Project idea form - small projects

Version 2.1

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

Project Idea Form

Date of submission 03/06/2025

1. Project idea identification

Project idea name	BalticBlueResilience
Short name of the project	BalticBlueResilience
Previous calls	yes ◯ no ◉
Seed money support	yes ◯ no ◉

2. Programme priority

	2. Water-smart societies

3. Programme objective

	2.1. Sustainable waters

4. Potential lead applicant

Name of the organisation (original)	Savonia-ammattikorkeakoulu oy
Name of the organisation (English)	Savonia University of Applied Sciences
Website	www.savonia.fi
Country	FI

Type of Partner	Higher education and research institution

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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.

Holbæk Kommune (Associated Partner)
North Savo Regional Council (Associated Partner)
Others under discussion - to be confirmed

5.1 Specific challenge to be adressed

Municipalities across the Baltic Sea Region face mounting challenges in managing stormwater amid intensifying climate impacts and rising environmental standards. More frequent and intense rainfall events are straining urban drainage systems, while stormwater runoff remains a major source of pollution—transporting nutrients, heavy metals, hydrocarbons, and microplastics into rivers, lakes, and coastal waters.
Balancing urban development with environmental protection and climate resilience is increasingly difficult. Many municipalities contend with overloaded infrastructure and fragmented institutional responsibilities. Strict interpretations of water and environmental legislation further complicate planning, often delaying or preventing development in flood-prone areas.
This project directly addresses these challenges by strengthening the capacity of municipalities and utilities to implement sustainable, cross-sectoral water management solutions. The core focus is on reducing stormwater pollution and enhancing resilience to cloudbursts and flooding through nature-based and integrated approaches.
Key activities include regional and cross-regional stakeholder mapping, thematic workshops on legal and technical barriers, and the co-development of joint action plans and a transnational roadmap.

These will help municipalities identify innovation priorities, adapt discharge practices to evolving legal requirements, and strengthen collaboration among utilities, planners, regulators, and civil society.
The project draws on experiences such as those in Holbæk Municipality (Denmark), where development in the Kalvemose Å catchment is hindered by combined flood risks and water quality concerns. By tackling these systemic challenges, the project will enable smarter, more integrated planning approaches that support both urban growth and water protection.
It builds on and complements current BSR initiatives—including CityBlues, Urbreath, MustBe, Waterman and NBS4Local—that promote nature-based solutions (NBS). Our project adds value by emphasising local-regional integration, digital and legal capacity building, and operational collaboration between key actors. The aim is to produce scalable, practical solutions that empower municipalities across the region to manage stormwater more effectively while contributing to cleaner inland and marine waters.

5.2 Focus of the call

Our project contributes to the cohesive development of small places and rural areas in the Baltic Sea Region by addressing the increasing threat of flooding risk that undermines local economies, social stability, and environmental health. By focusing on Sælland (Denmark), Pohjois-Savo (Finland), Gdańsk–Gdynia–Sopot Metropolitan Area (OMGGS, Poland) and Skåne (Sweden), we engage areas facing distinct demographic and socio-economic challenges.

We support the EUSBSR objectives to “Save the Sea” and “Increase Prosperity” by enabling vulnerable communities to implement locally adapted water-smart and nature-based flood resilience measures. Many of these areas lack the infrastructure, knowledge-sharing frameworks, and stakeholder coordination necessary to address flooding in a sustainable way.

Through transnational cooperation, participatory planning, and knowledge exchange, we build local capacity and involve newcomers, and underrepresented stakeholders in shaping water management strategies. The project’s regional roadmaps and shared solutions will strengthen innovation ecosystems, reduce disparities, and help rural areas remain attractive, safe, and climate-resilient places to live and work.

6. Transnational relevance

Water pollution from stormwater and flooding is a transnational challenge that no single municipality or country can solve in isolation. Climate change is intensifying rainfall and cloudbursts across the Baltic Sea Region (BSR), overloading drainage systems and increasing the transport of nutrients, heavy metals, hydrocarbons, PFAS, and microplastics into water bodies—ultimately degrading the shared Baltic Sea.
The semi-enclosed nature of the Baltic Sea makes it particularly vulnerable to cumulative land-based pollution. According to HELCOM (2023), over 97% of the sea remains affected by eutrophication. Stormwater from urban expansion is now a growing concern, carrying pollutants of emerging concern —such as PFAS—that demand updated regulatory and technical responses.
These impacts know no borders. Runoff from Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Poland, and the Baltic States all contributes to shared environmental degradation. Addressing this requires not just

cooperation, but co-learning: municipalities and utilities must come together across borders to share experience, test new approaches, and align legal, technical, and planning frameworks.
Our project creates a platform for structured co-development—bringing together partners to jointly analyse runoff quality, regulatory bottlenecks, and innovative responses including nature-based solutions and digital monitoring. By learning from diverse contexts, partners avoid duplicated efforts and accelerate the design of effective, climate-resilient stormwater infrastructure.
Transnational co-learning enhances capacity where it's needed most, empowers public authorities with shared tools and strategies, and drives practical, scalable innovations that benefit both local communities and the broader BSR ecosystem.

7. Specific aims to be adressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

The project fosters trust among municipalities, utilities, researchers, and SMEs through collaborative workshops, stakeholder mapping, and co-creation formats. By jointly tackling climate-related water challenges, partners build relationships grounded in shared goals and practical outcomes. This trust lays the groundwork for future large-scale cooperation and the continued co-development of resilient, nature-based flood solutions across the BSR.

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

We will establish and sustain transnational networks between municipalities, utilities, innovation hubs, and solution providers focused on water resilience and pollution prevention. Activities like cross-regional capacity-building workshops, innovation matchmaking, and joint action planning strengthen existing ties and build new partnerships. These networks support ongoing knowledge exchange and foster alignment on policy and practice throughout BSR.

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

The project engages citizens through local workshops, particularly in flood-prone communities like Holbæk. By involving civil society, landowners, and residents in the development of nature-based solutions and urban planning strategies, the project raises awareness and ownership of flood resilience efforts. This inclusive approach makes Interreg's goals visible and relevant at the community level.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

Flooding from cloudbursts and heavy rainfall presents urgent and unpredictable risks to BSR municipalities. The project enhances local response capacity through practical workshops, legal framework analysis, and co-developed action plans that enable quicker, evidence-based decision-making. Short-term solutions and here-and-now measures will be identified and shared, empowering faster reactions to climate-induced water challenges.

8. Target groups

Our project focuses on building capacity for flood resilience across the Baltic Sea Region by engaging target groups that are directly impacted by flooding and equipped to influence sustainable solutions. The primary target groups are: municipalities and cities, utilities, SMEs/startups, and CSOs & NGOs.

	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.	Local public authority	Responsible for land-use planning, flood risk mitigation, spatial development, environmental permitting, and public policy implementation.	Denmark (Holbæk Municipality), Finland (Kuopio, Pohjois-Savo), Poland (Gdańsk–Gdynia–Sopot Metropolitan Area (OMGGS)), Sweden (Skåne region)
2.	Regional public authority	Responsible for land planning and zoning, long-term water resilience strategies, supporting innovation ecosystems, ERDF funding distribution, S3s.	Denmark (Holbæk Municipality), Finland (Kuopio, Pohjois-Savo), Poland (Gdańsk–Gdynia–Sopot Metropolitan Area (OMGGS)), Sweden (Skåne region)
3.	Infrastructure and public service provider	Operation of urban drainage systems, stormwater and wastewater management, public utilities, and physical and digital flood resilience infrastructure.	Denmark (FORS A/S), Sweden (Malmö area service providers), Finland (Kuopio region), Poland (Gdańsk Waste Utilisation Plant)
4.	NGO	Public awareness, citizen and landowner engagement, climate adaptation advocacy, co-development of nature-based solutions and place-based planning.	To be confirmed; targeted from Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Poland, and Baltic States (e.g. Latvia)

5. Small and medium enterprise	Innovation in water management, sustainable business digital tools, and nature-based solutions for stormwater and flood resilience.	Denmark (via CLEAN), Sweden (Skåne via SBH), Finland (Pohjois-Savo region and Kuopio via Savonia), Poland (Gdansk region via OMGGS)

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 Nutri
PA Hazards
PA Secure

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 selected partners and regions reflect the diversity of challenges and capacities across the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) in managing urban flooding and stormwater pollution. The partnership includes municipalities, utilities, innovation clusters, and research actors from Denmark, Finland, Poland and Sweden—each bringing complementary experience in water management, planning, innovation, and public-private cooperation.
Municipalities and public institutions are central to the project as they are directly responsible for urban development, water management, and land-use planning. Their early and active involvement ensures that project activities align with real planning needs and regulatory constraints. Municipalities lead local workshops, co-define stormwater challenges, and shape action plans. Through peer exchange and roadmap co-creation, they build capacity to implement nature-based and integrated solutions while navigating complex legal contexts.
CLEAN (Denmark) acts as a bridge to innovative SMEs and technologies, anchoring the project in market-oriented, scalable solutions. Savonia University of Applied Sciences (Finland) brings strong

technical and regional knowledge from an inland, flood-prone area where nature based solutions are developed. Sustainable Business Hub (Sweden) contributes innovation capacity, experience in regional testbeds, and strong ties to municipalities and utilities in Skåne. As a public authority, OMGGS from Poland brings the perspective of urban/industrial watershed to diversify legal and hydrological contexts as well as use cases, customer engagement, and capacity building.
Utilities like FORS A/S (Denmark) and Gdańsk Waste Utilisation Plant (Poland) are critical for translating planning and policy into practice. Their role in implementing infrastructure means they will be deeply engaged in technical assessments, solution co-design, and uptake of outputs like digital tools and discharge strategies.
To strengthen the transnational scope, we aim to add:
– A public authority or utility from the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania, or Estonia) to bring Eastern BSR perspectives;
– An NGO with expertise in citizen engagement to ensure inclusive, community-supported outputs;
– Optionally, a research institution with digital water monitoring expertise to enhance innovation.
Together, this diverse partnership ensures practical, legally grounded, and socially accepted solutions with broad regional relevance and replication potential.

11. Workplan

The project is built around involving key target groups—municipalities, utilities and SMEs—through all phases of the work, from problem definition to final roadmap delivery. The process is structured to ensure direct engagement, co-creation, and long-term uptake.

Work Package 1: Project Management (M1-24)
Activity 1: Reporting
Activity 2: Financial administration
Activity 3: Communication (website, logo)
Activity 4: Partner coordination

Work Package 2:
Activity 1: Regional Engagement and Challenge Mapping (M1–4)
Local workshops in Holbæk (DK), Pohjois-Savo (FI), Gdansk (PO) and Malmö (SE) will mobilise stakeholders—public authorities, infrastructure and service providers (i.e. utilities), SMEs, researchers, NGOs and citizens. Actions:
-Identifying flood and stormwater challenges
-Clarifying legal frameworks
-Mapping stakeholders and local needs
-Engaging landowners and communities
*Outcomes: stakeholder maps, context analyses, local challenge briefs

Activity 2: Capacity Building and Cross-Regional Exchange (M4–9)
Cross-regional workshops will bring partners together to share strategies on:
-Nature-based and blue-green solutions
-Integrated water planning and legal alignment
-Community engagement and co-benefits

-Public-private cooperation in stormwater innovation
*Outcomes: shared best practices, thematic briefs, mutual learning, Hybrid cross regional workshop

Activity 3: Innovation Matchmaking and Co-Creation (M9–15)
The project will host a BlueGreen Innovation Challenge, where municipalities pitch needs to innovators. SMEs and researchers co-create responses in structured ideation sessions.
*Outcomes: innovation concepts, SME-municipality matchups, solution pathways

Activity 4: Joint Roadmap (M15–20)
A transnational roadmap will consolidate lessons and outline:
-Regional innovation priorities
-Steps for policy and planning integration
-Funding options and regulatory adjustments
*Outcomes: joint roadmap, regional action plans

Activity 5: Uptake and Dissemination (M20–24)
To ensure impact, results are embedded in local strategies (e.g. Holbæk's development plan) and used to create a "one-point-of-entry" cooperation model between public authorities and utilities. Results are widely disseminated via:
-Local and regional events (local and regional projects are used as D&C platforms), these will also be utilised as working groups which will disseminate learnings and outcomes.
-Municipal and cluster communication channels
-European networks such as the International Cleantech Network (ICN) and other water-focused platforms, extending the reach to cities, clusters, and SMEs across Europe

Institutions that use the outcomes:
-Municipalities to guide infrastructure and spatial planning
-Utilities to improve flood resilience and pollution control
-SMEs to develop early phase and scalable solutions addressing public needs
-Policy bodies to inform legal and regulatory refinement across the BSR and tailor towards specific place based needs.

12. Planned budget

ERDF budget (planned expenditure of partners from the EU)	EUR 500,000.00
Norwegian budget (planned expenditure of partners from Norway)	*EUR XXX*
Total budget (including preparatory costs)	**EUR 500,000.00**

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	Which templates and level of detail do you recommend for the transnational roadmap and local action plans? Are there minimum quality criteria or KPIs for thematic workshop outputs (e.g. legal briefs, SWOT analyses)? How should we document and report co-learning outcomes from cross-regional exchanges? Can you share examples of effective dissemination channels and metrics for uptake by CSOs, landowners, and farmers? Are you aware of any project in the synergies? Any projects we should employ due diligence in order to prevent double funding? Is the consortium well balanced? Any preference of associated partners? With regards to type of organisation? How should we integrate project management/DEC? Are actions well enough described and activities concrete enough? Does our project logic flow naturally? Is a joint action plan considered a solution? Is there enough of a red thread running through the outputs i.e the durability of the outputs?
Questions related to budgeting and expenditure	*(max.1.000 characters incl. spaces)*
Any other questions	*(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)*

15. Additional information

We would be interested to organize a consultation with the MC/JS as early as possible.

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