



**European Union**  
European Structural  
and Investment Funds

**European Update for Cheshire and  
Warrington Voluntary, Community and  
Social Enterprise Sector**

**6th December 2019**

**Provided by Network for Europe and CVS Cheshire East**

### **Headlines**

Call for European Social Fund Projects

Call for European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development Projects

Reserve Funds

### **Open Opportunities**

#### **DPS for Skills Providers and Training Provision, Skills For Growth: Cheshire and Warrington: ESF**

If your organisation has a training programme which employers do/could use to support the training and development of their staff then this tender may be of interest to you.

The University of Chester have a need to appoint suitably qualified organisations to a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) to deliver training and education, with requirements for delivery specifically within Chester and Warrington in partnership commencing 3rd February 2020 – 30th November 2022 with the option to extend a further 10 months. The University seeks to contract for high quality provision which complements but does not compete with its own provision, meets the needs of employers, and/or benefits the local community.

Tenders (SSQs) in the first round must reach them via the e-tendering portal <https://www.in-tendhost.co.uk/universityofchester> by 10:00 10th January 2020

The tender can be found here <https://in-tendhost.co.uk/universityofchester/asp/Tenders/Current>

If you require any support with this please contact Caroline Whitney, [caroline.whitney@cvsce.org.uk](mailto:caroline.whitney@cvsce.org.uk)

### **Update on other ESF Projects**

**Journey First** – This is a local authority led ESF project which aims to target those that are furthest away from the job market. Within this programme there will be the opportunity for VCFS organisations to be on a Framework to deliver support services required by the clients on the programme.

CVS and its partners are providing support for this and will be able to support any VCFS organisations to apply to this framework once open. We hope to have further news in the New Year.

Please ensure you are either on the CVS or your local infrastructure organisations mailing list.

[Cheshire East Mailing List - CVS](#)

[Cheshire West Mailing List - CWVA](#)

[Warrington Mailing List/membership - WVA](#)

### **New ESF calls/tenders**

Of the seventeen calls for £39m across England in November, three were for Cheshire and Warrington. These totalled £6m from Europe, and were issued at the end of November.

The Cheshire and Warrington calls follow the information event on 29th October, and the intention is for smaller providers to work with others developing consortia bids.

It's important to note that these calls require the bidder to have in place 50% match. This match must be classed as 'clean'. Please contact us if you have questions about this.

Call 1703 combines three Investment Priorities to give greater flexibility.

The £3,490,110 from Europe is split into approximately:

- £1,791,000 for IP1.1 (access to employment),
- £726,000 for IP1.2 (young people) and
- £973,110 for IP1.4 (inclusion).

Current Projects that receive funding in these areas that you may be familiar with are: New Leaf and the Journey First

It is expected that one contract will be awarded under this call, so consortia or other partnership arrangements are strongly encouraged. Activities could include support for parents with young children, and support for digital inclusion for unemployed and economically inactive people. Applicants should demonstrate targeting those furthest from the labour market, a wider approach including early intervention, and effective coverage across the sub-region.

We are supporting a response to this from the Local Authorities which would see an opportunity for small VCFS organisations to be involved in delivery.

Call 1700 (IP 2.1) is for £1,970,000 from Europe, and again it is expected that just one contract will be awarded (so a consortia with specialist providers is welcomed), and the LEP is hopeful that this can be delivered within existing partnership structures. The project is to support workforce development and addressing in-work poverty, with some contingency to provide redundancy support, if necessary.

Call 1699 (IP 2.2) is for £500,000 from Europe. There will be links between employers and schools and others working with young people, as well as a digital co-ordinator. The aim is to promote career opportunities in key sectors, articulate skill needs of SMEs, and strengthen digital skills. It is expected one contract will be awarded for this call.

Ref	Opened	Closing	IP	£m
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OC03S19P1703	27 Nov	19 Feb	1.1	1.79
			1.2	0.73
			1.4	0.97
OC03S19P1700	27 Nov	19 Feb	2.1	1.97
OC03S19P1699	28 Nov	20 Feb	2.2	0.50

Full details, including the call specifications and other background documents are available at [www.gov.uk/european-structural-investment-funds](http://www.gov.uk/european-structural-investment-funds)

## News from the LEP

**Cheshire and Warrington LEP have also put an update out about the calls above – see here for their update.**

## Other ESF and ERDF news

### ERDF calls

On June 26th there were 132 ERDF calls across England for £613 million from Europe with a deadline of the end of September. There were 500 applications, for £687m, slightly more than the amount available.

Cheshire and Warrington has bids of around £0.4m for Priority 1 (Research and Development) - £4.5m was available, and £3.0m for P2 (ICT) - £3.0m available and £13.4m for P3 (Small and Medium Sized Enterprises), where there was £3.1m available in the call.

### EAFRD Calls - from Reserve Fund

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development has already launched with £35 million from Europe available. Applications opened from 4th November, deadline 16th February. Minimum bid is reduced from £35k to £20k. As before, there are three Themes (Business Development, Tourism Infrastructure and Food Processing), with a well designed and clear booklet for each, EAFRD will generally provide up to 40% of eligible costs, but Tourism Infrastructure can be higher - up to 100% of eligible costs if not generating a direct return (cycle tracks, monuments).

Funding is to create jobs or bring more money into the rural economy. There is a two stage application process, starting with an Expression of Interest form. Expect each full time job created to require around £30k of grant.

[www.gov.uk/european-structural-investment-funds/business-development](http://www.gov.uk/european-structural-investment-funds/business-development)

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/rdpe-growth-programme-rural-maps](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rdpe-growth-programme-rural-maps)

### Reserve Funds

For the Programmes so far, each LEP area (including Cheshire and Warrington) have had an allocation for ESF and ERDF. Now that we are coming to the end of the Programmes, any remaining uncommitted funding will be put into a Central Pot, and LEP areas will be able to create proposals for calls to spend this money. This could be perhaps £200m in total for ERDF and £400m ESF. There are intended to be fortnightly calls from January to about June for ESF. Details for the ERDF Reserve Fund are still under discussion, but could mean a call early in 2020 (and perhaps a second call).

## **ESF-Lottery BBO**

National Lottery Community Fund are currently being agreed, and should be announced soon.

## **Simplification, and Appraisal delays**

ESF and ERDF in England are hoping to reduce the bureaucratic gold plating and appraisal delays, and catch up with some of Europe's Simplification Agenda. Following the updated Regulations in 2018, ERDF issued updated simplification Guidance last year, and ESF issued some guidance recently. This can mean that timesheets for staff are not required for those who only work on an ESF project, or only work for a fixed percentage of time each week. Similarly, the 40% rule can mean that receipts do not need to be collected, as indirect and direct costs can be paid as a percentage of staffing.

Since June, DWP has said that its aspiration is to appraise ESF bids within 16 weeks. Currently, the aspiration is at around 24 weeks, but it is hoped to bring this to 16 by January.

## **Leave or Stay**

The current ESF and ERDF Programmes cover the period 2014-20, and the N+3 rule allows spend until 2023. The UK Treasury has guaranteed funding, so that whether we stay in Europe, leave, or crash out with no deal, ESF and ERDF projects with funding agreements dated before the end of December 2020 will be able to continue until the end of the Programme. ERDF projects should plan to complete activity at the latest by June 2023, ESF by December 2023.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-governments-guarantee-for-eu-funded-programmes-if-theres-no-brexit-deal](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-governments-guarantee-for-eu-funded-programmes-if-theres-no-brexit-deal)

The next Programme Monitoring Committee (Growth Board) will now be on 18th December, and will be an opportunity to reflect on the election results in the context of the ESF and ERDF Programmes

## **ESF Programme Bulletin**

The November update was issued on 5th. This refers to the ESF Case Study Booklet, and confirms that over £2 billion from Europe has been allocated, with more calls underway. It again confirms funding for ESF projects will continue to the end of the programme, publicises a European Commission consultation on ESF, and refers to two recent ESF Action Notes 039/19 and 040/19.

Subscribe direct for your own copy of the Bulletin by emailing [esf.2014-2020@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:esf.2014-2020@dwp.gov.uk)

## **Network for Europe**

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