Purpose of report:
- To inform the Regional Transport Forum of the call for transport project concepts under the East of England European Regional Development Fund.

Recommendations:
1. It is recommended that RTF members note the call and disseminate widely to transport colleagues in the region.

1. Background

1.1 The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is a €308 billion programme of European Structural Funds across EU Member States for the period 2007-13. The East of England's allocation is around £83 million, which is to be invested in the region under the EU Competitiveness and Employment objective.

1.2 The ERDF programme for the East of England will support low carbon economic growth.

1.3 The transport call is being primarily made under Priority Axis 3, “ensuring sustainable development, production and consumption”, but projects under Axis 1 and 2 are possible.

2. Transport Projects Call

2.1 An allocation of £8 million ERDF will be made available for this call leading to a minimum total value of projects of £20 million when match funding is taken into account. The £12 million match funding required can be from public or private sources or a combination of both.

2.2 There is 40% match funding for projects that meet the criteria.

2.3 The key general criteria that eligible projects need to address are:

2.3.1 Demonstrable and attributable economic benefits to SMEs in the East of England;

2.3.2 Measured reductions of carbon/greenhouse gas emissions through efficiencies or the development of lower carbon technologies or practices.

2.3 In addition, projects will need to be focused on the following:

2.4.1 how they can reduce carbon emissions, or may help to stimulate sectors such as low carbon fuels, improved logistics, better data or freight management;

2.4.2 Information communication technology (ICT);

2.4.3 Innovation transport systems (ITS) and other communication systems;
2.4.4 All projects will need to practically support, advise and guide SMEs and other similar sized organisations to improve transport and other sectors.

2.4 Based on an analysis undertaken for the East of England Transport and Carbon Study (TraCS), proposals eligible for funding through this ERDF transport call are likely to fall within the categories listed below:

2.5.1 SME advice and technical support;

2.5.2 Data / demand management (freight and logistics) e.g. ITS etc;

2.5.3 Business clusters and collaborative hubs;

2.5.4 Sustainable communities;

2.5.5 R&D related activities (promoting innovative approaches on fuels, renewable energy, and/or use of low carbon vehicles within SMEs)

3. Timetable

3.1 Below is a provisional timetable (subject to final confirmation):

3.1.1 Launch date: 22 November 2010

3.1.2 Deadline for submission of project concept note: 28 January 2011

3.1.3 Invitation to submit full business case: 11 February 2011

3.1.4 Deadline for full application: 21 April 2011

3.1.5 Final decision: 21 June 2011

3.1.6 Funding agreement issued: 27 June 2011

4. Conclusion

4.1 If you would like more information, please consult the EEDA website www.eeda.org.uk/erdf.asp or contact Michelle Burdett at EEDA on 01223 484657 or michelleburdett@eeda.org.uk

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