

MAINSTREAM GRANTS PROGRAMME 2015-18 ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Introduction

The purpose of the assessment process is to determine whether applications effectively demonstrate that they meet the requirements of the relevant grant specification. Officers will do this by evaluating the extent to which the information in the Application Form, and requested documents, addresses the questions asked.

To ensure fairness and transparency **all** applications must be assessed **solely** on the information provided in the Application Form and requested documents. .

Eligibility

This initial phase of the assessment will be used to determine which applications go through to the Full Assessment phase.

- check that the organisation meets the basic eligibility criteria
- confirm that organisations have submitted the required documentary evidence

If the organisation does not meet all of the basic eligibility criteria or has failed to provide any of ‘mandatory’ documents to support their application, then the form cannot go forward for full assessment.

Full Assessment

Each section of the application form will be assessed against the following ratings:

Rating	Definition	Score
Excellent	Comprehensive level of information provided – clearly addressing the guidance and service specification requirements in convincing detail	5
Very Good	High level of information provided – addressing the majority of the key guidance and service specification requirements but with some elements lacking sufficient detail	4
Moderate	Average level of information provided – partially addressing the key guidance and service specification requirements - or Good level of information but all lacking in detail	3
Below average	Addresses a limited number of the of the guidance and specification requirements but with limited detail - or, addresses a good level of the requirements with little or no relevant detail.	2
Poor	Very limited relevant information provided – makes some attempt to address the guidance and service specification requirements but the vast majority of information is poor	1
Extremely Poor	Fails to provide any relevant, or extremely poor information in response to the guidance and service specification requirements	0

For each scored question assessors must decide the extent to which the information provided in the Application Form and requested documents addresses the guidance and the service specification.

Weighting

In conducting the 'full assessment' of the application form, a weighting of 1, 2 or 3 will be given to the scored questions as set out below:

No.	Scored Questions	Weighting
15	Organisation structure and governance	1
21 / 25	Project description	3
22 - 25	Project outcomes / outputs / milestones	2
26	Experience and track record	3
27	Quality assurance standard	2
28	Project management and control	3
29	Equalities and diversity *	2
30	Digital Inclusion *	2
31	Project Staff and Volunteers	2
32	Project finances	1

*cross-cutting themes

On assessing a scored question, the awarded score is multiplied by the weighting in order to arrive at the weighted score – see example below.

Scored Question	Awarded Score	Weighting	Weighted Score	Max. Weighted Score
Organisation structure and governance	5	1	5	5
Project description	4	3	12	15

Using the above criteria the maximum available Weighted Score is 105.

Assessment

Independent assessors will score the applications that have met the basic eligibility criteria.

A score can only be given where there is information/evidence provided in the Application Form and/or requested documents to support that level of scoring.

Quality Assurance checks will be carried out by Council Officers and then the scoring information will be collated.

Cross-Cutting Themes

The cross-cutting themes of Equalities & Diversity and Digital Inclusion are scored as shown above. It is expected that all applications include how these themes inform the development of the project and how it will be delivered.

A minimum 'weighted score' of 6 must be achieved for each of these cross-cutting themes in order for the proposal to be considered for funding.

For all successful applicants there will be ongoing conditions in the Grant Offer Letter setting out what is required in the delivery of the project. These must be reported on quarterly as part of the regular performance monitoring update.

Ranking Organisations

The maximum available Weighted Score that an application can achieve is 105. Within each funding stream all of the applications should be ranked according to its awarded score.

The starting point for deciding how the funding will be allocated is to rank applications by score; from the group that achieved the highest Weighted Score down to the group that has the lowest. Applications that score less than **46** will be considered not to have met the necessary **minimum required standard** and should not be recommended for funding **unless there is an extremely strong and compelling reason:** for example, in circumstances where there is no other suitable project being proposed within a particular geographical area. In this scenario the project could be recommended for funding but with appropriate pre-award or on-going conditions which need to be met.

In addition to the cross-cutting theme scores, any application with a ‘weighted score’ of 6 or less in either sections 21/25 (project description), 26 (experience and track record) or 28 (project management and control) should not be recommended for funding.

The scores for the cross-cutting themes will also be considered separately and will be a factor in the ranking, for example for applications that have the same score the cross-cutting theme scores will determine which is higher on the list.

The next step will be to look at the budget requested by the groups and to enter that detail next to the scores to establish a preliminary ‘cut off’ point.

Adjustments for Gaps in Provision

The next stage is to look at how well those groups ranked highest (within the available budget) meet the optimum range of provision outlined in the service specifications: i.e. the specific geographical area(s), activity profile and client group.

Where it is identified that there is a gap in provision, then assessors may need to look at those applications immediately below the cut off line, providing they meet the minimum score, to see if they can fill that gap. Alternatively assessors may need to consider negotiating with those organisations above the ‘cut off’ line to deliver some services where there are gaps.

Approvals

The penultimate stage of the process (once the scoring, ranking and necessary adjustments within each funding stream have been finalised) requires the Theme Leads to set out the recommendations within their respective themes which will then need to be signed-off by the Section 151 Officer prior to being presented to the Commissioners for a decision.

Entering Details on GIFTS

Once the final recommendations have been approved, the agreed details and summary should be completed and entered in GIFTS.