

Announcement Note

The First Call for Applications for Extension Stage Projects Priorities 1-3

Timeline: 2 October 2018 – 31 January 2019

1. Introduction

Interreg Baltic Sea Region is launching the first call for applications for extension stage projects. This call is focused on partnerships of the regular projects approved in the first call for applications in priorities 1-3.

The extension stage is an instrument in the Programme to support successful regular projects to capitalise on their results and partnerships. It aims to ensure a higher impact of the Programme on the Baltic Sea region. The extension stage offers a possibility for finalised regular projects to receive additional funding for the implementation of specific activities to strengthen the utilisation of the outcomes of the regular projects.

2. Aims, activities and outputs of extension stage projects

Extension stage aims at increasing the quality and durability of the preceding regular projects. The activities of an extension stage project should be implementation focused. Regular project outputs might reach higher maturity when a practical application is being implemented in the extension stage.

An extension stage project needs to implement a solution developed during the regular project in the form of a **practical application or an investment**. Its implementation for target groups and the evaluation of its success should be at the focus of an extension stage project. Investments should be based on joint evaluation and planning activities from the regular project. The investment should either demonstrate a transnational dimension or should otherwise be of transnational added value.

Examples of types of activities to be implemented within an extension stage project are listed below:

- Pilot implementation of a management scheme developed in the regular project,
- Testing instruments developed in the regular project,
- Implementation of investments prepared in the regular project,
- Implementation of policy recommendations developed in the regular project.

3. Composition of an extension stage project partnership

The partnership composition of an extension stage project should be **based on partners from the regular project** that are relevant for the implementation of the activities in the extension stage project. Involvement of private partners is encouraged. In well-justified cases it is possible to involve organisations that were not included in the partnership of the regular project. Russian organisations may be included as project partners as well.

As a minimum requirement each project has to involve **at least three partners from three different countries of the Programme area**. Lead partners must be located in the territory of an EU Member State in the Programme area or in Norway. At least one of the regular partners has to be located in the territory of an EU member state in the Programme area.

Further details on the Programme requirements and the composition of the partnership can be found in the Programme Manual. Specific information on extension stage projects is described in chapter D.2.

4. Availability of funds and the budget of extension stage projects.

The available Programme ERDF co-financing for the projects applying in this call is currently 7.5 million euro. The currently available Norwegian co-financing is 0.2 million euro and the ENI/Russian co-financing 3.6 million euro. Some of the funds will be committed to the projects applying in the parallel 2nd project platform call. In addition some of the ENI/Russian funds will be committed to additional Russian partners in the already approved projects in the Programme.

The total budget for an extension stage project can be up to EUR 1,000,000.

Partners from Denmark, Finland, Germany and Sweden may receive 75% ERDF co-financing, while partners from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland may receive 85% ERDF co-financing. Norwegian partners will receive 50% co-financing from Norwegian national funding. Russian partners will receive 85% Programme co-financing, combining the EU funding from the European Neighbourhood Instrument and the financial contribution of the Russian Federation.

Partner organisations located outside of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region's programme area are entitled to receive 75% ERDF co-financing.

Budgets and eligibility of costs of the extension stage projects must follow the rules of the regular projects. No costs of the extension stage projects are eligible as long as the main stage project is still in its implementation phase. Extension stage projects cannot claim reimbursement of costs for project preparation.

5. Duration of extension stage projects

The duration of an extension stage project consists of three phases: a contracting phase, an implementation phase and a closure phase. The contracting phase lasts up to three months and starts the day after the MC approval. The closure phase lasts three months. The duration of the implementation phase may last up to 18 months.

6. Extension stage projects application and selection procedure

The MA/JS will support the development of extension stage projects by providing feedback to project ideas through individual consultations. Prior to this, the applicants should complete a project idea form for an extension stage (available at www.interreg-baltic.eu) and ask for feedback. The consultation is a prerequisite for obtaining access to the online application system (BAMOS).

An extension stage application will have to be completed in BAMOS. Guidance for filling in the application is provided in the application package at the Programme website www.interreg-baltic.eu. The guidance outlines the Programme expectations regarding quality and amount of information to be provided in the extension stage application.

The table below summarises information about documents that applicants need to submit:

Extension stage project application	
Digital version	
Which documents?	Online application
When?	No later than 31 January 2019 at 16:00 CET (UTC+1)
How?	Submitting via online system: ba.bamos.eu
Paper version	
Which documents?	Signed application (identical to the digital version) Partner declarations for all project partners (including lead applicant) original or copies State aid self-declarations for all project partners (including lead applicant) original or copies Optional: letters of support from associated organisations
When?	No later than 31 January 2019 !!! The date on the post stamp must be the date of the deadline or earlier !!!
How?	Send documents to: Interreg Baltic Sea Region Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat c/o Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein (IB.SH) Grubenstraße 20 18055 Rostock, Germany

The MA/JS is responsible for the verification of the completeness and correctness of the submitted documents as well as for the assessment of applications. The assessment criteria are presented in Annex I to the Programme Manual. Furthermore, during the assessment, particular attention will be paid to the practical approach of extension stage projects. An extension stage project should demonstrate additional value to the results of its corresponding regular project.

The Monitoring Committee of the Programme will select extension stage projects for funding at its meeting in April 2019.

7. Programme language

The official language of the Programme is English. Therefore, all communication between applicants and the MA/JS is in English. Information in application forms as well as official correspondence must be treated accordingly.

8. Further information and assistance

The official Programme documents are available on the Programme website: www.interreg-baltic.eu and include:

- Interreg Baltic Sea Region Cooperation Programme;
- Programme Manual; and
- Application package for extension stage projects.

The MA/JS offers the following assistance to applicants:

- For general advice please contact: extension@interreg-baltic.eu;
- The MA/JS offers consultations at its offices in Rostock and Riga, as well as via telephone/skype. To request a consultation please write to: extension@interreg-baltic.eu.