

Danube Region Programme

Call announcement for the 1st call for proposals

September 2022

1. Introduction

Danube Region Programme (DRP) is launching the **1st call for proposals for the financial support of the specific objectives under the programme priorities 1, 2, 3 and the specific objective 4.2.**

The programme offers financial support to transnational projects contributing to the development of a more innovative, sustainable and more social Danube Region. The programme has been designed under the territorial cooperation goal of the European Union. The uniqueness of the programme consists of offering a platform for cooperation in strategic areas between EU Member States and non-EU countries in the Danube region.

2. Objectives and priorities

DRP supports policy integration in the Danube area through projects addressing key challenges and opportunities of the region in specific fields of action, below the EU-level (not duplicating efforts in policy integration at the EU-level) and above the national level. Transnational projects should influence national, regional and local policies (policy driver).

In order to achieve a higher degree of territorial integration of the very heterogeneous Danube region, the transnational cooperation programme will act as a policy driver aiming to tackle the common challenges and needs deriving from specific policy fields. Therefore, transnational cooperation is expected to deliver tangible results through the development and practical implementation of policy frameworks, tools and services. To this end, the programme seeks to promote concrete pilot investments.

The 1st call for proposals is open to all specific objectives (SO) of the programme priorities 1-3 and to SO 4.2 according to the following table:

SO	Status in 1st Call for Proposals	Available Interreg funds per Priority in EUR	<u>Indicative</u> allocation per SO in EUR
SO 1.1	Open	18,745,255.50	9,372,627.75
SO 1.2	Open		9,372,627.75
SO 2.1	Open	34,530,733.00	8,694,838.56
SO 2.2	Open		10,024,271.79
SO 2.3	Open		7,631,291.99
SO 2.4	Open		8,180,330.64
SO 3.1	Open	25,651,402.00	7,695,420.60
SO 3.2	Open		7,695,420.60
SO 3.3	Open		10,260,560.80
SO 4.2	Open	12,825,700.88	12,825,700.88
Total		91,753,091.38	

3. Funds allocated for the call and co-financing

The programme will allocate for this 1st call for proposals up to **EUR 91,753,091.38** of the DRP's Interreg fund.

The maximum EU contribution to the projects is a co-financing rate of 80%.

4. Eligibility of expenditure

The following cost categories are eligible for the 1st call for proposals:

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

In the expression of interest (Eoi) the lead applicants (LA) shall only indicate the total budget of each partner without detailing it on cost categories. The Guidelines for Eoi explains how to introduce the total budget in Jems.

5. Timeframe

The call is open from the 29 September 2022 until the 21 November 2022.

The 1st call for proposals of the Danube Region Programme is organised according to a two-step procedure.

- In the “First step”, applicants are requested to submit electronically, through the Joint Electronic Monitoring System (Jems), an Expression of Interest (Eoi), outlining mainly the intervention logic of the proposal and its strategic relevance for the DRP. No additional supporting documents are to be delivered at this stage.
- In the “Second step”, the pre-selected project proposals will be invited to submit an application package including a fully developed Application Form (AF), which will contain more in-depth information about the content and will be the basis for the final selection of the project proposals.

The Expression of Interest (Eoi) has to be submitted to the joint secretariat through Jems by 14:00 Central European Time on 21 November 2022.

The application package has to be submitted by the pre-selected projects to the joint secretariat through Jems, estimated in spring 2023.

In both steps an earlier submission of the documents is recommended.

6. Duration of projects

The duration of projects must not exceed **30 months**. This limit applies for the operational phase of the project and does not comprise the preparation phase. The estimated starting date of the projects is January 2024.

7. Lead Partner principle

Each project has to appoint a lead partner (LP) who is responsible for preparation and submission of the application form as lead applicant. In case of approval of the project, the lead partner takes over the full responsibility for management, communication, implementation, and coordination of activities among the involved partners. The lead partner bears legal responsibility for the whole partnership. The lead partner is also the

link between the project and the managing authority/joint secretariat (MA/JS) of the programme.

The following types of entities can be lead partners:

- Local, regional, national public bodies/ bodies governed by public law (including EGTCs in the meaning of Article 2(16) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)
- International organisations
- Private **non-profit** bodies

The LP can be either from DRP EU Member States or from DRP non-EU Partner States.

EXCEPTION: in the 1st call for proposals applicants coming from Ukraine can participate only as project partners.

ATTENTION: The lead partner cannot be changed between the two steps.

8. Eligible partners

The following types of entities, officially registered in the programme area¹, are eligible to apply:

- Local, regional, national public bodies/ bodies governed by public law (including EGTCs registered in one country of the programme area)
- International organisations
- Private bodies (non-profit organisations and private enterprises / private profit-making organisations)

9. Partnership requirements

The programme covers 14 countries, 9 of them EU Member States (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Hungary, Germany: Baden Württemberg and Bavaria, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia) and 5 non-member states (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine with four provinces: Chernivetska Oblast, Ivano-Frankiviska Oblast, Zakarpatska Oblast, Odessa Oblast²). As a general rule, EU financing is only provided to project partners located in the programme area³.

¹ Exceptions for geographic eligibility described in detail in section II.1.3 of the DRP Applicant's Manual

² DRP will cover the entire territory of Ukraine provided that the part of the operations implemented outside programme area (the UA regions not officially involved in the programme) directly contribute to the objectives of the programme. (Reg. (EU) 2021/1059, Art.37)

Each project has to involve at least **three financing project partners from three different countries** of the programme area: the lead partner and at least two project partners. At least one project partner has to be located on the territory of an EU Member State of the programme area. Involvement of project partners coming from non-EU countries is strongly supported by the programme and is subject to quality assessment.

Applicants located outside the programme area but within the EU are not eligible to apply for funding as project partners in the 1st call.

ATTENTION: maximum 4 project partners can be changed (replaced or can withdraw) between the two steps. Adding new partners has no limitation.

10. Call documents

The following documents, part of the application package, are compulsory to be submitted:

1st Step (until 21 November, 14:00 CET):

- Online Expression of Interest

2nd Step (expected in spring 2023):

- Online Application Form
- Declaration of co-financing (for all partners)
- State aid declaration (for all partners)
- Partnership Agreement
- Declaration for International Organisations (only if applicable)
- Associated strategic partner (ASP) declaration (only if applicable)
- LP confirmation and signature

11. Programme Language

The official language of the programme is English. Therefore, all communication between applicants and the MAJS is carried out in English. Information in the application form as well as official correspondence must be communicated accordingly.

³ Exemptions from this rule may apply to partners in Germany and are specified in the Applicants Manual (under II.1.3.).



12. Relevant documents

The application package and all relevant information about the programme are available on the programme website: <http://www.interreg-danube.eu>.

The following official programme documents are to be read before the submission of a proposal:

- Danube Region Programme document (IP);
- Applicants' Manual;
- Guidelines for the expression of interest and guidelines for application form.

The programme provides tools (e.g. individual consultations) and events (e.g. thematic seminars, info days) to facilitate the generation of projects and to support applicants in the project development process.

For general advice on the programme and on eligibility requirements and national rules, please contact your [National Contact Point](#).

For advices related to the thematic scope of the project and the thematic alignment of the project to the call requirements, please contact danube@interreg-danube.eu.