

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	Climate Circles: Rural Women Leading the Green Transition
Short name of the project	<i>(max. 20 characters incl. spaces)</i>
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)	Insamlingsstiftelsen Entrepreneurs Without Borders
Name of the organisation (English)	Entrepreneurs Without Borders
Website	www.ewb.world
Country	SE



Type of Partner	NGO
	Non-governmental organisations, such as Greenpeace, WWF, etc.

Contact person 1

Name	Donnie Lygonis
Email	donnie@ewb.world
Phone	+46 708 33 00 90

Contact person 2

Name	<i>(max. 100 characters incl. spaces)</i>
Email	<i>(max. 100 characters incl. spaces)</i>
Phone	<i>(max. 100 characters incl. spaces)</i>

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.

Starter Incubator, Poland
 SmartEnergy DIh, Lithuania

5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

Rural areas across the Baltic Sea region face dual challenges: a lack of climate adaptation capacity and underrepresentation of women in innovation and leadership. Women in these regions are often caretakers of local resilience but lack structured spaces to build climate knowledge, develop solutions, and lead change. The project addresses this by empowering rural women to become “climate leaders” through peer-led learning and innovation groups — the Climate Circles.

5.2 Focus of the call

The project supports the cohesive development of rural communities by establishing Climate Circles — local peer-learning groups for women that meet monthly to learn, exchange, and co-create sustainability solutions tailored to their communities. These groups build local capacity, enhance liveability, and foster job creation through green micro-enterprises and community-led initiatives, inspired by the Swedish NGO Hand in Hand's model of grassroots development and EWB's Impact Chapter model.



6. Transnational relevance

The systemic challenges facing rural women in Poland, Lithuania, and Sweden are strikingly similar: isolation, limited access to innovation support, and lack of structured pathways into the green economy. A transnational approach allows us to co-create a common Climate Circle toolkit, pilot different local adaptations, and exchange best practices. Shared learning and joint outcomes will build a replicable support model across the Baltic Sea region.

7. Specific aims to be addressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

Yes — the monthly peer-learning model fosters deep trust and collaboration between women leaders, which can extend beyond the project into new EU cooperation efforts.

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

Yes — we build a durable transnational network of rural climate innovators supported by local incubators and expert partners.

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

Yes — the Climate Circles are rooted in community. They directly engage rural citizens and activate local agency in the green transition.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

As the project focuses on long-term resilience building, not emergency response, the short answer would be no, however with a number of active groups up and running, they would in practice be utilized and mobilized for swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges.

8. Target groups

The primary beneficiaries of the project are women in rural communities. The listed target groups represent the organizational entry points for reaching and supporting these women — through training, coordination, mentorship, and community building.

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. NGO	Women's empowerment, rural entrepreneurship	Sweden, Poland, Lithuania
2. Local public authority	Rural development, inclusive policies	Sweden, Poland, Lithuania
3. Education/training centre and school	Informal education, peer learning, facilitator training	Sweden, Poland, Lithuania
4. Interest group	Climate action, women's networks, civic engagement	Sweden, Poland, Lithuania
5. Business support organisation	green innovation, startup mentoring	Sweden, Poland, Lithuania

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 Bio-economy

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

The partnership brings together three complementary organizations from Sweden, Poland, and Lithuania:

Entrepreneurs Without Borders (Sweden) – Lead applicant; coordinates project design, development of the Climate Circle toolkit, and oversees transnational peer learning.

Starter Incubator (Poland) – Runs local pilots, trains facilitators, and activates rural women innovators through workshops and coaching.

marterEnergy (Lithuania) – Contributes technical expertise in clean tech, circularity, and climate-focused entrepreneurship; also supports local implementation and innovation scouting.

Each partner brings expertise in inclusive innovation, community engagement and sustainability. The chosen countries represent diverse rural challenges and opportunities, ensuring rich transnational learning. Additional expert organizations (e.g. universities, municipalities) may be added for evaluation, replication, or dissemination.

11. Workplan

Main activities:

Co-design a Climate Circle model, toolkit, and facilitator guide

Recruit and train local facilitators

Establish Climate Circles in each country (at least 2–3 per region)

Organize monthly peer-learning sessions in each circle (12 per pilot site)

Collect and share best practices, stories, and solution pilots

Host transnational learning exchanges between Circles

Publish a replicable model and policy brief for regional scaling

Outputs:

1 open-access Climate Circle toolkit (incl. curriculum, facilitator manual)

6–9 Climate Circles piloted in rural communities

3 country-level reports and

1 synthesis brief with policy recommendations

1 online showcase event for cross-border storytelling and scale-up dialogue

Target group involvement:

Rural women will co-create the Circle model, lead local pilots, and contribute insights to the toolkit.

Local stakeholders (e.g., NGOs, public bodies) will help with recruitment, space, and support. Final outcomes will be used by innovation support organizations, public authorities, and rural development actors.

12. Planned budget

ERDF budget (planned expenditure of partners from the EU)	EUR 460,000.00
Norwegian budget (planned expenditure of partners from Norway)	EUR 0.00
Total budget (including preparatory costs)	EUR 460,000.00

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 No additional questions at this stage. We welcome feedback via PAC or Monitoring Committee if relevant.

15. Additional information

This project builds on peer-based empowerment models such as Hand in Hand and adapts the Entrepreneurs Without Borders Impact Chapter model to climate action. While simple in structure, its replicability and focus on rural women's leadership in the green transition offer strong potential for transnational policy impact and future cooperation projects under Priority 1 and 3.

We anticipate developing open-access resources (e.g. the Climate Circle Toolkit) that could be of use to other BSR rural actors, NGOs, or local authorities. We are happy to engage in sharing or dissemination activities beyond the partnership.

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>