



NORTHERN PERIPHERY PROGRAMME

DATASHEET 3: Selection Procedure and Criteria

Project selection criteria

Project selection will be based on firstly, formal requirements to secure admissibility and eligibility and secondly, selection criteria for ranking of projects presented below. The selection criteria might be specified, completed and further developed by the Programme Monitoring Committee during the implementation process.

Formal requirements to secure admissibility and eligibility

To comply with the requirements for **admissibility** the following points must be fulfilled:

1. One of the project partners should be assigned the role of Lead Partner, carrying the overall responsibility of the project. The Lead Partner must come either from an EU Member State (Finland, Scotland, Sweden) or from the Non Member States of Norway or Iceland, and be located within the programme area in order to be entitled to take full responsibility for the Northern Periphery Programme funding. For further information on Lead Partner responsibilities see Datasheet 5.

2. The application form must be filled in correctly and it should include the following elements:

- Specified aims or purposes that enables an evaluation of the project's compliance with the overall intentions of the programme
- An outline of the basic strategy of the networking project
- A specified time schedule and a presentation of the planned activities of the project
- A presentation of the partners, the project-organisation and the project-leader
- A presentation of the intended results of the project, and a list of indicators to ensure the monitoring and evaluation of the project
- A presentation of the dissemination of project results and what can be learnt from these
- An overall budget and a financial table, specifying the different financial sources of the project, including evidence of co-financing in the form of signed co-financing commitments.

To be considered **eligible**, the project must:

- Be consistent with the Interreg III B Northern Periphery Programme
- Concentrate on issues that call for transnational cooperation
- Include three or more partners from at least three different countries, of which one must be from an EU Member State, within the programme area
- Demonstrate its contribution to spatial development
- Take into account sustainable development, including economic, social and environmental perspectives

- Take into account equal opportunities in a broad context; gender equality, minorities and age groups
- Avoid duplication of current or completed work
- Provide good value for money with a realistic budget
- Be likely to prove viable both in its execution and ability to survive once funding under the programme ends

Only project applications fulfilling the admissibility and eligibility criteria will be forwarded to the Programme Monitoring Committee acting as Steering Committee for approval.

Selection criteria for ranking of projects

Projects will be given **higher priority** if they also:

- Demonstrate an additional and sustainable economic benefit to the programme area
- Involve partners from either Scotland, Greenland, Faroe Islands, Iceland or Northwest Russia
- Have a complex partnership (partnership not only between single partners from each country, but between partnerships involving both the public and private sector from each country involved), for example educational institute-private sector-public sector cooperation
- Take into account/focus on the particular conditions of the north, particularly peripherality and sparsity of population
- Take into account the different groups of indigenous people
- Attract private sector contributions or generate indirect private sector leverage
- Demonstrate positive environmental impact and sustainability
- Demonstrate positive impact on equal opportunities in a broad context; gender equality, minorities and age groups
- Have an appropriate size recommended by the PMC
- Contribute significantly to achieving the outputs/outcomes for the programme and priority and measure targets
- Demonstrate a high degree of innovativeness
- Demonstrate a well-balanced transnational partnership where the different partners contribute and benefit to a similar extent
- Demonstrate synergy with other funds including Tacis, Objective 1, 2, 3 and transitional funding

Measure specific selection criteria

The priorities and measures are presented in more detail in the Programme Complement, and some “core actions” are indicated. However, the measures will be open for a wide range of issues and applicants are welcome to present arguments for how their project fits into one of the measures, and contributes to the overall aims of the programme.

The measure specific criteria below indicate what will be prioritised in the assessment of projects under the different measures.

Measure 1.1

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Promote the maintaining and improvement of effective and sustainable transport infrastructure within the region
- Address weaknesses in transport networks, particularly links between regions and with national and international networks
- Improve access of enterprises to resources and markets and/or communities to jobs and services.

Measure 1.2

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Assist in the creation of new employment, particularly in remoter areas, and/or reduce the need to travel
- Enable enterprises to become more competitive
- Improve access to information and services.
- Enhance the availability of ICT in the Northern Periphery Programme Area

Measure 2.1

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Provide evidence that the proposed use of natural resources is sustainable
- Derive positive economic and social benefits from the natural environment
- Encourage/build on the areas unique cultural heritage
- Relates to the high quality of the Northern periphery environment, including EU sites within the Natura 2000 suite or similarly nationally protected sites in non-EU countries
- Lead to higher value uses of the natural resource and/or enhance the economic value of products created from natural resources
- Lead to the enhancement of the region's natural resources through improved management

Measure 2.2

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Result in an increase in exports and/or an increase in production/output
- Result in expanding markets
- Help companies broaden their competence for new product development and foreign trade
- Encourage greater participation of women and young people in entrepreneurial activity
- Increase the competence of the Northern Periphery Programme workforce
- Result in increased commercialisation of product ideas developed in co-operation with business and research institutes
- Improve the viability and/or provide new business opportunities for business enterprises, and SMEs in particular
- Result in best practise for business development, accessing market information, training etc.

Measure 3.1

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Improve the viability of service provision
- Improve the level or quality of service
- Enable communities to make better use of the energy resources and waste products
- Lead to a better understanding of the economic and social circumstances of sparsely populated areas

Measure 3.2

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Support local mobilisation and other actions that increase the viability of local communities
- Improve resource management or reduce pollution through more integrated planning
- Improve the ways in which spatial and economic development strategies are formulated
- Support bottom up processes and exchange of experiences between communities
- Raise the awareness of the challenges of the periphery

Prerequisites for successful running of projects**Practical prerequisites**

As the administration of a transnational EU-funded project is substantial, a number of prerequisites may help the practical implementation and proceeding of each networking project.

Lead Partner responsibilities

In order to be able to run the project efficiently, the lead partner has to set up an efficient and reliable management and co-ordination system handling the administration of the project. This responsibility lies with the lead partner. The administrative co-ordination includes both issues related to the thematic activities of the project, as well as the purely administrative and financial management of the project and its accounts. Another important task of the project co-ordination unit is the production of six-monthly reports to the Northern Periphery Programme Secretariat on activity related progress and financial follow-up.

The lead partner should appoint one *project co-ordinator* responsible for the overall activities of the project. This person should be qualified to handle the thematic co-ordination of the project and thus be able to work as a driving force to the partnership and people around it, in order to achieve the objectives laid down in the application. It is recommended to appoint a project co-ordinator with experience in management of transnational projects.

Financial management and control

A project co-financed with EU-assistance has to be managed and administered in a professional and reliable way. The financial co-ordination should not be underestimated, as experience shows that it is an extensive assignment to build up, maintain and phase out a transnational project of this kind. In order to make best use of the funds raised to the project, professional financial management is essential.

Selection procedure

Project selection will be done by the Programme Monitoring Committee following open calls for applications. Calls for applications will be launched regularly. In line with the pro-active approach to programme implementation, the Programming Monitoring Committee may decide on special focus or requirements for individual calls.

Calls for applications will be published on the website of the programme as the main source of information at least three months prior to each application round. They will, for example, be published in ministry bulletins to all public national, regional and local authorities. Relevant information will be distributed through the Programme Monitoring Committee and Regional Contact Points.

Applications for funding will be submitted by the Lead Partner of the project to the Northern Periphery Programme Secretariat. Upon arrival of the application at the secretariat, the Lead Partner will be sent a notification of the arrival of the application. The application will be registered and checked for admissibility and eligibility by the Northern Periphery Programme Secretariat. The Monitoring Committee will be notified of all projects that failed to meet the admissibility and eligibility check.

The Secretariat will then distribute the eligible applications to the Regional Advisory Groups, which will assess the suitability and priority of all eligible project applications using the agreed selection criteria and make recommendations on whether or not the requests for funding should be supported. The selection will be based on the "4-box-scoring method" where the applications will be recommended for 1) accepted without conditions, 2) accepted with conditions, 3) resubmission and 4) rejected.

On the basis of the recommendations of the Regional Advisory Groups, the Northern Periphery Programme Secretariat will prepare proposals for decision to the Programme Monitoring Committee, acting as a Steering Committee. Funding decisions will be made at the Programme Monitoring Committee meetings. After the Monitoring Committee meetings, the Lead applicant/partner will be informed about the decision. When an application is approved, the Managing Authority will draw up the Grant Offer Letter. If the Monitoring Committee rejects the project, a refusal letter will be sent to the Lead Partner. The Lead Partner is responsible for communication with the other partners in the project.

Figure 1. Application Procedure and Timescale

