Instructions for seed funding applications

with the final date of application 13 February 2018

Version 11 December 2017

Table of contents

1. Purpose of instructions

These instructions are intended for those wishing to apply for seed funding from the Swedish Institute (SI) for project start-ups in the Baltic Sea Region. The instructions contain detailed information both about the call itself and about the processing and assessment of applications.

We would like you to read through all the instructions before beginning on your application.

If you have any questions about your project idea/application, please feel free to contact the SI programme officer concerned. See our website for contact details: https://si.se/en/apply/funding-grants/pi/

2. Seed funding – an introduction

Seed funding is a form of support for which Swedish actors can apply within the context of cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region[1]. The overall aim of seed funding support is to help bring about sustainable development and greater global competitiveness in the Baltic Sea Region, which is often expected to result from interaction between countries both within and outside the EU.

In recent years, seed funding support has financed 166 collaborative projects in which almost 1,000 parties from all over the region have engaged with issues in many different areas. The basis of seed funding activities for the purpose of developing relations is the meeting between individuals and organisations, the aim of which is to promote mutual and sustainable ties and partnerships. Through seed funding, participants are expected to develop their international relations in the region, improve their competence in respect of Baltic Sea regional cooperation and broaden knowledge in their collaborative field.

As a basis for cooperation, actors in the region need to identify common challenges where such cooperation benefits all parties as well as the region as a whole. In addition, projects must help create conditions for long-term, sustainable relations in the Baltic Sea Region.

A seed funding project should have the potential to impact favourably on a number of frameworks in the region. As it always involves EU countries that are a party to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR), the project must show how it contributes to this strategy[2]. A project encompassing countries in the EU Eastern Partnership (EaP) must also relate to this framework.[3]

Financing may be granted for projects with clear linkages to policy, for such purposes as

- undertaking a pilot study in preparation for a more extensive Baltic Sea regional project
- establishing new networks
- expanding and strengthening existing networks
- preparing an application on funding from one or other of the EU's programmes/funds or from other funds

[1] Where this form of support is concerned, the term Baltic Sea Region refers to countries that are a party to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, i.e. Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden. Support may also be extended to Russia and the countries of the EU Eastern Partnership, i.e. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldavia and Ukraine.
[2] Read more about the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) in Section 4, Linkages to policy.
[3] Read more about the EU Eastern Partnership (EaP) in Section 4, Linkages to policy

- initiating and developing cooperation between the EU member states and non-EU countries
- cooperating with projects of a transboundary nature already underway.

Projects are to be innovative in their approach – they may for instance feature cooperation in new constellations, with new methods or on new themes. SI does not provide seed funding for outright research projects. Research activities may however be a part of a project.

3. Application period

The application period is **1 December 2017–13 February 2018**.

4. Linkages to policy

In your application for seed funding support you should describe how the project contributes to relevant policies and frameworks. Since a seed funding project always encompasses EU countries that are a party to the EUSBSR, it must show how it contributes to this strategy. A project encompassing countries in the EU Eastern Partnership must also relate to this framework. Other policies and frameworks may also be relevant. Additional instructions on how to describe linkages to policies/frameworks in the application are to be found in Section 11 below.

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)

The EUSBSR is one of the EU's macro-regional strategies, i.e. an agreement between member states in the EU and the European Commission on deepening cooperation between the countries around the Baltic Sea with a view to meeting the common challenges that the region faces. The strategy is a guide and an aid designed to help countries prioritise and engage in joint efforts in the region. It covers the EU member states in the region, i.e. Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden. The EUSBSR also notes the importance of cooperating with countries outside the EU.

The strategy has three overall objectives:

- save the sea
- connect the region
- increase prosperity.

The EUSBSR includes an Action Plan in which the three overall objectives have been broken down into 12 sub-objectives. The strategy itself has been divided into 13 policy areas and 4 horizontal actions directed at one or more of the overall objectives/sub-objectives. Each policy area/horizontal action in the strategy has a thematic coordinator, and each has specific targets for the work involved.

Read more at http://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/

The EU Eastern Partnership (EaP)

The EaP was established in 2009 and is the EU's policy for deepening relations with six countries of Eastern Europe: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldavia and Ukraine. The policy takes the form of a partnership with these countries. The principal focus in the partnership is on each partner country's bilateral relations with the EU. In addition, a multilateral framework has been established to complement these bilateral relations and pave the way for cooperation between the countries.

The scope, objectives and principles of multilateral cooperation in the partnership have been adopted and confirmed at five summit meetings (Prague 2009, Warsaw 2011, Vilnius 2013, Riga 2015 and Brussels 2017). These are set out in the 'Eastern Partnership Summit Declarations'. Such cooperation takes place within thematic platforms reflecting the four priority areas and focusing on:

- Economic development and market opportunities
- Strengthening institutions and good governance
- Connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change
- Mobility and people-to-people contacts.

At the Brussels summit in 2017, the countries reached agreement on 20 key deliverables to be achieved by 2020.[4] Each deliverable relates to a priority area.

Read more at http://www.euneighbours.eu/en/policy/eastern-partnership

5. Thematic areas for the call

You must state on the application form which of the general thematic areas the application comes under. This categorisation is only for administrative purposes and does not affect assessments. The project focus could fit to several different areas, but you should choose the one you think most appropriate. A project in the cultural field, for instance, might fit both 'Sustainable growth for increased prosperity' and 'Regional challenges', depending on its focus and/or how the challenges are defined. Social entrepreneurship is another example of a focus that could be placed in several different areas.

The areas are:

An ecologically sustainable region	-	projects relating to the environment and sustainable development.
Sustainable growth for increased prosperity	-	business-related projects and projects dealing for instance with innovation, regional development or tourism.
Regional challenges	-	projects relating to society such as ones involving social issues, public health or civil security.

[4] The document '20 Deliverables by 2020' is available at http://www.euneighbours.eu/en/policy/eastern-partnership.

6. Partner countries

The Swedish Institute can provide seed funding support for joint projects between EU countries under the EUSBSR (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden). Seed funding support is also available under certain circumstances (see table below) to Russia and to the EaP countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldavia and Ukraine).

- A partnership must comprise **at least** three different countries, with the main applicant based in Sweden.
- Please note that a partnership may consist of several parties from one and the same country and/or additional countries once the three-country requirement has been met (according to requirements listed below).
- A partnership may involve up to 12 parties (including the main applicant). On average, previous projects have involved 6 parties (including the main applicant).

For other conditions relating to the composition of partnerships, see the table below.

Possible partner countries	**Conditions for participation**
Main applicant:	
Sweden	Organisation based in Sweden.
Core countries in the EU:	
Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland (and Sweden).	There are two alternatives relating to conditions for the partnership's composition, besides the requirement that it must include three different countries: 1) Partnerships that only include core countries in the EU must comprise a Swedish main applicant plus *at least* two other EU core countries. 2) Partnerships that include core countries from outside the EU require a main applicant from Sweden and *at least* one *other* EU core country.
Core countries outside the EU, countries of the Eastern Partnership and Russia	
Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldavia, Russia and Ukraine	These countries may participate on condition that the partnership already consists of two core countries in the EU, i.e. the main applicant from Sweden and at least one *other* EU core country.
Additional countries in the EU:	
Denmark, Finland, Germany	Additional EU countries can participate in partnerships that already consist of *at least* three core countries in the EU, i.e. the main applicant from Sweden and two other EU core countries *Naturally, these partnerships may also include core countries from outside the EU.* *In the case of parties from Denmark, Finland and Germany, budgets may only cover costs for food and lodging up to SEK 25,000.*

Actors from other countries may not join the partnership. If relevant, they may however take part in project activities as experts, in which case under the budget item ‘External expertise’. Please note that external expertise may also comprise actors from the core countries, but in such cases these actors may not be part of the partnership.

7. Partnerships

The following Swedish actors from the public, private and non-profit sectors can apply for seed funding and establish a partnership:

- Non-governmental organisations
- Business companies
- Local authorities, regional authorities, regional development councils and county councils
- Higher education institutions and research institutes
- Intergovernmental organisations
- Business and trade organisations
- Central government agencies

When a partnership is put together, the focus should be on how relevant the various actors are to the task of achieving the project aims and objectives. Bear in mind that project work is to be pursued through collaboration between all parties, with the focus on **common challenges**. It is important that this cooperation benefits all parties and the region as a whole. To achieve results, both mandates and the ability to implement projects will be required. It is also important to ensure that the project has the full support of the partnership’s participating organisations. The main applicant needs to possess the capacity to pursue, follow up and report on the project. The application should be formulated by the various parties in close cooperation.

All partners in the project must represent one or more of the above actors. SI takes a positive view of partnerships that include more than three actors – ideally, broad partnerships with actors from several actor groups. A partnership may for instance be structured in such a way that parties from one and the same country consist of several actor groups, as an alternative to partnerships comprised of many different countries with a single actor in each country. The challenges for the Baltic Sea Region necessitate active commitment on the part of actors and policymakers at various levels in society. Consequently, relevant levels and actors should be represented in the project partnership or constitute your target group so as to ensure that the project results have the desired effect or are spread beyond the partnership.

8. Instructions for seed funding applications

- Applications are to be sent in via the seed funding form in SI's web portal and must be completed in full, with all enclosures (in their specific templates) attached.
- The application should be formulated through close cooperation between the different parties and for that reason **must** be written in English.
- The project may begin at any time between 1 June and 1 November 2018 and run for no more than 18 months.
- The main applicant must be an actor based in Sweden, who will also be responsible for implementing and reporting on the project.

- A seed funding partnership must include actors in at least three of the eligible countries. See the conditions for countries' participation and the partnership's composition in Section 6 above.
- SI applies the EU rules on state aid. Further information is available in enclosures 1 and 5.

More detailed instructions are contained in the following sections of this document and in other application documents.

9. Creating an account for an application

You apply for seed funding by means of a web application on the Swedish Institute's application portal – https://applications.si.se/LogIn

There, you create an account that gives you access to the application form. Applications can be saved and then completed at a later time. **The final date of application is 13 February 2018.**

Once you have sent in your application you will receive an email with a registration number. If you need to contact us, always refer to this registration number.

10. Filling in an application

The application portal has a special **application form** entitled 'Seed funding (cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region)'.

The form has the following tabs:

- Details of main applicant organisation (Swedish organisation)
- Contact for the applicant organisation
- Person in charge/authorised to sign for the applicant organisation
- Information about partners
- Summary of the project
- Information about the project
- Linkages to relevant strategies/policies
- Appendices

Begin by carefully reading through these instructions before filling in the application form in the portal, and the enclosures. Accompanying the application form are a number of **enclosures** that you fill in separately. In the case of Enclosures 1–3 and 5, there are templates that must be used. Enclosures 1-3 are compulsory for all. Enclosures 4 and 5 are compulsory when the main applicant is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) or a business company.

All templates can be found on the SI website https://si.se/en/apply/funding-grants/pi/

- **Enclosure 1:** Project description – template
- **Enclosure 2:** Organisation assessment/formalities – template
- **Enclosure 3:** Budget – template
- **Enclosure 4:**
  - For applications in which an **NGO** is the main applicant, three enclosures are compulsory: the statutes, the most recently adopted annual financial report/audit report, and the Swedish Tax Agency's civic registration certificate.

- For applications where a **business company** is the main applicant, two enclosures are compulsory: form **SKV4820** which is filled in by the Swedish Tax Agency and a registration certificate from the Swedish Companies Registration Office (or the equivalent). To ensure that this enclosures can be included in the application, it is important to contact the Swedish Tax Agency in good time beforehand.

There is no special template for these appendices. *The appendices are to be attached as a joint document.*

- **Enclosure 5:** A certificate of *de minimis* aid (refers to state aid) is to be filled in when the main applicant is a business company – template.

11. Instructions for Enclosure 1-3 (ready-to-use templates)

Below are instructions for filling in Enclosures 1-3. Please note that not all areas in each respective enclosure are mentioned below. These instructions are intended as an additional aid in filling in the appendices.

Enclosure 1 – Project description

The purpose of Enclosure 1 is to describe the project for which you are seeking funding. Be aware that in certain cases the questions in the application may refer both to the project for which you are seeking funding and to your future cooperation.

The enclosure covers the following areas:
1 Aim and background
2 Context and linkage to policy/frameworks
3 Composition of the partnership
4 Summary: Short-term objectives, activities, indicators and expected outputs (see more below)
5 Work plan
6 Communication
7 Sustainability
8 Risk analysis (see more below)
9 State aid to third parties/organisations.

The following is detailed information on certain parts of Enclosure 1.

Enclosure 1 – Area 2: Context and linkage to policy/frameworks

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

In your application for seed funding you need to describe in Enclosure 1 how your project contributes to the specific objectives and actions described in the EUSBSR Action Plan in your chosen policy area and/or horizontal action. The chosen policy area/horizontal action should also be stated in the application portal.

You can read about the strategy's various policy areas and horizontal actions in the EUSBSR Action Plan. The action plan describes which objectives and actions have been identified within each policy area/horizontal action.

Read more in the Action Plan at:

https://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/action-plan

The EU Eastern Partnership

When one or more countries from the Eastern Partnership are taking part in the project, you should state in Enclosure 1 how your project relates to one of the four EaP priority areas. You must choose one of these areas. Your choice of priority area should also be stated in the application portal:

Priority area in Swedish	**Name in the portal**
Stärka institutioner och gott samhällsstyre (inkl. säkerhetsrelaterade frågor)	EAP 2017 Strengthening institutions and good governance
Ekonomisk utveckling och marknadsmöjligheter	EAP 2017 Economic development and market opportunities
Connectivity - transportinfrastruktur, energieffektivitet, miljö och klimatförändringar	EAP 2017 Connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change
Mobilitet och mellanfolkliga kontakter	EAP 2017 Mobility and people-to-people contacts.

Documentation from the 2017 summit is available via the link below. The Eastern Partnership Summit Declaration from the 2017 summit contains a description of the four priority areas and the 20 key deliverables associated with them. The website also contains a brief fact sheet about the 20 key deliverables.

Read more at:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-summit/2017/11/24/ (on the 2017 summit)

http://www.euneighbours.eu/en/policy/eastern-partnership (general information about the Eastern Partnership)

Similar/complementary initiatives/projects

In Enclosure 1 you are to describe as far as possible what other similar/complementary initiatives/projects have been implemented or are being implemented in the Baltic Sea Region that are financed by Interreg programmes or other sources. There is a database listing projects that are either being implemented or have been implemented under Interreg auspices. In it you can search by subject, country and region etc.

Read more at:

https://www.keep.eu

Enclosure 1 – Area 4: Summary– short-term objectives, activities, indicators and expected outputs.

The table below contains explanations designed to facilitate the **formulation of short-term goals, activities, indicators and expected outputs (results).**

English	Swedish translation	Description
Short-term objectives	Kortsiktiga mål (ska uppnås inom projekttiden)	The problem to be solved in the project often describes a negative state of affairs. The objective should describe the positive opposite. The project's short-term objective should express what the partnership will have achieved (changed) once the project is over. Short term objectives must be measurable via one or more indicators.
Activities/operations	Aktiviteter/verksamhet	Describe what you specifically intend to do in the project. The activities concerned should lead to the achievement of the project's stated aims. Several activities can contribute to one and the same objective.
Indicators	Indikatorer	Indicators are to be drawn up for the project's short-term objectives. It is important to establish in advance how the indicators are to be measured. An indicator is a concrete sign of what has been achieved in relation to the initial state of affairs. If it is difficult to show what the objective is specifically supposed to achieve, or what changes the project is to bring about, this is often because the objective is too wide-ranging or is formulated in too abstract a way. Where this is the case, try to reduce the project to a level whereby you can show what is specifically to be achieved or changed.
Expected outputs	Förväntade resultat	For each objective, state what will have been achieved/changed once the project has been completed, based on what the situation looked like before the project began.

Enclosure 1 – Area 7: Sustainability

In this section you are to describe how the project outputs can have an impact in the long term.

Where the seed funding project involves preparing an application on continued financing from calls in EU funds or other funds, you should describe how the partnership's combination of countries/regions is suited to a future application.

Enclosure 1 – Area 8: Risk analysis

The risk analysis is an important part of the application, since it increases the likelihood of the project objectives being achieved. The purpose of the analysis is to predict conceivable events that may jeopardise implementation of the project and thereby achievement of the short-term objectives. Some risks can be mitigated through good planning, and sometimes adverse consequences can be avoided through appropriate measures. There are also risks that can be neither prevented nor managed but which must still be included in the risk analysis in Enclosure 1.

Such risks may for instance be associated with project management, economic reporting, formal problems, key actors/individuals, costs, further financing, activities, or interest/participation on the part of partners/stakeholders.

A careful analysis of relevant risks and a concrete plan of action benefit both the application and your cooperation in the project. Please note that risks involving corruption **must** be described in the risk analysis.

Instructions for presenting the risk analysis:

- Which risks are present internally within the partnership or in relation to individual partners?
- What external risks are there?
- How likely is it that the risks will transpire (1 – unlikely, 2 – possible, 3 – likely, 4 – certain)?
- Then weight the risks according to how serious the consequences may be (1 – negligible, 2 – mild, 3 – perceptible, 4 – severe).
- Then calculate the total risk in terms of likelihood x consequence.
- For all risks involved, risk management is to be clarified and the responsible officer is to be stated.

Enclosure 2 – Organisation assessment and formalities

The purpose of Enclosure 2 is to describe and respond to formal issues. Besides funding disbursement details (in Swedish: PlusGiro/BankGiro), the enclosure is to include the following:

- Basic information about the main applicant
- Assessment of the main applicant organisation (self-assessment)
- Any previous funding from the Swedish Institute
- Possible forwarding of funds to other parties/countries

Enclosure 3 - Budget

Enclosure 3 is to be enclosed with the application using the .xls eller .xlsx format. The budget template comprises a tab with instructions, a compilation tab and tabs for detailing costs. There are also tabs for instructions in English and translations of budget terms.

Make clear which item in the budget corresponds to the activity concerned. Specify how the various costs have been calculated. An insufficiently detailed project budget may mean that the application will not be considered.

General information

- Application sum: From SEK 100,000 to 500,000.
- Salary expenses must be given as an actual cost, including statutory employer contributions (in Sweden "LKP").
- SI does not fund the purchase of equipment.
- SI does not fund expense (per diem) allowances, i.e. if these occur in the project
- Co-financing must make up at least 10% of the amount applied for from SI, and must refer to costs that are directly related to the project, i.e. not overheads. (If the sum applied for is SEK 500,000, co-financing must amount to at least SEK 50,000.)
- Co-financing must come from actors in the partnership's core countries.
- When assessing applications, SI takes the total financing of projects into account.
- SI may revise the applicant's project budget before a decision is made.
- Denmark, Finland and Germany may only be compensated for food and lodging (not per diem expenses). No more than SEK 25,000 of the project's total budget is payable to partners from these countries.

Budget breakdown
The budget is divided into two main budget categories comprising a number of budget groups.

Budget category 1: Project management, OH, analysis and communication (max. 50% of requested amount)

Budget group	Project management	Includes the budget items ***Project management*** and ***Project administration***. Only the Swedish main applicant may apply for project management and project administration funding within the scope of these budget items, since this actor is responsible for the project's financial control and follow-up.
Budget group	External audit	Remuneration for the mandatory external auditing may not exceed SEK 25,000.
Budget group	Overheads (OH):	May constitute no more than 10% of the total amount applied for from SI. Pertains to costs for such things as administration in support of core activities. Organisations applying for compensation for overheads must specify which costs are included but must state a total amount for all overheads without itemising them. Examples of overheads are costs for premises, supplies, telecommunications and post, and staff expenses for support functions.
Budget group	Analysis, implementation and follow-up	Includes the budget items *Internal project-wide tasks* and *External expertise*. ***Internal project-wide tasks*** pertains for instance to qualified analysis and report work performed by an organisation from one of the partnership's core countries, whether EU or non-EU. Costs for the work of organising and administering project-wide activities may also be recognised under this item. However, costs for management, auditing and reporting are not permissible. It must be clearly shown in the specification which partner in the project performs the work. The ***External expertise*** category only covers activities/services undertaken by external parties (i.e. not by project partners) and may only in exceptional cases cover experts from countries that are not eligible for SI funding.
Budget group	Communication costs	Pertains to costs for external communication. Costs for the communication-related activities of external expertise engaged for the project are also to be included here.

Budget category 2: Meetings and mobility

Budget group	Meeting costs	The budget items **external speakers/debate moderators, costs for premises, conference equipment, refreshments etc; interpreter and translation costs**. External speakers may in exceptional cases come from non-eligible countries. Meetings and activities may take place in all of the eligible partner countries and to a limited extent in other Baltic Sea countries. Special reasons must be given in the application for including meetings/activities in a non-eligible country.
Budget group	Travel and accommodation	The budget items **travel, national (within countries); travel, international** (between countries); **visa costs; food and lodging.** Remuneration for food and lodging may be applied for to cover a maximum of ten consecutive working days. SI does not fund per diem expenses. Please note that Denmark, Finland and Germany may only use the budget item "Food and lodging – Denmark, Finland, Germany" (not per diem expenses). No more than SEK 25,000 of the project's total budget is payable to partners from these countries.

12. Processing applications

A submitted application is a public document.

Information on how SI handles personal details

In applications for seed funding, SI collects details of the main applicant organisation, the first name and surname of the project leader/manager, and the person responsible for the application. The data covers the name, corporate identity number and address of the organisation concerned, including country, email, website and telephone details. We also collect similar data for co-applicants.

This information is intended to make it easier for SI to deal with applications in all aspects and to communicate with the various parties. It is also used to help us analyse application rounds currently under way. Once a decision has been reached on an application, the data is used for information purposes and/or analysis/evaluation.

Where relevant, the data we collect is shared with Swedish missions abroad and with other financiers and/or actors participating for instance in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

Assessment criteria

SI evaluates whether seed funding applications reflect the overall aim of this type of support by assessing them on the basis of three principal criteria: the project's **relevance**, the partnership's **composition**, and the project's **feasibility and sustainability**.

Each main area has in turn a number of interim stages that are subject to special scrutiny when assessing an application. These interim stages are presented below.

Relevance of the project
Here, SI assesses for instance the relevance of the project proposal and application as a whole to the region's common challenges. Assessment is also made of how they contribute to implementation of

the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. In cases where countries from the EU's Eastern Partnership are included in the project partnership, their participation is assessed in relation to what is stated about the EaP, in accordance with the requirements in the application. Assessment is also made of the value added by the project in relation to previous and existing projects and to other initiatives in the policy field concerned. In addition, SI takes into account the extent to which cooperation on the project issues is transnational in character.

Composition of the partnership
Here, SI assesses for instance the partnership's composition in relation to the project's aims and objectives, and also the competence and relevance of the actors taking part in the partnership. Assessment is also made of the partnership's mutual interest in the project proposal and whether added value accrues to each partner as a result of confronting the jointly defined challenges. The assessment further includes the division of roles and responsibilities in the project.

In addition, SI assesses the extent to which the partnership or the target group includes public decision-making levels and actors of relevance to the project. It is not a question of including as many actor groups as possible but of whether the proposed project includes and/or reaches the specific groups required for achievement of the project's stated objectives.

SI also assesses the partners' capacity to implement the project. Where both partnership and project management and reporting are concerned, it is vital to show that there is a mandate, sufficient capacity and active ownership of the proposed project to ensure implementation.

Feasibility and sustainability
SI considers whether the project objectives and planned outputs are reasonable, whether they can be achieved within the project period, and whether activities and the project design facilitate implementation and achievement of the objectives. SI assesses the risk analysis on the basis both of the partnership's risk awareness and of how the partnership intends to apportion and deal with each risk that exists.

Where the budget is concerned, assessment is made of how reasonable the project costs are in relation to the objectives, activities and outputs that the project is expected to achieve. Own resources and part-financing from other donors are also taken into account in the assessment.

SI assesses the prospects of the project being able to contribute sustainably to the region's common challenges as specified in relevant policies and frameworks. To ensure that the project is sustainable and that outputs are carried forward once the project ends, plans for further cooperation and/or the extent to which the seed funding project outputs are sustainable are also assessed. The seed funding project may for instance lead to deeper cooperation in a project financed by the EU or by other fund, or via a cooperation agreement or specific operational improvements that benefit both the partnership and other external actors/target groups.

In assessing the communication plan, SI takes special note of how the partnership intends to reach out to and establish contact with other actors affected by the project, and also of how the end-users of the project's outputs and lessons learned are associated with the project itself. Assessment is further made of how the project outputs are communicated and put to use in the actors' own organisations, since ensuring support both for the project idea and for use of the project's outputs/experience within the organisation is crucial to the achievement of lasting results.

Decisions

Submitted applications are processed after the final date of application. The estimated processing period is about three months. SI’s decisions are final and may not be appealed.

Disbursement of funds granted

In the case of approved projects, disbursement of the funds granted (90 per cent of the agreed amount) takes place once the signed agreement has been received by SI. The remaining 10 per cent is disbursed, insofar as the funding has been utilised, after the final report, the financial report and the external audit – undertaken by an authorised/approved public accountant – have been received and approved by SI. Funding for this purpose may be included in the application’s project budget.

13. Links

Policy

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, EUSBSR

International website (Eng.)	http://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/
Action Plan (Eng.)	https://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/action-plan
Brochure: 'The Baltic Sea Strategy for Beginners' (Eng.)	http://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/news-room/documents-materials?task=document.viewdoc&id=2

The Eastern Partnership, EaP

EU website (Eng.)	http://www.euneighbours.eu/en/policy/eastern-partnership
The 2017 EaP Summit (Eng.)	http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-summit/2017/11/24/

Call for applications

Application portal:	https://applications.si.se/LogIn
Enclosures to the call:	https://si.se/en/apply/funding-grants/pi/
Contact information:	https://si.se/en/apply/funding-grants/pi/
Database listing Interreg projects (Eng.)	https://www.keep.eu
EU website on state aid (Eng.)	http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/overview/index_en.html