

# 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	Green Whisper- React, Educate, Inspire
Short name of the project	Green Whisper
Previous calls	yes <input type="radio"/> no <input checked="" type="radio"/>
Seed money support	yes <input type="radio"/> no <input checked="" type="radio"/>

### 2. Programme priority

1. Innovative societies
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### 3. Programme objective

1.1. Resilient economies and communities
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### 4. Potential lead applicant

Name of the organisation (original)	Powiat Augustowski
Name of the organisation (English)	Augustow County
Website	<a href="https://powiat-augustowski.eu/">https://powiat-augustowski.eu/</a>
Country	PL



Type of Partner	Local public authority
	municipality, etc.

#### Contact person 1

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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.

Augustow County in Poland and Alytus District Municipality Administration in Lithuania will participate in the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme for the first time. This programme helps to local rural areas in BSR to implement innovative solutions, improving life of residents, social integration addressing environmental and climate-related challenges. The participation reflects the local commitment to addressing climate change impacts and raising awareness on environmental issues.

### 5.1 Specific challenge to be adressed

Forest fires and the uncontrolled burning of old grass represent a significant environmental, economic, and public safety challenge in the Kurzeme region in Latvia, in Alytus region in Lithuania and in Augustow district in Poland. In the context of the Baltic Sea Region, where environmental sustainability and climate resilience are core strategic priorities, tackling the causes of uncontrolled open burning is essential.

The most important challenge is to protect nature and prevent from destruction and degradation.

Latvia, and specifically the Kurzeme region, has developed a strong model of voluntary fire brigades that supplement the work of professional emergency services, particularly in rural and hard-to-reach areas. This scheme is consistent with fire brigade units operating in Augustów County in Poland. These volunteer-based units have proven to be an essential asset in early fire response, community education, and fire prevention efforts.

Therefore, another important challenge to be addressed is the education of members of the Volunteer Fire Departments to expand the knowledge needed for rescue operations, taking into account ongoing climate change and natural disaster situations, including water pollution, taking into account our maritime boundary, and improve digital skills if needed in specific area and enhance immediate response capacity.

Equipping the fire brigade with specialized equipment for operations in difficult terrain and organizing joint service training will improve the work of units and increase safety. It will strengthen the resilience of society.

Educational activities will allow for behavioral change, integration and building skills related to environmental protection. Public involvement in the project will strengthen resilience and response to threats. These activities will promote responsible behaviour, increase public awareness and improve practical skills to respond quickly and safely to fires. Participation in the project will help to benefit from international best practices.

The planned education and information activities include the following:

- community, local authorities, fire departments, NGO
- entrepreneurs,
- tourists,
- schools (children, youth, students, teachers, parents)
- volunteer firefighters.

## 5.2 Focus of the call

The planned activities are aimed at international and local integration with the common goal of nature protection. Educational activities will increase awareness of the risks and effects related to fires and environmental destruction. The purchased equipment will improve the functioning of the fire brigade unit and will be an innovation in the region. International cooperation will allow to benefit from the knowledge and experience of units operating in the area of operation of the project partners.

Trainings and simulations organized for the Voluntary Fire brigades and professional Fire Brigades will improve their knowledge and ability to make the right decision in extreme situations. An internal mobile platform will provide real-time emergency notifications, safety updates, and critical incident alerts to voluntary firemen based on their location.

The project call will support the inclusion of smaller rural regions, contributing to the promotion of innovation and ensuring high development of the Baltic Sea areas.

## 6. Transnational relevance

Partnership in the program is based on similar activities in response to the needs of our regions. Common goals and vision will serve to strengthen contacts and build resilience to crisis situations. The project is a response to the assumptions of priority 1.1. International cooperation allows for improvement of standards based on internal and European Union regulations. Promotion of the regions, mutual assistance, exchanging good practices, knowledge and ideas are one of the most



important elements of the planned project. Transnational cooperation helps to build network and cooperation activities with the best specialists and it is the key to development of the BSR. Common problems and international cooperation allow us to develop the most effective methods of supporting smaller regions, supporting the mutual promotion of our region. Joint actions contribute to the promotion of regions which has an impact on tourism and gaining knowledge about other cultures, strengthening the vision of the European Union community.

The selected challenge – preventing and responding to open area fires – is common across many regions in the Baltic Sea area. Transnational cooperation enables partners to exchange best practices, experiences, and innovative tools to address this issue more effectively. Shared training for firefighters, joint awareness campaigns, and the development of communication platforms will strengthen the capacity of local and voluntary units. Learning from each other's successes and failures helps to avoid isolated efforts and ensures more coordinated, resilient, and informed responses to environmental and safety threats.

## 7. Specific aims to be addressed

### Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

Purchase of specialized equipment for the fire brigade unit and organization of joint service exercises. Conducting educational activities related to responding to fire-related emergencies and preventing hazardous situations.

This project idea proposes to share Latvia's best practices and lessons learned in building and managing voluntary fire brigades with partners in Poland and Lithuania.

The above ideas will be a good introduction to further actions on a larger scale in the future because the needs of our regions are very large.

### Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

Taking joint actions related to solving problems faced by nature conservation institutions and fire brigade units. Activities are targeted at areas covered by the Baltic Region and identify with its needs. Joint international action will help to protect the environment. They will enable shaping society's awareness and solutions towards protecting natural heritage and preserving it for future generations. Generating networks will help to gain the latest knowledge and access to the latest technologies and specialists.

By facilitating knowledge exchange, joint workshops, field visits, and small pilot initiatives, the project will promote transnational learning and capacity-building. The collaboration will also help align local-level fire prevention strategies with wider BSR goals for climate adaptation, risk reduction, and community resilience.

### Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

Conducting educational activities related to the thematic area of the project. Increasing knowledge related to environmental protection and response to threats. Encouraging young people to act creatively in the field of environmental protection. Cooperation with project partners. These activities

will contribute to increasing the visibility of the project among citizens and allow it to reach a large group of recipients.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

The purchase of specialized equipment will improve the work of the fire brigade unit. It will enable quick and accurate data acquisition, efficient response to threats and support rescue operations. Educational activities will increase the awareness of project recipients in the field of environmental protection and enable effective response to threats.

Trainings and simulations will enlarge the experience of the Voluntary Fire brigades and will help them to react according to the situation.

An internal mobile platform which provides real-time emergency notifications, safety updates, and critical incident alerts to volunteers based on their location will help to take action immediately.

## 8. Target groups

Services, schools, city and municipal offices, the Youth County Council, universities and non-governmental organizations (for example as Volunteer Firefighters Associations), fire brigade teams, will be involved in project activities. The indicated target groups have competences enabling the implementation of the project and have a positive impact on its final effects.

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. Education/training centre and school	Education, Promotion	Poland (Augustow district), Latvia (Kurzeme region), Lithuania (Alytus district)
2. NGO	Education, Training, Promotion	Poland (Augustow district), Latvia (Kurzeme region), Lithuania (Alytus district)
3. Interest group	Education, Promotion	Poland (Augustow district), Latvia (Kurzeme region), Lithuania (Alytus district)
4. Local public authority	Education, Promotion	Poland (Augustow district), Latvia (Kurzeme region), Lithuania (Alytus district)



5. Infrastructure and public service provider	Education, Training, Promotion	Poland (Augustow district), Latvia (Kurzeme region), Lithuania (Alytus district)
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## 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 Secure

PA Tourism

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

Partnership include collaboration of three countries: Poland, Lithuania and Latvia. Partners are characterized by similar needs in the context of protecting natural values. All partners will implement activities in: education, international cooperation and purchasing of specialist equipment to assist in crisis management. Project activities are evenly distributed among partners. Leading institution from Poland will coordinate meetings and arrangements with partners. Partners geographically are close to each other so it is possible to plan some activities via personal meetings, trainings, workshops. Partners belong to the same group as a public authorities and therefore understand the specificity of their responsibilities and activities.

In Augustow district there are 7 municipalities. Augustow region is characterized by natural values that can be taken care of by joining the partnership.

Kurzeme Planning Region (KPR) is a regional public authority in Latvia representing the interests of all 8 local municipalities of Kurzeme region, with the aim to facilitate socioeconomic development of the region. KPR has vast experience in participating in and/or managing EU co-financed projects. We have developed a well-functioning project implementation system, with detailed implementation schemes on each project. We've got experience in implementing different type and scale projects being supported by the EU and other funds. Alytus District Municipality Administration is a public authority located in southern Lithuania, responsible for carrying out local self-government functions in a rural

area. The municipality has experience in implementing both national and international projects in the fields of education, environmental protection, and public well-being. Within this project, the municipality aims to raise public awareness about natural risks, develop response skills, and strengthen inter-institutional and transnational cooperation. Alytus District Municipality Administration will be responsible for implementing preventive and educational activities, cooperating with schools and local communities, and contributing to the organization of practical training sessions.

## 11. Workplan

### 1) Purchase of specialized equipment

The purchased equipment will be handed over to the Fire Brigade Unit in Augustów. The equipment will be able to work in difficult terrain, monitor the technical condition of facilities, map the area and support rescue operations.

### 2) Organization of joint service training and simulations

The target group of the activity will be for example the fire brigade, voluntary fire brigades and police, as well as other services and institutions related to threat prevention and environmental protection. Joint service exercises will enable the exchange of experiences, improvement of procedures, better communication, and improve the competences of officers.

Alytus District Municipality Administration will organize training sessions for local communities and volunteers, focusing on response to grass fires and risk prevention in open areas. Simulation exercises will also be planned for schools and community leaders to strengthen practical response skills in emergency situations.

### 3) Education

Actions will be taken in the form of:

- workshops, lessons in schools and, if possible, equipping schools with educational materials on environmental protection,
- field games for young people,
- information campaigns and social actions,
- organization of meetings with specialists,
- organization of photographic exhibitions on nature and environmental protection,
- preparation of educational and information materials,
- raising awareness among residents, landowners, and local stakeholders through targeted communication campaigns,

Education activities will be conducted by teaching staff in schools, employees of universities or organizations, fire brigades and institutions related to risk prevention and environmental protection. City and commune offices from Augustów County will also be involved in the activities.

Alytus District Municipality Administration will also implement educational lessons and workshops in local schools, in cooperation with teachers and communities, organizing communication campaigns on fire prevention, responsible behavior in nature, and strengthening societal resilience.

Voluntary Fire brigades from Kurzeme region will be trained on how to act in extreme fire situations as well as in environmental, especially water, pollution situations. They will gain knowledge on how to most effectively save people and nature.

### 4) Purchase or creating of the internal mobile platform

An internal mobile platform which provides real-time emergency notifications, safety updates, and critical incident alerts to users based on their location will be purchased or created for the Voluntary Fire brigades in Kurzeme. This will also help to improve digital skills for the senior Voluntary Fire brigade members.

The project's outcome results will benefit: Fire Brigade Unit, Voluntary Fire brigades, schools, National Park, residents, partners, tourists, the rest of the people who will be reached by promotional and educational activities.

## 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
<b>Total budget (including preparatory costs)</b>	<b>EUR 500,000.00</b>

## 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	<p>-After submitting an initial application, the target group (point 8) or work plan can be changed?</p> <p>-Professional fire brigade or volunteer fire brigade units belongs to infrastructure and public service provider?</p> <p>-5.1 refers to project recipients as a target group or to people involved in project implementation?</p>
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Questions related to budgeting and expenditure (max.1.000 characters incl. spaces)

Any other questions (max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)





## 15. Additional information

*(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)*

### **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>

