

PRE-ANNOUNCEMENT AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Preparatory Project Applications

Background

The Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme 2014-2020 was successfully implemented and has led to continued commitment to developing a new successor programme that is expected to run until 2027. Preparations are now complete for the new Programme, and the priorities and objectives of the Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic 2021 – 2027 Programme (Interreg NPA) are established.

The Interreg NPA Programme is part of the European Territorial Cooperation Objective supported by the European Regional Development Fund. The programme contributes to and aligns with the European Cohesion strategy of a Greener and Smarter Europe, and a Europe closer to citizens, National and Regional policies and development strategies, macro regional and sea basin strategies, and other programmes covering parts of the geographical area. Furthermore, an increased interest and rapid developments in Arctic regions has resulted in a more explicit recognition of the programme's regional development contribution to the EU's Arctic Policy.

Terms of Reference

The programme's vision is a Northern Periphery and Arctic area where communities cooperate with each other to harness opportunities, find common solutions to shared challenges and together become more prosperous and resilient.

In order to ensure that the new NPA Programme begins its implementation pro-actively, the Monitoring Committee of Interreg NPA would like to announce and encourage preparatory project applicants to start to develop their preparatory project ideas, explore potential partnership and investigate match funding sources for main project application calls.

Expected outcomes

Preparatory projects applicants are expected to address their chosen specific objective with actions such as feasibility studies, stakeholder mapping, and recommendations with the purpose of developing project ideas, ideally concluding with the presentation of a main project application addressing the Third or Fourth Call for main project proposals.

The Monitoring Committee is looking to fund projects in the following Priorities:

PRIORITY 1: Strengthening the innovation capacity for resilient and attractive NPA communities

1.1 - Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies

1.2 - Reaping the benefits of digitisation for citizens, companies, research organisations and public authorities and

1.3 - Enhancing sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in SMEs, including by productive investments

PRIORITY 2: Strengthening the capacity for climate change adaptation, and resource sufficiency in NPA communities

2.1 - Promoting energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions

2.2 - Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches and

2.3 - Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy

For all Priorities, the following is highlighted:

- All projects are expected make a special effort to include end users in their project proposals. End user involvement can be demonstrated by the composition of the partnership (e.g. involvement as full project partners, or associated partners), the involvement of end users as described in dedicated work package activities, or by attaching letters of support from end users.
- In all activities that are approved by the NPA programme, there should be an integration of the horizontal criteria. This means that the activities should strive for sustainable development, with equal opportunities for men and women, non-discrimination and accessibility and inclusion of underrepresented groups, including indigenous peoples and other culturally and linguistically distinct groups originating from the NPA area. Activities should be carried out with respect for fundamental rights.

Project Budget Preparatory projects are expected to have a total budget of 50.000 EUR for a 6-month project or total budget for a 12-month project of 100.000 EUR including match funding.

Project duration Preparatory projects: 6-months or 12-month for project activities, excluding final reporting.

Project structure Preparatory projects involve partners from at least 2 programme partner countries, at least one of which from an EU Member States. Partnerships are recommended to include at least 2 of the 3 geographical zones of the programme area: Finland-Sweden-Norway; Ireland; Faroe Islands-Greenland-Iceland.

Lump sum The support to the beneficiaries will be handled as a lump sum based on a draft budget. In case of approval, the draft budget will be converted to a lump sum budget in Jems. The NPA eligibility rules and intervention rates outlined in the Programme Manual apply.

In addition to expectations outlined in the Interreg Regulation (Article 26, Regulation 2021/1059), Lead Partners have to meet the following criteria:

- They are a public sector organisation.
- They are based in the NPA Programme area, unless they have a national remit that covers the Programme area.

Project partners are expected to be located inside the NPA area and can be either public or private organisations.

Timeline

Pre-announcement	28 th June 2022
OPENING OF CALL:	29th August 2022
APPLICATION DEADLINE:	19th September 2022 12:00 PM (CET)
DECISION DATE:	23rd November 2022 <i>(Date subject to MC approval at meeting in September)</i>
FURTHER INFO:	Available and published on the programme website and circulated as widely through Regional Contact Points

Further information

If you are interested in applying, we recommend that you are in touch with the Regional Contact Point in your region, click [here](#) for contact details. Alternatively, you can contact Christopher Parker at the Programme Secretariat, christopher.parker@interreg-npa.eu.

Details of the preparatory project application call and the application pack including guidance materials will be published on www.interreg-npa.eu.

General information about the Interreg NPA 2021-2027 can be found at this link: <https://www.interreg-npa.eu/interreg-npa-2021-2027/>.

DISCLAIMER: Preparatory project applications decisions for commencing operation are subject to final approval of the Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic 2021-2027 Programme by the European Commission.