

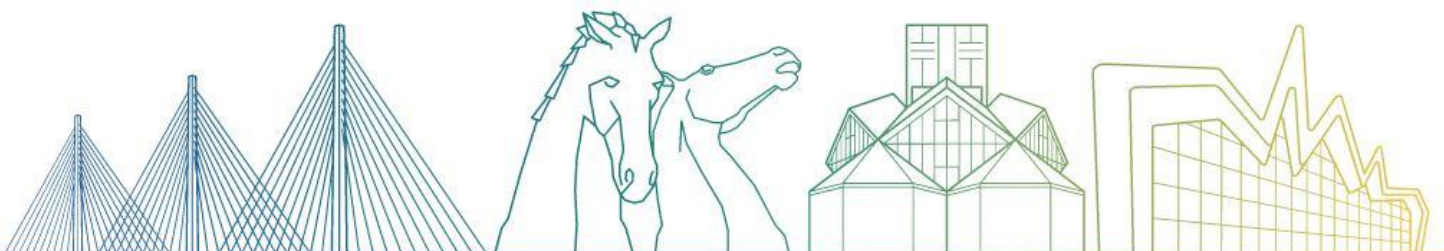


SHRED

Scottish Hub For Regional
Economic Development

City Region Deals: Embedding Equalities in Operational Business Cases

Chris Oswald



INTRODUCTION

This guidance is to help project owners think about inclusive growth, particularly as it relates to equalities, as they develop their business cases.

Inclusive growth is defined by The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as economic growth that is distributed fairly across society and creates opportunities for all.¹

It is a key aspect of all City Region and Growth Deals, as set out in the Scottish Government's conditions of grant aid:

The Regional Partners will work with the Equalities and Human Rights Commission and others to explore opportunities to maximise the impact of the Programme to allow the benefits of growth to be shared by all and to advance overall equality of opportunity under the Equality Act 2010 including the new socio-economic duty that came into force in April 2018.²

It is important that equalities are considered at the start of a project plan. This will require clarity about who is likely to benefit and how, avoiding assertion that the project will promote equality and inclusive growth without sufficient supporting evidence. In other words, show how you will embed equality within the project meaningfully.

The prompts below are not exhaustive, but are offered to help you think through your approach.

¹ <https://www.oecd.org/inclusive-growth/#introduction>

² Inclusive Growth focusses on groups who share Protected Characteristics and/ or live in deprivation. Protected Characteristics are a person's age, disability, faith or belief, ethnic origin, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy/ maternity, sex/gender, sexual orientation, or Trans status. Not all of these will be relevant to your aims, so be clear about who you are targeting. Be aware that deprivation can affect everyone but that disabled people, lone parents and some ethnic minorities are particularly affected by unemployment and poverty.

PROJECTS SHOULD AIM TO

1. Set out their equalities ambition

For example, you might be aiming to:

- a. Reduce the gender deficit within your region in relevant sectors (for example, construction).
- b. Help align the employment rate of minority ethnic people across your area with the equivalent proportion of working-age population.
- c. Reduce the proportion of households within your area that are workless, in order to align with or improve on the Scottish average.

2. Understand the baseline data

For example:

- a. How many people in the region are currently working in industries being supported by the Deal?
- b. Are some groups – e.g. women, disabled people – concentrated in lower paid jobs in the industry?
- c. What are the percentage gaps in participation rates that you want to improve, for example in employment or training?

3. Set clear targets

For example:

- a. Increase the number of women in higher paid jobs by (number) by (when).
- b. Increase the number of disabled people participating in apprenticeships by (number) by (when).
- c. Increase the number of women in STEM professions by (number) by (when).
- d. Ensure that (percentage) of all jobs created pay the living wage.

PROJECTS SHOULD BEAR IN MIND

1. The aim is to succinctly describe a clear and convincing approach to deliver set equality outputs and outcomes.
2. Many readers (Governments, elected members) will not know all the linkages in your projects, so if relying on another programme to deliver a key dependency (such as a Skills and Employability Development Programme) set out what they are going to deliver in the specific context of this project, for example:
 - a. “The Regional Skills and Employability Development Programme is working to reduce the number of workless households in the region to the Scottish average. They will support this project by...”; and
 - b. Be sure that the programme you are depending on actually does what you expect it to.
3. Be realistic – no one project can achieve every goal. Unless you are absolutely certain that your project will achieve certain goal e.g. reduce child poverty in a measurable way, don’t say it will.
4. The lack of data at Local Authority level may be an issue. National data plus local investigations, such as the local uptake of apprenticeships, should be helpful in drawing an inference about the issue and the gaps.
5. Be explicit about who you are seeking to draw into any given industry and how (for example, would the existing diversity profile of the industry justify positive action measures?).
6. When you talk about baselines and improvement from that baseline you must have established what the baseline is.
7. Speak to your procurement colleagues early so they are clear about what it is that you want to achieve. Remember that if your project involves building they will be able to assist you to make the construction sector more inclusive.
8. Be ambitious when considering Community Benefits. How can you encourage contractors to adopt best employment practices when delivering the contract?

SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION AND DATA

- ➔ The ASHE and Scottish Household Surveys contain a lot of local data which is helpful to understand labour market trends and diversity issues. These are particularly strong on sex, age and deprivation issues.
- ➔ The **Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020** allows you to search for granular data on the proportion of people living in each deprivation quintile, by postcode.
- ➔ Many local councils published analyses of the 2011 census which remains the most accurate information on ethnicity and faith in your areas. This is often available at ward level.
- ➔ Information about disabled peoples employment locally is available from the DWP.
- ➔ Skills Development Scotland local offices should be able to tell you about participation in apprenticeship programmes by sex, disability and ethnic origin.
- ➔ FE and HE colleagues can tell you about participation by sex, disability, ethnicity and socio economic status, although this may not always be about local students. Your Education Authority may be able to tell you about student's subject choice.
- ➔ Local representative organisations and charities will have valuable insights into issues about the problems some communities have when trying to access employment or training.

Specialist agencies such as Close the Gap and Engender (Sex), Inclusion Scotland (Disability), Stonewall and the Equality Network (LGBT), Age Scotland and the Scottish Youth Parliament (age), CEMVO, BEMIS and CREAR (ethnicity) have a lot of information on their websites. The Equality & Human Rights Commission's Scotland **website** also has information about equality law and current research. Its publication "How Fair is Scotland" sets out our key equality challenges.

SOURCES OF SUPPORT

- ➔ The Scottish Government seconded Chris Oswald from the Equality & Human Rights Commission to offer support to Scotland's 12 City Region and Growth Deals. Where possible route your inquiries through your local PMO.
- ➔ Keep an eye on the [SHRED website](#), which publishes blogs on inclusive growth practice. It also hosts the Wellbeing Economy Monitor and Toolkit and research. Think about submitting a blog about your own local practice.
- ➔ Most Local Authorities, Universities and other key statutory partners will have an Equalities Unit or officer who can help you understand local equality and diversity issues. Analysts and research officers can also help you to interpret data.
- ➔ Other project owners will often as not be working on similar issues to your own. They may have tips to share with you.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris Oswald wrote this guide whilst on secondment from the EHRC to the Scottish Government. He has worked on equality and human rights issues in Scotland in the voluntary sector, for Health Boards, and in the Commission for Racial Equality & the Disability Rights Commission.