ERDF Summative Assessment Plan Form

ESIF-Form-1-012

**Part 1 Project Summary**

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| **1.1 Applicant Details** |
| Applicant Organisation | Cornwall Development Company |
| Project Name | CIOS Growth Hub Phase 2 |
| Project Reference Number | Click here to enter text. |
| Programme Priority Axis | *PA3* |
| Name of ERDF Investment Priority | IP3d |
| LEP Area (s) covered | Cornwall & Isles of Scilly |
| Total Project Value (£) | £3,169.000 |
| Total ERDF sought (£) | £2,535,200 |
| ESIF Category of Region | *Less Developed* |  |
| *More Developed* |  |
| *Transition* |  |

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| **1.2 Project Timetable**  |
| Proposed Start Date | 1/10/2019 |
| Proposed Financial Completion Date | 30/9/2021 |
| Proposed Practical Completion Date | 1/1/2022 |

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| **1.3 Project Description (brief summary in max. 500 words)** |
| This project represents a second phase to the activity delivered by the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Growth Hub (CIOSGH). It reflects the experience of the Phase 1 CIOSGH project, client feedback and intelligence from other Growth Hubs nationally. It makes some key improvements in the systems, processes and delivery building on this advance in knowledge of operation. It draws on experience from other Growth Hubs around the country reflecting on lessons learnt from evaluations that have been published; national policy; and learning from events such as the Growth Hub Network Meetings (delivered by BEIS on a quarterly basis). The CIOSGH runs in conjunction with the CIOS Skills Hub (ESF Funded) and in some cases shares staff across both projects (see organogram). The combined operation of both projects offers considerable traction and penetration in the SME landscape in CIOS to support businesses with growth aspirations and ultimately boost business productivity. By way of background, the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Growth Hub (CIOSGH) is part of Government’s National Growth Hub network and provides a ‘one stop shop’ service for pre-start, start up and established SMEs to seek bespoke support to foster growth and enhance productivity across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (CIOS). It does this by providing a comprehensive support service consisting of; * Business Navigators- Phone based service; limited advice, appointment management (for Connectors), eligibility checks, Growth assessment, CRM Management etc
* Business Connectors- Information, Diagnostic and Brokerage (IDB) service, client account management, support knowledge experts, networking and marketing
* Website- Comprehensive website to provide the ‘Hub’ and focus for businesses seeking to grow in CIOS, communication of ‘Growth Ecosystem’ advice on service, provide case studies/PR for client businesses, news, listings, events etc
* Data Management- Reporting, CRM Management, intelligence
* Communications- Comprehensive communications and PR function including marketing, website management and social media delivery to market and showcase service.

The project works closely with other ERDF funded business support in Cornwall, the private sector support and national support to ensure pre-starts and SME businesses get the support and advice they need to grow. Locally it does this through regular meetings with partners and a more formal quarterly meeting of the Business Support Delivery Board Exec. Group that is chaired by the Growth Hub Operations Director. |

**Part 2 Summative Assessment Plan**

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| **2.1 Summative Assessment Objectives (max 500 words)**Please provide your objectives. Objectives should focus on describing what insights the summative assessment will seek to provide in respect of: * The design of the project;
* How the project has performed against its targets;
* The nature of the project’s outcomes and impacts and the value for money that has been achieved;
* The lessons which have emerged through the experience of delivering the project.
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| The specific activities that will be undertaken by the CIOSGH will be an Information, Diagnostic and Brokerage (IDB) service to enable Cornwall and IoS SMEs to access bespoke support for growth from the myriad of services on offer both within and outside of Cornwall and IoS. We will engage with 2,400 pre-start businesses and SMEs in the life of the project undertaking a 3-hour diagnostic under Indicator P13. There is a growing demand for this service, evidenced by a growing pipeline of new and ‘hard to reach’ SMEs accessing the service in addition to positive feedback from clients, who state the service is of significant value to them in their growth plans. Phase 2 builds on current delivery by addressing an identified gap in the CIOSGH IDB process to foster efficiency in the client journey (a tiered approach- see below). Additionally, phase 2 will operate a ‘Growth Access Fund, enabling 100 SMEs (C1/C2/C6) to apply for funding of £1,000 (with a £500 match from the business) to secure bespoke support from the private sector to deliver short, sharp interventions with significant impact on the businesses growth plans. Typically, this will either prepare a business for more intensive support from an ERDF Business Support Partner, accelerate growth post intervention, or accelerate growth plans for a business that does not want or have time for further funded intervention. The ‘Growth Access Fund’ will enhance the offer from partner organisations where the funding will both allow SMEs to be ‘support ready’, or be able to further develop growth plans post support. The objectives for the Summative Assessment can be grouped under the following headings.1. **Project design** - The Summative Assessment will critically assess the design of the project and explore all aspects of the rationale for intervention by the programme. This will be considered both at the time the project was conceived at the start of Phase 2, as well as throughout delivery. In simple terms, the Summative Assessment will assess whether the project’s aims (ie. Simplifying the pathway to Business Support for SMEs) remain relevant, and whether the way the CIOSGH has been designed remains appropriate. The design consideration are important foe any further iterations of the CIOSGH post EU support.
2. **Project performance** - The Summative Assessment will analyse the programme’s performance against its contractual spend and output targets. This will identify and explore the factors behind the programme’s performance, focussing in particular on the feedback from the business base and partners to whom the project has referred into (ie other ERDF Funded Business support and the Skills Hub).
3. **Project process evaluation** - The Summative Assessment will consider the overall delivery and management processes of the CIOSGH. In particular, the study will consider the aspects of delivery which have worked well, and others which have worked less well. This will allow CDC to reflect on past delivery and improve ongoing delivery for the CIOSGH post EU Funding when designing new delivery models to link businesses with support.

The study will also consider whether the management and delivery structures set in place were (and still are) appropriate, and the ways these have been influenced by project design and their effect on overall project performance. This will consider beneficiaries’ experience, satisfaction with the services on offer, satisfaction amongst partners and wider stakeholders as well as views about programme marketing that have all led to SMEs ease of access to the CIOSGH.1. **Impact and effectiveness** - The Summative Assessment will assess the simplification of the pathway to business support for the SMEs who have accessed the service, especially whether the outcomes and impacts set out in the logic model have materialised. Furthermore, an assessment of the marketing of the project and co-ordination (where possible) of business support messaging across CIOS will be examined.

**Economy** - Finally, the Summative Assessment will also assess whether the programme has created a positive return on investment, especially for public sector investment. The impact assessment will quantify the overall net additional impacts of the project, value for money and return on investment |

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| **2.2 Logic Model:** |
| Have you completed the project logic model form and submitted it to us (see Appendix A of the summative assessment appendices)? | Yes X | No ☐ |

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| **2.3 Approach, Methods and Tasks (max 1,000 words)**Referring back to the objectives of the summative assessment, please outline the methods that will be used to deliver the insights. The consideration of methods (see Appendix C of the summative assessment appendices) needs to encompass the progress, process and impact focused elements of the summative assessment. |
| Our approach to delivering the Summative Assessment is based on best practice guidance (such as that set out in the Good Project Evaluation Principles, and The Magenta Book) and experience assessing similar projects (especially by the external consultants selected to deliver this work). We will also draw on the experiences of the evaluation from Phase 1 that was completed by Ash Futures in September 2018.The work programme being developed for the Summative Assessment of the CIOSGH consists of three distinctive stages - a baseline evaluation, a second interim evaluation, and final a Summative Assessment - all of which build one on the other to assess the project’s impacts. An ongoing theme throughout this process will be the feedback provided to CDC and its partners on how management and project delivery could be improved and the benefits generated maximised. The **baseline** **interim evaluation** will undertake a detailed review of the project’s rationale and will focus primarily on programme design, delivery systems and delivery of activities. This will also examine a number of examples of best practice from other Growth Hubs around England (to be completed by End of January 2019). The **second interim evaluation** (to be completed by the end of August 2020) will focus on project delivery and consider outcomes and explore strategic added value in relation to the design of CIOSGH and models going forward. Again, design in relation to other Growth Hubs around England will be considered.The **third stage (ie. the Summative Assessment)** will take place in the final six months of delivery and will be completed by the end of August 2021. This stage will build on the research undertaken in stages 1 and 2 of the study and will synthesise the various strands of research to address the objectives identified in Section 2.1 above. The key research tasks are likely to include the following:1. Analysis of the **logic model** and the programme’s **rationale** both at project inception and throughout delivery, to consider whether these were/ are still appropriate. This process would be informed by desk-based research of key documentation and discussions with programme stakeholders.
2. Analysis of **project performance data** to explore key trends in overall performance.
3. **Project delivery review** providing a more qualitative analysis of performance, drawing on discussions with the delivery team.
4. **Primary research** with project beneficiaries will establish overall satisfaction with the programme, identify best practice, and provide the basis for the project’s impact assessment.
5. A **quantitative impact analysis** which draws on primary research, monitoring data and a counterfactual impact assessment to identify the (net) impacts generated by the CIOSGH. An assessment of the most appropriate (and feasible) impact evaluation options will be undertaken and signed-off by the end of Stage 1. However, if none of the options are deemed feasible, a self-reported approach gathered through a beneficiary survey would be applied. This would ensure that all data needed to produce the Summative Assessment is being collected from all beneficiaries.

The project’s logic model sets out a target to support 2400 SMEs. The Summative Assessment will ensure the sample of beneficiaries surveyed is representative and gather evidence from a range of clients. At this stage, it is too early to confirm whether a web-based or telephone-based survey is the most appropriate approach, this will be discussed based on our experience of the Phase 1 Evaluation. |

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| **2.4 Data and Monitoring (max 500 words)**Please briefly demonstrate that appropriate monitoring arrangements are in place to support strong and insightful summative assessment and confirm your commitment to collecting the minimum / compulsory data set out in Appendix D of the summative assessment appendices and also outline any additional monitoring data.  |
| The CIOSGH has identified several indicators that need to be measured in order to support the delivery of the Summative Assessment, and aide in the ongoing monitoring of its performance. The following indicators are identified as “required” in Appendix D of the Summative Assessment guidance and will therefore be collected for each beneficiary receiving support. Most of this information will be gathered at registration and will be updated on an ongoing basis to reflect the most up-to-date position throughout delivery. * Named contact, telephone number and email address;
* Business sector (SIC code);
* Business start-date;
* Business trading age at the start of support;
* FTE employment at the start of support;
* Financial turnover for last complete financial year prior to receiving support;
* State Aid in last three financial years prior to receiving support; and
* Date when support first accessed;

The Summative Assessment guidance (Appendix D), identifies the following data as useful (ie. “advised”) for the Summative Assessment process. Wherever possible, this information will be collected and may be passed onto the external evaluators to assist with the Summative Assessment of the programme.* A measure of intensity of support, such as the value of the assistance (P13 or C1 etc)
* Adoption of new technologies (for example through the A2GF Grant)
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| **2.5 Implementing the Summative Assessment (max 500 words)**Please set out the practical steps involved in implementing the summative assessment. This should cover the following. * The assessment route: who will undertake the assessment and whether the assessment will be carried out internally or by external evaluators, explaining the rationale for this decision. If external support will be procured, this section should set out the process for procurement and ensure compliance with ERDF regulations.
* Timescale and Outputs: delivery plan identifying key milestones and output dates.
* Management and Quality Assurance plans.
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| The Summative Assessment of CIOSGH will be undertaken by external consultants that will be commissioned from a competitive tender process. The proposed timeline for undertaking the Summative Assessment for the programme, follows that set out in the attached ITT (see Section 6. Tender and commission timetable) and covers the key milestones from publication of the ITT, to submission of the final report.

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| **Milestone** | **Date** |
| Submission of Summative Assessment Plan | September 2019 |
| Publication of ITT | October 2019 |
| Appointment of external consultants | November 2019 |
| Project inception meeting | November 2019 |
| Baseline evaluation  | January 2020 |
| Interim evaluation  | August 2020 |
| Summative Assessment and presentation | August 2021 |

The timetable set out above has been designed to allow CDC to consider project design, ongoing performance, delivery and management processes, and progress towards the programme’s outcomes at different stages of delivery. This process will provide feedback about the programme’s overall progress towards its intended outputs and outcomes and ensure that delivery is reviewed and improved on an ongoing basis. As CDC will oversee delivery of the Summative Assessment, undertaking strategic oversight, ensuring quality assurance and managing performance of the external evaluators to ensure that the outputs delivered are fit for purpose and meet the evaluation objectives for the programme. |

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| **2.6 Dissemination (max 500 words)**Please set out how you propose to disseminate and share the findings from the summative assessment.  |
| I understand that, as a minimum, the full report needs to be shared with DCLG and the summative assessment summary findings template (ref. ESIF-Form-1-014) must be freely available. | Yes X | No ☐ |
| The baseline evaluation will be made available to partners at CDC, the programme’s Steering Group and funders (incl. CIoS LEP, Cornwall CC and MHCLG) to ensure that any emerging lessons can be passed on, and delivery improved. This is particularly important to feed into any design of the CIOSGH in the future and develop the LIS.Once produced, the interim evaluation and Summative Assessment will be distributed more widely including to the Steering Group, key stakeholders, delivery partners, relevant sector bodies in Cornwall as well as funders (ie. CIoS LEP, Cornwall CC and MHCLG). A shorter, distilled version of the second interim evaluation and Summative Assessment will be drafted and shared more widely amongst programme beneficiaries, and businesses within the CIoS LEP area. The distilled version of the second interim evaluation and Summative Assessment will be distributed via relevant social medial channels and the CIOSGH newsletter to ensure ‘good news’ project performance is reported. |