

Screening stage Equality Impact Assessment

1. Name of the strategy, policy, programme or project being assessed.

Business Expertise: Coaching for High Growth

2. Summarise the aims, objectives and purpose of the proposal, including desired outcomes.

The Convergence Programme’s overriding objective is to “Establish the momentum for transforming the economy to a high value added economy where knowledge, environment and quality of life underpin sustainable economic growth”.

Within Priority Axis 2: Enterprise & Innovation, it is acknowledged that the productivity of businesses in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is significantly below both regional and national averages. The economy is also dominated by micro-businesses. The evidence suggests that to address these weaknesses, there is a need to diversify the business base and address the constraints that are acting as barriers to growth. Within the existing business stock one of the main barriers to growth is accessing external expertise.

The aim of the programme envisaged in this proposal is to increase the stock of strongly growing SMEs in Cornwall through the provision, on a demand-led basis, of intensive high growth performance coaching and assistance. It should be underlined that this high growth coaching is not just for those companies that are technically innovative or focused only on bringing a new idea to market.

One of the project’s strengths is that it is ‘sector blind’ and responsive to individual business circumstances. It will seek to identify where high growth potential exists regardless of the sector (with the exception of the ERDF ineligible sectors) and fits with the stated aim within Priority 2 which focuses “efforts on improving productivity across the business base, not solely on elite groups and narrow sectors.” It will contribute directly to the Convergence Programme’s objectives of:

- **Transforming the economy to a more knowledge based, high value added economy with a broader range of sectors, and a reduced dependence on low paid jobs;**
- **Increasing the range and quality of employment opportunities available to the community.**

And indirectly, as the coaching activities will be designed to help businesses to increase their growth, transforming the economy and creating better employment opportunities towards the third objective of:

- **Managing economic growth in a sustainable manner.**

3. Who should benefit from the proposal, and in what way?

The primary beneficiaries will be established businesses with unrealised high growth and high GVA potential. The effect will be to increase their productivity and to increase the stock of sustainable high growth SMEs with a consequent increase in the number of well paid jobs in Cornwall.

4. Using the known evidence and considering our duties as a public body to take a proactive approach to:

- Tackle disadvantage and promote equality of opportunity
- Eliminate discrimination and harassment
- Promote good community relations between different racial groups
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation of disabled people and other under-represented groups in civic and community life
- Consider more favourable treatment of disabled people
- Protect and promote human rights

Please fill in the table below:

	Is there any potential for differential impact?	Could this lead to adverse impact and if so what?	Are there opportunities for positive impact or to promote equality of opportunity?	Can any adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason	Please detail what measures or changes you will put in place to remedy any identified adverse impact
All diversity strands generally	The focus of the programme is high growth potential businesses. It is designed to be sector blind and, by implication, there should be no differential impact with regard to the	It is envisaged that there will be no adverse impacts and it is important to the success of the project that the programme is indeed blind to all distinctions save high growth potential.	This programme is designed to be demand led. It is our objective to provide equality of opportunity and our selection criteria will be based only on the growth potential of each business. Research has shown that diversity in the workforce leads to higher growth than	No.	We will routinely monitor (where sensitivity allows) the outcome of the programme in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age - Caring Status - Disability - Gender - Race - Religion - Sexual orientation <p>In the event that there is any evidence of adverse impacts, the necessary corrective action will be taken.</p>

	diversity strands		a mono culture, so this project will seek to promote diversity in its client businesses.		
Age	All ages may ne working in high growth buiensses and all will be supported.	No.	n/a	No	n/a
Caring Status	Carers are often tied to specific locations.	Yes – Carers may not be able to take part in routine business hours activities.	Yes – ensure that carers are catered for in the project service offer.	No	The project will a accommodate the specific needs of carers.
Disability	There are a wide range of disabilities, some of which may tie the disabled to specific locations and types of work.	Yes – Some disabilities may limit the disabled ability to take part in routine business hours activities.	Yes – ensure that carers are catered for in the project service offer.	No	The project will a accommodate the specific needs of the disabled.
Gender	There may be cultural divides that	Possibly – There are generarly less female owners and senior	Yes – by encouraging growth through	No	The project will work specifically with Women’s groups to encourage female owners and

	need to be overcome.	level managers than male.	workforce diversity		managers to use the service's resources.
Race	There may be cultural divides that need to be overcome.	Not unless there is racial discrimination amongst the client base.	Yes – by encouraging growth through workforce diversity	No	All SQW Group companies and the project team itself have an ethnically diverse workforce which will ensure robust support for racial diversity in its client businesses.
Religion or belief	There may be cultural divides that need to be overcome.	Not unless there is religious discrimination amongst the client base – which we have never observed in previous projects.	Yes – by encouraging growth through workforce diversity	No	We will ensure that religious prejudices do not become an issue amongst our client base.
Sexual Orientation	There may be cultural divides that need to be overcome.	No.	n/a	No	n/a

5. List the evidence sources used in this screening assessment and list any evidence gaps which would affect your ability to identify/mitigate adverse impacts.

In addition to the ongoing project monitoring of equality and diversity issues we will routinely undertake client satisfaction surveys which will include questions designed to probe our performance in relation to Equality. As the project proceeds the results of this survey will be used to inform management and to help fine tune our performance.

6 Based on this assessment set out the rationale for deciding whether or not to proceed to a full impact assessment.

A full impact assessment is not required.

7. If not proceeding to a full impact assessment please detail any actions that will be taken as a result of identifying minor areas of concern during this screening process.

Mitigating actions are listed in the table in Section 4 above.

EqlA screening completed by:

Name

Job Title

Signature

Date

Director/Head of sign off

Name

Job title and Directorate

Signature

Date

