

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Question 1 – Are there other areas you think the Partnership Agreement should address?

We feel the areas set out in the paper are suitable, however, in respect of the aim to tackle the high proportion of the population with low level or no skills, our view is that this is too much of a broad-brush approach. Within the proportion of the population under consideration will be a considerable number of people with disabilities e.g. mental health problems. We would like to see more emphasis on addressing the issues that prevent people with disabilities from accessing employment, training and education. If this were to be included as a specific area it would raise the profile within Scotland of the historical discrimination that many of the people we are talking about face and redress the balance.

Question 2 – Do you think these thematic objectives will best address Scotland's short-term and long-term challenges?

We feel that the thematic objectives will address some of the challenges provided that they will assist or support people of all ages to re-train or learn new skills to meet the needs of the developing renewables sector. Older people in remote or rural areas where renewables are making the most progress can still contribute, at the same time proper long-term career opportunities could reduce the flow of younger people from these areas thereby helping maintain the stability and viability of their communities.

Question 3 – Do you think there are any other thematic objectives which should be addressed?

We are disappointed that sustainable transport will no longer be supported.

Question 4 – Do you think the Scottish Themed Funds will address Scotland's key challenges?

Yes. We feel local development and social inclusion is essential.

Question 5 – How do you think the governance and delivery arrangements will impact on your sector?

It is too early to say for certain but we do have concerns about the governance and delivery plan. We hope that smaller organisations i.e. delivery agencies are not disadvantaged by not being able to access funds due to the lack of a Lead Partner. There needs to be some way for Delivery Agencies to access funds through this system where no lead partner at the level indicated in the consultation is participating in programme.

Question 6 – How do you think the governance and delivery arrangements will impact on your organisation?

Provided the reassurances given at the ESF annual awards conference come to fruition with regard to simplifying the reporting process it should reduce the burden of reporting on the smaller delivery agencies.

Question 7 – Are there any unidentified governance or delivery arrangements that could aid simplification of the future programmes and ensure that the Structural Funds complement each other?

No comment.

Question 8 – What other delivery options do you think would be feasible for delivering youth employment initiatives?

We feel that any initiatives should meet the needs of people of working age and not just concentrate on young people.

Question 9 – What other measures could be taken to reduce the audit and control pressures?

We hope that the proposed new structure would ease the pressure on delivery agencies. We would like to see all audit and control measures being based solely on outcomes in line with other funding bodies. The level of detail required for processing claims is, in our opinion, disproportionate to the level of funding received.

Question 10 – Do you have any further comments on the proposals?

No comment.