

Interreg North-West Europe 2021-2027

Programme Manual addendum for the first call for capitalisation

December 2025

1. Scope of the Programme Manual addendum

This document concerns the application procedure for the 1st call for capitalisation. It is an addendum to the Interreg NWE 2021-2027 Programme Manual. For this call, the following chapters of the Programme Manual do not apply:

- Chapter 2 - Project development
- Chapter 3 - Application and assessment step 1
- Chapter 4 - Application and assessment step 2
- Section 5.9.3 – Communication Strategy
- Sections 5.5.5. and 5.5.6 - Advance payments and preparation costs

Taking into consideration the additional information presented in this addendum, all other chapters in the Interreg Programme Manual remain valid as reference for the implementation of capitalisation initiatives and project closure.

Any reference to a “step 2 application form” in the Programme Manual or in other Programme documents, should be understood as the application form for the purpose of this call.

2. Points of attention for applicants

To correctly fill in the application form, and in addition to the guidance given in the Terms of reference of the first call for capitalisation, the following points of attention need to be considered.

2.1. Project duration

The capitalisation initiative needs to be **based on an original NWE project**. It therefore keeps the name and number of the project it is built on and remains in the same Priority and Programme Specific Objective. It will be added to the original application form in Jems as an extra work package.

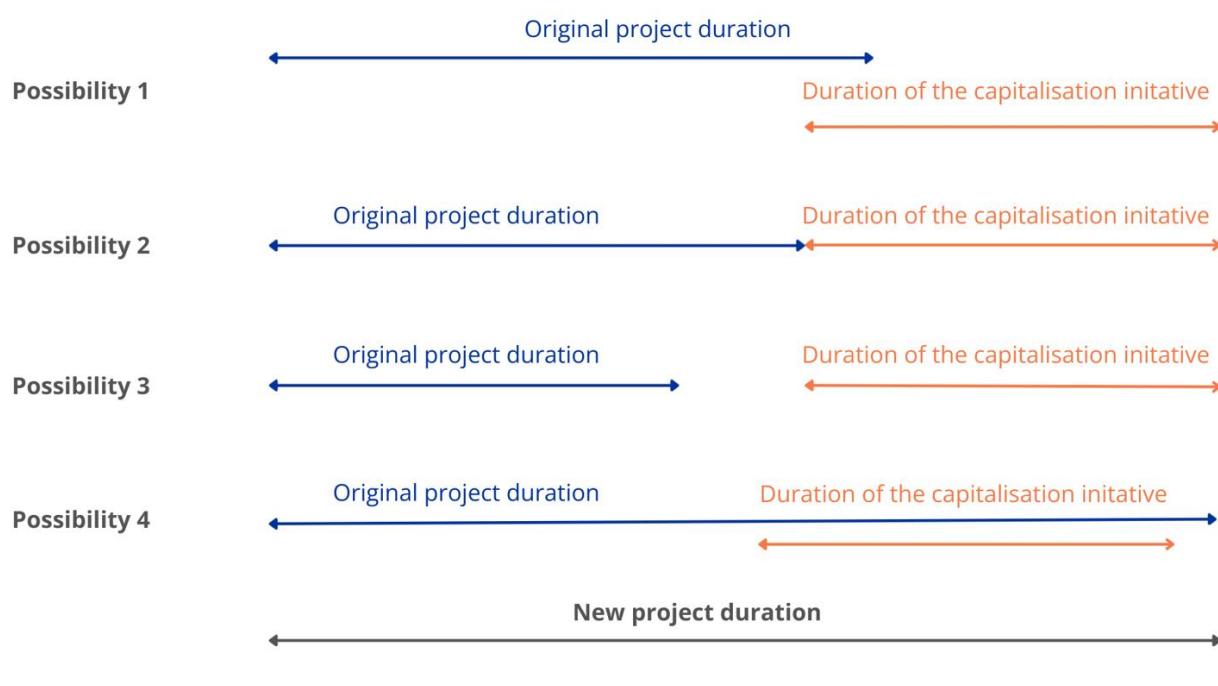
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The maximum duration for the capitalisation initiative is 18 months. The end date of the capitalisation initiative will become the end date of the original project, unless the capitalisation initiative is implemented within the time span of the original project (see possibility 4 in the image below). The timeline of the original project activities remains unchanged. Costs are eligible and can be claimed up to the project end date.

The procedures for project implementation and monitoring, as set out in the Programme Manual, apply to the overall project in line with the new milestones and timelines.

Closed projects may also apply for a capitalisation initiative. Their original project will thus have a new end date (i.e. an extension to implement approved capitalisation activities), see possibility 3 in the image below.

Depending on the status of the original project - be it running, advanced or closed - the following four variations of adapted project duration are possible at the time of the approval of the capitalisation initiative:



2.2. Outputs and results

Applicants are required to provide information on the duration and budget of the capitalisation initiative, the selected project output(s) and result(s) to build on, the objective, target groups and the territorial relevance of the initiative.

Concerning outputs and results, applicants are asked to quantify the estimated outputs and results that the capitalisation initiative will achieve, **in addition to the initial project outputs and results**. To the extent possible, applicants should use similar definitions and a quantification method as in the initial application form.

In line with the Programme indicator framework, results will be measured in the qualitative descriptions of outreach, uptake and impact as well as values of:

- Number of joint strategies/action plans taken up by organisations
- Number of solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations
- Number of the completion of joint training schemes

Please refer to Annex 1 of the Programme Manual for output and result indicator definitions.

With their capitalisation initiative, applicants may:

- extend the uptake of an original output
- adapt an original output for further uptake
- create new outputs based on existing ones

Depending on the approach, the target value for outputs, as compared to the original project, can either stay the same or increase. The target values for results must increase in any case. Contact Points will assist applicants in defining outputs and results correctly for the purpose of the capitalisation initiative.

2.3. Target groups

The application form in Jems features a drop-down menu with different possible target groups. Applicants should only select the target groups that will be specifically addressed in the framework of the capitalisation initiative.

2.4. Partnership composition

Applicants are asked to explain the relevance of the partnership in relation to the capitalisation initiative objectives. Original project partnerships can be adapted or modified

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(e.g. partners can be added or removed from the original partnership for the capitalisation initiative only). These changes need to be in line with the capitalisation initiative objectives.

All partners of the original partnership are prefilled in the application form. The fields for original partners participating in the capitalisation initiative serve to describe the respective partners' roles in the initiative. Text fields for original partners, who do not participate in the initiative, can simply be left blank to indicate their non-involvement. The detailed description of expertise of original partners involved in the capitalisation initiative will be accessed by assessors in the original application form.

Only new partners need to be included in the 'new partners' section. New partners will not be allocated a partner number by Jems until the capitalisation initiative is approved. Thus, new partner organisations will have to be referred to by their name or organisation acronym.

Adding new **associated organisations** is possible. At the time of submission, they need to be mentioned in the partnership description. No further details need to be provided at this point. Approved capitalisation initiatives will be asked to provide details on new associated organisations at a later stage.

Involving **partners from outside the Programme area** (e.g. project partners financed by other INTERREG Programmes or EU schemes) is possible but also needs to be justified. All partners involved – new or not - need to play an active role in the capitalisation initiative and their added value in contributing to the enhanced uptake of project outputs, leading to results, should be clearly described.

The existing **partnership agreement** of each project remains valid for the capitalisation phase of the project. New partners involved in the capitalisation initiative must also sign this partnership agreement of the project via an addendum to the existing partnership agreement. The partnership agreement addendum template can be found on the NWE website.

The Programme recommends new partners add their signature to the partnership agreement (via the addendum) during the application phase and have it submitted (in pdf format only) by the LP together with the capitalisation application form (see section "Capitalisation annexes" in Jems).

Doing this will allow for a fast start-up phase of the capitalisation initiative in the event of approval. No payments (e.g., in relation to capitalisation activities) can be processed unless all partners have signed the partnership agreement and it is submitted to the Programme on Jems.

2.5. Territorial coverage

As described in the Interreg NWE Programme document, *“the overall aim of the Programme and of its actions is to contribute to a balanced development across the NWE Programme area [...], making all regions in NWE more resilient, in the sense of increasing their ability to respond better to any existing and future challenge.”*

To that extent, proposals are required to have a **strong territorial justification**. This means they should clearly describe:

- where they will intervene
- why they will intervene in these territories
- who will benefit from the capitalisation initiative activities and results, and how

They should also explain how enhancing the uptake of the output in one of the three directions (territories, target groups and/or domains of activity) described above can contribute to a more balanced development of the NWE area.

Through its projects, the Programme also aims to ensure a balanced and well-distributed coverage of the NWE territories — not only in terms of partner locations, but as well in terms of the location of project activities, investments, and impact.

Capitalisation initiatives are encouraged to contribute to this objective, by enabling the uptake of project outputs in new territories, by new target audiences or within new fields of activity, particularly in less represented or not yet represented NWE regions.

The Programme, therefore, encourages applicants to consider adding partners from or able to impact on less or non-represented NWE regions in the 2021-2027 Programme.

For orientation, the **illustrative map in Annex 1** shows the extent to which NUTS2 regions within the NWE area are represented in terms of funded partners per region after calls 1-4¹. This map is based on partner locations. It does not necessarily indicate or represent the exact location of partners' project activities and impact.

¹ Swiss project partners cannot receive financial support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). However, they can apply for financial support from the Confederation through the Fund for Regional Development of the NRP. The conditions, co-financing rate and control system are different in Switzerland than in the EU. These specific framework conditions are outlined [here](#). Next to carefully reading this document, applicants are advised to get in touch with the Swiss Contact Point as soon as possible, should they be seeking Swiss co-financing.

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In any case, the inclusion of any partner, new or not and wherever located, should happen only if:

- this aligns with the objective of their capitalisation initiative,
- this is based on a strong territorial justification (challenges and opportunities in respective regions),
- the respective partner(s) demonstrate how their involvement adds value through relevant skills and knowledge, helping to leverage existing project outputs and enhance territorial impact in the NWE area.

If relevant, applicants are strongly encouraged to contact their NWE Contact Point for support in their partner search.

2.6. Project work plan

Upon approval, all capitalisation activities will form a new work package in the Project work plan (section C.4 of the original project in Jems).

Everything that will be undertaken in the framework of this initiative needs to be included in the call for capitalisation application form, including activities, deliverables and outputs. Project coordination activities do not need to be described in the work package.

Should the partnership plan investments as part of its capitalisation initiative, all required information is to be filled in the application form in the respective sub-section on investments.

2.7. Communication

While projects are not expected to draft a specific communication strategy for the capitalisation initiative (PM, section 5.9.3 not applicable), they must specify their communication objective(s) and target audience(s), like in any regular work package (see PM, section 5.9.2).

At least one communication activity and deliverable should be included. They can make use or build on communication tools and channels from the original project, as long as they clearly contribute to the capitalisation initiative.

The original project webpage will have to be used and regularly updated to promote the capitalisation initiative (see PM section 5.9.5). Projects will be asked to include a “capitalisation initiative” tab on the menu of their project webpage, so the additional activities and results can be clearly presented and identified.

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New partners, as all other partners from the original project, must comply with rules related to EU visibility and acknowledge financial support from the NWE Programme (see PM section 5.9.6).

If the capitalisation initiative extends the original project budget beyond EUR 5 million total eligible cost (TEC), it is reminded that a communication event involving the Joint Secretariat and the EU Commission is to be organised.

2.8. Budget

The following aspects must be taken into consideration when filling in the budget section in the application form:

- Applicants are required to indicate the overall budget of the capitalisation work package, both in terms of total eligible cost and ERDF.
- Original partner budgets will be prefilled based on the original application form. Original partners participating in the capitalisation initiative are asked to adapt their partner budget by adding new items to the list of budget items.
- The co-financing rate of original partners participating in the capitalisation call must not change. Original partners cannot change their chosen cost method (real cost expenditure or simplified cost options, see PM, section 5.2).
- Partners from the original project will have to update their state aid form and new partners involved will need to fill in the state aid criteria self-check on Jems.

Applicants should also note that for the capitalisation call:

- Advance payments and preparation costs do not apply (PM sections 5.5.5. and 5.5.6).
- The option of staff costs for company owners is extended to this call (see PM, section 5.3.2).
- If the capitalisation initiative extends the original project budget beyond EUR 5 million total eligible cost (TEC), additional conditions apply: see PM sections 5.5.7 (Value added tax) as well as 5.9.6 (EU rules projects must comply with) regarding the communication event. These must be considered when designing the budget.

- Procurement rules should be considered in view of contracts being extended in the capitalisation phase and the impact it may have on procurement thresholds, see PM, section 5.6.
- Solvency checks are required as per the Programme Manual section 4.2.7 only for newly added private partners in the capitalisation initiative. Existing partners which continue working on the capitalisation initiative do not need to undergo a new solvency check.

3. Drafting and submission of application form

The application form will be made available online, on the Joint Electronic Monitoring System (Jems).

Applicants will be able to access it by using their existing Jems credentials. Upon login, the capitalisation application form will be available in the top left corner of Jems. It will be pre-filled with information related to the original project, including current partnership and budget details.

Editing privileges within the Jems application form can be adapted and extended to new partners by the lead partner. Project partners are strongly advised to avoid working on the application form at the same time, as Jems will only save the latest updated version of the application form.

Capitalisation initiative proposals must be drafted in English only.

A 'capitalisation annexes' section for the upload of documents (partnership agreement, partnership agreement annex, infographics, solvency documents...) will be available in Jems.

Throughout the development phase of the capitalisation initiative, as well as during the drafting process, applicants will be supported by the Interreg NWE network of Contact Points, who are available to respond to any queries. All lead partners should get in touch with their national Contact Point(s) to discuss their capitalisation idea well in advance of submitting their application.

Applications should be submitted on Jems by the deadline: **28 May 2026 at 12:00 (noon) CET.**

4. Capitalisation initiative selection process

All proposals are assessed against eligibility and quality assessment criteria as described below.

Eligibility criteria

The following **16 eligibility criteria apply to the capitalisation initiative**. The first 10 criteria are step 2 eligibility criteria from regular calls. Among these, please note that criteria 9 and 10 are slightly modified and refer to the original application form. The last 6 criteria are specific to this call for capitalisation.

- 1) The application was submitted on time through the joint electronic monitoring system (Jems). The deadline was respected. The application was submitted by the deadline set in the Terms of reference for the call for proposals.
- 2) All sections of the application are completed. All sections in the application form are mandatory.
- 3) The project confirms that it obeys national and EU legislation. The lead partner confirms this by submitting the application form.
- 4) The application is completed in English. All sections of the application must be written in English.
- 5) The project involves at least three partners from three different countries. At least two of these partners must be from a region within the NWE Programme area. As an example, this means a project application with three partners from Düsseldorf, Waterford, (both places are located inside the NWE Programme area) and Marseille (outside the NWE Programme area) would be eligible; whereas a project with three partners from Lyon, Munich (both places are located outside the NWE Programme area), and Rotterdam (within the NWE Programme area) would be ineligible.
- 6) All partners included in the application form are legal entities.
- 7) The project will be completed no later than 30 June 2029. This is the date by which all projects under this Programme must be completed. Project duration during the application phase must be set in accordance with this date.

- 8) All partners contribute to project match funding. All partners have a budget in line with the eligible ERDF rate.
- 9) The project confirms that it makes a positive or neutral contribution to the Programme's horizontal principles: equal opportunities and non-discrimination, equality between men and women, sustainable development as described in the original application form. This is done by submitting the capitalisation initiative application form.
- 10) Mandatory cooperation criteria (joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, joint financing) are fulfilled as in the original application. According to the Interreg regulation "partners shall cooperate in the development and implementation of Interreg operations, as well as in the staffing or financing, or both, thereof."
- 11) The capitalisation initiative is based on an Interreg 2021-2027 VIB project (ongoing or closed), excluding call 3 small-scale projects and call 5 projects.
- 12) The application form is submitted by the lead partner (LP) organisation of the original project².
- 13) The capitalisation initiative duration does not go beyond 18 months.
- 14) The capitalisation initiative budget ranges between a minimum of €200 000 total eligible costs (TEC) and a maximum of €800 000 TEC.
- 15) The partnership includes the LP and at least one other project partner from the original project.
- 16) Only one capitalisation application is submitted for this project in current and future capitalisation calls.

² A Jems user at the LP organisation must submit the application form.

Assessment criteria

All capitalisation initiative proposals are assessed against the following three main quality assessment criteria. Each criterion has a different weight in the overall score of the proposal as indicated below:

1) Capitalisation potential

weight of criterion: 30%

Context
The capitalisation initiative builds on completed or nearly completed NWE 2021-2027 project output(s) which have demonstrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - their capacity to successfully impact territories and / or citizens. - their capacity and potential to be taken up by other stakeholders.
The capitalisation initiative goes beyond the results initially planned in the application form and differs from the long-term effects of the original project.
The capitalisation initiative builds on a well-functioning 2021-2027 project whose implementation is on track in terms of content and finances.

2) Expected impact

weight of criterion: 40%

Objective
The capitalisation initiative maximises the impact of the project in NWE territories by supporting the uptake of specifically identified output(s) in one of the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in new territories within NWE - by reaching new target groups or type of stakeholders - in new fields or domains of activity
Territorial relevance
The capitalisation initiative contributes to a balanced development of the NWE area and to reducing territorial disparities.
The capitalisation initiative contributes to reaching out to territories less involved so far in the NWE Programme area.
Outputs and results
The proposed activities and deliverables are relevant, coherent, and lead to the planned output(s) and result(s). The proposed timeline is realistic.

<p>The output(s) and result(s) of the capitalisation initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are specific, measurable, achievable, and - contribute to the Programme indicators.
<p>The project budget is used in accordance with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.</p>

3) Quality of partnership and cooperation

weight of criterion: 30%

Partnership and cooperation
The partnership brings together the relevant stakeholders to reach the objectives it aims to achieve (territories, target audiences/end users, fields / domains of activity).
Transnational cooperation is clearly embedded in the planned activities.
The application outlines well-defined roles and responsibilities in the project.

All criteria and their related subitems need to be taken into consideration by applicants. Each criterion will be assessed on a scale from 1 to 5.

5 (very good) - The proposal addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. The information provided is clear and coherent. Any shortcomings are minor.

4 (good) - The proposal addresses the criterion well. However, a small number of shortcomings are present (e.g., some parts of the application form are not well elaborated, the work plan provides little space for unexpected delays, etc.).

3 (sufficient) - The proposal fulfils the criterion to a sufficient level. However, some aspects of the criterion have not been fully met and/or not clearly explained (e.g., the proposed partnership lacks certain expertise needed to address the identified challenge; the implementation steps are not fully clear based on the description in the application form).

2 (weak) - The proposal has serious shortcomings in relation to fulfilling the criterion. The information provided is of low quality (e.g., the need for the project is not clearly justified; the main outputs are badly described; the target groups are not described).

1 (insufficient) - The proposal inadequately addresses this criterion. The proposal addresses issues that are not of relevance to the Programme as set out in the NWE IP; and/or the information in the application form is, missing, incomplete or irrelevant.

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The decision on applications will be made 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 in **autumn 2026**.

5. Overview of application process

	What?	Description	How?	When?	Who?
1	Opening and announcement of the call	Publication of the Terms of reference, application form and PM addendum for call for capitalisation	NWE website and social media, emailing to all approved projects from relevant calls	11 December 2025	Joint Secretariat
2	Drafting the application form	Support by Contact Points	Jems application form	Until deadline	Lead partner
3	Submission of the application form	Application form to be submitted on Jems	Submission on Jems	Deadline: 28 May 2026 – 12.00 pm (noon) CET	Lead partner
4	Assessment of the applications received	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eligibility check - Quality assessment 	Jems	June 2025	Joint Secretariat
5	Decision on the applications received		MC meeting	autumn 2026 (exact date tbd)	Monitoring Committee
6	Notification of the decisions to applicants including technical requirements		Official letter via Jems	One to two weeks after MC meeting	Joint Secretariat
7	Technical requirements to be addressed and application form to be entered in Jems	Support by JS Project officer. The updated partnership agreement with the additional signature pages of any new partners (if applicable) is added on Jems latest at this stage.	Jems	Deadline: 2 months after MC decision	Approved projects Lead Partner
8	Contracting	The revised application form approved on Jems confirms the revised activities, budget and timelines. It is the new annex to the Subsidy Contract already in force.		Deadline: 2 months after MC decision	Joint Secretariat

6. Annexes

- Annex to the Programme Manual addendum: Current territorial coverage of the NWE area by approved project partners.