

Building Better Opportunities



Guide to delivering European funding

Section three: Getting started

About this guide

This is just one section in a series of fifteen guidance documents that make up the Guide to delivering European funding (the 'Guide'). Taken as a whole, this provides all of the guidelines, tools and templates needed to manage and monitor your project.

The version of the Guide replaces any and all guidance we have previously published in relation to this funding.

For the full contents visit our website [here](#)

How to contact us

- ✓ If you are a **lead organisation** involved in delivering a project, the best way to get in touch is through **your funding officer**.
- ✓ **Other organisations** should email us at esf@biglotteryfund.org.uk

We have a Building Better Opportunities support team in place who can help with understanding European Funding requirements. You should by now have a named contact to contact directly. If you are unsure who this is, please contact your funding officer.

Summary of changes

May 2017 - Lottery logo updated.

March 2017 - Delayed quarterly update, including updated logo and new section 3.10 Risk management added so that ESF Support manual could be archived.

September 2016 - Quarterly update, with use of National Insurance number for participant ID, updated Annex K, new Annex Q and revised annexes in Oct/Nov.

June 2016 - This version of the Guide incorporates appropriate comments gained from the consultation review in April 2016.

Any changes to the Guide will be:

- ✓ communicated on our website and on the inside page of each section

- ✓ emailed to current grant holders and highlighted in our programme e-bulletin.

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3. Getting started

3.1 Before your first payment

There are **eight** things that need to happen before we can pay you the first instalment of the grant.

1. You'll accept the grant agreement.
2. You'll confirm your bank account.
3. We'll complete a grant induction with you.
4. You'll schedule your payments.
5. You'll schedule your targets and project outcomes.
6. You and your partners will sign the partnership agreement.
7. We'll set up your grant. This is likely to include a visit.
8. We'll send written confirmation that you can formally start the project.

3.2 The grant agreement

The first thing you need to do is accept the grant agreement we send you. The grant agreement is made up of:

- ✓ your offer letter
- ✓ the terms and conditions of grant for Building Better Opportunities.

We will send you two copies of these documents. To accept the grant agreement we need at least two people with appropriate authority from your organisation to sign one copy of the letter and to return it to us, with the terms and conditions still attached. Neither the letter nor the terms and conditions must be amended by you in any way. The letter explains who from your organisation has appropriate authority to sign the letter. You keep the other copy for your own records.

The grant agreement starts on the date you sign and return it to us and it lasts until the document retention period ends. We expect this to be by 31 December 2026. This is because projects may be audited at any point up to this date.

3.3 Your bank account

If you have not done so already, you'll need to set up a new bank account for the sole purpose of receiving and administering funding from Building Better Opportunities. This account must bear the legal name of your organisation with 'BBO' in brackets. For example: 'The Spencer Foundation (BBO)'.

Bank details form

Whether you need to set up a new account or not, we'll email you a bank details form, which you'll need to complete and return to us. This allows us to verify your bank account.

3.4 The grant induction

Your funding officer will arrange an induction with you during the first few weeks. This is an opportunity to talk through the process and the guidance we've sent you, so that you can ask any questions and we can clarify anything you're unsure about. This will help to develop the working relationships that will be vital to the success of the project.

3.5 Scheduling payments

We've explained how to develop your payment schedule in **Section four: Payments and monitoring**. You must use the template provided as an annex to that section (**Annex A**).

Your payment schedule is used to map out your expenditure over the lifetime of the project. It'll also tell us how much you need from us for your first payment.

Each quarter, we'll review your actual costs against this forecast. You'll update the schedule throughout your project and we'll use it to record any adjustments to the grant.

3.6 Scheduling targets and project outcomes

We've explained how to develop this schedule in **Section five: Targets and project outcomes**. You must use the template provided as an annex to that section (**Annex E**).

Your target and project outcome schedule ensures that you can realise the benefits of the project during its lifetime. We'll use this schedule to monitor your progress and you'll update it throughout the delivery of the project to reflect any changes.

3.7 Signing the partnership agreement

At stage two, you submitted a draft partnership agreement to us. This is an important document as it formalises the responsibilities and relationships between the different delivery organisations involved in the project.

We may have feedback on your draft partnership agreement and, if so, you'll need to update your agreement to reflect these comments. Our legal department will then need to approve it.

Before you and your partners can sign the partnership agreement, we'll need to check that you have listed all relevant organisations. See **Section seven: Partners and procurement** to find out more.

3.8 Setting up the grant

We need to ensure that you're ready to start the project. Your funding officer will arrange a suitable grant set-up date with you and may request that certain partners or personnel are available on that date. It is likely that the grant set-up will be done through a visit.

Advisers from our BBO Support Team may attend this visit on our request as they'll be able to provide additional advice.

On the next page, we've listed the key areas we will cover as part of your grant set-up.

3.9 Confirming you can start

You'll need to address any concerns identified at the grant set-up. We'll then send you written confirmation that you can start the project and will make your first payment.

Section of this Guide	What we'll cover as part of your grant set-up:
Section one: Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Using our electronic resources. ✓ How changes to guidance will be communicated.
Section two: Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How the funding is constituted. ✓ The stakeholders and relationships involved.
Section four: Payments and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How payments and any adjustments will work. ✓ How you'll report to us each quarter.
Section five: Targets and project outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How targets work. ✓ How we'll monitor your performance using the targets and project outcomes.
Section six: Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Checking eligibility and maintaining a participant file. ✓ Collating and reporting participant information. ✓ Recording category of region. ✓ Identifying participants involved in more than one project.
Section seven: Partners and procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dealing with changes to your partnership. ✓ Managing procurement and notifying us about your plans.
Section eight: Costs and expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evidencing expenditure. ✓ Calculating indirect costs. ✓ Collating and reporting your costs.
Section nine: Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Why publicity is important. ✓ Using the logo on job adverts, websites and materials.
Section ten: Cross-cutting themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How the cross-cutting themes are integrated into the project. ✓ Developing and implementing your action plans.
Section eleven: Evidence and retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How evidence is collected, checked and retained. ✓ How data is stored, protected and retained.
Section twelve: Projects based in London	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completing the Employment Performance Rating (EPR) and how it will be used. ✓ The sustained employment target.

3.10 Risk management

Most common risks to ESF can be controlled when identified at the earliest stage of planning. Risks should be assessed and reviewed regularly, ideally amongst the partnership as a whole (if applicable). Some common ESF management issues that you may want to include in your risk register are:

- Delays in recruiting staff; turnover of key staff (including amongst partners)
- Failure of partner to deliver/ partner withdrawal
- Under-resourcing of admin and data posts
- Nil or inadequate management checks on records and data
- Monitoring systems do not adequately track participants
- Finance systems do not adequately track ESF expenditure
- Failure to identify and rectify errors in calculation of costs
- Inconsistent reporting between partners and poor definition of project objectives and targets
- Failure to follow national procurement regulations
- Failure to follow ESF branding requirements
- Failure to identify and report double-funding or duplication where your BBO grant is funding another project
- Failure to identify and rectify data issues

Please contact BBO ESF Support or your Funding Officer if you are unsure about how such risks might be managed so that appropriate support can be provided.