



# GUIDANCE NOTE

## for project applicants in Call 12





## General Note

Please note that this call is open for project extensions only. It is open from 11 January to 19 March 2021. The Online Monitoring System will allow submissions through 23:59 CET on 19 March 2021.

## Project extensions in Call 12

A project extension refers to additional time, the addition of activities and/or partners, and additional funding to an existing project. Additional activities comprise, for example, new pilots or demonstrations that complement the existing framework of the project with additional ideas and, often, extended project geography. Extensions can also include a proposal for additional deliverables, outputs and results, e.g. conferences, trainings, etc.

Extensions should be clearly in line with the existing project. This means that including additional activities and/or partners should be balanced, logical, and understood as add-ons to a project that is running but needs to make some changes. An extension should therefore provide a proposal for additional funding that enables the partnership to carry out additional activities and/or to add partners that complement the existing project and add value to it. Partnerships that wish to submit an extension should also revise their project outputs and results to reflect the additional activities and time they are requesting for implementation.

## Guidelines for Call 12

- Each application should be submitted by the Lead Beneficiary of an existing project. Applications from recently completed projects where the partnership is still operational will also be considered (if you represent a recently completed project and wish to apply, please contact your project advisor for technical advice).
- Each project should, as a general rule, submit a proposal for a request of no more than € 500.000 in additional ERDF/Norwegian funding. It is possible to exceed the € 500.000 threshold in well justified cases.
- The original project, on which the extension is based, should be running according to plan, but circumstances outside the control of the partnership, e.g., Covid-19, will be taken into account.
- It is important to note that the call is intended for applicants seeking funding for new and additional activities. Applicants simply seeking an extension of the project



timeframe as a result of delays caused by Covid-19 should not apply under this call but should contact their project advisor.

- The call is **not** open to applicants who have been granted an extension including additional funding during a previous call; however, if you have received a 'Covid-19 time extension', you **are eligible** to apply for an extension during Call 12.
- New and innovative activities and/or projects partners, target groups, pilots in new areas etc. should be included in the extension request.
- All applicants will provide convincing arguments for their ability to deliver the additional activities outlined in the extension application.
- Applicants will provide realistic estimates of the target groups they will be able to reach with the project and provide updates on qualitative outputs and results for the extension.

It is important to emphasise that each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis taking into account the specific circumstances for that project.

Applicants can consult with their project advisors at the Joint Secretariat and/or the National Contact Points on the content of their extension application up until the end of the call on Friday, 19 March. National Contact Points' contact information can be found on the programme website.



## Available funding

The table below shows the remaining ERDF funding available under each priority, as well as the Norwegian funding that remains across all priorities. Please note that these amounts include a 10% over allocation in each priority, which was approved by the programme's Monitoring Committee in November 2020.

### Funding currently available for projects (10% over-allocation & funds flowing back)

(All amounts are in €)	ERDF funding (with 10% over allocation)	Norwegian funding*
Priority 1	6.187.176	237.551
Priority 2	647.147	
Priority 3	4.255.323	
Priority 4	1.314.971	
<b>Total</b>	<b>12.404.617</b>	<b>237.551</b>

Reading the table: Column 2 shows the funding (ERDF) available to Member State applicants and column 3 shows the available Norwegian funding. It should be noted that the Member State funding is divided by priority whilst the Norwegian funding is one common pot.

## Special guidance for extension applicants

- ❖ The call is open to UK partners as well as partners from the other six participating countries. Potential UK partners are encouraged to consult the UK Contact Point before applying in order to receive the most up-to-date guidance on the consequences of Brexit for applicants.
- ❖ New partners from outside the programme area can be part of a partnership under special conditions. However, it is difficult for the Managing Authority to establish effective control and audit arrangements for countries outside the North Sea Region. You should therefore be aware that partners from outside the North Sea Region may not be able to receive funding from the North Sea Region Programme but could participate using their own separate funding. Please consult Fact Sheet 18 for further details.



- ❖ The programme funding period is 2014 to 2020, but in practice projects may continue to implement their activities through mid-2023. The end date for completing project activities (except drawing up the final report) for all projects during this programme period is 30 June 2023.
- ❖ If your project will be adding a new beneficiary as part of your extension, please note that private sector companies, including SMEs, are welcome. However, there are specific requirements for companies that participate in a project, and they must agree to respect these rules. These often differ from standard private sector operating procedures and are described in separate fact sheets on State Aid (16), Private Sector Beneficiaries (15), and Intellectual Property Rights and ownership of project investments (27).
- ❖ All extension requests must be submitted by the Lead Beneficiary through the Online Monitoring System's changes module. They can be submitted at any point up to the deadline for Call 12 and will be assessed by the Secretariat and require Steering Committee approval.
- ❖ Letters of Intent: Beneficiaries requesting additional funds must submit a Letter of Intent confirming that they will make co-financing funds available for their participation in the extended project. As this is a call for extensions only, the amount for each beneficiary should be the accumulated amount covering both the existing budget and the budget for the extension. The text of the letter is auto-generated by the system. **Do not change it!** If you change the text or the amounts entered, you will be told to resubmit the letter and your application will be ineligible until a correct version of the letter is uploaded. You have to print the letter on the beneficiary organisation's letter paper, get it signed and then upload a copy to us.

## How is the funding decision made?

- ❖ Extension applications and assessments of those applications, together with a recommendation to fund or reject the extension, will be provided to the programme's Steering Committee, which is made up of national and regional representatives from all of the countries in the programme. The committee decides whether to approve or reject the extension request based on the secretariat's assessment and recommendation and sets any conditions that need to be met before a new contract will be issued.



All applicants will be informed about the committee's decision in writing. You can complain if your extension request is rejected. Complaints can only address the assessment procedure and will be expected to demonstrate that there has been a clear and significant breach of the published procedures. If a complaint is upheld, your extension will be considered at the next meeting. The Complaints Procedure is available online.

### **What happens after approval?**

- ❖ You will receive a decision letter as soon as possible after approval. This may include conditions that need to be met before a new contract can be issued. Contracts are prepared by the secretariat.
- ❖ The Partnership Agreement will need to be signed by any organisations added to the partnership as part of the extension. The additional signature/s to the Partnership Agreement must be uploaded to the OMS before any payments can be made in relation to the extension.
- ❖ All new beneficiaries in the project must designate an Authorised Signatory to sign and submit project reports and appoint a First Level Controller to check all expenditure. These steps must be taken as soon as possible after approval of the extension. Arrangements for appointing controllers vary between countries. Details can be found in the First Level Control Manual. (Please note that Sweden has a centralised system for control and that there are specific rules for Swedish beneficiaries to follow.)