SUMMARY Q&A SESSION

Evaluation of Slido polls and questions and answers at the online kick-off event, 13 July 2023

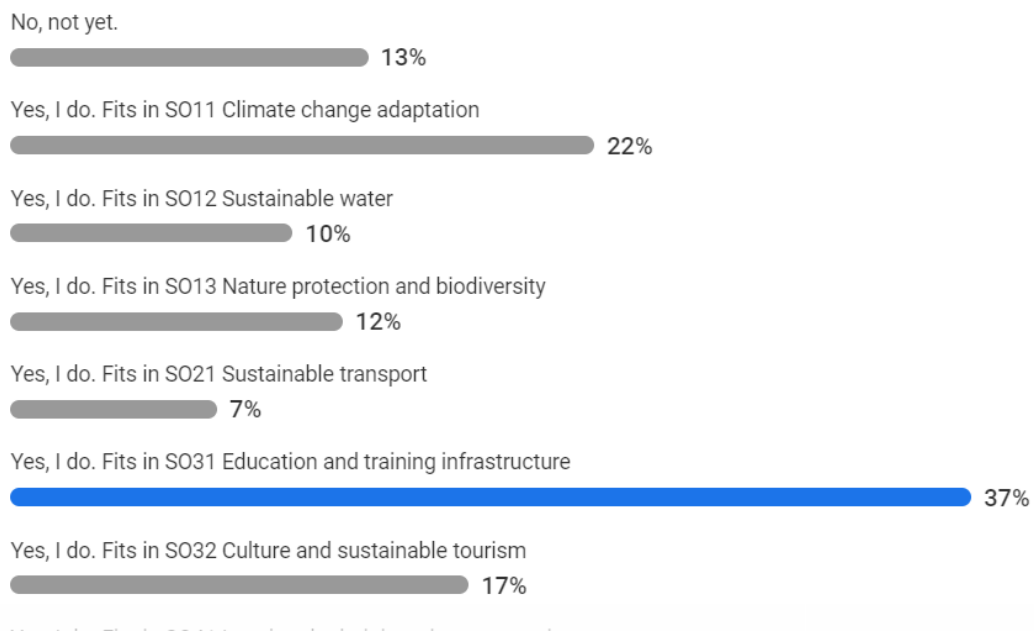13.07.2023

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1 Slido poll No. 1

Do you already have a project idea in mind? What specific objective would it fit in?

- 60 responses received,
- the most popular topic of the 1st submission deadline is SO31 "Education and training facilities",
- as multiple choices were possible and presumably already formed partnerships voted for the planned topics, the actual interest in the field might differ from the results shown below.

No, not yet.
13%

Yes, I do. Fits in SO11 Climate change adaptation
22%

Yes, I do. Fits in SO12 Sustainable water
10%

Yes, I do. Fits in SO13 Nature protection and biodiversity
12%

Yes, I do. Fits in SO21 Sustainable transport
7%

Yes, I do. Fits in SO31 Education and training infrastructure
37%

Yes, I do. Fits in SO32 Culture and sustainable tourism
17%

1 Slido poll No. 1

2   Slido poll No. 2

What topics would you like to have covered at the regional workshops of the programme? (Please mark the workshop you plan to attend with AT or HU!)

- 6 responses received
- the responses show a high interest in budget planning and SCOs.

Anonymous
Project accounts (internal and external costs. What to watch out for), Project documents for the submission.

Anonymous
SCOs

Anonymous
AT, means for best addressing the specific objectives with our projects

Anonymous
HU: FLC approach on staff unit cost reporting - audit trail, required supporting documents

Anonymous
SCOs, HU

Anonymous
AT
- Budget Planning
- Short overview about the documentation/reporting process, especially for staff costs

3 Slido poll No. 3

How did the online event meet your expectations? Did you receive all the information you are interested in?

- 37 responses received,
- with a response rate of 30% (37 out of 123 participants responded to Poll No.3) the overall rating of the event can be considered as "Good" (4.3 on a scale of 1 to 5).

Score: ★ 4.3

0%	3%	11%	41%	46%
1	2	3	4	5
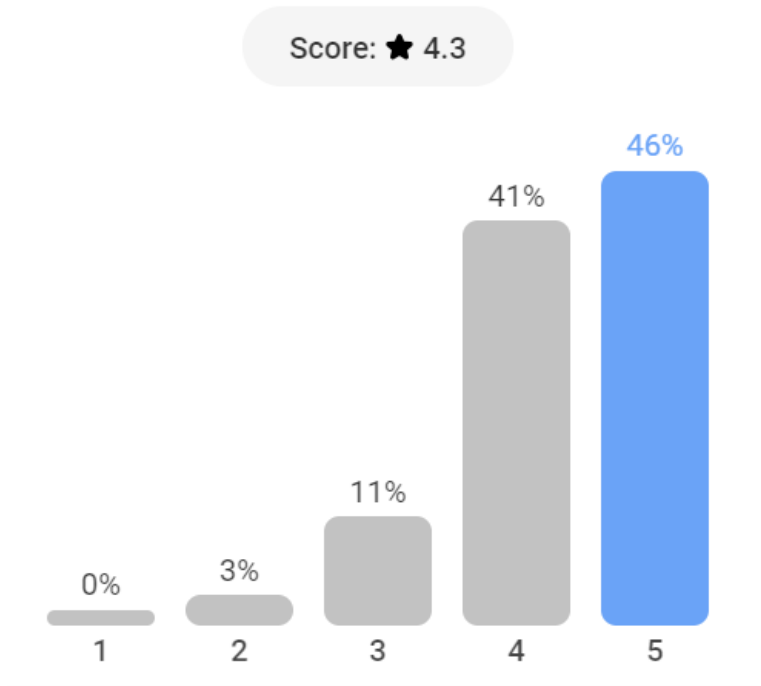
4   Summary of the questions and answers session

The questions posed by participants during the event were answered by the programme representatives. In order to give an overview of the answers the questions and the answers to them are grouped below based on their subject. The answers, where applicable, are amended with references to the particular programme manuals, where the subject in question is regulated by the programme.

4.1   Programme events for the 1st submission deadline

Will the recording be available afterwards?

The meeting was recorded with the consent of the participants and is published on the programme communication channels.

Are there already confirmed locations for the two HU and AT Workshops?

The locations are still to be decided. When the information is available, it will be published on the programme communication channels.

Why are there no online workshops between Hungary and Austria?

During the first submission round there is no joint workshop planned. The general information about the programme was presented during the kick-off meeting in an online format in order to reach the broadest possible audience. The regional workshops will be held in national languages to ease and ensure good communication between all participants, and also to have a greater focus on national specificities.

4.2   Partner search

How can I find partners in Hungary?

The Regional Coordinators can help you with the partner search. Get in touch with your Regional Coordinator to initiate the process. The contact information is available on the programme website, in the applicant portal/consultations section: https://interreg-athu.eu/en/interreg-at-hu-2021-2027/applicant-portal/consultations/

4.3   Project development, consultations

Is it possible to consult the Joint Secretariat on project ideas? (if they are eligible subject-wise and to possibly align them better to the programme)

The Joint Secretariat is not allowed to consult the content of project ideas with applicants due to its assessment duties of applications. The JS only can help you with questions about programme rules and technicalities. The content-related questions can be raised to the Regional Coordinators. You can find their contact information here: https://interreg-athu.eu/en/interreg-at-hu-2021-2027/applicant-portal/consultations/.

4.4   Open Call, Application Form and its Annexes

You said a capitalisation call is planned in the future. Does it mean that in the first call, no capitalisation-type projects are expected?

Applications with capitalisation activities are allowed in the first submission round, as well as in any other submission round. The idea of a possible capitalisation call is to specifically focus on further elaboration on already existing results. To do so, it is necessary to define the specificities of a capitalisation project (i.e. type of results, possible number of partners, max. budget, max. duration etc.) and the aims of such a call. The programme will shape this only at a later stage and decide upon its implementation.

Will it be possible to apply for standard projects after 29.09.2023 or is the call after this date only open for small-scale projects?

As the programme operates with continuous calls for standard and small-scale projects, the possibility for submission of standard projects starts on 27 July 2023 (first submission deadline 29 September 2023) and is continuously possible in later submission rounds, as well. For details on the time plan of both continuous calls for applications (standard and small-scale projects) please refer to the applicant portal: https://www.interreg-athu.eu/en/interreg-at-hu-2021-2027/applicant-portal/calls-for-applications/

When will the template for the partnership agreement be published?

The template of the partnership agreement is based on the ERDF subsidy contract template, which is still under preparation. The intention of the programme is to have both documents ready by the end of 2023 for the contracting phase of the projects submitted within the first submission deadline.

Will JS sign the De Minimis certifications or who should do that?

The de-minimis declaration is a compulsory annex of the application form and must be signed by the project partner.

4.5 Unit cost for staff costs

Are self-employed project managers, e.g. CEOs of the partner organisation also eligible for the staff unit costs or do we always need an employment contract with the partner organisation?

In accordance with article 39 (2) of the Interreg Regulation, staff costs consist of the gross employment costs of staff employed by the beneficiary for the implementation of the project. Unit cost financing is a simplified cost option for the reimbursement of these employment costs. To make use of this simplified cost option, employees of the project partner working on the project shall be allocated to the predefined functions, and their related employment costs are reimbursed on the basis of the number of hours spent on the project, multiplied by the appropriate hourly rate. For specific forms of employment, please consult the Regional Coordinators. Payments to sole proprietors (individual entrepreneurs) are not allowed (section 3.9 of the Eligibility Manual).

Is it possible to have more than one employee from a partner in category performance group 1?

There is no such limitation or exclusion among the programme rules in this respect, however, in any case, the assignment of staff members to a function (specifically in this case to performance group 1) must be underpinned with reasonable justification.

If a team member covers two functions ... how should we handle this according to financial reporting?

A staff member can only be assigned to one function and thus to one performance group. If a staff member covers activities which are defined for two different functions, the staff member shall be assigned to his/her main function. Nevertheless, the assignment to a function shall happen before the staff member starts to work for the project, not only during financial reporting.

Could you post the link please where to find the lump sums for each staff category?

The functions to which the staff members must be assigned and the respective hourly rates of the performance groups are available in the Eligibility Manual, in Annex 6.2 Assignment of project staff to functions and performance groups and Annex 6.3 Definition of unit costs acc. performance groups.

For further unit cost-related rules consult the Eligibility Manual, specifically chapter 5.1.2.1 and Annex 6.2.

You can find the manual in the applicant portal here: https://www.interreg-athu.eu/en/interreg-at-hu-2021-2027/applicant-portal/programme-manual/

What do hourly amounts per function look like?

See the answer above (Eligibility Manual, in Annex 6.3).

How is the indexation of unit costs planned? On a yearly basis?

The indexation is planned on an annual basis. The trigger for indexation will be the increase in the wage index. It is important to note that projects which are already in the implementation phase must apply the hourly rate which was in force at the time of submission during their whole duration. Indexed hourly rates can only be applied to newly submitted applications.

4.6 Reporting

Currently, there are great differences in the FLC "speeds". Could the MA-JS somehow harmonise FLCs or have an impact on speeding up AT FLC procedures?

That's what we try to do. MA/JS is in constant contact with FLCs in order to timely harmonise verification work within a project, especially now in the closure process of 2014-2020 projects. However, we know and admit that a verification process in time, and thus a smooth reporting process, was and is a challenging factor for all involved partners and programme bodies in the 2014-2020 period.

MA/JS and all other involved programme bodies seek for improvement in the 2021-2027 period, and we strongly believe that the extensive use of simplified cost options is one important influencing factor.

Still, we also call for and rely on the contribution of all project partners. Good quality reporting and accurate documentation of activities, results and expenditures make a significant contribution to a smooth reporting process.