



PEACE IV Programme Monitoring Committee

European Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland for 2014 – 2020 (PEACE IV)

Project Selection Criteria

The purpose of this paper is to inform the Monitoring Committee of the selection criteria to be utilised during project assessment and to gain the approval of the Monitoring Committee.

1. Assessment model

The primary purpose of the assessment process is to assess the potential of the proposed project to deliver the specified results and outputs of the relevant programme in a cost effective manner. Thereafter, it will be used to rank projects according to an agreed scoring methodology.

2. Assessment criteria

The Cooperation Programme provides the high level criteria against which each application will be assessed. Details will be included in the call for applications, including the specific objective and the relevant result indicator(s) and output indicators which applicants will be required to meet. An Applicants Guide is also available, which describes in detail the type of information to be provided in order to score well against the criteria.

2.1 The key principles in relation to assessment and selection criteria are as follows:

- All projects must positively support the core aims and objectives of the PEACE Programme as it seeks to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society through the promotion of reconciliation amongst all communities across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.
- Projects must positively support actions to improve relationships between communities by addressing issues of trust, prejudice and intolerance.

- All projects will be required to be strictly non-party political. Projects must take care to ensure party political neutrality in the manner which they go about their business.
- All operations will be selected following a robust and objective assessment process.

2.2 The following principles will inform the assessment process:

(a) Each operation will have to demonstrate how they contribute to the results and outputs of the themes.

- Particular focus will be given to the direct contribution to peace and reconciliation.
- Projects will have to demonstrate that they are creating opportunities for sustained meaningful and purposeful contact between people and groups of different backgrounds and in so doing contribute to the result and outputs of the call.

(b) Quality of the project design

- Projects will have to demonstrate a direct link between their proposed activities and the proposed impact of the project.
- Particular attention will be given to measures to ensure the inclusion of the marginalised or other target groups.
- Projects funded under Children and Young People (14-24 years) must clearly demonstrate that any potential duplication with other training initiatives targeting young people are fully addressed, with clear demarcation lines established and that robust and transparent monitoring and financial arrangements put in place ex ante to prevent duplication;
- Projects funded to improve the health and wellbeing of Victims and Survivors must conform to the defined national standards (National Institute for Care Excellence) and regional standards (the Commission for Victims and Survivors minimum standard) of care and deliver consistently to the required standards.
- Projects funded under shared spaces (capital build) will incorporate high quality design and sustainable development principles, including measures to minimise carbon emissions

(c) Quality of the project team, partnership and implementation arrangements;

- Projects will have to demonstrate that the project team have the right skills and experience to lead the project, and that the project structures will be able to deliver on the peace and reconciliation outputs.

(d) Value for money;

(e) Quality of cross community and cross-border co-operation with demonstrable added value;

- Cross border co-operation will be encouraged through the development of appropriate partnerships and implementation arrangements where these add value to the delivery of the Programme. In all cases including those projects implemented on a single jurisdiction basis, the project will have to demonstrate how they will effectively ensure participation from all communities in their activities.

(f) Contribution towards sustainable development;

- Projects will be encouraged to consider how their activity can be designed to positively contribute towards this horizontal principle.

(g) Contribution towards equality.

- Projects will be encouraged to consider how their activity can be designed to positively contribute towards this horizontal principle.

2.3 Stage One Assessment Criteria

Stage one assessment will be a strategic assessment and will determine the viability and merit of the project before proceeding to a more detailed assessment of the project in stage two. For stage one, applicants must demonstrate relevance to five criteria, each with an equal weighting, against which applications will be fully appraised and scored (0 to 5).

These are:

	Criterion (as detailed in section 2.2 above)	Weighting
1.	Contribution of the project to the defined results and outputs of the programme	20%
2.	Quality of Project Design	20%
3.	Quality of the project team and implementation arrangements	20%
4.	Value for Money	20%
5.	Quality of cross-community and/or cross-border co-operation with demonstrable added value	20%
	Total	100%

In order to be successful at stage one, a minimum score of 15 (60%) must be achieved, with individual scores for each of the criteria must not be less than 3.

Unsuccessful applications at stage 1 will be formally rejected with clear reasons for rejection. Applicants rejected at Stage 1 will have the right to a review, conducted by written procedure. (see separate paper.)

An invitation to make a stage two application is no guarantee that funding will be approved.

2.4 Stage Two Assessment Criteria.

Stage two of the assessment process will scrutinise the detail of the application. Applicants will be required to submit a Business Plan. This may involve the use of assessment techniques such as economic appraisal, technical studies, etc. to inform the decision making process. No scores are carried forward from stage one.

At Stage Two the application will be scored (0 to 5) against the following criteria and using the weighting set out below;

	Criterion (as detailed in section 2.2 above)	Weighting
1.	Contribution of the project to the defined results and outputs of the programme	20%
2.	Quality of project design	20%
3.	Quality of the project team and implementation arrangements	10%
4.	Value for Money	20%
5.	Quality of cross-community and/or cross-border co-operation with demonstrable added value	20%
6.	Contribution to Sustainable Development	5%
7.	Contribution to Equality	5%
	Total	100%

In order to be successful at stage two, a minimum score of 3 for each criterion is required.

3. Scoring and quality threshold

Scores will be awarded according to a pre-determined rating system depending on how well the evidence provided by the applicant satisfies the assessment questions listed under that criterion. If the value of the budget requested for projects which score above the threshold exceeds the availability of the budget, the threshold may be raised.

Score	Assessment	Descriptor/Indicator
0	Nil Response	Response failed to address the question.
1	Very Poor	A very poor response with limited evidence of capacity to deliver against the criterion.
2	Poor	A poor response with some evidence of capacity to deliver against the criterion, but overall it is below the standard expected in order to be awarded funding.
3	Acceptable	A good response with evidence of capacity to deliver to an acceptable standard against the criterion.
4	Good	A very good response with strong evidence of capacity to deliver above the minimum standard expected against the criterion.
5	Excellent	An excellent response with very strong evidence of capacity to deliver well above the minimum standard expected the criterion.