

# Project idea form - small projects

Version 2.1

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

## Project Idea Form

Date of submission 3/6/2025

### 1. Project idea identification

Project idea name	Phenomenal Futures: Youth-Led Redesign of Public Services
Short name of the project	Future-Y
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

1.2. Responsive public services
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### 4. Potential lead applicant

Name of the organisation (original)	Helsingin kaupungin kulttuurin ja vapaa-ajan toimiala / Nuorisopalvelukokonaisuus
Name of the organisation (English)	The City of Helsinki /Culture and Leisure Division / Youth Services
Website	<a href="https://nuorten.hel.fi/en/">https://nuorten.hel.fi/en/</a>
Country	FI



Type of Partner	Local public authority
	municipality, etc.

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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.

The City of Helsinki

Others not confirmed:

The Estonian Association of Youth Workers

The Finnish Youth Research Society

The KEKS Network

The Gothenburg municipal Youth Services

### 5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

This project aims to tailor and enhance public services to better meet the real needs of young people, by shifting from an organization-driven to a youth-driven approach. The goal is to rethink how services are designed and delivered — not based on institutional structures or legacy systems, but by centering the lived experiences, voices, and aspirations of youth themselves. Rather than offering services to young people from the top down, the project will co-create solutions with young people, ensuring that the design, decision-making, and implementation processes are collaborative, inclusive, and empowering.

The end result is a set of more responsive, accessible, and meaningful services — designed by the young, for the young. This ensures that the actors in the field of youth work, both in the cities and the rural areas, can offer services that correspond the needs of young people. By piloting new models of



collecting data on phenomena, of governance, participatory design, and intersectoral collaboration, this initiative not only strengthens trust in public systems but also builds civic capacity among youth. The project embraces experimentation, feedback loops, and continuous learning to ensure long-term impact.

## 5.2 Focus of the call

By connecting urban insights from Helsinki, Gothenburg, and Tallinn with the knowledge and local realities of rural actors in Finland, Estonia, and Sweden, the project bridges a critical urban-rural divide. We aim to co-develop context-sensitive public services that are grounded in both cross-city innovation and rural relevance. A central pillar of the project is the integration of qualitative “phenomena-based” knowledge, with a strong emphasis on youth perspectives in identifying challenges and imagining new solutions. This participatory data will be gathered in collaboration with the Finnish Youth Research Society, The Estonian Association of Youth Workers, and Sweden’s KEKS Network ensuring that rural youth voices are not just heard but form the core of evidence-building and service design. The project responds to existing fragmentation in youth services by promoting interdisciplinary and interregional learning. It aims to: Build a shared evidence base across countries and regions; Empower rural youth as co-designers of public services; Develop adaptable, youth-led models for inclusive, future-oriented governance; Strengthen local capacity by equipping public service providers with a tool and insights grounded in young people's real needs. Through this approach, the project strengthens social cohesion and resilience in both sparsely populated rural areas and urban communities facing challenges of segregation.

## 6. Transnational relevance

Transnational cooperation is essential to this project because the challenges facing youth in rural areas — such as limited access to services, social exclusion, and declining participation — are not confined to one country. On the other hand the challenges faced in urban areas are acknowledged and similar in the Baltic Sea region. By bringing together rural youth service providers from Estonia, Sweden, and Finland, and connecting them with urban public service provider organizations in each country, we enable a cross-border exchange of knowledge, practices, and innovations. This cooperation allows us to identify both shared phenomena and context-specific differences, ensuring that solutions are not only effective locally but also enriched by international perspectives. It ensures that knowledge flows both between and within countries, fostering mutual learning between urban and rural actors. Importantly, the project also strengthens cultural awareness and mutual understanding among young participants, helping them recognize common ground and celebrate diversity across the Baltic Sea region. This deepens youth engagement and builds a stronger sense of regional belonging, which is critical for sustainable, inclusive development.

## 7. Specific aims to be addressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

This project builds trust across borders by fostering genuine, youth-centered collaboration between

rural and urban actors in Finland, Estonia, and Sweden. Trust is established through co-creation processes where young people are not passive recipients but active contributors to knowledge-building and service redesign. By prioritizing shared learning, cultural exchange, and equal participation, the project creates a foundation of mutual respect and understanding between all participants — from local service providers to youth organizations and the young people themselves.

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

Involving respected national networks — such as the Finnish Youth Research Society, The Estonian Association of Youth Workers and Sweden's KEKS network — further enhances credibility and lays the groundwork for long-term institutional relationships. The collaboration model is designed to be transparent, inclusive, and replicable, which makes it scalable and adaptable for future joint initiatives.

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

As trust grows between individuals, organizations, and regions, the project naturally paves the way for sustained cooperation, follow-up projects, and policy alignment at the Baltic Sea regional level.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

This project is designed to be flexible and able to react quickly when things change. By listening closely to young people and collecting real-life needs, stories and experiences, we can spot new issues and phenomena in an early stage. We work in an agile way, checking in regularly with everyone involved and adjusting the processes if needed. Our international network makes it easy to share ideas fast, and local teams — including the youth — have the freedom to make decisions and act quickly. Because we regularly reflect and learn as we go, we can deal with urgent or unexpected challenges without getting stuck in slow processes.

## 8. Target groups

### 1. Public sector service providers and administration

It includes both frontline public service providers (e.g. municipal youth workers, social workers) and those involved in the strategic planning and data-driven leadership of youth services at the municipal or regional level. These actors are directly affected by the challenge of outdated or mismatched service models and have the capacity to use project outcomes to design and implement more responsive, youth-informed services.

### 2. Third-sector organizations working with youth

This group includes NGOs and associations that deliver youth services, particularly in areas where public infrastructure is weaker. These organizations bring practical experience, grassroots insights, and local trust, and they are key partners in implementing and scaling youth-led approaches.

### 3. Private sector actors involved in youth services

Private service providers are often involved in supplementing or innovating around public systems. Involving them supports cross-sector learning and strengthens the sustainability of solutions.

### 4. Young people (as beneficiaries and contributors)

Young people are the main beneficiaries of the project but are also actively involved in shaping outcomes. They contribute directly through participatory research, co-design processes, and dialogue

with decision-makers. Their lived experiences form the evidence base for improving services.

#### 5. National-level youth knowledge and policy networks

These partners ensure the scientific, policy, and systemic relevance of the project. They help translate local findings into scalable models and contribute to the dissemination of results nationally and internationally.

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	The municipal services of the City of Helsinki in the field of Culture and Leisure and City of Gothenburg and City of Tallinn.	Helsinki, Finland Gothenburg, Sweden Tallinn, Estonia + rural municipalities in the surrounding areas
2. NGO	NGOs working with young offering freetime activities and counselling services.	Helsinki, Finland Gothenburg, Sweden Tallinn, Estonia
3. Small and medium enterprise	Shops and freetime service provides	Helsinki, Finland Gothenburg, Sweden Tallinn, Estonia
4. Interest group	Young people in Helsinki, Gothenburg and Tallinn + in rural areas	Helsinki, Finland Gothenburg, Sweden Tallinn, Estonia
5. National public authority	Ministries and regional administrative agencies	Ministry of Culture and education of Finland and similar institutions in Sweden and Estonia

## 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 Culture
PA Health
PA Education

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

1. The City of Helsinki Youth Services is exceptionally well-positioned to coordinate a project focused on transforming public services through youth-driven, participatory approaches. As one of the most progressive and well-resourced municipal youth services in Europe, Helsinki brings a unique blend of strategic capacity, innovation leadership, and deep-rooted youth engagement practice.

Partnerships to be confirmed:

2. The Estonian Association of Youth Workers unites professional paid youth workers and youth work volunteers. Association has deep, established networks both in urban centers and rural areas — making it a vital conduit for reaching diverse youth populations and understanding their lived experiences. It brings to project strong institutional connections, experience with co-creation and participation, capacity for innovation and knowledge sharing, commitment to inclusion and equity 4) amplifying youth voice on national and European level.

3. The Finnish Youth Research Society develops youth research and provides information and expertise on matters relating to young people – studies, perspectives, interpretations and political stands. As a leading research organization specializing in youth issues in Finland, It is involved in a number of comparative research projects, with research settings either in or outside Europe. In these projects, issues such as democracy, the status of young people, migration, generations and gender, and the possibilities of digital assistance are the subject of a wide range of analyses.

4. The KEKS Network (Quality and Competence in Youth Work), based in Sweden, is a dynamic European network of municipalities and organizations. KEKS brings a unique blend of practical youth work experience, data-driven quality development, and a deep commitment to participatory methods.

5. Gothenburg Youth Services in Sweden has expertise in working with diverse and marginalized youth. Their experience ensures that the project's co-creation processes are not only participatory but also representative of diverse youth voices, especially from those typically underrepresented in public systems.

## 11. Workplan

1. Seeding – The participating organisations will be defining the phenomena, recognising the main problems and faults in their services and will do a compilation and framing of information gathered. Next activity is a joint analysis of the outcomes with the Bloomberg-Harvard PDIA-model which will be led by the Helsinki City's Youth Department. The outcome is the shared knowlegde which will construct the framework of this project.
2. Watering – The participating organisations will independently make an action plan for service design led by young people and carry it out. This includes finding options of platforms for data collection, gathering group of young people (5 to 7) and facilitating workshops for young people to be able to desing a questionnaire, choose a platform to carry out the research and to make a plan and timetable for data collection. The outcome is the youth led service design and research made by young people for the local youth that gives information of the local needs and phenomena for the development of youth services realised locally.
3. Harvesting – Joint knowledge flow meeting between the partners; Sharing the results between the participants to identify both shared phenomena and context-specific differences. The output is the planning of local solutions for better services and ensuring that they are not only effective locally but also enriched by international perspectives.
4. Crossbreed – Iterations of the local models for youth led data collection; The models made in different participating countries will be circuled to try them out the by other participants. The output is verifying and testing the different youth led data collection methods as well as getting more data from the participating organisation's influence areas.
5. Blooming – The experiences of the youth and participating organisations as well as the data collected will be gathered together and analysed in collaboration with the Finnish Youth Research Society, The Estonian Association of Youth Workers, and Sweden's KEKS . This will ensure the scientific and systemic relevance of the project. Ad an output this activity will translate local findings into scalable models and contribute to the dissemination of results nationally and internationally.

## 12. Planned budget

ERDF budget (planned expenditure of partners from the EU)	EUR 420,245.00
Norwegian budget (planned expenditure of partners from Norway)	EUR XXX
<b>Total budget (including preparatory costs)</b>	<b>EUR 420,245.00</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	How is the scope of the project received compared to those which have been previously funded?
Questions related to budgeting and expenditure	How do we estimate the daily salary for young people participating in the service design workshops from different countries - should it be set according to e.g the cost of living in each respective country?
Any other questions	How do we apply funding for the preparation costs? It would be vital to have a joint meeting with the partners prior to submitting the application.

### 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>