

On the basis of 219. Article of the Rules on the procedures of implementing the budget of the Republic of Slovenia The Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy, Kotnikova 5, 1000 Ljubljana, represented by the European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanisms Office, Cross-border Programmes Management Division, issues the

Open Call for Proposals

in the frame of the Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Slovenia - Hungary

(Reference number: 4300-116/2015)

1. Managing Authority

The Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy, Kotnikova 5, 1000 Ljubljana, represented by the European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanisms Office, Cross-border Programmes Management Division, acts as the Managing Authority.

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

2. Legal basis

- Commission Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (of 11 July 2006) with all amendments,
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European Territorial Cooperation goal with all amendments,
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the Regional Development fund and on specific provisions concerning the Investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing regulation No 1080/2006 of 5 July 2006 with all amendments,
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 1302/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 amending Regulation (EU) No 1082/2006 on a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) as regards the clarification, simplification and improvement of the establishment of such groupings with all amendments ,
- Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Slovenia-Hungary No CCI 2014TC16RFCB053, approved by the European Commission Decision, No C (2015)6551 on 18 September 2015 with all amendments.

3. Open Call for Proposals

This Open Call for Proposals is issued by the Managing Authority and is applicable for applicants defined in point 7 of this document.

The Cooperation Programme (CP) Interreg V-A Slovenia-Hungary (Interreg SI-HU) for the programme period 2014-2020 invites beneficiaries of the individual investment priority established in the programme area to submit applications in the frame of this Open Call for Proposals.

The Application Pack, consisting of the Implementation Manual for Beneficiaries, the templates of the Lead Partner Statement, Project Partner Statement, Subsidy Contract, Partnership Agreement and the Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Slovenia-Hungary is available on the web page www.si-hu.eu.

4. Subject of the Open Call for Proposals

The Cooperation Programme Interreg 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 projects from the ERDF that contribute efficiently to the **overall objective of the Programme, which is:**

to become an attractive area for living, working, investing, undertaking through better capitalizing on existing natural and cultural assets in tourism catalyzing the development of the whole region on one hand and on the other jointly addressing those common problems which call for common solutions at CBC level.

The Subject of this Open Call for Proposals is co-financing of projects corresponding to the following priority axes and related specific objectives:

Priority Axis 1: Attractive region

Investment Priority 6(c): *Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage*

Specific objective: To increase attractiveness through the diversification and cross-border integration of the sustainable touristic offer in the programme area, based on the protection of the elements of cultural and natural heritage and development of products and services in the less developed rural areas linking them to touristic magnets.

Priority Axis 2: Cooperative region

Investment Priority 11(b): *Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions*

Specific objective: To increase the capacity for cooperation in order to reach a higher level of maturity in cross-border relations.

Projects have to apply a result-oriented approach. **The coherence of the project intervention logic (i.e. the project specific objectives, activities, outputs and expected results) with the targeted specific objective of the Programme needs to be clearly demonstrated.**

For detailed information on the description of the content of each Priority Axis and programme specific objectives, including the indicative actions, beneficiaries and target groups, please refer to section 2 of the CP Interreg SI-HU document. In order to make your project compliant with the Programme it is compulsory to read and take into account the description under each Priority Axis and corresponding specific objective.

Under the terms of this Call, a project must refer only to **one** of the above-mentioned **Priority Axes** and **one programme specific objective**, even in case of a project where some activities might also fall under the other Priority Axis.

Activities have to indicate **cross-border impact on the eligible area** of this Programme.

Beneficiaries shall cooperate in the development and implementation of operations. In addition, they shall cooperate in the staffing or the financing of operations, or in both.

The Project Partners must fulfil at least three of the cross border cooperation criteria: joint development (obligatory), joint implementation (obligatory), joint staffing, and joint financing.

5. Available funds, share of co-financing and project size

The amount of **13,295,015 EUR** from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) will be available for co-financing operations.

The funds are subdivided by Priority Axes as follows:

| Priority Axes | ERDF Funding in EUR |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| Attractive region | 10.000.000,00 |
| Cooperative region | 3.295.015,00 |
| Total | 13.295.015,00 |

Only eligible expenditure can be co-financed from the Programme, whereby the co-financing from the ERDF funds can amount to max. 85% of the total costs; at least 15% is to be ensured from other sources.

The projects eligible for participation in the Programme have to apply at least 50,000 EUR for Priority Axis 1 and at least 20,000 EUR for Priority Axis 2 of ERDF funds and should not apply for more than 2,000,000 EUR ERDF for PA 1 and 350,000 EUR ERDF for PA 2.

6. Programme Area

The programme area of the Interreg SI-HU includes the following territorial units on the NUTS 3 level:

- **in the Republic of Slovenia:** Pomurje and Podravje regions;
- **in the Hungary:** Zala and Vas county.

7. Eligible applicants

In the frame of the Interreg SI-HU, eligible applicants are:

Priority Axis 1 (investment priority 6c):

- Local, regional public and state public administrations/institutions, and their organizations, such as national/natural park administrations, forest authorities, cultural institutions, museums, local action groups, organizations competent in the field of transport, etc.

- State owned companies
- NGOs, non-profit organizations (including legal entities established by private law with non-profit status and purpose of operation), tourism associations, tourism destination management organizations
- In Hungary, church institutions/organizations
- Chambers and professional associations
- EGTCs.

Priority Axis 2 (investment priority 11b):

- Local, regional and state level public administrations/institutions and their organizations
- NGOs
- Educational institutions, including rehabilitation centers
- Healthcare institutions, providers of social services
- Labor force offices, different forms of professional chambers
- Cultural institutions and organizations
- Stakeholders in the field of risk prevention and emergency management
- EGTCs.

The minimum requirement is to have **at least one Project Partner from Slovenia and one from Hungary** or an EGTC registered in one of the participating countries, consisting of members from both Member States.

The Lead Partners must be **located in the programme area**, institutions located outside the programme area, but inside the European Union can only act as Project partners. The participation of a Lead Partner from outside of the programme area can be justified if the partner is legally appointed and only authorized for a professional task and it is provided that it has legally defined competences or field of functions for certain parts of the eligible area.

Applicants located outside the programme area but inside the European Union can become Project partners only in duly justified cases. Please also note that, in case of project approval, the effective participation of partners from EU regions outside the programme area is subject to the condition that the Member States where they are located accept of the all-implementing provisions in relation to management, control and audit.

All partners must **have legal, financial and operational capacity** to participate in the Programme.

8. Eligible period of co-financing

The earliest possible start of the period of eligibility of expenditure is 1st January 2015. The project end date is defined in the Subsidy Contract, but not later than 31st December 2022.

9. Duration

The projects eligible for participation in the Programme are those with the duration up to 36 months of project implementation.

10. Eligible costs

1. Staff costs
2. Office and administrative expenditure
3. Travel and accommodation costs
4. External expertise and services costs
5. Equipment expenditure
6. Infrastructure and works expenditure

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

Expenditure can be considered to be eligible at the earliest from the 1st January 2015. The expenditures are eligible only within the project duration (except for preparation costs and the expenditure incurred in the last reporting period, which must be paid within 30 days from the end date of the project).

11. Project development support

Applicants should read all the documents related to the Open Call for Proposals before project submission. In the course of the Open Call for Proposals, questions may be sent by e-mail to Joint Secretariat.

The following information and support related to project development and preparing of applications will be **provided by the JS**:

- ✓ information about the programme and the Open Call;
- ✓ information concerning preparation and submission of applications;

The support concerning specific project content related topics, including information on State aid and project partner search will be provided by the representatives of the Member States (National Authorities).

Contacts are listed in Part 2, chapter 2.1 of the Implementation Manual for Beneficiaries and on the Programme website.

The information on the planned informative workshops and most frequently asked questions will be available on the web site www.si-hu.eu.

12. Submission of the applications

The application can be submitted at any time between the launch date and the closing date of the Open Call for Proposals as long as the funds are available. The project applications can be submitted continuously after opening the call.

The first deadline for the submission is 12 February 2016. The following deadlines for the submission of the applications will be published on the Programme web site 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 will be subject to MC decision.

The application must be submitted by the Lead Partner solely through the electronic monitoring system (eMS). The submitted application must contain all the required data and the signed scanned annexes to the Application Form as stated in the Implementation Manual for Beneficiaries.

The Application Pack is available at the web site: www.si-hu.eu.

13. Project selection

The selection of projects is based on the assessment of the received applications following a standardized procedure, which safeguards the principles of transparency and equal treatment. Only valid is the Application submitted via eMS system.

The project selection procedure will be conducted in two phases:

Administrative compliance and eligibility check

The administrative and eligibility criteria have to be fulfilled by every project. Those project applications that fully comply with the administrative and eligibility criteria will be subject to the quality assessment.

If there are some discrepancies or some documents are missing according to the administrative check, the application will be rejected in the eMS system as administrative not eligible without any request for clarification or supplements. The applicants have the possibility to submit the revised application again till one of the next deadlines.

Quality Assessment

The projects that pass the administrative compliance and eligibility check will be further assessed for quality using the following assessment criteria (presented in detailed in Part 3, chapter 1.5.1 of the Implementation Manual for Beneficiaries):

- Strategic assessment criteria
- Operational assessment criteria

Special attention will be given to specific eligible criteria and specific guiding principles criteria for the investment priority.

Total available points within the quality assessment are 107 points (100%). Each project has to score at least 60% or 64 points. Projects not reaching 64 points will be rejected. Projects reaching 64- 74 points will be discussed on the MC meeting with the possibility of being postponed or rejected, projects reaching 70% or 75 points and more will be discussed on the MC meeting with the possibility of being approved, postponed, rejected or put on the reserve list.

The detailed description on the scoring within the assessment process is described in Part 3, Chapter 1.5.1 of the Implementation Manual for Beneficiaries, which is part of the Application Pack.

Projects on which the MC will decide to be rejected after the quality assessment, may not apply for Interreg SI-HU funds again with the same project idea and partnership.

14. Project Approval

The **final decision** on the project is made by the MC of the Interreg SI-HU. The MC formally decides on the approval or rejection of the projects and on the ERDF contribution by taking into consideration the quality of projects and contribution to the Programme objectives.

15. Informing on the project selection

On the basis of the decision of the MC, the Lead Partner will be informed by the Managing Authority, on the approval/postponement/rejection/being put on the reserve list of the application within 30 calendar days of the decision of the MC.

16. Amendments to the Open Call for Proposals

Should the Open Call for Proposals or its Application Pack be amended corrigendum will be published on the following web sites: www.si-hu.eu and www.szechenyi2020.hu.

Amendments of this Open Call for Proposals shall be published in the Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia.

Applicants are obliged to respect eventual amendments to the Open Call for Proposals and its Application Pack published in the manner as described above.

17. Language

The Open Call for Proposals and the Application Pack are published in 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 Pack, harmonized English version will be used as a tool for common understanding.

The application must be submitted bilingual in **Slovene AND Hungarian** language, except **the Summary of the project which needs to be submitted in Slovene, Hungarian and English language**. In case of discrepancies, the language of the Lead Partner prevails.

The applicants must make sure that the wording in Slovene and Hungarian language is the same and understandable.

18. Other provisions

The results of the Open Call for Proposals are information of public nature and will be published on the web site www.si-hu.eu after signing of ERDF Subsidy Contracts with the selected Lead Partners.

Government Office of Republic of Slovenia for
Development and European Cohesion Policy