Swedish Institute

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SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme

Instructions for the call regarding seed funding 2024

Final date of applications 17 September 2024

Website of the programme: https://si.se/en/bsnp

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1. Purpose of the instructions

These instructions are intended for those wishing to apply for project funding from the Swedish Institute (SI) for the SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme. The instructions provide basic information about the programme and the call for proposals, as well as demonstrate what is required for an application to be taken up for assessment.

The application should be prepared jointly by the main applicant and its project partners. For this reason, and to strengthen transparency, commitment and equal participation within the project, the application must be written in English.

The instructions and application enclosures are designed to help applicants to produce a well-formulated application. We therefore recommend that you read through these instructions before starting your application.

2. Introduction to the SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme

The SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme aims to strengthen and create lasting cooperation between the EU countries around the Baltic Sea and countries of the EU Eastern Partnership to meet the region's common challenges and build on the opportunities that cooperation between the countries provides.

Funded projects are expected to focus on the region's common challenges and opportunities where the cooperation benefits the region as a whole but also all parties and countries involved. Today's challenges for the EU countries around the Baltic Sea and the EU's Eastern Partnership countries are complex and require broad solutions involving several sectors and governance levels.

Through SI’s funding, partnerships are expected to build a basis for future, long-term cooperation. An important aim is that the cooperation that SI finances can continue to develop, for example with EU funding.

Funded projects are assumed to be able to make a long-term impact, for example in the form of cooperation structures such as expert networks and platforms as well as the establishment of more informal collegial transnational networks. Furthermore, funded projects can lead to new thematic networks between EU and non-EU countries. Results produced in funded projects are assumed to have a communicative impact, which can lead to the spread of methods, models and knowledge and contribute to influencing policies and strategies, etc. In addition, results from the cooperation can be incorporated into the regular activities of the partnership and its stakeholders.

In the SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme, there are two types of grants: seed funding and funding for cooperation projects. Calls for these grant types are announced on different occasions. Sometimes SI may also launch special calls within the programme

2.1 About this call

This ongoing call within the SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme closing 17 September 2024 refers only to the grant type seed fundings. Please note that applications are made on a competitive basis and the call's budget sets the ceiling for how many projects that can be granted in this call.

The table below provides an overview of the grant type seed funding. A more detailed description is given in the following sections of the instructions.

Focus	Seed funding aims to lay the foundation for cooperation. For example, you can use seed funding to: • Develop concepts and identify partners for future cooperation • Prepare applications for new funding (mainly EU)
Project period	A project can last from 6 months to 15 months. The formal starting date must be 1 December 2024.
Budget	A seed funding project can apply for at least SEK 100,000 and up to SEK 400,000. **Please note** that only a total amount of SEK 40,000 can be included in the budget for all partners from the additional countries Denmark, Finland and Germany. Read more in budget enclosure 3.
Partnership	You can read about the general guidelines for how a partnership is formed in section 7. It describes who can apply, and about the formal roles of the project owner and project partners. **Please note** that a seed funding partnership can consist of **up to 8 parties** (divided into the main applicant, core countries and, where applicable, additional countries). A partnership must consist of **at least three different core countries**, including the main applicant based in Sweden, to be considered complete (see more criteria on the country composition in section 6.1). In seed funding, it is the next step that is in focus, which can also affect how to build your partnership for the SI-funded project versus the future project/cooperation. The partnership in the project financed by SI can be limited, but a project can, among other things, work to expand the partnership for future cooperation during the SI project. Depending on what the next step is, it may be relevant to consider a cross-sectoral approach already in the SI-funded project.
Relevance	The programme aims to strengthen and create lasting cooperation between the EU countries around the Baltic Sea and countries of the EU Eastern Partnership to meet the

	region's common challenges and build on the opportunities that cooperation between the countries provides. In the application materials, applicants are asked to describe which common challenge/opportunity they are focusing on and how it is relevant to the region. There are two overarching and important policy frameworks for the region, The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea region and the framework of the EU Eastern Partnership. These frameworks influence what is funded by the programme. Applicants are expected to reflect on how the aim of the project relates to these strategies. If applicants cannot demonstrate regional relevance for the project's aim based on the above strategies, they can refer to other relevant strategies and frameworks, e.g., within the EU and internationally. In seed funding projects, it is the next step in the cooperation that is in focus, which can influence which strategy is most relevant.
Target types	In applications to the programme applicants must formulate, in their own words, a maximum of ten (10) short-term objectives within the target types given below. The target types are closely linked to the intention of the type of grant. Within each chosen target type, the project must formulate its short-term objectives in its own words (one or more per target type). For seed funding projects, there are seven (7) target types that applicants must choose from. You must choose at least two (2) and at most five (5) target types: • Building knowledge, competences, and skills • Funding overview • Idea and concept development • Needs analysis • Partnership enlargement • Prepared application • Stakeholder engagement
Other	Seed funding from SI is comparatively (e.g., with EU-programmes) limited and aims to initiate cooperation and partnerships. Therefore, it is important that the long-term sustainability and possible expansion of the project partnership is clear in the application to SI.

3. Timeline

- The call is published at si.se in June 2024.
- Application enclosures will be published in June 2024.
- The application portal opens latest July 2024.
- The call for applications **closes 17 September 2024.**
- The assessment of applications is estimated to take about 3 months.
- The formal starting date must be 1 December 2024.

4. Regional relevance and connection to relevant policy documents

The SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme aims to strengthen and create lasting cooperation between the EU countries around the Baltic Sea and countries in the EU's Eastern Partnership to meet the region's common challenges and build on the opportunities that cooperation between the countries provides. Cooperation financed through the programme must benefit the region as a whole but also all parties and countries involved.

The identified common challenge or opportunity is expected to be based in relevant strategies and frameworks. There are two overarching and important policy frameworks for the region: The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the framework for the EU Eastern Partnership. These frameworks affect what is financed by the programme. Applicants are expected to reflect on how the aim of the project relates to these strategies. If applicants cannot demonstrate regional relevance for the aim of the project based on the above strategies, they can refer to other relevant strategies and frameworks, within the EU and internationally.

4.1 The 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 includes 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 of the region.[1]

The EUSBSR has three overall objectives:

- save the sea
- connect the region
- increase prosperity

[1] Note that the cooperation with Russia and Belarus within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea region is suspended. Belarus and Russia are also not part of the SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme. The remaining neighbouring countries that the strategy points to are Norway and Iceland. However, these countries cannot be included as formal partners and cannot be financed by the SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme. Norway and Iceland may participate in the projects at their own expense.

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 14 so-called policy areas (PA). These PAs contribute in various ways to one or more of the overall objectives. Each PA has its own actions which are described in the action plan. In addition, the action plan describes other key features of a more comprehensive nature, such as work regarding climate change, cooperation with neighbouring countries, transparent participation, inclusion, multi-level governance, etc.

Read more: https://eusbsr.eu/

4.2 The EU Eastern Partnership (EaP)

The EaP, established in 2009, plays a key role in deepening the EU's relations with six countries in Eastern Europe and the southern Caucasus.

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.

In the framework of EaP, which was adopted at the summit on 15 December 2021, the cooperation revolves around two pillars: 1) investment and 2) governance. The partnership has ten objectives in five main areas, which are linked to the UN's global goals in Agenda 2030.

- 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.

Read more: https://euneighbourseast.eu/policy/

https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/european-neighbourhood-policy/eastern-partnership_en

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

4.3 Other frameworks and strategies

It is important that applicants can demonstrate that there is support for the project's identified challenge or opportunity in strategies and frameworks relevant to the region. Applicants are expected to reflect on how the objective of the project relates to the EUSBSR and/or the EaP. If applicants cannot demonstrate regional relevance for the aim of the project based on the above strategies, they may refer to other relevant strategies and frameworks, within the EU and internationally. These other frameworks and strategies may also be stated in your application as a complement to the two main regional frameworks, i.e., the EUSBSR and the EaP.

5. Partner countries

In the SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme, SI can finance project cooperation between EU countries within the framework of the EUSBSR (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, and Germany[2]). The programme can also finance cooperation that include actors from five countries of the EaP (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine). SI looks positively on partnerships that include both EU countries and non-EU countries but points out that it is the identified challenge/opportunity that should guide the country and partnership composition in general.

- The main applicant must be a legal entity based in Sweden that represents a Swedish perspective.
- The main applicant can be an international/intergovernmental actor (legal entity) based in Sweden, but then the partnership needs to be supplemented with at least one project partner from Sweden who represents a Swedish perspective.
- Applications where the partnership only includes partners within one’s own organisation (e.g., member-based organisations) in different countries will not be supported.
- A partnership must always be multilateral, i.e., SI does not finance bilateral cooperation within the framework of the programme. A partnership must consist of at least three different core countries (within or outside EU), including the main applicant based in Sweden (see more information in the table below about the country composition in section 5.1).
- Note that a partnership can consist of several partners from the same country and/or additional countries when the country composition requirement is met. (See criteria for country composition in table in section 5.1).
- Those who are part of the partnership as main applicants and project partners are expected to receive the funds granted by SI for the project. There are special budgetary constraints for additional countries.
- Actors from countries other than those mentioned above cannot be part of the formal partnership but can participate at their own expense in the project's activities. Where applicable, they can participate as experts and are then covered under the relevant budget post. Note that external expertise can also be made up of actors from the partner countries, but in that case these actors cannot be part of the formal partnership.

[2] Partners from the additional countries Denmark, Finland and Germany can only benefit from a limited amount of the project's total budget. Read more in the budget enclosure 3.

5.1 Country composition

For conditions regarding the partnership composition, see the table below.

	Possible partner countries	**Conditions for participation**
Main applicant	Sweden	Actor (legal entity) based in Sweden that represents a Swedish perspective (see below) • Additional Swedish actors (legal entities), in addition to the main applicant, can also participate as project partners if the partnership already consists of at least three countries according to 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 that represents a clear Swedish perspective.
Core countries within or outside the EU	**Core countries within the EU:** Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. **Core countries outside the EU (countries of the EaP):** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine.	In addition to the main Swedish applicant, at least two core countries within or outside the EU must be part of the partnership.
Additional countries, within the EU	Denmark, Finland (incl. Åland islands), Germany *(Please note! Can participate only in already complete partnerships)*	These countries can participate provided that the partnership already consists of a main applicant from Sweden and at least two core countries within or outside the EU. • Partners from the additional countries Denmark, Finland and Germany can only benefit from a limited amount of the project's total budget. Read more in the budget enclosure 3.

5.2 Ukraine

Due to the current situation, SI assumes that actors from Ukraine may find it difficult to participate in the project implementation and activities on the same terms as other partners within the partnership. A partnership will still be considered complete if Ukraine is one of the three countries. However, for the sake of implementation, it can be an advantage to have a larger partnership to reduce the vulnerability of the project and increase its sustainability and possibility to achieve its results. A larger partnership can also more clearly contribute to the challenges that Ukraine is facing by contributing with different skills and experiences.

6. Partnership and stakeholders

Today's challenges for the EU countries around the Baltic Sea and the EU's Eastern Partnership countries are complex and require broad solutions involving several sectors and governance levels. Therefore, various relevant governance levels and sectors in society should be represented in the project's formal partnership and/or make up your target group. This is important for the project's results to have the intended impact or spread outside the partnership.

6.1 Partnership composition

The formal project partnership must consist of actors relevant to the common challenge or opportunity identified. Together, the partnership must have the skills needed to achieve the objectives of the project. To achieve objectives and results, the project must be anchored in all participating organisations so that the parties have the mandate and ability to implement the project. A partnership can, for example, be structured so that partners from the same country are made up of several sectors. This could be an alternative to a partnership including many countries but with single actors/sectors in each country. Please note that SI does not finance projects with one-way transfer of knowledge from one actor to the rest of the partnership within the SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme.

The formal project partnership consists of the main applicant and project partners. In the programme, the role of associated partners does not exist. Only actors and countries that constitute the main applicant and project partners are included in the formal partnership. Other actors who participate in meetings, conferences, etc. are not regarded as full partners and therefore cannot participate to fulfil the requirement of at least three different countries. See below for a description of the main applicant and project partner roles.

When forming your partnership, you should consider that the purpose of the programme is to focus on the common challenges and opportunities of the region, and that the results are expected to be disseminated and made publicly available. It may be more appropriate for e.g., smaller organisations and companies to be project partners than main applicants. They can also participate in other roles such as external experts or as target group for the project activities.

6.2 Main applicant

SI believes that it is important to have a clear Swedish perspective 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 applicant should represent a Swedish perspective and can be, for example:

- Non-governmental organisations, foundations
- Municipalities
- Regions
- Government agencies
- County administrative boards
- Higher education institutions and research institutes
- Intergovernmental organisations
- Business companies
- Business and trade organisations

The main applicant must have the capacity to lead, follow up and report on the project, but the entire partnership is involved in driving the project forward.

If the main applicant is an international or intergovernmental actor based in Sweden, the partnership must be supplemented with a project partner from Sweden who represents a clear Swedish perspective.

Once the project is granted, the main applicant's role is to be the project owner for the project. The project owner bears overall responsibility for the project towards the partnership and SI. It is therefore important that the main applicant ensures that the project is anchored in their own and the partnership's organisations.

6.3 Project partners

All project partners in the project must be legal entities and represent one or some of the stakeholder groups listed in section 6.2 above.

Project partners must have an active role in the implementation of the project. The entire partnership gets to share in the project's budget. Project partners may have primary responsibility for carrying out certain project activities, e.g., meetings/seminars/conferences, analysis work, feasibility studies, method development, etc.

It is important that partners have sufficient human resources to implement and participate in the project's planned activities and to contribute to the final reporting to SI.

All partners in the project must report their participation in the project in enclosure 5 "Partner Letter".

6.4 Stakeholders

A project is expected to describe how to reach and cooperate with important stakeholders via its activities. Stakeholders are people, a group of people or an organisation that is affected in one way or another by the challenge/opportunity that the project intends to work with. A stakeholder can also influence the project's conditions in a positive way, e.g., via special competencies, tools, networks, etc. Stakeholders can be both internal and external and can have direct or indirect influence. By identifying stakeholders and making an analysis of their relationship to the challenge/opportunity, a strategy for and prioritisation of how they should be involved in the project can also be designed.

In a stakeholder analysis, you can e.g., take help from questions such as:

- Who is interested in the project?
- Who will be affected by the project?
- Who can influence the development of the project?
- Who can approve/reject the project?

The stakeholder analysis helps determine who should be involved in the project and in what way.

7. Project design

A partnership is expected to cooperate on common challenges or opportunities where the cooperation benefits the region as a whole as well as all participating parties.

It is important that the project's aim, objectives, structure, and various activities are logically connected and that this is evident in the application. An application must demonstrate a clear connection between the identified common challenge/opportunity, the project aim, short-term objectives, activities, indicators, and expected results.

Each project is expected to formulate one single overall project aim. The aim should describe the desired situation after the end of the project, provided the project delivers the expected results.

Applicants should also formulate a number of short-term objectives. The short-term objectives are a breakdown of the overall project aim and describe what should be achieved by the end of the project period).

The call provides a number of predefined target types to choose from. These target types correspond to the intentions of the call and the orientation that the projects should have. The short-term objectives must be formulated from the selected predefined target types (see more in section 2.1).

The project's activities are crucial to the fulfilment of its short-term objectives. It is therefore important that relevant activities are linked to the chosen short-term objectives. It may require a variety of activities to achieve one specific short-term objective. Furthermore, applicants should specify one or more indicators for each short-term objective. These are used to assess how successful the project has been in relation to its objectives.

It is advisable to use a project planning methodology (also called results-based management methods) such as the Logical Framework Approach to plan the project. The idea of these methods is to start with what is to be achieved (objectives) rather than what is to be done (activities).

Please note that it is important that the application focuses on and distinguishes between what is to be carried out in the SI-financed project and what is planned to be carried out in a future cooperation.

7.1 Illustration of project design

Title in enclosure	Description
Challenge/ Possibility	Applicants must describe in your own words which overall challenges or opportunities/needs in the Baltic Sea region your project has identified and will work on.
Aim	A project should only have one overall project aim. It should describe the situation after the end of the project, provided that the project has delivered the expected results.
Short-term objectives	The project's short-term objectives specify what the partnership aims to have achieved (changed) by the time the project concludes. In this call a project can have a maximum of 10 short-term objectives. **Keep in mind**: It is easy to confuse activities with short-term objectives, but it is important to keep them separate. For example, organising a seminar is not an objective but an activity. The short-term objective, however, may be to increase the knowledge of those participating in the seminar. **Example:** Young entrepreneurs in the tourism sector have gained knowledge of how to run a business.
Target types	The call provides several predefined target types to choose from. The short-term objectives should be formulated by means of the chosen target types (one or more short-term objectives per target type but a total of no more than 10 short-term objectives in all distributed between any of the target types below). See more in section 2.1. For seed funding projects, there are **seven (7)** target types that applicants must choose from. You must choose **at least two (2)** and **at most five (5)** target types: • Building knowledge, competences, and skills • Funding overview • Idea and concept development • Needs analysis

	• Partnership enlargement • Prepared application • Stakeholder engagement
Activities	Activities are the project's means of achieving the short-term objectives. Therefore, for example, it cannot be a short-term objective to organise a seminar; instead, the seminar is an activity (see above about short-term objectives). The work plan should be designed to optimise the chances of achieving the project's short-term objectives. The main activities of the project should be outlined in the application's work plan (Enclosure 2, Project implementation).
Indicators	For each short-term objective, one or more indicators need to be formulated. These indicators are used to assess the objective achievement for the respective short-term objectives. An indicator is a measure of what needs to be assessed but should always be expressed neutrally, meaning it should only state "number of experts who..." and not "hundred experts who..." **Keep in mind**: There are two kinds of indicators: quantitative and qualitative. In many cases, both quantitative and qualitative indicators may be needed to capture different aspects of objective achievement. To show how your project fulfils the short-term objectives, the project should contain both quantitative and qualitative indicators. **A quantitative indicator** is, for example, a number (amount, average or median) or a percentage. One example could be the number of students with a passing grade from upper secondary school. **Qualitative indicators** can be expressed in quantitative terms but express what can be called "soft" data, e.g. values, attitudes and behaviours of the target group. Qualitative indicators can be measured and quantified through, for example, surveys that indicate the percentage of respondents who have a certain behaviour or attitude. It is important that you determine in advance how you will measure the indicators, i.e., method of measurement, so that the expected results listed below can be confirmed. **Example:** • Number of young entrepreneurs who participated in the project's seminars (quantitative indicator) • Number of young entrepreneurs who have gained increased knowledge of how to run a business (qualitative indicator)
Expected results	The project activities are expected to lead to short-term effects (here called expected results), i.e., direct results of an activity. It is important for the project team to formulate expected results in order, for example, to calculate a detailed

budget and establish a schedule. The expected results indicate what will have been achieved or changed for each short-term objective when the project is completed, as a result of the activities you have carried out.

Keep in mind: If it is difficult to formulate expected results, it is often because the short-term objective is too broad or too abstractly formulated. It is also important that the activities are designed in a way that makes the results measurable.

Example: 30 young people in the tourism sector have been trained on how to run a business.

8. Budget

The application must include a budget (Enclosure 3, Budget) that provides a detailed yet indicative plan for how the requested grant from SI will be spent within the project. SI considers the entire project's financing when evaluating the application. The intended SI template must be used for the budget enclosure.

The budget can include costs for each project partner for joint project activities as well as other costs related to the project's implementation. This may include, for example, qualified analysis/report work, or coordination of joint project activities carried out by a project partner. Therefore, it should be clearly indicated in both the work plan and budget which partners are involved in or implement each activity. Actors outside the partnership can also access the project's budget through their participation in the project's activities, such as meetings, seminars, etc.

SI does not require a budget broken down by partner, only a total budget for the entire project. However, please note that the total budget should reflect the costs incurred by each partner for the project's implementation.

The grant should be used to plan, implement, and follow up on the project. It can involve various types of costs but should be categorized under budget groups and budget items specified in Enclosure 3.

Salaries

The budget may include salary costs for employees both at the main applicant and other project partners. Salaries should be specified as actual costs (based on the current salary for the intended personnel within each organisation) including statutory employer contributions (in Swedish lönekostnadspåslag, LKP) or equivalent legal statutory employer contributions in the partner countries. The salary should, in turn, be calculated against the estimated work time to be allocated to the project.

Salary costs within the project are primarily expected to involve either overall project management, administration, or coordination, or planning and implementation of specific project activities. Note that salary costs cannot be stated as a lump sum and neither as a consultancy fee when referring to the formal project partnership. Costs related to overall project management and administration (budget group A) cannot exceed 30% of the grant from SI.

Mobility

Short-term mobility is the primary form of travel within the project (individual or group) and can be used, for example, for meetings, participation in conferences, workshops, study visits, exchanges. Short-term mobility can be supported for stays of up to 10 consecutive working days.

Indirect Costs (Overhead)

Up to 10% of the grant from SI can be used for indirect costs (overhead). The calculation description should be included in the budget enclosure.

Co-financing

SI does not require that co-financing be specified in the budget for this type of grant. However, in the application, you will need to answer questions about the entire scope of the project in various ways. It can be about/how you work within the project's focus in other contexts, if there is other funding that is adjacent to this and to the project's implementation, as well as what resources the partnership provides for the implementation of the project that is applied for from SI (working hours and other resources).

Miscellaneous, budget

Costs related to the additional countries Denmark, Finland, and Germany are stated in a specific section of the budget template (see Enclosure 3 for more information). Note that costs for the additional countries can only amount to a maximum of 10% of the requested budget from SI, and at most 40,000 SEK for the seed funding grant type.

SI does not reimburse the purchase of equipment but can reimburse costs for consumables if needed to carry out activities within the project.

External expertise can only cover activities/services carried out by external parties (i.e. not project partners) and may in exceptional cases come from non-programme countries. The project is expected to be clearly based in the partnership, which is why external expertise should only be used for complementary purposes.

SI reserves the right to adjust the project budget for an application before a decision is made.

Please note that if the grant from SI exceeds 200,000 SEK, the financial report and supporting documents must undergo an audit conducted by an authorized/approved external auditor. Read more in Chapter 11.

Refer to the specific tab in Enclosure 3 for detailed instructions regarding the project’s budget.

9. Design of the application

The application must be submitted via SI's application portal and be completed in full, with all enclosures (in the specified templates) attached. Note that the enclosures are locked and must not be opened.

A link to the application portal will be published on the website of the programme in accordance with the timetable in section 3: https://si.se/en/bsnp

In the SI application portal, you create an account which gives you access to the application form. The person who creates an account receives an ID number. Each application that is started also receives an ID number. A started application can be saved to be completed later.

When you have submitted the application, you will receive a confirmation by e-mail. Please note that it may end up in your spam folder.

The application should be formulated in close cooperation between the project partners and must be written in English.

More detailed instructions are given in the previous sections and in the application enclosures.

In the form on the application portal, applicants must enter the following information:

- Details of the main applicant organisation (Swedish organisation)
- Contact person at the main applicant organisation
- Responsible/signatory of the main applicant organisation
- Information about project partners
- Summary of the project
- Selection of target types
- Selection of relevant strategies/policies
- Enclosures

Remember: Last day for applications is 17 September 2024, at 23.59.59 (CET).

9.1 Mandatory enclosures

For an application to be considered complete, several enclosures as described below need to be uploaded to the application portal. For most of these enclosures, SI provides templates to be filled in, saved to PDF format and then uploaded to the application portal. Please make sure to double-check that the converted PDF files are readable and accurately represent the respective attachment before uploading them to the application portal.

In case of problems filling in the templates (which are locked in the .docx or .xlsx formats), SI should be contacted immediately and no later than one week before the deadline.

Please note that a template may include restrictions on how much text (number of characters, including spaces) can be filled in as an answer per question. If such restrictions are exceeded (or in other forms of unauthorized manipulation of the templates), the application may be considered invalid and rejected in connection with the formal assessment.

Please note! Enclosures 1-5 are mandatory for all applications. Enclosure 6 is mandatory when the main applicant is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) or a company. Enclosure 7 is mandatory when the main applicant is a company. For enclosures 1–5 and 7, there are templates on SI's website that you must download and fill in separately.

These templates can be found on the programme website: https://si.se/en/bsnp

Enclosure 1: Project relevance
Description of the project's identified common challenge or opportunity as well as a description of relevance and policy connection. The SI template must be used.

Enclosure 2: Project implementation
Description of the project's overall aim and background. Summary of short-term objectives, indicators, and results. A brief description of the partnership composition. A description of the project's activity plan, risk analysis and intentions for long-term cooperation.
The SI template must be used.

Enclosure 3: Budget
A project budget in which applicants specify the expected main costs of the project.
The SI template must be used.

Enclosure 4: Organisation description
A description of the Swedish main applicant organisation. To be filled in by the Swedish main applicant. Must be attached as a scanned PDF with signature. The SI template must be used.

Enclosure 5: Partner letter
A description of the involvement of each partner in the project. To be completed by each partner. Must be attached as scanned PDF with signature. The SI template must be used. **Please note!** The main applicant fills in Enclosure 4 Organisation description instead.

Enclosure 6: Mandatory enclosures for NGOs and companies
The enclosures should be attached as a single document. There is no template for these enclosures. If the main applicant is:

- an **NGO** (e.g. non-profit association, registered religious community, economic association, foundation), there are three mandatory enclosures: 1) the organisation’s statutes, 2) the most recently approved annual financial report/audit report, and 3) the Swedish Tax Agency’s civic registration certificate (or equivalent)
- a **company**, there are two mandatory enclosures: 1) a registration certificate from the Swedish Companies Registration Office (or equivalent) and 2) a current SKV 4820 form 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 7: Certificate of de minimis aid
This enclosure is mandatory when the main applicant is a company. The SI template must be used.

9.2 General information

- SI believes that physical meetings are important within projects to build relationships between the project partners and to strengthen the project's feasibility. At the same time, SI believes that projects should take advantage of the opportunities that digital tools provide for meetings and conferences, etc. SI foresees a project design which mixes physical and digital meetings, conferences, etc. in a way that is reasonable for each project.
- Applications aimed solely at obtaining funding for a single conference or meeting without any other planned activities will not be granted under this call.
- Funded projects are expected to contribute to a gender equal development of society. Both women and men should have an equal say in the project and actively participate in its implementation. The partnership should analyse and consider whether there are gender aspects that are relevant to the project's challenge, solutions and utilisation. In the project final report, it should be indicated how many men/women have participated in the project's activities.
- Note that within the framework of this call, SI does not grant support to pure research projects. However, research activities can be part of projects.
- Within the SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme SI does not fund projects aimed at transferring knowledge or ready-made solutions from one partner to another. Funded projects are expected to focus on the region's common challenges and opportunities where the cooperation benefits the region as a whole but also all parties and countries involved.
- In exceptional cases, an external speaker may come from non-programme countries. Meetings and activities can take place in any programme country. Meetings/activities in a non-programme country must be specifically justified in the application.
- Note that a project partner (legal entity) cannot simultaneously act as an external expert vis-à-vis the project.
- SI applies state aid rules. Additional information can be found in enclosure 7.

10. Processing of the application

10.1 Managing information as a government agency

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

10.2 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. SI 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.

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

Furthermore, SI might share personal data with the following parties:

- Swedish governmental agencies and ministries
- EU funding agencies
- Key actors related to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the EU Eastern partnership framework.

We would also like to inform of the right for persons to request from SI 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 SI 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 SI 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.

10.3 Assessment and decision

Applications received are processed after the application deadline. SI first checks that applications meet the formalities. SI checks that:

- the application has been submitted by an eligible applicant.
- the partnership is complete and consists of eligible countries and actors according to the rules of the call.
- the application and mandatory enclosures have been submitted via SI's application portal on the specific SI templates and are completed in full.
- The project budget and project period comply with the rules of the call.

Applications that meet the formalities are taken forward for qualitative assessment. Applications that have serious deficiencies in terms of formality will not be taken up for further assessment.

Please note that applications are made on a competitive basis and the call's budget sets the ceiling for how many projects that can be granted in this call.

SI assesses the application based on three main areas:

- the **relevance** of the project,
- the **composition** of the partnership
- the **feasibility and sustainability** of the project.

Estimated processing time is about three months. SI’s decisions are final and may not be appealed.

11. Approved projects

For the projects that are granted, an agreement is drawn up between SI and the Swedish project owner. The project owner can in turn sign agreements with partners in the partnership. If the project owner 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 and conditions from SI.

The project owner bears the overall, formal responsibility for the project vis-à-vis the partnership and SI. In all matters related to the project, SI communicates with the project owner. The project owner is therefore the link between the project and SI. The partnership is expected to cooperate in and take joint responsibility for the project and contribute to the final reporting of the project.

If the grant from SI exceeds SEK 200,000, the project must undergo an external audit by an authorized/approved auditor in accordance with ISA 800/805. The project owner is responsible for ensuring this as part of the work to complete the final reporting to SI. Funds for the audit can be included in the project's budget application (see enclosure 3).

The project must be reported to SI by the date specified in the agreement, usually no later than two months after the end of the project period

11.1 Payments

After the agreement is signed, part of the amount is paid out to the project owner in connection with the start of the project. SI pays out the contribution in Swedish kronor. The grant is paid out based on the length of the project. The grant is paid based on the approved total amount and the project duration.

- For projects with an approved total amount of up to SEK 200 000, 100% is paid out after the agreement is signed
- For projects lasting up to 18 months, 80% of the amount is paid when the signed agreement is received by SI [3]
- For grants with an approved total amount exceeding SEK 200,000, a final payment of 20% is withheld by SI until the project has been completed and the final report has been

[3] These are SI's general rules for payments. Please note that for the seed funding grant type, a project can last for a maximum of 15 months.

submitted. The payment will be made to the extent that the final payment has been used, after the final report and financial report, as well as the audit certificate have been received and approved by SI.

11.2 Reporting and audit

The project must submit a final report to SI by the date specified in the agreement, usually no later than two months after the end of the project period. The final report consists of:

- Reporting on the project's implementation (narrative report in a web tool);
- Financial reporting according to the budget template's format. A special template for financial reporting will be emailed to the project manager;
- Audit certificate issued by an external authorized/approved auditor. In case the project owner forwards funds to the project partners, an audit may also be required for project partners.

SI has the right to withhold or reclaim all or part of the disbursed funds if the reporting is insufficient or omitted. Late reporting may result in funds not being disbursed.

11.3 Audit

For projects with support exceeding SEK 200,000, an audit shall be carried out promptly, as part of the final reporting, by an independent external authorized/approved auditor (hereinafter auditor) in accordance with International Auditing Standard (ISA), applying ISA 800/805. After conducting the review, the auditor must provide an assurance report in which they state whether, in their opinion, the financial statement has been prepared in all material respects in accordance with SI's instructions and the agreement (for financial reporting).

11.4 Forwarding of grants

By forwarding of grants, SI means when the project owner transfers part of the granted amount to project partners in advance (before costs have occurred) to be handled within the framework of the partner accounting.

The alternative to forwarding is for partners to first process costs. The project owner pays out funds to partners after approving reports received regarding costs of work performed. SI does not define this procedure as forwarding of grants.

If funds exceeding 200,000 SEK have been forwarded to an individual partner organisation in advance (i.e., if these funds have been paid in advance by the project owner to this organisation's bank account or otherwise provided to the organisation in advance to be used for the project's expenses), these funds must also be subject to an audit by an auditor with qualifications equivalent to a Swedish authorized/approved auditor. The audit should be conducted in the country where the partner operates and in accordance with ISA 800/805, or alternatively, the corresponding national standard in countries where ISA is not applied.

If funds of 200,000 SEK or less have been forwarded to an individual partner organization, this must be stated in the auditor's report as an "Emphasis of Matter" paragraph (according to ISA 706), specified per partner organisation. It should also be noted that copies of receipts/documents concerning the reported costs have been received by the grant recipient from the partner organisation and reviewed by the grant recipient.

11.5 Project changes

During the project period, the project owner and its partners can carry out minor adjustments and changes on an ongoing basis. For significant changes to the project, however, a so-called change request must be submitted to SI in advance which must be approved by SI in writing. Examples of significant changes are:

- Addition or change of partners.
- Extensive budget changes.
- Extension of the project.
- Changes in content or implementation of activities that may affect the achievement of the project objectives.

12. Links

Links related to the call for applications

Website of SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme where you can find enclosures, link to the application portal, and SI contacts:	https://si.se/en/bsnp
SI projects database	https://si.se/en/projects-granted-funding/
Interreg projects database (en):	https://keep.eu
Swedish government web site on state aid: (se.):	http://regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/naringspolitik/statsstod/
EU web site on state aid (en):	http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/overview/index_en.html
Swedish Tax Agency website to request the form SKV 4820 (se):	https://www.skatteverket.se/privat/etjansterochblanketter/blanketterbroschyrer/blanketter/info/4820.4.39f16f103821c58f680006756.html

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, EUSBSR

EUSBSR website (en):	https://eusbsr.eu/
The EUSBSR action plan (en):	https://eusbsr.eu/about/action-plan/
Swedish Government website (se):	https://regeringen.se/sverige-i-eu/eus-ostersjostrategi/

EU Eastern Partnership, EaP)

EU websites about EaP (en):	https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eastern-partnership_en
	https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/european-neighbourhood-policy/eastern-partnership_en
	https://euneighbourseast.eu/policy/
Swedish government website (se.):	https://regeringen.se/internationella-organisationer-och-samarbeten/ostliga-partnerskapet
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