

# Project idea form - small projects

Version 2.1

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

## Project Idea Form

Date of submission 05/06/2025

### 1. Project idea identification

Project idea name	Border Regions with Resilience, Integration and Efficiency
Short name of the project	BRERIE
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)	Nordiska Skärgårdssamarbetet, Ålands Landskapsregering
Name of the organisation (English)	Nordic Archipelago cooperation, The Government of Åland
Website	<a href="https://skargardssamarbetet.org/en/">https://skargardssamarbetet.org/en/</a>
Country	FI



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.

Svinesundskommittén (SE)  
 Greater Copenhagen (DK)  
 Nordiska Skärgårdssamarbetet (AX) LEAD Partner (Government of Åland)  
 Kvarkenrådet (FI)  
 Bothnian Arc (SE)  
 Tornedalsrådet (SE/FI)  
 Nordkalotträdet (SE)  
 MidtSkandia (SE/NO)  
 Fellesrådet (SE/NO)  
 Innlandet/Dalarna (SE/NO)  
 Värmland/Östfold (SE/NO)  
 ARKO (SE/NO)  
 Innlandet Fylke (NO)  
 Länsstyrelsen Dalarna (SE)

The partners are Nordic Cross Border Committees, within the Nordic Council of Ministers, county administrations and regional administrations.

### 5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

The Baltic border regions as well as the Nordic border regions in general have faced severe challenges over the last few years. First there was the pandemic that tore our countries apart from each other and largely demolished what had been built up over decades: trust, integration, labour market regions.



Then came the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which has brought the Baltic border regions, and all the Nordic countries, a challenge not seen since World War II. In order to live up to the objective in both the EU Baltic Strategy and the Nordic Council of Ministers' Vision the cross-border cooperation in border regions needs to get more attention.

Border regions are very often rural, sparsely populated and remote. They are especially vulnerable, their resilience and economic development are depending on integration and cooperation across borders. That specific work, the cross-border cooperation and the efficiency, competence and methods of the parties involved is the main challenge this project will address. The results and experiences, if we reach our objectives, can be used throughout the Baltic Area and all border regions within the EU for that matter.

## 5.2 Focus of the call

With partners from five (so far, we hope to get positive answers from Estonia as well) countries the project intends to, just as the Nordic vision and the EU Baltic Sea strategy states, integrate them better. The focus for us is the integration in border regions. They are mainly rural, small places and experience all the difficulties that brings. But they also suffered severely from both the pandemic and the recent issues regarding security and not the least preparedness.

Border regions are more exposed to these problems and issues as they are the periphery of the nations. But they are also the gates for integration with other nations, very often with limited local and regional resources. Better integration, more efficient cross-border development and because of that more resilient border regions will strengthen them all - both short and long term.

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## 6. Transnational relevance

Nordic, Baltic and border region cooperation cannot be neither performed nor developed without transnational cooperation - it is the core of it all.

The Project idea originates from frustration within the Cross Border Committees over not being able to create the most integrated and sustainable region in the world – which is what the Nordic Council of Ministers has stated as the vision. They need competence, they need to form and sustain networks and arenas for cooperation, and they need methods and platforms for better efficiency.

The focus is transnational, cross-border. To try to do this on a national, or even bi-lateral, scale would not only be in vain, but it would also be truly sub-optimal and a waste of resources.

So, there is no “Transnational Relevance”, the project IS transnational from the original idea forward. We truly believe that results and experiences from our small project will be of great use to other



stakeholders in the area, and possibly throughout the EU.

## 7. Specific aims to be addressed

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

The partners in the project are spread throughout all the Nordics and especially around the Baltic Sea. The project aims to bring them all closer and integrate their work of trying to make border regions more resilient, integrated and effective.

For that to happen all stakeholders need to trust one another and BRERIE aims to support that through several activities in the project. To meet, to work together and to describe, address and discuss mutual challenges will help to build that trust. In addition, we hope to get side effects through new constellations finding that they can do things together, small or big.

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

The partners all connect through several different networks already today. Some are in many, some in few. What we aim to achieve are broader networks for regional, cross-border and shared development and integration. Thereby experiences, competence and resources can be used more effectively to build resilient and effective (border) regions.

Activities in BRERIE will address this and initially assess needs, currently existing connections and build there. Some of the existing fora might be too macro focused, some might be too narrow and micro focused. If there are existing networks where the partners already take part, with a focus that matches our objectives, we only need to inject new energy, challenges and resources there.

### Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

N/A

### Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

More effective cross-border cooperation will always be a useful and robust foundation for development of resilient societies in the affected regions. BRERIE does not, however, aim to build responsiveness or systems for security and preparedness in the partnership regions.

The project will work on the level above – to develop the abilities (competence, networks, methods etc) of the stakeholders in their cross-border cooperation. That, in turn, will give effects such as responsiveness, resilience, efficiency in rural and remote societies and much more.

## 8. Target groups

We have tried to build a partnership that also reflects our target groups. We aim to reach and involve



the stakeholders of the important work we are focusing: the the cross-border development and cooperation.

The Cross Border Committees of the Nordic Council of Ministers, which make up for the majority of the partnership, have different ways of organizing both practically and judicially. The majority of them are politically governed, with owners or members on the board of directors.

Our primary target group is therefore those groups of stakeholders: the people holding the responsibility for the cross-border cooperation and development in border regions. These are mainly regional or local (municipal) public authorities. This also includes the people working in the cross-border committees, of course. We have the objective of engaging also an Estonian partner with these competencies and more or less the same challenges. That has however not been confirmed when posting this Project Idea Form.

Secondly, we aim to involve the local and regional stakeholders as well. All cross-border cooperation is not undertaken by the CBCs, and BRERIE wants to enable more to participate, both in the project and afterwards.

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. National public authority	The Government of Åland is owner/ member and host employees of the Nordic Archipelago Cooperation, cross border committee	Åland
2. EGTC	The Kvarken Council in the Kvarken area is a Cross Border Committee organized as an EGTC	The Kvarken Council is an EGTC with Sweden and Finland as members. Regions are Ostrobothnia (FI), Västerbotten (SE) and Västernorrland (SE) together with a number of Swedish and Finnish municipalities

3. Interest group	Tornedalsrådet, Nordkalotträdet, MidtSkandia, Bothnian Arc, Fellesrådet Svinesundskommittén, ARKO, Värmland/ Östfold, Innlandet/ Dalarna, Greater Copenhagen (all CBCs)	These Cross Border Committees cover most of the border regions in the Nordics, except for Iceland. They are Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish and Danish
4. International governmental organisation	Nordic Council of Ministers, Estonia (not yet confirmed) working with cross border development and cooperation with the Nordics and the Baltics.	Estonia (and the Nordics)

## 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 Secure

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

We have tried to build the partnership of all the twelve official Cross border Committees (CBCs) within the framework of the Nordic Council of Ministers. That is the basis for the idea and for the common challenge we face. They all share the same “WHY”.

The CBCs all bring different things to the table. Different competencies, different experiences and



different local practical challenges. We have also approached an Estonian partner but have not yet received a final accept from them. The list of partners are as shown blow, with partners listed that have accepted to take part.

CBCs:

- Nordkalotträdet: Northmost part of Finland, Norway and Sweden. Partner, part financier, workgroup
- Tornedalsrådet: Along the Torne River in Finland, Sweden and Norway. partner, part financier, workgroup
- MidtSkandia: Västerbotten and Nordland counties in Sweden and Norway. Partner, part financier, workgroup
- Kvarken Council: Ostrobothnia (FI), Västerbotten (SE) and Västernorrland (SE) on both sides of the Kvarken Strait. partner, part financier, workgroup
- Fellesrådet: Jämtland/Härjedalen (SE) and Trøndelag (NO) counties. Partner, part financier, workgroup
- Innlandet/Dalarna CBC: Innlandet and Dalarna (Norway and Sweden) counties. Partner, part financier, workgroup
- Värmland/Östfold CBC: Värmland (SE) and Östfold (NO) counties. partner, part financier, workgroup
- Svinesundskommittén: Västra Götaland County (SE) and Östfold county (NO). Partner, part financier, workgroup
- Greater Copenhagen: Skåne and Halland Counties (SE) and Sjaelland Region (DK). Partner, part financier, workgroup
- Nordic Archipelago Cooperation: Stockholm, Östergötland, Sörmland and Uppsala Counties in Sweden (all bordering the Baltic Sea), Åland (AX/FI) in the middle of the Baltic Sea and Kymmenedalen, Egentliga Finland and Nyland in Finland – covering the coastline from Russia in the east over the Åland archipelago to the southern parts of the Swedish coastline. Lead partner, part financier, workgroup, project management.

## 11. Workplan

### Work Plan

The project has three main work packages and a start-up phase. The work plan will ensure strategic coordination, engagement of all target groups and delivery of practical outputs for stronger and more resilient societies in the border regions of the Baltic Sea Region – and throughout the Nordics.

### Start-up Phase: Planning, Management and Communication

This phase includes detailed planning, partnership agreement finalisation, communication structure setup, and working group / steering group initiation.

#### Activities:

- Kick-off meeting and partner coordination
- Establishment of communication channels and project management routines, incl. administrative routines
- Finalisation of stakeholder mapping and outreach plan

#### Outputs:

- Project handbook/guidelines

- Communication strategy, including exit, dissemination and final conference
- Stakeholder involvement plan
- Detailed project plan

#### WP1 – Efficient Infrastructure for Cross-border and Cross-regional Cooperation

This WP focuses on identifying, assessing, and improving the frameworks and structures enabling cooperation across borders in the BSR.

##### Activities:

- Mapping and analysis of existing infrastructures and legal frameworks
- Identification of bottlenecks and proposals for improvements
- Study visits and mutual learning workshops and arenas across border regions

##### Outputs:

- Report on cross-border infrastructure challenges and potentials
- Best-practice guide for institutional frameworks
- Recommendations for policy adjustments
- Network structures

#### WP2 – Skills and Resources for Cross-border Cooperation and Development

This WP enhances the competence and capacity of organisations and individuals engaged in cross-border development.

##### Activities:

- Competence needs assessment among target groups
- Training sessions and workshops (e.g. legal frameworks, project development, digital tools)
- Peer-to-peer coaching and knowledge exchange

##### Outputs:

- Capacity-building module package
- Toolkit for cross-border cooperation skills
- Increased capacity among involved actors documented in follow-up evaluation

#### WP3 – Better Cross-border Development – Methods and Tools

This WP provides tested methods and practical tools for more efficient, inclusive and goal-oriented cross-border development.

##### Activities:

- Inventory of existing methods and tools in partner regions
- Development of new tools for cross-regional planning and follow-up
- Piloting of selected methods/tools with feedback loops for different challenges/regions

##### Outputs:

- Catalogue of tested methods and tools
- Guidelines for practical implementation
- Evaluation reports from piloting phase

#### Target Group Involvement and Usage

The primary target groups—regional and local public authorities and cross-border committees—will be



directly involved throughout. They will co-develop activities, test solutions, and apply outputs in their ongoing work. The final outcomes will be usable by all Nordic and Baltic border regions and

## 12. Planned budget

ERDF budget (planned expenditure of partners from the EU)	EUR 426,000.00
Norwegian budget (planned expenditure of partners from Norway)	EUR 74,000.00
<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 *(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

This Project Idea Form, and the hopefully following application, will be handled by a consultant for the Lead Partner, The Nordic Archipelago Cooperation (AX) and he will need to get access to a BAMOS+ account to use going forward.

### **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>