

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

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

No comment

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

The thematic objectives to be focused upon appear sound in themselves.

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

Capacity building has supported the establishment and growth of social enterprises and third sector organisations which have been a growing area of Scotland's economy, and an essential deliverer of services in our most disadvantaged communities. SG are asked to consider the omission of this theme and potential impact on support services for this area of activity.

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

No comment.

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

There has to be clear and transparent involvement of the third sector across all SDP's for the three themes, at both a strategic level and in terms of future delivery. Representatives and representative groups for the third sector should be key members of these Partnerships.

In terms of the future delivery of programmes aligned to the three themes there has to be a clear and transparent commissioning and procurement process for all delivery.

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

Greater consideration has to be given to how the Structural Funds in Scotland integrate and add value to other UK wider programmes. In particular, the integration of Structural Fund programmes with UK Welfare to Work programmes. There has to be greater consideration given to how these programmes can be integrated and complement each other to maximise benefits for beneficiaries.

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 would welcome additional investment in the form of a Youth Employment Initiative. This would bring additional investment to the 16-24 age group in those areas of particularly high youth unemployment. We would however request that the wider range of employability initiatives supported under the Structural Funds is given greater consideration should the Youth Employment Initiative be secured. In particular there should be greater scope in the wider ESF programme for initiatives for those 25+, which is increasingly recognised as an area of under-provision.

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

A key issue in the 2007-13 programme has been that of eligibility of expenditure. The new programme should have clear guidance on what is eligible and ineligible, with responsibility for establishing this lying with the lead bodies and not delivery bodies. This would also prevent the time lags in payment that has affected the current programme.

For those programmes where an outcome based payment model is proposed there is potential to reduce administrative burden. However the National Audit Office will be reporting in September on the ESF families programme in England and Wales and are expected to comment on the use of outcome based payment models for ESF programme.

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

No further comments