Swedish Institute

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Document	Instructions

Instructions for seed funding applications with final date of application 15 February 2022

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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 managers 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 an 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.

SI can fund smaller projects as well as slightly larger projects. The application amount can be from SEK 100,000 to SEK 500,000. In less extensive and shorter projects, you can focus on fewer goals, e.g. formulate a new application, while larger and longer-term projects may include more activities with more objectives regarding the implementation of the project.

3. Application period

The application period is **17 November 2020 – 15 February 2022 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. To be eligible for seed funding, the projects must clearly show how they intend to contribute to this strategy i.e., the project must have a policy connection. 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.

4.1 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 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 neighbouring countries such as Belarus, Iceland, Norway and Russia.

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 sub-objectives. The concrete work within the strategy takes place in the so-called policy areas (PA). These PAs contribute in various ways to one or more of the overall goals. More about the action plan can be found under Section 11.

Read more at https://balticsea-region-strategy.eu

4.2 The EU Eastern Partnership (EaP)

The EU Eastern Partnership, established in 2009, is part of the EU Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and plays a key role in deepening the EU's relations with six countries in Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine.

The EaP is designed as a partnership with these countries and the main focus within the partnership is on each partner country's bilateral relationship with the EU. In addition, a multilateral framework has been established, with the aim of supporting bilateral relations and creating the conditions for co-operation between the countries.

Multilateral co-operation takes place through summits, meetings of foreign ministers as well as meetings, seminars and workshops at expert level. The goals and principles of the partnership have been established and confirmed at five summits, which can be read about in the so-called "Eastern Partnership Summit Declarations". The most recent summit was held in Brussels in 2017.

Work on a successor agenda began in 2019 with a broad and inclusive consultation. The resulting Joint Communication: Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020: Reinforcing Resilience – an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all and Council Conclusions on the Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020 set out a new agenda for the partnership, with resilience as the overarching policy framework and five long-term policy objectives. These were acknowledged at the EaP Leaders' videoconference held in June 2020.

The EU, its Member States and the partner countries will work together on the following Eastern Partnership objectives:

- together for resilient, sustainable and integrated economies;
- together for accountable institutions, the rule of law and security;
- together towards environmental and climate resilience;
- together for a resilient digital transformation;
- together for resilient, fair and inclusive societies.

This new agenda has been further outlined in the Joint Staff Working Document: Recovery, Resilience and Reform: post-2020 Eastern Partnership priorities adopted in July 2021.

The next summit will be held 15 December 2021. In this call, SI refers to the current direction according to five objectives listed above. If the summit on 15 December 2021 leads to significant changes in the objectives or the policy in general, the instructions will be updated. A new version of the instruction with new dating will then be published on the website: https://si.se/en/seedfunding

Applicants are advised to read the Joint Staff Working Document: Recovery, Resilience and Reform: post-2020 Eastern Partnership priorities adopted in July 2021": https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/swd_2021_186_f1_joint_staff_working_paper_en_v2_p1_1356457_0.pdf

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:

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

6. Partner countries

SI 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[2], Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine).

- A partnership must comprise at least three different countries, with the main applicant based in Sweden. Further conditions regarding the partnership composition can be found below.
- 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.
- Please note the specific requirements regarding the participation of Denmark, Finland and Germany. See below.
- A partnership may involve up to 12 parties (including the main applicant).
- Those who are part of the partnership as main applicants and core countries are expected to receive the funds granted by SI for the project. There are special budgetary constraints for additional countries. (see below).
- Note that special conditions currently apply for the participation of public actors from Belarus (see footnote below). Contact SI if you have questions about their participation.
- Any associated partners should come mainly from the programme's partner countries.

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

[2] Due to the situation in Belarus, SI has decided that as of 1 October 2020, public partners from Belarus may currently only participate in SI funded projects if no financial support from SI is provided. Any updates on this decision will be published on the website https://si.se/en/seedfunding

	Possible partner countries	Conditions for participation
Main applicant	Sweden	Actor based in Sweden. *Additional Swedish actors, in addition to the main applicant, can also participate as project partners if the partnership already consists of at least three countries in accordance with the requirements in this table. If the main applicant is an international / intergovernmental actor based in Sweden, the partnership must be supplemented with a project partner from Sweden.*
Core countries within the EU	Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland	One of the countries Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, or Poland must always be part of the partnership.
Core countries outside the EU, countries of the Eastern Partnership and Russia	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine	These countries can participate provided that the partnership already consists of the main applicant from Sweden and at least one other core country within the EU.
Additional countries in the EU	Denmark, Finland (including Åland islands), Germany *(NOTE! These countries can only participate in already complete partnerships)*	These countries can participate provided that the partnership already consists of the main applicant from Sweden and at least one core country within the EU and a third country as required in this table. *Only costs for travel, board and lodging for a total amount of SEK 50,000 can be included in the budget for all parties from Denmark, Finland and Germany.*

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.

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 to ensure that the project results have the desired effect or are spread beyond the partnership. Note that as the implementation takes place with public funds from the SI, it is assumed that the project's partnership and results are made publicly available.

When forming your partnership, you should consider that the purpose of this funding support is to focus on the region's common challenges and opportunities. It may be more appropriate for eg smaller companies to be a project partner than the main applicant. They can also participate in other roles such as external experts or as a target group for the project's activities (see more in section 11).

7.1 Main applicant

The Swedish Institute believes that it is important to have a clear Swedish added value and anchoring in the project. The main applicant must be a legal entity, based in Sweden and represent the public, private or non-profit sector. The main applicants can be, for example:

- Non-governmental organisations
- Local authorities
- Regional authorities
- Government agencies
- Higher education institutions and research institutes
- Intergovernmental organisations
- Business companies
- Business and trade organisations

If the main applicant consists of an international or intergovernmental actor based in Sweden, the partnership must be supplemented with at least one Swedish project partner.

The main applicant/lead partner bears the overall responsibility for the project towards the partnership and the Swedish Institute. It is important that the main applicant ensures that the project is anchored in the respective project partner's organisation. In all matters related to the project, the Swedish Institute communicates with the project owner. The lead partner is therefore the link between the project (project partners) and the Swedish Institute and is responsible for coordinating the flow of information between them.

7.2 Project partners

All project partners in the project must also be a legal entity and represent one or more of the actors listed in the section above 7.1.

The most important characteristics of a project partner are that they have an active role in the project implementation and can take part of the project budget. It is possible to allocate a budget for partners' work with project-wide activities under the budget item Internal project-wide tasks. This may, for example, refer to qualified analysis or report work carried out by an organisation from one of the partnership's core countries, within or outside the EU. Project partners can also have the main responsibility for carrying out certain project activities, eg meetings / seminars / conferences, etc., which should be stated in the work plan (Appendix 1, area 5).

Each partner must ensure that they have sufficient human resources to carry out / participate in the project's planned activities and to contribute to the reporting at partner and project level. If a project partner has questions about the project implementation, they should contact the Lead partner.

All project partners must explain in the partner letter why they consider it important to participate in the project, and in what way they intend to add competence and resources to strengthen the project's implementation.

7.3 Associated partners

In addition to project partners, a project can, but does not have to, have so-called associated partners. Being an associated partner opens for the participation of organisations that cannot or do not want to be project partners but that still add value to the project and benefit from the project. An associated partner should mainly come from the programmes partner countries. cs and cannot be subcontractors at the same time.

The Swedish Institute does not consider associated partners as full-fledged project partners and they cannot contribute to fulfilling the requirement that the partnership must consist of 3 countries. Associated partners must be mentioned in the place specified in Enclosure 1, but must not be filled in under partners in SI's web portal, nor must they attach a partner letter.

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 specific application documents can be found on https://si.se/en/seedfunding
- The application should be formulated through close cooperation between the different parties and must be written in English.
- The project may begin at any time between 1 August and 1 November 2022 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. See the section above about what applies when the main applicant is an international / intergovernmental actor based in Sweden.
- 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 **15 February 2022 at 15:00 CET.**

9. Creating an account for an application

To initiate an application for seed funding, visit the SI 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, 5 and 6, there are specific templates on our website that must be downloaded and completed separately.

Note: Enclosures 1-3 and 6 are compulsory for all applications. 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 description – TEMPLATE to be used by the main applicant
- **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: a registration certificate from the Swedish Companies Registration Office (or equivalent) and a current form SKV 4820 which can be requested from the Swedish Tax Agency via this link. In order to have time to include this enclosure in the application, it is important that you request the form from the Swedish Tax Agency in good time.
- **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.
- **Enclosure 6:** Partner letter – TEMPLATE for all project partners

11. Instructions for Enclosures 1–3 and 6 (ready-to-use templates)

Below are instructions for filling in Enclosures 1–3 and 6. 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.

11.1 Enclosure 1 – Project description

The purpose of Enclosure 1 is to describe the project for which you are applying for 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. Project setup and work plan
6. Communication
7. Sustainability
8. Risk analysis
9. State aid to third parties/organisations
10. Development of this project proposal

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

11.1.1 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 could it not be solved at national level, without transnational cooperation?

In addition, you should briefly describe what the overall aim of your project is. Describe also 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. 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://keep.eu and https://si.se/en/projects-granted-funding/programmes/baltic-sea-region-seed-funding

11.1.2 Enclosure 1 – Area 2: Context and connection to strategy

In this part, you must state how the application relates to the EU's strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and, if countries from the EU's Eastern Partnerships participate, how the application relates to the framework for the EU's Eastern Partnership. This part of the application is central to SI's assessment, as a relevant connection to current strategies is a prerequisite for a positive decision.

11.1.2.1 EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)

The EUSBSR has three overall goals: save the sea, connect the region and increase prosperity. As mentioned earlier, there is an action plan for the EU's strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

The concrete work within the strategy is currently taking place in the so-called policy areas (PA). These PA contribute in various ways to one or more of the overall objectives. Each PA is led by one or more policy coordinators. A contact list for these coordinators can be found on the strategy's website: https://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/contacts/eusbsr-actors

Each PA must ensure that horizontal aspects are integrated in an appropriate manner in the work within the policy area. This applies in particular to issues related to climate change and cooperation with neighboring countries and organisations outside the EU.

Applicants should also familiarize themselves with the writings of the PA:s in the action plan. This is to get an overview of the PA's so that in the application you will be able to describe how the proposed project connects to the selected PA.

- Each PA is described in the action plan. When you write your application, you must study the action plan and identify which PA your project contributes to. NOTE! You must state the PA that is most relevant, and it must be the same as you state in the application portal. It is mandatory to enter a PA.
- Each PA also has its own actions which are described in the action plan. In your application, you must identify which of these 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 its underlying actions.

The current action plan with its PAs - as well as the actions of each PA - can be found here: https://balticsea-region-strategy.eu/action-plan

11.1.2.2 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 five Eastern partnership objectives.

- together for resilient, sustainable and integrated economies;
- together for accountable institutions, the rule of law and security;
- together towards environmental and climate resilience;
- together for a resilient digital transformation;
- together for resilient, fair and inclusive societies.

You must choose one of these objectives. Your choice of objective should also be stated in the application portal:

Objectives in English	Name in web portal
Together for resilient, sustainable and integrated economies	EAP2021 Together for resilient, sustainable and integrated economies
Together for accountable institutions, the rule of law and security	EAP2021 Together for accountable institutions, the rule of law, and security
Together towards environmental and climate resilience	EAP2021 Together for environmental and climate resilience
Together for a resilient digital transformation.	EAP2021 Together for a resilient digital transformation
Together for resilient, fair and inclusive societies	EAP2021 Together for resilient, fair and inclusive societies

Within these objectives, several themes are stated and in order to be able to account for how your project works with the target area, applicants should familiarize themselves primarily with the document:

"Joint Staff Working Document: Recovery, Resilience and Reform: post-2020 Eastern Partnership priorities adopted in July 2021": https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/swd_2021_186_f1_joint_staff_working_paper_en_v2_p1_1356457_0.pdf

This document describes the objectives and the themes included under each objective. In the application, the applicant must also explain how the proposed project connects to the chosen objective.

Further reading at:

http://euneighbours.eu/en/policy/eastern-partnership (The site provides general information about the Eastern Partnership and contains links to relevant documents)

https://regeringen.se/internationella-organisationer-och-samarbeten/ostliga-partnerskapet

(Swedish Government's website about the Eastern Partnership)

11.1.3 Enclosure 1 – Area 3: Composition of the partnership

In this section of the application, the partnership must be outlined. 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 must be described so that it is clear who is the main applicant and who are the project partners in the project. Any associated partners and their role / s must also be described here.

More detailed descriptions of each project partner must be stated in the partner letter. (see more about Enclosure 6 in section 11.4)

The main applicant must fill in an organisation description. (see more about enclosure 2 section 11.2)

11.1.4 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. This include setting **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 Project setup and 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.

Title in enclosure	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.

11.1.5 Enclosure 1 – Area 5: Project setup and work plan

In this part you are to describe the project's implementation and concrete work plan. The description allows SI to assess whether your project is logically structured.

It is important that it becomes clear how the partnership intends to collaborate on the common challenge that has been identified. Describe the implementation of the project as a whole. Summarize e.g. the project's overall working methods, approaches, strategy, methodology, division of roles and responsibilities, etc., which provides a framework for the concrete activities which are then given in Table 5.2.

Concrete activities must be stated in Table 5.2 with a brief description of activities so that it is possible, for example, to understand the content of planned workshops, conferences and meetings. 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. It is important that it is clear who is responsible for the activity, who participates in the partnership and which external target groups participate. Also specify whether meetings are to take place digitally or as physical meetings.

Ensure that the project's activities link to the short-term goals you stated in section 4. The project's activities must be means of achieving the short-term goals. You need to keep in mind that all activities should be related to at least one short-term goal, and that all short-term goals should be related to activities. The project's joint activities can be carried out by different parties in the project. It is possible to use the project budget for this (read about budget item Internal project-wide tasks in section 11).

11.1.6 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.

11.1.7 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.

If 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.

11.1.8 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. The risks can relate to project-related risks as well as external risks. Project-related risks may, for example, apply to project management, financial reporting, formal problems, key actors / persons, costs, continued financing, implementation of activities, interest / participation from parties / stakeholders. External risks can, for example, consist of political changes, conflicts, pandemics, etc.

Instructions for presenting the risk analysis:

- How likely is it that the risks will occur? (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.

11.1.9 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

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.

11.1.10 Enclosure 1 - Area 10: Development of this project proposal

The application must be written in English so that everyone in the partnership has had the opportunity to contribute to its development. In this section, you are to briefly describe how you have collaborated in the partnership with the preparation of the application and / or with external support.

11.2 Enclosure 2 – Organisation description

The purpose of Enclosure 2 is to describe the Swedish main applicant.

In the enclosure, the Swedish main applicant must describe what competence they contribute to the project and what added value they consider to have from participating in the project. The main applicant must also describe how the project relates to the organisation's own activities and goals as well as to national, regional and local strategies.

The enclosure also includes the following:

- Disbursement details (in Swedish: PlusGiro/BankGiro),
- Assessment of the main applicant organisation (self-assessment)
- Any previous funding from the SI
- Possible forwarding of funds to other parties/countries

The enclosure must be signed by a person who has the right to sign this type of document. It must not be the same person who has been assigned as the project leader of the project.

11.3 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.

11.3.1 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.

- In the budget item "Internal project-wide tasks", all project partners can include costs for project-wide activities. This is a way to enable active participation for all in the partnership and create a more even distribution of responsibilities.
- Note that due to the situation in Belarus, SI has decided that as of 1 October 2020, public partners from Belarus may currently only participate in SI funded projects if no financial support from SI is provided. Any updates on this decision will be published on the website https://si.se/en/seedfunding

11.3.2 Budget breakdown

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

1. Budget category 1: Project management, OH, analysis and communication (max. 60% of requested amount)

Budget group	Description
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.
External audit	Remuneration for the mandatory external auditing may not exceed SEK 25,000.
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.
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 project partners from core countries can bring up costs for mutual activities within the project. This can for instance refer to qualified analysis/report work or coordination of joint activities 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.
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.

2. Budget category 2: Meetings and mobility

Budget group	Description
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. This budget post may also cover costs for digital meetings.
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.

11.4 Enclosure 6 – Partner letter

All project partners, except the main applicant, must complete a partner letter (Enclosure 6). Any associated partners should not fill in a partner letter, but only be mentioned in the project description (Enclosure 1, section 3.4.1).

In the appendix, the project partner must, in their own words, describe what competence they contribute to the project and what added value they consider to have from participating in the project. The project partner must also describe how the project relates to the organisation's own activities and goals as well as to national, regional and local strategies.

The partner letter confirms the support from each partner organisation for the project application.

The enclosure must be signed by a person who has the right to sign for the information provided. It must not be the same person who has been specified as the contact person. The document must be filled in, signed, scanned and sent by e-mail to the main applicant for the project you are applying for, not to SI.

The main applicant is responsible for enclosing all partners' enclosure 6 in the application portal.

Please note that the partner letter is mandatory for all project partners.

12. Processing applications

12.1 Managing information as a governmental agency

The Swedish Institute is a governmental agency and applications submitted to the Swedish Institute are public documents. Once a decision has been reached regarding applications, information and data are used for communicative purposes and analysis/evaluation.

12.2 Processing your personal data

The Swedish Institute would like to inform that by submitting your application we will process personal data of the entire project partnership in order to process your application. The Swedish

Institute is responsible for the processing of personal data, in our capacity as controller. We will process the following category of personal data for the entire partnership:

- First and last name
- E-mail address
- Telephone
- Title
- Organisation

The legal basis for the processing of personal data is article 6.1 (e) GDPR, for the exercise of official authority.

The Swedish Institute will retain personal data of the entire project partnership in accordance with the regulations with the GDPR and Swedish National legislation.

Furthermore, the Swedish Institute might share personal data with the following parties:

- Governmental agencies
- EU funding agencies
- Key actors related to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

We would also like to inform of the right for persons to request from the Swedish Institute access to, and rectification or erasure of, personal information, or restriction of processing, or to object to processing, as well as the right to data portability.

In case a person deems that the Swedish Institute has infringed on their rights according to the GDPR or processed their personal information in a way that is incorrect or unlawful according to the GDPR, this person has a right to lodge a complaint with the supervisory authority, the Swedish Authority for Privacy Protection (Integritetsskyddsmyndigheten).

To find out more about how the Swedish Institute process personal data, see our Privacy Policy at SI’s data protection policy: https://si.se/en/sis-data-protection-policy/

For questions regarding our processing of personal data, please see contact details on the website above.

12.3 Assessment criteria

SI first conducts a technical assessment of formalities and then evaluates the project applications which meet the formalities.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.

12.3.1 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. An 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. An 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.

12.3.2 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 organisations.

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.

12.3.3 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, an 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.

12.4 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.

12.5 Projects granted funding

For the projects that are granted, an agreement is written between SI and the Swedish Lead partner.

The lead partner bears the overall responsibility for the project towards the partnership and the Swedish Institute. In all matters related to the project, the Swedish Institute communicates with the lead partner. The lead partner is therefore the link between the project (project partners) and the Swedish Institute and is responsible for coordinating the flow of information between them.

When the agreement has been signed, 90 percent of the approved amount is paid to the lead partner. The lead partner can in turn sign an agreement with parties in the partnership. If the lead partner forwards (i.e. sends part of the granted amount to project partners in advance), such an agreement must be written. The agreement must state the terms from SI.

The remaining 10 percent is paid out, in cases where the funds have been used, after the final reporting and financial report together with the external audit, performed by an authorized / approved auditor, have been received and approved by SI. Funds for auditing can be included in the application's project budget.

If the lead partner forwards more than SEK 100,000 to a project partner, a local audit must be carried out. If the amount passed on is SEK 100,000 or less, an audit is performed as part of the lead partner's audit.

The partnership is expected to collaborate in and take joint responsibility for the project and contribute to the project's final reporting. Formally, however, the lead partner is responsible to SI.

13. Links

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, EUSBSR

International website: http://balticsea-region-strategy.eu/

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

Eastern Partnership, EaP

Website about EaP: https://euneighbours.eu/en/policy/eastern-partnership

Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020: Reinforcing Resilience – an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/1_en_act_part1_v6.pdf

Council Conclusions on the Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/43905/st07510-re01-en20.pdf

Joint Staff Working Document: Recovery, Resilience and Reform: post-2020 Eastern Partnership priorities adopted in July 2021: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/swd_2021_186_f1_joint_staff_working_paper_en_v2_p1_1356457_0.pdf

Links related to the call for applications

Application web portal: https://applications.si.se/LogIn

Enclosures for the call: https://si.se/en/seedfunding

Contact information: https://si.se/en/seedfunding

SI project database: https://si.se/en/projects-granted-funding/programmes/baltic-sea-region-seed-funding/

Database listing Interreg-projects: https://keep.eu

EU web site on state aid: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/overview/index_en.html

Swedish Tax Agency website to request the form SKV 4820: https://www.skatteverket.se/privat/etjansterochblanketter/blanketterbroschyrer/blanketter/info/4820.4.39f16f103821c58f680006756.html