

## IRELAND WALES COOPERATION PROGRAMME 2014-2020



### INTRODUCTION

The 2014-2020 Ireland Wales programme builds on over twenty years of co-operation through INTERREG. For the 2014-2020 funding period, the programme is led by WEFO taking on the role of Managing Authority on behalf of the Welsh Government and its government partners in Ireland, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and its operational partners the Southern Regional Assembly.

#### **The Programme vision statement:**

*'To provide the framework for organisations in the cross-border area to actively cooperate to address challenges and shared priorities of common interest on both sides of the Irish Sea thereby contributing and adding value to the economic and sustainable development priorities of Ireland and Wales.'*

#### **Programme Focus:**

**CROSS-BORDER** – genuine cross-border operations, providing clear added value

**ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES** – focus on economic activity and jobs and growth

**QUALITY** – good quality operations seeking solutions to shared challenges and priorities

**RESULTS AND IMPACT** – strong focus on tangible outcomes with maximum impact



## Priority Axes

- Priority Axis 1: Cross –Border Innovation.

The Priority will focus on activities in the following sectors which are aligned to shared priorities of the smart specialisation strategies in both countries:

- Marine and Environmental Sciences (including renewable energy);
- Food & Drink
- Life Sciences

- Priority Axis 2: Adaptation of the Irish Sea and Coastal Communities to Climate Change.

This Priority will focus on the links between the impacts of climate change on jobs and growth and will seek to respond to cross-border challenges on the Irish Sea and coastal communities due to the effects of climate change which have impacted on society, the economy, businesses and our shared ecosystem.

- Priority Axis 3: Cultural and Natural Resources and Heritage.

This Priority will focus on enhancing sustainable growth through co-operation by utilising the potential of the natural and cultural assets of the cross-border maritime area.

## Operation Beneficiaries (Partners)

Each operation must have at least one Irish and one Welsh beneficiary (partner) with a maximum of 6 joint beneficiaries per operation.

## Cooperation Criteria – Essential Building Block

Another essential building block in developing cross border partnerships is the 4 co-operation criteria:

- Joint Development
- Joint Implementation
- Joint Staffing
- Joint Financing

## Implementation

Programme will operate an **Open Call** for projects.

### Pre-planning

Organisation makes contact via website link, I/W inbox or Operations Officer

Operations Officer engages in early discussions with potential operation partners.

Organisation completes **Operation Logic Table**

Finalised proposals are forwarded to the **Technical Group** for decision

Proposals are either:

- Accepted into the first stage business planning
- Advised to work with another operation looking to deliver similar activity
- Advised to strengthen proposal
- Rejected/Declined/Withdrawn

WIN3 – Networking scheme providing travel and subsistence funding to facilitate establishment of partnerships.

### Gateway 1 – Business Planning Stage:

Organisation registers on e-Gateway to access WEFO Online (customer facing platform for PPIMs).

Lead Beneficiary is invited to complete and submit a **business plan template** limited to three core criteria - Strategic Fit (including co-operation criteria), Delivery and Finance & Compliance.

Officers prepare decision report for submission to the Programme Steering Committee.

### **Programme Steering Committee Gateway 1**

The PSC has three options when reviewing business cases at Gateway 1:

- Approval and acceptance into the detailed planning stage.
- Returned for additional work at Gateway 1 – we will need to provide clear guidance as a proposal that requires fundamental re-writing should be rejected or declined.  
Rejected/declined/placed on reserve/withdrawn.

## Detailed Business Plan Stage

Approved operations enter detailed business planning stage and complete evidence on the six remaining criteria:

Indicators & Outcomes; Value for Money; Project Management; Cross Cutting; Suitability of Investment; Long Term Sustainability.

Lead and Secondary Officers (in collaboration) complete a final funding decision report and submit to the PSC for Gateway 2 funding decision.

The PSC has three options:

- Approval.
- Returned for additional work – we will need to provide clear guidance as an operation that requires fundamental re-writing should be rejected.
- Rejected/declined/placed on reserve/withdrawn (This is unlikely at this stage but is included for scenarios where a beneficiary has withdrawn, funding has been lost etc.)

## Portal

To manage the open call approach a portal has been established to allow PSC members to:

- Download meeting papers
- Review business case application documents for consideration
- Utilise discussion blog to provide a clear audit trail for business case decisions at both Gateway 1 and Gateway 2.

## Post Approval

Induction meeting - to take place within 6 weeks of approval and to include review of contract, confirm beneficiary contracts have been drawn up and signed, mobilisation targets, delivery of activity , all policy documents are in place and can be located, retention of documents, contacts, levels of authority, specialist advice from CCT, RME, FAT (Finance), etc.

After Care/Reviews – close monitoring of approved operations, with regular reviews linked to claim submission and/or key milestones at three or six monthly intervals.