

Implementing a Cross-regional Support scheme within the Alpine Region

- Call Implementation Time Table -

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List of acronyms and definitions

Programme Owner:	Ministries and/or other bodies, which are legally entitled to design, publish and fund calls. They can also decide on funding scope, budgeting and funding rules.
Participating Regions:	Transregional initiatives bundle a certain number of regions that are ready to participate in such an initiative. These regions can be represented by Ministries (Programme Owners) or respective Funding Agencies.
Funding Agencies:	Funding Agencies, often also called management authority, have the mandate to implement and operate dedicated funding programmes. They are normally in charge with operation aspects for programme implementation, like timing of calls, selection process of proposals or the financial management. They often work as an operational arm of the Programme Owner.
Collaborative Proposal:	Collaborative Proposals contain sub-proposals from various participating regions.
Multi-Level Governance:	A multi-level governance scheme contains mechanisms for cross-regional cooperation of interested parties. It defines rules on policy (programme owner) level, how to align policies to meet common objectives. It also contains procedures how funding of cross-regional activities is provided and managed. Finally, it sets framework conditions under which industry or academia can collaborate across borders.

1. INTRODUCTION

Alpine Space Macro Region was adopted to strengthen innovation and competitiveness by transforming economic structures through the identification of local excellence and by the development of new combinations of existing capacities. Recent experience gained in Interreg-projects like S3-4AlpClusters, CirculAlps or TRANSALP shows that on one side multi-national governance structures for focused cooperation among Alpine Regions are critically missing. There is a persistent funding gap for cross-regional research, development and innovation (RDI) projects within the Alpine Region targeting regional priorities of particular relevance. On the other side, Alpine Regions must inter-link their local assets and individual excellent capacities to address grand challenges in future European RDI. Dynamic areas with significant impact are related to megatrends in circular-bioeconomy and health-economy (CBH) that will tremendously affect the way of our status-quo economy¹.

Nevertheless, there is an increasing understanding that cross-regional cooperation would advance regional competitiveness while bundling critical mass and competences on one side, but also minimising duplication and fragmentation of publicly funded activities across the Alpine Region in the other. In fact, increasing cooperation in innovation investments across regions is supported by the so-called outward-looking dimension that is generally expected to be present in upcoming smart specialisation strategies (RIS3). This dimension calls for possible complementarities with other regions, inside and outside the Alpine Region. However, what sounds rational and easy in theory causes significant issues in day-to-day practice. Currently, funding schemes and related governance structures are not prepared to encourage cross-regional cooperation.

Concerning cross-national funding schemes, Alpine Regions do not have many possibilities to influence the programme design and consequently the scope of the call. Furthermore, the current INTERREG Alpine Space support scheme is ending. Consequently, there is no modality currently in place where a group of Alpine Regions' entities can decide to support R&D or innovation in Bioeconomy or Health-economy across regions. Analysis and recent experiences show that one of the main reasons for this funding gap are missing multi-regional governance structures for cross-regional cooperation in S3-implementation that could serve as facilitator for cross-regional cooperation².

That is where ARDIA-Net comes into play, which aims to develop a multi-level, multi-national, coherent RDI area for the Alpine Region. ARDIA shall contribute to improve the framework conditions for cross-regional and cross-sectoral cooperation addressing common economic opportunities. ARDIA shall help regions to jointly design and implement a cross-regional funding framework and adjacent demonstrator projects targeting the development of the Alpine Region for future cross-border implementation of regional strategies, providing crucial solutions to macro-regional governance in support of sustainable development, knowledge transfer and innovation in the Alpine Region.

While none of the Consortium Partners of ARDIA-Net is a public funding party, ARDIA-Net's approach needs to rely on resources and motivation of the authorities (Programme Owners) of the regions and nations, and those agencies that fund RDI in the respective regions.

However, ARDIA-Net is determined to promote a process that evolves into cross-regional research and innovation calls and projects. The proposed descriptive analysis and assessment shall support ARDIA-NET in its considerations about a feasible approach to facilitate cross-regional funding.

¹ For more information regarding the project under <https://www.alpine-space.eu/projects/ardia-net/en/about/objectives/specific-objectives>.

² Dermastia, M. and Osvald, D. (2018), Study to Prepare A Synchronised Funding Scheme For Bioeconomy Development In The Alpine Region. Interreg AlpGov.

2. PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following chapters provide some ideas on how an Alpine Region Call can be implemented. It has to be pointed out that this is only a potential implementation plan, which has to be adapted and completed by the ARDIA-Net Partners. Such a plan is not mandatory part of a multi-level governance scheme, but helps to manage its implementation. It might also help interested regions, which are not yet part of the ARDIA-Net to better demonstrate how responsibilities and tasks shall be split among the Call Partners.

2.1 Summary

2.1.1 PAN-ALPS Call 1

The PAN-ALPS Call 1 intends to facilitate cross-regional collaboration within the Alpine Region. The rationale for the Call is:

HERE THE ARDIA-Net Consortium will name the rationale, main reason and intention targeted with the Call 1.

2.1.2 Participating Regional Funding Partners

List of Partners

Partners, Roles, Programmes and Funding Commitment

Partner Number	Partner Name	Regional/ local Scope	Funding Programme	Representation in Consortium Body (Steering Committee, Working Group)
1 (coordinator)				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				

2.1.3 Activities & Labour Division

Partner Number *	Partner short name	Activities involved	Effort (Person months)	Financial Contribution/ Contracting volume (including "in-kind")
1 (coordinator)				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				

2.2. Vision & Scope

PAN-ALPS Call 1 will be a driver for **developing a strong Alpine Region Research and Innovation Community** on **#topic call 1#** and for **strengthening the Alpine Regional economy** with respect to the challenges of the 21st century. Building on previous preparatory coordination work, ARDIA-Net's PAN-ALPS Call 1 will be a **highly ambitious network** involving a set of Alpine Region Partners.

2.2.1 Scope and Benefits Targeted

ARDIA-Net is *the network* of key players to facilitate cross-regional cooperation in research and innovation. The PAN-ALPS Call1 will **increase cooperation and synergies** between these Partners and related regions, and secure **durable, long-term cooperation** between these key actors.

Clear **added value** will be generated for the Alpine Region Innovation Community and related industry by raising their potential, by providing access to know how, by meeting the needs of the Cross-Alps economy and by identifying synergies with leading countries and regions worldwide to encourage further international cooperation in fields of strategic interest.

Promotion of research in #topic call 1# with an interdisciplinary and flexible approach.

The **novel cooperation framework** will be well-suited for **flexible networking in variable geometry in a sustainable manner**. Utilising the PAN-ALPS Call1 will establish a cooperation model for call implementation, which should reduce the duplication of efforts and allow coverage of future topics in related thematic areas.

This first Call will be widely promoted among the target groups. It will reflect the priorities, needs and challenges identified at Alpine Region levels, thus opening an **attractive and efficient tool** for cross-regional research and innovation **with low administrative efforts**. This will help to **overcome barriers to enter cross-regional cooperation, in particular for SMEs**. The multi-level governance scheme set-up by ARDIA-Net and the Call Partners will enable knowledge transfer not only along the research and innovation chain, but also across application fields.

Efficient and innovative implementation of joint activities are based on best practices. Efficiency of this Call and possibly following further joint activities operated in a variable geometry approach will be

ensured by a service provider philosophy, building especially on experiences from previous partnerships as well as best practices.

Generation of knowledge and exploitation along the innovation chain will strengthen the competitiveness of the Cross-Alps economy and the Cross-Alps Research Area.

The Thematic structure of the Call is in line with the individual regional innovation strategies of the Consortium Partners:

The **S3** (or similar strategies) of the Consortium Partners will be the basis for defining the scope of this Call and related activities. Making best use of the **interdisciplinary ARDIA network** will facilitate the **generation of knowledge along the innovation chain**, from high-level science and research to innovative industrial applications. ARDIA-Net's intention is to make best use of its decentralised network by providing close contact between regional funding organisations and respective clients to optimise the impact of PAN-ALPS Call 1.

ARDIA-NET will support the broad implementation of excellence and decisive knowledge for innovation, **enhancing the competitiveness of the Cross-Alps economy**. High quality and business-led proposals are expected to lead towards **commercialisation of innovative technologies**.

This will further enable the rapid dissemination of research results and exploiting the scientific, technological and innovative **impact of public investment** in innovation, thereby inducing substantial progress and major innovation in #topic call 1#.

2.2.2 Objectives

The PAN-ALPS Call aims to fund **1** projects with a total volume of **xxx.xxx** Euro. The main objectives are

HERE **THE ARDIA Net Consortium will name the main objectives targeted with the Call 1**

2.3 Description of Work

The work will consist of the following packages, embedded in the proprietary regional strategic innovation systems and programmes activities:

Work packages and tasks
WP 1: NETWORK COORDINATION
Task 1.1.: Network Consortium Agreement & Governance (Network Secretariat)
Task 1.2.: Call Coordination: Time Table, Budget Commitments, Activities and Infrastructures
Task 1.3.: Communication
Task 1.4.: Dialogue for sustainability
WP 2: CALL IMPLEMENTATION
Task 2.1.: Design and preparation of joint call
Task 2.2.: Operation of joint calls
Task 2.3.: Co-Monitoring of funded projects

2.3.1 Work Package 1

Work Package 1: Network Coordination

Participant no.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Participant short name (lead in bold)										
Effort WP1 (Person Months)										

Objectives:

The Partners will set up a professional network structure for efficient and effective project coordination and contract management to ensure the delivery of the agreed objectives. Communication and dissemination will be a major effort.

WP1 consists of 4 major tasks:

- 1) Network Consortium Agreement management; monitoring the compliance with rules laid out in the Consortium Agreement
- 2) Coordination of time table, ensuring of budget commitments, activities and infrastructures providing a working structure, coordinate & support execution of work plan & activities
- 3) Communication amongst the Call Partners
- 4) Dialogue for sustainability

Description of Work

Task 1.1: Network Consortium Agreement & Governance (“Network Secretariat”)

The task representation will ensure that all formal agreements are followed and will collect or compile respective records.

This task includes:

- Execution of consortium agreement matters; overseeing the proper implementation of governance procedures
In specific, the following meetings will be organised:
 - Steering Board: One Meeting to agree on call topics and indicative budgets, one meeting to agree on call time schedule, one meeting for project decision, one meeting for sustainability dialogue
 - Working Group: at least four meetings, each preceding the steering board meetings
- Budget/financial management of implementation plan, financial reporting
- Compilation of documentation where applicable (brief reports of activities and effort estimations by Consortium Partners)

Monitoring includes the compilation of information about the reached status of activities and payments in comparison to the plan, to communicate to the Steering board and to propose action where applicable.

An internal website will be set up and used as a central element of the communication between Project Partners. All reports, results and relevant material will be accessible to all Partners at all times.

Task 1.2: Call Coordination: Time Table, Activities and Infrastructures

The task representation will oversee an effective and efficient execution of the contract and work programme to budget and schedule and provide a working structure, which ensures optimum involvement of all Partners according to their commitments and the needs in view of efficacy and efficiency of the PAN-ALPS Call 1.

This includes the overall responsibility for and organisation of:

- A more detailed implementation time and action plan
- Basic rules for impartiality in design and implementation of the call
- The general set up of the Call Secretariat and the IT used therefore
- (Optional) proposal of tasks for a communication office to be established
- The overall Call time plan (in cooperation with the Call Secretariat)
- The specification of interfaces with pre- and post-call activities of ARDIA-Net and the Call Partners, as well as for aligning activities

Task 1.3: Communication

Internal communication

The management **communication among Partners (content, frequency, distribution, and media) will be planned** at the very beginning of the project and endorsed by the Working Group.

This may include the definition of tasks for a **communication office** to be **established** and operated in close contact with the Call secretariat, dedicated to external communication.

External communication

Communication will support the implementation of the PAN-ALPS Call 1 by raising the interest of target groups in the innovation communities, and by acting as a communication node for all stakeholders of the Call.

However, promoting the Call to the target communities in the Alpine Regions will remain a task of the Consortium Partners for their regions, utilising their usual channels to reach their target groups. The PAN-ALPS Call 1 website will be used as one central element of the promotion of calls. Public information will include information on funding programmes such as eligibility criteria and funding conditions.

Task 1.4: Dialogue for Sustainability

The Network coordination will include a task dedicated to potentials for future cooperation. Therefore, all Call and Implementation Partners and further stakeholders will be invited to discuss the experience of the Call with a perspective for further joint action – calls or any other innovation support activity.

2.3.2 Work Package 2: Call Implementation

Participant no.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Country										
Participant short name										
WP2										

Objectives

Implementation will build on good practices compiled by the ERA-NET Learning Platform.

Main tasks will include:

- Call design & preparation
- Call operation
- Monitoring of calls & funded projects

Description of Work

Task 2.1: Design and preparation of joint call

The task lead will, in due cooperation with Working Group and Lead WP1, during the project:

- Further detail the tasks of the call secretariat and other functions necessary for the call implementation, as well as the project external actors and specify interfaces/labour division
- Design (and develop/adopt) a submission system and/or contract it and ensure proper functionality
- Further detail the call time table in cooperation with the Call secretariat
- Prepare and propose the call documents
- Design and propose evaluation and selection procedures

The Working Group will agree on the details of the Call secretariat and the detailed call timetable.

The Steering Board will confirm the compliance with national/regional regulations and endorse the (phase 2) evaluation and selection procedures.

Task 2.2.: Operation of the Call

A Call secretariat will handle the submission and proposal evaluation platform, and organise the handling of proposals, as well as the communication with the proposers.

The call secretariat will implement the call, it will:

- Launch calls
- Maintain a central service & contact point for applicants (central questions)
- Communicate options for Partners
- Run and maintain the submission & evaluation IT Platform
- Appoint and guide evaluators
- Support the evaluation & selection process (technical questions, forms)
- Prepare feedback letters to applicants
- Compile call results (rating list)

Task 2.3. Co-Monitoring of funded projects

The monitoring of sub-projects will be realised by the funding programmes responsible in their respective regions, each for their respective sub-project.

However, where information needs to be shared with relevance for the project as a whole or other sub-projects financed by other regions, a simple IT-based coordination tool shall be applied to bring the respective parties in touch with each other when necessary. In the simplest way feasible, the progress of work will be reported to the Call office in order to keep track of the proceeding and finalisation of projects as selected and funded.

2.4 Consortium Budget: Efforts, Payment – and Contribution Plan

Call Implementation – efforts and additional financing

Table 1: Effort

Participant no.	Region / Country	Participant short name	Tasks WP1	Tasks WP2	Effort Total person months	Of which in-kind contribution	Of which subject to additional financing (Euro)
1							
2							
3							
...n							
Total							

Table 2: Additional financing contribution and payment

Participant no.	Country	Participant short name	Additional financing (to be paid to coordinator)	Dates and amounts of instalments
1				
2				
3				
...n				
Total				

2.5 Call Budget

Indicative Budget commitments for financing of regional participating funding Partners is displayed in the table below.

Table 3: Indicative Call Budgets

Participant no.	Country	Programme short name	Envisaged number of project participations (range)	Indicative Budget committed (total in Euro, max. or range)
1				
2				
3				
Total				

ARDIA-Net Partners

