QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM APPLICANTS AT THE APPLICATION STAGE 1ˢᵗ CALL

ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS

1. Is it possible for one applicant to apply for more than one project under the same objective, ensuring of course that he has capacity?
   Yes, it is possible. There is no restriction from this point of view as long as the applicant can demonstrate that they have the administrative and operational capacity and financial resources to do so.

2. Is it possible to have a partner from other country, which is not located in the eligible territory of the Programme (e.g. Croatia, as this academic institution would have the best knowledge on specific project topic to be transferred to the HUSKROUA region)?
   Due to the point 1.6 "Programme area" of the Guidelines for the Applicants, the programme area covers 4 countries and NUTS III level equivalent regions. Eligible applicants have to have their headquarters registered in Hungary or Slovakia or Romania or Ukraine.

ELIGIBILITY OF PARTNERSHIPS

1. Do I need to have a partner in each country?
   According to the section 3.3 "Minimum requirements for partnership" of the Guidelines for the Applicants the partnership shall involve at least one Applicant from one of the Member States participating in the Programme and at least one Applicant from Ukraine, each and all satisfying the eligibility criteria for Applicants. Both partners should have budget in the project

2. How to find partners?
   In order to find the partner the Programme website https://huskroua-cbc.eu/ encloses a dedicated sections for finding potential partners "Financed projects database" and "Project idea database". Moreover, you may consult https://keep.eu/ which is a comprehensive online database enclosing aggregated data regarding projects and beneficiaries of European Union cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation Programmes.

3. In case of unpaid recovery in the frame of the ENI CBC HUSKRPOUA Programme 2014 2020 Is the Lead Partner of the project is considered to be a debtor to the Programme or the partner who actually owes the debt?
   The particular partner organization from the financed project within ENI CBC HUSKRPOUA Programme 2014 2020 who did not pay the recovery amount is the debtor to the Programme and falls under exclusion criteria for partnership for the Interreg VI-A NEXT Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine Programme.

4. Can the legal representative of the NGO, be part of the implementation team in the project?
   Yes, the legal representative of the NGO, can be part of the implementation team in the project

5. Ukrainian partner can be the lead partner?

Yes, Ukrainian partner can be the lead partner. There is no restriction in the Programme for the lead partner role.

New

6. In the HUSKROUA ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020, state-owned enterprises (profit making) were eligible. Can they participate in the HUSKROUA INTERREG NEXT Programme 2021-2027 now?
According to the 1st call Guidelines for the Applicants should be non-profit making legal entity, however ministries and state owned companies having portfolio of public interest have exceptional status and are eligible. At the same time state-owned companies have to follow other eligible criteria set in the Guidelines (part 2 2. Eligibility of Applicants).

7. Can the Applicant from Suceava be the Lead Partner?
Yes, Applicant from Suceava can be the Lead Partner, there is no limitation on this point in the Call's conditions.

8. Can organization from Lviv (Ukraine) participate in the Project implementing activity on the territory of the Zakarpattya?
No, organization from Lviv (Ukraine) does not fall under the eligible criteria on eligible Programme area.

PROJECT DURATION AND TYPES

1. Are projects with the "mirror" types of actions acceptable?
Yes, mirror activities (similar activities on both sides of the border) within the project are eligible and acceptable.

2. Under Objective 1.1: Climate change adaptation, risk prevention, Type of Actions 1. Joint actions aimed to reduce the impact of climate change and human threats on nature: technical preparation of common infrastructure development projects and implementation of common interest infrastructure development projects, is it possible to submit a project that does not include infrastructure component?
Under Objective 1.1, Type of Action 1 any type of projects can be submitted (SSP, RSP with or without infra and LSP).

3. Under Objective 1.2: Biodiversity and reduced pollution, Type of Actions 1. Joint initiatives for ensuring the sustainable development of natural areas: technical preparation of common infrastructure development projects and implementation of common interest infrastructure development projects, is it possible to submit a project that does not include infrastructure component?
Under Objective 1.2, Type of Action 1 any type of projects can be submitted (SSP, RSP with or without infra and LSP).

4. Do policy and advocacy actions (roundtables for formulating policy recommendations) may complement some other actions under Objective 1.1: Climate change adaptation, risk prevention and Objective 1.2: Biodiversity and reduced pollution?
   Possible activities listed under Objective 1.1 are indicative and can be complemented.

New

5. Would a project proposal considered as Infrastructure-type only if all the involved Partners are planning infrastructure-type activity?

   No, even if only one Partner within the partnership plans with infrastructure element, the project is considered to be Infrastructure-type (should it be either a Regular or Large-scale project).

PROJECT LOGIC

1. …
2. ….

INDICATORS

1. Are result indicators mandatory or indicative (how can an applicant guaranty that the results indicators will be achieved after the project has been implemented)?
   The result indicators – in most of the cases – are measured up to one year after project completion. Therefore, the target values are indicative.

2. In the guidelines, page 38 it is mentioned that "For example, projects under Objective 1.1 with protection measures against climate related natural disasters, should select the corresponding indicator number RPRO1". Is it the case that we also need/are obliged to select the correlated Output indicator "RCO26 Green infrastructure built or upgraded for adaptation to climate change"? In our case we target a RSP without infrastructure on Objective 1.1: Climate change adaptation, risk prevention.
   There is a direct link between the output and result indicators, so that projects contributing to the value of any of the output indicators, are expected to contribute to the value of the corresponding result indicator, too.
   Under objective 1.1, for an RSP without infra is obligatory to select only the programme output indicator RCO87 and corresponding programme result indicator RCR84.

3. Are we allowed to develop project specific indicators, apart from the programme indicators to which we need to contribute?
   There are no project level indicators anymore. Programme-level indicators are defined in the Interreg Programme Document and detailed in the Guidelines for the Applicants and its Annex IV: "Indicator guide". Programme-level indicators are predefined and the applicant cannot change them.

4. How to calculate base and target values of each indicator? Are the formulas defined?

Base values in case of each indicator shall be 0, similarly, as defined on Programme-level. The measurement of target values shall be made according to the Measurement unit defined in Annex IV per each indicator. Please also read carefully the Definition per each indicator, which can guide you in realistic planning of target values.

5. Do we have to follow by the calculation of output and result indicator values the formulas provided by section *Assumption* for each Programme indicators in the Annex IV Indicator Guide? Please note that milestone target values for 2024 and target values for 2029, in all tables of Chapter 2 of Annex IV, refer to the target values of the Programme and are only for information purposes. Calculation provided in section *Assumption* for each indicators' target values were used by the calculation on Programme-level, therefore, and do not have to be followed in calculating target values on project-level. Instead, please consider in every case the *Measurement unit* and also consult section *Definition* of a given indicator.

HORIZONTAL AND OTHER PRINCIPLES

1. ....
2. ...

SOURCES OF FUNDING

New

1. Is it necessary to prove the availability of the own co-financing on our bank account at the stage of application?
   No, there is no need to prove the availability of the amount of own co-financing on bank account of the applicant institution that was calculated as per the project proposal budget.
2. ...

PAYMENT FORECAST

New

1. When is it realistic to plan with the receipt of the reimbursement following a Reporting period?
   The timeline of the overall reporting (both partner-level and project-level) until the approval of a Project Report will vary depending on the speed of certain steps of certain actors within the process. However, considering the deadlines, in normal case the approval of a Project Report and the following payment of reimbursement can be planned for the 4th-5th months counted from the end of the Reporting period.

2. How shall we plan the spending of the flat-rate category costs? Shall it be equally divided per months?
   The flat rate will be automatically calculated based on the real costs reported in a given Reporting Period. Thus, at the planning of the payments, it is advised to calculate the flat rate amounts based on the real costs as per the given Reporting Period.

SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATIONS

1. Will the package of documents be in Ukrainian?
   The Document "Guidelines for the Applicants" is translated into all national languages of the participating countries and available on the Programme web site https://next.huskroua-cbc.eu/ . At the same time the Annexes to the Guidelines were not translated into the national languages and available only in English.

2. Question on deadlines: regular projects with infrastructure are submitted by 20/12/2023 or 14/03/2024?
   The regular projects with infrastructure must be submitted by 14 March 2024, 15:00 (Central European Time).

3. In the supporting documents for submission with the application, the document: extract from register, is also mentioned. Does this document have to be valid (30 days after the request from the Court) or can it be even older (but of course it has to capture all the changes in the association)?
   Any submitted supporting document must be valid and contain the most recent data.

4. In completing the Annex 2, De minimis declaration – is there possible to explain better how we should complete this document? For us it is not clear if we need to mark one of the options listed: "merger during the current and the previous two fiscal years" or "splitting of undertakings during the current and the previous two fiscal years"?
   The Applicant shall choose one of the 2 options as follows:
   "Merger", if the applicant's organization merged with another organization, or "Splitting", if the applicant's organization underwent a splitting in the mentioned period. The choice depends on the actual situation of the particular organization.

5. Is it possible that supporting documents needed for application (Extracts from register, Establishing documents / Statutes or Article of Association, Copy of the Specimen of signature of the legally authorised representative(s) of all Applicants, Copy of all the Applicants' approved and audited Annual accounts for the last closed financial year) be in copy (not original), and signed by legal representative, stamped, certified with "according to the original"?
   Those documents which are named as "Copy of" in the List of the supporting documents can be submitted as suggested, however, is not an obligation to have it signed by a legal representative, stamped, certified with "according to the original".
   The rest of the documents should be scanned originals (meaning that the original documents have to be issued by the respective authority OR certified by a public notary/court, OR certified by the legally authorised representative of the respective Applicant meaning they have to be signed, stamped and dated by the person(s) authorised in the establishing document and/or in the specimen of signature to sign in the name of the Applicant organisation.)

6. In relation to supporting document "Copy of all the Applicants' approved and audited Annual accounts for the last closed financial year", can these documents be provided ONLY in national language or there is a need for summary English translation?

There is no need in English summary for "Copy of all the Applicants' approved and audited Annual accounts for the last closed financial year". This document can be submitted in national languages.

7. When submitting the proposal, applicants need to submit Job description to all positions listed in the Project team. Is there any template for the Job description?
No specific template for the Job description is provided by the Programme.

8. Do the Job description need to be dated and signed by each expert in the project?
NO, since not all projects will have already the necessary staff hired at the moment of the submission of the application.

9. In case if a supporting document, in concrete, *Extracts from register (or equivalent document) – by all applicants (by each potential partner organization of the partnership)* is not relevant for one of the Applicants, what coud be the solution? What else to submit?
Any equivalent document contains complete information (and historical data) about legal form and status of legal entities, fields of its activity etc. should be uploaded. In case when such document is not relevant, at least an explanatory document shall be prepared and uploaded to the relevant folder in I+.

10. The following data is requested on tab Applicant/Financial capacity: Funding from other sources (EUR). What does that refer to?
Funding from other sources (EUR): The amount of other subsidy and funds received for additional activities closely related to the project activities must be included here. (E.g.: in the case of a project aimed at renovating a building, this project includes the renovation of two floors of the building, while other EU programme covers the construction of the roof)

ASSESSMENT, SELECTION, CONTRACTING

1. …
2. ….

ANNEXES AND APPENDICES TO THE APPLICATION PACKAGE

1. The land and/or buildings where the work will be carried out must be owned or used by the partner on a long-term basis - what is meant by long-term use?
In line with Annex B "Special stipulations on the ownership of land and buildings in case of projects having investment/works activities" to the Guidelines for the Applicants if the applicant implementing the works component already rents, or wishes to rent for the duration of the project and for subsequent operation, the land or building, the relevant rental contract must be annexed to the application, together with the declaration of the owner of the property that the owner agrees with the submission of the application to implement and subsequently operate the works component for at least 5 years after project closure. The rental contract must be stipulated for a definite period of the project implementation and no shorter than additional 10 years and it must ensure the exclusive use of the investment, according to the activities described in the

application form and endorsed by the MC, during the implementation of the project and in the following 10 years In our case, long-term basis means at least 10 years.

ELIGIBILITY OF COSTS (INCLUDING SCO)

1. If the partner includes the preparation costs that were incurred before the start of the project, do they have to comply with procurement rules?
    Yes, the expenditure for the preparation costs should be in line with Programme eligibility procurement rules.

2. Has VAT become acceptable expenditure?
    in case if the total budget of the project (including VAT) is at least EUR 5 000 000 and it is recoverable under national VAT legislation or if total budget (including VAT) of the project is below EUR 5 000 000, and the project is state aid relevant, the recoverable VAT is not eligible. In other cases VAT is eligible and Applicant can include VAT into the planned Budget.

3. Can small projects include a small infrastructure component?
    Due to the point 1.5 "Financial allocation of the present Call for Proposals" of the Guidelines for the Applicants Small-scale projects are intended to be projects with soft elements with possible equipment in justified cases where the equipment is necessary for the execution of the project professional content.

4. Who can be the staff? Is it an individual entrepreneur or a municipal employee?
    The staff in the section 1 "Staff costs" is the persons employed by the organization based on the employment contract or an appointment decision/contract considered as an employment document (internal experts). Individual entrepreneur under the service contracts (external experts) should be assigned to the section 4 "External expertise and services costs".

5. What is considered an infrastructure component? Is the current repair of the premises where the equipment is installed an infrastructure component?
    In terms of Programme infrastructure component is meant to be works. However in order to correctly define the subject of the future procurement we recommend to consult relevant national classifier or other relevant documents which gives the strict order how to determine the subject of the procurement.

6. Is the purchase of specialized, expensive equipment an investment component?
    Equipment as such does not refer to the infra component/works. Equipment elements should be assigned under budget section 5 "Equipment expenditure".

7. Can used equipment be procured?
    Due to the section 3.5 Equipment of the Annex III "Eligibility of expenditure" second-hand equipment may be purchased only in special and well justified cases in accordance with Article 43 (2) of the Interreg Regulation, as a main rule eligible only if approved within the assessment phase of the application.

8. Is an infrastructure component for sports facilities possible?
Objective 2.2: Culture, Type of Actions 2. "Promotion of local and regional cooperation in culture and arts" says that one of the indicative activity can be investment in public cultural and community sports infrastructure to support preservation and development efforts.

9. The term "investment/infrastructure component" is used in programme documents. Does it mean only works?
Yes, term "investment/infrastructure component" means works. Works is the outcome of building or civil engineering works taken as a whole which is sufficient in itself to fulfil an economic or technical function.

10. is it necessary to include the costs of audit services for Ukrainian Applicants ?
No, Ukrainian Applicants should not include expenditures for the audit service, since control function will be performed by the state national institution in Ukraine.

11. Travel and meals (section 3) applies only to project staff? And in which section should I put travel and meals for conference participants?
Section 3 "Travel and accommodation" is planned for financing expenditure on travel and accommodation costs for missions necessary for the project implementation (e.g. participation in project meetings, project site visits, meetings with the Programme bodies, seminars, conferences, etc.) of the internal staff. Expenditures needed for the external conference participants should be assigned to the budget section 4 "External expertise and services costs".

12. Can the organisation of an event be subcontracted?
Yes, project events can be subcontracted and budgeted under budget section 4 "External expertise and services costs".

13. Is it possible to cover expenses in one applicant's budget (e.g.travel costs) for participants from other countries than the Programme area countries, provided that they have knowledge and expertise that is needed for project implementation?
Travel expenses are eligible, regardless whether such costs are incurred and paid in or outside the Programme area, as long as they relate with the project's delivery and are essential for the project activities.
In case an expert provides external service to the Project Partner, he/she shall include its travel and all relating costs in its service contract fee.

14. Is the purchase of laboratory equipment eligible for strengthening the administrative capacity of the food control laboratory?
The procurement of laboratory equipment is eligible and can be purchased.

15. The Guidelines for Applicants say that Ukrainian Partners have to provide 10% own co-financing to the implementation of their project part. Is it necessary to prove that the amount is available

on the bank account of the Ukrainian Applicant or can it be ensured by the availability of the appropriate workforce?

It is not necessary to prove the availability of the amount of own contribution at the application phase. However, during the implementation of the project, it is not enough that the appropriate workforce is available as a proof of ensuring the requested own contribution to the project, but it is an obligation to share each incurred and paid costs into NDICI sources (90%) and own sources (10%).

BUDGET AND FINANCES

1. Can a partner without a budget spend its own contribution but not receive co-financing from the Programme? are there eligibility requirements for a partner without a budget applicable?

    Partner without a budget fully falls under the eligibility rules for Applicants. Due to the section 1.5 "Financial allocation of the present Call for Proposals" of the Guidelines on project level, the Union co-financing rate is maximum 90% of the total eligible expenditure. The Union co-financing rate shall not exceed 90% on project *and on partner-level*. Thus the co-financing rate cannot be less than 10% of the total eligible expenditure. The costs of a Partner without budget shall in no way be part of the planned project budget.

2. Are there any requirements for the distribution of funds between partners in percentage terms? Can 1 partner receive 10 per cent and the other 90 per cent, or 2 partners receive 10 per cent and 2 partners receive 40 per cent?

    There is no specific requirement on the distribution of funds between partners in percentage terms. However according to the section 3.3 "Minimum requirements for partnership" of the Guidelines the budget of the applications has to be planned in a balanced way, proportionate to the planned activities (except those partners not receiving financial support).

3. Should an NGO have the co-financing amount in their budget or it can be covered by a bank loan?

    The Applicant may decide how and in what form to provide the own co-financing. However, the Applicant should be aware that such expenditures as interest on debts, bank charges, unless a separate bank account is opened for the project are non-eligible.

4. If an applicant chooses to outsource project management and the Staff cost flat rate is not calculated and reimbursed, does this mean that the cost of internal experts is also not reimbursed?

    Indeed, if the project management is outsourced, the staff cost as flat rate is not calculated and reimbursed. Therefore, the cost of internal experts is also not calculated and reimbursed.

5. In relation to the reimbursement mechanism: It is specified that there will be an advance payment and then every 4 months there will be an interim report as well as a verification expenditure report. Will these expenditure reports be available in due time to ensure a flux of cash flow for beneficiaries?

    The reporting period for the project is defined in the Subsidy Contract and should be prepared by the project Beneficiaries every 4 months. The national controllers should perform the verification

of the Reports within the set deadlines. It is very much depending on the quality of the reports and the capacity of the Controller's organization to process reports. The Controllers will verify the expenditure using the "simplification" method for the SCOs, which should speed up the entire process.

6. In case we will have an institutional partner who cannot receive payment on staff costs from project budget (because it is financed by state budget), is it possible that their travel costs are covered in the budget of other project applicants?
Is it possible that the same institutional partner may include costs in the project under category of direct costs (expertise, equipment)?
There are 2 types of Budget available: one where Staff Cost is a flat rate (depending of the project type) calculated based on the direct (real) costs and a second option, where Staff Cost is a real cost and the rest of cost categories automatically calculated as flat rate. In both cases, travel costs are automatically calculated and reimbursed, as flat rate.
Budget section 4 "External expertise and services costs" can be used for financing of the travel and accommodation for external experts, speakers, chairpersons of meetings and service providers.

Including costs in the project under category of direct costs (expertise, equipment) it is possible.

7. Shall we have price offers for proposed budget item in original at the premises of each applicant?
Price offers in original are not needed at the time of application. However price offers for the launched procurement will be checked by the controllers at the verification stage while checking the market prices. All supporting documents should be stored at the premises of the Beneficiary in originals for the purpose of the verifications, audit and monitoring missions.

8. Does the financing operate on the principle of reimbursement of expenses?
The financing of EU grant is paid in 2 forms: advance payment and reimbursement. 25% of advance payment from EU contribution is granted right after the Subsidy contract signature, then payment will be done based on the reimbursement of expenses. National co-financing is paid out on the principle of reimbursement, details and order of payment is defined in the national regulations.

New

9. Shall we include costs for the auditor for UA Applicant in the Budget?
No, there is no need to plan cost for the audit service in the Project Budget as control function will be performed by the State Audit Service of Ukraine. The services of verification is provided free of charge and not accounted in the Budget.

COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

1. Can TV/radio be replaced by YouTube channels?
While YouTube channels can be a valuable and additional platform for content distribution, they are not intended to substitute traditional TV and radio entirely. Each medium serves different

purposes and caters to diverse audiences. Traditional TV and radio continue to offer a wide reach and structured broadcasting, while YouTube channels provide a more interactive and on-demand viewing experience. Integrating both can create a comprehensive content strategy, maximizing the benefits of each platform. However, no, YouTube cannot replace TV/radio.

2. Is the communication package for the project or for each partner? That is, for example, in a project with 2 partners - 1 package or 2 packages?
Information and publicity package is designed to be flexible, allowing each project partner to choose its own package based on its specific communication needs and goals. In a project with two partners, each partner has to select its own communication package. This approach ensures that partners can tailor their communication strategies to best suit their individual requirements, audience, and objectives. The aim is to provide a customized and effective communication approach for each partner within the project.

3. Are communication activities, such as the SCC, real costs or simplified costs?
Communication activity can refer to the real costs in case Applicant choose Budget type A. In this case costs for the visibility and communication actions should be assigned to the budget section 3.4 "External expertise and services costs".
If Applicants choose Budget type B communication activity falls under simplified costs option.

4. Communication packages - can an applicant choose additional communication tools outside the existing packages if necessary?
Yes, it is possible. If there is a need of additional communication and promotion tools for the respective project, it can be done as an additional activity.

New

5. Medium communication package includes at least 50 professional photographs demonstrating project activities, progress and results. Does it mean we have to hire professional photographer?
Project partners have the flexibility to decide how they procure professional photographs for their projects. They can choose to hire a professional photographer as an external expert, ensuring high-quality images that meet communication standards. Alternatively, partners may opt to purchase a professional camera and capture photographs themselves, provided they possess the necessary skills and expertise to produce professionally made images. The key requirement is that the photographs meet the criteria of professionalism, regardless of whether they are sourced externally or taken by project partners. Photos must be well composed, properly lit, and edited to ensure clarity, sharpness, and visual appeal.

INTERREG +

1. Do I need to re-register if I am already registered in the I+ programme?
User Manual of the INTERREG+ IT Application Module (available on the web site https://next.huskroua-cbc.eu/) says that Users who have had access to the INTERREG+ system in

the 2014-2020 programming period, do not have to re-register, they can use their users in the system developed for the 2021-2027 programming period.

2. Who fills in the INTERREG+ system at the time of application, each partner separately or the lead partner?
The representative of the Lead Partner organization will be responsible and will have technical possibilities to create one, united Application for the project.

3. In the Work plan section of an RSP without infrastructure, I have included 3 software activity groups in the application, but the system still does not allow me to include other packages than the communication and management package (the fourth one). In the manual it says that we can have maximum 6 activity groups. Is this an error or a misunderstanding?
For Regular projects without infrastructure a maximum of 3 soft activity groups and one for management and communication are possible (4 activity groups in total).

4. In the Work plan section, for specific activities, the country of the activity is required in addition to the activity name and description. In this case, we have to include a specific country for each activity, even if the activity is mirrored, so we will have several activities, where the difference is only the country in which it takes place?
Indeed, for each activity the country where it will be implemented have to be selected. To avoid multiplication of an activity where only the location is different, in the description of the activity it should be clearly explained where it will be carried out/implemented. The content of the activity description should be reflected in the budget of each partner.

5. When will the Interreg+ platform be available for testing for project submission? Is there a manual on submission in Interreg+ (or we use the prior version, available on https://huskroua-cbc.eu/documents/project-implementation-documents)? Do we need to make a separate account in Interreg+ for submission of project if we already have an account as Beneficiary of project under ENI HUSKROUA 2014-2020? Is JS planning to organize a training on submission of projects using Interreg+ platform?
The application module of I+ was launched on 26th of October, 2023. The user manual is also available on the Programme website www.next.huskroua-cbc.eu.
No separate account is needed. The same user account can be used on both Programmes, selecting different programming period is needed though (2014-2020 or 2021-2027).
Any related trainings will be announced on the Programme website in due time.

6. Is it possible to have a separate work package on management, and another one on communication or these should be embedded in the other technical work packages?
There is a separate Activity Group dedicated to both project management & communication in the on line application module.

New

7. How to choose several countries in I+ section Exact location in the Work plan (Activity name) if the activity is mirrored by several partners? Do I need to duplicate the activity?
There is no need to duplicate activity, in the description of the activity there is a possibility to describe the list of location.

8. Would it be possible that two persons using the same account is working on the same application at the same time?
No, that is not possible.