

SEMLEP

South East Midlands
Local Enterprise Partnership



European Union
European Structural
and Investment Funds

South East Midlands European Structural Investment Fund 2014-20 – Implementation Plan 2017-20

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Appendix 1: Matching National ESIF Priorities to SEMLEP and NEP ESIF Strategies

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1. Introduction

The South-East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) Implementation Plan 2017-20 sets out the priorities for European Social Fund (ESF) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) spending in the second half of the SEMLEP ESIF Programme, what funding will be available and the timetable for calls.

The ESF and ERDF priorities used in the document are derived from the 2014 – 2020 ESF and ERDF Operational Programmes. See Annex 1 for corresponding SEMLEP/NEP ESIF Priorities.

Following the merger between SEMLEP and NEP (Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership), it was decided that rewriting a combined ESIF strategy was not practical. SEMLEP undertook a refresh of ESF key data sets http://www.semlep.com/modules/downloads/download.php?file_name=624 including the combined former SEMLEP and NEP areas and has produced this implementation plan covering both areas' remaining allocations for the second half of the programme.

The ESF data refresh compares overall LEP statistics to England and explores the data divided into 13 Local Authority areas for trend analysis with greater granularity. An ESF Project Directory has also been produced http://www.semlep.com/modules/downloads/download.php?file_name=648 which details contracted provision from the first half of the ESIF programme.

This Implementation Plan has considered stakeholders' consultations undertaken from May to July 2017 by SEMLEP on the ESF Key Data Refresh and analysis of ESF activity procured in the first half of the programme. The consultation included ESIF Committee members and stakeholders at two events supplemented by an online consultation. Such input was valuable in view of changes to the local labour market and to ensure that ESF provision in the second half of the programme addresses gaps in provision.

No stakeholder consultation has been undertaken for the ERDF Programme as the conditions that underpinned its priorities in the first half of the ESIF Growth Programme have remained broadly unchanged. As with ESF an ERDF Project Directory has also been produced http://www.semlep.com/modules/downloads/download.php?file_name=647 which details contracted provision from the first half of the ESIF programme.

The Implementation Plan does not cover the EAFRD Programme as the funds have now been fully committed.

The second half of the SEMLEP ESIF Growth Programme has over £33m of ESF and ERDF funds left to be committed. This has the potential to make a significant contribution to the delivery of jobs, skills and support for SMEs across the SEMLEP area.

The ESIF resources will contribute to achieving the SEMLEP Strategic Economic Plan vision, review in progress, delivering critical outcomes for individuals and businesses and having an

economic impact over the period up to 2020. Due to Brexit only projects contracted by March 2019 will be underwritten by the Treasury to 2020.

2. Approach to Delivery

SEMLEP has identified a range of strategic programme activities to bring forward using the remaining area's ESIF funding allocation, to

1. deliver targeted impact and sustainable benefit,
2. minimise duplication and maximise added value,
3. and make a significant contribution towards the achievement of the SEMLEP Strategic Economic Plan.

In all our proposed activities, we anticipate cross-cutting benefits of sustainability and the promotion of equality.

To ensure the value of ESIF funds is maximised locally, we plan to ensure that our Programme is open and accessible across the private, public, voluntary and community sectors.

The timetable for calls is largely predicated on Britain's timetable for leaving the EU in 2019 and the Government guarantee for funding to all projects that have a signed Funding Agreement before the UK formally ceases to be an EU member. Given the length of the application process, calls must be launched between October 2017 and January 2018.

In most areas funding is not matched at source, requiring potential applicants to identify their own match funding (primarily cash and/or staff time). ERDF will continue to have a minimum project size of £500k whilst for ESF the approach is to allow a blend of project sizes to ensure maximum flexibility and impact.

For further detail, please contact the SEMLEP on 01234 436100 or visit www.semlep.com/esif

3. ESF Priority Axis 1: Inclusive Labour Markets

Interventions under Priority Axis 1 include Investment Priorities aimed at supporting: the unemployed and economically inactive; young people not in education, employment or training (age 15-24); those in poverty and socially excluded.

Strategic Context:

Since the launch of the ESIF 2014-2020 programme the South-East Midlands area has enjoyed a period of sustained growth. The employment market has improved and job density in several local areas is approximately one job per person of working-age. Current forecasts are for continued improvement in the immediate short term. SEMLEP statistics in most areas and overall match or exceed national averages.

Although the area has a high percentage of working-age population (80%) in employment, there is a need to support more people to access work. At present, specific groups face multiple barriers to accessing or returning to work with limited awareness of emerging employment opportunities. A priority will be to provide services to support moving these individuals into the work place including tailored support packages, where necessary, to address their needs. The consultation process as identified the following target groups. Please refer to the ESF Data Refresh for more in-depth information.

- young people who are **NEET or at risk of becoming NEET** (Not in Education, Employment or Training) including those leaving care with a focus on mental health and wellbeing support. Provision to focus on attitude, character and values as well as task and work readiness. The extremely low rates of both economic activity and employment in 16 – 19 year olds could be attributed to continuing education. However, the rates for both economic activity and employment for those people aged 20 – 24 are seven points below the SEMLEP working age average in both categories [Economically active 73.7% versus SEMLEP's 80.4% and employed 70.3% versus 77.6% SEMLEP average.]
- those with **work limiting illnesses on ESA** (especially those who have been on benefits for 2 years and over). The number of people claiming ESA benefits over 2 years and over 5 years have both increased from 2014 - 2016 despite suggested market improvement in every other statistic of employment and economic activity.
- individuals with **mental health issues** and individuals with learning and physical disabilities. Employment among EA core or work limiting disabled is still 25 points behind the SEMLEP average for those people without disability. Research indicates people with secondary mental health needs are more likely to also suffer long term unemployment. Individual placement and support (IPS) services have been proven to have a major impact on employment rates for this group.
- **ex-offenders** statistics show the number of offenders that reoffend is highest among males under 20 years old. The percentage of convicted offenders with one offence doubles over those with no previous offence among both males and females.
- individuals and families who are **homeless or in temporary accommodation**. The number of homeless children being housed in temporary accommodation rose by more than a third in the last three years, according to official figures. Based on the latest figures from the Department for Communities and Local Government, covering January to March 2017, there was a net increase of 32,650 (37%) since the second quarter of 2014 - an average of 906 extra children every month. Official government figures for England show that there has been a 51% increase in the number of people sleeping rough in the last two years and a rise of 133% since 2010. The ESF data refresh highlighted that SEMLEP outpaces both London and the rest of England by multiples [500% for SEMLEP versus <250% over London and the Rest of England both].
- **carers, lone parents and women returning to the work force** while lone parents and carers contribute to only 2% of SEMLEP benefits claimants, thirty-seven percent of

economically inactive women cite family reasons. Despite many of these not being on benefits, they may still miss out on career opportunities and SEMLEP area is missing a work force contributor.

- **women whose first language is not English**, enabling them to access training at the appropriate level and take up employment opportunities including self-employment. Employment among ethnic women is 20 points below the SEMLEP average for 16 – 64 year-olds on average [56.8% versus 77.6%]
- **over 50's**, addressing the barriers and challenges that long-term unemployed and those who work in declining industries face in this age group. Huge variances [-10 to +20%] between employment rates in different areas for males and females over 50-years old against the SEMLEP average suggest how poorly we understand the issues of older people staying in or re-entering the workforce.
- those affected by **financial exclusion and the impact of benefits reform** on disadvantaged groups; particularly homeless people and those in temporary accommodation, disabled, lone parents and certain ethnic minority groups. Interventions to support personal budgeting and IT skills for those affected by universal credit and in-work poverty.
- **Rural communities** facing challenges accessing basic services including health, education, and training. Lack of public transport is a major issue particularly for young people who are unable to access employment outside their immediate residential area. Several SEMLEP areas, while ranking well in statistics for employment, income and environment, still show almost 20% of their local areas present in the bottom of England's IMD rankings for access to services and 10% rank in the bottom 20% of England for education and training.

As a result of SEMLEP's ESF consultation, the forthcoming ESF calls will provide the opportunity for LEP wide and county-wide projects. Other projects will target local initiatives driven by a specific need, offering intensive support to individuals or specific communities. At the time of writing all ESF project providers will need to secure 50% match as no co-financing bodies have come forward.

Approach to Implementation

Funding for ESF Priority Axis 1 will be drawn from the European Social Fund (ESF) through an open call process with the possibility of opt ins if available.

We will use ESF funding to add value to statutory programmes through innovative interventions; delivering support to overcome barriers to education, training and employment for some of the most disadvantaged residents in the SEMLEP area.

Funds under ESF Priority Axis 1 may be available for large strategic projects across the whole SEMLEP area as well as for smaller targeted initiatives. The minimum project size would be £100,000 with a 50% intervention rate.

Investment Priority 1.1	Access to Employment
2017 Local Priorities	<p>Access to employment will help those who are disadvantaged but still relatively close to the labour market tackle their barriers to work, enter and sustain employment.</p> <p>Activity must demonstrate a person-centred approach to reduce unemployment levels, demonstrate additionality, ultimately promoting and stimulating growth across the South-East Midlands.</p> <p>Activity will particularly support innovative projects that can provide basic training support and employment outcomes for target groups through holistic and targeted interventions.</p> <p>Priority will be given to initiatives that target workforce shortfalls in the sectors health and social care, logistics and construction.</p> <p>Interventions are encouraged that support individuals in rural communities to access training and employment.</p>
Total ESIF Allocation 2014-20	£15,590,726 ESF
Committed	£5,269,629 ESF
To be committed	£10,321,107ESF
Intervention Rate	50%
Contract Start	Before March 2019
Duration	3 years
Geography	Available across SEMLEP
Potential for collaboration with other LEPs	Yes
Route to Market	Open Call/possibly opt-in if available
Number of Awards	Multiple (minimum of 2)
Timing of Call	October 17 & January 18

Investment Priority 1.2	Sustainable integration of young people (15-24 years old)
2017 Local Priorities	<p>This priority focuses on helping young people to enter training and employment. The local priorities for this call are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supporting more young people to enter quality apprenticeships and traineeships across all sectors helping SEMLEP develop its talent pipeline by ensuring that young people are work ready. 2. Pre-NEET and NEET support including those leaving care, lone parents or carers working closely with Local Authorities and schools across the SEMLEP. 3. Pre-NEET support for young people diagnosed with ADHD, Dyslexia and high functioning autistic individuals. Evidence shows that programmes promoting early detection facilitate access to training. 4. Targeted support for young people who are suffering from a disability including deafness or blindness to access training, employment opportunities and supported apprenticeships. 5. Initiatives that map and design outreach to engage with 'unknown or hidden' young people who are currently not registered on any programme. 6. Intervention for youth that are at risk of offending to support them into training or employment. 7. Targeted support for young people who have, or have had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to engage in the apprenticeship programme at the appropriate level
Total ESIF Allocation 2014-20	£4,074,282 ESF
Committed	£1,686,599 ESF
To be committed	£2,387,683ESF
Intervention Rate	50%
Contract Start	Before March 2019
Duration	3 years
Geography	Available across SEMLEP
Potential for collaboration with other LEPs	Yes
Route to Market	Open Call/possibly opt-in if available
Number of Awards	Multiple (minimum of 2)
Timing of Call	October 2017 & January 2018

Investment Priority 1.4	Active Inclusion	
2017 Local Priorities	<p>This priority is to help people who are more distant from the labour market, facing multiple complex barriers to move towards or into employment or progress within work.</p> <p>Activity must demonstrate a targeted, effective and potentially 'tiered' approach to tackling local social inclusion issues. Provision to provide additionality and support to individuals with complex barriers that prevent them from gaining employment. Whilst provision is invited across all target groups the following are considered specific local priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Targeted support for individuals and families who are homeless, in temporary accommodation or sofa surfing. 2. Interventions that support ex-offenders into employment. Provision to include initiatives around gang culture and those with substance abuse issues 3. Support around troubled families, working with parents to help their children access training and employment 4. Innovative initiatives that provide mental wellbeing support to help individuals helping them back into training or employment. This priority also covers the need to support individuals in work. 5. Focused support for ESA claimants particularly for those claimants of 2 years or more. Offering peer-to-peer support for the long-term unemployed. 6. Interventions to support women returners back into training or employment with a particular focus on females from ethnic communities. 	
Total ESIF Allocation 2014-20	£8,306,986 ESF	
Committed	£4,975,260 ESF	
To be committed	£3,331,726 ESF	
Intervention Rate	50%	
Contract Start	Before March 2019	
Duration	3 years	
Geography	Available across SEMLEP	
Potential for collaboration with other LEPs	Yes	
Route to Market	Open Call/possibly Opt-ins if applicable	
Number of Awards	Multiple (minimum of 2)	
Timing of Call	October 17 & January 18	

4. ESF Priority Axis 2: Skills for Growth

Interventions under Priority Axis 2 include Investment Priorities aimed at upskilling the workforce and encouraging SMEs to participate in projects improving the labour market relevance of education and training systems.

Strategic Context

SEMLEP is a high-growth economy with GVA currently standing at some £50bn, up from c.£45bn in 2010. The area includes some highly productive economies; for example, Milton Keynes has the fifth highest GVA per worker of all British cities. Meanwhile, between 2000-2015 SEMLEP's population grew by 16%, from 1.70m to 1.97m while England's population grew by only 11%. This growth is set to continue with the ONS projecting a South-East Midlands' population of 2.42m by 2039, representing a 23% increase from 2015.

The LEP area offers significant opportunities to support a growing enterprise base that can help to drive productivity gains. SEMLEP are revising the Structural Economic Plan and developing a Skills Strategy which will further explore the opportunities and challenges within our area. The 2017 ESF Data Refresh provides further information into the current job market and highlights areas of focus.

SEMLEP's 2015 Business Survey indicates that of businesses with vacancies, 46% experienced difficulty in recruiting staff. This is supported by the UKCES Employer Skills Survey 2015 data showing that the percentage of unfilled vacancies due to skill shortages is increasing (23% in 2015 compared with 16% in 2011).

Details on skilled labour by sector is highlighted in the same document [Table 6.3, page 60] shows on average 27% of businesses surveyed reporting lack of skilled labour within the workforce with Transport, Information and Communication (Logistics) (24%); Manufacturing (28%); Education and Health (20%) and Construction (44%) reporting significant need. Accommodation and Food Services; Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities; Arts, Recreation and Other Services; Agriculture, Mining and Utilities; Wholesale and Retail also report skills gaps within a band of 13 to 31%.

As well as the priority growth sectors identified in the ESIF Strategy 2014 changes in the labour market suggest that SEMLEP should include Health and Social Care as a priority sector. Statistics from NHS Digital, which collates local data, shows the number of vacancies climbed by almost 8,000 compared to the same period in 2016 [BBC News 25/07/17]. More than 86,000 NHS posts were vacant between January 2017 and March 2017, figures for the NHS in England suggest.

With such a dynamic economy some South East Midlands businesses are already reporting difficulties in finding employees with the skills that they need. SEMLEP want to change this by delivering an employer-led approach to skills development, provision and labour market information, producing a talent pipeline which will involve effective and ongoing engagement between businesses and educators, and enable excellent responsiveness to sectoral and technological change. Provision should focus on being proactive through

guidance from primary education through to relevant training and pathways, including technical qualifications and apprenticeships.

Measures of the skills mismatch between those employed, those seeking work and employers can be identified through analysis of SEMLEP's Employer Survey vacancies and recruiting data. The most frequent reason employers state for finding it difficult to fill vacancies is having a low number of applicants with the skills they require. Other common reasons given are not enough people interested in the role, lack of work experience and lack of qualifications. To increase economic activity provision is needed to support vulnerable groups and potential work returnees to overcome employment barriers and by providing lifelong opportunities for up-skilling and re-skilling.

Analysis of the types of skills required shows three types of skills needed by employers across all sectors. Those skills are

- Those specific to a job
- Technical and practical skills
- Advanced IT
- Customer Services

Core competencies, often referred to as 'transferable' or 'soft' skills include:

- Communication
- Confidence
- Initiative
- Planning and Organisational
- Problem Solving
- Resilience
- Teamwork
- Basic IT

Basic skills

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- English

Interventions are sought to support all businesses to adapt to changes in the labour market and enable SME's and public services to maintain a skilled workforce. We need to equip the workforce with the skills that employers need to drive competitiveness and innovation. There is a requirement for a more flexible approach which is sector and employer driven to ensure that it is responsive and supports people to enter and progress in employment. If the

available workforce constricts there will be a need to upskill individuals at all levels with some sectors being more affected by labour market fluctuations, for example

- Health and Social care
- Medical and scientific professionals
- Logistics
- Construction

Any initiative should link with employers to ensure that progression routes are clearly defined. This is particularly relevant to individuals who suffer potential work poverty due to insecure, part-time work and zero-hour contracts.

Initiatives are sought that focus on female participation and progression in the labour market particularly those from ethnic communities. Women from these communities have multiple barriers that reduce their ability to move into employment. Interventions are sought that supports training and provides access routes into work, including self-employment

Approach to Implementation

Funding for Priority 2 will be available through an open call process with the possibility of opt-ins if available.

Funds will be available for large strategic projects across the whole of SEMLEP as well as for smaller targeted initiatives. The minimum project size would be £100,000 with a 50% intervention rate. Projects could focus on a specific target group, sector or concentrate on a geographic area.

Investment Priority 2.1	Enhancing equal access to lifelong learning	
2017 Local Priorities	<p>IP2.1 initiatives focus on improving the skills of individuals to meet their goals and the needs of the local economy, primarily training, advising or supporting individuals in work but at-risk due to skills deficiencies.</p> <p>Individual’s work profiles are changing; people are working longer and more people have ‘portfolio’ careers. There is a need for a lifelong learning approach that enables individuals to change roles and help them address personal competency and employability skills needs.</p> <p>Innovative support is sought to engage with SME’s to promote apprenticeship and training for employees. Tailored provision should provide support for all skill levels and focus on target participants.</p> <p>Interventions are encouraged that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support people at risk of redundancy by offering tailored support to help individuals explore and identify transferrable skills and training needs to move into different areas or sectors of employment. 2. Pre-qualification based outreach initiatives to enable individuals that have low literacy levels to access employment opportunities to include ESOL and language skills to help individuals to be work ready. Special emphasis on carers, lone parents, women returning to work and women from ethnic communities. 3. Link up with SME’s around individual CPDs and career portfolios to identify progression route for employees 4. Champion support for self-employment and skills development for SME owners 5. Support individuals with a disability or mental health issue to access training to assist them to be work ready or progress within work 	
Total ESIF Allocation 2014-20	£17,828,143ESF	
Committed	£10,884,999 ESF	
To be committed	£6,943,144 ESF	
Intervention Rate	50%	
Contract Start	Before March 2019	
Duration	3 years	
Geography	Available across SEMLEP	
Potential for collaboration with other LEPs	Yes	

Route to Market	Open Call/possibly opt ins if available
Number of Awards	Multiple (minimum of 2)
Timing of Call	October 17 & January 18

Investment Priority 2.2	Improving Labour Market Relevance of training and education systems
2017 Local Priorities	<p>IP.2.2 provision should focus on improving the labour market relevance of education and training systems by promoting employer participation and engagement in learning.</p> <p>Interventions are sought to address discrepancies between the skill needs of employers and those held by employees. Developing better links between businesses and education particularly for the identified priority groups.</p> <p>There is a need for training providers to work with employers to align initiatives across all sectors but most urgently in health and social care, construction and logistics.</p> <p>Interventions are sought to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. provide a comprehensive training regime from level 2-3 upwards developing innovative brokerage models focusing on engagement. 2. provide the training and recruitment of apprenticeship assessors at all levels. 3. build capacity for SMEs to help them understand the benefits and opportunities of an apprenticeship programme and the value of upskilling workforce. 4. work with businesses to help them integrate disabled and ex-offenders or those at risk of offending into the workplace utilising specialist organisations to support individuals to settle into new role. 5. assist businesses to understand about welfare and benefit reform and in work poverty to support employees to progress within employment. <p>Whilst all target groups need support priority will be given to projects that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist female participation • Work with businesses to provide initiatives that support employees to progress from part-time work and low paid zero-hour contracts. • Support SME's to support and work with employees to identity mental health issues within workforce to enable them to remain in employment
Total ESIF Allocation 2014-20	£3,919,5519ESF
Committed	£0.00 ESF
To be committed	£3,919,5519ESF
Intervention Rate	50%

Contract Start	Before March 2019
Duration	3 years
Geography	Available across SEMLEP
Potential for collaboration with other LEPs	Yes
Route to Market	Open Call/possibly opt ins if available
Number of Awards	Multiple (minimum of 2)
Timing of Call	October 17 & January 18
-	

5. ERDF Priority Axis 1_ Promoting Research and Innovation

Strategic Context and Approach to Implementation

The South East Midlands is a £50bn economy that occupies a key strategic position at the nexus of Oxford, Cambridge, London and Birmingham. It has undergone rapid growth in recent years. The number of jobs and enterprises in the area has increased by nearly 8% and 20% respectively since 2010¹, alongside the establishment of a significant cluster of high-performance technology innovation assets and expertise. SEMLEP plays an important role in England's housing growth, providing over 6% of the country's new homes in 2016², relative to 3.6% of the country's population³. It is an excellent place in which to set up a business: not only has it had a higher than national business birth rate in recent years⁴; it has also outperformed national business survival rates [Strategic Plan 2017].

Priority Axis 1 aims to fully exploit the SEM's knowledge base in higher education institutes, research institutes and private sector firms by providing the right environment and conditions for business to locate, cluster and innovate through knowledge and technology transfer.

This will include interventions to support smart specialisation by targeting R&D and innovation support in our known growth sectors to encourage the development of innovative new technologies. Intervention will also strengthen and maximise the capabilities of higher education (and further education) to support businesses (including Voluntary and Community, Social Enterprise and rural enterprises) through knowledge transfer and commercialisation of research.

The funding for Priority Axis 1 will be made available through an open call with a project minimum size of £500k ERDF.

Activities

Priority Axis 1	Promoting Research and Innovation
	Activities to exploit the strengths and opportunities within the existing Research & Development (R&D) and science base of the SEM economy – especially the area's HE sector that can be adopted by local firms across the area to facilitate their growth in new and emerging markets. The Programme will also involve working with SMEs across all sectors to improve their ability to innovate and exploit knowledge, new and emerging technologies and new products and business processes.
Total ESIF Allocation 2014-20	£12,397,830 ERDF
Committed	£6,485,000
To be committed	£5,912,830
Intervention Rate	Max 50%
Call date	November 2017

¹ 2010-2015 period; total employment and VAT and PAYE-registered enterprises. [Sources: BRES & IDBR statistics].

² DCLG quarterly house-building statistics.

³ ONS LA population estimates; 2015 figure.

⁴ The business birth rate for the area increased from 10% in 2010 to 15% in 2015. [Source: IDBR statistics].

Duration (<i>no more than 3 years</i>)	3 years
Geography	Available across SEMLEP
Potential for collaboration with other LEPs	Yes
Route to Market	Open Call

6. Priority Axis 2: Enhancing Access to, and use and quality of, information communication and technology

The Digital Technology and Demand Stimulation Programme aims to ensure that local businesses and communities can benefit from digital technological changes and market opportunities. A key focus of the programme will be on demand stimulation and the exploitation of new and emerging digital technologies rather than investment in the 'hard-wiring' to connect communities to broadband infrastructure.

Support delivered under Priority 2 will include pre-business start-up, start-up and support existing businesses, encourage and support exporting, and stimulate growth and business opportunities for SEM companies.

Priority Axis 2	Enhancing Access to, and use and quality of, information communication and technology
	This Programme Activities will include: business specific ICT support and advice, business support events, education, information and general awareness-raising activity; stimulating the demand for new (or improved) services, processes and products; business engagement activities to help create business champions.
Total ESIF Allocation 2014-20	£4,257,716 ERDF
Committed	£2,170,438 ERDF
To be committed	£1,000,000
Intervention Rate	Max 50%
Duration (no more than 3 years)	3 years
Geography	Available across SEMLEP
Potential for collaboration with other LEPs	Yes
Route to Market	Open Call
Timing of the Call	November 2017

7. Priority Axis 3: Enhancing the Competitiveness of SMEs

Strategic Context and Approach to Implementation

The South East Midlands is a £50bn economy that occupies a key strategic position at the nexus of Oxford, Cambridge, London and Birmingham. It has undergone rapid growth in recent years. The number of jobs and enterprises in the area has increased by nearly 8% and 20% respectively since 2010, alongside the establishment of a significant cluster of high-performance technology innovation assets and expertise. SEMLEP plays an important role in England's housing growth, providing over 6% of the country's new homes in 2016, relative to 3.6% of the country's population .

SEMLEP offers significant opportunities to support a growing enterprise base that can help to drive productivity gains. Effective business support and supply and demand side measures which can improve business productivity are important to create new jobs. Priority Axis 3 activities aim to support entrepreneurship, business development, targeted inward investment and fund financial initiatives to help improve competitiveness and especially in high value target 'showcase' sectors.

Activities

Priority Axis 3	Enhancing SMEs Competitiveness
£1,982, 326 ERDF	Providing businesses with access to high quality business premises including enterprise or incubation centres, facilities and services, and move-on accommodation. Activity is likely to focus on the retrofit / refurbishment of existing business premises, including those in town centres. Funding could be used for a variety of purposes, such as remedial work, service connection and other infrastructure and site access.
	A tailored business support by experienced advisors (including pre-start-up and start-up programmes) to stimulate the creation of new businesses, including knowledge based businesses and social enterprises (for example a focus on young people developing new businesses in Social Enterprise environment).
	A specialist business growth support service providing access to a tailored and co-ordinated package of diagnostic, advisory, coaching and mentoring services to accelerate the creation and growth of sustainable ventures.
Total ESIF Allocation 2014-20	£27,449,003 ERDF
Committed	£22,316,657 ERDF
Call Value	£5,132,346 ERDF
Intervention Rate	Max 50%
Contract Start	Before March 2019
Duration (<i>no more than 3 years</i>)	3 years
Geography	Available across SEMLEP
Potential for collaboration with other LEPs	Yes
Route to Market	Open Call
Timing of Call	November 2017

8. Priority Axis 4: Developing a Low Carbon Economy

Strategic Context and Approach to Implementation

A key objective of Priority Axis 4 is to build the market in low carbon environmental goods and services, non-domestic sector deployment of low carbon technologies, whole place low carbon solutions and low carbon innovation.

The focus of this priority is therefore to help build the market in low carbon environmental goods and services, non-domestic sector deployment of low carbon technologies, whole place low carbon solutions and low carbon innovation.

This priority aims to embed low carbon technologies and promote eco-efficiencies across all business growth activities, and promote the advantages of climate resilience, adaptation technologies, and energy efficiency. This priority will also support the development of the renewable energy supply chains, low carbon social enterprises and businesses to improve environmental performance and resource efficiency.

Activities under this Priority Axis will also support Social Housing Retrofit to support energy conservation and generation in existing social housing. It will seek to harness the best national, regional and local expertise and experience and delivering the best economic and carbon reduction outcomes.

Funding for Priority Axis 4 will be made available under an open call process.

Activities

Priority Axis 4	Developing a Low Carbon Economy	
£3,830,026 ERDF	The Programme aims to promote greater energy efficiency through a combination of business reviews, practical advice, awareness-raising activities, tailored on-site support, to SMEs looking to reduce their energy costs, leading to increased productivity, and competitiveness and reputational gains. The Social Housing Retrofit programme aims to support energy conservation and generation in existing social housing. For example, the programme could support the adoption of domestic energy efficiency and low carbon construction techniques, including ultra-low carbon exemplar demonstrator buildings Adaptations need to be above such standard energy efficiency measures as double glazing or loft lagging.	
Total ESIF Allocation 2014-20	£13,134,186ERDF	
Committed	£9,304,160 ERDF	
Call Value	£3,830,026 ERDF	
Intervention Rate	Max 50%	
Contract Start	Before March 2019	
Duration (<i>no more than 3 years</i>)	3 years	
Geography	Available across SEMLEP	
Potential for collaboration with other LEPs	Yes	
Route to Market	Open Call	
Timing of Call	November 2017	

Appendix 1 - Matching National ESIF Priorities to SEMLEP's ESIF Strategy

ESF Operational Programme Investment Priorities (IP)	SEMLEP/NEP Priorities
IP 1.1 Access to Employment	5.2 Basic Skills and Employment Programme/Sustainable and equitable growth
IP 1.2 Sustainable Integration of Young People	5.2 Basic Skills and Employment Programme/Sustainable and equitable growth
IP 1.4 Active Inclusion	6 .1 Social Inclusion Programme/Sustainable and equitable growth
IP 1.5 Community Led Local Development	6.2 Community Led Local Development
IP 2.1 Enhancing Equal Access to Lifelong Learning	5.1 High Level Skills for Key Sectors/Responsive and adaptable workforce
IP 2.2 Improving the labour market relevance of educational and training systems	2.2 Stimulating Enterprise & enhancing competitiveness of SMEs in target sectors/ Responsive and adaptable workforce
ERDF Operational Programme Priorities Axis (PA)	SEMLEP/NEP Priorities
PA1 Promoting Research and Innovation	1.1 Strengthening and exploiting SEM's innovation and knowledge base/Innovation
PA2 Enhancing Access to, and use and quality of, ICT	1.2 Digital technology & demand stimulation programme/Driving SME competitiveness
PA3 SMEs Competitiveness	2 Stimulating enterprise and enhancing competitiveness of SMEs in target sectors and markets/Driving SME competitiveness
PA4 Supporting the shift to a Low Carbon Economy in all sectors	1.3 Low Carbon and Technology Innovation Support Programme

Appendix E: ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BIG Lottery Funding

BIS Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

CLLD Community led local development

DCLG Department of Communities and Local Government

DEFRA Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

DfE Department for Education

DWP Department for Work and Pensions

EAFRD European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

EC European Commission

EFA Education Funding Agency

EMFF European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

ERASMUS European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students

ERDF European Regional Development Fund

ESA Employment and Support Allowance

ESF European Social Fund

ESIF European Structural and Investment Funds

ESOL English for speakers of other languages

EU European Union

EURES European Employment Service

FE Further education

FSB Federation of Small Businesses

FUSE Further Education Colleges in the South East Midlands

GDP Gross Domestic Product

HE Higher education

ICT Information and communications technology

IP Investment priority

ISCED International Standard Classification of Education

JSA Jobseeker's Allowance

JCP Jobcentre Plus

LAG Local Action Group

LEADER Links between the rural economy and development actions

LEP Local Enterprise Partnership

LNP Local Nature Partnership

PMC Programme Monitoring Committee

MoJ Ministry of Justice

MoU Memorandum of Understanding
NEA National Enterprise Allowance
NEET Not in education, employment or training
NEP Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership
NOMS National Offender Management Service
NUTS Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEM Original Equipment Manufacturer
ONS Office for National Statistics
SEMLEP South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership
SEMU South East Midlands Universities Group
SEP Strategic Economic Plan
SFA Skills Funding Agency
SME Small and medium sized enterprises
STEM Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
TA Technical Assistance
TO Thematic objective
VCSE Voluntary, community and social enterprise sector
YEI Youth Employment Initiative