

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Autum 2023 Call For Preparatory Project Applications

Background

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 continues 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 Fourth Call or Fifth 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,

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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 eco-system-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 gender equality, 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 up to 50.000 EUR for a 6-month project or total budget for a 12-month project of up to 100.000 EUR including match funding.

NB. Applicants from Non-Member states are strongly advised to check if there are any national restrictions to budget levels, for example by checking national information websites, or by contacting their Regional Contact Point.

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

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eligibility rules and intervention rates outlined in the Programme Manual apply.

Partnership

In addition to expectations outlined in the Interreg Regulation (Article 26, Regulation 2021/1059), Lead Partners must 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.

Mandatory supporting documents to be submitted with JEMS application:

- PDF of signed Lead partner statement (signed by the legal representative)
- PDF of signed Project partner statements (signed by the legal representative)

Timeline

OPENING OF CALL:	23 rd August 2023
APPLICATION DEADLINE:	22 nd September 2023 12:00 PM CET – Noon.
DECISION DATE:	Second half of November 2023
EXPECTED PROJECT START DATE:	1 st December 2023
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.