



Cabinet Office

Chloë Smith MP
Minister for Political and Constitutional Reform

70 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AS

Web www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Our Ref: MP608498

Chief Executives / Electoral Registration Officers
Electoral Services Managers

18 June 2013

Dear Chief Executive (ERO) Electoral Services Manager,

The Government is committed to helping EROs increase the rate of voter registration while also meeting the timeline for IER delivery. I am writing to inform you about two new initiatives to help maximise registration rates among under-registered groups. Both initiatives offer Local Authorities and Voluntary Joint Boards the opportunity to apply for additional funding for 2013/14.

Although the electoral register is 85% to 87% complete, research published by the Electoral Commission suggests that approximately six million people living in Great Britain who could be registered are not. Some groups in particular are less likely to be registered. These groups include young people, private and social renters and students. Research has repeatedly shown that moving home is a key driver of under-registration and many of these groups are more mobile than the rest of the population.

The Cabinet Office has funding available to support schemes to increase the rate of voter registration among under-registered groups prior to the confirmation exercise in June 2014. The two schemes offer funding on an optional basis. EROs are under no obligation to apply for funding, and to be awarded support through either scheme, EROs must be able to show that there will be no negative impact on their ability to deliver IER.

Scheme 1: Targeted Canvassing Fund


The Cabinet Office have funds available for EROs to conduct additional, targeted canvassing activities after the publication of the delayed register in February 2014 and before confirmation in June 2014. These funds will be awarded to those EROs who put forward robust business proposals to show how they will specifically target groups who are under-registered in their area. Targeted canvassing may be focussed, for example, on areas with high under-registration, and EROs will need to explain how the addresses of these areas will be identified.

Scheme 2: ERO Registration Fund

I am aware that alongside some strong ongoing programmes for increasing registration rates, Electoral Services and other Local Authority staff often have new ideas for targeting under-registered groups but lack the resources to be able to deliver them on an appropriate scale. The Cabinet Office has funding available to award to EROs who successfully submit proposals for practical schemes which could be run in one or both of two activity periods before confirmation in June 2014. The first period of activity is the same as that of the delayed canvass from October 2013 to February 2014; the second is the same as the pre-confirmation period from February to June 2014. Proposed activities do not have to last the full length of either of these periods.

We are also working with other organisations which have an interest in democratic participation, such as those in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, to increase rates of voter registration. We hope to find further ways to increase registration levels through engagement and registration activities. We will keep you updated as this work progresses.

If you would like further information about the targeted canvassing or the ERO registration funds, please contact the Cabinet Office as soon as possible at ERODelivery@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk. You should also contact this address if you have any further enquiries about the administration of the scheme. The deadline for applications for the first round of the ERO registration fund is **1 August**; the deadline for applications for the second round of the ERO registration fund and the targeted canvass fund is **1 December**.

Yours sincerely,


CHLOË SMITH MP