

Investment Review 2023 — Managing an impartial and transparent process

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How we engage and communicate with the sector during this period is key for achieving the objectives of the Investment Review and for developing multi-year funding agreements that are representative of the diversity of groups and communities across Wales.

Therefore, it is vital that we ensure the process we adopt for conducting the Investment Review is fair, transparent, equitable and:

- Ensures the key messages and objectives of the Investment Review are accessible to all, and communicated, clearly and consistently
- All information is available to potential applicants are able to access information and enter into a dialogue with us regarding these key messages, including through publications and the use of published FAQs
- Our communication strategy and application process does not advantage organisations with whom we may already have a relationship, including current Portfolio members or those whom we have funded through Lottery or disadvantage those organisations that haven't
- Our support to all potential applicants is consistent, timely and without differential

We have clear guidance on how we manage related party interests in our published Registration and Declaration of Interest Policy, particularly regarding the application of these at meetings. This Policy applies to Council Members, Members (including Associates) and staff.

The following guidance complements this Policy and relates to the management of requests from organisations for advice and guidance during the Investment Review period, to ensure consistency and fairness, particularly up to the point of deadline for applications.

The action we take in communicating and engaging with potential applicants would differ at key stages of the process and summarised on the following page:

Public Consultation July – 10 Oct 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information at this stage is public knowledge and accessible to all.• Promote the Investment Review, have conversations with organisations based on published information and encourage the Sector to respond to the consultation to help inform our final approach.• Use of FAQs via a dedicated email address to share any additional information resulting from individual conversations and questions.• Declarations of interest will be noted but would not be prohibitive.
Final Versions prepared 11 Oct – 4 Nov 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consultation period closed, Terms of Reference including objectives for the Review, application format finalised for Council approval.• Content of the final versions will not be public knowledge until they are published post November Council.• Do not engage in specific Investment Review conversations other than redirecting enquiries back to previously published consultation paper.• Declarations at the November Council meeting noted but, in consideration of its vital role in agreeing final versions, may be decided by the Chair not to be prohibitive, as the discussion will be on the final terms for the Review, not specific to any potential applicant and the final versions will be published shortly thereafter.• To ensure fairness, information shared before or resulting from the Council meeting must not be shared externally prior to its publication.
Final Versions launched Nov – Dec 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final versions now in public domain post 11 November Council meeting.• Officers may promote the opportunity to apply and respond to general questions by referring to the content of the published terms.• Officers should be clear in conversations with potential applicants that the applicant is responsible for deciding whether or not apply to the Investment Review.
Application Launch / Deadline Jan 2023 – March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Officers and members of Council must be careful that, whilst they may continue to engage and communicate with organisations, they are not drawn into specific conversations regarding the Investment Review as this may be interpreted as providing specific advice to individuals regarding their application.• External enquires should be directed back to the final published guidance and FAQs.• Declarations of interest at this point will require the exclusion of officers or Council members who are conflicted from discussion of Investment Review matters, to ensure the application process is fair and transparent for all potential applicants.
Assessments April – July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Same as per Application Launch above – no specific external conversations regarding Investment Review applications and all enquires directed back to published information.• Declarations of interest considerations will also be actioned for Officers and any other parties to the assessment and decision making process (e.g. Associates) and, where there is an identified conflict, that individual will not participate in that part of the process or particular meeting.
Post Council July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council decisions in principle announced.• Appeal process launched and overseen by Director of Finance and Business Services (DFBS) as independent from Investment Review Project Board.• Appeal enquires and questions to be directed to DFBS.