



# **Innovation and Resilience Fund (IRF)**

## **IRF Panel - Terms of Reference**

### **1.0 Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of the IRF Panel is to evaluate IRF applications; deciding which Policy compliant applications are to be awarded a grant and which are to be rejected. This panel will supersede the ARG Panel, continuing with the same cross-party allocation of panel members and the same structure of meetings.

1.2 The purpose of this document is to support panel members in clarifying relevant roles and responsibilities for this scheme.

### **2.0 Panel Meetings**

2.1 Panel meetings will take place once per month, or at a more regular frequency determined by the level of applications received to the IRF. Panel meetings will begin from the point at which the first full bid application is received and scored by the IRF case officers. Panel meetings will continue to take place while applications continue to be received and until the scheme is closed. Meetings will be postponed if there are no applications that require evaluating in any 4 week period.

2.2 Prior to each panel meeting, IRF case officers will prepare a report to panel members outlining the core details of each application, along with how the submission has been considered against a set of agreed IRF criteria (set out in the Policy). Reports to panel will include the applicant name, the main elements of the proposed scheme, the amount of project funding requested and the application score. Full bid application forms will be appended to the report.

### **3.0 Evaluating Applications**

3.1 Funds allocated to the IRF scheme will only be spent in cases where the IRF Panel has both reviewed and approved that spend. No IRF grant award will be offered without this approval.

3.2 Only applications that are channelled through the recognised application route, as outlined in the Policy, can be presented to the IRF Panel and evaluated. Each full application must have

been preceded by an initial Expression of Interest via EDDC's web form. A flowchart of the application process is available in Appendix 1 of this document.

3.2 All new and returning applications presented to the IRF Panel must be scored by IRF case officers before being presented to and considered by the IRF Panel, to ensure the application is consistent with IRF Policy and the degree to which it meets the fund objectives.

3.3 The IRF Panel can choose to request additional information from the applicant before choosing to award or reject the application. In this instance, the applicant will be required to amend their full bid application which will be re-scored by the IRF case officers and re-evaluated by the IRF Panel at a subsequent panel meeting.

3.4 Each IRF application presented to the IRF Panel will be evaluated individually. Exemptions to this can be made for particularly straightforward applications that score very highly against the agreed fund criteria (60% of available points or above) and are seeking project funding of less than £10,000. In such instances, these applications will be batched into a 'group decision', where a shortened report is provided, detailing the headline information only. If Panel members are content that all such batched submissions are Policy compliant and with a high likelihood of successful delivery, they will be invited to approve or reject all the applications in the batch without making an individual decision on each individual application. At any point, an IRF Panel member can request an application within a batch to be individually evaluated by the panel. To allow officers time to compile a requested report, such requests should be made 24 hours prior to that panel meeting.

3.5 All applications which score below 20% of available points or below will not be presented to the IRF Panel for evaluation.

# Appendix 1

## IR Fund Application Process Route

