



Project idea form - small projects

Version 2.1

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

Project Idea Form

Date of submission 04/06/2025

1. Project idea identification

Project idea name	Small-scale Place Development in Rural and Archipelago Areas
Short name of the project	RurDev
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)	Stiftelsen Västerviks Museum
Name of the organisation (English)	The Västervik Museum Foundation
Website	www.vasterviksmuseum.se
Country	SE



Type of Partner	Small and medium enterprise
	micro, small, medium enterprises

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.

TBD. We are currently discussing with future partners.

5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

Over the past few decades, public services and natural meeting places have gradually disappeared from large parts of the countryside and archipelago. This decline has crept in as jobs and public services have been shut down. Bit by bit, social sustainability has been dismantled as places and people that once acted as the social glue of villages have disappeared. This has, in turn, contributed to a growing divide between urban and rural areas, difficulties in recruiting volunteers for community associations, poor integration of newcomers, and limited communication between stakeholders, residents, and municipalities. They often feel forgotten and deprioritized by the rest of society. They do not feel like part of the municipality but instead identify with their local area, parish, or the nearest town. Their sense of identity is highly local. We can thus conclude that human connection, natural meeting places, municipal services, and communication between residents, local actors, and the public sector are essential building blocks for creating long-term, attractive places.

Many rural areas are strongly affected by depopulation, but there are countertrends. At the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), a research project is underway on "The New Green Wave." For about ten years now, there have been signs that "people are moving to the countryside to engage in small-scale farming, self-sufficiency, and alternative lifestyles." Examples include an increase in the

number of small farms, rising demand for abandoned rural homes and properties, and more people moving to rather than from sparsely populated areas. Similar trends are observed in other European countries such as Finland, the United Kingdom, and Italy.

The global situation requires green transition and new solutions. Analyses suggest that the places of the future will be hyperlocal, with accessible, smart solutions that make everyday life easier—both in cities and in rural areas. These descriptions align well with the qualities that small communities in the countryside aspire to. In fact, many small rural villages already possess the basic conditions to take the next step toward becoming hyperlocal “modern villages.”

5.2 Focus of the call

The method for “Small-Scale Place Development” originates from UNESCO’s approach to strengthening World Heritage sites. With support from the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Tillväxtverket), Västervik Museum has adapted the method to suit the Swedish countryside and archipelago. The method consists of nine steps and is implemented in selected locations through 3–4 workshops. The aim is to help small rural communities become more attractive to residents, visitors, and businesses, while also increasing their resilience. This is achieved through collaboration and shared goals defined locally in each place. The overall goal of this project idea is to test and adapt the method to suit the conditions of other countries in the Baltic Sea Area. When we leave a place after completing the workshops, it is never an ending—it should be seen as the beginning of something new. Our hope is to help spark ongoing processes and improve communication between different stakeholders!

6. Transnational relevance

We are convinced that the needs we have encountered in the Swedish countryside also exist in other countries. Examples include improved communication between residents and public representatives, as well as opportunities to attract new businesses, residents, and visitors. We have also seen that place development can play a role in civil preparedness, for instance by establishing local points of contact. There is great potential in working with social sustainability to make small communities more attractive places to live. However, the method needs to be tested and adapted to the conditions of other countries. For example, the choice of shared goals may differ between countries, the types of local representatives interested in participating may vary, and the organization of collaboration and continued efforts after the project may need to be structured differently.

7. Specific aims to be addressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

The project aims to adapt and test the place development method in the countries around the Baltic Sea. In doing so, a network is created—built on knowledge, understanding, and shared experience. This increases opportunities for residents, businesses, public representatives, and other stakeholders to meet and collaborate on sustainable rural development across the entire region. Through this work,



trust in the approach and its potential is strengthened.

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

Through the project, a network for sustainable place development in rural and archipelago areas will be initiated. Together with stakeholders such as cultural heritage associations, rural development organizations, and local and regional authorities, we will be able to share the results.

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

In the project, we will work together with residents and various stakeholders in rural areas. In previous work in Sweden, between 15 and 45 people have participated in each meeting or workshop. There is a high level of engagement, active stakeholders, knowledge of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, natural resources, and a strong connection to—and sense of responsibility for—the place. There is a clear willingness and drive to improve the quality of life, care for the area, and attract more visitors to experience what it has to offer. Moreover, there is a positive attitude toward tourism, which is seen as one of several tools for developing the place and strengthening entrepreneurship and local growth. There is plenty of potential that needs to be harnessed! What is lacking are shared goals and a clear organizational structure.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

Through the project, collaboration and communication in rural areas are improved. In addition, a shared organization is established in each location. This means that in unexpected or urgent situations, there is already a designated local actor who can quickly step in and act as a unifying force.

8. Target groups

1. Rural residents
2. Local businesses
3. Local associations (e.g., associations for sports, nature, cultural heritage, or youth)
4. Representatives from municipalities and regions
5. National representatives for cultural heritage, rural development, civil preparedness, and business development

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	Enable rural development.	Depending on the final partnership of the project consortium.



2. Regional public authority	Enable rural development.	Depending on the final partnership of the project consortium.
3. Infrastructure and public service provider	Enable rural development.	Depending on the final partnership of the project consortium.
4. Interest group	Local, regional and national interest groups. Participating in workshops.	Depending on the final partnership of the project consortium.
5. NGO	Local and regional associations. Participating in workshops.	Depending on the final partnership of the project consortium.

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 Tourism

PA Culture

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

Stiftelsen Västerviks Museum, Sweden (www.vasterviksmuseum.se). Has developed the method. A historical museum with a regional mandate and national interest working with a broad field of heritage. It has a particular focus on the Baltic Sea and the surrounding region.

Forum Marinum, Finland (www.forum-marinum.fi). A maritime museum with national responsibility, Forum Marinum has been jointly developing different local cultural heritage sites and cooperating with



small coastal and archipelago area museums in Finland
 Balteus Foundation, Poland (balteus.eu) – a non-governmental organisation that focuses on innovation, digital inclusion and community empowerment. Balteus brings valuable experience in implementing cross-sectoral rural development projects, as well as expertise in promoting youth engagement in underserved areas.
 We are discussing with one or two more partners to join the consortium.

11. Workplan

Main activities and outputs:

- Review of the existing method for rural place development with all project partners.
- Selection of locations for place development in each participating country.
- Identification of relevant stakeholders in each country.
- Implementation of place development in 1 to 2 locations per country.
- The project consortium reviews the results, experiences, and new ideas. The method is adjusted.
- Implementation of place development in an additional 1 to 2 locations per country using the revised method.
- The project consortium reviews the results, experiences, and new ideas. The method is further refined.
- A shared method for the countries around the Baltic Sea is developed jointly by all partners.
- The method is disseminated to local, regional, and national organizations and decision-makers.

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
(max.1.000 characters incl. spaces)



Questions related to budgeting and expenditure *(max.1.000 characters incl. spaces)*

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

15. Additional information

For more information:

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:36eb9fac-9dee-4ea2-9661-17cca57f1f43>

<https://www.kulturarvvastervik.se/>

<https://kunskapbesoksnaring.se/platsutveckling/lar-av-andra/samverkansprojekt-i-vastervik-ser-till-att-kulturarv-bevaras>

<https://kunskapbesoksnaring.se/platsutveckling/projekt-platsutveckling-genom-kulturarvsturism>

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>