



# Competitive calls to select the ‘best’ projects in Nordrhein-Westfalen

The competitive call approach is seen as a means of attracting high quality projects. It involves high-profile competitive procedures, aimed at high quality projects, with transparent selection criteria and external expert juries. Applied in the German *Land* Nordrhein-Westfalen (NRW) at a large scale in the ERDF OP of the 2007-13 period, it is seen to have generated projects of a much higher quality than were seen in previous periods. The revision of the calls approach has been central to the process of developing the 2014-20 OP and has involved extensive consultation and communication with actors outside the managing authority, notably the intermediate bodies and the various *Land* ministries, as well as with economic and social partners. On this basis, a number of changes are being introduced for the 2014-20 period.

In 2014-20, Nordrhein-Westfalen will benefit from €1,212 million of ERDF funds. The OP is managed by the Ministry for Business, Energy, Industry, SMEs & the Craft Sector.

## Competitive calls in 2014-20

### Scope

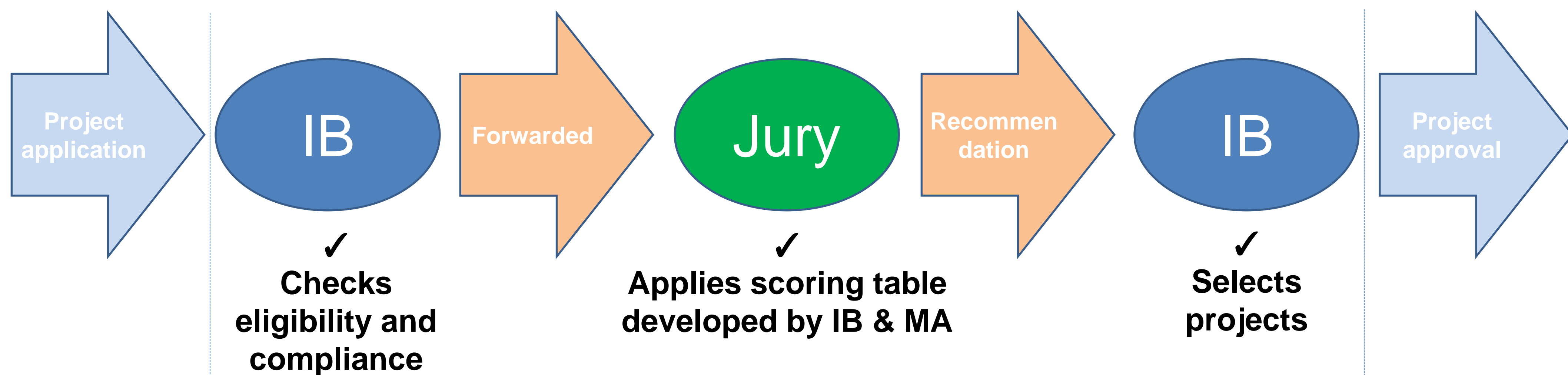
**Primary means for selecting projects relating to the Land's 8 priority sectors (*Leitmärkte*):**

Mechanical and plant engineering / production technology; new materials; mobility and logistics; information and communication sector; energy and environmental sector; media and creative sector; health; life sciences.

### Criteria

**Key selection criteria:** Innovation-related content, Potential for business application, Scope for knowledge transfer

Additional specific project selection criteria will be set out in each competitive call document. These will be used as the basis for scoring project applications. Each call will be prepared by a working group (MA, responsible IB, other ministries) and include information on goals; formal requirements; selection criteria; members of the selection jury; and a timetable.



## Changes from 2007-13

	Number of calls	Call management	Appraisal process	Jury composition
<b>2007-2013</b>	54 calls with single submission dates	Different IBs responsible for different process stages	Basic eligibility criteria not considered early enough	Mainly composed of technical experts with expertise linked to call theme
	<b>Reduce</b>	<b>Streamline</b>	<b>Tighten</b>	<b>Vary</b>
<b>2014-2020</b>	8 calls with several submission dates to enhance consistency and predictability	Single IB in charge of each call from design to final reporting	Applications only go forward to expert jury if basic eligibility criteria are met	Not only technical expertise but also administrative and financial

**Evaluation evidence:** The changes made for the 2014-20 NRW ERDF OP result from two evaluations<sup>1</sup> of procedural aspects and from internal reflections (among the MA and IBs) of the benefits and problems of the approach taken in 2007-13. A further evaluation of the 2007-13 calls is planned and will focus on content issues (contribution to key goals such as innovation and sustainability). The 2014-20 approach is likely to be subject to further evaluations and an on-going review process.

#### Learning:

- Calls need to be budgeted carefully because they can use up large funding amounts if many good and large applications are put forward;
- Strong communication in advance of application deadlines is important to ensure the OP reaches new recipients;
- The expert jury needs to receive clear guidance, e.g. via a thorough scoring table; experts cannot ask applicants for fundamental changes.

**For further information, please contact the Objective 2 Secretariat in Nordrhein-Westfalen: [claudia.schulte@mweimh.nrw.de](mailto:claudia.schulte@mweimh.nrw.de)**

Extensive information on the 2007-13 calls is available at: [http://www.ziel2.nrw.de/2 Wettbewerbe und weitere Foerdermoeglichkeiten/index.php](http://www.ziel2.nrw.de/2_Wettbewerbe_und_weitere_Foerdermoeglichkeiten/index.php)

<sup>1</sup>) MR Gesellschaft für Regionalberatung and GEFRA Gesellschaft für Finanz- und Regionalanalysen (2008) Wettbewerbe des Landes NRW, Report to Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Mittelstand und Energie des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, Münster / Bremen; Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Energie, Industrie, Mittelstand und Handwerk des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen (2012) *Evaluierung von wettbewerblichen Auswahlverfahren des Ziel 2-Programms (2007-2013)*.