

# Project idea form - small projects

Version 2.1

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

## Project Idea Form

Date of submission *dd/mm/yyyy*

### 1. Project idea identification

Project idea name	GINGER – Generations Interacting for Growth and Efficiency in Rural regions
Short name of the project	GINGER
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)	BGZ Berliner Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit
Name of the organisation (English)	BGZ Berlin International Cooperation Agency GmbH
Website	www.bgz-berlin.de
Country	DE



Type of Partner	Regional public authority
	regional council, etc.

#### Contact person 1

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#### Contact person 2

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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.

Gdańsk Foundation for Social Innovation - Gdańska Fundacja Innowacji Społecznej (GFIS) (PL)  
ESTAruppin e.V. (DE)

### 5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

Rural environments face multiple challenges: lack of mobility, new arrivals integrating into existing communities, decline of infrastructure and access to health care, or rural depopulation and thus gerontification, increase in isolation and mental health issues. To raise the attraction of such areas as places to live, work and thrive, we aim to empower citizens to act together, identify urgent needs and salient gaps in their community. Promoting through cross-generational exchange and interaction a common knowledge pool to tap into and shape together local solutions for improvement. For solutions to be practicable and take hold in the reality of people's lives, a grassroots approach is the most efficient technique because ideas, endorsed by the community, provide the basis for testing, implementing and accepting feasible and immediately practicable solutions. Inspiration from other European solutions will ensure transnational learning and cultural competences. As a result, citizens will feel more empowered to tackle problems together with their neighbours in their communities. This will lead to more resilient communities.

The project idea is to develop and pilot compelling use cases as good practice in the spirit of a bottom-up approach. Motivating and encouraging citizens to come together in workshops to discuss their needs and find common goals instead of being merely presented with ready-made solutions designed

top-down. Meetings will be moderated to ensure that everybody sees themselves as “game changers” and discussion will be held on par. Each community participating in the project selects a group of ambassadors to represent the community and their challenges and ideas for improvement and solutions in transnational workshops and events. This way they learn from each other, discover common challenges and co-design or test transferable solutions across borders. A joint visit to a region presenting good practice examples will be organised to inspire the ambassadors for adapting existing practices for their own community project.

## 5.2 Focus of the call

The application aligns closely with the focus of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region call by addressing critical challenges faced by small places, rural areas, and communities experiencing significant social and economic disparities. The project aims to improve the cohesive development of these areas by tackling challenges prioritised by the community facing them, such as e.g. inadequate access to health services and limited availability of transport etc. By empowering rural residents young and old, and from different and diverse backgrounds, the project creates valuable connections in the local or regional population, enhancing the wellbeing with meaningful roles and training opportunities. Reaching out to citizens and creating impact where it really matters is the ambition which resonates well with Interreg core objectives. However, often developing and piloting a solution comes first, then is presented as a final package to the public as future users. To help projects in the future create a close, meaningful and impact-driven dialogue with the end beneficiaries of projects, ensuring the transfer of solutions into the real-world and everyday life, we propose to develop with those organisations in direct contact with the rural population, their public authorities and CSOs guidelines for good practice, tested as real use cases in the partner areas, to provide evidence-based recommendations and practices for interacting in rural areas with their population.

## 6. Transnational relevance

Rural communities in Germany, Poland, and Finland face similar issues, such as aging populations, youth migration, and healthcare disparities, but each country brings unique approaches and solutions to these challenges. And different cultural background with its ensuing different experiences in reaching out to and engaging with the diversity of people in the different regions will provide a multifaceted backdrop and knowledge pool to draw from and to think outside the box when designing and testing the most efficient ways to invite and commit people to participate in community-led activities. Solutions-finding is much driven by cultural practices and mindsets. By working together, we can co-create innovative, scalable models that leverage shared knowledge while tailoring solutions to local contexts. Transnational collaboration also fosters stronger regional networks, ensuring the sustainability and broader impact of the initiative across the Baltic Sea region.

## 7. Specific aims to be addressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

We will have transnational workshops in person with the partners and endeavour to build trust in the



programme and the transnational collaboration breaking down preconceptions and reluctance to join forces across borders and to experience how fruitful and inspiring transregional collaboration can be, despite deficiencies in English (which seems to factor in heavily in the reluctant attitude towards transnational projects).

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

n/a (if establishing formal transnational networks is meant to be a core focus - naturally the existing - often informal - networks of the partners will receive new incentives and positive impact from the project which will strengthen the networks).

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

As we will be working directly with the population of the rural area catered for by the partners, through the visibility measures and the transnational collaboration, they will be directly experience the programme and its effect for their region. The positive impact of the project in terms of cross-border collaboration and removing obstacles and reluctance based on fear, ignorance and pre-conceptions, will foster a positive and welcoming attitude which will be indelibly linked to a positive image of the Interreg programme with citizens in the participating areas and the population at the receiving end of the results formed during the project.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

n/a

## 8. Target groups

People living in Rural Areas across the whole spectrum of the population

Role: Provide insights into the most urgent challenges they experience, and determine the most feasible and suitable solutions they can implement as a community.

Involvement: Attend workshops, test solutions, and contribute feedback.

Benefits: Strengthened cohesion of the population, stronger ties and better understanding between the generations (youth and seniors) and people of diverse backgrounds, experience of being in charge and capable of pro-actively changing a situation instead of seeing oneself a helpless victim.

b) CSOs and Community Organisations

Role: Enable project implementation through expertise and networks.

Involvement: Train volunteers, support partners in reaching out to the public and public authorities, attend the events and participate in the workshops, and disseminate outcomes.

Benefits: Strengthened capacity, impact scaling, and community recognition.

The other target groups are listed below:

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. Infrastructure and public service provider	this will depend on the priority challenges identified by the citizen participants in the preparatory workshops	DE, FI, PL
2. Local public authority	They will support the activities where it is needed from public authorities (e.g. because of regulations), they will support with the reach-out to citizens.	FI, PL, DE
3. Interest group	this will depend on the priority challenges identified by the citizen participants in the preparatory workshops	PL, DE, FI
4.	<i>(max. 200 characters incl. spaces)</i>	<i>(max. 200 characters incl. spaces)</i>

## 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 Spatial Planning

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

Our envisaged partners are:

ESTAruppin e.V. (Germany) works with the people of the region for the people of the region – regardless of age, origin, or status. In all areas of work, they are committed to encounters and integration, equal opportunities and protection from poverty, practical learning for young and old, counseling and encouragement, and the prevention of violence and right-wing extremist influences. Numerous institutions and agencies support them in this. Their full-time employees are therefore supported by a large number of volunteers.

Gdańsk Foundation for Social Innovation (Poland). The foundation creates and supports places that are the foundation of social bonds and communities. It strives to build a democratic community in which people work together to enrich themselves and their surroundings.

TAMK Tampere University (Finland), The Regional Higher Education Network which is tasked with regional operations focusing on adult education and services aimed at working life. They have a good network with 12 villages of Ikaalinen (Finland) from a previous project "Smart villages" on collaboration models between villages, which will provide us already with tested models and evidence-based insights to draw from.

All three partners already support rural communities.

With their diverse backgrounds, we aim to draw from their various experience and knowledge.

## 11. Workplan

GINGER aims to pilot and validate models across regions in Germany, Poland, and Finland to engage with residents of rural areas and remote, small towns in a meaningful way and involve them in pro-actively addressing challenges and testing solutions. The tested models will be based on the partners' experiencing in working with rural communities and organisations. The result will provide good practice guidelines for other communities and their CSO and public authorities and services.

Activities and Output

- Building a common knowledge pool amongst the partners and their network partners to support with reaching out to local communities (common workshops, exchange of knowhow and experiences on peer level).
- Initiating a dialogue amongst a heterogenous group of residents of a rural area. Involving organisations and public services/authorities committed to enhancing the attraction of the area as a place to live and work and thus the general welfare of their population. Determining the challenge(s) to be addressed in the ensuing dedicated workshops on the most salient topics (e.g. healthcare, mobility, aging population, rural exodus, labour market etc.)
- Organising dedicated workshops and together with residents researching pertinent input (e.g. existing solutions in other areas) for the workshops/prioritised challenge(s) to determine which pilot to carry out
- Organisation of transnational workshops where ambassadors of each community work group presents their specific case and exchanges on how each case relates to their specific area (e.g. how the chosen challenge of e.g. the Polish community is experienced in the Finnish community, either in form of an unsolved challenge or in form of a proposed solution practiced in their area).
- Carrying out the determined pilot with the involved communities, supported by CSO, public

authorities and services; assesment/validation of the piloted solution

- Dissemination and output: The project's results are shared through dissemination events and guidelines to support replication.

By empowering rural residents to take action and mitigate the effects and impact of challenges and disparities will provide a solid basis and interest in projects developing solutions for e.g. societal challenges and sustainable prosperity for rural areas, however often lacking efficient reach-out for effective implementation and acceptance by the target groups of rural areas.

## 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
<b>Total budget (including preparatory costs)</b>	<b>EUR 400,000.00</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	In question 8 - what is expected in the first part (above the part where we use the dropdown menus for the target groups)? Are we to describe target groups that we do not find in the dropdown menus (as done here in the PIF)?
Questions related to budgeting and expenditure	Question 12 is unclear to us. We have understood that the funding is maximum 400,000 Euro, and with the 20% own contribution cannot exceed 500,000 Euro. Still we weren't sure which figure you are asking for: the request for ERDF funds or the total budget, as the line "total budget" is automatically filled in and equals the ERDF funds. Just to be on the safe side: we have understood that 400,000 Euro is max funding and 20% own contribution.
Any other questions	Is PA spatial planning the correct PA? We couldn't find any other that would be a good fit.

## 15. Additional information

BGZ has solid experience with Interreg and with leading projects. We believe that smaller organisations, in particular from the remote and rural areas and even small towns, have an inhibition to apply with European projects, not to mention lead them. We feel that taking the lead helps getting such partners on board and acquainted with the programme and thus encourage them to participate more frequently and eventually also take a lead role.

TAMK also has Interreg experience, however, as we understood, the focus is not only on "first-time applicants" but also on "rural areas", we felt that TAMK has a strong position here, having a lot of ties to rural areas and their networks/initiatives and organisations.

### **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>