

Implementing a Cross-regional Support scheme within the Alpine Region

- Sample MoU -

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List of acronyms and definitions

Programme Owner	Ministries and/or other bodies, that 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 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 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 show 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 impact 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 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 strategy (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 coming to an end. 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 reason 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.

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.

While none of the consortium partners of ARDIA-Net are public funding parties, 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 Research, Development and Innovation (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.

2. SAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The intention of such Memorandum of Understanding is to gain a certain kind of commitment from interested regional funding partners as well as an indication of the budget (funding) they are willing to contribute with. Text marked in yellow has to be adapted according to the specific circumstances.

Memorandum of Understanding

Partner organisation:

Regional funding programme:.....

is willing to participate in the xxx-xxx Call1.

[] A budget of EUR xxx.xxx has been reserved.

The eligibility check and the final funding decisions will be made by the partner organisation according to national/regional procedures and regulations.

All information related to the projects will be kept confidential and not used for any other purpose than evaluation of the application, making a funding decision and monitoring of the project.

For this collaborative activity Mr./Mrs. will be our contact person; contact data:

Legally authorised representative_____

Name_____

Function_____

Date_____

Signature_____

ARDIA-Net Partners

