

WHO IS PARTNERSHIP FUNDING FOR?

Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Partnership Funding is for eligible projects that provide flood or coastal erosion risk management benefits to people and property. Typically FCERM Partnership Funding would be sought by Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) which include the Environment Agency, County Councils, Local Authorities and IDBs. However, community and partnership-led approaches can make bids to RMAs for funds. People who benefit from FCERM projects include those who live, work or who provide or receive services in an area benefiting from the work being carried out. This also includes anyone who represents them, and commercial or voluntary enterprises.

Local involvement

The local community will be fundamental in helping to identify potential beneficiaries and investors. In addition to this, local communities can lead projects, join up suitable partners, and ensure the schemes can deliver wider benefits.

The local economic benefits of a potential FCERM scheme arise from one or more of the following:

- avoiding potential damage
- sustaining current uses
- enabling inward investment and higher value land uses within and sometimes even beyond the benefiting areas
- having a good understanding of who locally can realise how much financial benefit and getting beneficiaries to contribute equitably to secure those benefits. The Environment Agency can support communities, businesses and local authorities through processes such as benefit mapping and beneficiary analysis to help with indicative local FCERM investment planning. More information can be found on the EA website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/flood-and-coastal-defence-funding-for-risk-management-authorities>

It may be possible to reduce delivery costs significantly if local projects are packaged together to take advantage of innovative funding and delivery methods.

Strengthening your proposal

Where the calculated FDGiA available does not meet the full cost of a project, the additional cost needs to be met by other means. Proposals can be strengthened by including additional **multiple benefits**, adjusting the **geographical scale** of the project and re-assessing **timescales** (see overleaf).

Multiple Benefits

As well as reducing the risks to people and property, FCERM can bring significant economic, environmental and social benefits. Once those who benefit are identified, it should be possible to build a network of beneficiaries, to include organisations with infrastructure and asset investment plans. This will help to identify the wider benefits that FCERM solutions can enable, such as economic growth and opportunities for businesses, authorities, communities and the local environment. Partnerships should agree at an early stage who is best placed to approach potential beneficiaries and explore options for funding. Additional benefits could include recreation, habitat creation, landscape and regeneration. For example in Clacton-on-sea the proposed flood defences will protect the local community and support regeneration in the town.

It is likely that RMAs and infrastructure providers will have similar objectives. For example, water and sewerage companies have been contributing to the design and construction of schemes which reduce erosion and flood related risks to their assets and operations. A £300,000 contribution from Northumbrian Water to Hartlepool Borough Council to extend its coastal protection scheme and to protect the sewerage treatment works is a great example of improving efficiencies and benefits within a range of partners.

We need to broaden the scale of potential investors and think a little 'outside the box' with regard to who the beneficiaries are and who may be able to provide funding, whether financial or contributions 'in kind'. We also need to consider innovative ways to reduce costs and encourage the local sourcing of materials, etc.

Geographical Scale

Broadening the outcomes of a scheme, to appeal to a wider range of beneficiaries and potential funders, can be achieved by extending the geographical boundaries. For example, instead of focusing on one flood defence wall, by also considering the defences either side, it might be possible to complete improvement works to a larger area. This could result in improved local benefits, an increase in the number of partners involved and potentially an increase in the partnership funding available. However care should be taken as the cost of the scheme will increase, and schemes must still be policy compliant and take into account environmental considerations.

In some scenarios reducing the geographical influence can have a positive impact on the partnership funding score and therefore the probability of the scheme becoming viable.

Timescales

Evaluating your timescales can also increase the benefits of a scheme, and may mean that varying investors, funding streams, etc may become available. It is very important not to overlook the fact that different stages of a project, such as the costs of ongoing maintenance, may need separate funding.

What types of projects attract FDGiA Funding?

All FCERM projects are eligible to apply for FCERMGiA. However, as detailed above, flood alleviation and coast protection projects can also deliver a range of non-FCERM benefits. The achievement of multiple objectives, as part of a single project, should be encouraged but FDGiA can only be used to fund the lowest cost required to achieve and maintain the FCERM outcomes of a project over its lifetime.

Investment choices will be made based upon the benefits, costs and outcomes of each individual project. The Partnership Funding calculator can be used to determine the potential availability of FDGiA funding and the partnership contributions required.

Skills and capabilities

There are a range of skills and capabilities, including relationship-building and engagement, that are needed to deliver successful partnership projects. These skills can help to reduce the financial and legal risks and liabilities for all parties involved. Experience in these skills and capabilities is new or limited within the organisations involved in partnership funding. Progress during the early years of implementation will require project partners to understand the importance of learning and development for their staff and recognise the time it takes for this training to have an effect. This will help to ensure the delivery of successful projects and long term outcomes expected by all parties involved.

This pack has been commissioned by the East Anglia Coastal Group to act as a useful resource tool to enable learning about Partnership Funding. However, it is recognised that Partnership Funding and working with local communities requires special skills which partners should acquire or share with others if possible.

The Environment Agency is developing training for all partners to support this pack.