

Interreg North-West Europe 2021-2027

**Draft Terms of reference  
3<sup>rd</sup> call for proposals:  
Call for small-scale projects**

*23 February 2023*

## 1. Introduction

The Interreg North-West Europe Programme invites partnerships of public and private organisations to submit applications in the framework of call 3 for small-scale projects for the 2021-2027 period.

A comprehensive description of the Programme strategy and priorities is included in the Interreg North-West Europe Programme 2021-2027.

A complete set of application documents relating to the call 3 for small-scale projects can be downloaded from the Programme website [www.nweurope.eu](http://www.nweurope.eu) (Interreg NWE Programme, Programme Manual and Programme Manual addendum for small-scale projects, call 3 application form in Word version for reference).

## 2. Aim of the Programme

The Interreg North-West Europe (NWE) Programme is one of the fourteen 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 in view of promoting a green, smart and just transition for all NWE territories. The aim is to support a balanced development and make all regions more resilient. 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, disseminate and roll-out the results of their project.

### **3. Aim of call 3 for small-scale projects**

The objective of call 3 for small-scale projects is to allow project applications with a reduced scope, size, and duration to apply to the Interreg NWE Programme.

Through a simplified project application and implementation process, the aim of this call is to make our Programme more accessible to stakeholders which are not familiar with our Programme, lack capacity to apply for a regular call, or simply envisage results within a shorter timeframe.

It should also enable stakeholders to use small-scale projects as stepping stones or follow-ups to regular projects. Small-scale projects can:

- act as preparatory actions and increase organisations' capacities to engage in projects from regular calls.
- complement projects from regular calls and / or reinforce their impact by making their outputs accessible to a wider group of stakeholders.

Applicants should keep in mind that the general principles and programme expectations related to "what makes a good project?" (see Programme Manual, section 2.2) remain the same and will need to be followed by all small-scale projects.

### **4. Thematic priorities**

The call for small-scale projects is open to all five Programme thematic priorities. Transnational partnerships are invited to submit their project application under one priority, and within this chosen priority, under one specific objective:

#### **Priority 1 - Smart climate and environmental resilience for NWE territories**

- Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches (SO 2.4)
- Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution (SO 2.7)

#### **Priority 2 – Smart and just energy transition for NWE territories**

- Promoting energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (SO 2.1)
- Promoting renewable energy in accordance with Directive (EU) 2018/2001, including the sustainability criteria set out therein (SO 2.2)

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### **Priority 3 - Transition towards a place-based circular economy**

- Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy (SO 2.6)

### **Priority 4 – Improving territorial resilience in NWE through innovative and smart transformation**

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

### **Priority 5 –Transition towards a socially inclusive and resilient society**

- Enhancing the effectiveness and inclusiveness of labour markets and access to quality employment through developing social infrastructure and promoting social economy (SO 4.1)
- Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family-and-community-based care (SO 4.5)
- Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation (SO 4.6)

## **5. Main features of small-scale projects**

The reduced scale of the expected projects is reflected in several simplified features.

### **Project duration and budget**

The maximum project duration is 18 months, and the project budget should be between EUR 200,000 (minimum amount for any project as indicated in the NWE IP) and EUR 800,000 of total eligible costs. The co-financing rate will up to 60% as for projects from regular calls.

Project partner budgets must use the 40% flat rate on staff costs (see section 3.1.1 in the Project Manual addendum). Each approved project will be granted EUR 6,000 (total eligible cost) for preparation costs.

### **Types of projects**

Projects should be structured around one overall project objective, specified by only one project specific objective and its corresponding work package.

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Projects should also focus on the joint development and implementation of only one type of project activity. This activity should lead to one of the following types of project outputs and results:

- Development and implementation of joint strategies/action plans
- Development and implementation of pilot actions leading to solutions
- Capacity building and awareness raising activities (incl. trainings) leading to participants having completed joint training schemes.

Investments and voucher schemes are not possible in small-scale projects.

## 6. Who can apply?

The Programme targets all or parts of seven participating countries, including six EU Member States (Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) and the non-EU Member State Switzerland.

A wide range of public and private (non-profit and profit making) organisations are welcome to take part in project partnerships including national, regional and local authorities (or EGTC's, or public equivalent organisations), universities, R&D centres, SMEs and business support organisations, sectoral associations, NGOs, lobby organisations and citizens groups.

For this small-scale project call, we specifically encourage the following stakeholders to submit a project application:

- Local, regional and national public authorities
- NGOs and interest groups such as local, community organisations, international organisations, trade unions, foundations, charities and voluntary organisations, clubs, etc.

Projects should bring together at least three partners from three different countries of which two need to be from the NWE Programme area. Partnerships are encouraged to limit their size in view of the reduced scope and budget.

## 7. Lead partner principle

The 'lead partner principle' will apply to the project management system, meaning that one partner takes the lead in the project. The lead partner is the link between the project partnership and the Joint Secretariat, Programme bodies, the European Commission and other interested parties. Furthermore, it will supervise the administrative and financial management of the project and bear legal responsibility and liability for them.

## 8. Funding available

Over the lifetime of the Programme, € 287 million of ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) will be allocated to projects. **No ceiling is set for call 3 for small-scale projects.**

All projects need to have partner contribution (provide match funding). The maximum ERDF grant rate for partners is 60% of the total project budget. The partnership needs to contribute to the remaining 40% (see Programme Manual, section 5.5.1).

## 9. Application process

Call 3 for small-scale projects is organised in a one-step procedure. In this one-step procedure project lead applicants must give a comprehensive picture of the project need, objective and intended change, as well as details on the partnership, the project work plan and budget. For a detailed description of the application and selection process, see the relevant sections of the Programme Manual as well as the "Programme Manual addendum" specific to this call for small-scale projects call.

The call for small-scale projects opens on Thursday 23 February 2023.

Applications must be submitted in the Interreg NWE Joint electronic monitoring system (Jems) by **Wednesday 12 July 2023, 12.00 pm (noon) CET.**

Project proposals must be submitted in English and only through the Interreg NWE [Joint electronic monitoring system](#) (Jems). The project summary must be provided in all four programme languages (English, Dutch, French, and German).

Other small-scale project calls are foreseen during this 2021-2027 programming period and their dates will be communicated in due time.

## 10. Project selection

All small-scale project proposals are assessed by the Interreg NWE Joint Secretariat against the eligibility and quality assessment criteria as listed in the Programme Manual addendum (section 2.4).

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

The Monitoring Committee will meet in October / November 2023 (exact date to be confirmed) to decide on small-scale project applications. The applicants will be notified of the decision of the Monitoring Committee soon after this meeting.

## 11. How to get assistance?

Continuous assistance will be provided by the Interreg NWE network of Contact Points during the project development phase. They are available to respond to any queries. We encourage all lead partners to get in touch with the NWE Contact Point of their region/country to discuss their small-scale project idea before submission.

All contact details can be found on the NWE website: <https://www.nweurope.eu/contact-us/contact-points/>

We also invite you to register for the NWE online community to start networking with other potential applicants and to find suitable project partners for your project.

The application package for call 3 for small-scale projects can be downloaded in the "Calls for projects" section of the NWE website. It consists of:

- Terms of reference for the 3<sup>rd</sup> call for proposals
- Application form call 3 in Word version (for reference only)
- Programme Manual addendum for small-scale projects
- Programme Manual
- Interreg NWE Programme
- Factsheets on Programme specific objectives