

Interreg North-West Europe 2014-2020

Terms of reference
9th call for proposals

12 December 2018

1. Introduction

The Interreg North-West Europe Programme invites public and private organisations to submit applications in the framework of the ninth call for proposals for the 2014-2020 period.

A comprehensive description of the programme strategy and priorities is included in the Interreg North-West Europe 2014-2020 Cooperation Programme.

A complete set of documents can be downloaded in the “Application resources” section of the programme website www.nweurope.eu (Cooperation Programme, Programme Manual, application forms step 1 and 2 for reference).

2. Aim of the Programme

The Interreg North-West Europe (NWE) Programme is one of the fifteen transnational cooperation programmes financed by the European Union. It is financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). ERDF is one of the funds designed to improve EU Cohesion.

The programme encourages public, scientific, private and civil society organisations to cooperate with a view to improving the economic, environmental, territorial and social development of Europe's regions. The programme co-finances these organisations to work together in transnational projects on specific themes.

All projects financed by the programme will need to demonstrate high transnational cooperation intensity throughout their lifetime with a clear focus on results. This means that partners must work together to deliver, evaluate, disseminate and roll-out the results of their project.

3. Thematic priorities

The current call for proposals is only open to priority 1 and priority 3 of the NWE Programme.

Each of these priorities has one specific objective. Transnational partnerships are therefore invited to submit their project application under one of these two priorities.

Priority 1: Innovation

Specific Objective 1: To enhance innovation performance of enterprises throughout NWE regions.

Priority 3: Resource and materials efficiency

Specific Objective 5: To optimise (re)use of material and natural resources in NWE.

Within priority 1, and without excluding in any way other relevant topics for this priority, the NWE programme would welcome in particular projects dealing with:

- Social innovation (please see [guidance note](#)), including projects addressing the migration related challenge, focusing on the integration of recognised refugees on the mid and long-term, in particular in the domain of entrepreneurship, employment and access to the labour market.
- Innovative products, processes and technologies contributing to CO2 reduction and the green economy, including green transport, in line with the big societal challenges addressed by the Paris Agreement.

Within priority 3, the NWE programme is specifically interested in projects focusing on circular economy.

4. Type of projects

Based on the conclusions of the gap analysis conducted in 2018, the NWE programme is particularly interested in :

- o Projects which will make a strong contribution to reducing territorial disparities, reaching out to peripheral and weaker regions, and which aim at 'closing a gap' between leaders and followers within a relevant field. This implicates projects with strong territorial justification (why a particular region was selected, why cooperation is essential).
- o Projects with a strong representation of public authorities, SMEs / private companies, and NGOs within their partnerships. The NWE programme will not fund projects which are too research oriented.
- o Projects which have a substantial demonstration and roll out phase.
- o Projects which can have complementarities or synergies with previously approved projects, in terms of scope or approach taken.
- o Projects which focus on a niche within a theme, where the approach chosen and the need for the transnational project is clearly identified and justified.

5. Who can apply?

The programme targets all or parts of 8 participating countries, including 7 EU Member States (Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom) and the non-Member State Switzerland. A wide range of bodies are entitled to take part in NWE project partnerships including national, regional and local authorities, universities, R&D agencies, non-profit organisations as well as private partners, including profit-making partners (e.g. SMEs). Projects should bring together partners from at least three different countries (usually more) of which two need to be from within the NWE area.

In duly justified cases partners from outside the programme area are welcome.

6. Lead partner principle

The “lead partner principle” will apply to the project management system, meaning that one partner is taking up the lead in the project. The lead partner will be the link between the project partnership and the Joint Secretariat, the European Commission and other interested bodies. It will furthermore supervise the administrative and financial management of the project and bear legal responsibility and liability for them.

7. Funding available

Over the lifetime of the programme, €372 million of ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) will be allocated to the most qualitative and innovative projects.

No ceiling is set for this call.

All projects need to be match-funded. The maximum ERDF grant rate for partners is 60% of the total project budget. The partnership will need to provide the remaining 40%.

8. Submission of applications

This call for proposals is organised according to a two-step procedure.

Step 1 – Applicants have to submit an application providing an outline of the proposed project. The application goes beyond a mere expression of interest, i.e. applicants need to present a comprehensive picture of the project’s intended change and result. This picture is the solid basis of the further development of the project.

Step 2 – Applicants who succeeded in step 1 of the call are invited to submit a “full application form” which includes all the details on the full partnership, the project work plan and budget.

Project proposals, both within step 1 and 2 of the call, must be submitted in English and only through the Interreg NWE portal ([eMS](#)). The project summary must be provided in all 4 programme languages (English, Dutch, French and German).

9. Project selection

All project proposals are assessed against eligibility and quality assessment criteria (see chapters 3 and 4 of the Programme Manual).

The decision on step 1 project applications will be taken by the Interreg NWE Monitoring Committee (MC), which is made up of representatives from both national and regional authorities within the NWE Member States.

The Monitoring Committee will meet on 25 and 26 September 2019.

The applicants will be notified of the decision of the Monitoring Committee after this meeting.

10. Deadline for submission

Project proposals for step 1 of this call must be submitted through the eMS (Electronic Monitoring System) at the latest by:

Friday 14 June 2019 12.00 pm (noon) CET.

In case of approval in step 1, full applications (step 2) must be submitted on **7th February 2020 (date to be confirmed)**.

11. How to get assistance

Continuous assistance will be provided by the Interreg NWE network of contact points during the step 1 phase of project development. They are available to respond to any queries. We encourage all lead partners to contact their national contact points before submission to discuss their project ideas.

All contact details can be found on the website www.nweurope.eu

Technical questions regarding the electronic Monitoring System should be asked through: eMS@nweurope.eu. This email address will function as the source for a FAQ section to be built up.