

## People Impact Assessment

People impact assessment is a tool to help you identify the impact HIE's activities have on people. Taking this into account in the early stages of developing an initiative will help you improve its reach and effectiveness.

An assessment can be carried out on anything we do: developing or reviewing a policy, programme or regional strategy. It can be applied to processes or approaches to our work, such as account management or employee relations. Terms used such as proposal, policy or programme are interchangeable and intended to describe the activity you are assessing.

This form guides you through 3 stages of assessment, and is also set out in the associated flowchart:

- Section A : screens out policies or projects which are not relevant to equality
- Section B : helps you understand the nature and significance of the proposal's impact on people
- Section C : identifies action you will take as a result of that knowledge

## Identifying the proposal you are assessing

<b>Title of the policy, programme etc. being assessed</b>	Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20	
<b>Brief summary of the policy, project being assessed</b>	The Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 comprises a range of interventions to raise ambition and develop the skills and capability of entrepreneurs within the HIE region to accelerate the growth of our businesses and social enterprises.	
<b>Type of activity:</b> please tick as appropriate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> at HIE's own hand <input type="checkbox"/> third party intervention <input type="checkbox"/> partnership activity	
<b>Is your proposal:</b> please tick as appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> an existing policy, project etc now being reviewed
<b>Group or Area Team leading the proposal</b>	Sectors, Innovation and Programmes	
<b>Name and role of person leading the assessment</b>	Louise MacDonald, Senior Development Manager - Entrepreneurship	



## Section A – screening for relevance to equality

All activities we carry out should be screened to identify whether they are relevant to equality because of the impact they are likely to have on particular groups of people. This is not just to avoid discrimination but also to identify ways in which we can maximise the positive impact on people of our functions.

### Question 1

The activities listed below have already been identified as being relevant for equality. Please tick the relevant option(s) if your proposal is likely to:-

**a) contribute to achieving one or more of HIE's equality outcomes 2013-17:**

- ☐ helping young people (aged 16-24) move into suitable employment
- ☒ increasing the number of women in leadership roles in business / social enterprise
- ☐ promoting inclusive working practices in HIE which recognise the implications for employees of dispersed work locations in relation to the protected characteristics
- ☐ increasing public understanding of / confidence in reporting hate incidents e.g. racism

**b) contribute to any of the three aims of the General Equality Duty**

- ☐ eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment
- ☒ advancing equality of opportunity:-
  - by removing or minimising disadvantage for a group(s) of people
  - by meeting the needs of particular groups which are different from the needs of others
  - by encouraging participation in public life for a group(s) of people
- ☐ fostering good relations:-
  - by tackling prejudice
  - by promoting understanding between groups of people

**c) ☒ use EU funding. Assessment mandatory for European Structural Fund Programmes**

**d) ☐ address known areas of inequality** e.g. gender pay gap, youth out-migration, under-employment of EU Accession Country nationals, occupational segregation, in-work poverty

**e) ☐ affect HIE budget allocation and impact differently on some groups of people in relation to the "protected characteristics"**

**f) ☐ affect key HIE employment activity e.g. recruitment, pay or workforce development**

If you have ticked any of the options a) to f) above proceed now to Section B. You do not need to sign Section A as you will sign off the assessment document at the end.

If you have not ticked any of the options a) to f) please go to question 2.

### Question 2

**Since your proposal does not contribute to any of the above you have indicated that your proposal is not relevant to equality.**

For example this might be the case where:-

March 2016



- your proposal is unlikely to impact on people; or
- it will impact on people but it will not impact in different ways on specific groups of people such as younger or older people, men or women etc.
- there is no or little opportunity to advance equality through its delivery
- everyone affected by the proposal (men or women, or younger or older people) is likely to experience the same outcome, regardless of HIE's influence

Please outline below why you consider your project, policy etc not to be relevant to equality.

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### Signing off the assessment

Please include in relevant project or policy approval papers:-

- a statement to confirm that the proposal has been screened and that is not relevant to equality
- your justification for this decision, as outlined in question 2 above
- if your proposal includes procurement activity above OJEU threshold levels you must include a statement to confirm that there is no need to consider award or contract performance criteria linked to equality

You should now sign off Section A of the assessment. Assessment of your proposal ends at this stage.

**This document must be retained with your policy or project papers. Screening documentation is subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 1998.**

To be signed where Question 2 above has been completed.

Name and role of person leading the assessment:

Loise MacDonald

Job Title:

Senior Development Manager - Entrepreneurship

Date of decision:

5 August 2016



## Section B – understanding the nature and significance of impact on people

### Requirement to publish impact assessments

Impact assessments for proposals relevant to equality must be published, demonstrating that HIE has paid due regard to equality in the development and delivery of our functions. Assessments are also subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 1998.

### Question 3

#### What do you aim to achieve from the project, policy etc?

In what way will people be affected by its implementation e.g. job creation, events delivered, protection or support in place from a new policy, increased community capacity.

The Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 aims to assist and grow capable and ambitious entrepreneurs to accelerate sustainable business growth in the region to meet the demands of fast-changing market opportunities. The new programme builds upon HIE's proven and effective delivery of entrepreneurship support for over ten years and will be delivered in partnership with Scottish Enterprise to provide Scotland-wide delivery. The programme will take this work in new directions to draw in more entrepreneurs and will provide access to best practice theory and practice from leading edge academics and practitioners in the UK and internationally to help entrepreneurs in the region accelerate their business growth. The comprehensive programme aims to raise ambition and confidence, develop entrepreneurial skills and facilitate networking amongst businesses, social enterprises and community groups within the region.

### Question 4

**What do you already know about how the proposal is likely to affect people?** This might be from national data, relevant websites etc. Consider both positive and negative effects, bearing in mind that identifying negative impact now helps you minimise potential barriers to effective implementation.

**Specifically mention any information you have about views expressed by the groups of people most likely to be affected.** This might be consultation exercises, surveys or participant feedback etc. on this specific proposal, or more general views about this area of work.

What does the evidence tell you about the effect of your proposal on people?	Source of evidence
The evaluation highlighted that the programme delivered a return on investment of at least 9:1 and of as high as 28:1 and achieved high levels of additionality and low levels of displacement. The evaluation also highlighted that the programme delivered a range of 'softer' benefits. However, an analysis of beneficiaries from 2013-16 highlights that less than 20% of participants on the programme were women. Therefore, new approaches will be required to better understand what changes need to be made to encourage more women to participate and ensure the way the programme is delivered meets their needs.	"Encouraging Entrepreneurship: Evaluation of the Entrepreneurship Support Programme 2013-16". Report published by ekosgen in January 2016.
The report highlighted a gender gap in enterprise and suggests that Scottish GDP could be boosted by over 5% if this gap were adequately tackled. The report further concluded that, if rates of women-led businesses equalled that of men, the contribution to Scotland's GVA would increase to £13 billion. Furthermore, the report estimates that around 21% of Scotland's 339,000 SMEs are majority-led by women.	"Women in Enterprise. A framework and action plan to increase the contribution of women's enterprise to the Scottish economy". Report published in March 2014.



The report shows there are still specific and persistent barriers for too many women when setting up and growing their own businesses. The report refers to work undertaken by the Women's Business Council which states a key explanation for the gender entrepreneurship gap may be linked to wider issues of lacking self-confidence rather than an actual lack of skills.	"Women in Enterprise: The untapped potential". Report for the Federation of Small Businesses published in April 2016.
The action plan flowing from the Scottish Government's "Scotland CAN DO" report puts in place a range of measures to support entrepreneurship and innovation to support young people. This includes embedding entrepreneurship and innovation within Curriculum for Excellence and supporting entrepreneurship and innovation within Scotland's colleges and universities through initiatives such as Scottish Edge and Young Enterprise Scotland's Bridge2Business. A range of support exists to help young people start-up and grow a business, such as the Enterprise Campuses and the Prince's Trust. HIE also supports initiatives such as the Business Ideas Competition operated by CREATE in the region. Therefore, young people are not included in this People Impact Assessment as a suite of support currently exists to support young entrepreneurs.	"Scotland CAN DO. Becoming a world-leading entrepreneurial and innovative nation". Scottish Government report November 2013.

If you think people may be negatively affected and this could be unlawful contact HIE's Equalities Manager now to clarify the potential impact and remove any unlawful provisions from your proposal.

### Question 5

**Which groups of people do you think will be affected most by the proposal?** Please tick any that apply and complete the relevant information. Consider whether there is potential for discrimination (including inadvertent discrimination), for advancing equality of opportunity or for fostering good relations.

Please tick	Protected characteristics
	<b>Age - people of a particular age or younger or older people</b>
X	<p>Positive impact identified ☺</p> <p>The Entrepreneurial Academy will offer a suite of workshops to develop entrepreneurial skills. The workshops will target all of HIE's client segments and will also be opened up to companies that are not account managed by HIE. The support of HIE account managers will be sought to proactively target women and young entrepreneurs who may benefit from the workshops and the workshops will be advertised externally.</p> <p>When a high profile speaker is secured to deliver an inspirational lecture, or possibly a masterclass, in the HIE region, it is proposed to organise a 'one to many' session which will open up attendance to a wide and diverse audience including young people and students. This will provide access to leading edge thinking around entrepreneurship to as diverse an audience as possible. The intention is to stimulate ambition amongst entrepreneurs who have not been impacted by the programme of support to date.</p> <p>Negative impact identified ☹</p>
	<b>Disability - people who have a disability</b>
X	<p>Positive impact identified ☺</p> <p>Monitoring has not been undertaken to date for people with disabilities and, therefore, the information and intelligence that will be gathered through the introduction of a new monitoring process for the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 will add to our understanding of levels of participation and whether new approaches are required in the future.</p>



	Negative impact identified ☹️
X	<b>Gender - men or women</b>
	Positive impact identified 😊  Monitoring of the programme will identify any positive or negative impacts which will be addressed. Feedback will also be sought from women who participated in Entrepreneurship Support 2013-16 to see what further measures could be taken to encourage more women to participate.  Based upon the feedback from Entrepreneurship Support 2013-16, a more gender aware approach will be taken for participation within the various strands of support available in the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20. This will help ensure that eligible woman are made aware of the support and considered for programme participation.
	Negative impact identified ☹️
	<b>Gender-reassignment - people who have undergone or plan to undergo gender re-assignment</b>
	Positive impact identified 😊
	Negative impact identified ☹️
	<b>Marriage or civil partnership - people who are married or in a civil partnership</b>
	Positive impact identified 😊
	Negative impact identified ☹️
	<b>Pregnancy and maternity - women who are pregnant or linked to maternity</b>
	Positive impact identified 😊
	Negative impact identified ☹️
X	<b>Race - people of diverse race, nationality or ethnicity</b>
	Positive impact identified 😊  Monitoring has not been undertaken to date for people of diverse race, nationality or ethnicity and, therefore, the information and intelligence that will be gathered through the introduction of a new monitoring process for the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 will add to our understanding of levels of participation and whether new approaches are required in the future.
	Negative impact identified ☹️
X	<b>Religion or belief - people of diverse faiths or beliefs</b>
	Positive impact identified 😊  Monitoring has not been undertaken to date for people of diverse race, nationality or ethnicity and, therefore, the information and intelligence that will be gathered through the introduction of a new monitoring process for the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 will add to our understanding of levels of participation and whether new approaches are required in the future.
	Negative impact identified ☹️
	<b>Sexual orientation - people of different sexual orientation</b>
	Positive impact identified 😊



X	Monitoring has not been undertaken to date for people of different sexual orientation and, therefore, the information and intelligence that will be gathered through the introduction of a new monitoring process for the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 will add to our understanding of levels of participation and whether new approaches are required in the future.
	Negative impact identified ☹

## Question 6

**Are there any evidence gaps which prevent you from understanding fully the likely impact on people affected?** If so, identify the evidence gaps which you wish to fill:

There is an evidence gap to explain why substantially fewer women than men engaged with the Entrepreneurship Support Programme from 2013-16. At the moment, it is not clear whether this is the result of a lack of awareness of the support available or whether there are elements of the content and/or method of delivery of the wider programme that is a deterrent to women.

There is currently insufficient information on the profile of the participants on the programme from 2013-16 to know whether individuals with protected characteristics are engaging with the support. For example, there may non-UK workers who have the potential to become entrepreneurs of the future. The use of a monitoring form will enable us to identify whether this is a gap or, indeed, something for HIE to consider going forward.

There has been a relatively large turnover of staff within the account management role and the Entrepreneurship Programme has a critical dependency upon staff to promote the support to their clients. At the current time, it is difficult to assess the general awareness of staff and their understanding of how the support will benefit the growth of their client businesses.

In addition, the suite of workshops that will be available through the new Entrepreneurial Academy will be pitched at a different level than the Masterclasses delivered through Entrepreneurship Support 2013-16. The previous Masterclasses focused upon business leaders in more mature growth companies. The Entrepreneurial Academy aims to attract more emerging entrepreneurs to build their skills and confidence and this will provide an opening for ambitious and capable women. The content of the Academy's workshops will focus on practice informed by theory and will equip entrepreneurs to implement key strategies and policies within their own business.

### What steps will you now take to fill those evidence gaps?

#### Information gathering:

An analysis of participants on the Entrepreneurship Support Programme 2013-16 will be undertaken and the data will be compared with other programmes to identify whether this is part of a wider trend or whether it is a specific issue for Entrepreneurship Support.

It is also proposed to request participants on the various strands of the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 to complete a short form to monitor, as best as possible, the composition of the beneficiaries.

#### Consultation or involvement:

A sample of women who participated on the Entrepreneurship Support 2013-16 will be contacted to understand what they gained from the experience and their thoughts on what could be done to encourage more female entrepreneurs to participate. This will be supplemented by arranging sessions with some established networks for women, such as Highland Business Women's Club, to raise awareness of the support and identify any barriers to participation.



A series of meeting will be organised with each of HIE's area offices to speak with staff to explain the various strands of support, the type of businesses that are eligible for support and how they could benefit from participation. The views of staff will be sought on the most appropriate ways to encourage more diversity amongst participants on the programme going forward.

## Question 7

**Where relevant, once you have gathered more information or carried out consultation or involvement activity, what additional insight have you gained about how people will be affected by your proposal?**

You may wish to fill the evidence gap before proceeding with the proposal or continue and incorporate the findings as the proposal is implemented. This will depend on the nature and significance of the gap.

The proposed information gathering and analysis, alongside the consultation exercise, will provide insights and intelligence to better target individuals with protected characteristics and/or know whether aspects of the support need to be tailored to suit the needs of these groups.

## Question 8

### Gaelic language

HIE's [Gaelic Plan](#) emphasises use of Gaelic as an asset for generating economic and social value. **Identify below how your proposal may add to Gaelic's contribution to the delivery of HIE's organisational priorities and let a member of Buidheann a'Phlana Gaidhlig know.**

At the current time, it is not possible to assess how the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 will contribute towards the Gaelic Plan specifically. Should a requirement to, for example, promote the programme of support, in Gaelic emerge, then steps will be taken to address this.

## Question 9

### Integrating equality in the 2014-2020 European Structural Funds Programmes

All funded projects (2014-2020) are required to carry out an equality (people) impact assessment. **Refer to the guidance notes on "horizontal themes" for specific requirements and summarise the relevant findings below.**

### Equal opportunities

Participants will mainly be identified by HIE account managers based upon their suitability for each particular strand of support, although some elements of the programme will be advertised externally to open up participation to a wider group of businesses. The account managers will be encouraged to seek gender balance when identifying potential participants. The programme team and the account managers will consider any varying needs of the participants to ensure these are incorporated in deliver of the support. Feedback from participants will be sought and reviewed regularly to identify any changes or adaptations that may be required.

### Social inclusion

The use of digital materials and platforms will be considered and used where appropriate. Where it is not possible to offer workshops or similar support in all parts of the HIE region, plans will be developed to allow De Minimis funding to be used to support extra travel and subsistence costs. Feedback will be gathered from the participants and changes in delivery methods made as appropriate.

## Question 10

### Rurality



HIE aims to address the challenges of access faced by rural populations, both business and community-based, to ensure they are not disadvantaged as a result of geographic location. **In what way(s) will your proposal address issues of rurality?**

It is likely that, for reasons of economy, elements of the support (such as workshops and Masterclasses) will be delivered in a central location, such as Inverness. However, it is recognised that travel costs and time are a major deterrent to participation for businesses located in parts of the region, such as Shetland, the Outer Hebrides and Argyll. Attendance at a one day workshop can entail three days out of the office and substantive costs for travel and accommodation. To address this problem and ensure that the programme of support is as accessible as possible to businesses from the islands and rural areas, HIE will support 60-70% of travel costs through Training Aid. Discussion on travel time and costs with some of HIE's account managers indicate that this will help ensure that businesses in more remote areas participate in the programme.

The various elements within the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 aim to instil confidence, stimulate ambition and develop the skills of entrepreneurs across the HIE region to accelerate sustainable business growth. The support equips entrepreneurs to accelerate their business growth and this can contribute to employment in fragile rural areas. The support provides people across the region with options beyond seeking traditional employment and helps to convey the benefits of starting and operating their own business. The content within the programme of support is equally applicable to businesses in more densely populated areas and more fragile rural areas and, in combination with other HIE initiatives such as digital connectivity, means that businesses are supported and encouraged to prosper in more remote parts of the region.

## Question 11

If you ticked question 1b) this indicated that your proposal will contribute to at least one of the three aims of the General Equality Duty:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment
  - which may result in less favourable treatment
  - give rise to indirect discrimination
  - lead to discrimination arising from disability
  - may fail to build in reasonable adjustments
- advancing equality of opportunity:-
  - by removing or minimising disadvantage for a group(s) of people
  - by meeting the needs of particular groups which are different from the needs of others
  - by encouraging participation in public life for a group(s) of people
  - by taking account of disabled people's impairments
- fostering good relations:-
  - by tackling prejudice
  - by promoting understanding between groups of people

**Briefly outline the way(s) in which your proposal will contribute to this:-**

The Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 will help to advance equality of opportunity through supporting existing entrepreneurs and helping to grow the number of entrepreneurs across the region. Work will be undertaken to identify and implement ways to secure greater participation amongst women on the various elements of the programme. If successful, this will contribute towards the numbers of women entrepreneurs and help them to address known challenges, such as access to finance.

A key aim of the support is to help entrepreneurs to accelerate their business growth through developing new products and services or entering new markets which will lead to higher levels of productivity and employment across the region. By creating more employment opportunities, the risk of young people and other skilled workers leaving the region to seek work will be reduced.

## Question 12



## Economic, social and cultural (human) rights

HIE has an obligation under the Human Rights Act 1998 to ensure that people's rights are respected in all we do. HIE is particularly well placed to create the conditions in which economic, social and cultural rights can be realised, such as working towards:-

- an adequate standard of living e.g. developing the minimum income standard, addressing poverty
- access for all to well paid employment e.g. supporting job creation, increasing income levels
- just and favourable work conditions e.g. providing favourable internal employment policies and influencing businesses to apply inclusive employment practices
- social participation and community confidence e.g. encouraging inclusive practices in community capacity building and representation

While equality focusses on the relative experiences of groups of people, taking a human rights approach aims to raise overall standards and protect against universally poor treatment.

### In what way(s) will your proposal help people realise their economic, social or cultural rights?

The Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 aims to support entrepreneurs to accelerate their business growth leading to new and more skilled employment opportunities for people in the region and reducing the risk of de-population in some more fragile parts of the region. The programme will help to create role models for enterprise and self-employment and provide case studies outlining how individuals and businesses can survive and thrive in the region, irrespective of gender, rurality and other factors. The elements of the programme also foster networking opportunities enabling businesses to forge new relationships that can, in turn, lead to new business opportunities and sustainable employment.

## Section C - using knowledge of impact

It is important that you act on the information about the impact of your proposal on specific groups of people identified in Section B.

### Question 13

#### What actions will you now take to make sure the information about impact on people is incorporated in your proposal?

This might include amending a draft policy, carrying out consultation with a specific group of people or developing a feedback process for programme participants. Actions should be proportionate to the aims of your proposal.

Action to be taken	By whom	By when
Review and analysis of information to determine whether the lower level of participation amongst women is a trend across areas of HIE support or specific to Entrepreneurship.	HIE entrepreneurship support team	December 2016
Consultation with staff in area offices to communicate the content of the programme, seek views on any barriers to participation and enlist their support to proactively target women with information about the support.	HIE entrepreneurship support team	December 2016
Consultation with established women's networks, such as Highland Business Women's Club, to communicate the elements of the programme and seek views on any potential barriers to participation.	HIE entrepreneurship support team	End of March 2017
As information and intelligence is gathered through the introduction of a new monitoring form, we will be better placed to identify whether there are participation issues for	HIE entrepreneurship support team	Beginning of 2018



people with other protected characteristics.		
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#### Question 14

**How will you ensure that you understand the actual impact experienced by people as your proposal is delivered?** This might be by gathering event or programme feedback which allows analysis by gender, age, disability etc. or information about the workforce demographics of appointments to jobs created.

Method of monitoring actual impact	By whom	By when
Use a monitoring form to capture more detailed information on participants on the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 and review and analyse findings.	HIE entrepreneurship support team	Embed process by March 2017

#### Question 15

**When will you review actual impact?**

This should be an integral part of your normal policy or project review process and should help you identify whether your proposal has been successful in achieving positive or minimising negative impact.

Review process	By whom	By when
Monitoring forms to be used for each element of the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20.	HIE and SE	Ongoing
Undertake an initial review to assess whether changes are required.	HIE and SE	June 2107
Ongoing review with suppliers through route project management meetings.	HIE and SE	Ongoing

#### Question 16

**Procurement:** HIE proposals which include procurement activity at OJEU level must consider whether to include contract award or performance criteria related to equality. **Where relevant, how will you help eliminate discrimination, advance equality or foster good relations between people through contract award or performance criteria when procuring goods, services or advice?**

You should also refer to the guidance on equality contained in procurement documentation.

Award criteria to be included at tender stage:

Information on HIE's expectation of suppliers regarding equalities will be included in the Invitation to Tender (ITT) for all elements of the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20. This will also be discussed in detail with Scottish Enterprise, HIE's partner for the design and delivery of the programme, to ensure consistency in our approach. Suppliers responding to the ITT will be expected to demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of people who may participate on the programme and how they would respond. Successful suppliers will be fully briefed on the requirement to complete monitoring forms for participants on all elements of the programme.

How you will evaluate the award criteria:

Information will be evaluated by the scoring panel in line with the information contained in the Invitation to Tender.

Contract performance criteria:



There will be ongoing project management meetings with the suppliers of the various strands of support within the Entrepreneurship Support programme and equalities will be incorporated as an agenda item for discussion at these meetings.

How you will monitor delivery of performance conditions:

There will be ongoing review meetings between the suppliers and HIE and Scottish Enterprise which will assess, amongst other items, levels of participation by people with protected characteristics and the feedback information submitted by participants.

Assessment of how effective award or contract performance criteria have been in addressing inequalities or disadvantage or in promoting equality should be completed as an integral part of the procurement contract review process.



## Signing off the completed assessment

The outcome of the assessment must be reflected in relevant project or policy approval papers. It should outline as appropriate:

- a summary of positive and negative impact identified for specific groups of people and how your proposal maximises positive impact or minimises negative impact (Qs 5, 13 and 14)
- how your proposal helps achieve HIE's equality outcomes (Q1)
- how your proposal helps eliminate discrimination, advance equality or foster good relations (meeting the General Equality Duty) (Qs 1 and 11)
- how your proposal helps people realise their economic, social and cultural (human) rights (Q12)
- any equality considerations to be included in contract award or performance criteria (Q16)
- ways in which your proposal:
  - adds to Gaelic's contributes to HIE's organisational priorities (Q8)
  - meets EU funding requirements on social inclusion (Q9)
  - addresses issues of rurality (Q10)

The Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 aims to assist and grow capable and ambitious entrepreneurs to accelerate sustainable business growth in the region to meet the demands of fast-changing market opportunities. The new programme builds upon HIE's proven and effective delivery of entrepreneurship support for over ten years and will be delivered in partnership with Scottish Enterprise to provide Scotland-wide delivery. The programme will take this work in new directions to draw in more entrepreneurs and will provide access to best practice theory and practice from leading edge academics and practitioners in the UK and internationally to help entrepreneurs in the region accelerate their business growth. The comprehensive programme aims to raise ambition and confidence, develop entrepreneurial skills and facilitate networking amongst businesses, social enterprise and community groups within the region.

An assessment of participation on Entrepreneurship Support 2013-16 highlights lower levels of participation amongst women. Therefore, desk research will be undertaken to determine whether this is a trend across HIE programmes or specific to the Entrepreneurship Programme. In both instances, consultation will also be undertaken internally with account managers and externally with previous female participants on the programme and with established networks for women to determine how best to promote the support and whether any adaptations need to be made to meet the needs of women.

The Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 will help to advance equality of opportunity through supporting existing entrepreneurs and helping to grow the number of entrepreneurs across the region. Work will be undertaken to identify and implement ways to secure greater participation amongst women on the various elements of the programme. If successful, this will contribute towards the numbers of women entrepreneurs and help them to address known challenges, such as access to finance.

A key aim of the support is to help entrepreneurs to accelerate their business growth through developing new products and services or entering new markets which will lead to higher levels of productivity and employment across the region. By creating more employment opportunities, the risk of young people and other skilled workers leaving the region to seek work will be reduced.

At the current time, it is not possible to assess how the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 will contribute towards the Gaelic Plan specifically. Should a requirement to, for example, promote the programme of support, in Gaelic emerge, then steps will be taken to address this.

Participants on the courses will mainly be identified by HIE account managers based upon their suitability for each particular strand of support, although elements of the programme will be advertised externally. The account managers will be encouraged to seek gender balance when identifying potential participants. The programme team and the account managers will consider any varying needs of the participants to ensure these are incorporated in deliver of the support. Feedback from participants will be sought and reviewed regularly to identify any changes or adaptations that may be required.



It is likely that, for reasons of economy, elements of the support (such as workshops and Masterclasses) will be delivered in a central location, such as Inverness. To address this, De Minimis funding may be used to allow HIE to assist with travel and subsistence costs for people who have to travel significant distances.

The various elements within the Entrepreneurship Programme 2017-20 aim to instil confidence, stimulate ambition and develop the skills of entrepreneurs across the HIE region to accelerate sustainable business growth. The support equips entrepreneurs to accelerate their business growth and this can contribute to employment in fragile rural areas. The support provides people across the region with options beyond seeking traditional employment and helps to convey the benefits of starting and operating their own business. The content within the programme of support is equally applicable to businesses in more densely populated areas and more fragile rural areas and, in combination with other HIE initiatives such as digital connectivity, means that businesses are supported and encouraged to prosper in more remote parts of the region.

Completed impact assessments must be published to demonstrate that we have paid due regard to equality in the development and delivery of our functions. They are published on HIE's website, but you should also consider sharing the assessment with those who participated in its completion, including any equality groups consulted and stakeholders or partner agencies.

Senior Responsible Officer (name): <u>Donna Chisholm</u>	
Job Title: <u>Reg. Head - Sectors, Innov, Progs</u>	Contact Number: _____
Date of signing off completed assessment: <u>31 Aug 2016</u>	

HIE's Equalities Manager will arrange for the assessment to be published. Please ensure that you send a scanned copy of the signed assessment.