BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONS – REGIONAL LEVEL PROJECTS

Building Community Cohesion through Social Innovation

1. The PEACE IV Programme

The EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation is a unique Structural Funds programme aimed at reinforcing progress towards a peaceful and stable society in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. It represents the European Union's commitment to supporting the peace process across the region and was initially launched in 1995.

The PEACE IV Programme 2014-2020 represents a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) investment of €229m and will provide support to projects that contribute towards the promotion of greater levels of peace and reconciliation. The Programme will also place a strong emphasis on promoting cross-community relationships and understanding in order to create a more cohesive society.

The core objectives of PEACE IV will be to support actions that will develop and deepen reconciliation between divided communities; increase tolerance and respect, promote increased community cohesion and contact, enhance cross-border cooperation and address the legacy of the past.

2. Summary of Call – Building Community Cohesion through Community Led Social Innovation Project

The PEACE IV Programme is making a call for applications for regional projects under the specific objective:

> **To promote positive relations, characterised by respect, and where cultural diversity is celebrated and people can live, learn and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.**

The output indicator (to be achieved by 2021):

- **Regional level projects** that result in meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact between persons from different communities.

Three indicators have been identified that will indicate progress towards increased good relations and respect:

- An increase in the percentage of people who think relations between Protestants and Catholics are better than they were five years ago from 45% to 52%.
- An increase in the percentage of people who think relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better in five years' time from 40% to 48%.
- An increase in the percentage of people who know quite a bit about the culture of some minority ethnic communities from 30% to 38%.

These result indicators will be monitored from information collected by the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey.

A total value of €1m (ERDF / Accountable Department match) has been allocated to this call. The SEUPB is seeking to award funds to **one project** that will impact on a regional basis i.e. across the entire programme area of Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. This SEUPB would welcome applications from partnerships to enable a regional reach wider than just a one area approach.

The timeframe is as follows:

- Opening Date: 7th September 2020 @ 9am
- Call Workshop Date: 9th September 2020 @10am
- Closing Date: 16th November 2020 @ 3pm
- Steering Committee: June 2021

There has been a significant and sustained reduction in the overall level of violence directly related to the conflict. However, there is evidence of continued high levels of sectarianism and racism. The increasing levels of ethnic diversity alongside relatively high levels of socio-economic deprivation in some areas as well as the immediate and evolving challenges presented by the on-going COVID-19 crisis, present new challenges for achieving greater integration and citizenship within society. Due to the history of the division in Northern

Ireland and the Border Region, some sections of society have not yet developed the capacity to deal positively with diversity and difference.

It is anticipated that the Project will support actions which reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society through the promotion of reconciliation amongst all communities as well as building, improving and sustaining relationships between communities by addressing issues of trust, prejudice and intolerance through activities which address the capacity of communities to develop the social economies / entrepreneurship & innovation.

The project must support communities to develop local solutions to social problems. This will be delivered through the process of community-led social innovation, applying a "Community Building" Theory of Change to create new approaches which tackle the challenges that prevent the development of cohesive communities. This project will focus on community capacity building by stimulating ideas to tackle social problems through to the development of innovative social solutions where they can impact on peace and reconciliation and which can, where relevant, be sustained through a social economy model.   This will act as a means of addressing entrenched social / community cohesion problems and that will help to deliver positive change to our communities and societies.

Outputs should include development of a robust plan to engage in peace and reconciliation activity that demonstrates pre award engagement activity with potential participants/organisations; engaging with a large range of individuals and holding participants meetings; developing and implementing a Pathway/Outreach Programme (including toolkit) with meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact between people from different communities; **producing a lessons learned report documenting the key learning and experiences from the project**; and through a website provide a summary of the project along with case studies associated specifically with the activity funded through the project, an overview of the Pathway Programme and to aid dissemination across the eligible region. Note that planning and delivery of the project may need to effectively adapt to any ongoing public health restrictions across the eligible region.

Community Led Social Innovation
Community led Social Innovation is in effect providing support to the organisations and people who think bigger and think differently about solutions to problems in their

communities. It provides investment for innovative new ideas and the people behind them with the aim of inspiring and supporting creative problem solving by re-imagining processes, services and products — within and across sectors — to make our region better for everyone. This will involve investing in efforts to inspire, equip and connect people.

The principle of community led social innovation is based on encouraging individuals and organisations to think bigger and think differently about what is possible. This involves actively seeking and encouraging new opportunities to work in true collaboration with others to have more impact. Ambition to raise overall quality of life while also closing opportunity and achievement gaps. Providing support to communities and leaders will help progress toward more equitable, sustainable and innovative communities which are driven by the people who live there.

While social entrepreneurship and social enterprise development has been positively impacting peace and development issues for a number of years now, community led social innovation is complementary to and builds on this experience in that it operates in spaces before and during the social enterprise model of delivery. New approaches to community led social innovation are directly entering peace building spaces, heavily influenced by new technology. With more systemic expertise and guidance there is considerable potential to integrate social and technological innovation to build peace, more effectively applying new advances in technology and innovation processes to address some of our challenges.

This approach could help overcome existing challenges by prioritising ethical, culturally sensitive engagement; using social innovation mechanisms, to more clearly deliver positive impacts in conflict environments. Social innovation for peace can be impactful in post conflict economies; by helping to foster inclusive growth; business and virtual peacebuilding; climate and environmentalism; migration and identity; rural and urban issues.

Projects that aim to support community led social innovation should focus on the development of social innovation ecosystems that provide operational support to maximise the success of new processes as well as the products of services created by the community. This could include activities such as support for general administration, financial compliance, skills attainment, marketing to allow ideas, communities and businesses to thrive. Projects that support community led social innovation should focus on "design thinking" and building

capacity in communities and groups to reimagine new and better ways of working and responding to existing and emerging challenges. This may include harnessing digital and ICT technologies to deal with societal challenges and indeed opportunities.

Introducing community led social Innovation within the Programme at this stage allows for potential new interventions, such as processes, products or services to be developed, both short and long term, giving due consideration to how they are innovatively addressing the challenges of peace building, social and economic development rather than just repeating interventions and measures already undertaken within the eligible region.

This Call seeks applications for a project which will support the stimulation and development of self-sustaining communities and cross-community partnerships through the model of community led social innovation that will support and generate new processes, products or services opportunities for social entrepreneurship and social enterprise within the eligible region to support community cohesion. The theory of change which should underpin the project supported should emphasise the importance of ownership and contact at an individual and community level.

The project supported should provide opportunities for sustained, meaningful and purposeful contact between individuals and groups of different backgrounds and where possible on a cross border basis. Through this contact the project supported should result in a reduction in isolation, polarisation, division, prejudice, sectarianism, racism and stereotypes between / among groups. The project supported should also pay particular attention to minority groups and groups who traditionally have been marginalised in society so that opportunities will be created that allow for a greater degree of participation and integration in society.

A number of reports have recently been published which highlight the need for new innovative measures to support community cohesion including the Funding Peace: a report on the funding of Peace and Reconciliation work in Northern Ireland and Ireland 2007-2014[1], and the North Belfast Ethical Investment-EDT North Working Paper on the Social Economy[2] which argues that the social innovation within a Social Economy *'offers a pathway for development, within a materialist understanding of conflict and how segregation can be*

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[1] https://www.corrymeela.org/cmsfiles/resources/FundingPeace/Funding-Peace.pdf
[2] http://nbei.profiletree-dev.tk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/NBEI-EDT-North-Working-paper-Peacebuilding-and-prgramme-impact-on-contested-space.pdf

challenged within an economic context', and the Strategic Framework Documents of each of the five Urban Villages in Belfast and Derry-Londonderry[3].

At the European level there is a range of initiatives relevant to this call. EU strategic action can be traced back as far as 2010 with the Innovation Union Initiative and later the 2013 Social Investment Package. These initiatives recognized that promoting social innovation leads to social cohesion, economic growth and jobs, clearly linking social innovation and social enterprise. Furthermore, the European Commission's Social Business Initiative (SEC (2011)1278) prescribed and operational definition of a "social enterprise" as

"*an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make profit for its owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives. It is managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involves employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities.*"

Also, the **EU Commission (Expert Group)** on **Social Enterprises and the Social Economy Going Forward (2016)[4]**, report by the Commission Expert Group on Social Entrepreneurship (GECES) represents a call for action issued to the European Commission, EU countries and social enterprises organisations. It argues for a European Action Plan for the Social Economy and Social Enterprises, which would provide new impetus to promote an "*enabling environment for social enterprises and the social economy to flourish, building on their core values such as democratic governance, social impact, innovation, profit reinvestment or the central place given to the human in the economy.*"

Finally, at the European level, the European Commission has committed to producing a "*European Action Plan for the Social Economy*" to enhance social innovation in 2021.

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[3] https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/urban-villages-initiative-strategic-frameworks
[4] https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/urban-villages-initiative-strategic-frameworks
[44] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX%3A52018PC0374&from=EN
[4] http://ec.europa.eu/growth/content/social-enterprises-and-social-economy-going-forward-0_en

This call is also in line with the NI Executive's Innovation Strategy 'InnovateNI' which highlights a growing and focused interest in social innovation and a recognition that social innovation is distinct from the social economy. The strategy advocates seizing opportunities to instill a new way of innovative thinking that will embed social innovation in Northern Ireland. This has the potential to enable organisations across all sectors of the economy to bring about systemic change through applying their respective expertise and resources to resolving some of the most intractable social problems.

In Ireland, the National Social Enterprise Policy 2019 – 2022 recognises the importance of the wider social economy and the symbiotic relationship between social innovation and social enterprise in building a more sustainable and inclusive economy. It also emphasises the importance of cross-border collaboration in these areas. It is therefore clear that the social economy as well as social innovation are seen as important drivers, for not only the economy but also for building more sustainable and cohesive communities.

The SEUPB will establish a Consultative Advisory Panel of key stakeholders from across the Programme area to advise on the direction of the Project and to assist with regional sharing of learning. The Advisory Panel will be responsible for ensuring that the impact of the Project is maximised by developing and nurturing a strong change and outcomes focus by the successful project. The successful project will be required to report to SEUPB and to this Advisory Panel. The Advisory Panel will ensure that the project complements envisaged or planned initiatives undertaken within the region by local authorities, government departments and agencies to support communities in relation to social enterprise.

The successful project is expected to be involved in an SEUPB managed Exhibition showcasing regional, national and international best practice in the area of Community Cohesion and the Social Innovation. The costs of this event will be covered directly by SEUPB.

SEUPB will commission an evaluation of the Project, this will be paid for directly by SEUPB.

Delivery Partners

The delivery partner(s) must have the capacity to deliver in all of the targeted areas identified and should also deliver on a regional basis (both in NI/Border Region of Ireland). The

partner(s) must have the necessary experience, both in terms of building community cohesion and also in the implementation of economic development programmes which can result in long term socio-economic outcomes for communities.

The partnership should also have the ability to engage with key stakeholders at a regional/programme level and also with experts and best practice at a European / global level.

This regional project will support actions to facilitate involvement from people from diverse backgrounds.

It is envisaged that this call for applications will result in one project being awarded a letter of offer to deliver the required activities and outputs outlined above and within section 7 of this Call document.

3. Essential information

The call for applications should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Cooperation Programme and associated Citizens' Summary
- The Programme Rules
- Guide for Applicants
- European Commission Guidance for the Simplified Cost Options (including unit costs)
- Output Indicator Guidance

Please consult these documents before completing the application form as they contain essential information to assist you in making the best application possible.

Applicants may also find it useful to consult the 'Impact Assessment Toolkit for Cross Border Cooperation'. This toolkit has been developed by the Centre for Cross Border Studies, as part of an INTERREG IVA funded project and is intended to be a practical guide to assist with planning cross-border projects. A copy of the toolkit can be downloaded from our website: www.seupb.eu

4. Project Selection Criteria

The following selection criteria will be used:

(a) Each operation will have to demonstrate how they contribute to the results and outputs of the themes.

- Particular focus will be given to the direct contribution to peace and reconciliation.

- Projects will have to demonstrate that they are creating opportunities for sustained meaningful and purposeful contact between people and groups of different backgrounds and in so doing contribute to the result and outputs of the call.

- Projects have to demonstrate their essential regional characteristics, including the rationale for regional implementation and regional impact (as opposed to local implementation and local impact). It should be noted that the project is expected to deliver a programme of activity within targeted areas across the eligible region, however, this activity must ultimately lead to a an impact at the regional level, through the sharing of learning and guidance.

- Projects should address strategic and policy issues of relevance to the region and should not be engaged in widespread service delivery at the local level.

(b) Quality of the project design
- Projects will have to demonstrate a direct link between their proposed activities and the proposed impact of the project.
- Particular attention will be given to measures to ensure the inclusion of the marginalised or other target groups.

(c) Quality of the project team, partnership and implementation arrangements;
- Projects will have to demonstrate that the project team have the right skills and experience to lead the project, and that the project structures will be able to deliver on the peace and reconciliation outputs.

(d) Value for money;

(e) Quality of cross community and cross-border co-operation with demonstrable added value;

- It is expected that regional projects should impact on the programme area. Cross border co-operation is necessary through the development of appropriate partnerships and implementation arrangements where these add value to the delivery of the Programme. The project will have to demonstrate how they will effectively ensure participation from all communities in their activities.

(f) Contribution towards sustainable development;

- Projects will be required to consider how their activity can be designed to positively contribute towards this horizontal principle.

(g) Contribution towards equality.

- Projects will be required to consider how their activity can be designed to positively contribute towards this horizontal principle.

5. Eligible Region

The eligible area for the PEACE IV Programme is:

- All of Northern Ireland with the following targeted Urban Villages areas of Belfast and Derry-Londonderry:

  - Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan (North Belfast)
  - Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street (Derry~Londonderry)
  - Colin (West Belfast)
  - EastSide (East Belfast)
  - Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets (South Belfast)

- The Border Region of Ireland (Counties Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo). With at least one of the border counties being targeted.

This is a cross-border Programme and the project approved will be funded on a cross-border basis.

6. What is the theme "Building Positive Relations at a Local level – Regional Level Projects" going to achieve?

Some issues and target groups can be better accommodated through regional level initiatives that transcend local authority boundaries. These regional initiatives will also facilitate cross-border co-operation. The Project should pay particular attention to minority groups and groups who traditionally have been marginalised in society so that opportunities will be created that allow for a greater degree of participation in society.

The Project should support groups particularly impacted by the legacy of the conflict such as victims and survivors and those communities with low social structure and organisation as well as those identifiable groups and networks dealing with specific legacy issues such as young and older people, women, the faith community, those suffering from physical or mental disability arising from the legacy of violence, ex-prisoners, displaced persons and former members of the security forces.

The 12 to 18 month Project should be inclusive in nature and will ensure meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact between people of different backgrounds, and which have the capacity to change attitudes and behaviour. Initiatives should evidence a direct commitment to tackling real and complex issues, such as sectarianism and racism through the promotion and development of social innovation and social enterprises within communities. The project must involve the optimum mix of expertise within the partnership to ensure that the latest innovation, international best practice and knowledge around social innovation, social entrepreneurship and the social economy is shared within the region. Project proposals should have regard to other PEACE IV Projects operating in targeted areas and within targeted groups with a view to avoiding duplication while exploiting opportunities to support, complement or enhance that work.

7. Anticipated Actions

It is anticipated that the Project will fund the following types of actions under this specific objective:

- A project which will reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society through the promotion of reconciliation amongst all communities;

- A project which builds, improves and sustains relationships between communities by addressing issues of trust, prejudice and intolerance through a Project of activity addressing capacity of communities to harness social innovation and to develop the social economy. The activity undertaken must be developed within the context of a clear understanding of European and indeed global trends and developments within social economies / entrepreneurship & innovation.

- A project which helps communities respond positively to the current COVID-19 crisis and adjust to challenges as they emerge in the aftermath, particularly in relation to improving and sustaining tolerance, respect and mutual support. For example, this could be around the following:

    - **Health and well-being**: Dealing with the impact of self-isolation on people and their mental health – elderly people and other vulnerable groups who already suffer isolation will be impacted even worse from this situation, how can we develop innovative responses?

    - **Technology solution**: How can technology be brought to those people who need it and/or don't know how to use it?

    - **Citizen engagement/ Community response**: What lessons can be learned from the Community response to COVID19? How can this be used within other key areas or challenges?

Outputs

The main Outputs that must be delivered include:

- Development of a robust plan to engage in peace and reconciliation activity that conforms to the requirements of the Output Indicator Guidance and demonstrates pre award engagement activity with potential participants/organisations

- Minimum of 500 individuals engaged with 50 participants meeting Output Indicator Guidance requirements and 8 organisations receiving direct support. One Pathway /

Outreach Programme (including toolkit) developed and implemented with meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact between people from different communities;

- Lessons Learned Report documenting the key learning and experiences from the project;

- Website – Providing a summary of the project along with case studies associated specifically with the activity funded through the project, an overview of the Pathway Programme and to aid dissemination across the eligible region.

Required target regions for the Project

The Project, whilst having a regional impact in terms of sharing best practice must target at least one of the areas within the Border Region of Ireland (Counties Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo) and the following places in Northern Ireland – i.e., the Urban Villages areas of Belfast and Derry-Londonderry:[5]

- Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan (North Belfast)
- Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street (Derry~Londonderry)
- Colin (West Belfast)
- EastSide (East Belfast)
- Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets (South Belfast)

It is anticipated that the objectives will be achieved through one single project which will deliver a programme of activity encompassing the following:

1. A cross-community programme of delivery implemented within key targeted geographic locations in Northern Ireland and the border region with a community led social innovative approach to the development of community cohesion through the stimulation of ideas tackling social challenges and the building of capacity within and across communities with regards to social innovation and the social economy where it can support community cohesion.

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[5] https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/urban-villages-initiative-strategic-frameworks

2. The programme should be designed to be outcomes-focused, delivered in a number of key targeted geographic locations identified by SEUPB (some of which are specified below) but also having at its core an ability to share the learning from the Project across the Programme area.

3. This Project must include a number of key features which include:

   i. The development of a programme of activity across each of the mandatory regions selected and other areas identified by the project. The Project should have regional coverage across the programme area;

   ii. The identification and/or placement of *Community Social Innovation Capacity Building Delivery Agents* as part of an outreach Programme within the specified targeted geographic areas and other areas identified by the project. The delivery agents must work within communities to promote and support social innovation practices where there are peace and reconciliation benefits;

   iii. Workshops and Information Seminars to promote Community-led Social Innovation within the targeted communities, with a specific focus on using them as a driver for social enterprise development, community cohesion and peace and reconciliation;

   iv. Consideration of innovative models within communities to stimulate and develop ideas which tackle social challenges, particularly where these challenges can lead to improved good relations between communities;

   v. A 'Pathway' approach should be developed and tested as part of the project. This should encompass a roadmap / toolkit to help with engagement on a cross community basis with people and organisations to bring social innovation ideas to reality. This will contribute to the outcomes focus of the project;

   vi. Engagement activity with local and regional authorities and agencies as part of this process to ensure joined-up delivery and to test the Project effectively.

With reference to the above key features, the successful project must show how it will take into account European and global trends in relation to the development of social innovation and the social economy.

Activities may include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Study Visits[6] – engagement with regional, national and European best practice;
- Professional expertise – development of business plans, utilisation of new technologies and creative approaches to address social, societal or environmental changes
- Advice, training, mentoring and networking opportunities

The Project should have a timeframe of no more than 18 months.

The Project should seek to create a space to test models which stimulate and develop ideas which lead to the creation of new processes, products or services for social enterprises which support a more cohesive society. The fostering of sustained cross community contact around the social innovators and actors within the social economy should ultimately lead to improved good relations and more robust, sustainable communities.

8. Budget and co-financing rate

A total value of €1m (ERDF / Match) is available under this call.

The level of grant aid may also be adjusted to take due account of state aid and/or anticipated future revenue streams. Please consult the Programme rules for further details. Grants and payments may take any of the following forms:

(a) Reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred and paid;
(b) Standard scales of unit costs;
(c) Flat-rate financing, available for overhead costs or salary costs.

The above options may be combined only where each option covers different categories of costs or where they are used for different projects forming a part of an operation or for successive phases of an operation.

For planning purposes applicants are to use an exchange rate of £1 = €1.18.

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[6] European travel must be well justified, particularly from a peace and reconciliation viewpoint

A successful project, where there are cross-border partners, will be issued with a Letter of Offer in Euro. A successful project that has Northern Ireland partner(s) only, may request a Letter of Offer in Sterling.

8.1   Simplified Cost Options (SCO)

In order to simplify the administration of grant aid, the SEUPB would propose to use simplified costs options for the administration of this theme. Simplified costs will be established during the application process in consultation with the successful applicant and in accordance with the European Commission's guidance. It is envisaged that the relevant simplified cost options will include both flat rates and unit costs, as outlined in the Programme Rules.

8.2   Flat Rate

Office and administration costs (overheads) will be funded at a flat rate of 15% of direct salary costs. No justification is required.

8.3   Unit Costs

The use of unit costs, where applicable, is desirable in this area of the programme and, accordingly, applicants are encouraged to present unit costs. Where applicants take this opportunity, unit costs are to be presented and evidenced in accordance with the European Commission's guidance for the preparation on unit costs.

Unit costs must be:

- Fair – based on reality, not excessive or extreme
- Equitable – it does not favour some beneficiaries or projects over others
- Verifiable – determination of flat rates, standard scales of unit costs or lump sums should be based on documentary evidence which can be verified.

Applicants must document as a minimum:

- The description of the calculation method, including key steps of the calculation

- The sources of data used for the analysis and the calculations, including an assessment of the relevance of the data to the project(s), and an assessment of the quality of the data
- The calculation itself to determine the value of the Simplified Cost Option (unit cost).

The Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) specifies that the following may be used in evidence to support Simplified Cost Options:

- 'Statistical' data or other objective information
- The verified historical data of individual beneficiaries
- The application of the usual cost accounting practices of individual beneficiaries.

When providing calculations of unit costs, applicants must provide accounting data over at least three years so as to identify any potential exceptional circumstance which would have affected costs in a specific year as well as the tendencies in the cost amounts.

Where unit costs are presented, applicants will be able to suggest modifications to the overall financial allocations.

9. Application process

A one stage application process will be in place for this call. Full details of the assessment process, including admissibility criteria, is also available in the Guide for Applicants.

You can apply on line through the SEUPB website, for further information please see www.seupb.eu

If you wish to discuss the application with the SEUPB Team please contact siobhan.mcconnell@seupb.eu to arrange a meeting.

FAQ's in relation to the call will also be available on the SEUPB website.

10. Contact Us

For general enquiries about this call please contact the SEUPB on: Tel: + 44 2890 266660

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Special EU Programmes Body

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