



Resource Allocation A Practical Guide

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Offices

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*A project supported by the PEACE III Programme managed for the Special EU Programmes Body
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Introduction

1. Background
2. Phase 1 Implementation
3. What happened
4. Lessons learned
5. Phase 2 Implementation

Some Background

- Partnership wanted to ensure that small scale projects at the grass roots level would continue
- Partnership wanted to takes away the administrative burden of small grants
- Partnership wanted to maintain a strategic approach to implementation
- The RA is administered by the consortia delivering each of the programmes.
- Awarded to groups to assist them to meet the overall objectives of the programme(s) - and enable them to do small projects as part of the wider programme in which they are participating - builds upon the learning achieved and further enhances the confidence and capacity of the group.

Background continued.....

- Groups are not allocated any funds into their bank account –they are awarded the resource allocation indicatively and then they choose what they want to do with it.
- The delivery agent ensures all spend is undertaken properly and verified in line with SEUPB requirements.
- The delivery agents are tasked with ensuring that as many local groups, who perhaps had never applied for small grants before are able to access the resource allocation and are assisted to develop and deliver their project ideas. (In Phase 2 we plan to include this as a target in letters of offer i.e. 20% will be groups new to the programme)
- The ability of the Delivery Agent to manage the RA was assessed by the Partnership in advance of them being awarded the programme – (as part of the tender assessment)



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Phase 1 Implementation: RA Administration

- Build the management and administration of the RA into the ToR (include 100% verification if that is what you are going to do)
- Issue guidance/training to Delivery Agents on the use of templates:
 - Application Form for groups
 - Project Cost Breakdown
 - Scoring Criteria
 - Sample Travel Claim Form
 - Individual Assessment Sheets / Assessment Panel Combined Score Sheet
 - Sample Letter of Offer
 - Sample Letter of Refusal
 - Resource Allocation Agreement Form
 - Conditions for the use of the Resource Allocation

Phase 1 RA Implementation

- Each Programme had a separate steering group which comprised Delivery Agents, Partnership Members, Relevant experts, Council Officers, PEACE III staff
- The Steering Group were responsible for decision-making (and later for selecting and supporting appropriate projects for support)
- Groups signed up to a programme and were encouraged to complete an expression of interest in the programme. Contained within the expression of interest was a question relating to a potential project that the group might undertake.
- After groups are successfully recruited onto the programme they discuss their project ideas with their facilitator and commence a process of planning to ensure that they fully understand what is required in order to deliver their project. Part of this process also includes the completion of a project proposal which is submitted to the steering group for consideration.



Phase 1 Implementation continued.....

- The steering group meet to score individual applications using the criteria. If the steering group determines that a project does not satisfy the required criteria it will allow the group an opportunity to reconsider its project and resubmit a revised application.
- The Delivery Agents are tasked with supporting groups to ensure that meaningful and effective projects are delivered in all cases.
- A full RA action plan is submitted to the Partnership for final approval
- Upon completion of the project all groups are encouraged to complete an evaluation form which requires groups to identify the outcome of their project and the perceived impacts of the project upon their own group and the wider community.

Steps in Stage 1

1. Establishment of steering group
2. The Steering Group agree criteria for each individual programme & PEACE III Manager approves criteria
3. Groups fill out an EoI to participate on a programme
4. Delivery agent has facilitated discussions with the group
5. Group completes full project proposal form
6. Proposal is assessed by the Steering Group
7. Proposal either pass or fail (if fail it gets sent back to the group for more work)
8. RA action plan submitted to PEACE III Partnership for final approval
9. Delivery Agent sends Letter of approval to the group
10. Group enter into a signed agreement with the Delivery Agent on behalf of PEACE III
11. Upon project completion groups complete an evaluation form

Changes / Improvements

PHASE 1	Phase 2
1. Each Programme has a separate steering group which comprises Delivery Agents, Partnership Members, Relevant experts, Council Officers, PEACE III staff	Yes but reduce number of mtgs
2. Steering Group agree criteria for each individual programme & Manager approves	Delivery Agent set criteria
3. Groups fill out EoI	Yes
4. Delivery agent has facilitated discussions with groups	Yes
5. Group completes full project proposal form	Yes but shorten form
6. Proposal is assessed by the Steering Group	No
7. Proposal either pass or fail (if fail it gets sent back to the group for more work)	Yes
8. RA action plan submitted to PEACE III Partnership for final approval	Yes
9. Letter of approval sent to group from Delivery Agent	Yes but on behalf of PEACE III
10. Group enter into a signed agreement with the Delivery Agent	No – with PEACE P'ship
11. Upon project completion groups complete an evaluation form	Complete a PPE



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Phase 1 RA Payments

The Rules:

- 100% Verification
- Invoicing - Lead Partners submitted RA claim on a monthly basis along with the monthly invoices & all supporting documentation and progress reports.
- Once verified the payment is made directly to the Lead Partners bank account through BACS.
- It is the responsibility of the lead partner to ensure that all the necessary original documentation is available to enable the vouching of expenditure to be undertaken

The Lessons:

- Claims were not on time
- Part claims were made
- Administration was put on the groups rather than the delivery agent e.g. obtaining quotes

Verification Issues

- Quotes not being sought
- The lowest quote not being selected – need a valid reason for deciding to purchase the more expensive quote
- Quotes being sought after the good/service has been already bought
- Suspected fraudulent invoicing and quotations
- Slow response times to PEACE III Finance Officer when requesting additional information
- Prior approval not been sought from PEACE III staff for selecting a single supplier
- Invoice processing and verification happening daily instead of monthly
- Invoices been held over to the following month as the correct information not available at time of verification – leading to a hold up in payment for the lead partner (secretariat do not have the facility to pay outside of the council arrangements)

What Happened

- Engaged hard to reach groups
- Some groups never really understood that the funding came from PEACE III (impact on PR)
- Delivery Agents took the credit for funding – PEACE III was sidelined
- Lot of confusion about who was responsible for what
- Terminology & roles were confusing: Consortiums, Delivery Agents, Lead Partners, Steering Groups
- Groups tried to participate in different programmes and undertake the same project as part of their RA allocation (trying to increase the funding to existing project ideas)
- Consortiums charged full consultancy rates for every RA mtgs



Learning along the way

- Local delivery agents cannot avail of the RA if they are part of the delivery consortium
- Delivery agents cannot benefit from the RA in any way – no payment for services should be made to the delivery agents via the RA e.g. further facilitation, increased mentor days etc
- Clear guidance needs to be issued to Delivery Agents at the start
- Needs to be closely monitored for eligibility
- Need for flexibility

Interim Findings

- Some Delivery Agents lost the focus of their programmes and were centering all activity around the RA.
- Groups being promised items or enticed onto the programme with the promise of an event or an activity.
- Common sense needed when discussing the eligibility of certain items.
- Lead partners within each Consortium are accountable and responsible back to the Partnership. It's up to you to ensure that you have proper procedures in place for the assessment and decision making. In future if your own procedures are not followed and ours strictly adhered to your expenditure will be deemed ineligible
- Delivery Agents not adhering to the timeframes regarding submitting the applications to the PEACE III staff in time for the partnership meeting papers
- Delivery Agents rushing through applications to the Partnership
- Allocations being promised to groups to ensure their participation on the programme
- Many good examples of how the RA had been managed very well and where it had not become the driver on a programme.



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Key Learning

1. Make sure you are clear in the ToR what you expect of the lead partner for delivery of the RA
2. Amount of time for Delivery agents to assess and manage the RA was underestimated – need to simplify the process
3. Make sure a member of staff attends any scoring and assessment meetings to provide guidance
4. Sign the Delivery Agent up to presenting the RA action plan at a Partnership meeting
5. Quite often the project idea completed at EoI stage changed due to the group better understanding P&R outcomes.
6. Should be same value of RA for each programme (reduce competition)
7. Keep track of how much is spent cross border

Key Learning continued.....

8. Sign them up to completing Post Project Evaluations
9. What you expect from the delivery agent in their delivery of the RA needs to be very clearly outlined in the ToR– If you put 100% verification of RA element into your ToR then you have to follow this through
10. 100% Verification:
 - *Resource Intensive*
 - *Delivery agents placed the administration onto the small groups who felt it was burdensome (writing an application, quotes, invoicing etc)*

Outcomes/Impacts

- 128 Resource Allocations awarded totalling £297,665 (9.5% of our programme budget)
- Greater collaboration between participating groups achieved (e.g. 1b)
- Huge footfall achieved in terms of participation
- Huge amount of activity:- Good Practice visits, networking events and activities, cross community and cross border activity & engagement.
- Contributed to a significant interest in PEACE III
- Catalyst for further development – assisted GROs in Councils to start working alongside some of the most hard to reach groups (opened doors)
- Enabled us to map more easily the participation levels and amount spent by Council area – very useful for presenting information to Councils & identifying gaps

Implementation of Phase 2

- RA amount should be the same for each programme
- Don't allow reallocation of budgets (due to large volume of RA and activities)
- To ensure that a programme doesn't become all about the RA, don't allow RA expenditure until year 2 of the programme.
- Same application form used consistently (Simple form)
- Better mapping of applicants (need to be able to answer questions on who, where, how much etc – external evaluation didn't allow us to do this)
- Don't allow the use of any logos other than PEACE III
- Hold an information & training session with all your Delivery Agents at the start



Action Plan Template for Phase 2

- Application Form
- Assessment Criteria
- Travel Claim Form
- Assessment Panel Score Sheets
- Sample Letter of Offer
- Sample Letter of Refusal
- Resource Allocation Agreement Form
- Conditions for the use of the Resource Allocation

Questions?

