

**Interreg - IPA CBC**  
Italy - Albania - Montenegro



**Interreg IPA CBC Italy–Albania–Montenegro Programme**

**1<sup>st</sup> Call for Proposals for Standard Projects**

***Deadline: 60 calendar days from publication***

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Interreg IPA CBC Italy-Albania-Montenegro is a multilateral cross border cooperation Programme co-financed by the European Union under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) in the 2014–2020 programming period.

The Interreg IPA CBC Italy-Albania-Montenegro Programme is designed in the framework of the European strategy for a *smart, inclusive and sustainable growth* and of the relevant national strategic documents of the involved Countries.

The Cooperation Programme (CP) describes the context and priorities for cross-border cooperation (CBC) among Italy, Albania and Montenegro, aiming to enable regional and local stakeholders from the three (3) countries to exchange knowledge and experiences, to develop and implement pilot actions, to test the feasibility of new policies, products and services, and to support investments.

## 2. PROGRAMME GOAL, PRIORITY AXES AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The Programme aims to strengthen cross-border cooperation among Italy, Albania and Montenegro for a smart and sustainable development of the involved area, tackling common challenges in order to boost the integrated territorial development.

The first call for proposals is opened to the 4 Priority Axes and 6 Specific Objectives of the Programme:

PRIORITY AXIS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE
<b>PA 1 Strengthening the cross-border cooperation and competitiveness of SMEs</b>	<u>SO 1.1</u> : Enhance the framework conditions for the development of SME's cross-border market
<b>PA 2 Smart management of natural and cultural heritage for the exploitation of cross border sustainable tourism and territorial attractiveness</b>	<u>SO 2.1</u> : Boost attractiveness of natural and cultural assets to improve a smart and sustainable economic development;
	<u>SO 2.2</u> : Increase the cooperation of the key actors of the area for the delivery of innovative cultural and creative products
<b>PA 3 Environment protection, risk management and low carbon strategy</b>	<u>SO 3.1</u> : Increase cross-border cooperation strategies on water landscapes.
	<u>SO 3.2</u> : Promoting innovative practices and tools to reduce carbon emission and to improve energy efficiency in public sector
<b>PA 4 Increasing cross border accessibility, promoting sustainable transport service and facilities and improving public infrastructures</b>	<u>SO 4.1</u> : Increase coordination among relevant stakeholders to promote sustainable cross border connections in the cooperation area

The project proposals must be focused on one priority axis and one of its related specific objectives, otherwise they will be rejected.

Please, refer to the Section 2 of the Cooperation Programme (CP) for all specific information on the expected results, indicative eligible actions, types of project partners and targets groups, as well as to the Applicants Manual.

### 3. BUDGET ALLOCATED TO THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The budget allocated to the First Call for Proposal amounts to **EUR 25.000.000,00** (including national co-financing), broken down per Priority Axis as follows:

	European Union Contribution (€)	National co-financing (€)	European Union contribution + National co-financing (€)
<b>Priority Axis 1</b>	4.722.221,75	833.333,25	5.555.555,00
<b>Priority Axis 2</b>	6.611.111,30	1.166.666,70	7.777.778,00
<b>Priority Axis 3</b>	5.902.778,25	1.041.666,75	6.944.445,00
<b>Priority Axis 4</b>	4.013.888,70	708.333,30	4.722.222,00
<b>TOTAL</b>	21.250.000,00	3.750.000,00	25.000.000,00

### 4. PROGRAMME ELIGIBLE AREA

The Programme eligible area covers NUTS III territories of 1 EU Member State (Italy) and 2 IPA Countries (Albania and Montenegro), namely:

EU Member State	
ITALY	Puglia: <i>Foggia, Bari, Brindisi, Lecce, Barletta–Andria–Trani, Taranto</i> Molise: <i>Isernia, Campobasso</i>
IPA Countries	
ALBANIA	The whole country
MONTENEGRO	The whole country

### 5. ELIGIBLE PARTNERS

As general eligibility rule, Lead Applicants and partners must be established in the eligible territories of the Countries participating in the Programme.

Partners having the registered office outside the Programme area but the branch office established in the Programme area will be eligible for funding, provided that they has financial and administrative power to undertake commitments. The following types of partners, are eligible for funding:

- **Public bodies;**
- **Bodies governed by public law<sup>1</sup>** in the meaning of the legal entities that fulfil the following characteristics:

<sup>1</sup>Article 2(4) of the EC Directive (2014/24) 'bodies governed by public law' means bodies that have all of the following characteristics:(a)they are established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest, not having an industrial or commercial character;(b)they have legal personality; and (c)they are financed, for the most part, by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law; or are subject to management supervision by those authorities or bodies; or have an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law

- (a) They are established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest, not having an industrial or commercial character;
- (b) They are financed, for the most part, by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law; or are subject to management supervision by those authorities or bodies; or have an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law;
- **Non-profit organisations**, established according to the applicable legal framework/law in the respective country that fulfils the following characteristics:
  - (a) They are not established with the goal to obtain profit
  - (c) Do not distribute profits to the shareholders
  - (b) They do not have the organisational structure of an undertaking or a regular presence on the market;
  - (c) They have legal personality or, for Italian partners that they have full legal capacity to assume liabilities, obligations and rights.

Non-profit organizations must be operational for at least 12 months before the launching of the call for proposals.

Private lead partners shall provide a financial guarantee covering the whole EU pre-financing amount for the duration specified in the subsidy contract, once the project proposal is approved and before contracting. Further specific eligibility requirements are detailed in the Applicants Manual.

## 6. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTNERSHIP COMPOSITION

The minimum eligible partnership must involve at least one partner from each participating Country:

- at least 1 partner from EU Member State (eligible territories of Italy)
- at least 1 partner from each IPA Countries (1 partner from Albania and 1 partner from Montenegro).

The total number of partners must not exceed six (6) including the Lead Partner.

The partnership has to appoint a Lead Partner who is responsible for the preparation and submission of the application form. In case of approval of the project, the Lead Partner takes over the responsibility for management, communication, implementation, and coordination of activities among the involved partners.

**Coordination of activities** of all project proposals submitted within the current and future calls by the same applicant will be carefully assessed by the representatives of the participating countries. In particular, the lead applicant and the project partners are required to demonstrate how the activities of all project proposals submitted by the same legal entity (public administration, university, research centre, etc.) are going to be efficiently coordinated. Coordination of activities shall apply both within the same and different administrative units of the same legal entity, as to exploit potential synergies, to avoid overlapping and risk of double financing. The coordination among numerous projects for the same partner and lack thereof will be subject to assessment. In order to ensure sufficient management capacity, it is advisable for all lead partners to not submit more than 5 project proposals, per legal body as well as per administrative unit of the same legal entity (department, service, etc.).

The participation of “associated partners” is allowed, but no more than one per partner. The associated partners, not receiving directly financial contribution by the Programme, can be located outside of the eligible Programme area.

## **7. LOCATION OF THE ACTIVITIES<sup>2</sup>**

All project activities have to be located in the Programme eligible area. In compliance with art. 44 of the IPA Implementing Regulation (Commission Implementing Regulation no. (EU) No 447/2014), a derogation to this rule may be exceptionally accepted upon decision of the JMC, provided that:

- The total amount dedicated to the activities located outside of the eligible Programme area does not exceed 10% of the Programme budget.
- These activities are for the benefit of the Programme area.
- Activities are essential for the implementation of the project.
- It is clearly indicated in the Application Form and duly justified.

## **8. PROJECT SIZE**

The total budget of the projects must respect the following financial thresholds (including EU + national co-financing or private co-financing in case of private non-profit Partners):

- Minimum budget (EU contribution + national co-financing) = EUR 500.000;
- Maximum budget (EU contribution + national co-financing) = EUR 1.500.000 (except for PA 4, which is EUR 2.000.000).

The minimum budget for each partner cannot be lower than 10% of the overall budget.

## **9. PROGRAMME CONTRIBUTION AND CO-FINANCING RATE**

The total project budget is covered by the EU contribution up to 85% and the remaining percentage is guaranteed by the national co-financing of each partner, according to the system applied by each participating country.

## **10. PROJECT DURATION**

The project implementation shall not be longer than 24 months, starting from the signature of the Subsidy Contract.

## **11. APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

The project proposals have to be submitted in one step electronic procedure through the Electronic Monitoring System of the Programme (eMS) at the address that will be available on the Programme website upon the publication of the call.

All the compulsory documents to be filled in for submitting a project proposal are included in the Application Package available on the official Programme website at the following address: [www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu](http://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu).

The Application Package includes the following documents<sup>3</sup>:

- a) Application Form
- b) LP/PP Statements duly stamped and signed by all participating partners and for associated partners a declaration of interest (standard forms provided);

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<sup>2</sup>Art.44, *Implementing Regulation (EU) no. 447/2014*

<sup>3</sup> For scanned documents the advisable format is .pdf

- c) The statute and/or legal act which sets up the applicant institution/organization<sup>4</sup> involved in the proposal, in which its legal representation is specified. The statute and/or legal act can be submitted also in the national language. A translation into English is preferable.
- d) For private partners, the balance sheets of the last two accounting years, or of the last accounting year in case of organization established only in the last 12 months, issued according to national legislation.

The Application Form and LP/PP Statement must be filled in English in all their parts and the Lead Applicants and partners must not modify the templates provided by the Programme.

The Lead Applicant is responsible for submitting the project proposal. The Lead Applicant has to collect the required documents from all involved partners and submit the project proposal according to the application procedures.

Before the submission of the Application Form, the Lead Applicant needs to be registered on the eMS. The Lead Applicant has to fill in the **Project Application Form online** through the electronic monitoring system (eMS). The Project Proposal must be submitted through the Programme eMS.

### **Deadline**

**The Call is open for 60 calendar days from the publication in the official bulletin of Puglia Region. The publication includes a deadline for submission.**

## **12. SELECTION PROCEDURE**

Following the submission of the project proposals, each of them will be subject to a formal assessment on **Eligibility check**: the project proposals will be checked against a set of technical criteria.

The formal assessment will be performed by the JS with the support of the respective National Authorities (NAs), under the supervision of the Managing Authority, as responsible for the procedure. Only the project proposals that fulfill the admissibility and eligibility criteria will be admitted to the further quality assessment, while the not eligible ones will be rejected through decision of the JMC.

**§ QUALITY ASSESSMENT:** the project proposals will be checked against a set of quality criteria approved by the JMC. The JS will carry out the quality assessment of the project proposals and it will rely on the assistance of the NAs of the participating countries and/or on a group of external evaluators carrying out a technical evaluation, where needed. In addition, as specified in Article 39 of Regulation EU 447/2014, the JMC may set up a Steering Committee for the selection of operations. The JMC is responsible for the final decision, on the basis of the outcomes of the quality assessment.

The evaluation procedure for each step is detailed in the Applicants Manual.

## **13. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROCEDURE**

According to the Interreg IPA CBC Italy-Albania-Montenegro Programme, responsibility for the administrative procedures of this Call for proposals lays on Puglia Region, in the person of the Director of the Managing Authority Office.

## **14. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

More information about the content of the CP, the specific conditions for the submission of the project proposals, the assessment and selection procedure, the application package as well as other relevant information are available at [www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu](http://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu), [www.integrimi.gov.al](http://www.integrimi.gov.al) and [www.mep.gov.me](http://www.mep.gov.me).

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<sup>4</sup> Both public and private bodies are required to enclose their statute/legal act.