

Tilbury CLLD

Opportunities for the local community

ESF Project Grants Manual

INTRODUCTION

These grants are provided as part of the EU funded Tilbury Community Led Local Development Programme, which will be referred to throughout the rest of this document as 'Tilbury CLLD'. Based on community-led consultation the aim of the programme is to promote the social and economic cohesion of Tilbury through interventions to help the most deprived communities. This will be achieved by helping residents to access jobs and by supporting local businesses to help them grow and provide new job opportunities.

a) FUNDING and budget available

Funding allocation, including 50% match funding (to be secured by applicants) across the Strategic Actions and their sub actions is as follows:

Support Local People to access local jobs and develop their skills	Total budget
Employment readiness and skills support delivered in Tilbury aimed at individuals facing specific barriers to employment or training	£1,000,000

Tackle the barriers facing people furthest from the labour market	Total budget
Bespoke training, mentoring and work readiness activity delivered in Tilbury to support individuals who face multiple and complex barriers to employment or training; and	£2,050,000.00
Helping organisations and networks to advocate for and to champion local people with physical and mental health issues, substance abuse and other issues that act as barriers into work.	
Working with existing services to reach people needing extra support and to maximise the use of current provision	

Encourage local civic action, pride and volunteering as routes into work for the strategy	Total budget
A programme of outreach and capacity building to enable residents to volunteer and take other forms of civic action that will enable them to gain job-relevant skills and experience	£500,000.00

Up to 75% of the total programme funding will be available in 2019 for project applicants and a minimum of 25% of the funding will be available for applicants in the 2020 call.

b) Eligible areas

Grant applicants don't have to be based in any specific area. However, the funding will only be allocated to projects delivered to **Tilbury St Chads and Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park wards residents**.

Higher scores will also be given to projects with a high **Proportion of individuals, that will be supported in the CLLD areas of highest deprivation (20% most deprived LSOAs)**.

Please see the **postcode checker** for eligibility.

c) OUTPUTS AND RESULTS

Tilbury CLLD has committed to achieve the following ESF outputs and results

ESF code	PRIMARY OUTPUTS	Target
CO01	Unemployed, including long term unemployed participants	790
CO03	Economically Inactive	407

OUTPUTS- Subset of CO01 and CO03

CO15 (O5)	Participants who are ethnic minorities	156
O4	Participants who are over 50 years of age	208
CO16	Participants with Disabilities	156

RESULTS

R1	Unemployed participants into employment (including self-employment) on leaving	147
R2	Inactive Participants into employment or job search upon leaving	118
CR02	Participants in Education and Training on leaving	487

The European Union has very specific definitions and evidence requirements for each of these output and results lines. Tilbury CLLD and those awarded grants to deliver these results must fully adhere to these definitions. Failure to do this could result in ineligible delivery. For further information please look at [ESF Output and Results Guidance Version 2 October 2018](#).

A. THE GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

The programme will operate through a competitive and open call to grant applicants.

You will find other useful documents on the webpages, such as how we will assess the application and CLLD sustainability and equality and diversity policies.

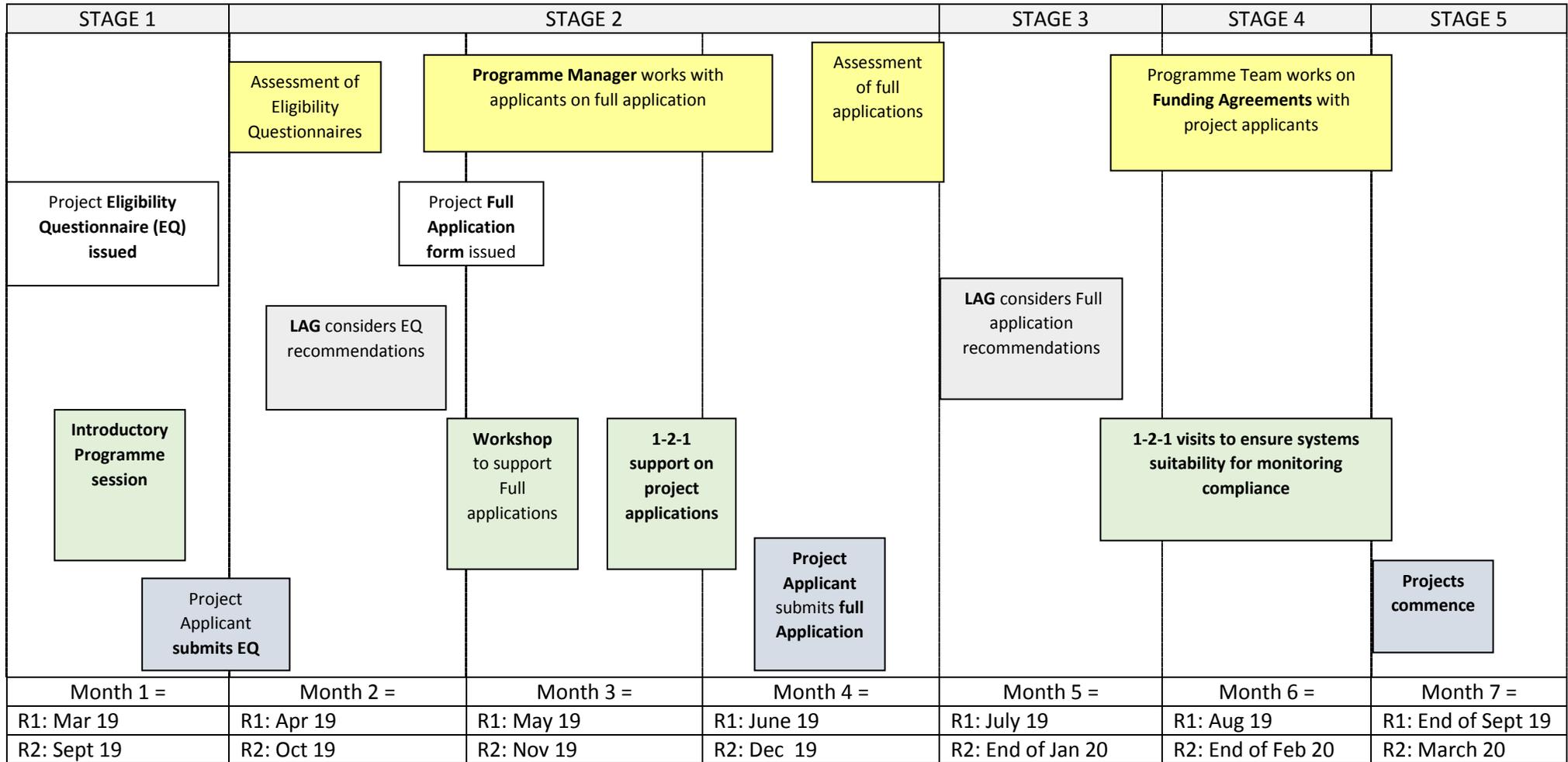
Support to fill in the application documents is available, please contact TilburyCLLD@thurrock.gov.uk

Activity	Submission Deadline	Result confirmed
Deadline for Eligibility Questionnaire	5pm, 17/04/2019	5pm 01/05/2019
Deadline for Grant Application	5pm 01/07/2019	31/07/2019- Applications will be Approved, Rejected or Referred (see below)
Approved Grants		
Contracting with Thurrock Council	Generally, within 4 weeks of grant approval	
Project Start	Within 4 months of project approval	
Quarterly claims	To be agreed in funding agreement	The Council will normally pay Grant Claims within 30 Working Days of all evidence being approved.
Final Claim	Claim submitted within three months of the project activity end date and no later than the 30 th of September 2022 All evidence to be	The Council will normally pay Grant Claims within 30 Working Days of all evidence being approved.

	provided for the claim to be accepted	
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Figure 1 shows in diagrammatic form the stages and timing of the application and assessment process for the Tilbury CLLD Programme

Figure 1 Tilbury CLLD Programme: ESF Programme Application and Assessment Process



Stage One: Completing the eligibility questionnaire

The Eligibility Questionnaire has to be completed for all delivery organisations planning to deliver activities to meet ESF outputs.

A general 1/2-day Introductory Session will be held which is open to all and free of charge. It is advised that potential applicants attend this session before submitting an Eligibility Questionnaire and full application.

The Introductory Session will look at:

- 1- General introduction about the programme
- 2- What are we looking to achieve?
- 3- Budget principles
- 4- Output principles
- 5- Delivering Sustainability and Human Rights (also described as Cross Cutting Themes or Horizontal Principles) and Publicity
- 6- Introduction to reporting
- 7- Next steps and advice to look at manual that will include all reporting documents
- 8- Opportunities for residents to discuss any projects ideas with delivery organisations
- 9- Opportunities for delivery organisations to come together to explore the potential for joint projects

The aim of the workshop will be to help project applicants to complete the Eligibility Questionnaire (EQ) by the required deadline

The EQ will require information from the project applicants on:

- Summary answer about experience
- Administrative info (E.g.: Number of staff, status)
- Questions about state aid
- Questions about match funding and where the organisation think it might come from
- Last 2 years of accounts to be provided

After the submission of the EQ, the Tilbury CLLD Programme Management team will assess the EQ and make recommendations to the Local Action Group (LAG) on whether the project applicant has met the eligibility criteria and should progress to next steps and complete a full application.

Following consideration of EQs by the LAG, all will be notified of the outcome within One week of the LAG meeting.

Stage Two: Completing the grant application

Once project applicants have been successful at the EQ stage, they will be invited to submit a full application. Guidance notes are available to support completion of the application form.

The project applicant will be advised to start working on their application as soon as possible, and begin to identify budget lines, outputs and match funding sources as much as possible. Applicants are strongly advised to attend a free of charge Stage 2 workshop.

Each applicant will be required to submit a list of questions and draft application form three days before attending the Stage 2 workshop.

The Stage 2 workshops will provide details about budgets, Match funding and outputs and answer general questions.

Project applicants will then be required to submit their applications by the deadline.

Should an applicant have any queries regarding the completion of the Application Form, then they should contact the Programme Management Team.

Stage 3: Assessment and Decision:

Using an established set of criteria, an Independent grant Assessor will assess the grant applications and present the reasons and recommendation to approve or reject to the Local Action Group (LAG). The LAG will then take a decision.

The Grant Assessor will complete an Assessment Sheet as part of this process. This information, along with other supporting documents, will be provided to the Local Action Group.

The LAG will review projects and make funding decisions.

Notifications of the outcome will be issued within two weeks.

Three notifications can be made:

Approved: The project is successful and can go up to the contracting stage.

Rejected: The project does not meet the priorities and outputs of the Tilbury CLLD programme and should not be resubmitted in this form.

Referred back: In its current form, the project does not sufficiently meet the requirements for approval. The applicant is encouraged to revise and resubmit a revised application.

Applications that are referred back will receive recommendations as to what aspects of the project would need to be improved for the revised application to meet the assessment criteria.

There is no right of appeal against the decision, its timing or phasing and the Programme Management team will not normally enter into correspondence in this respect. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing (Annex E).

It must also be noted that grant funding is capped and in later application rounds eligible, effective projects may be rejected if funding is insufficient to meet all applicant's requirements.

Stage 4: Contracting

Successful applicants will receive an Offer Letter and the Funding Agreement. Applicants will be required to complete, sign and return the Funding Agreement before any grant monies can be dispersed. These agreements will specify the scope of work and the terms and conditions under which the grant has been approved, as well as termination process and reporting requirements.

The Programme Management team will work with each project applicant to put in place all legal agreements. Visits will be made by the Programme Management Team to each project applicant to ensure that they have the necessary understanding and systems in place to undertake the monitoring and meet all other requirements for the European funding

Once the legal documentation has been signed by both signatories, the Grant Holder will be able to commence the project as specified in the Application Form.

Upon returning the completed Funding Agreement, details of the grant holder will be entered into an Electronic Form so that payments can be set up for payment through the financial system.

Stage 5: Project implementation

It is envisaged that the first projects will commence within six months from the start of the call for projects.

Please note that all projects must be finished and defrayed by the 30th of September 2022

THE GRANT DEFRAIDAL PROCESS

Project Grant Payments:

As the Accountable Body, Thurrock Borough Council sits at the nexus of the grant process for the ESF Project Grants.

The Accountable Body's core responsibility is to manage the dispersal process on behalf of the UK's ESF Managing Authorities (DWP), under an ESF compliant framework, to prevent any future financial claw-back.

The Accountable Body is a core member of the Local Action Group and will need to agree with the decision made by the Local Action Group to award European funding.

All Grant holders will be required to sign up to a legally binding Grant Funding Agreement with Thurrock Borough Council that specifies the exact eligibility of expenditure and the evidence required to support all expenditure, including defrayal.

The Programme Management team, which represents the Accountable Body, will engage with the appropriate finance teams from each grant holder organisation to ensure that their responsibilities and deadlines are fully understood and complied with.

Grant holders will be required to produce each quarter:

- A detailed transaction report from their financial system showing payment amount, date, recipient and payment reference.
- A bank statement showing an itemised transaction list, with relevant project expenditure clearly highlighted.

For each individual transaction made by a grant holder, evidence will be obtained to cover all aspects of finance and procurement, including:

- quotes/tender documentation
- copy of purchase orders
- final invoices
- receipt of goods
- payment details (from finance system)
- remittance advice
- bank statements

Grant holders will submit a detailed expenditure claim to the Accountable Body via the Programme Management team on a quarterly basis. Each claim will be checked for expenditure eligibility by the Tilbury CLLD Programme Compliance Officer against bank statements, programme delivery records and budget profiles, before being compiled into a central report that will form a central part of the project claim.

This information will be checked against the reported expenditure budget, by the Tilbury CLLD Compliance officer and the Tilbury CLLD Programme Manager.

Project and claim start and end dates will be carefully monitored and communicated to ensure that no expenditure outside the programme timeframe is submitted

The defrayal evidence submitted from each grant holder will be collated onto a Grant Claim Schedule and signed off by the grant holder, the Project Manager and countersigned by the Strategic lead- Economic Development.

Once approved, the dedicated finance officer for the Tilbury CLLD programme at Thurrock Borough Council will process the information into an order which the Accounts Payable team will then act on to pay the grant to the recipient. The order will be downloaded and stored alongside the Grant Claim Schedule to form part of the claim to the managing authority.

Please note that in case of exceptional circumstances, Thurrock Council can agree for monthly claim submissions. However, this will increase the intensity of the administration required by the applicant.

Grant Holders will be notified of any claim items deemed ineligible by ESIF. These will be deducted from future claims. If more than next the claim amount is rejected by the Funder, as ineligible expenditure, the Accountable Body will take action to reclaim payment from the Grant Holder.

Project Grant Claim Process:

The Programme Management team will collate, on a quarterly basis, a submission to the managing authorities for grant claims that have been authorised and defrayed on behalf of the Accountable Body, Thurrock Borough Council.

As invoices and defrayal data is received this information will be updated on the Grant element master database.

Thurrock council will check the information received by the grant holder before adding to the output and results database or the financial claim. Thurrock Council acts as an advisory body but the responsibility for compliance ultimately lies with the grant holder.

The financial claims and data for each project will be stored in line with the programme guidelines by each grant holder and by the Programme Management team for Thurrock Borough Council, as the Accountable Body. The Programme Management team will provide a comprehensive and auditable evidence base through which the programme can be accurately monitored.

A. RECORD KEEPING

All documentary evidence ascertaining to outputs, finance and procurement will be maintained and kept by the grant holders in accordance with guidance laid out in the grant agreement (which will include the retention rules).

Each project grant holder will be responsible for maintaining the original documentation and transferring it to the Programme Management Team on a quarterly basis to support regular project level claims.

By keeping orderly and comprehensive records it is far easier to assess the project status and progress towards overall outputs and results. The need to be able to provide records to substantiate claims and prove that the Programme has satisfied the various ESIF requirements is a 'golden thread' which runs through the ESIF Regulations as well as the Offer Letter.

It is therefore the responsibility of the grant holder to keep individual records for the following reasons;

- It is an essential requirement of European funding
- To enable the project to complete interim and final claims

- To monitor the progress and achievement of outputs and expenditure against the Offer Letter
- To provide exact evidence of expenditure (i.e. there must be an audit trail)
- To use as evidence in annual reports
- For monitoring and audit visits from internal and external parties

In addition to the various visits, additional records will need to be kept by the Accountable body. These records should show;

- Sufficient audit trail – this should be traceable back to the original documents.
- Evidence of all expenditure
- Evidence of open and fair procurement of goods and services
- Evidence of auditable, accountable match funding
- Compliance with publicity, equal opportunities and environmental requirements
- Clear records of businesses supported for State Aid purposes

B. PUBLICITY

All organisations who are provided with European funds to deliver actions that support the project outputs and results will be informed of ESIF publicity requirements. Adherence to these requirements will form part of the delivery process. All materials used by grant holders to support the delivery of the project will be required to be provided to the Programme Management team for approval before use.

The Accountable Body will keep copies of all publicity (e.g. adverts, press releases, photos, leaflets and posters). Failure to comply with the publicity requirements may result in payments back to the managing authority.

List of documents to consult:

ESF Grant programme Eligibility Questionnaire

ESF Project Grant Application Form

ESF Project Grant Application Form Guidance Notes

ESF Project Grant Assessment Form

Tilbury CLLD Eligible postcode list

ESF Project Application Unsuccessful Letter (see below)

ESF Project Application Offer Letter (see below)

ESF Project Funding Agreement (to be created)

ESF Project Grant Claim Form (to be created)



<<Address block>>

Thurrock Borough Council
Civic Offices
New Road
Grays, Essex
RM17 6SL
Phone: 01375 652585
Email: XXX

<<DATE>> << REF>>

Dear

Thank you for your recent application.

All the applications received in this bidding round have now been assessed. We received many thoughtful and innovative submissions; strongly competing for the funding available. Unfortunately I'm sorry to tell you that on this occasion your project has not been selected for funding.

We try to offer feedback to all applicants to help you understand the reasons why the project has not been awarded funding and to help you decide whether to submit an application again in round 2 or to another fund. On this occasion your application was not approved because;

- 1)
- 2)

We would be happy to discuss the feedback provided with you if you would like further assistance with this matter and we would like to encourage you to submit a new request for assistance should funding be available again in the future. If we are unable to assist you directly it is our hope that you will be able to obtain financial support from other sources. To this end please find below a list of organisations/funders that may be able to help with funding for your project. If you have any questions regarding the programme at this stage then please contact the Delivery/Project Manager using the contact details above. Please retain a copy of this letter for your records and do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries.

Yours Sincerely,

TBC
Tilbury CLLD Programme Manager

Annex F ESF Project Application Offer Letter



European Union

European Structural
and Investment Funds

<<Address block>>

Thurrock Borough Council
Civic Offices
New Road
Grays, Essex
RM17 6SL
Phone: 01375 652585
Email:
TilburyCLLD@thurrock.gov.uk

<<DATE>> << REF>>

Dear

I am pleased to inform you that Thurrock Borough Council (“**the Council**”) as the Delivery Agent for the Tilbury CLLD Programme has approved your Grant Application. We are therefore delighted to offer <<name>> (“**the Grant Recipient**”) a Grant of £<<AMOUNT>> (“**the Maximum Sum**”) towards Eligible Expenditure for the Project which consists of;

Expenditure Category	Eligible Expenditure	Amount
	The Maximum Sum =	£

This Offer Letter and the provision of Grant Funding from the Council are subject to the Terms and Conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement attached.

Please Action as Follows:

- **Complete the Grant Agreement**
- **Sign and date both copies of the Grant Agreement on the same day**
- **Return one completed signed and dated copy of the Grant Agreement to me at the address above.**

This offer of Grant will remain open for acknowledgement for 30 days from the date of this Offer Letter and will automatically lapse if the signed, dated and completed Grant Funding Agreement is not received by the Project Management Team on or before that date. Please retain a copy of this letter

for your records and do not hesitate to contact me should you require further clarification with regards to the above.

Yours Sincerely,

TBC
Tilbury CLLD Project Manager