

Section 75 Policy Screening Form

Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy:

Clustering for Growth Programme (CfG)

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

This is a revised Programme designed to replace the existing Collaborative Network Programme (CNP), which comes to an end on 30 September 2016.

The CNP was subjected to an independent Economic Evaluation (January 2016) and Appraisal (July 2016), both of which found no negative equality impact/s arising.

While the Clustering for Growth Programme will have new branding and a different grant rate, the principles under which the Programme is operated will remain largely as before.

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

The programme provides facilitation support to encourage companies to engage in collaboration activities to develop their skills, enhance their knowledge base, stimulate open innovation and ultimately exploit emerging opportunities both within and across sectors.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.

The policy is not aimed at any specific Section 75 category, but rather at representatives of NI industry, academia, and the public sector who wish to collaborate on specific projects with defined economic outcomes. Representatives from any Section 75 category are welcome to participate in Networks/Clusters funded under the Programme, provided that the projects they are aligned to meet Invest NI's general intervention principles.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The policy was initiated and devised within the Skills and Strategy Division at Invest NI, with reference to objectives outlined in the Programme for Government, Department for the Economy (DfE) Economic Strategy for NI, the NI Innovation Strategy, the DfE MATRIX Science Industry Panel and the Invest NI Corporate Plan.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The policy is owned by the Clustering for Growth Team within the Skills and Strategy Division at Invest NI.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

If yes, are they

financial: **Funding for the Programme has been agreed for a five year period from October 1 2016; if it was to be withdrawn, for any reason, the organisation would need to review its capacity to deliver support for clusters/networks.**

legislative

other, please specify _____

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

- staff
- service users
- other public sector organisations
- voluntary/community/trade unions
- other, please specify: **Academic Institutions; businesses; wider stakeholders with an interest in the specific sectors that are the focus of any particular cluster/network**

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- what are they?

Europe 2020 – A Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth (EU);

Regional Policy Contributing to Smart Growth in Europe 2020, the EC Cohesion Policy and the Smart Specialisation (RIS3) agenda (EU);

Department for Business Innovation and Skills – Business Plan, 2012 – 2015 (UK Government);

Fixing the Foundations: Creating a more Prosperous Nation – HMT, 2015 (UK Government);

Draft Programme for Government Framework, 2016 – 2021 (NI Executive);

NI Programme for Government, 2011 – 2015 (NI Government);

NI Economic Strategy – Priorities for Sustainable Growth and Prosperity (NI Government);

Innovate NI – The Northern Ireland Innovation Strategy, 2014 – 2025 (NI Government);

DETI Corporate Plan, 2011 – 2015 (NI Government);

Invest NI Corporate Plan, 2011 – 2015 (Invest NI);

Northern Ireland Framework for Smart Specialisation, 2014 (NI Government);

First Report of MATRIX: The Northern Ireland Science Industry Panel, 2008 (MATRIX)

- who owns them? **See above**

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	<p>The Collaborative Network Programme (to be known as the Clustering for Growth Programme from October 1 2016) was subject to an independent Economic Evaluation and Appraisal in January 2016 and July 2016 respectively.</p> <p>Past and present Programme participants were contacted and surveyed in depth as to their experience of participating in the Programme; external stakeholders (including other public sector bodies and academic institutions) were also</p>

	<p>contacted as part of this process.</p> <p>Both the Evaluation and the Appraisal found that there were no aspects of the Programme that had the potential to impact negatively on any Section 75 category. While the new Programme will be branded differently and have amended grant rates/levels it is anticipated that there will continue to be no negative impact from a Section 75 perspective.</p> <p>Invest NI colleagues will continue to monitor the Programme as it develops, and steps will be taken to mitigate against any adverse impact on Section 75 categories if/when this arises.</p>
Political opinion	See above
Racial group	See above
Age	See above
Marital status	See above
Sexual orientation	See above
Men and women generally	See above
Disability	We recognise the additional needs of people with disabilities and will offer reasonable adjustments in order to ensure that our services are completely accessible. This includes literature in alternative formats and the use of text phone for those with hearing difficulties.
Dependants	See above

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious belief	None
Political opinion	None
Racial group	Our Programme material is available in the English language as a default position. Members of other racial groups may require the material to be made available in an alternative language. We will consider these requests and provide translation and interpretation services where possible.
Age	None
Marital status	None
Sexual orientation	None
Men and women generally	None
Disability	Individuals with a disability who wish to find out more about the Programme; attend an event about the Programme at an Invest NI location and/or participate in a Network/Cluster may require Programme material to be made available in

	alternative formats. They may also require reasonable adjustments to be made to enable them to attend and participate in events. We will accommodate such requests.
Dependants	None

Part 2. Screening questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of this Guide.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;

- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

Screening questions

1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? minor/major/none		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
Religious belief		None
Political opinion		None
Racial group		None
Age		None
Marital status		None
Sexual orientation		None
Men and women generally		None, although in the interests of encouraging female participation we will highlight this programme within Women

		in Business.
Disability		None, although we will accommodate all requests for reasonable adjustments.
Dependants		None

2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?

Section 75 category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide reasons
Religious belief	No	We do not anticipate that this programme will lend itself to the promotion of opportunity for this particular category.
Political opinion	No	We do not anticipate that this programme will lend itself to the promotion of opportunity for this particular category.
Racial group	No	We do not anticipate that this programme will lend itself to the promotion of opportunity for this particular category.
Age	No	We do not anticipate that this programme will lend itself to the promotion of opportunity for this particular category.

Marital status	No	We do not anticipate that this programme will lend itself to the promotion of opportunity for this particular category.
Sexual orientation	No	We do not anticipate that this programme will lend itself to the promotion of opportunity for this particular category.
Men and women generally	While there are no aspects of the Programme that impact adversely on the ability of women to participate in Clusters/Networks, we will engage with stakeholders representing Women In Business to raise awareness amongst female business representatives.	
Disability	No	We do not anticipate that this programme will lend itself to the promotion of opportunity for this particular category, however we will accommodate all reasonable adjustments to ensure participation.
Dependants	No	We do not anticipate that this programme will lend itself to the promotion of opportunity for any particular category.

**3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?
minor/major/none**

Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact minor/major/none
Religious belief	N/A	None
Political opinion	N/A	None
Racial group	N/A	None

4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
Good relations category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide reasons
Religious belief		The Programme is self-selecting and is aimed at enhancing NI's economic competitiveness; as such there is no specific focus on the promotion of good relations.
Political opinion		See above
Racial group		See above

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

No multiple identity impacts are envisaged.

Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

The Clustering for Growth Programme (previously known as the Collaborative Network Programme) is a funding mechanism open to groups of Northern Ireland companies (minimum of four) who want to collaborate with each other, and other stakeholders, in order to improve their economic competitiveness.

Applications to the Programme are assessed in line with Invest NI's established intervention principles, which are a purely economic test and do not preclude any Section 75 category from making an application.

The Programme has been subject to an independent Economic Evaluation and Appraisal and no adverse impact on any Section 75 category was found.

We will take steps to engage with Women In Business to ensure that there are good levels of awareness about the Programme amongst female business representatives.

Invest NI will continue to monitor the Programme as it develops and will take the necessary steps to mitigate against any future adverse impacts, should they arise.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced.

N/A

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

N/A

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

N/A

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been ‘**screened in**’ for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	n/a
Social need	n/a
Effect on people’s daily lives	n/a
Relevance to a public authority’s functions	n/a

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details

N/A

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
Joanne McMullan 	Collaborative Network Executive	12/09/16
Approved by: 	Pamela Marron Equality Manager	15/09/16

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

