

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	Resilient Megatrend Riders: future-driven entrepreneurship support for rural youth leading to innovative, sustainable and resilient businesses
Short name of the project	REMER
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

3. Programme objective

1.1. Resilient economies and communities
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4. Potential lead applicant

Name of the organisation (original)	Latvijas Biozinātņu un tehnoloģiju universitāte (LBTU)
Name of the organisation (English)	Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies
Website	https://www.lbtu.lv/en
Country	LV



Type of Partner	Higher education and research institution
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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.

The project plans to involve 2 newcomers to the Programme: a local municipality from Lithuania (Panevezys apskritis) and a youth NGO from Latvia (Latgale). Negotiations are currently in progress.

5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

The project will address joint transnational challenges related to high unemployment of youth who are 18-25 years old and reside in rural areas of Latvia (Zemgale and Latgale), Lithuania (Klaipeda and Panevezys apskritis) and Estonia (Louna-Eesti). These regions face declining economic activity and population loss, which hinders cohesive development across all three countries. Young people are particularly vulnerable: they often struggle to get a job and may fall into long-term unemployment or NEET status, as employers generally prefer to hire personnel with a prior work experience.

Running a business appears a feasible alternative for young people. However, this path is also associated with a number of challenges. Lack of modern and/or future-oriented entrepreneurial competences, along with a vague understanding of current and emerging business trends, makes it difficult for young people to establish viable and sustainable companies with a stable growth potential. Meanwhile, present business environment influenced by the Covid-19 aftermath and war in Ukraine calls for resilient and effective enterprises, especially in the border countries.

There is a clear need for local authorities, educational institutions, business support organisations, and

youth associations to collaborate in supporting young people through cross-disciplinary efforts. Yet these stakeholders frequently have limitations in knowledge, capacities and tools needed to implement resilience-building initiatives effectively.

Specifically, local authorities are affected by challenges, such as limited budgets for youth-oriented programmes, lack of data or awareness of emerging market trends that will significantly reshape business environment, as well as weak intersectoral cooperation, which makes it hard to connect education, business and youth support efforts.

Educational institutions' curricula are often not aligned with real-world entrepreneurial skills and business environment megatrends. These institutions are challenged by poor integration with local businesses and limited access to modern digital tools that would appeal to young people.

Business support organisations tend to focus on existing businesses, overlooking potential entrepreneurs among young people. They are challenged by a lack of tailored support tools targeted at youth at the entry level of entrepreneurship.

Youth associations are challenged by insufficient entrepreneurship-related knowledge or tools.

5.2 Focus of the call

The project supports cohesive development of small places and rural areas by building capacities of local actors that have the ability to influence involvement of young people into entrepreneurship, such as authorities, educational institutions, business support organisations, and youth associations. Moreover, the project equips these stakeholders with transferrable tools required to facilitate development of sustainable and resilient businesses in the regions – namely, a future-oriented training module, a user-friendly mobile app, and a practical business guide adapted to rural environment.

The project aligns with the Programme's aim of unlocking the potential of affected areas by enabling young people to see entrepreneurship as a viable and attractive path, as well as empowering them to act on their aspirations. The project takes a participatory approach, especially engaging young people in piloting activities, ensuring their voices shape the project outputs.

The project is rooted in the socio-economic and demographic realities of the participating regions that experience declining economic activity, population loss, including youth outmigration, limited job opportunities, and reduced access to business support. Through transnational cooperation, the project contributes to reduction of regional disparities and, therefore, enhancement of community well-being and resilience.

In addition, the project plans to bring two newcomers to the Programme.

6. Transnational relevance

The tackled challenge is too complex to be addressed by a single country only. Instead, it requires a joint response from 3 Baltic States, which share similar backgrounds, histories, and socio-economic



development levels. While having much in common, each country brings unique experiences, ideas and know-how. Thanks to transnational cooperation, partner organisations and other stakeholders will be able to pool a variety of competencies and knowledge together, capitalise on complementary expertise, leverage local successes and best practices, and learn from setbacks. Importantly, transnational collaboration sparks innovation through blending of diverse perspectives.

This coordinated approach is cost-effective and more efficient than isolated efforts. It creates a synergistic effect, enabling partners to jointly deliver high-quality outputs and strengthen own and stakeholders' long-term institutional capacities for providing future-oriented entrepreneurial education to young people in the targeted regions and beyond. Reliable, long-standing relationships leading to further cooperation will be established among involved organisations.

Moreover, transnational cooperation will enable young people to participate in joint piloting activities in three countries. Trainees will practice working in diverse groups and various business contexts while respecting socio-cultural authenticity of all members.

Piloting activities will serve as learning environments for young people, with some participants expected to launch resilient, internationally-focused businesses. These new entrepreneurs can become change agents and role models for other young adults in rural areas in the Baltic States and Baltic Sea Region.

Finally, transnational network is more likely to sustain efforts beyond project duration due to shared ownership and broader support. Transnational cooperation also increases project's visibility, credibility, and ability to influence relevant policies.

7. Specific aims to be addressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

The project builds trust by fostering genuine, long-term collaboration between the partners from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. Through co-creation of outputs, shared piloting activities, and joint reflection on best ways to take, partners engage in a transparent and inclusive process that leads to mutual understanding and respect. Jointly developed solutions become a common foundation for further initiatives, encouraging continuity and future cooperation beyond the project lifespan.

Project stakeholders – local authorities, educational institutions, business support organisations, and youth associations – will interact throughout the project in a collaborative, supportive, and inspiring environment, which is expected to result in mutual trust and understanding, facilitating further cooperation. Young people actively involved in piloting activities are anticipated to establish strong connections that may evolve into joint entrepreneurial initiatives.

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

The project builds and strengthens transnational networks by connecting rural entrepreneurship stakeholders. It brings together organisations with complementary expertise and local knowledge to jointly address shared challenges faced by young people in small and often underserved communities. By disseminating project solutions widely, the initiative creates opportunities to engage additional



stakeholders from other Baltic Sea Region countries, fostering broader collaboration and enriching the project's outputs with diverse perspectives and experiences.

Additionally, project partners aim to establish a network of progressively thinking stakeholders focused on future-driven, resilient business approaches across the Baltic Sea Region in order to constantly strengthen each other's capacities, exchange practical know-how and ensure that innovative future-oriented practices continue to circulate and evolve beyond the project's territory and lifetime.

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

The project focuses on institutional capacity-building of partners and other stakeholders, who are closely connected to their communities and have the ability to influence how entrepreneurship support for young people, i.e. citizens, is delivered and scaled in rural areas. Therefore, the project ensures that the Programme's benefits are extended to citizens who may otherwise have limited access to entrepreneurial resources.

Young people are not only recipients of support but also active participants in the co-creation – piloting activities. This participatory approach fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment among rural youth, making the Programme more visible and meaningful at the grassroots level.

The project serves as a bridge between the Programme and rural young people, ensuring that the Programme delivers tangible value to citizens in their everyday lives.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

The project takes a future-oriented approach by equipping target groups in rural areas with the mindset, knowledge, and practical tools needed to navigate uncertainty and respond effectively to unpredictable and urgent challenges. Moreover, by deepening understanding of megatrends, stakeholders are empowered to anticipate change – not just passively react to it – and use it as an opportunity for innovation and growth. The project builds stakeholders' capacities to foresee potential shifts and generate innovative, resilient and future-relevant solutions.

Focus on risk and change management instruments along with practical techniques for maintaining mental strength, emotional balance, motivation, and discipline during crisis situations help achieve personal and organisational resilience. Emphasis on creativity in the project allows taking out-of-the-box and resilient actions in high-pressure or unexpected scenarios.

8. Target groups

Project target groups are local authorities, educational institutions, business support organisations, youth associations and young people 18-25 years old from rural areas.

Involvement of target groups in the project is as follows.

Target groups (organisations) will:



- Participate in co-creation workshops at the design stage of project outputs and contribute their expertise, experience, ideas, needs, or challenges.
- Support information collection.
- Facilitate access to other target group representatives.
- Attend piloting events to provide structured feedback or act as speakers, panellists, etc.
- Reflect on project progress.
- Participate in training sessions for organisations to uptake project outputs.
- Integrate project outputs in their work.
- Act as ambassadors and promote the project and its outputs in their own networks.

40 young individuals from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia will form a Focus Group that will participate in educational events and play an important role in piloting the training module.

This inclusive approach ensures broader ownership, practical relevance, and greater sustainability of the project outputs.

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	Participate in co-creation, support information collection, engage in trainings to uptake project outputs, integrate project solutions into policy development, disseminate information	Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia
2. Higher education and research institution	Participate in co-creation (incl. piloting), facilitate access to young people, engage in trainings to uptake project outputs, integrate project solutions into regular activities, promote the project	Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia

3. Business support organisation	Participate in co-creation (incl. contribution of expertise), support information collection, engage in trainings to uptake project outputs, integrate project solutions into support systems	Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia
4. NGO	Youth associations will participate in co-creation, support information collection, facilitate access to young people, engage in trainings, integrate project solutions, promote the project	Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia
5. Interest group	Rural youth will participate in surveys and piloting activities, use project solutions to launch resilient businesses, act as agents of change and role models, promote the project	Latvia, Lithuania, 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 Innovation

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

Current partnership consists of 3 partners:

1) Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies (LP, Zemgale)

LP – rationale for involvement in the project: LP has a significant expertise in multidimensional entrepreneurship training leading to innovative, resilient and sustainable businesses, both in formal and informal education. LP is experienced in development, piloting and integration of training materials and activities based on a fine-tuned combination of academic knowledge, real-life business cases, local state of play, emerging trends and innovative game-based learning methods, including incorporation of digital tools, such as an online business simulator. LP continuously cooperates with business development centres, incubators and municipalities on a local and regional level.

LP – role: LP will play a key role in the project by contributing its comprehensive expertise in innovative all-round business education and knowledge of megatrends. It will oversee the piloting phase and digital tool creation.

2) Association of Municipalities of Tartu County (PP2, Lõuna-Eesti)

PP2 – rationale for involvement: PP2's top priorities are youth, education, business, and welfare. It supervises eight local municipalities and communicates requirements for stimulation of youth entrepreneurship to them, as well as ensures entrepreneurship-boosting training and support measures. PP2 has worked on Tartu County Development Strategy and Tartu County NEET development programme, was involved in improvement of youth policies for sustainable rural development.

PP2 – role: PP2 will lead in coordination of youth entrepreneurship efforts across policy-makers and contribute valuable insights into rural youth's profiles.

3) Klaipeda Chamber of Commerce Industry and Crafts (PP3, Klaipėdos apskritis)

PP3 – rationale for involvement: PP3 consolidates more than 300 businesses and facilitates their sustainable development, including future-driven transformations and growth on an international scale. The largest business support network, Enterprise Europe Network, has been operating in the Chamber since 2008.

PP3 – role: PP3 will contribute its strong expertise in real-life business needs and support measures leading to resilient, sustainable and innovative enterprises.

The project plans to involve a local municipality from Lithuania (Panevezys apskritis) and a youth NGO from Latvia (Latgale).

Selected regions are subject to challenges described under point 5.1.

11. Workplan

The project empowers local authorities, educational institutions, business support organisations, and youth associations to support young people in rural areas who are eager to become entrepreneurs running sustainable businesses. The project responds to and builds upon emerging megatrends that are already reshaping our societies and will continue to do so in the coming years, as emphasized by reputable institutions such as the OECD, McKinsey, and Sitra.

Environmental megatrends (for example, transition to a circular economy), technological megatrends (e.g., AI and automation; new forms of employment and remote work), demographic megatrends (e.g. aging population) and social megatrends (e.g., growing interest in mental health) will affect communities on multiple levels, creating both new business opportunities and threats. By anticipating these shifts, the project prepares its target groups to what will come next — equipping them with tools, skills, mindset, and networks needed to thrive in a changing business environment, thus making them more resilient. This is an innovative approach, which goes beyond the existing practice in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia – entrepreneurs, new and experienced ones, often rely on the current state of play in their decisions while neglecting upcoming game-changing transformations.

The project will carry out the following activities:

Survey to assess the extent to which local businesses are aware of and aligned with megatrends.
(OUTPUT 1)

Collection of benchmark companies and best practice examples that demonstrate linkage to megatrends. (OUTPUT 2)

Co-development and piloting of a training module consisting of 5 core blocks (OUTPUT 3):

- 1) Understanding megatrends: promoting knowledge of megatrends and empowering young people to generate out-of-the-box business ideas linked to them.
- 2) Risk and change management: helping young people adapt to uncertainty, react to rapid changes and build resilience.
- 3) Sources of internal and external strength: offering young people practical tools and techniques drawing from coaching and psychology.
- 4) Creativity activation: unlocking entrepreneurial innovation through targeted exercises.
- 5) Team roles and dynamics: enabling young people to understand individual roles within teams to enhance collaboration and leadership.

Real-life entrepreneurs will be involved in all 5 blocks.

Co-development of a mobile application that integrates training materials from all five core modules



into an engaging, game-based format with bite-sized content and a user-friendly interface. (OUTPUT 4)

Co-creation of a guide to promising market niches and potential business ideas, designed to support young people willing to start a business but still searching for the right business idea. (OUTPUT 5)

Final evaluation, publication of results, support for the practical application of the training materials in real-life contexts, including individual training sessions.

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	We would greatly appreciate your feedback on both the strengths of our PIF and any areas that could be improved or clarified to better align with the Programme's expectations.
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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

N/A

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>