
Interreg Alpine Space programme

Terms of Reference

4th call for project proposals

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Introduction

The Alpine Space programme is an EU transnational [cooperation programme](#) supporting sustainable regional development in the alpine area. The programme provides stakeholders with a framework to develop, test, implement and coordinate new solutions for common challenges. Projects can be co-financed under four funding priorities: innovative Alpine Space, low carbon Alpine Space, liveable Alpine Space and well-governed Alpine Space. All priorities have a high consistency with the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region ([EUSALP](#)) and the programme aims at contributing to the implementation of the strategy through projects in all priorities.

After three calls for project proposals, there are currently 49 projects being implemented which are already addressing a wide range of shared challenges across the alpine area and helping the programme to reach the specific objectives set for its funding. With its 4th call for project proposals, the Alpine Space programme offers up to 24,8 million EUR ERDF for transnational cooperation projects.

The present terms of references describe what kinds of project are expected by the Alpine Space programme. They are based on an analysis of topics covered by the running projects, on new developments in the alpine area, on the European Commission proposals for the coming cohesion period 2021-2027 and furthermore on the topics that are being dealt with by EUSALP and the [Alpine Convention](#) and as laid down in the [programme documents](#).

Who can apply?

The Alpine Space programme welcomes organisations from the public and private sector. A wide range of bodies can take part in a project, such as national, regional, local authorities, universities, R&D-agencies, companies, NGO, etc. Projects should bring together at least four partners from four different partner countries of the programme. The partner countries are Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Slovenia and Switzerland. The project partnership shall be composed in a way that is adequate for the objectives, which the project intends to follow. Please note that the so-called “lead partner principle” applies to the project management. The lead partner will be the link between the project partnership and the programme. It will conclude the subsidy contract with the managing authority (MA) and bear



the overall responsibility and liability for a proper project implementation. More information on possible project partners can be found in the factsheet "[Who can participate](#)".

How to design a good project?

Project applicants are invited to read the factsheet "[Quality requirements and contents](#)" in which guidance and illustration are given on the programme's expectations as regards the quality of a project proposal.

Project proposals shall clearly demonstrate their added value compared to previously financed projects, in the context of Alpine Space and other programmes. Thus, please carefully check the [project section](#) of the programme website and the [keep database](#).

What has been said above about the "right" composition of the project partnership also holds true for the project duration and project budget: information on the projects that are already being co-financed by the programme may serve as orientation. However, in principle the project budget and duration shall also be adequate to what the project partners want to achieve. The start date for the implementation of all projects in call 4 will be the date of project approval by the programme committee (PC). This is currently foreseen for September 2019 (the exact date will be made available during step 2 of the application process). To allow a timely and quick closure of the programme, projects shall end in June 2022 at the latest.

How to submit a project proposal?

The project application follows a two-step-procedure. In the first step, so-called expressions of interest (EoI) can be submitted via the eMS (e-monitoring system). Promising proposals will be invited to submit a detailed application form (AF) in step 2.

How will the project proposals be selected?

The assessment of EoI and AF will be done by the joint secretariat (JS) with support of the Alpine Space contact points (ACP). For details on the assessment procedure and the applied eligibility and quality assessment criteria please refer to the factsheet "[Project selection](#):"



[procedure and criteria](#)". The JS will propose a ranking list to the PC composed by the partner states of the programme. The PC will finally select the projects by consensus in both steps.

What is the time schedule of this call?

Step one: EoI shall be submitted via the eMS between 19 September and 12 December 2018, 1:00 pm. All submissions will be acknowledged with an automatic email confirmation.

Step two: Project proposals selected by the PC in March 2019 will be invited to submit the AF together with the signed partnership agreement via the eMS from end of March until 5 June 2019 1:00 pm. All submissions will be acknowledged with an automatic email confirmation.

The final decision on project selection in priorities 1-4 will be taken by the PC in a meeting foreseen mid-September 2019.

How and where to get support?

In autumn 2018 the programme will organise a MEET & MATCH forum which will be open to all interested organisations. At this occasion, the present terms of reference will be explained and opportunities will be given to meet other organisations, to exchange on project ideas and to get further advice and support from the programme bodies.

Interested project developers are also encouraged to contact the ACP in their countries for clarifications or informal feedbacks on their project ideas. Project ideas can be filled in and presented via a specific tool, the [project idea community](#). The ACP offer feedback on the content and consistency of the proposal and its overall coherence to the cooperation programme. This includes information on the suitability of the programme, the alpine and transnational relevance of the proposal, its fitting to the selected specific objective, clarity of the intervention logic, selection of target groups and suitability of the partnership as well as general advice on the preparation of project proposals. Moreover, ACP organise information days and individual consultations where more guidance is given. The contact details about ACP in each country are available [here](#). The JS is also available in case of technical questions, contact details can be found [here](#).



What project topics is the programme looking for?

The Alpine Space programme 2014-2020 was elaborated in the years 2012/2013. Since that time, a number of developments took place and some trends (e.g. digitalisation, new lifestyles, impact of demographic evolutions, governance and social innovation, environmental challenges) became more important and are considered to be very relevant for the programme area by the partner states:

- **Digitalisation** offers many opportunities for the cooperation area, especially where they have a potential to help overcome the divide between prospering and shrinking and/or remote alpine regions (e.g. in terms of territorial connectivity, education and training, services as well as business development);
- Emerging new types of **lifestyles** (e.g. a higher ecological awareness, towards low-carbon consumption patterns and short supply chains) **and demographic trends** (e.g. population ageing and growing “silver society”, migration flows) have a more ambivalent character: they put in light societal and economical challenges, but also offer chances (transition of economic sectors, better quality of life). A high attention needs to be given to these topics and further developments should be picked up in transnational alpine strategies, policies and projects;
- Trends related to **governance and social innovation** such as the emergence of participative initiatives, social entrepreneurship, the wish to better integrate disadvantaged groups and regions have potentials to improve economic and social development in the Alps. They should be supported in the frame of the Alpine Space programme, for example through providing platforms for developing creative solutions and testing/experimenting with social innovation projects (e.g. new cooperation formats between public, private stakeholders and citizens; inter-generational exchanges, integration of refugees);
- The implementation of **environmental policies**, for example via the conservation and valorisation of biodiversity and landscape (in terms of green infrastructures or natural resources), or through the greening of economic sectors (e.g. construction, transport/mobility), also has a mostly positive effect for the alpine region as these policies support the preservation of the fragile alpine environment. Here, additional action is still necessary to reach out to new target groups (e.g. approaches to overcome barriers linked to public and private acceptance) and to implement integrated solutions



with alpine co-benefits (e.g. new synergies and technological developments leading to decarbonisation and climate adaptation).

The Alpine Space programme responds to these challenges by triggering and funding transnational cooperation projects that provide the chance to develop policies, to explore and test them and to bring them into implementation phase. The projects foster transnational cooperation and create an added value compared to national and regional structures. Transnational strategic elements such as policy papers developed by the projects can play a significant role to identify new strategic fields of activities in the alpine area and help to coordinate policy tools and joint actions. Concrete transnational outputs, such as jointly developed tools, pilot actions or preparation of investments are further significant elements of transnational cooperation.

The present call for project proposals **is open in all funding priorities of the [cooperation programme](#) and all specific objectives** as set out below.



Priority 1: Innovative Alpine Space

Specific objective: Improve the framework conditions for innovation in the Alpine Space

Specific objective: Increase capacities for the delivery of service of general interest in a changing society



Priority 2: Low carbon Alpine Space

Specific objective: Establish trans-nationally integrated low carbon policy instruments

Specific objective: Increase options for low carbon mobility and transport



Priority 3: Liveable Alpine Space

Specific objective: Sustainably valorise Alpine Space cultural and natural heritage



Specific objective: Enhance the protection, the conservation and the ecological connectivity of Alpine Space ecosystems



Priority 4: Well-governed Alpine Space

Specific objective: Increase the application of multilevel and transnational governance in the Alpine Space.

Project applicants are herewith expressly encouraged to develop creative and innovative project proposals that go beyond the topics and approaches covered by the already approved projects and provide answers to the trends as set out above. It is therefore of utmost importance that applicants examine carefully if their project topic is already covered by other projects. The programme partners expect the project applicants to define ambitious projects that provide a contribution to common policies of macro-regional relevance. Project proposals that deal with agricultural issues shall demonstrate the added value of tackling them in a transnational project with a focus on territorial cohesion, instead of EU common agricultural policies.

Topics and activities described in the following indicative list are considered by the partner states as highly relevant for the cooperation area with regard to the above-mentioned trends and call for new, cross-cutting and integrated approaches. The list of topics is not exhaustive and to be understood as exemplary only. It is on purpose that the topics are not specifically linked to the funding priorities and specific objectives of the programme. The topics have linkages to several priorities and objectives as they can be dealt with from several angles. It is up to the applicants to choose the priority and objective under which the project proposal shall be submitted and to present adequate intervention logic and project design. The ACP and JS will provide support to the applicants in identifying the appropriate priority and specific objective.

Topics in which the programme specifically calls for project proposals to respond to the above-mentioned trends:



- To develop experimental approaches for a circular economy and strengthen regional value chains.
- To foster innovation and accessibility of services of general interest in remote, urban and peripheral areas, in order to tackle marginality, gender inequality, social exclusion and demographic change.
- To improve the capacities of social organisations and public authorities for receiving migrants and refugees, caring for them, and integrating them in the Alpine Space communities.
- To explore and anticipate in the Alps the Mobility 4.0 (digitalisation and automative transport) in order to tackle alpine transport challenges.
- To foster innovation in tourism (introduction of Tourism 4.0 concept) with focus on digitalisation, use of big data, digital marketing (e.g. social medias and web application), development of platform businesses, development of digital competences at employees and SME owners.
- To develop cross-sectoral solutions for strengthening Green Infrastructure with a special focus on multifunctional rural-urban relationships.
- To develop innovative approaches and concepts to initiate and foster a transnational multilevel governance in spatial planning.

Getting started

The guideline for filling in the EoI is available on the programme website. Here are some tips and pointers to help applicants get started with their project proposal:

- Review the [programme](#) and its funding priorities and specific objectives,
- See what kind of projects have been co-financed so far ([project section](#) of the programme website, [keep database](#) and consultation of the ACP),
- Check the application documents and respective guidance,
- Contact the [ACP](#) to receive feedback on the content and consistency of the proposal and its overall coherence to the cooperation programme. The ACP also help finding relevant project partners in other regions,
- The [project idea community](#) is also a good place to look at in case of partner search,
- Project officers at the [JS](#) can give technical and general information,



- In case of very specific questions with regard to eligibility of costs, the colleagues in the [MA](#) are happy to support applicants,
- The filling in of the application documents takes some time. Please do not leave the submission to the last moment.
- Join the MEET & MATCH forum organised by the Alpine Space programme on 23-24 October 2018 in Salzburg, Austria for identifying and discussing regional challenges, learning about existing solutions, bringing in your expertise and meeting partners to develop new projects.
- Please do also visit the [project implementation handbook](#) and the [FAQ-section](#) on the website, where useful information on questions like what costs can be co-financed, what is regulated in the subsidy contract, what to observe with regard to state aid or procurement law, what are the specific national requirements of the partner states, can be found.