Frequently Asked Questions

Call for project proposals

Capitalisation Small-Scale Projects

Please note that this document is issued by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat of the Interreg IPA South Adriatic on behalf of the participating countries, represented at the Task Force, it is provided only for information purposes.

It is published at https://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu/index.php/programme/south-adriatic-2021-27/south-adriatic-calls, to assist potential project applicants and it only intends to provide clarification on the text of the Call.

For further questions contact js@southadriatic.eu.

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1. GENERAL

1.1 Is it possible to get assistance on the development of a project proposal?

-a. Please study carefully all documents published at https://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu/programme/south-adriatic-2021-27,, especially the text of the call. In the documents you may find the guidance we provide to all interested applicants. In particular, the text of the call, the Manual and these FAQs reply to most of the questions. We are going to also hold “open days” in January-March 2023, in order to answer applicants' questions. Please check the announcement on the programme website.

1.2 Is the call fully open or you already pre-selected some projects for capitalization

-a. Yes it is fully open, no pre-selection of results to be capitalised on.

1.3 In the document NOTICE OF AMENDMENTS AND CLARIFICATIONS states that for assessment items on pages 11-12-15, the references to Application Form must be understood as referring to the sections that must be compulsorily completed. For the relevance filter, which are the relevant chapters of the application form that are going to be considered for the application of the filter?

- Only these parts are relevant for the relevance filter: PART A: A1, A2, A3, PART C: C1, C2.4, C2.5, , C2.7, C3, C5, while C2.1., C2.2, C2.3 are not applicable to the first call and must not be compulsorily completed.

1.4 With regards to the selection procedure, is there a threshold to be reached by the proposals to be included in the final ranking list?

-a. As stated in the § 8 of the call, all proposals admitted to the full assessment, following the outcomes of relevance filter will be included in the final ranking list validated and approved by the MC.

1.5 Will the final proposals selected for funding be directly contacted by the MA/JS or not?

-a. The final ranking list, one per priority axis, approved by the MC will be published in the Official Journal of MA (BURP - Bollettino Ufficiale della Regione Puglia) and into the Programme web portal as soon as the assessment procedure is closed. Anyway, based on the outcomes of the quality assessment and any specific conditions, which the MC may decide to apply to any project, after the funding decision a negotiation phase is open, where the JS/MA contact directly the LP to optimise project planning, activities and budgets. Considering the timing to close the assessment procedure, take care to include relevant contact person' references into the submitted Application Form.

1.6 In order to "Create a new account" to register into the JEMS platform, are there rules on the use of personal accounts?

-a. We strongly recommend all applicants to avoid private personal emails and to use the official (work) email personal account of the entitled person in charge of the development of the proposal on behalf of the Lead Applicant organisation. As stated in the F.S. JEMS USER MANUAL - 1°Call for project proposals - Capitalisation Small-Scale Projects - §11.1 partner specific section, each partner shall fill in its official email. PEC address is also compulsory, only for Italian Partners.

1.7 Is it compulsory to set the exact amount of contribution within the LP/PP declarations - table 2b)?

-a. In the table 2b) of the LP/PP declarations, please specify the source of the contribution. If at the moment of filling it in, you do not have the final partner budget amount yet, it is acceptable to include only the percentage of co-financing, while the amount of own-contribution, which is automatically calculated in the JEMS application form, is binding.

2. CAPITALISATION

2.1 Is the 2014-2020 capitalisation procedure ranking list (related to 2014-2020 1st Call projects), as indicative of the good results reached during this programme, to be taken in consideration in terms of results for the capitalization actions of the new programme?

-a. The 2021-27 first call on capitalisation is broad: You may capitalise a) on 2014-20 IT-AL-ME project results, b) results of any other programmes, funds, initiatives, c) good practices of the organisation. If you decide to focus again on the 2014-20 IT-AL-ME first call projects -already capitalised on-, you have to explain the added value, e.g. if with the 2014-20 capitalisation procedure you validated the results with interested stakeholders (potential takers), with the 2021-27 capitalisation you may actually transfer those results to these takers. Please make sure to explain how the new capitalisation actions to be carried out differ (added value) from those already carried out.

2.2 Should the best practices realised in previous projects (also of other programmes), be considered for the new proposed projects?

-a. Yes, this is the meaning of capitalisation, to build on good practices and results.

2.3 Additional points for link to EUSAIR strategy: should the best practices to be capitalised come from Interreg and other T.C. Programmes or may they also come from other types of Programmes?

-a. As the 2021-27 capitalisation is broad, from any other types of programme, including Regional – National ERDF and IPA programmes.

2.4 Will there be any limitations for the best practices already capitalised in the current programme, e.g. with small scale projects?

-a. See above. Please make sure to explain how the new capitalisation actions to be carried out differ (added value) from those already carried out.

2.5 Results to be capitalised: may be transferred and capitalised in this call results and best practices realised from projects of other Programmes, e.g. ADRION, useful to be transferred in Puglia?

-a. See above. Yes.

2.6 Are additional points granted for a specific type of capitalisation in the assessment? If yes, which type?

-a. No, in general additional points are granted for any capitalisation of results, which are suitable, valid and mature to be transferred and further used. We expect project applicants to convince us on the added value of the capitalisation actions, depending on the type of results.

2.7 For the S.O. 5.1. what kind of capitalisation actions may be financed, as this is a new S.O. for 2021-2027?

-a. As this S.O. is new and therefore you may only partially capitalise on 2014-2020 project results, we expect applicants to suggest even new, innovative joint models/procedures, but still building on competences and expertise of the organisations participating in the project.

2.8 May a platform for tourism be considered a result to be capitalised on? If yes, how can we cover travel costs necessary for involvement of a person who comes from outside the programme eligible area?

-a. The first call is focused on a wide concept of capitalisation on results, which may be obtained in other contexts / initiatives and which should be suitable for capitalisation. Please check fact sheet 1.1 for further reference. In order to justify the choice of a specific result, the applicant shall provide relevant explanation in the related section of the Application form.

Simplified cost options are focused on specific "outputs", which, once achieved, entitle beneficiaries to receive the set amount, i.e. the real costs incurred to achieve these, such as travel costs, are not verified any longer. Please check fact sheet 4.10.3.

2.9 Is it possible to capitalise a project recently approved by a national Ministry and still on-going?

Any result of a closed or even on-going project, you would like to capitalise on, needs to be sufficiently mature and suitable. It really depends on the nature of the result you are addressing and a careful assessment of the selected result needs to be performed by you and/or experts on the topic, as well as a precise and thorough description/justification is necessary in the AF.

2.10 Concerning the capitalisation of a result "widely recognised as a good practice", what the "external/independent assessment" consists of?

-a. We deliberately did not provide a precise definition, as it depends on the specific concrete case. E.g. an opinion by a competent user, expert, etc. may be sufficient, or of a number of users, or a scientific article, or an assessment performed by unbiased persons, etc. It is up to the applicant to provide convincing arguments.

2.11 For capitalisation can we join different projects? For example 2 similar already achieved projects' outputs in one capitalisation.

-a. Yes you may also put together the results of 2 projects to capitalise in a single project. It is up to the applicant to provide convincing arguments to the assessors.

2.12 May a project capitalising on a successful experience with innovative financial tools, such as the access to micro-credit, especially for the benefit of local actors in rural areas in IPA countries, be coherent with P.A. 5 governance?

-a. In general, ISO1 of the Interreg Regulation is related to all actions improving management capacities of Interreg partners. You may also check this publication: https://www.interact-eu.net/download/file/fid/20025

The Interreg IPA South Adriatic encourages the testing of new financial tools for partners, especially in IPA countries, local actors and in P.A. 5.

2.13 Which kind of trainers are required for the typology of Targeted Training activities?

-a. There is no specific requirement, besides the qualification, which depends on the topic of the training.

2.14 With reference to the call – chapter 1, we would like to understand if the proposal to be submitted should be directly linked to other projects already founded or should be a compulsory prosecution of them, with topics and contents linked totally or partially. Is it possible to submit proposals, also if we had not submitted any proposal with similar topics in the previous years?

- a. The meaning of capitalisation, as already expressed in the above FAQ, is to build on good practices and results already achieved in previous experience. Therefore, the first call is focused on a wide concept of capitalisation on results, which may be obtained in other contexts / initiatives and which should be suitable for capitalisation. Any result of a closed or even on-going project, you would like to capitalise on, needs to be sufficiently mature and suitable. It really depends on the nature of the result you are addressing and a careful assessment of the selected result needs to be performed by you and/or experts on the topic, as well as a precise and thorough description/justification is necessary in the AF. Please check fact sheet 1.1 for further reference.

2.15.Regarding the capitalisation of results achieved by two recent ADRION projects, can we use them and transfer them to other geographical locations in Albania, which were not part of the partnership of the two mentioned projects?

-a. Yes, if they are relevant and consistent with the objectives of the S.O. chosen

2.16.Is it compulsory to guarantee within the new proposal the participation of all partners which have achieved the output to be capitalised ? Is it possible that not everyone participates and someone else can be added?

-a. Yes it is. The capitalisation concerns the results of the project and not the partnership.

2.16.Can a project not yet completed be capitalised?

-a. It depends on the case and on the level of maturity of the output to be capitalised. If it has already been obtained, capitalisation is possible. In this case evidence must be given.

3. PARTNERS

3.1 What is meant with “Non-profit organisations operational for at least 12 months before launch of the call” indicated in the slides? Does this term refer to the time of registration of the NGO?

a. Yes, to be eligible NGOs have to be established and registered according to the applicable law in the respective country at least 12 months before the launching of the call. Establishment and registration time is when an NGO becomes operational.

3.2 Will it be possible, for an NGO who has not been a partner in previous programming period projects, to apply in this Call?

-a. Yes, as the call is open to any kind of capitalisation, not only on IT-AL-ME projects.

3.3 How can be justified the involvement of Italian partners from outside of the programme's area?

-a. The representatives of the participating countries in the Task Force specifically asked that involvement of Italian partners from outside the programme area (outside Puglia and Molise) must be justified with a clear and verifiable benefit for the programme area. Some examples are: 1- A major transport project, for which you need to involve the Italian competent Ministry in Rome; 2- A research centre located in another Italian region, which exclusively produced an innovative research/tool/device you want to apply in the programme area.

3.4 Is it possible to have a list of best-performing partners in the 2014-2020 period, in order to look for reliable partners?

-a. No, the programme authorities cannot disclose sensitive data on partners. In any case, in the programme website you may see the most productive projects and their partnerships, which gives you an idea of the performances of partners too.

3.5 Can we involve associate partners located outside the programme area and outside Italy, if we intend to capitalise on results achieved by them in another geographical area?

-a. Yes, if it is evident that their participation is beneficial for the programme area and for the partners, since they will not report expenditures, it is possible in compliance with the flexibility set out by article 22 of the ETC Regulation.

3.6 Can a partner apply, having only a branch office in the programme area?

-a. All bodies and institutions interested in being part of a project proposal shall have their registered office or operating headquarters, having full legal capacity, within the Programme area, except for partners located in Italian Regions other than Puglia and Molise, whose participation must demonstrate a real benefit for the programme area. The meaning of “full legal capacity” is related to the fact that the headquarters must be operative (adequate equipment and staff) and it must have full capacity to be a centre of rights and obligations. The meaning of sentence "to have full capacity to be centre of rights and obligations" related to the operating headquarters in the eligible area is referred to the full power of the office to operate with complete autonomy from the legal office of the same organisation (for instance the local office must have the power to sign all necessary contracts and agreements for project implementation). Additionally, the programme controllers and auditors have to be in the position to check the expenditures of the operating headquarters, which shall be bound to national rules of the country, where it is located and audit trail shall be kept in this location.

3.7 May an applicant participate with different projects in different programmes (e.g. also IT-GR) at the same time?

-a. You may participate in different programmes with different projects, not overlapping but complementary activities. If the complementarity is well planned and explained, it may strengthen the quality of the project. On the contrary, in the case the same activity is planned in different programmes, it could be ineligible due to the double funding.

3.8 May the JS-NIP provide applicants with names of partners e.g. Universities?

-a. For the partner search, please check the call text (first paragraph) and the related file. You may also use the 2014-2020 project websites or look at the list of operations you may find at

https://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu/programme/official-docs/cooperation-programme

or participate in any programme or project event taking place in the first quarter of 2023.

You may also check annex 5 of the Programme on the partnership involvement during programming you may find at

https://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu/programme/south-adriatic-2021-27/south-adriatic-docs

3.9 Limitation for partners: Can an applicant participate in max 2 projects per S.O. in total, one as LP and 1 as PP (8*2=16)? Or in 8 as LP and 16 as PP, i.e. 1 project per S.O. as LP and in 2 projects per S.O. as PP instead (8+(8*2)=24)?

-a. We confirm 16 in total, 8 as LP and 8 as PP.

3.10 I have a question regarding eligibility, if a branch of an international NGO can apply as a lead partner? The branch is located in Tirana, Albania

-a. The branch office has to demonstrate full administrative capacity, including full capacity to contract obligations according to the national law, as well as management capacity with staff, a legal representative, the audit trail, etc. at the branch office.

3.11 The maximum number of projects, as Lead and as Partner, does it refer to the University or to the individual departments that make it up?

-a. It refers to an organisation or a legal body, not to its units, unless the single units are legally identified as independent bodies with separate legal personality (to verify it, check e.g. fiscal position, VAT-number, statute, etc.). For this reason, in big organisations, coordination of project proposals of different units is very important.

3.12 A LAG (Local Agency for local development) established as a cooperative society governed and regulated according to the mutualistic principle without private speculation, can be Lead Partner in a

Small scale capitalisation project? If so, are there some specific requirements such as the inscription to RUNS. (National Registry of third sector)?

- If the referred organisation is structured as GLA (Group of Local Action - in Italian GAL - Gruppo di Azione Locale), because the GLA is mixed organisation (public-private) which could be established also in legal form of undertaking, the eligibility as beneficiary of the Programme depends on the legal status according to the relevant adopted statute or act of constitution, which clearly must be no-profit. Generally speaking, an Italian no profit private body can submit a project proposal as Leader Partner and must be enrolled in the National Registry of third sector (RUNS) in order to demonstrate the full legal capacity.

3.13. If a LAG is chosen as LP, which form is preferable: a cooperative society with a mutual purpose or a non-profit consortium (S.c.a.r.l.)?

-a. Regardless of the legal shape of the organisation (that depends on applicable national legislation of eligible Countries), please check carefully the § 3 of the call and the prescribed requirements for non-profit organisations and check and compare with your Statute.

3.14. Can we consider a cultural association representing the follow-up of two ADRION projects and only include a partner from the two previous ADRION projects as an associate partner of Montenegro?

-a. The building of an efficient partnership within the programme area is up to you according to the §3 of the call. Indeed the cultural association must meet the following requirements:

Non-profit organisations, established according to the applicable legal framework/law in the respective country that fulfils the following characteristics:

(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 organisational structure of an undertaking or a regular presence on the market
(d) *They have legal personality and must be operational for at least 12 months before the launching of the call for proposals.*

3.15 Can two Apulian sectoral districts participate in the proposal as Associated partners?

-a. Yes they may be admissible as "Associated partners". Check the text of the call and declaration template.

4. SIMPLIFIED COST OPTIONS

4.1 Does a lump sum cover staff costs of the partners?

-a. The lump sum is a simplified cost option and it implies a major shift of focus of controls: Management verifications (controls) are focused on the output and quality of this output (e.g. the workshop of 1 day with 40 persons, providing relevant and substantial contents) and not on the real costs incurred for partners (staff, experts, travels, studies etc.). This means that once the output is reached and verified, Albanian and

Montenegrin partners receive the IPA share of the total lump sum i.e. 85%, while for Italian partners 80% is IPA and 20% is FdR (Fondo di Rotazione according to the CIPE Resolution 78/2021).

4.2 On what basis are training being reimbursed within the new SCO?

-a. The SCO training is based on a calculation methodology developed within the European Social Funds, based on the number of trainees/days. The output to be reached and verified by the First Level Controller is the existence of the training and trainees. The guidance will outline how this is going to be verified.

4.3 If I organise a targeted training (Module 1) in Puglia with participants from Albania, Montenegro and Italy, do you confirm I shall consider the accommodation and subsistence daily rate costs also for Italian participants?

-a. No, the hosting organisation may claim accommodation and subsistence SSUCs only for the participants coming from abroad, thus in this case only for participants from Albania and Montenegro, not for the Italian participants. For this reason, it is advisable that a project partner carefully select the location of the training, while also considering the accessibility for the participants of its own country.

As a general principle, which is applicable to all other simplified cost options, please remember that the SCO applies only between the programme and its beneficiaries (project partners), i.e. not between the beneficiaries and third parties.

4.4 In the budget example, the APMM (joint action plan) is only one, or each partner involved in this activity should develop their own action plan to justify their lump sum?

-a. Each partner involved must contribute, while developing its own parts (covering each of the 4 phases set out for the APMM), therefore each National Controller will have to be able to check these deliverables separately by each partner (in each of the partners reports). The Lead Partner in the Joint Progress Report will include all contributions of all 3 partners in one joint product, a joint APMM (one for all partners), covering all four phases (deliverables).

4.5 Can "the update of the operability of a platform" be intended as a further development (i.e. the development of new functionalities) of an IT platform developed within a previous project to capitalise on? The objective would be to develop further functionalities that can extend the efficiency and scope of the previously developed IT platform; If yes, what is the correct LUMP SUM option corresponding to a possible update of operability of a platform?

-a. Depending on the nature and functioning of the platform, through an APMM (joint model), you may also test the platform within the new first call project, but remember to cover all four phases foreseen for the APMM (also analysis, management model/platform and commitment to use it).

4.6 May the testing phase of the APMM be demonstrated as a video-material, not necessarily a report?

-a. As long as the first level controller may verify that the testing phase occurred in reality, we did not further define how and how extensive the testing should be, as it should be suitable to the nature of the specific APMM, in proportion to the budget, and it may be documented even with audiovisual tools.

4.7 Is it possible to use the SCO "accompanying actions" in all Specific Objectives or only in S.O.1.1? could the target be identified among public administrations?

-a. The SSUCs for Accompanying actions, for its nature, is devoted to support the transformation of the business ideas into real innovative companies (SMEs or NGOs). Therefore, the target cannot be identified among public administrations' employees. Nevertheless this kind of SCO could be used in all S.O. and not only in the S.O. 1.1.

4.8 In this programming period is it possible to submit a proposal using only B2B and Workshop SCOs?

-a. In accordance with the F.S. 4.10.1 of the SA programme manual - The § Key rules related to management of Small Scale Projects, Unlike the 2014-2020 period, considering that the maximum budget amount is doubled and in order to ensure that projects have a consistent approach to effectively contribute to the programme objectives, projects including exclusively preparation cost, Workshop, seminars and conferences and Incoming missions & B2B meetings are not admitted, but they shall be combined with other SCOs.

4.9 If I organise a targeted training for 60hh, is there a minimum and/or maximum number of hours per day?

- in general there is not a minimum and/or maximum number of hours per day to be respected, but it also depends on the typology of modules and/or training. If for example you opt for the Modules with meals allowance, or if you pay the daily subsistence to incoming partners, your training day must last at least 6 hours.

4.10 Considering the difficulties in involving in a project a national administration, which could be a relevant partner to effectively support an action plan, would it be enough to have a letter of endorsement from the Ministry and involve a municipality as partner?

- for an effective implementation of the project it is required that the partner in charge has the management and operational skills to effectively carry out the planned activities. Basically at least one partner within the partnership involved for the proposal should have the right to use the good practise/product for the capitalization purposes

4.11 Relating to the SSUC for travel from Montenegro to Italy, the guideline foresees air connection. Is it possible using a maritime connection instead of air connection?

- the methodology used to develop the SSUC foresaw air connection. Anyway, the SCOs management verification aims "*to verify the* ***overall stay duration*** *and if air OR land transport has been used, return tickets – boarding cards* ***or equivalent*** *with the name of the trainee may be required for the sole purpose of checking the reality and duration of the travel and not the amounts effectively paid (which may be higher or lower).*"

4.13 Could you better explain, which are the deliverables to be included in case we choose the lump sum ApMM (joint action plan)?

-a. If only one of the project partners has the ApMM lumpsum, the 4 deliverables (i.e. related to the 4 required phases) have to take the cross-border dimension into account, i.e. to be "joint", it has to involve also other partners / cover other areas/ countries, not only the partner requesting the ApMM. If more partners use an ApMM instead, each partner involved should develop its own action plan (with the 4 phases / deliverables) to justify the lump sum requested. Then, during the project implementation phase, each partner has to submit separately with its own partner report the foreseen deliverables, which are verified by the respective National Controllers.

Therefore, in the application form you have to foresee 4 deliverables for each ApMM of each partner, plus a final deliverable "Joint ApMM", which is going to be submitted by the LP to the JS/MA with the Joint Progress Report. This joint ApMM should be the summary / synthesis of the contributions provided in all ApMMs produced by the partners, but in any case it has to result in one joint coherent work, instead of a simple copy-and-paste of separate unconnected ApMMs.

4.14 If we want to organise an international conference, is it possible to foresee one conference per each partner involved, with related linked lump sum for workshops, seminars and conferences? (ie. 1 conference in Albania, 1 in Montenegro, 1 in Italy which have their evidence in a single International conference)?

-a. It depends on how this is organised. The methodology used to develop the lump sum workshops, seminars and conferences is based on the eligible costs linked to the organisation of events, meetings, seminars, conferences in one country (e.g. organisation costs, renting rooms, interpretation, travel, subsistence and accommodation, experts, etc.) therefore only the partner, who organises the conference in its own country / region is entitled to receive the reimbursement in the form of a lump sum in the total amount set, if the event has a duration of at least 1 day (more than 6 hours, as principle) and with at least 40 participants gathering in person, from at least two different countries of the programme area, regardless of the structure given to the event, within the planned agenda.

4.15 With reference to the lumpsum Incoming missions & B2B meetings, is there any obligation related to its minimum duration?

-a We have not specified any limit of duration, since it depends on the main objective of the activity within the proposal. Any applicant has to organise it ensuring the evidences explained in the F.S. 4.10.1 of the SA programme manual for this kind of lump sum and ensuring an effective and high quality output, which has to reach the typical objective of "Incoming missions - B2B", i.e. to establish significant business relationships.

4.16 Shall we enter the 2% flat rate for the Italian FLCs into the JEMS as 1 unit in the external expert budget line?

-a Correct: 2% IT FLC has to be calculated by the applicant at the end, once the total budget for the Italian beneficiary is known, and it has to be entered into the external expert budget line as 1 unit. Take note that the JEMS system does not calculate this amount autonomously.

4.17 Shall we describe in the related field the activities of JEMS if for a workshop (lump sum) we intend to also involve participants / partners representing the other project partners?

-a. Yes it is necessary to explain how you intend to ensure the cross-border nature of the event, thus how other partners / countries are involved.

4.18 Is it possible to foresee among the possible activities of the Targeted Training a preliminary market research for a better awareness of the target group needs?

-a. See FAQ 4.1. Like any other SCO, the SSUC/participant is all encompassing. Any activity you deem essential to achieve the output is possible to reach the output foreseen.

4.19 Is the travel cost Italy-Albania Air (196 €) for one way, for one person? Consequently, does the back Albania-Italy air, for one person, cost 196 € as well?

-a. No, the amount is related to a return ticket.

4.20 Can you clarify if the Food Allowance is a cost covered by the Accompanying Actions?

-a. See FAQ 4.1.Like for any SCO, the list of possible typology of costs is non-exhaustive, only examples.

5. PROJECT PLANNING AND ELIGIBILITY

5.1 How and where shall we plan the management costs, as the project management work package is not foreseen anymore?

-a. You will not be required to set a budget for each work package, instead you will be only required to specify a budget per partner and per budget line. Therefore, the partner's project management costs will be included in the budget line staff or external expertise or both, according to the management model the partner adopts. This is a major simplification also during project implementation, i.e. budget shifts are made simpler.

5.2 Our organisation must be able to implement activities also outside our country, can we do that? What are the limitations?

-a. The flexibility provided by the Art. 22 of the ETC Regulation makes it simpler than in 2014-2020 to implement activities outside the programme area. It is now possible to implement activities outside the programme area, provided that they contribute to the achievement of project objectives, thus for the benefit of the programme area, as well as that they are approved by the MC, i.e. included in the project application form or added during project implementation with approval by the MA.

On the other hand, the simplified cost options (SCOs) are calculated on the basis of the costs of a specific country and costs of living may substantially differ, therefore the specific SCO output must be delivered in the country of the partner.

5.3 May partners within the same project decide to have different approaches towards soft activities, i.e. one partner applies the 40% Flat Rate on Staff costs, while another partner applies all budget lines for an investment project?

-a. For the future standard call, this option must be applied for the entire project, i.e. all partners must apply the 40% FR within a soft project, as this covers all other management and implementing costs (ie. external expertise services, equipment etc.) of the project.

5.4 Our project will have activities related to both S.O 2.1 Biodiversity and 5.1 Governance. Where shall we apply?

-a. It is necessary to focus on the main objective of the project, which shall provide the strategic direction for all single actions / activities, outputs and results. If the project in a mid- or long-term perspective mainly aims at providing impacts on the biodiversity of the territories, it should apply to this S.O., even though some actions may be focused on improved governance measures for management of natural resources. On the contrary, if the project intends to have impacts mainly on the governance e.g. improved management for organisations working on biodiversity, it should apply to the Governance S.O. There might also be tactical considerations by applicants, such as an estimation of chances to be financed based on the resources allocated per P.A., but the justification of the selected S.O. must be coherent with the project goal.

5.5 In IPA countries partners have serious difficulties in pre-financing their activities, i.e. they can only implement up to the pre-financing received. Can the Programme support them?

-a. The National Authorities in the IPA countries are responsible for this. They are assisted by the MA/JS, while setting up their own national management and control systems. This has to include the possibility to pre-finance all activities by partners, in compliance with the respective financing and art. 16(5) agreements. An additional effort has been made to facilitate a discussion with the related Finance Ministry to make it possible for public bodies to book amounts in their own annual budgets, to pre-finance all activities. We also encourage IPA project partners to make these efforts with their respective Ministry of Finance to reach this solution for the 2021-2027 period.

5.6 What is an Incoming event (for example for an Energy project)?

-a. Incoming events, as part of a B2B, are usually associated with economic operators coming from another country to visit and gain understanding of a successful practice, in the location where it is implemented. In the case of Energy projects, representatives of public authorities, such as e.g. majors, general directors, etc. may be visiting the energy community e.g. at the solar energy plant abroad etc.

5.7 If I capitalise a previous Action Plan and I want to realise one concrete action foreseen by that action plan, can the concrete action be realised through the testing phase of a new Action Plan (ApMM)?

-a. It really depends on the kind of action plan and the size of the activities you plan. For an ApMM all four phases (and corresponding deliverables) by each concerned partner needs to be delivered, not only the testing phase. In some cases, testing may be limited to a case study or to a feasibility assessment. In some other cases, you may decide to implement the action plan even with other SCOs (e.g. if you need to train some persons to implement a plan, targeted training may be used, etc.).

5.8 About the "testing of the ApMM", does this consist in a report describing the possible actions to test the ApMM (to implement in a future time) or consist in realising tests concretely?

-a. It depends on the kind of ApMM, but it may not be limited to a simple description (because this would not fulfil the objective of the testing activity), therefore it has to include at least a case study, i.e. application and assessment of the model/process/plan to a real case scenario (e.g. a walk-through), including e.g. risk and mitigating measures etc.

5.9 Concerning national co-financing for Italy, can the 20% co-financing by an Italian public partner (e.g. a public research organisation) be covered by a percentage of eligible direct staff costs (researchers involved)?

- a. Both public and private Italian partners are entitled to receive both the 80% of IPA from the programme budget and the 20% Italian National Rotation Fund, as set out in Delibera CIPESS n. 78/2021 from the Managing Authority.

5.10 Can you explain the functioning of the National co-financing rates?

-a. In the case of Simplified Cost Options, the programme will pay only the IPA part to the beneficiaries, i.e.. Albanian and Montenegrin beneficiaries will receive 85% IPA funds of each SCO, while Italian beneficiaries will receive 80% of IPA funds of each SCO. To make sure that sufficient IPA funds are available in the MA account, projects with an unbalanced share of funds between IPA countries and the Member State may only be approved under the condition that the financial balance (approximately 50% IPA countries and 50% Member State) is restored.

5.11 The JEMS rejects the upload of files signed electronically (extension .p7m). How can I upload them?

-a. The current version of the system does not allow it. Please zip the file and upload it as zip (extension .zip).

5.12 Is it possible to submit a proposal within the S.O.1.1 related to the increase of the SMEs competitiveness in the green economy theme, even if it is not mentioned among the examples listed for this S.O.?

-a. Yes. For each specific objective, a not exhaustive list of themes has been provided in order to better understand the general framework in which you can move choosing the right S.O. and applying your project proposal accordingly.

5.13 How many outputs per project have to be identified, considering that the typology of output indicators per each S.O. is equal to two?

-a. In accordance with the F.S. 1.1 of the programme manual and with the § 7 of the Call, project actions and activities shall all together contribute to the achievement of only one output indicator per project (filled in one work package), also linked to the related one result indicator.

5.14 Is it possible to foresee in a project proposal, 2 workshops or 2 B2B in the same territory?

-a. Yes, but they have to be clearly distinguished for timing, location, target etc, in accordance with the global intervention logic of the proposal

5.15 During the project planning, is it compulsory to duplicate each action per each country involved?

-a. Basically the principal aim for any project proposal should be to guarantee and enforce the cross border added value within the programme area, independently from the organisation directly involved into the organisation of a specific planned activity. Therefore, it is up to the project applicant to define efficiently the work-plan to be applied and the related role assigned to each partner, in accordance with the main objective of the proposal. For further relevant explanation check the F.S. 1.1 and F.S. 4.10.1 of the SA programme manual

5.16. With reference to the Application Form to be used to submit a project proposal, concerning the § C.2.6 seems that any past or current EU and other projects or initiatives could be claimed to underline synergies the project makes use of. Nevertheless, what does the sentence "The synergies to be filled in regard: ADRION, ROPs and National IPA programmes" mean?

-a. The claimed phrase only reflects the need within the SA programme framework, to count any project link with the possible synergies related to ADRION, ROPs and National IPA programmes.

5.17. Considering that the proposals capitalise on the results achieved within other/previous projects, is it mandatory that the new project proposal TITLE recalls the capitalised project? (for example, if we capitalise the project XX, should the new proposal be titled XX 2.0/ XX PLUS etc)?

-a. It is up to you to choose the right TITLE of your proposal. Please check carefully the Application form template in which you shall explain in which way your proposal will capitalise already achieved outputs/results.

5.18. What is the contribution to the EUSAIR strategy of a project based on the Governance priority axis, which is not included in the foreseen pillars?

-a. The Governance P.A. has to be considered as a cross cutting theme within the EUSAIR strategy to be linked to pillar/action/flagship defined in its related documents. Therefore, any project applicant independently from the SA programme S.O. chosen, has to specify the project contribution to EUSAIR goals, the precise EUSAIR actions of the action plan or flagship are going to be implemented, as well as how the EUSAIR stakeholders are involved, and the follow-up of the project

5.19. Does the Application Form have to be filled in by each partner in their own part?

-a. It is recommended that only the LP fills in the AF. Otherwise simultaneous presence of multiple users will crash the JeMS system and/or cause data loss.

5.20. The call and JeMS foresee a total of 12 months for project implementation, to be divided in two periods of 6 months. Realistically, from what date should the project start?

-a. Basically the project will start after the final MC approval, indicatively in autumn 2023.

5.21 Regarding the output of the S.O. 4.1, the activities of the project shall all together contribute to the achievement of only one result indicator (RCR 81 or RCR 79) or to both of them? In this second case, do we have to indicate which project output matches with the related programme output indicator and to what extent?

-a. Each Programme S.O. foresees two possible output indicators, each one connected to only one corresponding result indicator.

For this call for SSP, given the limited amount, we recommend to have only one project specific objective (which must be linked to the selected programme S.O.), one work package, as well as only one output indicator per project proposal. This output indicator has to be linked to one of the 2 programme output indicators. The programme output indicator is linked to its respective result indicator. Remember that project outputs need to contribute to the achievement of programme output indicators with the same measurement unit and target value set at programme level (one per project, therefore if you use, e.g. 2 project output indicators, together they should contribute to reaching 1 programme output indicator). This is necessary to be able to aggregate the project outputs and monitor the progress at programme level. We recommend reading carefully the F.S. 1.1 of the SA programme manual.

5.22 Could you specify where in the Application Form we have to fill in the references on selected typology of activity/ action out of the programme types of actions?

-a. As set out in the F.S. 1.1 of the SA programme Manual, we require partners to indicate the typology of activity/ action out of the programme types of actions, while including the respective code within the title of each defined activity planned in your Application Form.

5.23 Has the "JPM" typology of activity/ action to be used only in case of selecting the ApMM lump sum?

-a. No, the selection of the typology of activity/ action out of the programme types of actions has to be linked to the aim of each activity, which could be useful to achieving the final project output, therefore it may be the result from activities within different simplified cost options.

5.24 Within the framework of the work plan, shall we identify communication actions as dedicated activity?

-a. Considering the intervention logic of the SA programme and the use of only SCOs for this specific call, you can consider communication issues as included in the framework of the selected SCO for your proposal. This means that for any relevant activity you also have to explain the communication topics and if any, foresee deliverables for them. In order to have a smart work plan, we suggest collecting different kinds of tools in a single homogenised typology of deliverables (e.g. promotional web-campaign, or promotional print-outs at events, etc.).

5.25 I have a question about the attachments of the Application Package foreseen in the Paragraph 6 - Application Procedure of the Call (page 9). Do you confirm we shall upload the balance sheets of the last two accounting years (or equivalent documents) of <u>all</u> private partners participating or just for <u>lead</u> private partners?

-a. Please read the call, as the wording is clear: for all private partners.

5.26 For the State Aid declaration: Can you confirm that an "undertaking" may be also public, not only private, depending on the activity carried out? Can you confirm that we have to justify in the declaration why the activity does not lead to an economic advantage for the beneficiary?

-a. In the regulatory framework of State Aid, as for the application of the relevant rules, it must be considered the concept of "economic operator" (i.e. undertaking) and "economic activities" regardless of the nature (public or private) of the subject; accordingly, also public organisations could be subject to state aid rules. Therefore, it must be duly justified in the declaration that the activity does not lead to an economic advantage to the involved beneficiary. We recommend reading the guide we published at:

https://www.italy-albania-montenegro.eu/sites/default/files/2018-06/4.6_State_Aid_v01_rev04062018.pdf

Please, also remember to fill in related justifications also in JEMS The "State aid section" which contains four mandatory questions.

5.27 How do we need to improve the output column "Output target value"? We would like to participate within the specific objective S.O.1.1. Can we use different output indicators for different activities? How shall we use the mark "RCO target value"? Can you provide an example?

Please read carefully the F.S. 1.1 of the SA programme manual as well as the JEMS user manual at your disposal. In any case, we strongly recommend for all activities of the same work package (we recommend to have only 1) of a SSP to select 1 programme indicator and to enter 1 as target value (1 per project).