

## Slovenia – Hungary

On the basis of Article 106.i of the Public Finance Act of the Republic of Slovenia the Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development, Kotnikova 5, 1000 Ljubljana, represented by the Interreg and Financial Mechanisms Office, Cross-Border Programmes Management Division issues the following

### **OPEN CALL FOR PROPOSALS (for standard projects)**

in the frame of the Interreg VI-A Slovenia–Hungary 2021-2027 programme  
(Reference number: 4300-1/2023)

#### **1. Managing Authority**

Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development, Kotnikova 5, 1000 Ljubljana, represented by the Interreg and Financial Mechanisms Office, Cross-Border Programmes Management Division acts as Managing Authority.

The Managing Authority is the contracting authority for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

#### **2. Legal basis**

- Public Finance Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 11/11 – official consolidated text, 14/13 – revised, 101/13, 55/15 – ZFisP, 96/15 – ZIPRS1617, 13/18 and 195/20 US Dept.);
- Rules on the procedures for implementing the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, no. 50/07, 61/08, 99/09 – ZIPRS1011, 3/13, 81/16, 11/22, 96/22 and 105/22 – ZZNŠPP);
- Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021, laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy (Common Provisions Regulation) with all amendments;
- Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund (ERDF Regulation) with all amendments;
- Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments (Interreg Regulation) with all amendments;
- Implementing acts and delegated acts adopted in accordance with the aforementioned regulations;



- Other legal acts applicable to the implementation of projects co-funded by the ERDF;
- Interreg Programme Slovenia-Hungary No CCI2021TC16RFCB045, approved by the European Commission Decision, No C(2022)8276 final as of 14 November 2022 with all amendments.

The pronouns used in the masculine gender form in this document shall be considered as including the feminine gender form in line with the principles of gender-neutral language.

### 3. Open Call for Proposals

This Open Call for Proposals is issued by the Managing Authority.

The Application Package, consisting of the Manual for Beneficiaries, the Project Statement and the Project Partner Statement templates, the ERDF Subsidy Contract sample, the Partnership Agreement template and the Interreg Programme Slovenia-Hungary (IP SI-HU) is available for download on the website [www.si-hu.eu](http://www.si-hu.eu).

The IP SI-HU for the programming period 2021-2027 invites potential beneficiaries to submit project applications in the frame of this Open Call for Proposals.

### 4. Subject of the Open Call for Proposals

The IP SI-HU is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the European Territorial Cooperation objective. The subject of this Open Call for Proposals is co-financing of projects that contribute efficiently to the **overall objective of the programme which is:**

to contribute to an active and cooperating programme area aware of its environmental, natural and cultural values, through promoting sustainable utilisation, preservation and exploitation for tourism purposes, setting up a well identifiable and attractive green tourism destination.

The subject of this Open Call for Proposals is co-financing of projects that correspond to the following priorities and related specific objectives:

#### **Priority 1: Green border region**

- ✓ *Specific objective 1:* Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution

#### **Priority 2: Inclusive border region based on sustainable tourism**

- ✓ *Specific objective 1:* Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation

#### **Priority 3: Cooperating border region**

- ✓ *Specific objective 1:* A better cooperation governance

The projects shall apply a result-oriented approach. **The coherence of the project intervention logic** (i.e. the project overall objective, the project-specific objectives, activities, outputs and expected results)



**with the targeted specific objective and the indicators of the programme shall be clearly demonstrated.**

For a detailed description of the content of each priority and programme-specific objectives, including the actions and target groups, please refer to section 2 of the programme document. In order to make your project compliant with the programme, it is recommended to read and take into account the description under each priority and corresponding specific objective.

In line with the terms of this Open Call for Proposals, a project proposal shall address only **one** of the mentioned **priorities** and **one programme-specific objective**, even if certain activities of a project also fall under another priority.

### 5. Available funding, co-financing rate and project size

A total of **EUR 11.404.789** of ERDF funding shall be made available for co-financing of projects in the frame of the current Open Call for Proposals.

The funds shall be broken down by priorities as follows:

Priority	ERDF funding in EUR
1 Green border region	3.527.250
2 Inclusive border region based on sustainable tourism	6.466.667
3 Cooperating border region	1.410.872
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.404.789</b>

Only eligible expenditure (see point 10 of this document) shall be co-financed by the programme. Co-financing from the ERDF shall amount to a maximum of 80% of the total eligible costs, and at least 20% shall be provided by the Project Partners' own contribution and/or other sources<sup>1</sup>.

The projects eligible for participation in the programme shall apply for **above EUR 160,000 of ERDF** funds for Priority 1, Priority 2 and Priority 3, Specific objective 3.1 and **should not apply for more than EUR 1.5 million of ERDF** funds for Priority 1 and Priority 2, **EUR 350.000 of ERDF** for Priority 3, Specific objective 3.1.

### 6. Programme area

The programme area comprises two Slovenian (Pomurska, Podravska) and two Hungarian (Vas, Zala) NUTS-3 regions.

### 7. Partnership requirements

In line with the minimum requirement, the partnership shall have **at least one Project Partner from Slovenia and one from Hungary** or an EGTC (European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation) registered in one of the partner countries consisting of members from both Member States.

<sup>1</sup> For detailed information see the Manual for Beneficiaries.



Natural persons and political parties **shall be excluded** from participation. All other legal entities shall be able to participate provided they are not acting as external service providers in the same project and have the **financial, administrative and operational capacity** to participate in the programme.

Partners shall appoint a Lead Partner. The Lead Partners shall be **located within the programme area**. In justified cases a Partner located outside the programme area can be the Lead Partner provided that it has legally defined competences or field of functions for certain parts of the programme area. Institutions located outside the programme area but on the territory of a Member State involved in the programme can only act as Project Partners.

Project Partners located outside the programme area but in the European Union can be Project Partners only in duly justified cases. Please note that in case of project approval the effective participation of partners from European Union regions outside the programme area is subject to the condition that the Member States in which they are located accept all implementing provisions regarding management, control and audit.

#### **8. Eligible period of co-financing**

The earliest possible start of the period of eligibility of expenditure is 1st January 2022.

The project's end date shall be the date defined in the ERDF Subsidy Contract but shall not be later than 31 December 2028.

#### **9. Project duration**

The recommended project duration shall be **up to 36 months for Priority 1 and Priority 2** and **up to 24 months for Priority 3**, Specific objective 3.1.

#### **10. Eligible costs**

1. Staff costs
2. Office and administrative costs
3. Travel and accommodation costs
4. External expertise and services costs
5. Equipment costs
6. Costs for infrastructure and works

A detailed description of eligible costs is included in the Manual for Beneficiaries (Part 4).

#### **11. Project development support**

**Before submitting their project proposals, the applicants should read the documents related to the respective Open Call for Proposals published on the website [www.si-hu.eu](http://www.si-hu.eu).** Any inquiries and requests for additional information during the Call should be sent by e-mail to the Joint Secretariat (JS) at [si-hu.mkrr@gov.si](mailto:si-hu.mkrr@gov.si).



The following **information and support** related to project development and preparation of applications shall be **provided by the JS, including the Info Points in Hungary**:

- information about the programme and the Open Call for Proposals;
- information about the preparation and submission of applications;
- organisation of information workshops;
- publication of frequently asked questions and answers;
- publication of information about approved projects.

Support concerning specific project's content-related topics, including information on State Aid, Project Partner search or information on national co-financing (the latter applies to Project Partners from Hungary) shall be **provided by the representatives of both Member States** (National Authorities). It is strongly recommended that all Project Partners contact their National Authorities prior to submission of their project application.

Contacts are listed in Part 2, chapter 2.6 of the Manual for Beneficiaries and on the dedicated programme website.

The information about the planned information workshops, most frequently asked questions and approved projects shall be available on the programme website [www.si-hu.eu](http://www.si-hu.eu).

## 12. Submission of project applications

**Project applications can be submitted at any time between the launch date and the closing date of the Open Call for Proposals or as long as the funding is available.** The applicants can submit project applications continuously after the Open Call is launched.

**The first deadline for the submission of project applications shall be 8 May 2023.** All subsequent deadlines for the submission of project applications shall be published on the programme website [www.si-hu.eu](http://www.si-hu.eu) at least two months before the set deadline. Applications received in due time before each Monitoring Committee (MC) and fulfilling all requirements shall be subject to MC decision.

The project application shall be submitted by the Lead Partner through the electronic monitoring system applied by IP SI-HU (Jems). The submitted application shall contain all the required data and shall be accompanied by signed and scanned documents annexed to the Application Form as stated in the Manual for Beneficiaries.

The Application Pack is available on the dedicated programme website [www.si-hu.eu](http://www.si-hu.eu).

## 13. Project selection

The projects shall have **cross-border impacts on the programme area**. At least three of the cross-border cooperation criteria shall be fulfilled. The Project Partners shall cooperate in project development, joint implementation and joint financing. In addition, they may cooperate in joint staffing.



The selection of projects shall be based on the assessment of the received applications following a standard procedure, which shall ensure the respect of the principles of transparency and equal treatment. The project application submitted through Jems shall be the only one considered valid.

The project selection procedure shall be conducted in two phases:

#### ***Administrative compliance and eligibility check***

The set administrative and eligibility criteria shall be fulfilled by each project proposal. The project applications that fully comply with the administrative and eligibility criteria shall be subject to further quality assessment.

If there are some discrepancies or some certain documents are missing according to the administrative check, the Lead Partner shall be asked for supplements. The supplements may refer to the compliance with criteria A3, B1 and B2 only. **The Lead Partner shall be able to supplement the project application within seven calendar days** after the request for supplements has been sent. In case the project application fully complies with the set administrative and eligibility criteria after the requested supplements have been provided and is approved by the MC, all supplements shall be entered in the Application Form (in the Jems) before signing the Subsidy Contract.

#### ***Quality Assessment***

The projects that pass the administrative compliance and eligibility check shall be further assessed for quality against the following assessment criteria:

- Strategic assessment criteria
- Operational assessment criteria

During the quality assessment answers given to the set four groups of thematic questions will be evaluated. The total number of points for a project application in the scope of quality assessment shall be 20 (100 %). Each project shall score at least 3 points in each thematic group and has to achieve at least 60% (12 points) in order to be further considered. Projects not reaching 12 points will be rejected. Projects reaching 12 points or more shall be discussed at the MC meeting with the possibility of being **approved, approved under conditions, rejected (not approved for funding) or put on the reserve list.**

For IP SI-HU, it is crucial that **horizontal principles** are integrated in the planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the project activities. During the whole life cycle of the projects, partners are requested to consider actions cross-cutting project activities, taking into account the horizontal principles of the EU. More precisely, actions should be planned, implemented and reported considering the horizontal **principles of equal opportunity, non-discrimination, gender equality and environmental sustainability**. The Project Partners shall indicate the contribution of the project to horizontal principles as positive, neutral or negative and provide a short justification.

The detailed description of the scoring applied in the scope of the assessment is provided in Part 3, Chapter 2.1.1.2 of the Manual for Beneficiaries, which is part of the Application Pack published on the programme website [www.si-hu.eu](http://www.si-hu.eu).



#### 14. Project Approval

The **final decision** on the project shall be made by the MC of the programme. The MC shall formally decide whether to approve, approve with conditions or reject the project application for funding or put on the reserve list and shall set the corresponding ERDF contribution by taking into consideration the quality of each project application and its contribution to the programme objectives.

#### 15. Notification regarding project selection

The MAJS shall inform the Lead Partner whether its project proposal was approved for funding/not approved for funding/put on the reserve list within 30 calendar days from the decision of the MC.

#### 16. Amendments to the Open Call for Proposals

Any amendment to the text of the Open Call for Proposals or its Application Package shall be published on the programme website [www.si-hu.eu](http://www.si-hu.eu).

Amendments to this Open Call for Proposals shall be published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia. Applicants are obliged to respect potential amendments to the Open Call for Proposals and its Application Package published in the manner as described above.

#### 17. Language

The Open Call for Proposals and the Application Package shall be **published in the Slovene, Hungarian and English language**. In case of discrepancies between the Slovene and the Hungarian text of the Open Call for Proposals and the Application Package, harmonized English version shall prevail and shall be used as a tool for common understanding.

The project application shall be bilingual, written in both the **Slovene and Hungarian language**, except for **the project summary which shall be written in the Slovene, Hungarian and English language**. In case of discrepancies, the language of the Lead Partner shall prevail.

#### 18. Other provisions

The results of the Open Call for Proposals are considered as information of public nature and shall be published on the website [www.si-hu.eu](http://www.si-hu.eu) after signature of ERDF Subsidy Contracts with the selected Lead Partners.

Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development