

## How does BCR make CIF decisions?

### Role of BCR

BCR was set up as an independent entity under the Alternative Remedies Package (ARP) agreed between the Treasury (HMT), the European Commission and Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS).

The ARP sets the criteria for, and amounts of, any awards, along with the timelines within which activities such as opening and closing of bid periods, decision-making and disbursement of funds must take place.

BCR's primary role is to apply the terms of the ARP and, operating strictly within the ARP terms, to apply the given eligibility criteria and to then consider the applications of eligible bodies. Award decisions are made at BCR's sole discretion.

### Monitor

HMT has appointed Mazars as the monitor for the project. Their role is in part to assure HMT that the processes BCR has in place are robust and effective. They attend BCR board meetings and bid decision meetings.

The Monitor are involved in signing off on BCR compliance with the agreed processes and also in monitoring the award implementation and BCR monitoring of performance.

### The applicant journey

Potential applicants must be eligible against the criteria established in the ARP. These can be viewed [here](#).

Applicants use standard [application forms](#) and can engage in Q&A with BCR within published deadlines.

Successful applicants [sign a contract](#) with BCR.

### The CIF award process

As required in the project design, BCR has appointed an external firm (Baringa Partners LLP) to deliver the pre-Board processes and act as a resource to the BCR Board. Baringa support BCR as follows:

- Eligibility and sanction checks are undertaken by the Baringa team upon receipt of applications.
- Applications are then assessed by the Baringa team against the [assessment criteria](#) to produce a longlist for each award which is then presented, together with financial health and reputational considerations, to the BCR Board which then decides how to proceed.
- All longlisted applications are then considered by an Expert Panel of Baringa's senior consultants (BCR attend as observers) to establish a proposed unranked shortlist for each award.
- The shortlist is then presented to BCR's Evaluation Committee which will review and finalise a shortlist for presentation to the BCR Board. Baringa supports the Board by providing additional information as required to support the Board decision making process.
- If at any stage BCR needs further information from applicants, it will seek to address these in the first instance via the CIF tool but, if necessary, may also use face-to-face meetings.

- Each Board member (5 in total) has a single vote deciding which eligible organisations receive the CIF awards.

The Monitor attends to observe the decision-making process – and decisions are not announced until Monitor confirmation of satisfactory processes has been received.

Applicants are informed of the outcome, subject to contract in the case of those offered awards. BCR is required to release funds within 40 business days of contract signing.

### Confidentiality

In the course of receiving bids BCR becomes privy to commercially sensitive information and consequently BCR are not at liberty to expose in public or to third parties the details of bids or the discussion of them.

### Transparency post-award

Transparency is a core value of BCR.

*Applications:* Full details of the information required from applicants in their application form is viewable [here](#). This includes a requirement for senior level sign off for the statements and commitments made.

*Agreements:* The Alternative Remedies Package provides a template agreement for successful bidders, and any application is made in the awareness and acceptance of the terms in the agreement template.

The agreement includes provision for a formal process for BCR monitoring of the use of funds by the successful applicants and the circumstances in which BCR can elect to audit and/or claw back funds, including where the applicant wants to make a change to its business case as submitted at application.

Full details of the template agreement are viewable [here](#).

*Public commitments:* To maximise public transparency, BCR requires that every bidder provides us with a set of commitments in the knowledge that, should their bid be successful, these will be published and they will thereby be held publicly accountable for them both during and beyond the BCR monitoring period.

The commitments of those awarded can be found on our website ([here](#)) and, as part of contracting arrangements, BCR will be requiring that awardees produce regular and comparable updates available for public scrutiny.

*Update:* BCR has been concerned that the period over which monitoring takes place per the project design is too short and, acting on legal advice, BCR has implemented a means by which it may be extended - from 18 months after signing agreements, to 15 April 2022 unless terminated earlier by the mutual agreement of BCR, HMT and RBS).