

JNCC took on the UK LIFE National Contact Point from 01 January 2016 and these presentations/documents are from events under the previous LIFE NCP, Beta Technology. For further information on UK LIFE please see the dedicated webpages at: jncc.defra.gov.uk/UKLIFE

Lessons learnt from previous LIFE proposals - How not to fail at LIFE

UK LIFE Info Day
9th November 2015





- This presentation presents an analysis of selected LIFE proposals evaluated during the period 2012 to 2014 from UK applicants
- Analysis is grouped by evaluation headings, not by sections of the proposal (refer to the evaluation guidelines for more information on the evaluation process itself)
- Key aspects of good practice are indicated by an evaluators “LIKE”



Please note – this is a guide only and success is based on addressing ALL evaluation criteria to a high standard



- Always follow the rules to the letter, this presentation only aims to demonstrate common pitfalls for applicants
- Always “State the Obvious” – evaluators don’t and won’t make assumptions
- Team work – writers, editors, reviewers and a mock evaluation
- Three C’s rule – make sure your proposal is:

Clear
Consistent
Coherent

1. Technical coherence and quality



Positives:

- Well described pre-operational context
- Precise baseline for the project is required (where are we starting from)
- There is a **clear and logical** link between the environmental threats and problems, objectives, actions and expected results that are fully **quantified**



Negatives:

- Description too generic and not quantified
- No baseline data
- Target audience and stakeholders not clearly defined
- Maps missing



Positives:

- Results are **realistic, well described** and **quantified** 
- Progress indicators provided – easy to assess how progress will be monitored

Negatives:

- Lack of baseline data makes it difficult to see how progress will be monitored and impact achieved
- Monitoring methods are well defined, but not linked to the results (lack of coherence) or vice versa
- Expected results are vague and not quantified



Positives:

- Partnership is **appropriate**, **competent** and **coherent** to meet the objectives and actions
- An advisory board of key stakeholders to oversee progress and provide guidance (detail who and how many, letters of support) 
- Organisation chart shows management structure and there are clear chains of command

Negatives:

- Management not sufficiently described so not possible to assess if it is effective / well organised
- Management overstaffed / over resourced or vice versa



Positives:

- Commitment of own resources and intent to apply for future funding
- Strategy for dissemination beyond duration of the project (e.g. Website available for 5 years after end of project)



Negatives:

- No evidence project will be efficient in delivering results in the long term



Positives:

- Dissemination addresses the **right audience** which is **well described** and **quantified**
- Early consultation with stakeholders is positive (at proposal stage, including letters of support) 
- Well designed activities which go beyond the obligatory requirements
- Appropriate costs are assigned to dissemination

Negatives:

- Proposal does not meet the obligatory requirements
- Networking with LIFE projects – either not included or specific projects have not been identified

2. Financial coherence and quality



Positives:

- Beneficiaries provide an adequate financial contribution
- Financial information is **consistent** throughout the proposal and the budget is **balanced** (between cost categories)
- Budget is justified and considered to be good value for money
- Management costs kept to a minimum



Negatives:

- Costs are not duly described and justified therefore their eligibility cannot be assessed
- Overall financial coherence and quality is low
- Budget not balanced
- The budget is too high given the ambitions of the project



Positives:

- The proposal clearly explains why **no other financial instruments are appropriate** for the project
- The proposal has considered other funding for the future



Negatives:

- Does not show optimal use of EU funding, other sources of funding haven't been considered in preparing the proposal
- Proposal fails to identify other funding sources that could make the project results sustainable



Positives:

- Costs are deemed as reasonable to meet the objectives of the project and national conditions
- Project management costs are reasonable
- Procurement procedures are seen as appropriate



Negatives:

- 'Other' costs are not described, detailed or justified (could also apply to other cost categories – travel and subsistence was a common example as well)
- Website costs too high
- Project management costs too high
- Personnel costs are not sufficient for the project to achieve its impact
- Personnel day rates not in line with national conditions

Co-financing, beneficiaries, 2% rule and external assistance



Positives:

- Beneficiaries contribution is adequate 
- External assistance costs are high but are well described and justified by the applicant

Negatives:

- Co-financing rate not justified according to the rules
- 2% rule not respected

3. EU added value: extent and quality of the contribution to the specific objectives of the priority areas of the LIFE sub-programme



Positives:

- The project contributes to the **implementation of appropriate directives** e.g. Water Framework Directive, Habitats Directive
- The project is clearly of high European importance (due to the number of strategies and directives it addresses)
- The proposal properly targets the LIFE thematic priority



Negatives:

- Project is not expected to generate findings that are widely applicable as it does not show adequate EU added value
- The project is not expected to provide a significant contribution to the environmental problem targeted
- The proposal does not describe or discuss and specific related European policies / legislation

3. EU added value: contribution to the project topics



Positives:

- Project fully complies with the priority project area
- The project has **innovative elements**
- The project has the potential to generate important findings and demonstrate a new governance model



Negatives:

- Project does not comply with the topic
- The proposal does not show anything new / innovative
- Levels of demonstration are insufficient / too low
- Similar projects have already been funded by LIFE

5. EU added value: multipurpose, synergies and integration



Positives:

- Project has synergy with the objectives of the relevant directives 
- Project has synergy with variety of EU policies
- The project aims at integrating specific environmental objectives into other policy areas

Negatives:

- Project does not take up results from other framework programmes
- Project fails to integrate specific environmental objectives into other policy areas
- Socio-economic effects of the project are overstated

6. EU added value: replicability and transferability



Positives:

- Proposal includes actions that target replication and transfer of results during and **after** implementation
- Transferability potential is relevant across many areas of Europe



Negatives:

- Proposed actions are insufficient to ensure proper replication and transfer of results
- Deliverables are designed with a local focus and its uncertain to see how they can be replicated elsewhere
- Project has limited value in terms of generating findings relevant and replicable in other Member States

7. EU added value: transnational, green procurement and uptake



Positives:

- Applicant provides a **detailed** description of means to support the implementation of green procurement
- The project has transnational aspects and intends to draw on related results of other EU funded projects



Negatives:

- The proposal does not foresee the uptake of results from Horizon 2020 or framework programmes
- The project would only be implemented in the UK and it does not involve a transnational element or scope beyond the ordinary
- Green procurement not mentioned / mentioned in a limited manner



- Make the evaluator want to fund your project, don't give them any reasons not to
- Address all areas with equal importance
- Write clearly and concisely – balanced with sufficient detail to justify your actions and costs
- Ask a colleague to undertake a mock evaluation

Read the Guide for Evaluation

