

Idea Lab: Making your project idea a reality

Project idea generation

The foundation of a successful project starts long before a proposal is submitted. This interactive session will foster creativity and guide participants in shaping innovative project ideas for Call 3.

Step 1: Joint or Common Need/Challenge?

- A **joint need** arises from the same source, and its solution automatically benefits all territories concerned. Joint needs can only be solved through transnational cooperation.
- A **common need** relates to similar issues in different territories of the Alpine Space, but a solution on one side does not automatically bring benefits to the other side. Common needs can be addressed without transnational cooperation, so you have to clearly demonstrate that such cooperation will provide significant benefits over and above addressing them at the national level.



Tip: use a tool such as problem and opportunity trees to focus the need addressed.

Example for a problem and objective tree from the [European Commission](#)

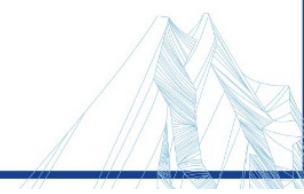


Step 2: Developing the Project Idea

Projects are need-driven: Start with the **why**. It is easier to explain **what** you are going to do, but people respond more enthusiastically when they understand the **why**.



Tip for finding your why: Your problem has an impact on people or the environment. Consider why solving it is important and the positive change you hope your project will bring.



Step 3: Thematic relevance - Does the Project Idea Fit the Strategy?

- Does the project contribute to the programme strategy (e.g. addresses a challenge relevant for the programme and contributes to one of the thematic focuses listed under each of the three open specific objectives of the current call)?
- Is there a contribution to the EU strategy for the Alpine region (EUSALP)?
- Has previous work been taken into account?
- Does the project introduce innovative solutions that go beyond existing practices?
- Does the project build on and implement already developed solutions?



Tip: Use the Alpine Space [project & output library](#) and [KEEP.eu](#) to see what Interreg has achieved in previous periods for inspiration.

Terms of Reference ([TOR](#))



[Project Manual:](#)

A.2 Required features for quality projects



Project Manual [Annexes:](#)

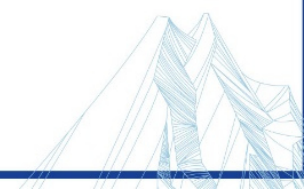


Step 4: Cooperation

Interreg's fundamental goal is increasing cohesion in Europe through territorial cooperation. It is therefore a fundamental requirement that all Alpine Space projects develop and pilot joint solutions for the Alpine area through a genuine transnational approach, also reflected in the structure of the partnership



Tip: the exact requirements for cooperation in an Alpine Space project can be found in the Programme Manual under chapter "A. Programme purpose and project quality requirements" and the Programme Manual Annex under Annex IIa.



[Partner search platform](#) (please register)



Step 5: Result Orientation - What Will the Project Change?

Interreg projects must be **result-oriented**. They should create a **sustainable, measurable, and meaningful** change for the target groups.



Tip: focus on the territorial change and impact that your project will create

Summary: What You Have Achieved as a Project Applicant

- ✓ You have identified a **joint need**.
- ✓ You have explained the **why** behind your project.
- ✓ You have ensured that the project aligns with the **programme strategy**.
- ✓ You have made the project **result-oriented**.
- ✓ You have **collaborated** with partners and refined the project idea.
- ✓ You have identified the **target groups**.
- ✓ The **partnership** has been strengthened, and teamwork has begun.

Interlude: guiding questions

When developing a project, the project idea owners must remember to give the programme a comprehensive overview of their idea in the Application Form. On this basis, the programme will assess the proposals along quality criteria and decide whether or not to co-finance the project. It is therefore important that the information is logical and coherent.



In order to provide such an overview, you need to answer these 'basic' questions:



The intervention logic group:

1. **Objectives:** WHY? Why do we need this project?
2. **Target groups:** for WHOM? Who will benefit from this project?
3. **Result and outputs:** WHAT change? In what way will the situation change (improve)?

The intervention logic

Must be linked to the programme's intervention logic.

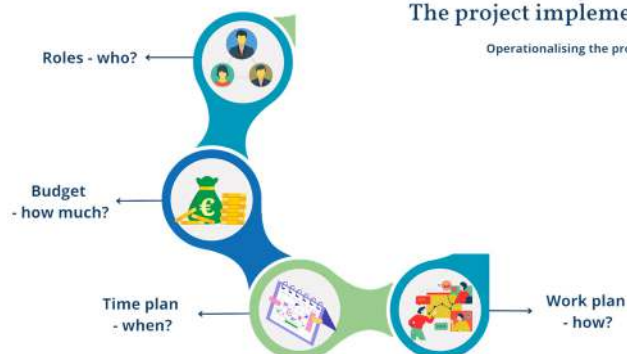


The operational elements group:

1. **Work plan:** HOW? How will we do this?
2. **Time plan:** WHEN? When will we do this?
3. **Budget:** HOW MUCH? How much will it cost?
4. **Roles (partnership):** WHO? Who do we need to do this?

The project implementation

Operationalising the project



The application procedure of an Alpine Space classic call is organised in two steps:

- In **step 1**, projects shall provide information on the partnership, overall objective, the project relevance and context and the draft work plan.
- Details on the activities per work package (WP), the planned deliverables and a detailed time line will be requested in **step 2** only.

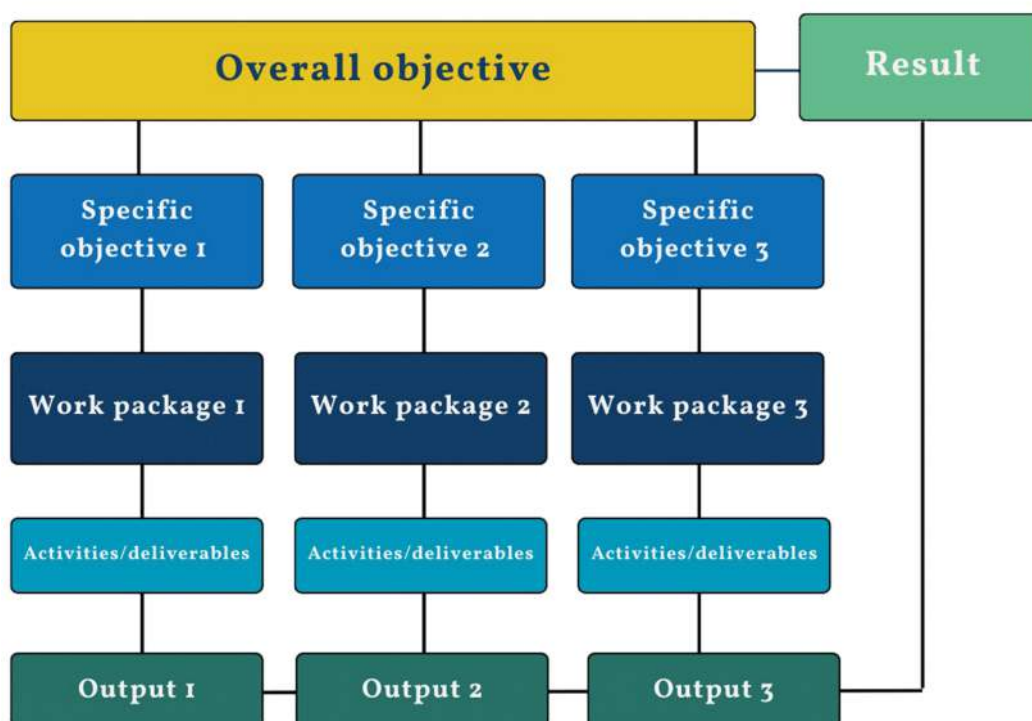
The application form guidance for step 1 and 2 can be found in the [Programme Manual Annex Ia](#).

Please also refer to the Programme Manual Annex IIa: Selection criteria for Classic projects

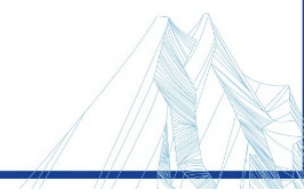
The intervention logic:

The intervention logic of a programme can be represented figuratively as the 'brain' of the project. This is where all the logical and organisational details are defined.

The intervention logic of the programme should be reflected in the intervention logic of the project. Each project applying to an Interreg programme should therefore define outputs and results that will feed into the programme output indicators and the programme result indicators.



This graphic gives you an overview of the intervention logic of your project. The following points are relevant in application step 1: **Overall objective**, **Result**, **Specific objectives**, **Output**.



Please remember that it is nevertheless important to keep an eye on the overall picture, even if not all information has to be provided in the first step of the application.

Overall objective = represents the reason **why** you want to deliver this project - remember this is always your starting point! It provides the overall context for what the project is aiming to achieve

Result = Description of the immediate benefit of achieving the project's **overall objective**. Direct effect of the project, formulated as an improvement in a condition, formulated as a **statement** describing an improvement of a state or a condition. **Results are the measurement of your project's overall objectives**

Specific objectives = The **overall objective** is broken down into specific objectives. They represent the link between the overall objective and the actual work of the project. They require the use and production of **outputs** to be fulfilled

Work package = Each work package has both a **specific objective** and a **communication objective (step 2)**, because communication is rooted in all aspects of the project. The work package can deliver an **output** as its final product. It produces the **output** by carrying out project **activities**.

Activities/deliverables = Each **work package** consists of activities that can produce **deliverables**, which are a way of documenting that the activities took place. The activities must be carried out in a logical order because there are often several dependencies between them. Thus they also require detailed coordination.

Output = They are the products of the **activities**. They represent the fulfilment of the **specific-** and/or **communication objectives**. Outputs consist of products or actions created with project funding. An output is a “tool” that must be created to obtain the desired result (change). **Outputs are the measurement of your project's specific objectives.**



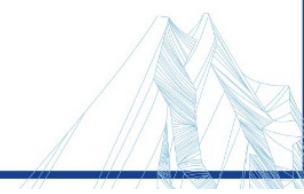
Tip: Your project needs to be result orientated! In step 2, when completing a work package, start with the outputs and think what activities you need to achieve them.

☹ Drafting a project from the activities leads to an artificial project with a weak foundation

☺ Drafting a project from the needs leads to a result-oriented project with a strong foundation.

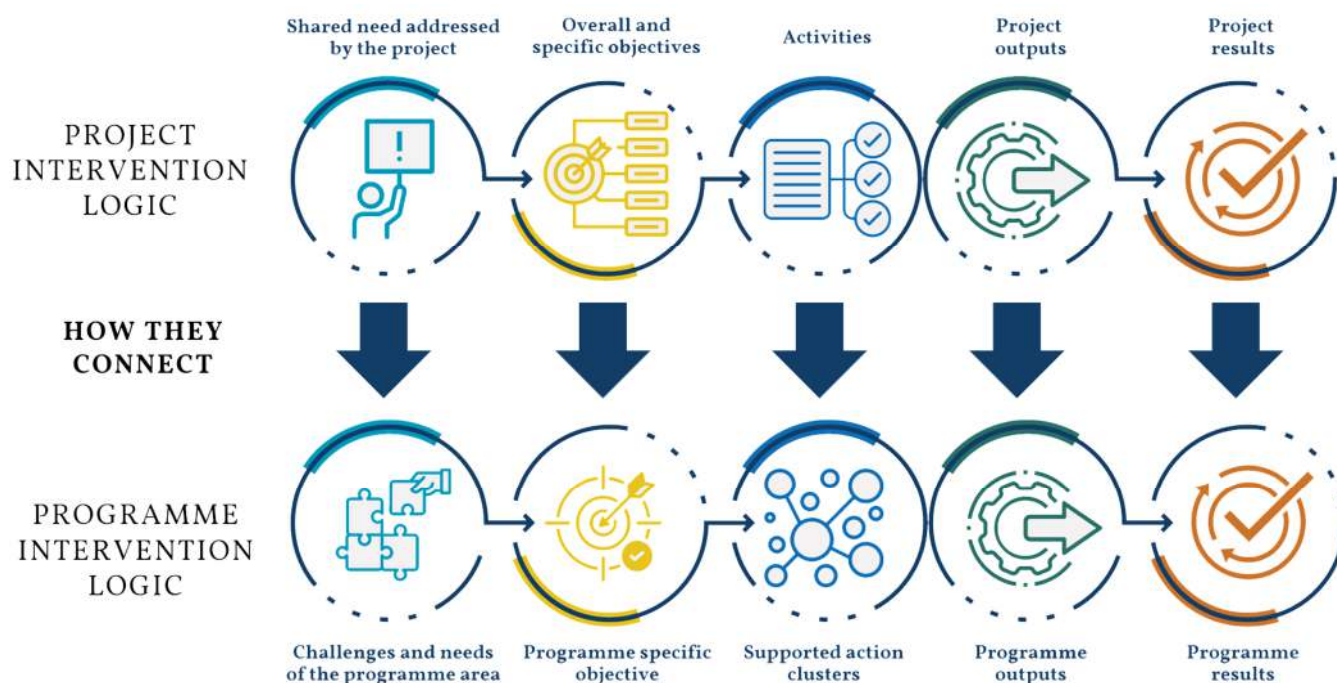


Tip: Stories and values often have a greater communication impact than facts and plans. For more information, refer to D.4 Project communication in the Programme Manual.



Next step: linking the project to the programme intervention logic

The programme intervention logic should be mirrored by the project's intervention logic:



Each project applying in an Interreg programme should be able to define outputs and results that will feed into the programme output indicators and programme result indicators.