

**Mclsaac C (Cathy)**

**From:** Paul Tyler [paul.tyler@strath.ac.uk]  
**Sent:** 08 January 2007 15:03  
**To:** Heydel E (Emeric)  
**Subject:** Future of European Structural Funds Consultation

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Dear Emeric

We would like to take the opportunity afforded by the current Scottish Executive consultation to put forward our views on the future of the European Structural Funds Programmes in Lowlands and Uplands Scotland 2007-2013 ("the Programmes").

Whilst it is not our intention to respond to the full list of questions within the consultation, we do wish to present general comments that we have relating to the Programmes and their future with particular regard to the Higher Education sector in the West of Scotland.

It is understood and accepted that the overall level of funding available for the Programmes is considerably reduced and that this in itself necessitates a review into the way in which the available money will be allocated. However, we do not believe that the proposals contained within the draft Operational Programmes which have been circulated adequately or accurately reflect the needs within the community for the following reasons:

#### 1. Spatial Targeting:

European Structural Funds were originally set up to narrow economic disparity within a region by targeting and directing resources to those most in need of support and assistance.

The Programmes, as proposed, do not address regional imbalances as funding will now be available throughout the whole Lowlands and Uplands Scotland. Many reports and consultations have concluded that regional economic performance within Scotland is weakest in the West and we therefore believe that a specific allocation of money from the Programmes should be earmarked for this region.

#### 2. Availability of Capital Funding in ERDF Priority 1:

It is our understanding based upon the information circulated to date that the most likely source of capital funding that might be suitable for projects arising from the Higher Education sector would be under ERDF Priority 1, amounting to a total of approximately £16m (15% of the total available) throughout the duration of the Programmes.

In order that maximum use can be made of these funds, we would like to suggest that **the proportion allocated towards capital funding is increased** (again spatially targeted) rather than provide recurrent funding for a few years to organisations that will **come to** rely on this as core funding which is not sustainable beyond the end of the Programmes.

As a more general point on Priority 1, we would like to see the continuation of focus on the support of innovation and enterprise and the interaction between the Higher Education sector and SME's (again spatially targeted) in accordance within the Lisbon Agenda.

#### 3. Role of Intermediary Delivery Bodies ("IDB"):

It is our understanding that part of the funds from the Programmes will be delivered by IDBs which will include a range of bodies, such as Scottish Enterprise and Community Scotland.

However, it is not clear at this point how these IDBs will operate and what level of accountability will exist in respect of their operations. It is also not clear how the IDBs will utilise the funding vis-à-vis core activities and activities supported under the Programmes.

We are therefore seeking clarity and clarification on the role of the IDBs and indeed question the need for the step change from the previous Programme Management Executive set up to that currently proposed.

We hope that you find these comments constructive and that they will add to and aid the consultation process.

Should you have any queries in respect of this letter or indeed wish to discuss any of the issues contained herein in any more detail then please don't hesitate to contact me.

I have also attached a copy of the respondent information form as requested in the documentation relating to the consultation.

Regards

Paul

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