

Assessment and Selection Procedure (including assessment and selection criteria)

Guidance for applicants

Green Infrastructure Community
Engagement Fund

January 2017



Disclaimer

Applicants should be aware that as the Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund is a new programme, the guidance will be reviewed as the programme evolves and therefore may be subject to change. The European Union and Scottish Ministers reserve the right to amend the National Rules and SNH reserves the right to amend the published guidance during the period of the programme. Decisions to fund Projects will be based on the availability of funding, how well the project matches the Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund priorities and its contribution to outcomes as part of the whole Strategic Intervention. These priorities may change during the course of the Strategic Intervention to take into account gaps in meeting priorities in previously funded Projects. The Scottish Government reserves the right not to award any support at all under this programme.

Version Control

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Contents

Disclaimer	1
Version Control.....	1
Contents	2
1. Purpose.....	3
2. Summary and Introduction.....	3
Figure 1 - Summary of assessment and selection stages	3
3. Screening.....	4
4. Eligibility	4
5. Assessment and Scoring.....	5
6. Scrutiny Panel	6
7. Approval by SNH's CEO.....	6
Annex – Assessment and Selection Criteria.....	7
A.1 Deliverability	7
A.2 Impact.....	9
A.3 Outcomes	10
A.4 Horizontal Themes.....	14

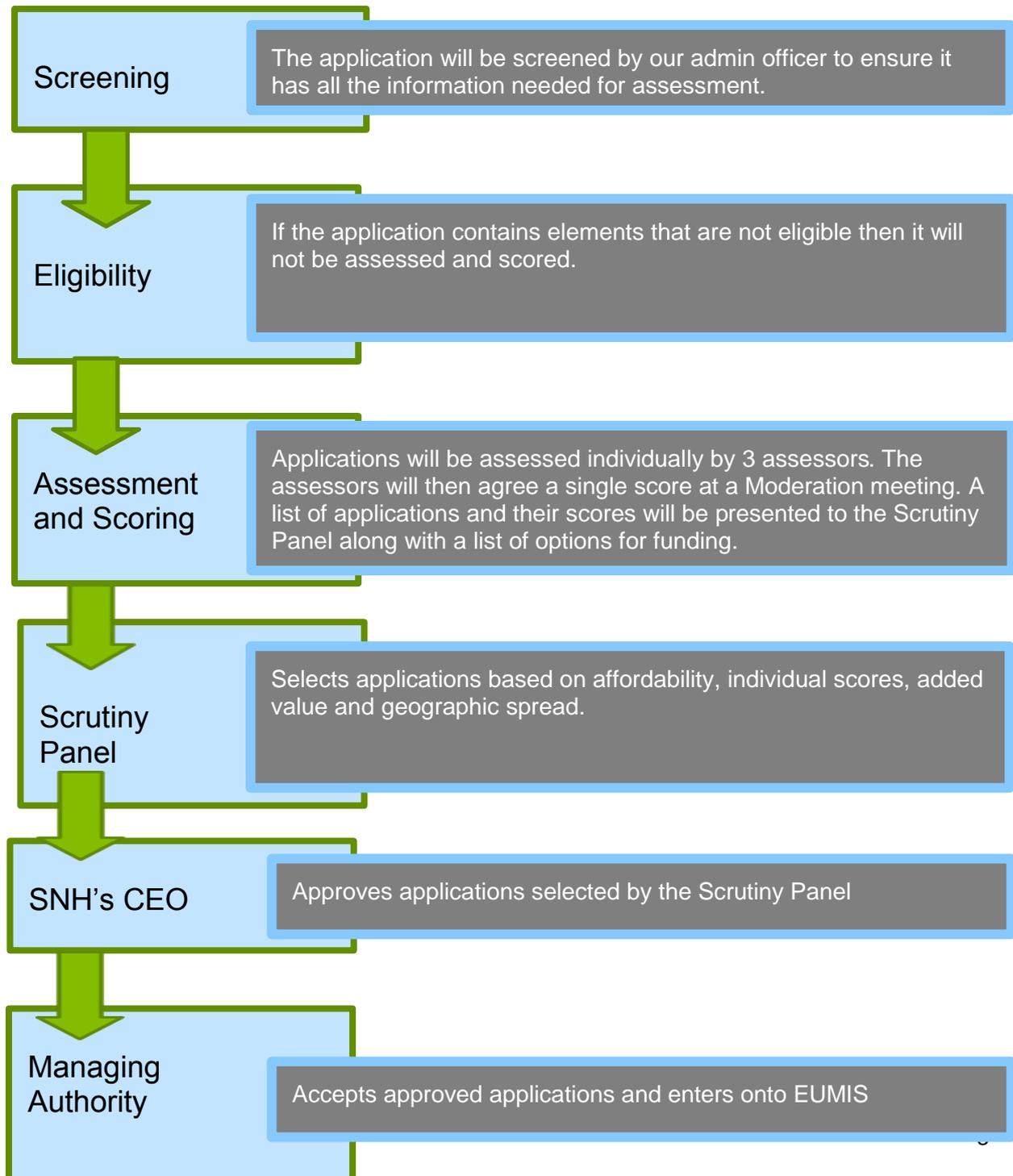
1. Purpose

This document sets out the processes and procedures we will use to assess and select the applications we receive to the Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund. This guidance differs slightly from the guidance that applies to the main Green Infrastructure Fund, so please make sure you refer to the correct document.

2. Summary and Introduction

There are five key stages to the assessment and selection of Projects. Figure 1 provides a summary of these stages.

Figure 1 - Summary of assessment and selection stages



A number of checklists and scoring sheets will be used at each stage. These are available to download from the [Green Infrastructure Fund Community Engagement Fund website](#) so that you can be fully aware of how your application will be assessed and scored. You should also use these as self-assessment checklists to ensure that you have considered all the required criteria and are ready to submit your application to the Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund. Note that if you cannot answer 'yes' to all the Eligibility criteria, your project will not receive funding from us. The eligibility criteria are set out in detail in the Annex at the end of this document.

3. Screening

Applicant organisations are expected to provide full details of their proposed project on the [Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund Application Form](#) along with supporting financial information demonstrating how the application meets the required eligibility criteria.

Screening will ensure that the application meets the following criteria:

- The application form has been received before or on the deadline;
- The application form is complete
- The required supporting information has been provided; and
- The application form has been signed and dated by someone within the applicant organisation with the authority to do so.

The Screening Checklist will be used by our administrator to check that your application is valid.

4. Eligibility

The second stage looks at the Eligibility of the application in terms of the proposed activities, the applicant organisation, the match funding and other associated factors. More details can be found in the [Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund Eligibility Guidance](#). Questions on eligibility can only be answered with 'yes' or 'no'. Applications must be able to answer 'yes' to all the eligibility questions in order to proceed to the third stage of the selection process – assessment.

An Eligibility Checklist will be used by SNH to evaluate the eligibility of your application to the Green Infrastructure Fund. Each of the 3 assessors will read the applications and assess the eligibility against the criteria. If an eligibility requirement has not been met, the assessors will record the reason why. This checklist is available for you to view in the Green Infrastructure Fund [Eligibility and Assessment Scoring Forms](#) document. You should use it to self-assess the eligibility of your application before you submit it. Please take the opportunity to discuss any queries you have about eligibility with your Support Officer early on when preparing your application.

The moderation process will be recorded on a spreadsheet to show the 3 assessors' conclusions, the moderation conclusion and the recommendation of whether the project will proceed to Stage 3, Assessment and Scoring, or be rejected.

5. Assessment and Scoring

The Assessment stage looks at the quality of the proposed project by considering what it will do, what it will achieve and how it will deliver the outcomes of the Green Infrastructure Strategic Intervention.

We will assess applications by asking questions about projects and allocating scores. The form we will use to do this are available for you to view in the Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund [Eligibility and Assessment Scoring Forms](#) document so that you can assess how well your project fits with our assessment and selection criteria. We will also assess the deliverability of the project by looking at whether it is well thought out and realistic and whether the applicant is capable of delivering it to the required high standard. Applications will also be scored on the impact that the project would be expected to make on the basis of the information we're given in the application.

We will look at the activities and outputs of your project, who will benefit and how, your plans for communication and for engaging with stakeholders and communities, how your project contributes to the Green Infrastructure Strategic Intervention overall and how it will address the ERDF horizontal themes. We will assess and score the evidence of need and local support for the project, the need for grant, added value and what is innovative about the project.

We will also consider and assess how applications will measure and evidence the delivery of their project and what the impact of the investment received will be. We will also assess how well you have prepared for your project and how realistic your plans for delivery are. This stage will be carried out by Assessment Panels and is designed to ensure that the best quality applications are then passed to our Scrutiny Panel for the fourth stage of assessment.

Projects will be scored against assessment and selection criteria which have been designed to help us answer the questions above. The selection criteria are listed in the **Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund Assessment and Selection Criteria** – which is included as an Annex at the end of this guidance. This gives details of what we are looking for and examples of what we might fund. The [Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund Application Form](#) has been designed to allow us to capture the information we need to assess applications against our assessment and selection criteria. For specific guidance on completing it please refer to the [Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund Application Form Guidance](#).

Each application to the Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund will be assessed and scored on the contribution that it will make towards the Green Infrastructure Strategic Intervention outcomes. These are:

- Nature, biodiversity and ecosystems
- Environmental quality, flooding and climate change
- **Involving communities and increasing participation**
- Increasing place attractiveness and competitiveness
- Increasing health and wellbeing

The most relevant outcome for the GICEF is **Involving communities and increasing participation**. However, if you think your project will also deliver towards any of the other outcomes, then make sure you tell us this in your application.

More detail on the outcomes can be found in the [Blueprint for Green Infrastructure](#). Please also refer to the [Green Infrastructure Fund Monitoring and Evaluation Guidance](#) to help you plan how you will monitor and evaluate the delivery of your project.

It is also vital that you consider the ERDF **Horizontal Themes – Environmental Sustainability, Equal Opportunities, Social Inclusion**. All projects funded through the Green Infrastructure Fund and the Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund must demonstrate how they plan to address these. Specific guidance can be found in the [Green Infrastructure Fund Horizontal Themes Guidance](#).

At both the eligibility and assessment stages, the application will be assessed by three assessors followed by a moderation meeting. Assessors and moderators will have signed a Declaration of Interest Form to ensure a fair and open process throughout. The [Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund Assessment and Scoring Form](#) which will be used by the assessors can be downloaded from the Green Infrastructure Fund website.

6. Scrutiny Panel

Once the assessment panels have allocated their scores, the ranked list of applications will be passed to the Scrutiny Panel who will look at their fit across the whole Green Infrastructure Strategic Intervention. They will consider the balance of delivery across the programme outcomes, the cumulative impact by outcome, the total eligible cost and the geographic spread of projects.

7. Approval by SNH's CEO

After the Scrutiny Panel has made their selection, details of their decisions on funding will be forwarded to SNH's CEO for final approval. Once the CEO has confirmed that they are happy with the projects the Scrutiny Panel has recommended for funding, the details will be passed to the Managing Authority for entering onto EUMIS and we will contact successful applicants to confirm award of Green Infrastructure Funding. At this point we will also contact unsuccessful applicants to inform them of the outcome of their application and to offer feedback.

Please note that the decisions by the SNH CEO, about which projects to fund, are final. If your project does not receive funding, and you think that there was an error in how we processed your application then please speak to us. If this fails to address your concerns you can complain using the [SNH complaints system](#).

Annex – Assessment and Selection Criteria

A.1 Deliverability

Category		Assessment criteria	What are we looking for?
Competency of the Applicant – Project Management (covered by Section B of the Green Infrastructure Fund application form)	1.	How strong is the applicant's track record in delivery of this kind of project, EU funded or otherwise?	Applicants who can demonstrate solid experience in the management and delivery of projects - EU funded or otherwise. Previous experience of EU funding would be advantageous.
	2.	How good is the applicant's plan for delivery with milestones and are the delivery timescales realistic? Are the milestones clearly tied to the financial projections for the project?	Clearly planned projects with realistic targets and timescales - both in terms of planned activities and the timescales of the Green Infrastructure Fund.
	3.	How robust are the applicant's plans for identifying, monitoring, managing and reporting on risk?	Evidence that you have read and understood our risk management guidance and have the ability to implement it and a good understanding of the principles of risk management.
	4.	How well has the applicant identified all of the risks associated with the application?	Evidence that you have made a thorough assessment of the risks associated with your project.
	5.	How well will the applicant evidence compliance with EU requirements and be prepared for audit?	Evidence that you are aware of and understand EU audit and compliance requirements and have the capability to meet them.
Project costs	6.	How well have the project costs been confirmed and justified (e.g. quantity surveyor report, recent similar projects, quotes etc)?	We want to see evidence that your costs are realistic. You could provide quotes as evidence or, you could tell us about recent similar projects or other evidence on which you've based your projections.
Match funding	7.	How close is the applicant to securing match funding by the time funding is awarded?	We need to know that there will be no delays to your project starting due to match funding not being in place.
Legacy	8.	What will the legacy of this project be? If there are any costs associated with	We need to know that you have thought about and

		maintaining this legacy, how will these be covered?	made realistic and achievable plans for what will happen after your project is complete. What will the long-term benefits be and where will they lead you?
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A.2 Impact

Category	Assessment criteria	What are we looking for?
Evidence of need	1. How convincing overall is the evidence provided for the need for the application?	We want you to show us that there is a demonstrable need for your project using relevant and up to date evidence, including reference to relevant policies.
	2. How strong is the evidence provided of strategic support for the application?	Tell us about the support you have secured for your project with local authorities and other organisations representing or advocating the needs of local communities, especially protected characteristics.
	3. How strong is the evidence for demand and support for the work this project will do at community level?	Tell us about any consultations or similar you have carried out with local communities. We would also like to hear about any other dialogue or conversations you have had with grassroots or community groups.
Need for Grant/Gap	4. How well has the application demonstrated the need for the ERDF grant?	Evidence that you have seriously explored and/ or applied for other funding should be provided, or absence of suitable funding sources if relevant
Added value, synergy and complementarity	5. How well has the applicant evidenced added value i.e. additional outputs, increased number of participants, overall improvements to the quality of activity etc.	Evidence of the difference that your project will make and how our funding will allow you to achieve outcomes that wouldn't happen otherwise.
	6. How well does the applicant evidence synergy with competitive funds (e.g. ETC, EAFRD, EMFF, Horizon 2020, SRDP) or other Strategic Interventions /projects/improvements to the project locality e.g. providing new services to disadvantaged individuals to overcome barriers to employment, education or training.	We would like you to tell us about how your project might complement projects funded by other EU initiatives. Also tell us how you will avoid any duplication or double-funding issues.
Innovation	7. How innovative is the application (in a Scottish context)?	We want to fund projects which show a level of innovation in what they plan to do. This could include demonstrating new approaches or ways of achieving outcomes.

Communications, publicity and stakeholder engagement	8.	How well developed are the applicant's plans for communication and publicity regarding their project, its role in the Green Infrastructure Strategic Intervention and ERDF funding?	We need to see evidence that you have clear plans for how you will communicate about and publicise your project and our funding, and that you will follow EU requirements.
	9.	Overall, how strong are the applicant's plans for engaging with communities during the project?	We are looking for projects which have robust and realistic plans for how they will engage and work with local communities on an on-going basis.
Monitoring and evaluation	10.	How robust is the application's framework for reporting the process, outputs and results and impact of the project?	We will look at how well the application reflects the requirements of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and works
	11.	How well will the project's plans for monitoring and evaluation help to tell a compelling story about the achievements of the project and allow lessons to be learned from it?	We will look at how well the application provides the evidence to tell the story of how the investment they've received will provide lasting benefits.

A.3 Outcomes

Outcome		Assessment criteria	Examples of Activities we might fund
Nature, biodiversity and ecosystems	1.	Will the project contribute directly towards the Nature, biodiversity and ecosystems outcome?	Projects which will make a tangible difference in terms of local awareness of conservation issues and values

	2.	How well does the application help people be aware increase people's awareness of the value of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably?	Applications that seek to increase understanding, awareness and ownership of benefits to people from biodiversity and nature.
Environmental regulation, flooding and climate change	3.	Will the project contribute directly to the environmental regulation, flooding and climate change outcome?	Projects which will make a tangible difference to a community's capacity to deal with environmental regulation, flooding and climate change
Community engagement and participation	4.	To what extent has the community had the opportunity to influence, inform or even lead the planning and design of the project so that it delivers what the community wants and needs?	Applications which show clear evidence of community involvement or co-design to demonstrate buy-in and likelihood of maximum benefit.
	5.	How well does the application show commitment to on-going engagement with the local community?	Applications with clear plans for on-going engagement with communities and which have considered ways of responding to and acting upon community feedback.
	6.	To what extent does the application increase opportunities for cultural events and activities?	Environmental art pieces / trails – aiming to provide motivation / stimulation for those using outdoor spaces.
	7.	How well will the application address interpretation of the place and space?	Website, interpretation and communications Guided tours or walks
	8.	How well does the application respect, promote and develop the local culture?	Events and local festivals that provide opportunities to learn about and celebrate the natural heritage, cultural heritage and/or common interests e.g. music.
	9.	How well does the application address anti-social behaviour or exclusion from greenspace?	Improvements to the physical structure of the greenspace that improve its sense of safety. Targeted efforts to encourage groups normally excluded to visit and explore the space and to make return visits.
	10.	How well does the application seek to empower communities?	Activities to increase user confidence in and ownership of greenspace.

	11.	How well does the application integrate and reflect the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of local communities?	Applications that seek to increase and make use of local knowledge of biodiversity, nature and ecosystems.
Increasing place attractiveness and competitiveness	12.	How well have the third sector been engaged in the development of the applications?	Capacity building of local non-environmental organisations to use their greenspace.
	13.	How well does the application maintain or increase job opportunities?	Applications which build in opportunities for job creation and skills development.
	14.	How well will the application increase visitor numbers - both locally and from other communities and from different groups, reflecting the protected characteristics?	Information / activities which promote the new / improved greenspace as a local destination.
	15.	How well does the application increase opportunities for formal and informal outdoor learning?	Applications that seek to increase the use the outdoors for education, learning, skills and training. Applications that increase the use of greenspace by FE institutions, schools and nurseries as part of learning.
	16.	How well does the application create opportunity to engage local communities through increased volunteering and/ or skills development, training or learning through green infrastructure and the natural environment?	Applications which show they have considered and planned for volunteering, training and learning opportunities and how they will be delivered. Provide opportunities for skills training programmes and capacity building relating to the green infrastructure (e.g. planning, maintenance, monitoring and reporting, interpretation, events etc).
Improve health and wellbeing	17.	To what extent does the application increase number of intermediary bodies using greenspace for skills development?	Applications that increase the use by intermediary bodies for skills development using greenspace
	18.	To what extent will the application improve health and well-being by promoting participation and improving the	Outdoor seating areas – aiming to enable families / community groups to spend more time outdoors. Facilities should have cultural relevance to the local community.

		quality of greenspace close to where people live?	Outdoor play areas based on natural materials. Off-road biking skills areas / pump tracks
	19.	Does the application aim to improve mental health through improved access to greenspace?	Health-related installations/interpretation within education / healthcare / workplace settings supporting and encouraging contact with nature and physical activity Proposals that increase the use of greenspace by hospital and health care facility staff and patients
Overall impact	20.	How well does the contribution towards outcomes match with the needs identified?	There should be a compelling link between the need identified and the outcomes and activities and outputs planned.

A.4 Horizontal Themes

		Assessment criteria	What are we looking for?
Environmental sustainability	1.	To what extent does the application consider environmental impact – particularly the ways in which the project contributes to the enhancement or protection of the environment and seeks to minimise negative impacts (such as pollution)? This should include considering local sourcing where appropriate e.g. local public transport and local community transport services	Evidence that the applicant has fully considered the potential impact of their project and has taken steps to minimise any potential negative impacts and has considered the wider impacts of their project, will look to source locally as far as possible and has considered how communities will access their sites.
Social inclusion	2.	Does the application target areas in the most deprived 15% of SIMD and areas that have limited access to good quality greenspaces?	Funding is targeted at areas within the most deprived 15% in Scotland according to SIMD, and areas with identified deficiencies in high quality and accessible greenspace.
	3.	How well does the application outline any potential barriers to access to participation, how these have been identified and how the project intends to overcome these barriers?	We want to see evidence that the applicant has fully considered any barriers that may exist, or may be created by, their project, how they know about these and what they plan to do to minimise their impact.
	4.	To what extent will the project create opportunities for people to meet and interact socially?	We want to hear about any opportunities for social interaction that will be created whether through creation or improvement of the green space, or through plans for events and activities.
	5.	Does the application outline how the project will aim to reduce inequalities between the least advantaged communities and the rest of society?	We want to see projects which have a clear plan of how all communities will benefit from their activities.
Equal Opportunities	6.	To what extent does the application have a particular focus on one or more of the nine protected characteristics? https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights/types-of-discrimination	We would like to see clear evidence that your project directly addresses one or more of the protected characteristics and why.
	7.	To what extent does the application focus on the needs of identified target groups and does the way the greenspace is planned, managed and used support and enable their involvement?	Projects which have a clear plan for helping their target groups, and clear reasons for choosing them. Projects which recognise barriers faced and potential discrimination experienced by people or groups and propose positive action to address these
	8.	How well does the application explain how the project has taken account of, and reflected, the diverse needs of	

		their target group(s) in the development and delivery of all activities?	
	9.	How well does the application outline any potential barriers to access to participation? Consider how they have these been identified, and how will the project overcome these barriers?	Evidence that the applicant has fully considered existing barriers to participation and any that might be created by their project, and has plans in place to overcome them.
	10.	Does the application fully consider how to engage female participants in activities?	Projects which will engage everyone regardless of gender
	11.	Does the project address how to engage disabled and older people?	Evidence that applicants have considered ways of making sure that opportunities provided by their projects will be open to all.
	12.	To what extent does the application involve representatives from different racial or religious groups in the local area, to ensure that project activities help to break down barriers between communities and offer opportunities to reflect local cultures?	Evidence that applicants have involved representatives from different groups who have helped to inform their thinking on ways of breaking down barriers whilst still reflecting local cultures.
	13.	To what extent does the application offer young people opportunities to engage?	Applications which have clearly set out plans to involve and benefit young people the chance to develop skills at different levels.
	14.	How well does the application consider how possible discrimination (including unconscious discrimination) will be addressed? How well will the activity planned, and the way it is to be delivered, contribute to eliminating discrimination and how well have processes been put in place to tackle discrimination if it occurs?	Evidence that applicants have fully considered how possible discrimination may impact on their project and the benefits it will bring and how their project will work towards eliminating discrimination.
	15.	How well does the application not only consider what Equal Opportunities policies, procedures and resources will be in place, but also explain how these will make a positive difference?	We are looking for clear evidence of how existing organisational policies relevant to equalities will be integrated and directly applied during the delivery of your project.

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