**Romanian Ministry of Development, Public Works and** **Administration**

**Managing Authority**

**INTERREG VI-A NEXT ROMANIA-REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

**GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS**

SMALL SCALE PROJECTS

Reference: 2ndst Call for proposals for small scale projects

Open Call for proposals: 2025

Deadline for submission: 2025

**How to use these Guidelines**

These Guidelines are aimed at providing information on the provisions laid down in the Interreg NEXT Romania – Republic of Moldova programme approved by the European Commission by Decision no 8932 on 30.11.2022 and amended by E.C. decision number 8965 on December 15, 2023.

They give guidance to the potential Applicants while preparing their proposals, and information about the selection, contracting and the implementation process.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

**These Guidelines only address the** SMALL SCALE PROJECTS

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# ACRONYMS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| BO | Branch Office of the Joint Secretariat |
| CBC | Cross-Border Cooperation |
| EC | European Commission |
| e.g. | Exempli gratia (for example) |
| EGCT | European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation |
| EU | European Union |
| ISO | Interreg Specific Objective |
| IT | Information Technology |
| JEMS | Joint Electronic Monitoring System |
| MC | Monitoring Committee |
| JS | Joint Secretariat |
| MA | Managing Authority |
| MDPWA | Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration |
| NA | National Authorities |
| NDICI | Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| OI | Output Indicator |
| PO | Policy objective |
| SC | Selection Committee |
| Programme | Interreg VI-A NEXT Romania-Republic of Moldova |
| RI | Result Indicator |
| SEA | Strategic environmental assessment |
| SO | Specific Objective |
| SMART | Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time Bounded |
| VAT | Value Added Tax |

# CHAPTER 1 - INTERREG VI-A NEXT ROMANIA-REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

1.1 Background information

The Interreg VI - A NEXT Romania Republic of Moldova Programme, hereinafter the Programme, contributes to the achievement of the ERDF specific objectives and of the Interreg-specific objectives. Only part of the specific objectives are addressed by this call for proposals (see chapter *1.3 Focus of the call*).

For a better understanding of these Guidelines and its annexes as well as of the Programme, it is recommended to read also the Programme document available on Programme website <http://ro-md.net> and the relevant national and EU legislation (see section 1 – Legal and strategic framework - Part 1 of these Guidelines).

Moreover, it is strongly recommended to frequently visit the Programme website (www.ro-md.net) and/or programme social media ([Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064654333847)) to check on any possible revision of these Guidelines, the publication of the answers to the questions submitted or on information of general interest.

* + 1. **Programme area**

The Programme area consists of:

* the Romanian counties of Botoșani, Vaslui, Iași, Galați and
* the whole territory of Republic of Moldova [[1]](#footnote-2)

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

***Only projects that benefit the Programme area will be eligible. To this end, projects should be implemented in the Programme area. However, in duly justified cases, a share of the project may be implemented outside the Programme area, irrespective of the place of registration of the beneficiaries, (in the limited conditions to be foreseen in the Section 2.2.1.1 of these Guidelines) provided that this is necessary for achieving the project’s results, is for the benefit of the programme area and is described and justified in the application form, and they will require the explicit approval of the Monitoring Committee.***

* + 1. **Other Interreg NEXT programmes**

 The Programme runs in parallel with other EU financed programmes, also relevant for the programme area (i.e., Interreg VI-A NEXT Romania-Ukraine Programme, Interreg VI-B NEXT Black Sea Basin Programme), as well as other national or cooperation programmes from Romania and Republic of Moldova funded by the European Union, relevant for this area.

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

***The Programme shall not finance projects whose activities have already been financed (totally or partially) by other programmes/ financial instruments.***

In order to avoid double financing and overlapping between projects, the Applicants and partners are strongly requested not to submit projects already awarded with a grant in another financial framework, or projects that include activities that have already been financed in another financial framework.

In this regard, all project partners shall confirm, in their statements, that no expenditure related to the above-mentioned project has been, is or will be funded, in part or in whole, by any other donor-funded programme

This should not have the effect of discrimination against their proposals during evaluation, but it will be taken into account for the final selection of projects, when appropriate consultation with other management structures (the National Authorities, the Managing Authorities or other Interreg programmes and the European Commission) will be performed in order to detect potential cases of double financing. Moreover, during the contracting phase, an updated statement of the Applicant and partners on this topic will be requested.

* + 1. **Programme structures with roles in selection of projects**

At programme level, there are joint structures involved in selection of projects (e.g.Monitoring Committee, Managing Authority, Joint Secretariat, but also national structures (National Authority in Romania-Ministry of Development Public Works and Administration, National Authority in Republic of Moldova-State Chancellery). The final decision on the results of the selection process will be taken by the Monitoring Committee.

* 1. Legal Framework[[2]](#footnote-3)

➢ Commission Decision No. 8932 on 30.11.2022 on approving the Interreg VI-A NEXT Romania-Republic of Moldova Programme for 2021 - 2027 period;

➢ Programme amending decision number 8965 on December 15, 2023. Financing Agreement for the Interreg programme (Interreg VI-A) NEXT Romania-Republic of Moldova

➢ Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy;

➢ Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments;

➢ Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund;

➢ Regulation (EU) 2021 /947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, amending and repealing Decision No 466/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU) 2017/1601 and Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 480/2009

➢ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024, on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union

➢Romanian Law No. 231 of July 19, 2022 on the management and use of Interreg funds and national public contribution, for the "European Territorial Cooperation" objective, in the period 2021-2027

1.3  focus of the call

**1.3.1 Priorities and specific objectives addressed by the call**

### Out of the 3 priorities of the Programme, only Priority 2 and Priority 3 will be addressed by this call for small scale projects, as follows:

**Priority 1 Green communities**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **POLICY OBJECTIVE 2****A greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe**  **by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility** ***SO1.1 Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches*** |

**Priority 3. Cooperation across borders**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **INTERREG SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1** **A better cooperation governance**SO 3.1 Enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular, with a view to resolving legal, capacity and other obstacles in the border region  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  **INTERREG icons 2020 G3**  | **Interreg Specific Objective 2** **A safer and more secure Europe*****SO 3.2 Border crossing management and mobility and migration management*** |

The Programme is looking for proposals that **envisage clear cross border impact** and support achievement of the Programme’s expected results and outputs, fulfil clear quality criteria and demonstrate technical and financial viability.

The quality criteria that the programme pursuits during the evaluation and selection process ensure that a project is relevant to the programme, it has strong and consistent internal logic, and the main pre-requisites for its successful implementation are already in place.

The coherence of the project intervention logic with the targeted specific objective of the programme is a key factor for a quality project.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

***Contribution to programme priorities, specific objectives. Intervention fields and to the needs of the communities in the programme area are essential for project selection.***

**1.3.2 Type of projects**

The present Call for proposal only addresses ***small-scale projects.***

In the meaning of the present call, ***small scale projects*** are projects, with no infrastructure (works) component.

.

**1.3.3 Cross border character of the projects**

The Programme is looking to select projects which envisage clear cross border impact and benefits on each side of the border.

 The following cross border criteria should be pursued by the partners as presented bellow, and be duly justified within the Application Form:

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

The following **cross border cooperation criteria** are to be taken into consideration:

**Mandatory:**

(1) **Joint development** is ensured when the project is designed by the Applicant (as coordinator of the process) together with its partners, and addresses the needs and priorities of all the relevant stakeholders.

(2) **Joint implementation** is provided when project’s activities are carried out and coordinated among all Partners. It is not enough that activities run in parallel. There must be clear content-based links between what is happening on one side of the border, and the work done by Partners on the other side. The Applicant is responsible for ensuring that activities are properly coordinated.

(3) **Joint financing** must ensure a reasonable distribution of the project budget between Partners, according to their share of activities and grant received. All project Partners who receive financial support from the Programme will contribute to the co-financing of the project.

**Optional:**

(4) **Joint staffing**, whether is paid from the project budget or not, the project staff will be responsible for the activities carried out on the respective side of the border.

Projects, shall involve partners from both countries. However, an European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGCT) may be the sole partner of a project, provided that the members thereof involve partners from both Romania and Republic of Moldova. The sole partner (EGCT) shall be registered in Romania.

It has to be considered that the cooperation criteria need to be effectively demonstrated throughout the project proposal e.g. distribution of responsibilities among the project Partners, methodology of activities, distribution of the project budget.

**1.3.4 Horizontal principles**

The following horizontal principles may be addressed by the projects funded under the Interreg VI-A NEXT Romania-Republic of Moldova Programme, and at least one has to be positively influenced:

**Sustainable development and environmental protection**

The programme has a strong commitment towards environmental protection and all operations supported by the programme have to respect the EU policies and rules regarding environmental protection and sustainable development taking into account the Paris Agreement, the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the “do no significant harm” (DNSH) principle.

Project applicants have to describe the contribution to sustainable development, explaining how the sustainable development principles are anchored within the project design and planned activities. The project will specify which possible effects (positive, neutral or negative) will likely have on the environment, by considering among others the following aspects: water, soil, air and climate, population and human health, fauna, flora and biodiversity, cultural heritage and landscape.

DNSH (the Do No Significant Harm Principle)

Project activities should contribute to one of the 6 environmental objectives and they should be compliant with the “do no significant harm” principle.

Article 17 of the Taxonomy Regulation[[3]](#footnote-4), defines the significant harm for the six environmental objectives. Thus, an activity is considered to do significant harm:

* + to **climate change mitigation** if it leads to significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions;
	+ to **climate change adaptation** if it leads to an increased adverse impact of the current climate and the expected future climate, on the activity itself or on people, nature or assets;
	+ to the **sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources** if it is detrimental to the good status or the good ecological potential of bodies of water, including surface water and groundwater, or to the good environmental status of marine waters;
	+ to the **circular economy, including waste prevention and recycling**, if it leads to significant inefficiencies in the use of materials or in the direct or indirect use of natural resources, or if it significantly increases the generation, incineration or disposal of waste, or if the long-term disposal of waste may cause significant and long-term environmental harm;
	+ to **pollution prevention** and control if it leads to a significant increase in emissions of pollutants into air, water or land;
	+ to the **protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems** if it is significantly detrimental to the good condition and resilience of ecosystems, or detrimental to the conservation status of habitats and species, including those of Union interest.

The project will have to promote solutions that are friendly with the environment and observe the Do No Significant Harm Principle.

Projects submitted are strongly encouraged to **green their projects and reduce the environmental and carbon footprint.** The following good environmental practices are recommended for all projects:

* Reduce the electricity and / or heat consumption;
* Reduce fuel, raw materials and hazardous substances consumption;
* Use high energy performance equipment;
* Choose adequate technologies for restoration/ preservation and respect them accurately so that the solutions chosen do not affect species of flora, fauna and aquatic ecosystems in the area;
* Minimize waste production;
* Ensure collection/ sorting/ recycling/recovery of the waste resulted;
* On-line meetings should be preferred whenever possible, electronic communication means should be used instead of paper based
* Including environmental criteria in procurement procedures;
* Giving preference to environmentally-friendly mobility options (in particular for short travel distances);
* Organising conferences and events in a sustainable way (e.g. by combining different meetings in one place, reducing printing and using recyclable materials, using video conference facilities, etc.);
* Considering resource efficiency and the use of renewable energy at all levels;
* Making use of regional supply chains (reducing supply chain length and CO2 emissions).

**Equal opportunities and non-discrimination**

Projects have to ensure that the activities implemented are in line with the principle of equal opportunities and do not generate discrimination of any kind (gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation).

Applicants have to describe how the equal opportunity and non-discrimination principle is anchored within the project design and planned activities.

**Equality between men and women**

Promotion of gender equality is important within the Programme design as a horizontal issue to be deployed in projects across any of the priorities selected. Both men and women shall have equal access to the opportunities and benefits of the Programme.

All projects will have to adequately consider gender related issues – such as equality of opportunity rights, distribution of benefits, responsibilities for men and women. This may include the integration of a gender perspective when planning activities, considering the likeliness of increased gender equality beyond the project end.

Projects have to ensure that the activities implemented are in line with the principle of equality between men and women and do not generate discrimination of any kind.

**New European Bauhaus**

In drafting the projects other principles should also be considered, such as the New European Bauhaus[[4]](#footnote-5) initiative. **The New European Bauhaus**initiative promotes a new lifestyle where sustainability matches style, thus accelerating the green transition in various sectors of the economy such as construction, furniture, fashion and in the society as well as other areas of our daily life. The aim is to provide all citizens with access to goods that are circular and less carbon-intensive, that support the regeneration of nature and protect biodiversity. Three core inseparable values guide the New European Bauhaus: sustainability, aesthetics and inclusion.

**1.3.5** **Synergies and complementarities with other actions[[5]](#footnote-6)**

Operations should seek to create synergies with any other programmes covering the same regions, like national programmes, or macro-regional strategies, cooperation programmes and other existing financing solutions. The application should include a short description on how the projects aims to contribute to wider strategies.

Examples of other programme or strategies:

* EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR),
* [Romania-](https://ro-md.net/en/)Ukraine Interreg NEXT
* [Black Sea Basin](https://blacksea-cbc.net/interreg-next-bsb-2021-2027) Interreg NEXT
* [Interreg Danube](https://www.interreg-danube.eu/).

**1.3.6** **Capitalisation of previous programmes’ results**

Project proposals can also capitalise on the results achieved previously through other projects.

Beneficiaries who want to learn about the projects financed in the previous period, can consult the program page, in the [projects section](https://www.ro-md.net/ro/despre-program/proiecte-contractate). Some of these projects, can be models or can be further built on their results, further developed or replicated, as feasible. Capitalisation activities should also focus on the widening up of the audience/target groups of existing project results.

The strategies and studies already developed in the framework of the previous Programmes can be used as valuable tools in addressing identified needs.

The database will be continuously enriched with information on the results achieved by projects supported under the Interreg VI-A NEXT Romania- Republic of Moldova Programme. Other information on this and similar topics is available at: [keep.eu](https://keep.eu/)[[6]](#footnote-7)

1.4 Financial allocations specific objectives

**1.4.1 Indicative allocation**

The **indicative** EU contribution available under this Call for proposals is of :

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Priority of the Programme | Specific Objective of the Programme | Allocation per specific objective [EURO} |
| **1. Green communities** | 1.1 Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches | TBD |
| **3. Cooperation across borders** | 3.1 Enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular, with a view to resolving legal, capacity and other obstacles in the border region (ISO 1) | TBD |
| 3.2 Border crossing management and mobility and migration management (ISO 2) | TBD |

**1.4.2 Grant and co-financing**

The **total project budget** consists of EU contribution (grant) and co-financing provided by project partners.

The EU contribution (grant) for a project shall be of maximum 90% of the total eligible expenditure of the project.

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

Projects shall not be selected for support where they have been physically completed or fully implemented before the application for funding under the programme is submitted, irrespective of whether all related payments have been made. **Grants shall not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit** **within the framework of the project during the implementation period**[[7]](#footnote-8).

***1.4.2.1 Size of grant per specific objective***

The **EU contribution (grant)** that may be requested for financing **small scale** projects under the present Call for proposals is shown below. **If the project does not fall within these limits, it will be considered ineligible.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Priority  | Specific Objective | Size of grant [Euro] |
| **1.Green Communities** | 1.1 Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches | 200,000- 750,000  |
| **3. Cooperation across borders** | 3.1 Enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular, with a view to resolving legal, capacity and other obstacles in the border region (ISO1) | 200,000- 1 000 000 |
| 3.2 Border crossing management and mobility and migration management (ISO2) | 200,000-250,000 |

***1.4.2.2 Co-financing***

The **co-financing** shall be of **at least 10%** of the total eligible costs of the project and shall be provided by all partners in the project receiving a financial support from the Programme, .

Co-financing ensured by each partner should represent **at least 10%** of their own eligible expenditure.

**▶▶▶ TAKE NOTE THAT**

Each project partner will include the eligible expenditure for their share of activities in the individual budgets, comprising **both a share of grant and the share of co-financing**.

**Co-financing for the Romanian beneficiaries**

For the Romanian beneficiaries, ***Law no. 231 of July 19, 2022 regarding the management and use of Interreg funds and the national public contribution, for the "European Territorial Cooperation" objective, in the period 2021-2027***, regarding the allocation of external grants and national public contribution, for the "European Territorial Cooperation" Objective, with subsequent amendments shall be applied.

1.5 State aid rules

**1.5.1 General provisions**

No state aid shall be granted under this call.

According to Article 107 (ex. Article 87) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, state aid is any aid granted by a Member State or through State resources in any form whatsoever which distorts or threatens to distort competition by favouring certain undertakings or the production of certain goods, therefore affecting trade between Member States.

During the evaluation process, the issue of possible involvement of state aid relevant activities will be checked based on all information concerning partners and activities foreseen by the project.

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

Provided it contains state aid relevant activities, the project **may be rejected** in its entirety, except for those situations when an adjustment of the activities, without affecting the project objectives, is possible.

**1.5.2 Self-assessment of the State Aid**

In order to find out if the project is likely to be regarded as a state aid or containing state aid elements, before finalizing the development of the project and its submission, the self-assessment grid provided in **Annex D** of the present guidelines is to be used and, if possible, the needed adjustments shall be made prior to submission of the application, in order to remove the potentially state aid elements.

The self-assessment **must refer to the project as a whole**. Consequently, only one self assessment will address the entire project and when performing the state aid self-assessment, the criteria shall be applied to each partner and each project activity. Moreover, the potential ”indirect advantage”[[8]](#footnote-9) which may occur as a result of project implementation must be taken into consideration.

The **self-assessment grid (Annex D)** contains five criteria to be duly considered when assessing the potential involvement of state aid elements in a project:

1. Are public resources involved?
2. Are public resources granted selectively to the partners?
3. Is any of the partners of the project an “undertaking”?
4. Does any partner (“undertaking”) and/or a third party (“undertaking”) get an “economic advantage” that it could not normally get from the market?
5. Does the aid (financing of project) distort or threatens to distort competition and trade within the European Union or between European Union and Republic of Moldova?

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

If one of the above questions is answered NO, there is no state aid involved. Details on how to interpret each criterion are presented in **Annex D\_State Aid Self Assessment**.

# CHAPTER 2 - RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2.1 Number of projects to be submitted

No limitations are set for an organization to participate in several projects submitted under the present call for proposals. However, please make sure that the respective organization has the necessary operational and financial capacity to implement all the projects submitted, provided that they are all selected **for contracting**.

2.2 Lead Partner and Partners. Eligibility requirements

**2.2.1 Eligibility requirements for the Lead partner and partners**

***I. Each entity partner in the project shall meet the following cumulative requirements:***

1. To be in any of the situations regarding its place of registration listed below:
2. Are legal entities registered and located in Programme area, namely in the Romanian counties of, Botosani, Iași, Vaslui, Galați, or in the Republic of Moldova[[9]](#footnote-10)
3. Are legal entities registered outside the Programme area, but only in conditions set at section 2.2.1.1.
4. Are European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) regardless of their place of establishment, provided that the members thereof involve partners from Romania and Moldova.
5. Are non-profit making organisations,
6. Are directly responsible for the preparation, management and implementation of the project with their Partners, not acting as an intermediary,
7. Be able to submit an annual balance sheet for the previous year, or at least a monthly balance sheet for the current year.
8. Have stable and sufficient sources of finance to ensure the continuity of the organisations throughout the project duration, to play a part in co-financing it and to ensure the needed cash-flow under reimbursement conditions. Moreover, the partners must have the necessary financial resources and mechanisms to cover operation and maintenance cost for operations comprising investment in equipment so as to ensure its financial sustainability.
9. Have no debts to the consolidated state budget or to the local budget in accordance with the national legislation of concerned country of registration(or to the national public budget – for moldovan partners).
10. Have competence in the fields of Specific Objective concerned by the project.
11. Have provable rights (ownership, long term rent, concession, administration, etc.) over each location [land/ building/space] where the equipment is to be installed. The proves of each type of the rights, except for ownership, must be valid until at least five years of the final payment to the beneficiary but not less than 2032. However, also in case of the ownership, the rights over the location where the equipment is to be installed, shall be maintained for the same period of time. In case the respective Partner is not the owner, the written agreement of the owner saying that equipment installment is allowed is needed.
12. Is not subject to a conflict of interests; the conflict of interests represents any circumstances that may affect the evaluation or implementation process in an objective and impartial manner. Such circumstances may result from economic interests, political or national preferences or family connections;
13. Are able to open a dedicated bank account in case the project is selected for financing. Any organization, be it Lead Partner or Partner in a project, must be legally able to transfer/receive funds to/from foreign countries.
14. Have no unpaid debt to the Managing Authority for any project financed under the Romania-Republic of Moldova Joint Operational Programme 2014-2020 at the date of contract signature. If the Managing Authority has established debts (in the Debtors Ledger of the entity hosting the Managing Authority) for the Lead Partner and/or the Partners, the grant contract may be signed only if and after the situation of the debt is tackled.

***II. Each entity partner in the project or person with attributions of representation, decision-making or control over it does not fall into any of the exclusion situations listed in Art. 138 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509). The specific exclusion situations will be checked in the “Project Statement and “Project Partner Statements”– Annexes A and B.***

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

**Failing to submit all the information** required as a condition of participation in the Call for proposals will result in rejection of the application.

**The Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat may request, at any time, additional documentary evidence, clarifications and argumentations regarding the eligibility of applicants or partners.**

The compliance with the criteria set at point I (a) to (g) will be cross-checked during the evaluation process, based on the documents submitted together with the Application form.

The criteria set at points I (h) to (i) and II will be checked based on the “Project Statement” (signed by the Lead partner) and “Project Partner Statements” (issued by each partner except for the lead partner).

The compliance with the criterion listed at point I (j) and (k), as well as the documentary proof for criteria set at point I(h) shall be checked during contracting process for equipment with installation, providing that the project is selected.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

Non-eligibility of any of the project partners (Lead partner or partners) leads to non-eligibility of the entire project, irrespective of the fact that the minimum partner requirements are still met.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

The Lead partner or a partner cannot be changed and replaced with other organisation, and its share of the project cannot be taken over by other project partner during the evaluation, selection process and contracting, as this would mean to change the project proposal after the submission deadline and thus to violate the principle of equal treatment.

***2******.2.1.1 Participation of partners registered outside the Programme area***

This call allows for participation of partners registered outside the Programme area only if the following conditions are met cumulatively:

1. **The project addresses the Specific Objectives available under the current call**
2. The activities to be performed by the partner located outside the programme area are implemented directly or with the support of their offices/ branches **in the Programme area, or for the benefit of the Programme area**.
3. The activities to be performed by the partner located outside the programme area **are necessary for achieving the project’s results**

The contribution of the partner located outside the Programme area shall be described and duly justified in the application form, in order to be explicitly approved by the Monitoring Committee.

* + 1. **Indicative eligible organisations**

An indicative list of the eligible entities is presented below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Nr | Main categories | Examples |
| 1 | Local public authority | administrative territorial units at the level of the county/municipality/ city/ commune/villages |
| 2 | Regional public authority | regional council, etc. |
| 3 | National public authority | ministry, etc.Offices/ branches of public national/regional authorities and other public bodies active on the themes of the priority  |
| 4 | Sectoral agency | local or regional development agency, environmental agency, employment agency, etc. |
| 5 | Interest groups including NGOs | -trade union, foundation, charity, voluntary association, NGOs, -religious organizations, legally established according to the national legislation in force  |
| 6 | Higher education and research organisations | University, faculty, college, research institution, RTD facility, research cluster, etc.  |
| 7 | Education/training centre and school | primary, secondary, public schools and other public educational institutions, public vocational training, etc. |
| 8 | Business support organisation | chamber of commerce, chamber of trade and crafts, ; |
| 9 | EGTC |  |
| 10 | Hospitals and medical centres |  |
| 11 | Other |  |

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

**The profit making entities and SMEs are not eligible under this Call for proposals.**

2.3 Partnerships. Eligibility requirements

**2.3.1 Partnership principles**

In order to ensure the successful implementation of the project and to achieve tangible results, it is very important that the partners involved in the project have the necessary competencies in the field of the Specific Objective chosen, for the development and implementation of the activities and also for ensuring the sustainability of the project on the long run.

Partners shall appoint one organization to act as Lead Partner who will take full responsibility for the submission of the project proposal and later, provided that the project is awarded a grant, will take the responsibility of implementation of the entire project.

When submitting the project, the Lead Partner shall fill in and sign a Project Statement (**Annex A**) acknowledging their responsibilities within the project. Each partner must issue and sign a Project Partner Statement (**Annex B)**

During the evaluation process, the Lead Partner is responsible to communicate with Programme structures on behalf of the partnership and also to ensure that exchange of information with his Partners is done in an efficiently and timely manner.

During the contracting phase (provided that the project will be selected), the project will submit a Partnership Agreement stipulating the specific obligations and the financial responsibilities to be met during project implementation, signed and stamped according to the relevant legal provisions in force, by the Applicant and all his Partners.

A model of the Partnership Agreement is annexed for information to the present Guidelines (**Annex L**). The Partners may decide to include additional or more restrictive provisions, but they must keep the provisions indicated in the model as a minimum.

Obligations of the partners during the project implementation are stipulated in the standard form of Contract, standard form of Partnership Agreement and in the Project Partner Statement. See the corresponding annexes.

***The main obligations of partners***

1. All partners shall actively cooperate for the implementation of the project, they shall ensure joint development, implementation and joint financing. They may also cooperate in staffing of the project;
2. Each beneficiary shall be legally and financially responsible for the activities that is implementing and for the share of financing that it receives;

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

***Partners will also be required to provide in section B.1.1 Partner identity, legal and financial information from the Application Form, the PIC (Participant Identification Code) code which can be obtained by registering the organisation on EC Participant Register (if not obtained already), accessible*** [***h******ere***](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/participant-register)***.***

***The Lead partner’s main obligations***

1. lay down the arrangements with the other partners in the partnership agreement comprising provisions that, inter alia, guarantee the sound financial management of the respective Union funds allocated to the Interreg operation, including the arrangements for recovering amounts unduly paid;
2. assume responsibility for ensuring implementation of the entire Interreg operation;
3. ensure that expenditure presented by all partners has been paid in implementing the Interreg operation and corresponds to the activities agreed between all the partners, and is in accordance with the document provided by the managing authority pursuant to Article 22(6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059.
4. If not otherwise specified in the arrangements laid down pursuant to point (a) the lead partner shall ensure that the other partners receive the total amount of the contribution from the respective Union fund in full and within a timeframe agreed by all partners and following the same procedure applied in respect of the lead partner. No amount shall be deducted or withheld and no specific charge or other charge with equivalent effect shall be levied that would reduce that amount for the other partners. However, the grant contract will include specific provisions for exceptional cases when the transfers cannot be done without jeopardizing the EU funds.
5. Additionally, the Lead Partner bears the responsibility for monitoring and reporting on the level of achievement of the project’s output and result indicators.

**2.3.2 Eligibility requirements for the project partnership**

***Number of partners***

**A maximum of 4 partners (including the Lead Partner) may participate in the project.**

***Location of partners***

**At least one partner in the project is registered in Romania, and at least one partner is registered in Republic of Moldova**.

However, an EGCT may be the sole partner of a project, provided that the members thereof involve partners from both Romania and Republic of Moldova. **The sole partner shall be registered in Member State**.

***Associated organisations***

Other entities may play a supporting role in the project as **associated organisations, without receiving funding from the project.** The **associated organisations are not partners** in the project and they do not have to meet the eligibility criteria and sign the Project Partner Statement and Partnership Agreement.

A **cooperation agreement** may be signed and submitted together with the application form in order to include these organizations in the target for indicator RCO 87.

2.4 Projects and Activities. Eligibility requirements

**2.4.1 Eligible projects**

In order to be considered eligible and selected, a project must address the one of the Priorities and specific objectives described in section 1.3.1, as well as the related intervention fields and indicative activities addressed by the Programme.

A project should demonstrate clear and feasible contribution to the achievement of programme Result indicators and Output indicators, set for the Specific Objective chosen, as outlined in the guidelines for indicators.

**For reference, please see Annex F Guidelines for Indicators for Small Scale Projects..**

The **Programme** document and its annex **Performance Framework** provide a clear list of the Programme output and result indicators per priority and specific objective, with baseline and target values, and also methods for their measurement. As such, in order to receive good scores during evaluation, project contribution to the Programme indicators must be clear, effective, quantifiable and verifiable.

Technical and financial viability gives assurance to the Programme that the selected project has the capacity to be successfully implemented and to continue after the end of EU financing.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

Project contribution to the Programme indicators should be clear, but also feasible, since they are to be measured and checked by management structures according to the grant contract provisions and, provided that the project will not achieve the stated indicators, the **managing authority reserves the right to reduce the grant amount of underperforming projects**. Therefore, is in the best interest of the project to commit to feasible and realistic target values for the indicators showing their contribution to the Programme, and not oversize them.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

During the selection process the programme have to ensure that selected operations are not directly affected by a reasoned opinion by the Commission in respect of an infringement within the scope of Article 258 TFEU that puts at risk the legality and regularity of expenditure or the performance of operations.

**2.4.2 Project’s contribution to the Programme**

The quality criteria that the programme pursuits during the evaluation and selection process ensure that a project is relevant to the programme, it has strong and consistent internal logic, and the main pre-requisites for its successful implementation are already in place.

The coherence of the project intervention logic with the targeted specific objective of the programme is a key factor for a quality project.

When designing a project, the following aspects have to be considered:

- Project specific objective targets one programme Specific Objective addressed by the call;

- Project corresponds to relevant intervention field(s) of the selected specific objective,[[10]](#footnote-11);

- Projects activities and outputs are logically linked to the targeted programme Specific Objective;

- Project clearly contributes to the programme output and result indicator(s).

The project intervention logic has to show how a desired change will be achieved. It should reflect the current situation (e.g. a problem, a need), its causes and the change/improvement which the project seeks to achieve by implementing the planned activities.

An example on how a project intervention logic should be designed is presented below:

**

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

*Contribution to programme priorities and specific objectives and the need of the communities in the programme area are essential criteria for the for project selection.*

In drafting the proposal, the meaning ofthe main terms used for the intervention logic and to describe these in section C in the application form, should be understood as follows:

**Project specific objective -** defines an immediate goal that the project can realistically achieve within the project lifetime through its planned activities and related outputs.

The **project output(s)** is the product that results from the implementation of one or more project activities. All project activities and outputs need to be consistent with and contribute to the project specific objective. All project outputs need to contribute to the programme output indicators.

The **project result(s)** is the immediate effect and change compared to the initial situation in the regions subject to cooperation, which the project intends to achieve through its outputs. All project results are to contribute to the programme result indicators.

A project should have **only one project specific objective**, and there should be **only one single work package** including the activities needed to achieve the set objective. The specific objective is considered achieved when all activities of the work package have been implemented and outputs have been delivered.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

*When defining the outputs,* ***Annex F Guidelines for Indicators*** *should be carefully considered! The document provides explanations that can help partners understand the programme indicators and how to quantify the outputs so that correct data is collected and reported.*

*In order to ensure a sound definition and implementation of the project, the project specific objective should be SMART!*

***S – SPECIFIC*** *– what? who needs project outputs delivered in this work package, and where*

***M – MEASURABLE*** *– can be measured?*

***A – ACHIEVABLE*** *– can it be reached?*

***R – REALISTIC*** *– can it be achieved with the given resources?*

***T – TIME-BOUNDED*** *– can it be achieved within the envisaged project duration?*

**2.4.3 Project duration**

The project duration must be planned as the total number of months needed to fully implement the project, without any specific dates.

The initially planned project duration depends on the complexity of activities envisaged and should be kept within the limits allowed by the Call for proposals, as follows:

**Minimum duration = 12 months**

**Maximum duration = 18 months**

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

The extension of the project duration may be possible during the implementation of the project, under certain conditions provided for by the grant contract.

**2.4.4 Project location**

Projectswill be implemented in the Programme area, as follows:

**In Romania – counties of Botosani, Iasi, Vaslui and Galati**

**In Republic of Moldova – the whole territory**

By means of exception, in duly justified cases, a share of the project may be implemented outside the Programme area, irrespective of the place of registration of the beneficiaries, (in the limited conditions foreseen in the Section 2.2.1.1 of this Guidelines) provided that this is necessary for achieving the project’s results, is for the benefit of the programme area, and is described and justified in the application form and explicitly approved by the Monitoring Commmittee.

**2.4.5 Project activities**

The project will define **one project specific objective**

The project consists of activities grouped into **a single work package** with the aim of achieving project outputs.

**An activity** should be understood as **a group of actions leading to the achievement of the deliverables, project outputs and project results**. In describing the activities, it is important to describe also the role of the partners involved in that specific activity. Each activity can lead to none, one or several deliverables.

**A deliverable** is the physical evidence of what has been produced through an activity or as the physical evidence/support of the output that was produced through an activity.

Outputs are defined based on activities to be carried out and must be reflected in a Programme Output Indicator. Based on the intervention logic of projects and programme, project outputs and activities should contribute to Programme Output and Result Indicators.



The **single work package** will include also the communication activities, which will be embedded and detailed in the corresponding section of the work package, as needed.

Please note than the description of the project management does not represent a separate work package and this information will be provided in section C7 of the Application form.

Detailed information on how to fill in the Work package is provided in **Annex E Guidelines for filling in the Application Form**

**2.4.6 Indicative eligible activities and intervention fields**

**Priority 1 Green communities**

**Specific Objective 1.1 Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches**

The related types of actions to be financed under this specific objective may be the following:

* Endowment with equipment for emergency situations interventions, including space/land setup services where the equipment will be installed. ;
* Joint operational plans/procedures/platforms/trainings/exchange of experience for risk prevention and management;
* Water quality monitoring and hydrological monitoring of rivers, water temperature, precipitation measurements, ice regime, including space/land setup services where the equipment will be installed.
* Afforestation of river banks;
* Erosion prevention and control activities including space/land setup services where the equipment will be installed.;
* Awareness campaigns for the population/stakeholders from the areas under the risk of natural or man-made disasters, in the field of prevention and efficient management of risks.

**Intervention fields**

58 Adaptation to climate change measures and prevention and management of climate related risks: floods and landslides (including awareness raising, civil protection and disaster management systems, ecosystem based approaches);

59 Adaptation to climate change measures and prevention and management of climate related risks: fires (including awareness raising, civil protection and disaster management systems, ecosystem based approaches);

61 Risk prevention and management of non-climate related natural risks (for example earthquakes) and risks linked to human activities (for example technological accidents), including awareness raising, civil protection and disaster management systems, ecosystem based approaches.

64 Water management and water resource conservation (including river basin management, specific climate change adaptation measures, reuse, leakage reduction)

**Priority 3. Cooperation across borders**

**Specific objective *3.1: Enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular, with a view to resolving legal, capacity and other obstacles in the border region (ISO 1)***

The related types of actions to be financed under this specific objective may be the following:

* joint cross border strategies/action plans/trainings/study visits including space setup services where the equipment will be installed if the case may be;
* joint solutions for cross border cooperation (which may include equipment endowment, software including space/land setup services where the equipment will be installed.);
* information and awareness campaigns;
* development and implementation of measures for strengthening of institutional capacities of public authorities, including space/land setup services where the equipment will be installed, if the case may be;
* sharing experiences, joint preparing of guidelines and procedures for improving assessment, prevention, preparedness and response in case of pandemics, emerging infectious diseases or other unforeseen crises;
* developing common policies and strategies for ensuring an effective border mobility;
* investments in equipment for effective border mobility for goods and persons, including space/land setup services where the equipment will be installed;
* joint actions to enhance efficient public administration, cooperation between citizens, civil society and institutions, by investing in state-of-the-art methods, technologies, procedures etc, including space/land setup services where the equipment will be installed, if the case may be.

**Intervention fields**

171 Enhancing cooperation with partners both within and outside the Member State

174 Interreg: border crossing management and mobility and migration management

***Specific objective 3.2: Border crossing management and mobility and migration management (ISO2)***

The related types of actions to be financed under this specific objective may be the following:

• joint cross border strategies/action plans/trainings/exchange of experience;

• joint solutions for cross border cooperation (equipment endowment, including IT&C and security equipment, software, vehicles, for cross border infrastructure), including space/land setup services where the equipment will be installed.;

• information and awareness campaigns.

**Intervention field**

*174 Interreg: border crossing management and mobility and migration management*

**2.4.7 Non-eligible projects. Non-eligible activities.**

The following projects / activities are not eligible under the present Call for proposals**:**

1. projects having an infrastructure(works) component
2. project not addressing at least one intervention field and one of the indicative eligible activities of the Specific Objective chosen
3. projects/any parts of the submitted projects that have already been approved for financing from other sources, including other EC programmes;
4. projects that have already been completed;
5. projects/activities related to the tobacco industry, production of alcoholic distilled beverages (excluding local and traditional products), arms and munitions;
6. projects concerned only, or mainly, with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
7. projects concerned only, or mainly, with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
8. projects concentrated only or mainly on charitable events;
9. projects in which the Applicant or Partner(s) re-grant the funding;
10. projects that have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the Applicant or Partners;
11. projects/activities which fall under the state aid rules;
12. projects consisting of activities linked to or financing political parties

2.5 Costs. Eligibility requirements

Irrespective the sources of funding, either grant (EU contribution) or co-financing, the budget is both a cost estimate and a ceiling for "eligible costs". During the implementation eligible costs must be based on real costs based on supporting documents (except for those costs were flat-rate funding will apply).

Grant award decisions are always subject to the condition that the checking process which precedes the signature of the contracts does not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (for instance arithmetical errors, inaccuracies or unrealistic costs and other ineligible costs, etc.).

The checks may give rise to requests for clarification by the Managing Authority and, moreover, may lead to modifications or reductions of the budget, meant to correct errors or inaccuracies.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

*The ratio (%) of the EU contribution as a result of the corrections made during the contracting process, cannot be increased over the 90% of the project budget.*

As a general principle, expenditure is eligible for funding when fulfilling the applicable national legislation, as well as respecting the specific rules described in the Common Provisions Regulation (EU Regulation 2021/1060) and the Interreg Regulation (EU Regulation 2021/1059).

Eligible costs are actual costs incurred and paid by the project Partners, irrespective they are from EU contribution or own co-financing, which meet all the following criteria:

1. They are incurred during the implementation period of the project, except for the costs related to the final report, which may be incurred after the implementation period of the project. In particular:
2. Costs of services shall relate to project activities performed during the implementation period. Costs of supplies shall relate to delivery and installation of items during the implementation period. Signature of a contract, placing an order or entering into any commitment for expenditure within the implementation period for future delivery of services or supplies after expiry of the implementation period do not meet this requirement. Cash transfers between the Partners may not be considered as costs incurred;
3. Costs incurred should be paid before the submission of the final reports, except for the costs related to the final report, which may be incurred after the implementation period of the project. They may be paid afterwards, provided they are listed in the final report together with the estimated date of payment;
4. If it is not foreseen otherwise in the national legislation of the project Partners, procedures to award contracts, may have been initiated and contracts may be concluded by the project partners before the start of the implementation period of the project, provided that the provisions of chapter 4.2.1 Procurement have been fully respected.;
5. They are included in the indicative overall budget for the project,
6. They are necessary for the implementation of the project and are related to the activities implemented in accordance with the rules of this call for proposals;
7. They are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the project partners and determined according to the accounting standards and the usual cost accounting practices applicable to the respective Partners;
8. They comply with the requirements of applicable national legislation;
9. They are reasonable, justified and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency;
10. They are supported by invoices or documents of equivalent probative value, as well as any other relevant document;
11. They observe the relevant public procurement rules, as per chapter 4.2.1 Procurement.
12. The compliance with the Programme visual identity requirements is ensured;

**2.5.1 Form of grants**

Under the present call, the grant provided shall take the form of the combination of the following two forms:

1. reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary and paid in implementing the project, (real costs)
2. flat rate (simplified costs).

Each form covers different categories of costs, as detailed bellow:

**The simplified cost** (flat rate) will be used for the following budgetary line:

* **Budget line 2**: Office and administrative costs - up to 7% of the direct costs of the project(budget lines 1- Staff costs, 3- Travel and accommodation costs, 4- External expertise and services, 5- Equipment, )

**Real costs** will be used for the following budgetary lines:

* **Budget line 1**: Staff costs
* **Budget line 3**: Travel and accommodation costs
* **Budget line 4**: External expertise and services
* **Budget line 5**: Equipment

**2.5.1.1 Simplified costs (flat rates)**

**Office and administrative costs (budget line 2)**

Office and administrative costs are indirect costs. They shall be calculated as up to 7% of eligible direct costs

Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading.

The Managing Authority may ask to justify the requested percentage before contracting.

**Office and administrative costs shall be limited to the following elements:**

* office rent;
* insurance and taxes related to the buildings where the staff is located and to the equipment of the office (such as fire or theft insurance);
* utilities (such as electricity, heating, water);
* office supplies;
* accounting;
* archives;
* maintenance, cleaning and repairs;
* security;
* IT systems;
* communication (such as telephone, fax, internet, postal services, business cards);
* bank charges for opening and administering the account or accounts where the implementation of an operation requires a separate account to be opened; and
* charges for transnational financial transactions.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

**The flat rates are automatically calculated in the Joint electronic monitoring system (JEMS) per each project partner**.

**2.5.1.2 Real costs**

**Staff costs (budget line 1)**

Staff costs are direct costs. When calculating the necessary allocation in the budget for Staff costs it should be considered that staff costs are gross employment costs of staff employed by the project partners for implementing the project.

Expenditure included under this line is limited to the following:

(a) salary payments related to the activities which the project partner would not carry out if the operation concerned was not undertaken, provided for, in an employment document, either in the form of an employment or work contract or an appointment decision, or by law, and relating to responsibilities specified in the job description of the staff member concerned;

(b) any other costs directly linked to salary payments incurred and paid by the employer, such as employment taxes and social security including pensions as covered by Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council (20), on condition that they are:

- provided for in an employment document or by law;

- in accordance with the legislation referred to in the employment document and with standard practices in the country or the organisation where the individual staff member is actually working, or both; and

- not recoverable by the employer.

Payments to natural persons working for the project partner under a contract other than an employment or work contract may be assimilated to salary payments and such a contract shall be considered to be an employment document.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

If the project partners do not have adequate professionals to carry out certain tasks and/or project activities, external experts may be contracted and budgeted under budget line “External expertise and services”, with the compliance of public procurement legislation.

**Travel and accommodation costs (budget line 3)**

Travel and accommodation costs, regardless whether such costs are incurred and paid inside or outside the programme area shall be limited to the following cost elements:

a) travel costs (e.g. tickets, travel and car insurance, fuel, car mileage, toll and parking fees);

b) the costs of meals;

c) accommodation costs;

d) visa costs;

e) daily allowances.

**Any cost element listed in points (a) to (d) of the above paragraph, covered by a daily allowance shall not be reimbursed in addition to the daily allowance.**

**Travel and accommodation costs of external experts and service providers fall under external expertise and services costs (budget line 4)**

The provisions of the national legislation in force will be taken into account, in each country. In the case of the Republic of Moldova - provisions of Government Decision no. 10/2012 for the approval of the Regulation regarding to the delegation of employees of entities from the Republic of Moldova, are to be considered.

**External expertise and services (Budget line 4)**

The external expertise and service costs should be based on contracts or written agreements concluded with external experts and service providers following a procurement procedure (see section 4.2.1), , and paid based on invoices or equivalent requests for reimbursement. The external experts and service providers are contracted by the partners to carry out certain tasks or activities which are strictly linked to the project and are essential for its effective implementation.

These costs shall be limited to the following services and expertise provided by a public or private law body or a natural person other than the beneficiary/beneficiary’s staff and all partners of the operation:

1. studies, or surveys (e.g. evaluations, strategies, , handbooks, etc);
2. training;
3. translations;
4. development, modifications and updates to IT systems and website related to project;
5. promotion, communication, publicity, promotional items and activities or information linked to the project;
6. financial management;
7. services related to the organisation and implementation of events or meetings (including rent, catering or interpretation);
8. participation in events (such as registration fees);
9. legal consultancy and notarial services, technical and financial expertise, other consultancy and accountancy services dedicated to the project;
10. intellectual property rights;
11. the provision of guarantees by a bank or other financial institution where required by Union or national law;
12. travel and accommodation for external experts, speakers, chairpersons of meetings (other than beneficiary’s staff) and service providers
13. other specific expertise and services needed for projects (these may include the costs for expenditure verification if the case may be);

**The above cost items cannot be claimed and reimbursed under any other budget line.**

**Equipment (Budget line 5)**

Costs under this category refer to equipment purchased (only new)[[11]](#footnote-12), rented or leased specifically for the purpose of the project, including related supplies specifically for the purpose of the project, provided they correspond to market prices.

All costs should be listed in the project budget

The following **exhaustive list** includes the cost items which could be included under this budget line and these should not be included also in Office and administrative cost budgetary line:

1. Office equipment;
2. IT hardware and software;
3. Furniture and fittings;
4. Laboratory equipment;
5. Machines and instruments;
6. Tools or devices;
7. Vehicles;
8. Other specific equipment needed for the project.

**The above cost items cannot be claimed and reimbursed under any other cost category.**

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

With the view to ensure that the project budget is cost-effective, in case of acquisition of vehicles for project management purposes, the programme will consider eligible up to EUR 23,000 VAT included per vehicle (this amount does not include insurance, maintenance or minor repairs );

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

For evaluation purposes, the Lead partner and partners are required to mention in the Project statement/Project partner statement if the costs presented in their own budgets include VAT.

**2.5.2 Ineligible costs**

The following costs shall not be considered eligible:

a) debts and interest on debts;

b) provisions for losses or liabilities;

c) costs declared by the Lead Partner and/or the Partners and financed by another project or programme, or from any other sources;

d) purchase of land or buildings;

e) costs related to fluctuation of foreign exchange;

f) loans to third parties;

g) fines, financial penalties and expenses of litigation and legal disputes;

h) contributions in kind;

i) purchase of used equipment or vehicles;

j) gifts.

K) costs of constructions/reabilitations/ modernizations of infrastructures

2.6 How to apply and procedures to follow

**2.6.1 Publication**

Call for proposals is published on the Programme website: <https://www.ro-md.net>.

Training sessions for the potential Applicants and Partners will be carried out after the launching of the Call for proposals. The calendar of the events shall be published on the website.

Information and updates concerning the Call for proposals will be provided on the Programme website. It is important to check it regularly.

**2.6.2 Deadlines for submission of proposals**

The project proposal must be submitted in electronic format, in JEMS, no later than: [three months of the launching date].

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

The electronic system JEMS does not allow further recordings of applications after this deadline. In order to avoid any inconvenient, we strongly recommend applicants to upload the application/documents few days in advance.

**2.6.3 Filling in the Application form**

Applications can be submitted exclusively via the Joint electronic monitoring system (JEMS), unless otherwise instructed by the Managing Authority. JEMS can be accessed through the programme website.

The offline template of the application form is not an official application form and shall not be submitted to the programme.

When filling in the online Application Form, the Applicants are required:

* + **To use the English language**, to fill in each field, and to follow the given sequence. Please note that some information is taken over from one field to another, thus making the process easier and error-proof.
	+ To formulate **only one specific objective per project.**
	+ To notice that the project budget is an integral part of the Application Form. **Each Partner has his own individual budget**, where all the necessary details must be provided.
	+ To indicate in the Application Form the locations where the purchased equipment will be installed, and or the mobile equipment will be stationed, regardless of the value of the equipment per location.
	+ To use and fully filled in the templates provided as annexes to the present Guidelines for applicants.

All supporting documents required in **section *2.6.4 Supporting documents accompanying the Application Form*** must be uploaded in JEMS.

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

The Applicants must ensure that, **before the deadline (1)** set in section *2.6.2 Deadlines for submission of proposals*, the final version of the Application Form, its annexes and the supporting documents have been checked for correctness and completeness, and then uploaded into the JEMS.

The programme recommends the Applicants to perform these actions with **at least one week before** the actual deadline of the call.

**2.6.4 Supporting documents accompanying the Application Form**

The following documents shall be uploaded in JEMS and shall be provided **by all the Partners** participating to the project, in joint or in separate documents, as required bellow.

1. *Project Statement[[12]](#footnote-13)* from the Lead Partner and *Project* *Partner Statements[[13]](#footnote-14)* from each project partner (**in English**, templates in **Annex A** **and Annex B respectively**), electronically or handwritten **signed by the legal representative of the entity concerned**. When document uploaded bears a handwritten signature, it will also be stamped, if that is required by the relevant legal provisions in force;
2. *Official mandate* for the person signing Annex A Project Statement, Annex C Financial Capacity Self-assessment, Annex D State Aid self-assessment, in case she/he is not the legal representative of the Lead partner/Partner **(in national language)**
3. *Statutes* or other relevant documents **(in national language)** for the Lead partner and each partner. The documents provided must contain at least the following information: headquarters of the organisation, legal representative, empowered body for the approval of the budget of the entity, articles demonstrating that the organization has competences/attributions in the field addressed by the project, appointment/designation/election etc of the legal representative if this information does not appear in the statute provided..
4. *Financial Capacity Self-Assessment (template in Annex C) – pdf electronically/handwritten signed by the legal representatives and Excel file– to be provided by lead partner and each project partner.*
5. *Annual accounts (****in national language****) for the latest financial year for which the accounts have been closed at the moment of submission of the Application must be submitted by the Lead Partner and all project partners. Only documents (the balance sheet and profit and loss account) providing data about revenues, expenditures, profit and losses will be accepted[[14]](#footnote-15). Annual Accounts containing only the Balance Sheet without the Profit and Loss Account or a document providing data about revenues, expenditures, profit and losses for the latest financial year for which the accounts have been closed, will be considered noncompliant. Organisations (any lead partner or project partner) established in 2024 not having the latest annual accounts must submit the Balance sheet for the last closed month. Organizations that do not present at least one closed Balance sheet are not administratively compliant.*

*This obligation does not apply to* ***public authorities*** *(e.g. county councils, local councils, district council, village council, etc).*

1. *Certificates of fiscal registration* *or equivalent (***in national language**)of the Applicant and each project Partner,
2. *State Aid self-assessment* (**one per project**) jointly filled in by the Applicant and each project Partner (template in **Annex D**), electronically or handwritten signed by the legal representatives of each partner. When document uploaded bears handwritten signatures, it will also be stamped, if that is required by the relevant legal provisions in force.

In case of supporting documents uploaded as scans, the text must be legible and the signatures, dates and stamps, must be visible. The originals must be available at any time during the evaluation, contracting, implementation and durability period of the projects.

Declarations signed with the qualified electronic signature are considered originals.

For the projects selected for financing, other documents will be submitted during the contracting phase.

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

**Information as included in the Application Form shall be cross-checked with the information given by the supporting documents accompanying the Application Form.**

**2.6.5 Further information for the Applicants**

Questions may be sent in writing by e-mail **no later than 21 calendar days** before thedeadline of closure of the Call for proposalsto the Joint Secretariat.

The following e-mail address is available:

**Joint Secretariat e**-mail helpdesk@brctiasi.ro Această adresă de e-mail este protejată de spamboţi; aveţi nevoie de activarea JavaScript-ului pentru a o vizualiza

Replies will be given **no later than** **11 calendar days** before thedeadline of closure of the Call for proposals. The Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat, will not provide further clarifications after this date.

Questions that may be relevant to other Applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the programme website: <https://www.ro-md.net>.

It is therefore highly recommended to regularly consult the Programme website in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

**In the interest of equal treatment of all the Applicants, the Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat cannot give prior opinions on the eligibility of the Applicant or its Partners, of the project or of the specific activities.**

# CHAPTER 3 - EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF PROPOSALS

The selection of the projects submitted following the Call for proposals will be realised through a process consisting of several steps and involving the programme structures, national authorities and independent assessors/external experts, as follows:

**Step I. ADMISSIBILITY**

This step will consist of administrative and eligibility checks, performed by Joint Secretariat of the Programme, , national authorities from both countries, State aid experts, external experts.

**Step II. QUALITY ASSESSMENT**

This step of evaluation will consist of strategic and operational assessment of the applications that have passed the Step I. In this stage are involved external assessor

Following the Step II, and after the verification of double-funding the recommendations for approval or rejection of a project shall be submitted to the Monitoring Committee (MC), for the final decision.

Applicants will be notified on the outcomes of evaluation after the MC issues the final decision on projects.

The selection of high value-added projects strongly contributing to the programme objectives and indicators is the key objective of the evaluation process.

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

**All persons involved in the evaluation process have to strictly adhere to the principles of: confidentiality, objectivity, transparency and fair competition,** as well as lack of conflict of interest**.**

**In this respect, during the selection process, all contacts between the Lead partners/ partners and the Programme structures must be transparent and ensure the equal treatment.**

**The evaluation process has a confidential character. The structures and persons involved with an active role or as observers in the evaluation process, are not allowed to disclose any information about the examination, clarification, or evaluation of any project, during and after the evaluation process.**

**Any attempt by a lead partner or a partner to influence the process in any way, whether by making contact with the staff of the Managing Authority, the Joint Secretariat and the Branch Office or with the National Authorities, members of the Monitoring Committee, observers, external assessors, or with other persons who might participate in any capacity in the selection process, or in any other way, will result in the immediate exclusion of its project from further consideration.**

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

**During the entire assessment process, the Coordinator of selection Committee, on behalf of the structures involved in assessment process, may request clarifications to which the Lead partner must answer within the indicated deadline. The Lead partner bears full responsibility for ensuring the technical conditions necessary for receipt of requests for clarifications. In order to timely receive these requests, contact details given at the time of registration in JEMS must be correct and fully operational.**

**3.1 Step I Admissibility**

### 3.1.1 Administrative checks

In order to be administrative compliant, projects have to fulfil the administrative requirements as per Annex H– **Admissibility -** Administrative grid, which will be used by the assessors of each project.

The required annexes listed in Section 2.6.4 - Supporting documents accompanying the application form have to be submitted within the deadline in Jems. , Clarifications may be requested during the administrative checks to the Lead partner, but not more than once per issue. Lead partners shall provide the required clarifications (including those related to their partners) within the given deadline (maximum 5 working days -depending on the complexity of the clarification needed) from the date of written request by the Coordinator of the assessment process).

### 3.1.2 Eligibility

The eligibility check will be carried out in order to check the compliance with the criteria set out in **Annex I Admissibility-Eligibility Grid,** based on the information provided in the Application Form and within the annexes listed in Section 2.6.4 **Supporting documents accompanying the Application Form**, which will be submitted within the deadline in Jems.

The **state aid assessment** shall be made at this stage, according to the same criteria described in **Annex D** State Aid Self Assessment.

The State Aid assessment is aimed at checking the State Aid relevance of a project proposal. This analysis will be performed by external experts, on the basis of information included in the application form, independently of the self assessment provided by partners.

During the assessment of eligibility, clarifications may be requested, but no more than once per issue. Lead partners shall provide the required clarifications within the given deadline (maximum 5 working days -depending on the complexity of the clarification needed) from the date of written request by the Coordinator of the assessment process).

**3.2 Step II Quality assessment**

Project proposals are to be evaluated against the priorities, specific objectives of the call, indicative activities/intervention fields, result indicators and output indicators of the Programme, and grants are to be awarded to projects which maximise the overall effectiveness of the Call for proposals, enabling selection of those which clearly contribute to the achievement of the Programme indicators. The assessment will also consider the relevance and coherence of the project, its contribution to the programme’s objectives, outputs and results, the cooperation character of the proposal, the relevance of the partnership, quality of the work package and budget effectiveness.

Each proposal will be assessed by two external assessors, under the supervision of the Selection Committee and the final decision on the scores awarded will be approved by the Monitoring Committee

During the *Step II Quality assessment* two categories of criteria are analyzed and scored, as follows:

**A. Strategic assessment consists of analysis of:**

* A1. Project relevance
* A2 Cooperation character
* A3 Project intervention logic
* A4 Partnership relevance

**B. Operational assessment** – consist of analysis of:

* B1 Work package
* B2 Budget
* B3 Communication activities

Each criteria will be evaluated and scored according to the **Annex J\_**Quality assessment grid.

In rating the applications the assessors will use a scale of 0 to 4. The scores given by the assessors are then weighted according the importance of each criteria, as indicated in Annex J. The granted scores will be whole numbers.

The eliminatory conditions are set against the marks given by the assessors and not against the weighted marks.

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

**The Strategic assessment is eliminatory, meaning that the project proposal must obtain an overall score of at least 40 points out of 55 points available at this section.**

**Also, a range of sub-criteria are also eliminatory (please see the Annex J Quality assessment grid)**

In case of missing document or missing/unclear information relevant for this assessment stage, clarifications may be requested, but no more than once per issue. Lead partners shall provide the required documents and/or information within the given deadline (maximum 5 working days (depending on the complexity of the clarification needed) from the date of written request by the Secretary-Coordinator of the assessment process).

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

**In case the Lead partner fails to provide the information requested as clarification, the project will be assessed in the absence of the concerned information, and will be scored accordingly (by scoring ”0” the section/subsection of the grid concerning the missing information). The ”0” score given to the eliminatory criteria, will automatically lead to the rejection of the project.**

Following Step II of evaluation*,* a list of applications ranked according to their score will be created.

**Ranking**

The maximum weighted score that a project can get is 100 points.

If several proposals will be awarded the same Final score (weighted) at the end of Step 2, in order to determine the final ranking on the list of provisionally selected projects and on the reserve list, the following supplementary criteria are to be taken into account, in the following sequence:

1. the score awarded at section A 2 Cooperation character
2. the score awarded at section A 3 Project intervention logic
3. the score awarded at section B 2 Budget

The list of **provisionally selected projects** shall be done within each financial envelope available under the call per specific objective.

The projects having a **Final score**(weighted) of **at least 70 points** will be included on a **reserve list.**

The Monitoring Committee will issue a decision concerning the list of the **provisionally selected projects** and **the reserve list**.

Please note that including a project on the reserve list does no guarantee that a contract will be signed in a later stage. Contracting the projects on the reserve list will be subject to a subsequent decision of the Monitoring Committee and availability of funds.

**Avoiding double financing**

In order to avoid double funding, the Programme will perform verifications of the projects recommended for funding.

Provided that double funding is identified, the project will not be selected for financing, or, in case of late identification of double financing, the Monitoring Committee will cancel the award decision of the respective project(s) and revise the list of selected projects, accordingly.

 The MC shall decide whether the respective proposal may be revised by the Lead partner during contracting without calling into question the award decision or the ranking of projects, when only certain activities of the project have been identified as potentially double funded.

Following the decision issued by the Monitoring Committee, all Lead partners will be notified regarding their selection or rejection, respectively.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

**Following the appeal procedure (see section 3.3 below) the ranking may be subject to changes. Consequently, there is a possibility that, at the end of this procedure, one or more Lead partners, on the lower positions to be informed that their project proposal went down on the reserve list.**

**3.3 The appeal procedure (complaints to the outcomes of the evaluation process)**

Lead partners believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during any step of the selection process may file an appeal.

An appeal is considered legitimate if **the Lead partner** can substantiate that the decision of the Monitoring Committee clearly infringes the provisions of the Guidelines for the present Call for proposals.

**In order to be considered, an appeal must**:

1. Be submitted by letter, electronically signed or handwritten signed **by the legal representative of the Lead partner**. In the latter case, it should also be stamped if required by the relevant legal provisions in force. Appeals submitted by partners or by third parties will be rejected.
2. Be written in English language;
3. Indicate the registration number of the project which is the subject of the appeal;
4. Clearly describe the infringement considered as being made by the Monitoring Committee, and make clear references to the corresponding provisions of the Guidelines for the present Call for proposals and to the information provided through the notification announcing the result of the concerned evaluation step;
5. Be submitted via e-mail, to the Joint Secretariat, within **10 calendar days** from the date when the written notification announcing the result of the evaluation has been sent following the decision of the Monitoring Committee, to the adress:

2ndsmall.scale.helpdesk@brctiasi.ro

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

**Appeals that do not observe these requirements will be rejected without further consideration.**

Answer to the Lead partner will be communicated in writing in maximum 60 calendar days from the receipt of the appeal. However, the final decision on the list of selected projects and of the reserve list is taken by the Monitoring Committee of the programme. Consequently, the final decision concerning the appeal may be communicated in the set deadline, subject to the availability of the Monitoring Committee to meet in this period.

The decision of the Monitoring Committee on the appeals received is final, and no other supplementary complaint submitted will be considered.

**3.4 Indicative time table**

| **ACTIONS** | **DATE** | **TIME\*** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1) Launch of the Call for proposals** |   |  |
| **2) Information and training sessions in the programme area**  | According to the schedule published on the Programme web-site |  |
| **3) Deadline for assistance delivery to the potential Applicants** |  |  |
| **4) Deadline for closing the Call for proposals** |  |  |
| **5) MC decision** | to be announced |  |
| **6) Notifications of award/rejection**  | to be announced |  |
| **7) Contract signature** | to be announced |  |

\***Provisional date.** All times are in the time zone of Romania (the country of the Managing Authority).

This timetable may be updated by the Managing Authority during the procedure. In such case, the updated timetable shall be published on internet on the programme website: www.ro-md.net

**CHAPTER 4 - CONTRACTING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS**

**4.1 Preparing the grant contract signature**

Before signing the grant contract, all the selected projects shall undergo a contracting procedure.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

**The grant contract included as in Annex K to these guidelines for applicants is a draft and is only for information purpose. The content of the grant contract may be subject of modification following revisions approved by the Monitoring Committee and/or due to changes of the legal framework in any of the participant countries.**

After being notified about the Monitoring Committee’s decision, the Applicant has to submit to the JS/ MA mainly the following documents:

1. **Partnership Agreement** (**Annex L**). All partnersin a project, including the Lead Partner, must sign a partnership agreement that stipulates the rights and duties of the partners before the signing of the grant contract with the MA. A model of partnership agreement is annexed to the present Guidelines. The partners may decide to stipulate *additional* provisions provided that the respective provisions do not contradict and are fully in line with those mentioned in the model partnership agreement. The partnership agreement wil be electronically signed or handwritten signed by all partners. In the latter case, it must be stamped, if required by the relevant provisions in force, (**in english language).**
2. **Financial Identification Forms** (**Annex M**) for the accounts specially opened for the project in EUR and in the national currency, for the Lead Partner and for all the Partners who are responsible for managing a share of the project budget, **in national language**
3. **Decision of the empowered** **bodies** of the Lead Partner and of all the project Partners, stating the availability of the amount and percentage of co**-**financing to be provided and spent during the implementation period of the project, as well as any ineligible expenditure or any other costs necessary for the project implementation, the temporary availability of funds for their activities until reimbursement, as well as stating the fact that the Applicant/Partner has the necessary financial resources and mechanisms to cover operation and maintenance costs, so as to ensure their financial durability, **in national language.**
4. **Legal entity sheets** for the Lead Partner and all the project Partners, using the template provided in **Annex N**, signed and stamped (if required by the relevant legal provisions in force)/electronically signed by the legal representatives, **in national language**
5. ***Evidence of ownership*** by the Lead Partner and/or Partners or access to the land/space/building where equipment is to be installed, as follows:
* legal acts[[15]](#footnote-16) stating the rights of the respective Partner over each location (building) where the equipment is to be installed, valid at least five years from the final payment to the beneficiary but not less than 2032[[16]](#footnote-17) (ownership, long term rent, concession, administration, etc.) **– in national language**, **AND**
* documents showing registration in the relevant public registers of the rights of the respective Partner over each location (building) where the equipment is to be installed – in **national language**, **AND**
* In case the respective Partner(s) is not the owner, the agreement of the owner of the land/building/space, stating that the equipment may be installed/stationed – in **national language,**
1. **Valid certificates** issued by the competent state authority in each participating country proving that the Lead Partner and its Partners have fulfilled their obligations related to the payment of debt to the consolidated state budget[[17]](#footnote-18)/ national public budget[[18]](#footnote-19) in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established, **in national language**;
2. (for Romanian entities) **Valid certificates** issued by the competent local authority in each participating country proving that the Lead Partner and its Partners have fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of debts to the local budget[[19]](#footnote-20) , in accordance with the legal provisions , in the **national language**;
3. **Beneficiary’s Statement** (template to be provided by the Joint Secretariat), electronically signed or handwritten signed. In the latter case, it must be stamped, if required by the relevant provisions in force.- **in national language**
4. **Declarations on behalf of the Lead partner and Partners regarding the absence of double funding**, electronically signed or handwritten signed by the legal representatives. In the latter case, it must be stamped, if required by the relevant provisions in force, **in national language**
5. **Official mandate** for the person signing the declarations above (mentioned at letter i) in case she/he is not the legal representative of the respective entity.

**TAKE NOTE THAT**

**In order to satisfy itself of the sound management of the contracting process, at any stage the MA/JS may request additional documents from the applicants and on-the-spot/virtual visits shall also take place.**

In order to verify the information and documents provided by the project partners during the evaluation process in what concerns the location(s) where the project will be implemented, in order to prevent possible fraud or contracting errors, the JS will perform pre-contracting visits (on site or virtual) at the selected partners. The purpose of the on-site visits will be, inter alia, to check the documents necessary for the signature of the contract as originals, to check the location where the project is to be implemented, to identify any potential problems which may hinder sound implementation of the selected project, and give feedback to the partners etc. During the on-site visits, the JS may recommend corrective measures.

If the on-site/virtual visits cannot be performed due to reasons imputable to the selected Lead Partners and/or their Partners, the project shall be rejected.

In the case of online pre-contracting site visits, the correctness and conformity of the information and documents presented by the Applicant and the Partner(s) during the virtual pre-contracting visits shall be verified during the first monitoring on-site visit performed by the JS.

During the preparation of the grant contract the JS will carry out checks to ensure the correctness of the project budget (e.g. inaccuracies and technical inconsistencies, removal of all ineligible costs and removal/reduction of costs according to the conclusions and recommendations approved by the Monnitoring Committee, and also any necessary adjustments in order to raise the level of coherence between the outputs, results and activities, while respecting the conditions established in the Guidelines for applicants and the definitions from the Performance Framework Methodology, and to increase the possibility of reporting realistic achievements). Also, any clarifications or minor corrections may be made to the description of the project or to the budget in so far they do not call into question the grant award decision, do not conflict with the equal treatment of all the applicants, relate to matters clearly identified by the Project Selection Committee and/or provided by the present Guidelines, or are absolutely necessary for the sound implementation of the project, under the conditions and in the framework established by the programme documents.

The checks may give rise to the requests for clarifications and may lead the JS/MA to impose modifications or corrections to address such mistakes, inaccuracies or recommendations approved by the Monitoring Committee. If the selected Lead Partners and/or their Partners do not agree/ agree only partially with the above mentioned modifications necessary for the implementation of the project in the framework established by the programme documents, the project shall be rejected.

Also, the MA will check the Debtors Ledger of the entity hosting the Managing Authority to check if the Lead Partner or Partners have no unpaid debt to the Managing Authority for any project financed under the Romania-Republic of Moldova Joint Operational Programme 2014-2020 at the date of contract signature. If the Managing Authority established debts (in the Debtors Ledger of the entity hosting the Managing Authority) for the Lead Partner and/or the Partners, the grant contract may be signed only if and after the situation of the debt is tackled.

Depending on the nature and complexity of the corrections necessary to be performed, the application and the summary of modifications/ corrections may be submitted to the MC for approval.

All partners have the obligation to provide all the necessary documents and be available for the on-the-spot/virtual visits in order for the contracts to be signed. Please take into consideration that failure to provide the requested documents within the set deadlines during the pre-contracting period will lead to the rejection of the project.

Depending on the admissibility of the provided documents and the verifications performed by the JS during the on-site visits, the Managing Authority may decide at any moment during the contracting process, in consultation with the Monitoring Committee, to reject a project. In this case, the MC shall decide the destination of the disbursed funds based on the proposal of the MA (e. g. inter alia, may decide to select and, consequently, the MA may initiate the contracting procedures with the next project from the reserve list).

Following the MC decision to award a grant, a grant contract will be offered (see **Annex K**). The contract annexed to these Guidelines is indicative. The final version of the grant contract shall be available during the contracting phase. By signing the grant contract, the Applicant becomes the project Lead Partner and declares accepting the contractual conditions.

**4.2 Project implementation**

**4.2.1 Public procurement**

If the Lead Partner and the Partners have to conclude procurement contracts with contractors in order to carry out certain project activities, they shall respect the procurement rules set out in art 58 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 (Interreg).

Contracting authorities within the meaning of the Union legislation applicable to procurement procedures located in the Member States, shall apply national laws, regulations and administrative provisions adopted in connection with Union legislation, as laid down in Article 58.1(a) of the Regulation (EU) no 2021/1059 (Interreg).

In all other cases, the public or private Partners shall apply the provisions set out in Articles 58.2 of the Regulation no 2021/1059, which make references to the provisions of *Annex 2 on Public Procurement* of the Financing Agreement signed between the European Commission, Republic of Moldova and Romania (Annex O).

If it is not foreseen otherwise in the national legislation of the Lead Partner and/or of the Partners, procedures to award contracts may be initiated and contracts may be concluded by the Lead Partner and/or the Partners before the start of the implementation period of the project, provided the provisions of this Article have been respected.

**4.2.2 Taxes and VAT**

In accordance with Article 64 (1)(c)(i) of the Regulation (EC) 2021/1060 and of the Financing Agreement signed between the European Commission and participant countries, VAT is considered eligible for projects with a total value bellow 5,000,000 Euro.

Nevertheless, when project partners are entitled, according to their national legislation, to recover VAT, **should not include** in the project budget, and requests the amounts representing the VAT corresponding to the reported/requested eligible expenditure.

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

For evaluation purposes, the Lead Partner and Partners are required to mention in the Project statement/Project partner statement if the costs presented in their own budgets include VAT.

 **TAKE NOTE THAT**

Once the grant contract is signed and before requesting the first pre-financing, the entities from Republic of Moldova will register the project on amp.gov.md portal and will request for tax exemptions according to the provisions of GD no. 246/2010

**4.2.3 Payments to the project**

An advance payment shall be granted, representing 30% of the value of the grant, set in thecontract, following an advance payment request submitted to the MA by the Lead partner.

Further payment requests may be submitted by the Lead partner provided that the amount claimed for reimbursement is not lower than 5,000 euro, but not later than every 4 months of the implementation period. The payment request shall be accompanied by a narrative and financial report and a control report for expenditures declared.

**CHAPTER 5 - ANNEXES**

**5.1 Templates for documents required together with application form**

Annex A Project Statement (to be signed by Lead Partner)(template)

Annex B Project Partner Statement (to be signed by each partner except for the Lead Partner (template)

Annex C Financial Capacity Self Assessment (template)

Annex D State Aid self-assessment (template)

**5.2 Annexes to the Guidelines supporting preparation of proposals**

Annex E Guidelines for filling in the Application Form

Annex F Guidelines for indicators

Annex G Mandatory visibility requirements of project

Annex H Admissibility - administrative grid (for information purpose)

Annex I Admissibility - eligibility grid (for information purpose)

Annex J Quality assessment grid (for information purpose)

**5.3 Other**

Annex K Grant contract (draft) (for information purpose)

Annex L Partnership Agreement (model)

Annex M Financial Identification (template)

Annex N Legal Entity sheet (template)

Annex O *Annex II* *Public Procurement* of the Financing Agreement between European Commission, Republic of Moldova, and Romaniafor the Interreg programme (Interreg VI-A) NEXT Romania-Republic of Moldova

1. *Potential applicants from Transnistrian region, Bender Municipality and Gagauzia are eligible if they are registered with the competent national authorities, possess permissive acts of the Republic of Moldova, comply with the requirements of the national legislation in force and implement projects in accordance with the requirements of the regulatory framework of the Republic of Moldova and the country's cooperation/financing agreements with external partners* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. https://www.ro-md.net/ro/program/legislatie [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32020R0852 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/index\_en [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. See Programme document, section 1.2.3 for additional information; data to be included in section C.2.5 of the Application Form [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. https://keep.eu/ [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. The profit shall be defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiaries, when the request is made for payment of the balance. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. An “**indirect advantage**” (indirect State aid) occurs when funds received by beneficiaries are channelled, during the project implementation or following the finalisation of the project, to identifiable undertakings/groups of undertakings (e.g. if the funds are used by the beneficiary for training of the employees of certain SMEs, a certain “undertaking” is going to benefit by an infrastructure developed by a beneficiary within a project, etc.). Thus, these third parties-“undertakings”- receive an advantage through the project activities that they would not have received under normal market conditions. This implies that they could be recipients of State aid. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Entities from Transnistrian region, Bender Municipality and Gagauzia are eligible provided they are registered with the competent national authorities of Republic of Moldova, possess permisive acts of the Republic of Moldova, comply with the requirements of the national legislation in force, and implement projects in accordance with the requirements of the regulatory framework of the Republic of Moldova and the country's cooperation/financing agreements with external partners,, [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. See also 2.4.6 Indicative eligible activities and intervention fields [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. It is to be noted that the purchase of consumables that do not fall under the definition of office and administrative costs

and that are necessary for the use of laboratory equipment or machines and instruments (points d) and e) is eligible and

should be included under this cost category. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Signed by the legal representative of the Lead Applicant [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Signed by the legal representative of each partner except for the Lead partner [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. The extracts from bank accounts are not equivalent to latest annual account. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. E.g. government decision, law, government ordinance, decision of local authorities, property act, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Exception is made only when the respective Partner is the owner of the land/ building [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Romanian entities [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Moldovan entities [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Romanian entities [↑](#footnote-ref-20)