



Guidance

Participation of Russian organisations in the first calls for applications

Core and small project applications

1. Introduction

Interreg Baltic Sea Region 2021-2027 launches its first calls for applications in the beginning of February 2022. Project applications for core and small projects may involve partner organisations from all the Programme countries. The Programme area covers ten countries: eight EU Member States (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, parts of Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden) and two partner countries (parts of Norway and parts of Russia).

The conditions for the whole partnerships are detailed in the Programme Manual and the announcement notes for core and small project applications. **There are a few specific requirements for Russian organisations**, however. The financial and implementing provisions for participation of Russian organisations will be stipulated through the agreement governing the financial contribution from the European Union and the Russian Federation. This financing agreement (FA) is currently being drafted. Therefore, all the provisions are not known, yet. As soon as the conditions for Russian participation are agreed upon in the FA, they will be transferred into the Programme Manual. Until then this additional guidance will apply.

The Programme Manual includes a lot of useful information and guidance on how to construct a project proposal, how to build a partnership and how to plan a budget. **Most of these rules and requirements are the same for project partner organisations from all the Programme countries.** For example, such chapters as C. Obligations of partnership, C.2 Eligible and ineligible organisations, D.3 Eligibility rules for core projects, E.3 Eligibility rules for small projects (including sub-chapters on staff costs under D.3.6 and E.3.5), M. Control and audit will help Russian organisations to understand some of the Programme rules and plan their budgets accordingly. Some other elements relevant only for Russian project partners have not yet been included in the Programme Manual (for example, procurement rules, payments, availability of advance payment, visibility requirements). They will be included at a later stage, after they are clarified in the financing agreement.

At the moment, the indicative allocation from the EU Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) is 4.4 million euros. A corresponding budget from the Russian national budget is under negotiations in the Russian Federation.



2. Modes of participation of Russian organisations

For the first calls for core or small project applications, Russian organisations can join project applications as **project partners on hold**, as the conditions for the Russian participation are not yet agreed. Once the financing agreement is signed, Russian project partners on hold will be invited to upgrade their status to regular project partners. Russian organisations may also join as associated organisations, if they do not plan to apply for Programme funding.

Russian project partners on hold

Project partners on hold is a custom-made category for Russian organisations in the first calls for core and small project applications. It was introduced by the Programme to allow participation of Russian organisations even before the financing agreement is drafted and signed.

Russian organisations are encouraged to get acquainted with the Programme requirements and rules during the preparation of an application.

a. Applying as project partners on hold (application phase)

Russian organisations can join the development of project proposals from the very beginning as project partners on hold. Lead applicants are encouraged to involve Russian organisations from the beginning, considering the conditions related to the partners on hold status. Russian partners on hold should prepare their activities together with the other partners, plan a corresponding budget and describe them in the application. The co-financing rate for Russian project partners will be maximum of 80%.

Application form

As this is a custom-made category only for Russian organisations in the first calls, the following steps should be taken to add Russian project partners on hold to the application¹.

Step 1. Go to application, section 2. Partnership, select “+ Project Partner”

The screenshot shows a horizontal navigation bar with six tabs: '1. Project Summary', '2. Partnership', '3. Relevance', '4. Management', '5. Work Plan', and '6. Indicators'. Below the tabs is a light blue bar containing three buttons: '+ Project Partner', '+ Associated Organisation', and 'Check for errors'. The '+ Project Partner' button is circled in green.

¹ It should be taken into consideration that initially the Programme’s electronic data exchange system BAMOS+ was developed to accommodate only standard categories of organisations joining project applications (project partners and associated organisations).



Step 2. Add the required information on the organisation. Before the name of the organisation in English add a clear reference **“PARTNER ON HOLD”**

2.2 Project Partner Details - Partner 7		
LP/PP ⓘ	Project Partner	
Partner Status ⓘ	Active	
Active from	09/11/2021	Inactive from
Partner name:		
Organisation in original language	Администрация города N	
Organisation in English	PARTNER ON HOLD Administration of city N	

Step 3. Describe the role of this Russian project partner on hold in the project implementation, for example indicate what project activities, work packages and groups of activities this Russian project partner on hold plans to participate in. Also add in that field the corresponding budget the Russian project partner on hold plans for these activities.

Role of the partner organisation in this project: ⓘ
What is the role of this Russian project partner on hold in the project implementation? What project activities does this Russian project partner on hold plan to participate in? What is the corresponding budget the Russian project partner on hold plans for these activities?

274 / 1,000 characters

Step 4. Save.

Step 5. Add further Russian project partners on hold if relevant.

No other sections of the application need to be updated regarding the participation of Russian project partners on hold. The complete application for a core or small project must be submitted by the deadline specified in the announcement notes for the respective call.

At the stage of application, Russian project partners on hold do not need to sign a partner declaration. If Russian organisations have questions whether they are eligible as project partners for Programme funding, they should contact the members of the Programme’s Committee from Russia at <https://interreg-baltic.eu/service/contacts/monitoring-committee/> or the Russian National sub-committee of the Programme at <http://www.rnsc.leontief-centre.ru/8/>. In addition, the Programme Manual provides good information in chapter C.2 Eligible and ineligible organisations.

The members of the Monitoring Committee (MC) from Russia will be asked to verify the eligibility of Russian project partners on hold.



b. Upgrading to regular project partners (contracting or implementation phase)

As soon as the financing agreement is signed, the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat will invite the projects with Russian project partners on hold to upgrade their status to a regular project partner. The lead partners of such projects will need to amend the application with details on activities and budgets of the Russian project partners. This is done in the application form sections 2. Partnership, 5. Work plan and 7. Budget. In addition, Russian project partners will need to sign partner declarations.

If the financing agreement is signed before the decision of the MC on selection of small or core projects, the Russian project partners on hold will be upgraded to regular project partners during the contracting phase. They will start the project implementation together with all other partners.

If the financing agreement is signed after the decision of the MC on selection of small or core projects, the Russian project partners on hold will be upgraded to regular project partners during the implementation phase. Russian partners on hold may implement the project activities before the signature of the FA, yet on their own risk. It is not known yet when exactly the FA will be signed, but not later than 31 December 2023.

3. Payment to Russian project partners

In general, the Programme operates based on the principle of reimbursement. This means that each project partner pre-finances its own project expenditure and requests a reimbursement of the Programme co-financing via a partner report. The availability of the advance payment scheme to Russian project partners is under discussion.

Programme funding to Russian project partners will be made available only after the financing agreement entered into force and if there are sufficient funds on the Programme account. Until then, the implementation of activities by Russian project partners can be done only from their own resources. The Programme will aim to reimburse the costs borne by the Russian project partners on hold that incurred after the approval of the project by the MC but before the signature of the financing agreement. The projects selected for funding will receive further information and guidance after the MC decision on approval of the projects.