

Interreg IPA CBC Italy-Albania-Montenegro Targeted Call for Project Proposals

This document is issued by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat of the Interreg IPA CBC Italy-Albania-Montenegro in compliance with the decision of the Joint Monitoring Committee of 23 October 2018.

The call is **open for 60 calendar days** from the day of publication (until 11:59 AM of the 60th day, including day of publication). The official publication at <http://www.regione.puglia.it/bollettino-ufficiale> will be also announced at:

<https://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu/>

<https://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu/programme/open-calls-%26-notices>

<http://punetejashtme.gov.al/> and <http://www.eu.me>

In order to support interested partners to look for potential partners, **partner searches** requested to email js@italy-albania-montenegro.eu, starting from the publication of this document, will be published on the programme web portal, if they include at least a) selected specific objective, b) project idea description (500 characters), c) type of partners and countries searched, d) organisation name, e) contact person email, f) consensus to publish the data for partner searches, in compliance with EU General Data Protection Regulation (please include all items/all letters).

INTRODUCTION

The Interreg IPA CBC Italy-Albania-Montenegro is a trilateral cross border cooperation Programme co-financed by the European Union under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) in the 2014–2020 programming period.

The approved programme, including priority axes, specific objectives, eligible areas, financial allocation and programme strategic goals may be found at <https://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu/programme/official-docs> and further described in details in the Manual (01 Strategy, Factsheet 1.1.) at: <https://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu/tools/programme-manual/strategy>.

1. TARGETED CALL

Definition

This call for project proposals is targeted to specific topics, which have been addressed in the adopted Cooperation Programme, but they have not been tackled, or not sufficiently been tackled, by the first call for standard projects and by the thematic projects. In this sense, this is a strategic and key call for the purpose of achieving the programme objectives.

These topics have been identified through a gap analysis developed by the Joint Secretariat, discussed and adopted at the Joint Monitoring Committee meeting of Podgorica on 17 April 2018.

Accordingly, project proposals, which potentially contribute to fill in these gaps, **will receive additional points** and have more chances to be financed, as specified in the selection criteria below.

Missing topics identified

For each Specific Objective, these are the missing topics for which gaps have been identified:

- **S.O. 1.1. Competitiveness (only small scale projects):**

- Social innovation/inclusion;
- Blue and green economy.

Guidance at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1>

https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/blue_growth_en

- **S.O. 2.1. Tourism:**

- Family tourism;
- Sport/adventure tourism;
- Youngsters tourism.

Guidance at: https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer_en

Indicative examples PANORAMED:

http://www.enpicbmed.eu/sites/default/files/live_your_tour_final_0.pdf

<https://emblematic.interreg-med.eu> / https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer_en

- **S.O. 2.2. Culture:**

- Arts other than visual arts (music, literature, etc.).

Guidance at: https://ec.europa.eu/culture/policy/cultural-creative-industries_en

- **S.O. 3.1 Environment (no resource available)**

- **S.O. 3.2. Energy**

- Common energy planning;
- Adoption of European standards in the RES and RUE sector for public administrations.

Guidance at: <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/energy-efficiency>

Indicative example: <http://www.alter-energy.eu/>

- **S.O. 4.1. Transport:**

- Multimodal connections;
- Custom procedures;
- Connections between the main cross border transport infrastructures and the EU trans-European corridors;
- Improvement of maritime connections;
- Optimization of out of standard loads.

Guidance at: https://ec.europa.eu/transport/home_en

Indicative examples PANORAMED: <http://www.adbmultiplatform.eu/adb/>; Project FREIGHT4ALL
https://ec.europa.eu/transport/home_en

If applicable, projects may identify one or more topics belonging to the same Specific Objective (not across objectives). Only the contribution to the topics of the same specific objective of the project are considered for the additional points.

Capitalisation

Moreover, the project proposals, which plan concrete and precise capitalization actions, as well as build up synergies with existing projects and initiatives may receive additional points. Even more if the projects precisely avoid overlapping especially with existing projects of partners / areas / activities already financed in the first call, of which the partners are aware.

EUSAIR

Additional points are foreseen also for project proposals having objectives and activities, which are explicitly foreseen in the EUSAIR action plan (see <https://www.adriatic-ionian.eu/library/>). In this case the project shall clearly outline how these activities are going to be followed up on within the EUSAIR and with the EUSAIR stakeholders. Together with the existing criteria, up to 8 points may be given in this criterion.

SMALL SCALE PROJECTS

The programme bodies intend to contribute to simplification for beneficiaries, especially small organisations, while using one of the foreseen **simplified cost options (SCOs)**. At the same time the programme intends to test innovative financing options also in compliance with the general simplification principle set in the ERDF and IPA regulations.

Applicants can choose to apply for a targeted “normal project” or for “small scale project”. The same partnership cannot submit the same proposal for both typologies.

Project proposals submitted as “small scale projects” follow the restricted rules defined by the Annex 2 “SMALL SCALE PROJECTS”.

2. PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL ALLOCATION

The overall provisional financial allocation for the 4 priority axes is as follows:

Axis	IPA Contribution (85%)	National Contribution (15%)	Total (100%)
1 Competitiveness	85.000,00	15.000,00	100.000,00
2 Tourism	2.845.854,31	502.209,58	3.348.063,90
3 Environment	4.591.729,43	810.305,19	5.402.034,63
4 Transport	4.022.184,42	709.797,25	4.731.981,67
TOTAL	11.544.768,17	2.037.312,03	13.582.080,19

Please note that for P.A. 3, S.O. 3.1. it is not possible to submit project proposals, as the entire amount of P.A. 3 is allocated to S.O. 3.2. energy efficiency. For P.A. 1, S.O. 1.1. it is possible to submit only small scale project proposals. This allocation includes the Small Scale Project allocation.

The participating countries represented at the Joint Monitoring Committee may decide to change the final financial allocation before publishing the targeted call.

Co-financing

The EU contribution to projects shall be up to 85% of eligible expenditure, while 15% shall be provided according to the national systems. Concerning Italy, the national co-financing is guaranteed to public partners by CIPE Resolution n. 10 of 28 of January 2015. The national co-financing is not provided to eligible private partners, which have to contribute to projects' proposals with their own resources. For Albania and Montenegro, each partner is obliged to provide co-financing at project's level.

Pre-financing

Pre-financing 20% of IPA contribution by signature of subsidy contract offset of pre-financing in equal shares in the three reporting periods. Private lead partners shall be required to provide a financial guarantee for the pre-financing.

According to the reimbursement principle, the partners shall have financial capacity to advance all costs, which shall be reimbursed upon the foreseen verifications on paid expenditures.

For "Small Scale Projects" the rules are specified in the Annex 2.

Open ranking list

The outcome of the project selection shall be an open ranking list, which is going to be valid until all funds of the programme are absorbed. This means, that in case funds become available in a specific objective, e.g. because of project savings or thematic project allocation not fully absorbed, the next project of the list is going to be financed.

Two separate open ranking lists are foreseen: one for "standard" and one for "small scale projects".

De- commitment targets

If a project partner does not reach at least 85% of the spending target for a specific period¹, which was fixed in the approved application form, the Managing Authority may de-commit the difference between target and the certified amount, which will become available for the specific Priority Axis, unless this is not due to partner's failures, of which the partner shall provide evidence.

Eligibility rules

Detailed eligibility rules for the expenditures are specified in the programme manual fact sheet no. 4.10 published at <https://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu/tools/programme-manual/implementation>.

For "Small Scale Projects" the rules are specified in the Annex 2.

Location of the operation

All the project activities have to be located in the Programme eligible area, in compliance with art. 44 of the IPA Implementing Regulation (Commission Implementing Regulation no. (EU) No 447/2014).

3. PROJECT PARTNERS

Eligibility of partners according to location

Lead partners and project partners must be established in the eligible territories of the Countries participating in the Programme. Partners having the registered office outside the Programme area, but the

¹ Reporting periods corresponds with the first and the second semester of the year (1 Jan – 30 Jun , 1 Jul – 31 Dec). If project start date is in the middle of a semester (e.g. 1 Apr) the first period is shorter (e.g. 1 Apr – 30 Jun), the last period is longer (e.g. 1 Jul – 30 Sep) as to reach the number of months set for the project duration.

branch office established in the Programme area, will be eligible for funding, provided that the branch office has full legal capacity².

Eligibility of partners according to legal status

The following types of partners, according to their legal status, are eligible for funding:

- Public bodies;
- Bodies governed by public law³;
- Non-profit organisations, established according to the applicable legal framework/law in the respective country⁴.

Partners shall not fulfill exclusion criteria set in art. 106 and 107 of Regulation (EU) No 966/2012.

Non-profit organizations must be operational for at least 12 months before the launch of the call for proposals.

NGOs or Social Partners (Chambers of commerce, business organisations, etc.) are encouraged to participate.

Partnerships

The minimum eligible partnership must involve at least one partner from each participating Country and Italian Region:

- at least 1 partner from Puglia (Region of the EU Member State);
- at least 1 partner from Molise (Region of the EU Member State);
- at least 1 partner from Albania;
- at least 1 partner from Montenegro.

The **total number of partners must not exceed five (5) including the Lead Partner.**

Projects can also have **associated partners**, taking part to the activities without receiving financing, for a maximum of one per partner.

For “Small Scale Projects” the rules are specified in the Annex 2.

The partnership has to appoint a Lead Partner, who is responsible for the preparation and submission of the application form. In case of approval of the project, the Lead Partner takes over the responsibility for management, communication, implementation, and coordination of activities among the involved partners.

Limitations for specific partners

In compliance with the targeted approach of this call, in order to balance participation of partners over-represented in the first call and thematic projects, as well as to encourage big organisations to strategically plan their participation, a limitation for certain types of partners is set.

² Full legal capacity means also that the branch office has financial and administrative power to undertake commitments, make payments and keep project accounts and audit trail.

³ They are established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest (not having an industrial or commercial character); (b) They are financed, for the most part, by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law; or are subject to management supervision by those authorities or bodies; or have an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law, according to art. 2 (4) of EU Directive 24/2014.

⁴ (a) They are not established with the goal to obtain profit; (b) do not distribute profits to the shareholders, (c) They do not have the organizational structure of an undertaking or a regular presence on the market; (d) They have legal personality. For the purposes of this point (d), for Italian partners grant applications may be eligible if submitted by entities which do not have legal personality under the applicable national law, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the entity and offer guarantees for the protection of the Union's financial interests equivalent to those offered by legal persons according to art. 131 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 966/2012.

Legal entities being universities⁵, research centers / bodies, as well as national ministries or Italian regional authorities⁶ are allowed **to apply as lead partners in maximum one project per specific objective and as partner in maximum two projects per specific objective**, i.e. max. 3 projects per S.O. in total, i.e. max. 12 in total, in addition to Small Scale Projects, which are counted separately. After the call closure, the number of applications per legal body of these typologies shall be counted in chronological order of submission and **all applications submitted after the maximum number of projects is reached per partner, shall be excluded at the eligibility check**.⁷ Coordination of activities of all project proposals submitted within past, current and future calls by the same partner will be carefully assessed.

In compliance with art. 11 (4) of Reg. EU No. 1299/2013, partners shall cooperate in the development and implementation of projects. In addition, they shall cooperate in the staffing or the financing of projects, or in both.

For “Small Scale Projects” the rules are specified in the Annex 2.

4. PROJECT SIZE

The total budget of the projects must respect the following financial thresholds (including EU + national public or private co-financing):

- **Maximum budget** (EU contribution + national co-financing) = EUR 850.000 (except for PA 4, which is EUR 1.200.000)
- **Minimum budget** (EU contribution + national co-financing) = EUR 400.000.

No minimum budget per partner is required. However, projects shall demonstrate a balanced distribution of tasks and budget among partners (see quality criteria B5, B7 and B9), in order to ensure that each partner concretely contributes to achieving the projects goals. As a general principle, a balanced budget per partner is not lower than 10% of the total budget. Lower partner budget should be justified.

These requirements do not apply to Small Projects, for which the Annex 2 is applicable.

5. PROJECT DURATION AND PREPARATION-CLOSURE LUMPSUMS

The project implementation shall not be longer than **18 months**, starting from the project start date, set during the contracting procedure. A prolongation of additional 6 months may be approved by the JMC, if duly justified.

Expenditures incurred to develop the project (project preparation) before the project start date will not be reimbursed, but are covered by a lump sum of 10.000,00 EUR (IPA 85%, co-financing 15%) to the lead partner. According to the same principle, all expenditures incurred to close the project (project closure) after the project end date will be covered by a lump sum of 5.000,00 EUR (IPA 85%, co-financing 15%) to the lead partner.

For “Small Scale Projects” the rules are specified in the Annex 2.

⁵ Albanian faculties, having separate legal personality within the same university, are allowed to apply as Lead Partner to only 1 project and as Project Partner to only 1 project per Specific Objective

⁶ Even though made of several departments or operative branches, the legal entity is considered as a single entity if it is established and operates as one body from the legal and fiscal point of view (e.g. a single VAT / registration number, a single statute, a single balance sheet, etc.). Even though heads of department, faculty, institute etc. might have a power to sign and represent the legal body, it remains one single legal body. Only for the purpose of this limitation, Regione Puglia and Regione Molise are considered as National Ministries in Albania and Montenegro, while local authorities in Albania and Montenegro are not counted as regional authorities.

⁷ In order to avoid that high quality projects are rejected because they are submitted later than poorer quality projects by the same organization, internal coordination is required, e.g. through an office/person.

6. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The project proposals have to be submitted in one step electronic procedure through the Electronic Monitoring System of the Programme (eMS). The address of the eMS will be published on the Programme webportal with the publication of the call.

The project lead partner shall submit it on behalf of the partnership. All the compulsory documents to be filled in for submitting a project proposal are included in the Application Package available at www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu.

The Application Package includes the following documents:

- a) Application Form
- b) LP/PP Statements duly stamped (if stamp is applicable) and signed by all participating partners (standard form provided) and for associated partners a declaration, including state aid assessment⁸;
- c) Statute and/or legal Act which sets up the partner institution/organization involved in the proposal, in which its legal representation is specified. Statute and/or legal act can be submitted also in the national language. A translation into English is preferable.
- d) For private partners, the balance sheets of the last two accounting years, or of the last accounting year in case of organization established only in the last 12 months, issued according to national legislation.

The Application Form and LP/PP Statement must be filled in English in all their parts and the Lead Partners and partners must not modify the templates provided by the Programme. The Lead Partner is responsible for submitting the project proposal.

It means that the Lead Partner has to collect the required documents from all involved partners and submit the project proposal according to the application procedures. Before the submission of the Application Form, the Lead Partner needs to register in the eMS. The Lead Partner must fill in and submit the Project Application Form ONLY online at the electronic Monitoring system (eMS).

7. APPLICATION FORM

The Application Form is structured according to the following chapters:

- Project summary;
- Partnership;
- Project description;
- Work plan, structured according to work packages;
- Project budget overview;
- Partners' budget;
- Attachments.

⁸ The presence of State Aid can be confirmed only if all the following 5 cumulative criteria are fulfilled 1) The measure must confer a benefit or advantage on the recipient which it would not otherwise have received (which is always the case for any Interreg Programme); 2) It must be granted by a EU Member State or through State resources (which is always the case for any Interreg Programme); 3) It must selectively favour certain undertakings or the production of certain goods; 4) It must distort or threaten to distort competition; 5) It must affect trade between EU Member States. All project activities have to comply with Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014, Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid.

The submitted project proposal needs to demonstrate:

- What it wants to change and why;
- What it needs to deliver to obtain the change;
- How it will do it and what resources it needs for it.

The submitted project proposal must show a direct link to the Programme intervention logic and its contribution to the Programme objectives achievement. The project main overall objective contributes to the Programme priority specific objective; the project overall objective describes the general, strategic and long term change the project intends to support for the benefit of the identified target group(s). The project specific objective describes the specific and immediate effects of the project that can be realistically achieved within the project life-time; the project result contributes to the Programme result, even if project results will not be directly aggregated on Programme level, as Programme result indicators measure changes in the whole Programme area.

The project outputs contribute to the achievement of Programme outputs so they can be aggregated at Programme level.

Project activities within the frame of the Programme shall be organised around work packages, i.e. a group of related project activities necessary to produce project deliverables and outputs. Each work package, structured in activities, shall provide information on the partners involved, the description of the related deliverables and expected outputs, and the related budget.

The partnership can structure its project proposal according to a maximum number of work packages, keeping in mind that FOUR of them are compulsory:

- 1) Project Management, describing how management on strategic and operational level will be carried out in the project. This work package includes also costs related to external controller, if any, which are appointed according to the Italian decentralized control system⁹;
- 2) Communication, including the strategic planning of communication activities and a clear indication of the target group(s) to address. A web space will be made available in the Programme webportal to all selected projects, to be used as project webportal. A logo will also be provided to all selected projects. In the implementation manual more guidance will be given;
- 3) Project implementation – which can consist of further work packages, which describe what the partnership intends to implement to reach the foreseen goals. Each project proposal shall contribute to the realization of at least 1 Programme output as set in the cooperation Programme; project partners have to explain how project outputs feed Programme output indicators.
- 4) Pilot action. Each project proposal has to include **at least one innovative and concrete pilot action**, which shall provide for **wide visibility and concrete results** in the territories. In the WP description, the project partners have to precisely describe what are the innovative aspects of this action, e.g. in terms of innovative products / outputs resulting from the activities, as well as in terms of innovative processes to reach specific goals. It shall include a brief analysis of the state of play in the concerned topic (i.e. the baseline), in order to stress the elements, making the action particularly innovative (i.e. the innovative added value).
- 5) Non-compulsory work packages: preparation for the Lead Partner only (covering all costs before the project duration on a lump sum basis). Additional implementation work packages are also non-compulsory.

For “Small Scale Projects” the rules are specified in the Annex 2.

⁹ The remuneration fee for external controllers shall be in proportion to the complexity of the operation, its value and duration, It shall be adequate and consistent to the budget of the project. In any case, the choice between the minimum and maximum fee should be left to the free market.

8. SELECTION PROCEDURE

Following the submission of the project proposals, each of them will be subject to a formal assessment on:

- Eligibility;
- Quality check of technical nature.

The project proposals are also subject to a policy check by the Joint Steering Committee.

9. ELIGIBILITY CHECK

The project proposals are checked against following technical criteria:

- Submission in time
- Submission through the eMS
- Obligatory annexes correct and submitted
- Supporting documents duly filled, signed and stamped (if stamp is applicable)
- Geographical location of activities and partners
- Eligibility of Lead Partner
- Eligibility of Project Partners
- Requirements regarding the minimum and maximum number of partners, including maximum numbers of applications for universities, research bodies, ministries and Italian regional authorities.
- Maximum co-financing rate respected
- Minimum and maximum amounts per project respected
- “Non-profit organizations” Partners registered at least in the last 12 month
- The project includes at least four work packages (Project management, Implementation, Communication, Pilot action)

The formal assessment will be performed by the Joint Secretariat with the support of the respective National Authorities and National Info Points, under the supervision of the Managing Authority as responsible for the procedure. Only the project proposals that fulfill the admissibility and eligibility criteria are admitted to the further quality assessment, while the not eligible ones are rejected by the decision of the JMC.

For “Small Scale Projects” the rules are specified in the Annex 2.

Partners may be requested to provide minor integrations or to correct minor clerical errors in the documents, upon approval by the Managing Authority and within a fixed deadline. Besides these cases, following errors lead to an automatic rejection, without possibility to amend or correct these:

- 1) Delayed submission or submission not through the eMS;
- 2) Missing statements, or not duly signed and stamped (if stamp is applicable), i.e. no or insufficient evidence of the willingness of the legal representative of the partner’s organisation;
- 3) Incorrect statements submitted, e.g. substantially changed statements;
- 4) One or more key documents are missing, e.g. accompanying act attesting the legal power of the signatory or lack of evidence on the capacity of partners;
- 5) Maximum and minimum budget amounts for project proposal are exceeded;

- 6) Partners not having autonomous legal seat in the eligible area;
- 7) The signatory has not the legal power to represent the partner's organisation;
- 8) Number of applications exceeds the rule on maximum number of applications;
- 9) Missing one or more compulsory work packages (Project management, Implementation, Communication, Pilot action).

10. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The project proposals are checked against following set of quality criteria approved by the JMC. For "Small Scale Projects" the rules are specified in the Annex 2.

STRATEGIC CRITERIA	Max Pts.
A.1. The project involves relevant Project Partners from all participating countries and they prove the necessary experience and competence in the field concerned.	5
A.2. The coherence between the objectives of the project and the composition of the partnership is assured.	3
A.3. The project addresses common territorial challenges, joint assets and opportunities in the programme area - there is a real need for the project and it is in line with National and/or regional Strategies of the participating countries.	5
A.4. The importance of the cross- border approach to the topic addressed is clearly described; the project results and outputs cannot (or only to some extent) be achieved without cooperation.	3
A.5. There is a clear benefit from cooperating for the Project Partners, the target groups and/or for the programme area.	5
A.6. The project overall objective clearly links to a Programme priority objective.	5
A.7. The project results clearly link to at least one programme result indicator.	5
A.8. Results and main outputs are specified (concretely defined and measurable) and realistic (it is possible to achieve them with given resources). Results and main outputs are in accordance with the selected target group's needs.	5
A.9. The project clearly contributes to the EUSAIR macroregional Strategy	5
A.10. The project makes use of available knowledge and builds on existing results and practices.	3
OPERATIONAL CRITERIA	Max Pts.
B.1. The Lead Partner demonstrates competency in managing EU funded projects or other international projects or can ensure adequate measures for management support.	5
B.2. Project partners demonstrate that they efficiently coordinate activities with all other projects submitted by the same legal entities and that these activities are not redundant or overlapping	3
B.3. The communication approach/tactics chosen are appropriate to reach communication objectives. Communication activities and deliverables are appropriate to reach the relevant target groups and stakeholder* not applicable to Small Scale Projects	5

B.4. Coherence of project activities with indicative types of actions and outputs, as per relevant Priority axes. Proposed activities are relevant and lead to the planned main outputs and results	3
B.5. All partners play a defined and active role in the project partnership with clear responsibility (e.g. sharing of tasks is clear, logical, in line with partners' role in the projects and cross-border Cooperation character), and risks and mitigation measures are well described	5
B.6. Time plan is realistic (activities, deliverables and outputs are in a logical time sequence)	3
B.7. All activities demonstrate a clear benefit of the cross-border programme area and for each participating partner (such as e.g. through activities taking place in each territory)	3
B.8. The project is mature, allowing its smooth realization (i.e. stage of completion of the administrative procedures, etc.)	3
B.9. The overall budget is clear and realistic and reflects real partners' involvement (it is balanced). To what extent does the project budget demonstrate value for money?	5
B.10. Financial allocation per expenditure category is in line with the work plan of activities. To what extent is the budget coherent and proportionate? * not applicable to Small Scale Projects	5
B.11. To what extent is the budget of the proposed activities well-justified and explained?	3
SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA	Max Pts.
C.1. How will the project outputs be further used and how the sustainability will be ensured once the project has been finalised? If applicable, how the project envisages durability of relevant project outputs?	5
C.2. Project main outputs are applicable and replicable also outside of the current partnership (transferability) – if not, it is justified	5
C.3. The project makes a positive contribution to sustainable development. The project makes a positive contribution to equal opportunities and non- discrimination. The project contributes to equality between man and woman.	3
	Max Pts.
STRATEGIC CRITERIA	44
OPERATIONAL CRITERIA	43
SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA	13
Total	100
ADDITIONAL TARGETED CRITERIA	Max Pts.
D.1. The project objective and expected result directly address one of the missing topics for the specific objective, identified in the Call. Relevant activities and outputs are in place to achieve these objectives.	5
D.2. The project activities include relevant capitalization actions, aimed at building up synergies and avoid overlapping with other projects and initiatives, which are precisely identified. The project has specified the measures to be adopted to avoid overlapping with existing projects and initiatives in terms of content/location of interventions.	5

D.3. The project objective and activities are explicitly foreseen in the EUSAIR action plan, the project clearly outlines how these activities are going to be followed up on within the EUSAIR.	3
TOTAL MAXIMUM ADDITIONAL POINTS	13
E.1. JOINT STEERING COMMITTEE CRITERIA: Globally, the project complies with national and regional policies, its actions and outputs precisely address concrete needs of the territories, and it involves a suitable partnership, capable to reach the expected impacts.	20
TOTAL MAXIMUM ADDITIONAL POINTS BY THE JOINT STEERING COMMITTEE	20
TOTAL	133

Scoring system:

	SCALE 0,1 TO 5,0	SCALE 0,1 TO 3,0
4,1 to 5,0 =	The application fulfils the given criterion to an excellent level and the provided information is sufficient, clear and coherent for assessing the criterion.	
3,1 to 4,0 =	The application fulfils the given criterion to a very good level, however, some aspects of the given criterion lack certain clarity or coherence.	
2,1 to 3,0 =	The application fulfils the given criterion to a sufficient level, however, some aspects of the given criterion have not been met fully or not explained in full clarity or detail.	The application fulfils the given criterion to an excellent level and the provided information is sufficient, clear and coherent for assessing the criterion.
1,1 to 2,0 =	The application has serious shortcomings in fulfilling the given criterion and/or the provided information is of low quality.	The application fulfils the given criterion to a sufficient level, however, some aspects of the given criterion have not been met fully or not explained in full clarity or detail.
0,1 to 1,0 =	The application does not fulfil the given criterion.	The application does not fulfil the given criterion.

If the information required is completely missing the score is 0 (zero).

The points are scored by the assessors with one decimal number.

The JS will carry out the quality assessment of the project proposals and it will rely on the assistance of the NAs/NIPS of the participating countries and/or on a group of external evaluators carrying out a technical evaluation, where needed.

In addition, as specified in Article 39 of Regulation EU 447/2014, the JMC shall set up a Joint Steering Committee (JSC) for the selection of operations. Starting from the quality assessment by the JS, the JSC shall make a policy assessment, based on following qualitative policy criteria: "Globally, the project complies with national and regional policies, its actions and outputs precisely address concrete needs of the territories, and it involves a suitable partnership, capable to reach the expected impacts". The JSC may decide to award project proposals fulfilling this policy criteria most with an additional score of maximum 20 points (from 0 = quality assessment confirmed to 20 = the project proposal fulfils the policy criteria to an excellent level).

The JMC is responsible for the final decision, on the basis of outcomes of the quality assessment. Based on the outcomes of the quality assessment, after the funding decision a negotiation phase will be opened, where the JS/MA will require the LP to optimize project planning, activities and budgets.

11. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

More information about the content of the CP, the specific conditions for the submission of the project proposals, the assessment and selection procedure, the application package as well as other relevant information are available at www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu, <http://punetejashtme.gov.al/> and www.eu.me.

12. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROCEDURE

According to the Interreg IPA CBC Italy-Albania-Montenegro Programme, responsibility for the administrative procedures of this Call for proposals lays on Puglia Region, in the person of the Director of the Managing Authority Office.

13. ENCLOSURES

- Annex 1: Small Scale Projects
- Annex 2: Obligatory templates for partner statements (downloadable at <https://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu/programme/open-calls-%26-notices>)

ANNEX 1 to the Targeted Call for project proposals

Small Scale Projects

The programme bodies intends to contribute to simplification for beneficiaries, especially the small organisations, while using one of the foreseen **simplified cost options** (SCOs). At the same time the Programme intends to test innovative financing options, also in compliance with the proposals for regulations 2021-2027 newly issued by the European Commission (see ETC Regulation, Small Project Fund).

Project proposals may be submitted as “**Small Scale Projects**” defined by the following restricted rules.

Where not specified, the general rules of the call are valid.

1. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION FOR SMALL SCALE PROJECTS

The overall financial allocation for the 4 priority axes, as Small Scale Projects is as follows:

Axis	IPA Contribution (85%)	National Contribution (15%)	Total (100%)
1 Competitiveness	85.000,00	15.000,00	100.000,00
2 Tourism	295.517,90	52.150,22	347.668,12
3 Environment	476.812,27	84.143,34	560.955,61
4 Transport	417.669,83	73.706,44	491.376,27
TOTAL	1.275.000,00	225.000,00	1.500.000,00

Please note that for P.A. 3, S.O. 3.1. it is not possible to submit project proposals, as the entire amount of P.A. 3 is allocated to S.O. 3.2. energy efficiency.

Pre-financing and payments

Pre-financing 30% of IPA contribution by signature of subsidy contract. **Offset of pre-financing with the final payment.** Private lead partners shall be required to provide a financial guarantee for the pre-financing.

According to the reimbursement principle, the partners shall have financial capacity to advance all costs, which shall be reimbursed upon the foreseen verifications.

For Small Scale Projects, an interim payment shall be released after the achievement of the first of two fixed milestones:

1) The first milestone is achieved upon the complete delivery of the first output or outputs planned, being workshops/seminars/conferences or Incoming missions & B2B meetings, completed at the end of a reporting period. The interim payment should be equal to the lump sum amounts corresponding to the delivered outputs;

2) the final payment will be released after the achievement of the second and final milestone, which is the complete delivery of all planned outputs.

The output delivery is considered completed after the follow-up of the concerned meetings is concluded, including the provision of sufficient documentation related to the achievement of the meeting expected results. If the output delivery is not completed, because the meeting expected results have not been achieved, the related part of the interim or final payment may not be released. If there is a clear evidence that meeting results are achieved only partially, the Managing Authority reserves the right to proportionally reduce the amount, upon consultation of the concerned partner.

Open ranking list

The outcome of the project selection shall be an open “**Small Scale Projects**” ranking list, which is going to be valid until all funds of the programme are absorbed. This means, that in case funds become available in a specific objective, e.g. because of project savings or thematic project allocation not fully absorbed, the next project of the list is going to be financed.

Eligibility rules

The dedicated **Small Scale Projects** grants shall exclusively take the form of reimbursement of eligible costs declared by beneficiaries on the basis of **a lump sum**.

Several lump sums could be combined to cover different activities, and to contribute to the total amount of the project.

In compliance with art. 67 (4) of CPR Reg. (EU) No. 1303/2013 small scale projects implemented **exclusively** through public procurement are not admitted¹⁰.

Other than the documentation to prove the reality and existence of the output, no supporting administrative documents have to be provided for the real costs during the reporting. Therefore, emphasis is put on the output, to prove that activity took place in the planned way. Once the activity has taken place it will be reported. If the output for the activity is reached completely, the project will be reimbursed with the full amount that was budgeted.

The **Small Scale Projects** grants can use lump sum for three typologies of actions as follow:

1. Preparation cost
2. Workshop, seminars and conferences
3. Incoming missions & B2B meetings

1. Preparation Cost

According to Article 2(1) of Regulation 481/2014, eligible expenditures shall relate to the costs of initiating or initiating and implementing an operation or part of an operation. Approved Projects are entitled to receive reimbursement of their preparatory costs (as considered as initiating costs of an operation) in the form of a lump sum in the total amount of **EUR 5.000€** (including IPA contribution and national co-financing).

Preparatory costs lump sum may cover costs of:

- meetings between potential partners;

¹⁰ To the application form applicants are required to attach an indicative procurement plan and an indicative list of internal staff of each beneficiary, who is going to be involved in the development and implementation of the project. The evidence that beneficiary's staff contributed to the delivery of outputs is going to be verified (e.g. in the signature lists of at least one event and during the on-the-spot verification by the JS).

- related staff costs;
- travel costs;
- external expert costs for preparation of the documentation;
- studies;
- translation of documents;
- consultations;
- and any other cost related to the preparation of the operation activities carried out before signing the Subsidy Contract/Partnership Agreement.

Only one lump sum of this type of activity can be allocated per project. The lump sum will be included in the Application Form within the budget of the Lead Partner, in order to be reimbursed to the Lead Partner.

Management verifications

The objective of management verifications in case of the project preparation lump sum is to verify that project preparation occurred in reality, i.e. that it existed.

The proof that the project was prepared is the submission of the application form and its compulsory attachments, filled in in all its parts, as required. To produce this concrete output, the project partners must have carried out a number of preparation activities.

The verification of the Application Form occurs:

- At eligibility check, which requires that 2 assessors at the JS and the National Info Points in Albania and Montenegro check completeness of the application, among other aspects;
- At quality assessment, which requires that 2 assessors at the JS and the National Info Points in Albania and Montenegro assess the content and quality of it;
- During the contracting phase and before the project start date, where an active cooperation of the Lead Partner staff with the JS and Managing Authority takes place, e.g. to collect signatures, add the information required in the eMS, to fulfil any condition set, etc.;
- At reporting, which requires that the persons of the JS and of the Managing Authority in charge confirm the existence of the application form.

Instead of the National Controllers, the Managing Authority, supported by the JS and the National Info Points, is performing and confirming the verification of reality and existence.

2. Workshop, seminars and conferences

The eligible costs are linked to the organisation of events, meetings, seminars, conferences, debates, in particular costs relating to organisation, renting rooms, interpretation, travel, subsistence and accommodation, experts, etc..

The types of costs covered by the lump sum “Workshop, seminars and Conferences” are:

- executive planning of the event (staff cost + external expertise)
- logistical assistance
- fee for speakers, including travel and accommodation
- rental services and setting up locations

- kit-event realization
- hostess service
- interpreter service
- catering service
- operational secretary, including travel and accommodation
- preparation and implementation of the promotion campaign for the event
- event follow-up (reporting, evaluation, press releases, etc.)

Projects are entitled to receive reimbursement in the form of a lump sum in the total amount **set in the table below, relating to at least 1 day and at least 40 participants per event.**

During the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the meetings the partners shall prove that sufficient quality standards are ensured (e.g. involving qualified experts, facilitators, ensuring sufficient services for participants, outcomes of the meeting duly documented, participants satisfaction questionnaire, etc.), which allows for achieving the project goals, outputs and results. This means that the Joint Secretariat shall be in the position to verify with project reports that the outputs and results are achieved in the expected quality in a reasonable way. In particular, an assessment by participants (through questionnaires e.g.), or external experts, or equivalent, is required.

Management verifications

The objective of management verifications in case of the workshop, seminar and conference lump sum is to verify that these events occurred in reality, i.e. that they existed.

The proof that the events took place, as output of a number of activities performed by the beneficiaries, is verified:

- during the implementation phase, i.e. the JS and National Info Points staff are invited to participate in all events planned with at least one-month notice. At least at one event per project, and without prior notice, a member of the JS and National Info Points shall on-the-spot verify the existence of the event and fill in a report to be uploaded with the concerned project report;
- at reporting, i.e. the persons in charge at the JS and at the Managing Authority shall verify the event documentation and request additional proof, if needed.

Event documentation shall be produced and uploaded with the project report and include at least:

- Documents produced during the preparation of the event: Agenda, invitation, participant lists, event poster, news, publications, studies, etc.. A sufficient evidence shall be provided in order to prove to a reasonable extent that the events was well prepared and communicated beforehand.
- Documents produced during the event: Signature lists, photo and video materials, social media and media coverage, etc.. A sufficient evidence shall be provided in order to prove to a reasonable extent that the events took place.
- Documents produced after the event: Minutes, Summary, Conference proceedings, meeting evaluation forms filled in, signed memorandum of understanding, etc. A sufficient evidence shall be provided in order to prove to a reasonable extent that the events was followed-up on.

Instead of the National Controllers, the Managing Authority, supported by the JS and the National Info Points, is performing and confirming the verification of reality and existence.

3. Incoming missions & B2B meetings

The types of costs to be covered by the lump sum “Incoming mission & B2B meetings” are:

- incoming activities, including travel and accommodation
- logistical assistance for operators of economic activities
- rental services and setting up locations
- hostess service
- interpreter service
- catering service
- operational secretary, including travel and accommodation
- preparation and implementation of the promotion campaign for the event
- event follow-up (reporting, evaluation, press releases, etc.)

Projects are entitled to receive reimbursement in the form of a lump sum in the total amount **set in the table below, for at least 1 meeting with 10 economic operators.**

During the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the incoming missions and B2B the partners shall prove that sufficient quality standards are ensured (e.g. involving qualified experts, ensuring sufficient services for participants, outcomes of the meeting duly documented, participants satisfaction questionnaire, etc.), which allows for achieving the project goals, outputs and results. This means that the Joint Secretariat shall be in the position to verify with project reports that the outputs and results are achieved in the expected quality in a reasonable way. In particular, an assessment by participants (through questionnaires, e.g.), or external experts, or equivalent, is required.

Management verifications

The objective of management verifications in case of the incoming missions & B2B meetings lump sum is to verify that these events occurred in reality, i.e. that they existed.

The proof that the events took place, as output of a number of activities performed by the beneficiaries, is verified exactly like for the workshop, seminar and conference lump sum.

Instead of the National Controllers, the Managing Authority, supported by the JS and the National Info Points, is performing and confirming the verification of reality and existence.

Applicable lump sum amounts

In order to take into account the different costs of living in the three countries, adjustments are necessary through the application of a country correction coefficients.

Using country correction coefficients, the Lump Sums of Workshop, seminars and conferences and Incoming missions & B2B meetings, become respectively¹¹:

¹¹ Please note that these amounts might have minor, but non-substantial re-adjustment, as a consequence of the audit opinion.

	Italy Total (IPA contribution + National co-financing)	Albania Total (IPA contribution + National co-financing)	Montenegro Total (IPA contribution + National co-financing)
Workshop, seminars and conferences (amount for single event)	EUR 17.000	EUR 12.000	EUR 11.000
Incoming missions & B2B meetings (amount for single event)	EUR 21.000	EUR 15.000	EUR 13.000

Costs declared as a lump sum shall be eligible if they correspond to the lump sum set out in the estimated budget for the activity and if the corresponding tasks or parts of the action have been properly implemented in accordance with Application Form.

Each lump sum should be named with a unique, identifiable name; the same name should be used in the project budget.

Detailed information should be given on the content and costs foreseen for the lump sum, per work package and beneficiary.

Through the project report each beneficiary certifies that:

- the information provided is full, reliable and true;
- the work packages have been completed and that the action in general has been properly implemented;
- the proper implementation can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documentation that will be produced upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations.

2. PROJECT PARTNERS

The **total number of partners must not exceed three (3) including the Lead Partner**¹².

Projects can also have **associated partners**, taking part to the activities without receiving financing, for a maximum of one per partner.

The partnership has to appoint a Lead Partner, who is responsible for the preparation and submission of the application form.

NGOs and social partners are strongly encouraged to participate.

Limitations for specific partners

Legal entities being universities, research centers / bodies, as well as national ministries or Italian regional authorities¹³, in "Small Scale Projects", in addition to the other ones, are allowed **to apply as lead partners**

¹² The partnership composition is regulated in article 39 of the IPA IR (EU) No 447/2014, as well as article 12 of ETC Reg. (EU) No. 1299/2013.

¹³ Even though made of several departments or operative branches, the legal entity is considered as a single entity if it is established and operates as one body from the legal and fiscal point of view (e.g. a single VAT / registration number, a single statute, a single balance sheet, etc.). Even though heads of department, faculty, institute etc. might have a power to sign and represent the legal body, it remains one single legal body.

in maximum one small scale project and as partner in maximum one small scale project per specific objective, i.e. max. 2 projects per S.O. in total, i.e. max. 10 in total. Big organisations -such as Regions, Universities and Ministries- are strongly recommended to use these additional two months to carefully plan and coordinate the project proposals they would like to participate in, in order to avoid that high quality projects are rejected because they are submitted later than poorer quality projects by the same organisation. A possible solution could be to rely on an internal coordination office/person.

After the call closure, the number of applications per legal body of these typologies shall be counted in chronological order of submission and **all applications submitted after the maximum number of projects is reached per partner shall be excluded at the eligibility check.**

3. PROJECT SIZE

A maximum total budget of **EUR 100.000,00** is allowed per project (including EU + national public or private co-financing).

No minimum budget per partner is required, but each partner shall be in charge of at least one of the outputs, for which a lump sum is foreseen.

4. PROJECT DURATION

The project implementation shall not be longer than **12 months**, starting from the project start date, set during the contracting procedure. A prolongation of additional 6 months may be approved by the JMC, if duly justified.

5. APPLICATION FORM

The Application Form is structured according to the following Work Packages:

1. Preparation
2. Implementation

which are compulsory.

Planned sources of verification of the output shall be given by the applicant, i.e. the Lead Partner has to clearly set out what evidence may prove the existence of the set output. For example, if “meeting with a set number of participants” is the output defined, documental evidence may be proposed by the applicant, such as the meeting agenda, minutes, meeting participants and registrants list, photographic material, video material, external feedback, which is in any case required, e.g through analysis of the evaluation forms by participants. The applicant shall provide for its own outputs a proposal for verification sources, which shall be part of the subsidy contract and shall be verified by the JS/MA, at reporting.

6. SELECTION PROCEDURE

The proposals will be evaluated according to the standard evaluation procedures with the help of outside experts, if needed. The assessors will assess the quality of the proposals in terms of innovation, expected impact and quality and efficiency of the implementation. The assessors will also check the budget estimate

Only for the purpose of this limitation, Regione Puglia and Regione Molise are considered as National Ministries in Albania and Montenegro, while local authorities in Albania and Montenegro are not counted as regional authorities.

and look whether the value of the activities and expected outputs corresponds to the estimated budget and if the resources proposed and the split of lump sum shares allows achieving these activities and expected outputs.

Lump sums operate on a binary approach, and there are no other choices than paying 0% or 100% of the single lump sum. Special attention should be paid that the conditions (e.g., how the reimbursement of costs can be affected if the conditions have not been fulfilled) are clearly defined in the subsidy contract. If only one input/output to be financed via a lump sum is indicated and that input/output is not delivered, no reimbursement is due.

The estimated lump sum shares indicated cannot be adjusted by transfers of amounts between beneficiaries.

Transfers between work packages are however possible only if:

- the work packages are not already completed (and declared in a financial statement);
- the transfers are justified by the technical and scientific implementation of the action
- a review confirms that the amendment does not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants.

7. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The project proposals are checked against the standard set of quality criteria approved by the JMC.

The criteria B.3. and B.10. are not pertinent for “Small Scale Projects”, so the score for Operational Assessment will be 33, and the total score will be 90 (excl. targeted and JSC criteria).

