

Fact Sheet 27: Small-scale Projects

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CORE MESSAGE

Small-scale projects are smaller in scope, budget, partnership size, and length than regular projects funded by the North Sea Programme. This fact sheet outlines the parameters and rules governing small-scale projects.

Background

The North Sea Programme funds two types of projects: regular projects and small-scale projects. In contrast to regular projects, small-scale projects have a reduced application timeframe, smaller budget and partnership size, and shorter project lifetime. While many of the programme's rules apply to both kinds of projects, some requirements of small-scale projects are slightly different. It is important to understand these differences before applying for funding of a small-scale project.

Parameters of small-scale projects

Small-scale projects are funded under all four priorities in the North Sea Programme. However, they are limited to a maximum lifetime of 18 months, €500,000 in total budget, and a partnership of three to seven partners¹. Although the partners must be based in at least three different participating countries, the programme strongly encourages applicants to include in their partnership organisations from more than three countries, if possible.

Given their smaller scale, small-scale projects benefit from a shorter application procedure. Rather than going through the two-stage process, small-scale project applications are selected after one application round. The small-scale project application is a modified full application. The application process for small-scale projects is described in detail in Fact Sheet 18 (application assessment process).

¹ The focus of the small-scale projects may change from call to call. Thus, applicants are encouraged to consult the relevant guidance note for further information about what the programme is looking for in small-scale projects in a specific call for proposals.

Project intervention logic

The intervention logic for regular projects and small-scale projects is the same. This means that small-scale projects are required to contribute directly to the objective(s) of the programme and apply the same indicators as regular projects. When establishing the intervention logic for a small-scale project you should remember to consider and address the long-term effects (durability) of the planned project. More information on this can be found in Fact Sheet 22 (intervention logic and indicators).

Please note that small-scale projects are limited to one work package. This limitation is a direct reflection of the relatively short project lifetime.

Budget

Small-scale projects benefit from an easier budget and reporting setup. Small-scale projects do not make use of the same number of cost categories (budget lines) as regular projects. This means that not all fact sheets governing the cost categories applicable for regular projects funded by the North Sea programme are applicable to small-scale projects.

In terms of applied cost categories small-scale projects are simply required to follow the fact sheet on staff costs (Fact Sheet 2 and Fact sheet 2a for partners located in Belgium). All other costs are covered by a 40% flat rate applied to the controlled staff costs². Thus, the budget of the small-scale projects can be expressed by the following simple equation:

$$\text{Eligible project costs} = \text{Staff costs} + \text{Staff costs} * 40\%$$

Reporting

Small-scale projects only report twice during their lifetime. One report is expected to be submitted around the mid-term point of the project lifetime (mid-term report) and the second report after the closure of the project (following the guidelines for final reporting laid out in Fact Sheet 21).

The mid-term report will follow a different logic to that outlined for regular projects in Fact Sheet 20. Mid-term reporting will be agile and accommodate a minimal effort approach. In practice this means that the Joint Secretariat will carry out the mid-term progress evaluation of small-scale projects by involving the entire project partnership. The secretariat will then provide a short summary of the interview conclusions, which will have to be approved by the project partnership. Once the evaluation has been acknowledged by the project partners, the project will be invited to submit their mid-term statement of accounts (finance report).

Control of the statement of accounts will be limited in scope due to the simplified reimbursement structure covered in the budget section above. The finance report and related control will focus on the staff costs incurred up until the project mid-term, and the documentation of these costs must follow the setup outlined

² Common provisional regulation no. 2021/1060 Article 56.

in Fact Sheet 2 (staff costs). When reporting the staff costs in the Online Monitoring System a flat rate of 40% will be added to the controlled staff costs. The added flat rate of 40% will cover all other costs and no documentation or control of these expenses will be required from the project partners.

Preparation costs

Small-scale projects are not eligible to apply for preparation costs. This means that only staff costs relevant for implementing the project after the approval of the project can be included in the project finance reports.

Programme rules in general

If not otherwise mentioned in this fact sheet, small-scale projects will follow and adhere to the programme rules outlined in the other programme fact sheets. In principle only the following fact sheets do *not* apply to small-scale projects:

- No. 3 Office and administration
- No. 4 Travel and accommodation
- No. 5 External expertise and services
- No. 6 Equipment
- No. 7 Infrastructure and works
- No. 8 Preparation costs

References

- Common Provisional Regulation No. 2021/1060 Article 56