



Project idea form - small projects

Version 2.1

Registration no. (filled in by MA/JS only) _____

Project Idea Form

Date of submission 02/06/2025

1. Project idea identification

Project idea name	Explore possibilities for off-season blue regenerative food tourism in the Baltic Sea Region
Short name of the project	ReGenBlueFoodTourism
Previous calls	yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> no <input type="radio"/>
Short name of the previous project	BalticBlueBizConnect
Seed money support	yes <input type="radio"/> no <input checked="" type="radio"/>

2. Programme priority

1. Innovative societies

3. Programme objective

1.1. Resilient economies and communities
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4. Potential lead applicant

Name of the organisation (original)	Leader Gute
Name of the organisation (English)	Leader Gute
Website	https://leadergute.se/



Country	SE
Type of Partner	NGO
	Non-governmental organisations, such as Greenpeace, WWF, etc.
Contact person 1	
Name	Ellen Lundkvist
Email	ellen.lundkvist@leadergute.se
Phone	+46730851888
Contact person 2	
Name	Maria Breinder
Email	maria.breinder@leadergute.se
Phone	+46730851038

Which organisation(s) in the planned partnership take part in a project within the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme for the first time? Please list the respective partners.

Leader Gute (SE)
 MTÜ Ruhnu Kultuurium/ Ruhnu Cultural Space (EST)

5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

Islands and coastal communities are facing challenges with seasonal tourism, loss of local fishing tradition and Baltic Sea ecosystem collapse. This project aims to respond to the challenge of regional dependence on high season tourism by promoting regenerative blue food tourism in the Baltic Sea region

Islands and coastal communities' economic resilience on tourism and its seasonality present a socio-economic challenge. Simultaneously, traditional fishing is declining. With very few restaurants serving locally and sustainably sourced fish, seafood or seaweed, we actively need to promote local sustainable blue consumption. By introducing regenerative blue foods as a tourist experience, we can position our communities as blue food destinations and promote off-season visits to the region. Beyond economic benefits, revitalizing local blue food traditions is essential for preserving cultural heritage, maintaining regional identity, and ensuring that traditional knowledge is passed down to future generations.

While there have been several efforts towards the green transition, initiatives towards the blue transition are scarce. The blue transition holds significant promise for reinforcing resilience in our businesses and communities by encouraging the sustainable utilisation of local resources, attracting tourists and raising awareness. More off-season tourism would bolster our economies and offer more stable, year-round employment, enhancing social resilience. Furthermore, it can preserve and develop regional identity by promoting local blue cultures.

Exploring possibilities for off-season blue regenerative food tourism in the Baltic Sea Region will tackle the following challenge and opportunity:

1. Unsustainable practices in sourcing and utilising blue foods in the Baltic Sea Region.
2. The untapped potential of regenerative blue food tourism to drive off-season tourism in the region.

5.2 Focus of the call

The project aims to develop a methodology for off-season regenerative blue food tourism in the BSR based on local-international networking in small coastal and island communities. The project will create transnational networks between stakeholders and contribute to tourism development in a variety of communities in rural areas that can serve as a model for other rural communities. The project contributes to a sustainable utilization of cultural heritage and natural resources in tourism destinations. The specific values of these small communities have great potential in developing attractive places for people to live and visit. Simultaneously they struggle with demographic and socioeconomic conditions demanding local and innovative solutions for a stable and resilient local economy. The project has potential to lead the way for other coastal communities in rural areas with a dependence on tourism on how to promote regenerative blue food tourism off-season. The transnational cooperation through CoPs (Communities of practices) involving different stakeholders intend to create a new intersectional workmethod with a variety of new and fresh perspectives - an opportunity to rethink and allow input from newcomers and expanding participation to find sustainable ways of generating income.

The project will engage youth as the next generation working in sustainable businesses, to inherit know-how and cultural blue heritage and to live in small, rural but prosperous communities.

6. Transnational relevance

The partners share the same economic dependency on seasonal tourism, which in the long run is unsustainable in every dimension. The partners have complementary strengths and knowledges, making transnational cooperation and exchange crucial to solve their common challenges. Gotland is a profiled "green" tourist destination with a developed recreational fishing but has lost much of its fishing tradition. Funen has also lost much of it but has several incentives promoting blue growth, such as cultivation of blue foods and innovative gastronomy. Islands and coastal areas of Estonia and Lithuania still possess rich knowledge of local and small-scale fish food traditions. However, they aspire to further develop their green tourism sector and to expand the use of recreational fishing. Apart from the partners representing a variety of communities and competences, it also encompasses diverse ecological conditions including a change in salinity along the basin. The



partnership reflects communities with different needs for local solutions which enables the project's results to be transferred to other communities with similar challenges. The Baltic Sea is our common resource, with similar fish-catching seasons and a fragile ecosystem, which require joint stewardship. This project has potential to preserve and develop our shared blue identity and traditions as well as our local blue distinctiveness and tourism profile.

The project will create transnational networks and knowledge exchange between stakeholders. The exchange will result in the development of a methodology for off-season regenerative blue food tourism. This methodology will be a model for other islands and coastal communities in rural areas with a dependence on tourism on how to promote regenerative blue food tourism off-season, offering methods that can be replicated in other communities.

7. Specific aims to be addressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

Participating countries will establish small local innovative CoPs (communities of practices), including relevant stakeholder actors like for example SMEs (restaurants/chefs, nature guides, blue farmers, fishermen), tourism organisations, regional strategists, NGO nature organisations, business support organisations in hospitality or similar agents. The CoPs also include the partner organisations. The partner countries local CoPs will be connected to each other throughout the project, generating a local-transnational cooperation by networking and knowledge exchange. Based on the local-international networking and knowledge exchange, the projects (and CoPs) aim is to develop a local-transnational methodology of off-season blue regenerative food tourism in the BSR. This method development will lay a foundation to further cooperation initiatives, for example implementing and testing the methodology as a "next step" for the cooperation.

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

The project will mobilize and connect "CoPs" of "avantgarde" stakeholders, interested in innovative method development and open to learning and sharing insights of how to create, package and promote regenerative blue food tourism experiences off-season. These CoPs/stakeholder actors will constitute a local platform for developing the concept of regenerative blue food as a reason to visit off-season. By transnational cooperation, they will be connected to their CoPs counterparts in the other participating countries, forming a local-transnational network for regenerative blue food tourism in the BSR. Through this, the CoPs will take advantage of the unique knowledge and skills of regenerative tourism, local fish-related tourism events, recreational fishing and blue food traditions in each of the cooperating countries, enabling them to develop a regenerative blue food-tourism methodology for their local context.

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

During the project, the CoPs will host two specialised "regenerative blue youth events" aimed and adapted to local youth to engage and educate youth on the regenerative practices in the Baltic Sea.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

N/A

8. Target groups

CoPs (Communities of practices) are the project's core methodology, bringing together the target group stakeholders, including SMEs in tourism, aquaculture, fisheries, as well as public sector, business support organisations and NGOs. The members of the CoP consists of actors that have a shared goal of advancing regional regenerative blue food tourism.

CoPs facilitate knowledge exchange, best practice sharing and co-development of solutions in the project. Each partner establishes a local CoP focusing on local and regional needs, ensuring tailored approaches. Insights are shared at the transnational level through cross-border learning, e.g. Study visits.

Please use the drop-down list to define up to five target groups that you will involve through your project's activities.	Please define a field of responsibility or an economic sector of the selected target group	Specify the countries and regions that the representatives of this target group come from.
1. Small and medium enterprise	Stakeholders in the target group will be involved in the CoPs, see explanation question 8 and 11.	EST, SE, LITH, DEN
2. Business support organisation	Stakeholders in the target group will be involved in the CoPs, see explanation question 8 and 11.	EST, SE, LITH, DEN
3. Regional public authority	Stakeholders in the target group will be involved in the CoPs, see explanation question 8 and 11.	EST, SE, LITH, DEN
4. NGO	Stakeholders in the target group will be involved in the CoPs, see explanation question 8 and 11.	EST, SE, LITH, DEN

9. Contribution to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Please indicate if your project idea has the potential to contribute to the implementation of the Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (<https://eusbsr.eu/implementation/>).

yes ☒ no ☐

Please select which policy area(s) of the EUSBSR your project idea contributes to most.

PA Tourism

PA Culture

The MA/JS may share your project idea form with the respective policy area coordinator(s) of the EUSBSR. You can find contacts of PACs at the EUSBSR website (<https://eusbsr.eu/contact-us/>).

☐ If you disagree, please tick here.

10. Partnership

The partners are:

- Leader Gute, Gotland (SE) - Lead partner NGO for locally led community development on Gotland
- Blått Centrum/the Blue Center Gotland (SE) - University
- Marine Biological Research Center, University of Southern Denmark, Funen (DEN) - University
- MTÜ Ruhnu Kultuurium/ Ruhnu Cultural Space, Ruhnu/Runö (EST) - NGO
- Klaipeda Chamber of Commerce Industry and Crafts (KCCI), Klaipeda rural costal area (LITH) - BSO

As already described in question 6, the partners have complementary strengths and knowledges, making transnational cooperation and exchange crucial to enable the development of a methodology for off-season regenerative blue food tourism:

Gotland is a profiled "green" tourist destination with a developed recreational fishing but has lost much of its fishing tradition. Funen has also lost much of the traditional fishing but has several incentives promoting blue growth, such as innovative cultivation and gastronomic experimenting with blue foods. Islands and coastal areas of Estonia and Lithuania still possess rich knowledge of local and small-scale fish food traditions. By mixing the specialized knowledges of "green" hospitality development, innovative blue foods cultivation and gastronomy, and more traditional small-scale fish food knowledge, the partners complement and can learn from each other's strengths.

To further enhance the knowledge of innovative seaweed farming and food, there are actors on Åland (FIN) that could potentially be included in the project. Some talks have been made with the company "Under Ytan": <https://www.underytan.fi/> who have expressed interest in joining this project.

11. Workplan

The project is organised around monthly regular partner meetings for coordination, communication, implementing, progress tracking and monitoring.

A digital social media platform and a communication strategy will support communication, engagement and result dissemination throughout the project.

CoPs (Communities of practices) are the project's core methodology, bringing together the target group stakeholders, including SMEs in tourism, aquaculture, fisheries, as well as public sector, business support organisations and NGOs. The members of the CoP consists of actors that have a shared goal of advancing regional regenerative blue food tourism. CoPs facilitate knowledge exchange, best practice sharing and co-development of solutions in the project. Each partner establishes a local CoP focusing on regional needs, ensuring tailored approaches. Insights are shared at the transnational level through cross-border learning, e.g. study visits.

Study visits follow an iterative process. Each CoP visits the others CoPs and each CoP also hosts a visit, fostering knowledge exchange and strengthening communication. After each visit members of the CoPs share insights locally to their own CoP members who did not join the visit to enhance engagement and transfer knowledge and skills.

Insights from study visits will contribute to the development of a regenerative blue food tourism methodology by each CoP. The Methodology development process integrates local-transnational knowledge from study visits and CoPs local knowledge, creating a structured approach to regenerative blue food tourism.

A recipe collection for regenerative blue food in the BSR will be developed in EST during an innovative-traditional cooking knowledge exchange of regenerative blue food.

During the project, the CoPs will also host two specialised "regenerative blue youth events" aimed and adapted to local youth to engage and educate youth on the regenerative practices in the Baltic Sea.

Lastly, partners will write a summarizing report presenting local and a joint transnational methodology. In this report, partners will also explore relevant national and international funding opportunities, e.g. ERDF, EMFAF, Interreg, Horizon.

The project ends with a final hybrid conference on Gotland, ensuring broad strategic communication of outcomes.

12. Planned budget

ERDF budget (planned expenditure of partners from the EU)	EUR 400,000.00
Norwegian budget (planned expenditure of partners from Norway)	EUR XXX
Total budget (including preparatory costs)	EUR 400,000.00

13. Project consultation

Please indicate if you wish to have a consultation (online meeting) with the MA/JS to discuss your project idea

yes ☒ no ☐

14. Questions to the MA/JS

Questions related to the content of the planned project	The partner Klaipeda Chamber of Commerce Industry and Crafts (KCCI) is not a rural located actor, but the idea is to work with the Klaipeda rural costal area. Is it OK that the partner is located in a city, or must the partner also be rural for this call?
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Questions related to budgeting and expenditure	<i>(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)</i>
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Any other questions	<i>(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)</i>
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15. Additional information

The project idea has been selected and granted Technical Assistance as part of the EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters. The Technical Assistance has been effective from approx November 2024 to February 2025, and this application is a result of the Technical Assistance granted from the Mission. In the evaluation and selection process of the Technical Assistance, the EU Commission deemed that the project's focus on regenerative blue tourism and its link to mission objective #3 ensures that it is relevant to the mission's objectives. The Commission also highlighted the project's potential to act as a pilot project, by offering a practical model that can be replicated in other regions.

Your account in BAMOS+

Please remember that to officially submit your application you need to access our electronic data exchange system BAMOS+. More information about the process of applying for your account in BAMOS+ you will find here:

<https://interreg-baltic.eu/gateway/bamos-account>