Instructions for seed funding applications

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Table of contents

1. Purpose of the instructions

These instructions are intended for those wishing to apply for seed funding from the Swedish Institute (SI) for cooperation projects in the Baltic Sea Region. They provide basic information about the call for applications as well as practical support for completing the application documents. In addition, they contain information about how SI processes applications.

We recommend that you read these instructions before starting your application.

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

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. This takes place through interaction between countries both within and outside the European Union (EU). The basis of seed funding activities is the meeting between individuals and organisations, the aim of which is to promote mutual and sustainable ties and partnerships. A partnership is expected to collaborate on common challenges where cooperation benefits all parties as well as the region as a whole.

Examples of the purpose of projects:

- Undertake a pilot study in preparation for a more extensive Baltic Sea regional project
- Prepare an application for funding from any EU programme or other source of funding
- Establish new networks
- Expand and strengthen existing networks
- Initiate and develop cooperation between the EU member states and non-EU countries
- Cooperate with projects of a transboundary nature already underway

Projects are to be innovative in their approach – they may for instance feature cooperation efforts in new constellations, with new methods or on new themes. Please note that 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 **19 November 2019–12 February 2020 at 15:00 CET.**

[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, Moldova and Ukraine.

4. Policy documents relating to the Baltic Sea region

A seed funding project always encompasses EU countries that are a party to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. In order to be eligible for seed funding, the projects must clearly show how they intend to contribute to this strategy. Note that this also applies to projects that, in addition to EU countries, also include countries in the EU's Eastern Partnership. Other strategies and policy documents may also be relevant. Additional instructions on how to describe linkages to policy documents 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 so-called macro-regional strategies that identify common challenges facing the countries in the region. It encourages closer cooperation between the countries around the Baltic Sea in order to meet these challenges. The strategy covers EU member states in the region, i.e., Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden. The strategy also points to the importance of cooperating with Russia and the countries within the Eastern Partnership.

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 Action Plan is currently under revision. More about the action plan can be found under Section 11.

Read more at https://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, Moldova 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.[2] Each deliverable relates to a priority area.

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

A review of the framework for the Eastern Partnership is currently underway and is expected to be completed in 2020. SI refers to the current focus.

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

5. Swedish Institute's 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 SI's **internal administrative purposes and does not affect assessments**. Keep in mind that although the project's focus could possibly fit to several areas, 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.

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 to Russia and to the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova 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, but is not required to, include the countries of the Eastern Partnership and Russia.
- A partnership may involve up to 12 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).	Partnerships that *only* include countries in the EU must comprise a Swedish main applicant plus *at least* two other EU core countries.
Core countries outside the EU, countries of the Eastern Partnership and Russia:	
Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine	These countries may participate on condition that the partnership already consists of the main applicant based in Sweden and *at least one other* EU core country.
Additional countries in the EU:	
Denmark, Finland (including Åland islands), Germany	Additional EU countries can participate in a complete partnership that already consists of *at least* three countries. Note that in such case the partnership must consist of the main applicant from Sweden and *at least one other* EU core country. *In the case of parties from Denmark, Finland and Germany, budgets may only cover costs for travel, food and lodging up to SEK 50,000.*

Actors from other countries are not eligible to join the partnership. If relevant, they may however take part in project activities as experts. This cost must be included under the budget item 'External expertise' (further information in Section 11 under Enclosure 3, budget). 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 partnership should consist of actors who are relevant to the common challenge identified and who together have the skills needed to achieve the project's objectives. In order to achieve results, all partners must have the mandate and ability to implement the project and the project needs to be well-established in all participating organisations. The main applicant must have the capacity to lead, follow up and report on the project. However, all partners must be involved in driving the project forward. The SI will not fund projects with one-way transfer of knowledge from one partner to another. Swedish actors from the public, private and non-profit sectors can apply for seed funding and establish a partnership e.g.:

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

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 July and 1 November 2020 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.

Remember: Last day of application is 12 **February 2020 at 15:00 CET**.

9. Creating an account for an application

To initiate an application for seed funding, visit the Swedish Institute's web portal – https://applications.si.se/LogIn

Through this portal you create an account that gives you access to the application form. Applications can be saved and then completed at a later time.

Once you have submitted your application, you will receive an email with a registration number. **Save this email** and always state your assigned registration number if you need to contact us. That way, we can quickly find your application in our system.

10. Filling in an application

The web 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
- Enclosures

The application form is accompanied by a number of **enclosures** that you fill in separately. In the case of enclosures 1–3 and 5, there are specific templates on our website that must be downloaded and completed separately.

Note: 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/seedfunding

- **Enclosure 1:** Project description – TEMPLATE
- **Enclosure 2:** Organisation assessment/formalities – TEMPLATE
- **Enclosure 3:** Budget – TEMPLATE
- **Enclosure 4:** The enclosures should be attached as a single document. For these enclosures there is no special template but depends on the type of main applicant.
  - 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 enclosure can be included in the application, it is important to contact the Swedish Tax Agency in good time beforehand.
- **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 Enclosures 1–3 and 5 (ready-to-use templates)

Below are instructions for filling in Enclosures 1–3 and 5. These instructions are intended as an additional aid in filling in the enclosures. Please note that not all areas in each respective enclosure are mentioned below.

Enclosure 1 – Project description

The purpose of Enclosure 1 is to describe the project for which you are seeking funding.

The enclosure covers the following areas:
1 Aim and background
2 Context and connection to strategy
3 Composition of the partnership
4 Short-term objectives, indicators and expected outputs
5 Work plan
6 Communication
7 Sustainability
8 Risk analysis
9 State aid to third parties/organisations.

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

Enclosure 1 – Area 1: Aim and background
In your application, describe in your own words what overall challenges or needs in the Baltic Sea region your project has identified and will work with. How are these linked to the partnership's own challenges and needs? A partnership is expected to collaborate on **common challenges** where cooperation benefits all parties as well as the region as a whole.

Try to explain why you think transnational cooperation is the best way to solve these challenges. Why can't it be solved at national level, without transnational cooperation?

In addition, you should briefly describe what the overall aim of your project is.

Describe the project's background. Try to describe how the idea of the project itself came about and how it may have changed over time. How was the partnership formed? Have the participants worked together for a long time or is it a new partnership?

Briefly describe other similar or complementary projects that may have been carried out or are still ongoing in the Baltic Sea Region. SI asks you to describe this to avoid repeating something that might have already been done by another actor. Try to explain how your project proposal differs from or complements other projects, ongoing or completed. At the very least, do a search in the KEEP database of projects in the Baltic Sea Region, with financing from the Interreg programmes. The database lets you search for topics, countries, regions, etc. Also do a search in the SI project database to see projects which have previously been funded by SI.

Read more at: https://www.keep.eu and www.si.se/en/seedfunding

Enclosure 1 – Area 2: Context and connection to strategy

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)

The EUSBSR has three overall goals:

- save the sea
- connect the region
- increase prosperity

As mentioned previously, there is an Action Plan for the EUSBSR. The concrete work within the strategy takes place in 13 so-called Policy Areas (PA) and 4 Horizontal Actions (HA). These areas/actions contribute in various ways to one or more of the specific overall objectives.

- Each PA/HA is described in the Action Plan. When you write your application, you have to study the Action Plan and identify which PA/HA that your project contributes to. Note! State the PA/HA which is most relevant, and which is the same as the one you state in the web portal.
- Each PA/HA also has its own underlying specific objectives and actions as described in the Action Plan. In your application you must identify which of these specific objectives/actions your project contributes to.
- Last but not least, you should describe in your own words how you see that the project you want to implement contributes to the chosen PA and/or HA and its underlying specific objectives/actions.

The Action Plan with its various policy areas and horizontal actions – as well as the specific objectives and actions identified by each PA/HA – can be found here:

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

The Action Plan is currently under review. In this call the Swedish Institute refers to the current version.

The EU Eastern Partnership

If 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 Eastern partnership 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. You must use this declaration and not previous ones. The website also contains a brief fact sheet about the 20 key deliverables.

A review of the framework for the Eastern Partnership is currently underway and is expected to be completed in 2020. SI refers to the current focus.

Further reading 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).

Enclosure 1 – Area 3: Composition of the partnership

In this section you are to describe the partnership. Requirements for the composition of the partnership can be read in sections 6 and 7 of this instruction.

You should describe how the project strives to involve relevant levels and actors either because they are represented in the project's partnership or constitute your target audience.

The partnership should be described so as to identify who the main applicant is and who the partners in the project are. For all parties involved, including the main applicant, you should describe the skills they contribute to the project and what added value they gain from being involved in the project. It is important that it is clear how the partnership intends to cooperate on the common challenge identified. It is also important that the partnership's roles appear, which helps to provide a picture of the distribution of responsibilities in the project. It is important that the main applicant ensures that the project is well-established in the partner organizations.

For main applicants, you should also describe how the project relates to your organisation's own goals and strategies, as well as core activities.

Enclosure 1 – Area 4: Short-term objectives, indicators and expected outputs

It is important that the application conveys that there is a clear logic in the project. SI wants to see that your projects show a clear link between the identified common challenge, the aim of the project, the short-term objectives, activities, indicators and expected outputs.

The table below explains the logic of the project: that you set **short-term objectives** (to be achieved **no later than** the end of the project period). The short-term objectives need to be based on the common challenge you have defined and the aim of the project. It is important that the short-term objectives are not expressed as activities. The concrete activities carried out within the project are, on the contrary, a way of **achieving** the objectives. Later, in Section 5 Work plan, you describe the project activities that should clearly contribute to the project's short-term objectives and expected outputs.

To measure how you succeed, enter one or more **indicators** for each short-term objective. These are used to assess how successful the project has been in relation to its set objectives. An indicator is a measure that should always be neutral, i.e., it should only be 'x young people who...' and not '100 young people who...'. The project's **expected outputs** indicate what will be achieved/changed for the respective short-term objectives when the project is completed.

English	Description
Short-term objectives	The project's short-term objectives should express what the partnership will have achieved (changed) at the latest once the project is over. Several short-term objectives are to be specified. ***Keep in mind:*** Activities and objectives are closely linked, but it is important to keep them apart. For example, arranging five seminars is not an objective but an activity. The objective may, however, be to increase the knowledge of those participating in the seminars. ***Example:*** Young entrepreneurs in the tourism sector know how to start a business.
Indicators	Establish indicators for the project's short-term objectives. There should be at least one indicator for each short-term objective. ***Keep in mind:*** There are two kinds of indicators: quantitative and qualitative. Both types are often needed to capture different aspects of fulfilling the objective. To show how your project meets the short-term objectives, we'd like to see that the project as a whole contains both quantitative and qualitative indicators. *A quantitative indicator* can for example be a number (amount, average or median) or a percentage. One example could be the number of students with passing grades from secondary school. *Qualitative indicators* can be expressed in quantitative terms, but they then represent so-called 'soft' information – such as values, attitudes and behaviours of the target audience. One way to measure and quantify qualitative indicators could be through surveys that indicate the proportion of respondents who have a certain behaviour or a certain attitude. It is important that you determine in advance how to measure the indicators, i.e., method of measurement, so that the expected results listed below can be confirmed. ***Example:*** • The number of young entrepreneurs who have participated in the project's seminars (quantitative indicator) • The number of young entrepreneurs who know how to start a business (qualitative indicator)
Expected outputs	For each short-term objective, state what will have been achieved/changed once the project has been completed. ***Keep in mind:*** If you find it difficult to put expected outputs into words, it is often because the objective is too extensive or too abstractly formulated. It is also important that the activities are designed in a manner that makes the outputs measurable. ***Example:*** 30 young individuals in the tourism sector know how to start a business.

Enclosure 1 – Area 5: Work plan

In this section you are to describe the project's work plan. The work plan allows SI to assess whether your project is logically structured and if there is a relevant and clear division of responsibility in the partnership. SI does not request exact dates, but at a minimum, please provide overall timeframes. In addition to obvious activities such as workshops, conferences and meetings, please also describe ongoing activities such as preparation of meetings, planning, evaluation work, report writing etc. Also provide a brief description of the activities for us to understand the contents of planned workshops, conferences and meetings.

Note that joint project tasks can be carried out by various partners in the project. There is also a possibility for all partners to use the project budget for carrying out these tasks (read more about the budget post Internal project-wide tasks in budget category 1/budget group Analysis, implementation and follow-up on page 16).

Enclosure 1 – Area 6: Communication

Communication is not a separate part of a project, but rather an integral part of achieving a project's aim. In addition to the organisations that are partners in the project, you will certainly need to involve/reach additional groups in different ways if you are to achieve your objectives. In this section you are to briefly describe how you will work with internal as well as external communication. Below are a number of questions that may support the planning of the project's communication:

- Which target groups need to be made aware of the project and what you are doing in your project so as to influence the target group positively?
- What change would you like to see among these target groups? Do you want to increase knowledge, or influence their attitudes or actions?
- What information or message does the respective target group need? (Messages answer the questions: what, why and how?)
- Which methods/channels will you use to bring the message to each respective target group?

Set the ambition of your communication plans in relation to your project. It is most important to prioritise the target groups and the communication activities that can best support fulfilling your project aim.

Enclosure 1 – Area 7: Sustainability

In this section you are to describe how the project outputs can be used, have an impact in the long term, and how the partnership aims to continue its cooperation.

Where the seed funding project involves preparing an application on continued financing from EU or other funds, you should specify which call for application it concerns (as detailed as possible) and which programme. You are also to describe how the project's focus as well as the partnership's composition of countries/regions is suited to a future application for the specific call.

Enclosure 1 – Area 8: Risk analysis

A thorough analysis of relevant risks and a concrete action plan will strengthen the application and your cooperation level within the project. 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.

Risks concerning corruption **must** be described as part of the risk analysis. In addition, it is important to consider risks within the partnership/among individual parties, as well as external factors. Such risks may for instance be associated with project management, economic reporting, formal problems, key actors/individuals, costs, further financing, completion of activities, or interest/participation on the part of partners/stakeholders.

Instructions for presenting the risk analysis:

- 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 person is to be stated.

Enclosure 1 – Area 9: State aid to third parties/organisations

SI must comply with EU legislation on state aid and ensures this in part by assessing the activities of the projects. The information you write in area 9 facilitates this assessment.

Detailed information on state aid can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/overview/index_en.html (English)
http://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/naringspolitik/statsstod (Swedish)

The project may be considered to provide state aid to third parties outside the project's partnership. This is because operators engaged in economic activities (but not included as project partnerships, e.g., associate organisations, target groups, etc.) may benefit from project activities in a way that they would not have under normal market conditions.

Examples of when a project's activities can be considered as state aid:

- Counselling or other subsidised services to small and medium-sized enterprises
- Education courses to small and medium-sized enterprises
- Free access to research facilities such as laboratories for companies

Please note: The fact that a project is considered to provide state aid to third parties does not affect the assessment of the project or the possibility of obtaining financial support from the SI. However, the provisions on aid that falls within the *de minimis* rule are applied.

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 SI
- Possible forwarding of funds to other parties/countries

The enclosure should be signed by a person who has the knowledge about the data given in the form. It should not be the same person who has been assigned as the project leader of the project.

Enclosure 3 - Budget

Enclosure 3 is to be enclosed with the application using the .xls or .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 Swedish '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 in addition to food and lodging, it may be noted as co-funding instead.
- 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 travel, food and lodging (not per diem expenses). No more than SEK 50,000 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. Refers to costs for such things as administration in support of core activities. Organisations applying for compensation for overheads must specify which different types of 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*. In the budget item ***Internal project-wide tasks*** all of the project's partners can bring up costs for mutual activities within the project. This can for instance refer to qualified analysis and report work performed by an organisation from one of the partnership's core countries, whether EU or non-EU. 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	Refers 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 that are included in the partnership. Special reasons must be given in the application for including meetings/activities in a non-eligible country or a country not included in the partnership.
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 budget items for travel, food and lodging (not per diem expenses). No more than SEK 50,000 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

An application submitted to SI is a public document. In applications for seed funding support, 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, as well as relevant contact information. 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 (i.e. embassies and consulates) in the Baltic Sea region (countries included in the programme) and with other financiers, such as Interreg-programmes, and actors who work with EUSBSR.

Assessment criteria

SI evaluates whether seed funding applications reflect the overall aim of this type of support by assessing them based on 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 Eastern Partnership, in accordance with the requirements in the application. This part of the application is central to SI's assessment, as a relevant link to current strategies is a prerequisite for a positive decision. 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. SI also assesses the partnership's mutual interest in the project proposal and whether each partner gains added value as a result of the project. The assessment further includes the division of roles and responsibilities in the project and an assessment of whether the project is well-established in the partner organizations.

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 of both 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 funding instruments, 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 four months. SI's decisions are final and may not be appealed.

Payment of funds granted
In the case of approved projects, payment 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 paid (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 the external audit may be included in the application's project budget.

13. Links

Policy

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, EUSBSR)

International website	http://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/
Action Plan	https://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/action-plan
Brochure: 'The Baltic Sea Strategy for Beginners'	https://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/news-room/documents-materials/26-beginner-s-guide-to-eusbsr/download

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/seedfunding
Contact information	https://si.se/en/seedfunding
SI project database	https://si.se/en/seedfunding
Database listing Interreg projects	https://www.keep.eu
EU website on state aid	http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/overview/index_en.html