



2nd round of the Call for Small Project Fund Umbrella Projects

in the frame of the
INTERREG V-A SLOVAKIA-HUNGARY
COOPERATION PROGRAMME

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1. Introduction

The Hungarian Prime Minister's Office acting as the Managing Authority of the Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary Cooperation Programme and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic acting as the National Authority are announcing the second round of the Call for Small Project Fund Umbrella Projects in the frame of the Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary Cooperation Programme (hereinafter also Cooperation Programme or CP).

The Small Project Fund (hereinafter also SPF) is a tool serving the implementation of small scale cross border actions financed from the budget of the Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary Cooperation Programme. The SPF will be implemented on western and eastern part of the eligible programme area through two umbrella projects financed under Priority Axis 1 - Nature and culture and two umbrella projects financed under Priority Axis 4 - Enhancing cross-border cooperation of public authorities and people. The aims of the SPF and specific objectives of the Priority Axes are explained in detail in the [Cooperation Programme](#) document.

2. Aim of the Call

As a result of the first round of the Call for Small Project Fund Umbrella Projects all together four Umbrella Project proposals were approved by the Monitoring Committee (hereinafter also MC) to be responsible for management of the Small Project Fund in the framework of the Interreg V-A SKHU Programme. The aim of the second round of the Call is to invite the successful applicants to further develop their Umbrella Project proposals and deliver guiding documents related to the management and implementation of the Small Project Fund within the Programme.

3. Type of the Call

The second round of the Call for Small Project Fund Umbrella Projects [Call] is **restricted** to only those applicants whose Umbrella Project proposals were approved by the Monitoring Committee in the first round of the Small Project Fund Umbrella Projects selection process.

4. Timeframe of the Call

The Call was launched on 01/08/2017 with the deadline for submission of the required documents by 31/08/2017.

5. Eligible applicants

Due to restricted character of the Call, only those applicants are eligible to further develop and submit the project proposals whose application forms were approved by the Monitoring Committee in the first round of the Call for the Small Project Fund Umbrella Projects, namely the following partnerships:

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----|---|
| SKHU/1701/1.1/001 | LB: | Európske zoskupenie územnej spolupráce Via Carpatia, s.r.o |
| | B2: | Košický samosprávny kraj |
| | B3: | Széchenyi Programiroda Nonprofit Kft. |
| SKHU/1701/1.1/002 | LB: | Rába - Duna - Vág Korlátolt Felelősségű Európai Területi Társulás |
| | B2: | Trnavský samosprávny kraj |
| | B3: | Széchenyi Programiroda Nonprofit Kft. |
| SKHU/1701/4.1/003 | LB: | Európske zoskupenie územnej spolupráce Via Carpatia, s.r.o |
| | B2: | Košický samosprávny kraj |
| | B3: | Széchenyi Programiroda Nonprofit Kft. |
| SKHU/1701/4.1/004 | LB: | Rába - Duna - Vág Korlátolt Felelősségű Európai Területi Társulás |
| | B2: | Trnavský samosprávny kraj |
| | B3: | Széchenyi Programiroda Nonprofit Kft. |

Project proposals submitted from other applicants will be automatically rejected at the step of administrative assessment.

In each partnership two Umbrella projects are to be implemented: one in Priority axes 1 and one in Priority axes 4. As the Small Project Fund will be implemented on western and eastern part of the eligible programme area, altogether 4 Umbrella Projects will be realized.



Following the condition emphasized in the first round of the Call for the SPF Umbrella Projects, both partnerships of the approved SPF project proposals have to work in close cooperation in setting up the management of the SPF using same mutually agreed rules, implementation procedures and processes ensuring same conditions for the applicants in the whole programme eligible area.

Under the provisions of this Call, both partnerships of all four approved SPF Umbrella Projects are required to elaborate one common package of the mandatory documents to be submitted to this Call. The package of mandatory documents shall mutually apply for all four Umbrella Projects, both partnership of the Umbrella Projects as well as both Priority Axes concerned by implementation of the SPF. For more information please refer to Chapter 8 and 9 of this Call.

6. Principles for realization of the Umbrella Projects

Main postulates for realization of the Umbrella Projects

The Umbrella Projects serve the implementation of small projects within the Small Project Fund financed from the Interreg V-A SK-HU Programme's budget. Small projects supported in the framework of the SPF must contribute to fulfilment of the Programme's goals and objectives and output indicators¹ relevant for the Priority Axes.

The financial support provided for smaller local initiatives within the SPF should form the basis for further common cross-border initiatives on bigger scale. Within the SPF there is a possibility for realization of investment type of activities which must be connected to the soft activities implemented in the small project. The investment activity itself cannot be the sole aim of the small project realization.

Lead Beneficiary and Beneficiaries of the Umbrella Projects are obliged to make every effort in order to use the financial allocation available for the SPF in the frame of the Programme to its maximum amount and in case of necessity to take the remedy actions. The Umbrella Project LB monitors the overall implementation of the Umbrella Project and bears the responsibility for its sound realization. If any delay in the implementation of the Umbrella Project occurs or is foreseen and/or arising savings are recognized, the Umbrella Project LB informs the JS and MA and with no delay takes the necessary remedy actions. Not undertaking the remedy actions can mean the bases for decreasing

¹ The objectives and indicators are available in the 1st round of the Call for the Small Project Fund Umbrella Projects: <http://www.skhu.eu/call-for-proposals/call-for-small-project-fund-umbrella-projects>

the financial allocation for the Umbrella Project including the management costs of the Umbrella Project Beneficiaries by the Monitoring Committee.

Scope of activities in the Umbrella Project

The Umbrella Project LB is responsible for the overall implementation of the Umbrella Project including the activities of the Umbrella Projects Beneficiaries, the Monitoring Subcommittee as well as the actors involved in the evaluation of the small project proposals. The Umbrella project LB and Umbrella Project Beneficiaries will agree on arrangements of their cooperation, duties and obligations in the Partnership Agreement which has to be signed by all partners involved in the Umbrella Project partnership.

Main tasks and obligations of the Umbrella Project LB and Umbrella Project Beneficiaries are as follows:

Preparation of the implementation documents for the beneficiaries of the small projects

- ✓ Call for small project proposals
- ✓ Applicant`s Manual containing
 - Priorities and objectives of the Call for Small Project Proposals;
 - Exhaustive list of eligible activities to be carried out by small projects;
 - Eligibility criteria for applicants: legal requirements, territorial, sectorial, professional, financial criteria, exclusion criteria, partnership requirements;
 - Cross-border cooperation criteria (joint planning, implementation, staffing and financing);
 - Project development requirements: intervention logic, target groups, project duration, indicators, horizontal principles, information and publicity, general eligibility rules for expenditures
 - Submission procedure: submission rules, requirements for Annexes to the Application form, etc.;
 - Selection procedure
 - Model of financing of small projects with possibilities for pre-financing small projects if relevant;
 - Principles for handling the state aid on the level of small projects;
 - Description of handling complaints;
- ✓ Assessment grids: administrative, eligibility and quality assessment grids
- ✓ Application form template and templates for annexes if applicable
- ✓ Subsidy contract template
- ✓ Partnership contract template
- ✓ Visibility guide for small projects (in line with the Visibility guide of the Programme)
- ✓ Guide on eligible expenditures for small projects (in line with the Guide on eligible expenditures of the Programme) with obligatory introduction of the simplified costs options for the small project beneficiaries
- ✓ Small Projects Beneficiaries' Implementation Manual with all relevant templates (beneficiary report, project report, application for reimbursement, request for modification, follow up report, etc.) describing the processes and mechanisms leading to successful implementation of the small projects focusing on the following topics:
 - Responsibilities and tasks of the small project partners (respecting the Lead Beneficiary and partnership principle)
 - Contractual procedure
 - Principles for handling the modifications on the small project level

- Requirements for reporting (beneficiaries reports and project reports) and monitoring (during the implementation and in the sustainability period including the principles of monitoring visits to small projects implementation sites)
- Model of financing and reimbursement procedures
- Small projects closure
- Principles for sustainability
- Principles for handling the revenues generating small projects
- Principles for monitoring the state aid on the level of small projects
- Decommitment of funds, etc.

Launching the calls for small project proposals, evaluation and selection of the small projects

- ✓ Preparation and launching the calls for the small project proposals;
- ✓ Carrying out formal (administrative and eligibility) and quality evaluation (either by own staff of the Umbrella Project LB or by external assessors) of the small project proposals;
- ✓ Ensuring unified methodology of small projects evaluation, objective and consistent approach of all parties involved in the small projects evaluation process;
- ✓ Preparation of ranking lists (including lists of approved small projects, lists of small projects approved with condition/s and lists of rejected small projects) and their submission for approval to the Monitoring Subcommittee (hereinafter also MSC);
- ✓ Organization of the Monitoring Subcommittee meetings;
- ✓ Setting up the complaints handling system related to discrepancy between the evaluation process of small project and procedures described in the calls for the small project proposals;
- ✓ Concluding the subsidy contracts with the small projects Lead Beneficiaries;

Ensuring sound implementation of the Umbrella Project

- ✓ Setting up processes and procedures ensuring efficient monitoring of implementation of small projects;
- ✓ Analysing, examination and approval of changes in small projects in line with the procedures described in the Small Projects Beneficiaries' Implementation Manual;
- ✓ Monitoring of the implementation the Umbrella Project's relevant part, and in case of Umbrella Project LB overall monitoring of the Umbrella Project;
- ✓ Setting up databases of small project monitoring and keeping them complex and up to date for any ad hoc necessary reports requested by the Managing Authority (MA) / National Authority (NA) / Joint Secretariat (JS);
- ✓ Informing the MA about the status of Umbrella Project implementation in a predefined form on quarterly bases;
- ✓ Ensuring that the costs requested by the small project beneficiaries submitted for reimbursement are eligible, among others by the means of:
 - Financial control of the costs included in the small project partners reports according to the records and requested obligatory attachments, approval of fulfilment of indicators set for the small project, control of the correctness of the public procurement process carried out by the small project beneficiaries,
 - On the spot checks at the small projects implementation sites;
- ✓ Issuing the certificate on eligibility of costs (in written format) based on the small project partners reports and correct implementation of activities and indicators listed in the small project application form, according to the location of the small project beneficiary (for small project beneficiaries located in Hungary the certificated is issued by the Umbrella Project Beneficiary in Hungary – SZPI and for small project beneficiaries located in Slovakia the certificated is issued by the Umbrella Project Beneficiary in Slovakia – VÚC);

- ✓ Submission of the applications for reimbursement on behalf of the Umbrella Project to the JS (responsibility of the Umbrella Project LB);
- ✓ Monitoring of the state aid provided to the small project beneficiaries;
- ✓ The Umbrella Project LB receives the ERDF contribution from the Programme account in EUR which without any delay must be forwarded to the other Umbrella Project Beneficiaries and to the small project Lead Beneficiaries in line with the approved amounts;
- ✓ In case there was an unduly paid amount reimbursed on the level of the Umbrella Project or small project due to ineligible costs or violated subsidy contract provisions, the Umbrella Project LB returns back to the programme account the financial resources unduly paid. The Umbrella Project LB receives these financial resources back from the Umbrella Project Beneficiary or small project beneficiary at whom the irregularity has been detected;
- ✓ Performing the role of personal data administrator of the small projects which are processed in paper documents or electronically in line with the personal data protection law.

Communication and propagation

- ✓ Propagation of the Umbrella Project focused on dissemination of information about the results of the small projects in and out of the programme eligible area;
- ✓ Contribution to achieving the goals defined in the programme [Communication strategy](#);
- ✓ Organization of the *information days* for the small project applicants with special focus on organizations without previous experience with the cross-border cooperation in order to activate these subjects, providing *consultation* opportunities for potential small project applicants and support in searching for foreign small project partners, organization of *trainings* for the small project beneficiaries;
- ✓ Providing consultations for potential small project applicants and proving support in searching for foreign small project partners;
- ✓ Preparation of necessary information based on the request of the MA, NA, JS, Monitoring Committee and Monitoring Subcommittee, among others developing the annual reports about the status of Umbrella Project implementation as an input to the Annual Implementation Reports of the Programme;
- ✓ Making the outputs from the implementation of the Umbrella Project and small projects available for the MA, NA and JS with consent of their further usage by the MA, NA and JS and their propagation in any form and in any media;
- ✓ Creating own Umbrella Project website for the purpose of making all relevant information related to the implementation of the Small Project Fund available for public with reference to the original programme website;
- ✓ Provide support for Beneficiaries to complete their communication tasks;
- ✓ Preparation of regular communication report for the MA, NA, JS, providing information on ad hoc basis, as well if asked so;
- ✓ Upload all mandatory project data and project info into the project database available on the official website of the programme (www.skhu.eu).



Main tasks and obligations listed above shall be reflected in the ruling documents in a detailed, precise and auditable way, those ruling documents shall be approved by the Monitoring Committee/Monitoring Subcommittee according to its rules of procedure. It is strongly recommended that the Joint Implementation Plan should describe the type of ruling documents as well including those tasks and obligations listed above.

Umbrella Project approval and contracting procedure

In case the Monitoring Committee approves the Umbrella Project proposal, the Lead Beneficiary signs the Subsidy contract for the implementation of the Umbrella Project with the Managing Authority. Lead Beneficiaries conclude the Subsidy contract with the Managing Authority only for the ERDF funding of the Umbrella Project.

A national co-financing contract in Slovakia is signed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic as National Authority with the Umbrella Project LB/Beneficiary having seat in Slovakia. If there is more than one Slovak Project Partner involved in the Umbrella Project partnership, these appoint one organization among themselves to fulfil the role of the Main cross-border beneficiary who will contract the Slovak national co-financing for all Slovak Beneficiaries involved in the Umbrella Project partnership.

Hungarian Umbrella Project Beneficiaries have to conclude a related National co-financing contract with the Prime Minister's Office in Hungary or with the relevant institutions to which this task is delegated. The national co-financing is provided from the Hungarian State budget automatically after the signing of the Subsidy contract.

The conclusion of the Subsidy contract for ERDF funding is a prerequisite to signing the National co-financing contracts. The signed Subsidy contract will be forwarded to the National Authority in Slovakia and to the relevant institutions in Hungary by MA/JS.

Partnership Agreement

At the stage of contracting, the Declaration on partnership submitted with the Umbrella Project Application form in the first round of the selection process will be replaced by a Partnership Agreement which has to be signed by each Umbrella Project Beneficiary. The Partnership Agreement shall govern the internal management of the Umbrella Project by setting out the responsibilities of the Umbrella Project Beneficiaries towards one another, including how they will ensure the sound financial management within the Umbrella Project. Signature of the Partnership Agreement is a precondition to signature of the Subsidy Contract.

Publishing of the Calls for the small projects

After the approval of the Umbrella Project by the Monitoring Committee and after the Declaration on Commitment is issued by the MA but before signing the Subsidy Contract, the Umbrella Project LB can launch the Call for the small project proposals. After signing the Subsidy Contract the Call for the small project proposals shall be immediately launched. The timeframe of the call, its content and the documentation listed in Chapter 6 part "*Preparation of the implementation documents for the beneficiaries of the small projects*" of this Call is approved by the Monitoring Subcommittee. The MA, NA, JS, Information Points are informed about launching of the Call.

The standard Call should contain at least the following attributes:

- Name of institution/s publishing the Call
- Subject of the Call including the type of actions and type of beneficiaries relevant for the Call
- Description of the conditions of the Call concerning the financial limits - ERDF financial resources available in the Call and in the Priority Axes opened and minimum and maximum ERDF and overall eligible budget of projects
- Maximum ERDF contribution according to the type of beneficiary
- Deadline, address and form of submission of the application forms
- Applicant's package related to the Call.

The Umbrella Project LB publishes the Call on the official webpage of the Umbrella Project and on the Programme's webpage (through JS) as well as in media in Hungary and Slovakia (press media, electronic media, press agencies, etc.)

Submission of the Small Project Application forms

The small project application forms are submitted by the Small Project LB to the Umbrella Project LB. The small project application form must be submitted within the submission deadline indicated in the Call. The application forms are submitted bilingually, in Hungarian and in Slovak language, with a short project description in three languages – English, Hungarian and Slovak.

Small project application form and its annexes submitted after the deadline indicated in the Call are automatically rejected from the evaluation process. The applicant is informed about the exclusion of its application form in written by the Umbrella Project LB.

At the duration of the Call for Small Project Proposals the Umbrella Project LB is responsible for organizing information days for potential applicants. The information about the schedule of the information days is published on the Umbrella Project official website and JS is informed. The Umbrella Project LB provides consultations to the potential small project applicants and acts as intermediary in the process of foreign partners search for the small projects.

Each small project application form is registered upon submission. The registered application forms submitted within the deadline are forwarded to the administrative assessment.

In case savings from implementation of the small projects approved in a Call arise and the Monitoring Subcommittee didn't establish any reserve list of small projects under the given Call, these financial resources can be used either for launching a new Call for Small Project Proposals or reopening the Call in which the savings arose. If the latter one is applied, the information must be published on the official webpage of the Umbrella Project and the programme's website (through JS) stating the additional deadline for submission of the small project application forms. In case, a reserve list of approved small projects was established by the Monitoring Subcommittee, the small projects can be supported in the order in which they are listed on the reserve list based on the assigned scores until the savings are not used. If the reserve lists are not used, the Umbrella Project LB is obliged to find other means of securing the efficient usage of the Small Project Fund budget, e.g. by more frequently launched Calls for Small Project Proposals.

Evaluation of the Small project application forms

The Umbrella Project LB bears the responsibility for elaboration of methodology for evaluation of the small project application forms and for setting up the selection criteria for actors involved in the small project assessment process.

Minimum standards related to evaluation of the small projects proposals are as follows:

- ✓ The evaluation process consists of three steps: the administrative assessment (admissibility and completeness), the eligibility and the quality evaluation. The small project application forms can be forwarded to the further assessment steps under the condition that the criteria of the previous evaluation step was met.
- ✓ In every step of the evaluation process each small project proposal is assessed by two independent assessors.
- ✓ Assigning scores to small project proposal is applied during the quality assessment, not in the administrative and eligibility.
- ✓ The administrative assessment and the eligibility assessment are carried out by the Umbrella Project LB's own staff.

- ✓ The quality assessment is carried out either by the Umbrella Project LB's own staff or by external experts.
- ✓ The Umbrella Project LB is responsible for setting up the criteria for the quality assessors which must reflect the necessary qualification, working experience and impartiality.
- ✓ The Umbrella Project LB is responsible for the trainings of the quality assessors.
- ✓ The quality assessors carry out the quality assessment of the small project proposals based on the criteria published in the Applicant's package of the given Call for Small Project Proposals.
- ✓ The Umbrella Project LB is responsible for setting up the process to be applied for the cases when the evaluations of two independent experts and their scores assigned to a small project proposal significantly differ.
- ✓ Persons responsible for assessment of the small project proposals cannot participate at their selection.
- ✓ The ranking lists of small project proposals sorted in order according to the awarded scores are forwarded to the Monitoring Subcommittee as bases for decision making. The members and observers of the Monitoring Subcommittee receives the ranking lists, small project application forms and quality evaluation grids (without the identification data of assessors) in minimum 15 calendar days prior the respective meeting.

Selection of small project proposals

For the purpose of selecting the small project proposals the Monitoring Subcommittee is established. The Monitoring Subcommittee makes the decision about the approval or non-approval of each small project proposal included in the ranking list.

The composition, functions and organization of the Monitoring Subcommittee are stipulated in the Rules of Procedures of the Monitoring Subcommittee approved by the Monitoring Committee of the Interreg V-A SK-HU Programme.

Representatives of the Managing Authority, National Authority and JS are attending the Monitoring Subcommittee meetings in the role of observers. As the MA bears overall responsibility for the sound implementation of the Programme, its role of being the observer in the Monitoring Subcommittee is extended by having a veto right as to be specified in the Rules of Procedure.

The list of small project proposals approved by the Monitoring Subcommittee along with all other decisions undertaken by the Monitoring Subcommittee on its meetings including the reserve lists if established, must be published on the official website of the Umbrella Project as well as the official programme website (through JS).

Additionally, the Umbrella Project LB informs the applicants about the decision of the Monitoring Subcommittee, maximum amount of awarded funds and conditions for concluding the subsidy contract for the small project proposal in writing.

Contracting of the small project proposal

The Umbrella Project LB is responsible for concluding the subsidy contract with the Lead Beneficiary of the small project approved by the Monitoring Subcommittee. The contract is concluded based on the template published in the Applicant's package under the respective Call. The contracting procedure starts with no delay right after the decision on approval of the small project proposal was undertaken by the Monitoring Subcommittee.

7. Principles for realization of small projects

This chapter stipulates standards and principles obligatory for the Umbrella Project Beneficiaries when setting up and developing the implementation rules and documentation for the small projects.

Eligible applicants for small project

Location criteria

Applicants shall have their seats or a regional/local branch registered in the eligible programme area. Organisations which have registered local branch within the programme area, but have their headquarters outside thereof will be regarded as being located in the programme area provided it is the local branch office in the programme area which carries out the substantive work of the project.

In cases when the regional/local branch implementing the project is not a legal entity, the headquarters have to be identified officially as the responsible partner with indicating the existence and proving the registration of the regional/local branch inside the programme area.

Applicants not having their seat or a regional/local branch registered in the eligible programme area are ineligible.

Exclusion criteria

Applicants are eligible only if the following conditions are met:

- their legal personality is in accordance with the legislation of Slovakia and Hungary and are exclusively legal entities;
- they have their seat in the eligible programme area. However, exceptions can be possible in cases where the different organisational setup of an applicant makes it necessary;
- they have fulfilled their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions and/or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the Managing Authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- they are not bankrupt or being wound up, are not having their affairs administered by the courts, have not entered into an agreement with creditors, have not suspended business activities, are not the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are not in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- they have not been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of 'res iudicata';
- they have not been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Managing Authority or the National Authority can justify;
- they have not been the subject of a judgement which has the force of 'res iudicata' for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or for any other illegal activity detrimental to the Community's financial interests;
- they are not subject to a conflict of interests connected to their participation in the respective Call;
- they are not guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the MA/NA as a condition of participation in the Call or in failing to supply information;

- they have not attempted to obtain confidential information or to influence the Monitoring Subcommittee, Umbrella Project LB and/or Beneficiaries, MA/NA/JS or any actors involved in the assessment process in any Call.

Partnership criteria

Emphasising the cross-border aspect of the projects, eligible applicants have to act in partnership. Minimum requirement for the partnership is to have at least one Slovak partner and at least one Hungarian partner².

Partners in actions are required to have a declaration on partnership at the stage of submission of the application. Declaration on partnership is a compulsory attachment to the small project application form. In case when small project is selected for approval the Declaration is substituted by Partnership Agreement signed by every small project beneficiary acting in the partnership of approved small project proposal. The Partnership Agreement is attached to the Subsidy contract.

Small projects must meet the Lead partner principle. Small project beneficiaries shall nominate among themselves one partner fulfilling the role of Lead Beneficiary. Lead Beneficiary bears the responsibilities to represent and to mediate the whole small project. Rather than signing individual agreements with all small project beneficiaries, the Umbrella Project LB signs Subsidy contract with the small project Lead Beneficiary setting out the conditions for support for the entire small project.

Cooperation criteria

The Umbrella project LB ensures that the supported small project proposals fulfil the cross-border cooperation criteria:

Joint development: The project idea is jointly developed and planned by the small project partners.

Joint implementation: The activities, outputs and results are jointly carried out by the small project partners.

Joint staffing: All small project partners provide staff to support the project activities.

Joint financing: At least 5% of project budget is invested at each Beneficiary.

Small project partners are required to cooperate at least in three of these criteria. The Joint development and Joint implementation are obligatory for all small projects; the third can be either cooperation in the staffing or in the financing of the project. Beneficiaries are free to cooperate in all four areas³.

Duration of small projects

The maximum project duration of small project cannot be longer than 12 months. In exceptional and in written justified cases approved by the Umbrella Project LB and/or Monitoring Subcommittee the duration may be prolonged to maximum 18 months.

Small project beneficiaries may start the implementation of the project without a valid Subsidy contract on their own risk. The earliest possible day of starting the implementation of small project is the day

² In line with the Article 12 (3) Regulation No 1299/2013 of the Council and the European Parliament this requirement is automatically fulfilled by the organisations operated in the form of European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation type of legal bodies.

³ Based on Article 12(3) Regulation No 1299/2013 of the Council and the European Parliament the organisations operated in the form of EGTC type of legal bodies automatically fulfil the joint criteria of a partnership; an EGTC is considered as satisfying the requirement of Article 12(4) in case partners from both Hungary and Slovakia are involved in its organisation as founders.

after the day of submission of the small project application form. The duration of small project implementation is defined in the application form and (after the approval) in the Subsidy contract. In case of approval of the small project proposal the costs incurred from the day after the day of submission of the application form are eligible.

Small project size

The minimum financial support from the European regional development fund for the implementation of a small project (counted on project level) is 20.000 EUR and maximum financial support is 50.000 EUR. Additional limits in this range can be introduced by the Umbrella Project Lead Partner or by the Monitoring Subcommittee e.g. based on the type of small project (soft/investment).

Each small project beneficiary can receive maximum of 85% European Regional and Development Fund [ERDF] contribution. No state co-financing is provided to beneficiaries of the small projects. The availability of own contribution shall be demonstrated by Declaration of the small project partner at the stage of submission of the small project application form.

Guiding principles to be followed

- Small project proposals are selected through calls for proposals;
- Real cross-border projects with cross border impact and cross-border partnership criteria can be supported within the SPF, mirror projects with no cross-border impact and real cross-border cooperation shall not be supported;
- Activities implemented within the small projects should have a time perspective: the programme does not support individual events; the small project partners have to endeavor to lay the basis for long-term partnership. One-off events are not supported;
- Projects which capitalize on the existing results and make one step further to establish more sustainable connections between the communities, as well as, community building projects and those ensuring the participation of greater number of people will be prioritized;
- Coordination of actions under different Operational Programmes implemented in both member states shall be secured;
- Mirror projects without personal meetings of project partners are not supported;
- Sustainability of cooperation should be encouraged through the selection;
- Actions are supported under the strategic framework to increase social cohesion of the programme area;
- Operations must meet all quality criteria set in the Call for small project proposals approved by the Monitoring Subcommittee and they must be focused, relevant, viable, fit-for-purpose;
- Horizontal principles (further details in Chapter 8 of the Cooperation Programme document) have to be respected as selection criteria;
- Usage of bilingualism (Hungarian and Slovak) within the SPF (e.g. Application form for the small project, etc.);
- Obligatory simplified cost options for the small projects implemented within the SPF;

- Obligatory simplified procedures within the SPF during the entire small project cycle: application phase, contracting phase, implementation phase including reporting and monitoring;
- Reduction of the administrative burdens of small project beneficiaries shall be respected;
- Priority Axes 1: Small projects are supporting small scale investments in the field of tourism, environment and culture with a clear contribution to landscape and nature protection.

Additionally to the above listed, all relevant guiding principles defined in the Cooperation Programme shall be respected.

8. Mandatory documents to be submitted

The applicants listed in the Chapter 5 of this Call are invited to further develop their Project proposal approved in the first round of the selection process and submit the documents listed below. When developing the required documents applicants are obliged to follow the principles for realization of the Umbrella Projects and principles for realization of the small projects set in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 of this Call.

1. Rules of procedures of the Monitoring Subcommittee [MSC]

Regulating the establishment of the MSC for the implementation of the SPF within the Interreg V-A SKHU Programme reflecting the partnership principle⁴ and focusing on the following provisions⁵:

- Setting up of the MSC
- Tasks and functions of the MSC
- Members and chairmanship
- Involvement of the Monitoring Committee members ensuring the flow of information between MC and MSC
- Role of the MA, NA and JS
- Organization of the meetings
- Decision making
- Confidentiality
- Communication
- Working language
- Expenses

2. Assessment Manual

Methodology of assessment of the small projects, description of evaluation steps and selection process of the small projects implemented within the Umbrella Project⁶:

⁴ Partnership principle shall be kept in the decision making body of the SPF.

⁵ The list is not exhaustive.

⁶ The list is not exhaustive.

- Definition of assessment steps;
- Institutional setup and actors of assessment ensuring common methodology of assessment, objective and consistent approach of all actors participating in the assessment process;
- Selection of assessors for different stages of assessment, including description of avoiding conflict of interests;
- Rules governing correspondence and handling of documents;
- Project assessment database, preparation of lists of small projects including the lists of approved small projects, lists of small projects approved with condition/s, lists of not approved small projects and lists of small projects included in the reserve lists if applicable;
- Deadlines;
- Handling of complaints;
- Description of the selection steps and procedures (receiving and opening project proposals, steps of administrative, eligibility and quality assessment, scoring of project proposals, decision of the SC, informing the applicants, etc.);

3. Joint Implementation Plan

Description of procedures from among the others focused on the following topics:

- Description of the system of Calls for the Small Project Proposals: timeframe, duration and types of the Calls;
- Remedy actions to be taken in case of delays in Umbrella Project implementation or rising savings;
- Eligibility criteria for applicants: legal and institutional requirements, territorial, sectorial, professional, financial criteria, exclusion criteria, partnership requirements;
- Identification of exhaustive list of eligible activities to be carried out by small projects divided per Common and Programme specific output indicators
- Methodology of ensuring the interest and involvement of small projects;
- Identification of simplified costs options for the small projects
- Simplified procedures related to small projects application phase, implementation phase and project closure;
- Principles for respecting the horizontal principles (sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination and equality between men and women) and specific horizontal measures defined for each Priority Axis;
- Principles for ensuring sustainability of small project results;
- Principles for handling the revenue generating small projects;
- Principles for monitoring of the state aid.

4. Letter of consent

Under the provisions of this Call, both partnerships of all four SPF Umbrella Projects approved in the first round of the Umbrella Projects selection process are required to elaborate one common package of the above listed mandatory documents to be submitted to this Call. The package of mandatory

documents shall mutually apply for all four Umbrella Projects, both partnership of the Umbrella Projects as well as both Priority Axes concerned by implementation of the SPF.

Taking into consideration that the mandatory documents will be submitted only in one mutual package on behalf of both partnerships, letter of consent with the content of the mandatory documents signed (and stamped) by legal representative/s of both Umbrella Projects LBs is obligatory attachment. The template to be used is published as Annex 1 to this Call.

5. Declaration on identical versions

The mandatory documents have to be submitted in 3 paper versions and on three pieces of CD/DVD. Therefore, the Lead Beneficiaries shall declare that all three copies are identical. Declaration shall be issued by legal representative/s of Lead Beneficiary of both Umbrella Project`s partnerships. The template to be used is published as Annex 2 to this Call.

9. Submission procedure

Deadline for submission of applications

31/08/2017

Language requirements

All mandatory documents must be developed and submitted in **English language**. The complete list of the mandatory documents is described in Chapter 8 of this Call.

Form of submission

Each mandatory document must be submitted in paper form in 3 copies as well as electronically in 3 copies on CD/DVD. The CDs/DVDs shall contain all documents in both, .doc and in .PDF format.

If relevant, predefined templates published as annexes to this Call must be used.

Method of submission

Mandatory documents shall be submitted either by registered mail or by a courier service. Documents submitted by any other means (e.g. e-mail or fax) will be rejected. Evidence of the timely submission by post or courier service will be constituted by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In case the timely submission cannot be checked by the postmark, the Joint Secretariat is entitled for asking the deposit slip.

Mandatory annexes shall be submitted to the following address:

Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary Joint Secretariat
Széchenyi Programme Office Nonprofit Ltd.
1053 Budapest, Szép u. 2., IV. floor.
Hungary

Documents submitted or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

The envelope containing the mandatory documents is to be sealed and properly marked including the following information:

- address to which the documents are submitted,
- Wording: “Second round of the SPF Umbrella Projects, Interreg V-A SKHU Cooperation Programme”.

For detailed information please contact directly the Joint Secretariat. Contact or queries can be made via the programme’s website (www.skhu.eu).



Under the provisions of this Call, both partnerships of all four approved SPF Umbrella Projects are required to elaborate one common package of the mandatory documents to be submitted to this Call. The package of mandatory documents shall mutually apply for all four Umbrella Projects, both partnership of the Umbrella Projects as well as both Priority Axes concerned by implementation of the SPF.

10. Selection steps

The evaluation process of the project proposal submitted in the second round of the selection process comprises of the following phases:

- 1) Administrative assessment
- 2) Eligibility assessment
- 3) Quality assessment

The assessment criteria for each step of the evaluation process are specified in the assessment grids approved by the MC and attached to this Call. Umbrella Project Lead Beneficiary is notified about the results of the evaluation steps as follows:

- The decision about the result of administrative and eligibility assessment signed by the JS is distributed to the Umbrella Project LB after the administrative and eligibility assessment has been closed for all submitted project proposals.
- The decision about the results of the quality assessment signed by the MA is distributed to the Umbrella Project LB after the respective MC on which the decision has been adopted.

Administrative assessment

The administrative assessment includes check of admissibility and completeness criteria and is carried out by the JS on the basis of 4-eye principle. At each stage, the MA may carry out sample checks to satisfy itself about the correctness of the assessments. The evaluation grid of administrative assessment is available as Annex to this Call (see *Administrative assessment grid*).

Admissibility criteria

The first key condition that must be met upon submitting the project proposal is to follow the submission procedure described in Chapter 9 of this Call. The project proposal has to be submitted in English language within the given deadline.

In case the submitted project proposal does not meet the admissibility criteria, there is no possibility to complement or any later resubmit the proposal under the same Call; therefore the project proposal is automatically rejected under the given Call.

The fulfilment of the admissibility criteria of submitted project proposal will be checked in maximum 15 calendar days from the respective submission deadline. In the cases when the fulfilment of the admissibility criteria is not obvious, the JS can ask for decision of the MA. If needed, the NA can also

be involved. Project Proposals fulfilling the admissibility criteria are forwarded to the next step of administrative assessment.

Completeness criteria

The next step of the administrative assessment is to check whether the project proposal contains all required documents specified in this Call. Apart from the admissibility criteria, this part of the assessment process allows the Umbrella Project Lead Beneficiaries to **complement missing mandatory annexes** within a given deadline. During the check of the completeness criteria, clarification can be asked by the JS.

Proposals are checked in the shortest possible timeframe. In case the submitted project proposal does not meet the requirements for mandatory documents, the Umbrella Project LB is requested by the JS via e-mail or postal letter to submit the missing mandatory annexes. **The deadline for completing the missing mandatory documents is 14 calendar days from the day of delivery of the completion request of JS by Umbrella Project LB.**



Completion of the project proposal can be done more than once however it is important to note that the process of administrative assessment must end in maximum 60 days counted from the day of submission of project proposal to this Call.

In case missing documents are not submitted to the JS within the given deadline/s, or if the submitted documents do not meet the criteria, the assessment procedure for the concerned application will be stopped and the project proposal will be rejected. Proposals fulfilling the completeness criteria are forwarded to the next step of assessment process which is eligibility assessment.

Eligibility assessment

The eligibility assessment shall ensure that only eligible project proposals are considered for the further project selection procedure. This evaluation step has no quality ranking. Eligibility assessment criteria are examined by attributing “fulfilled” (YES) or “not fulfilled” (NO). Project proposals fulfilling the eligibility assessment criteria are forwarded to the next step of assessment process which is quality assessment. The evaluation grid of eligibility assessment is available as Annex of this Call (see *Eligibility assessment grid*). During the eligibility assessment, clarification can be asked by the Joint Secretariat.

Quality assessment

Those project proposals that succeeded in the above steps of the assessment process will be further evaluated in terms of their quality. The quality of each application is assessed against a set of criteria laid down in the quality assessment grid. The evaluation grid of quality assessment is available as Annex to this Call (see *Quality assessment grid*). The quality assessment criteria are grouped into following two main categories:

Strategic evaluation

Strategic evaluation is aimed on assessment of the:

- project environment and coherence,
- relevance of the submitted proposal for the set objectives,
- level of cross-border cooperation,

- added value,
- project partnership and
- sustainability of project results.

Operational evaluation

Operational evaluation assesses

- feasibility of project activities,
- management capacities,
- requested financial resources,
- project working schedule as well as
- horizontal principles.

The main categories of quality assessment listed above are further divided into the sub-criteria with pre-defined scores and thresholds (see the *Quality assessment grid*).

Each application can receive maximum of 100 points from which 65 points threshold have to be gained by the application in order to be proposed for approval in the first round of selection process. The achievement of minimum 65 points threshold doesn't automatically mean co-financing for the project, applications which reached the threshold will be forwarded to the second round of the selection process.

The quality evaluation will be performed under the coordination of relevant programme authorities.

11. Decision of the Monitoring Committee

On the basis of the quality assessment results and thresholds achieved by the project proposals, the programme implementation authorities prepare a summary of the applications submitted under the present call and, if necessary, relevant recommendations for the Monitoring Committee. Based on the results of the quality assessment the MC can make its decision:

- a) projects proposed for approval (threshold above 65 points)
- b) projects proposed for approval with condition (threshold above 65 points and condition set by the assessors and/or JS and confirmed by MC)
- c) projects proposed for rejection (threshold below 65 points)

The MC members will be provided with the results of the evaluation process and assessment grids in due time prior to the MC meeting.

12. Complaint procedure

According to Article 74(3) EU Regulation No. 1303/2013 the Beneficiaries may submit complaint. Within the Programme terminology, the term "complaint" refers to three different cases:

- Complaints against a decision of the MA/JS during the project implementation are based on the Subsidy contract concluded between the MA and the Lead Beneficiary and follow the rules laid down in the Subsidy contract;
- Complaints related to FLC have to be addressed to the responsible National authority (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Slovak Republic and Prime Minister's Office in Hungary) or administrative body according to the setup of the management, financial and control system and applicable national rules.
- Complaints may be raised against the project assessment process and the correctness thereof. The procedure regarding this type of complaint is described below.

Handling of the complaint

The rules set in this section are providing transparent complaint procedure against decisions taken by Programme bodies during the project assessment and selection process. The Lead Beneficiary is the only one entitled to file a complaint. The right to complain against a decision regarding the project selection applies to the Lead Beneficiary whose project application was not selected for co-financing during the project assessment and selection process.

The complaint is to be lodged against the communication issued by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat as the MA'/JS' communication is the only legally binding act towards the Lead Beneficiary during the project assessment and selection process.

The complaint can be lodged only against the outcomes of the eligibility assessment. The complaint should be submitted in writing by postal mail to JS of the Programme within 14 calendar days after the Lead Beneficiary had been officially notified by the MA/JS about the results of the project selection process. The complaint shall be written in English and shall include:

- a) Name and address of the Lead Beneficiary
- b) Reference number and acronym of the application which is a subject of the complaint
- c) Clearly indicated reasons for the complaint, including listing of all elements of the assessment which are being complaint and/or failures in adherence with procedures limited to eligibility criteria
- d) signature of the legal representative of the Lead Beneficiary (scanned signatures are accepted)
- e) Any supporting documents (no additional content-related information than the one included in the proposal is allowed).

The relevant documentation shall be provided for the sole purpose of supporting the complaint. No other grounds for the complaint than eligibility assessment will be taken into account during the complaint procedure.

A complaint will be rejected without further examination if submitted after the set deadline or if the formal requirements set above are not observed. In case the complaint is rejected on these reasons, the MA/JS conveys this information within 10 working days to the Lead Beneficiary. After the receipt of the complaint the MA assisted by the Joint Secretariat, examines the complaint and prepares its technical examination regarding the merit of the complaint.

The complaint will then be examined on the basis of the information brought forward by the Lead Beneficiary in the complaint and the technical examination prepared by the MA by the Complaint Board.

The Complaint Board is the only body entitled to review a complaint against a decision regarding assessment and selection of projects co-financed by the Programme. The Complaint Board comprises of three members; MA, NA and JS. Impartiality of members of the Complaint Board towards the case under review has to be ensured. If this cannot be provided, the distinct member shall refrain from the distinct case's review and be replaced by another impartial member.

The Complaint Board will have 30 calendar days to provide a binding decision. This can be extended once with an additional 30 calendar days in case further information is needed. The decision - if the complaint is justified or to be rejected - is taken by the Complaint Board by consensus. In case it is justified, the project proposal will be forwarded to next step in assessment process.

The decision of the Complaint Board is communicated by the MA/JS in writing to the Lead Beneficiary within 7 calendar days from the receipt of the Complaint Board decision. The decision of the

Complaint Board is final, binding to all parties and not subject of any further complaint proceedings within the Programme based on the same grounds.

Proposals rejected after the quality assessment will receive official communication from MA/JS with the reasons for rejection. Further details on the reasons for rejection can be requested on demand from JS and the Lead Beneficiary can have an insight in the evaluation grids within 7 calendar days after the receipt of the notification letter on the rejection.

13. Concluding provisions

The Managing Authority may modify the terms of this Call by amendment at any time prior to the deadline for submission of project proposals. The amendments may not affect the eligibility and the evaluation criteria. In order to afford reasonable time for applicants to fulfil the modified terms of the call, the Managing Authority may extend the deadline for the submission of applications. If the applicant submitted the proposal before publishing an amendment, the applicant cannot suffer disadvantage due to the modified terms of the conditions.

The Managing Authority after consultation with the National Authority may decide to cancel the procedure of this Call at any stage, but particularly if

- there have been irregularities in the procedure, in particular where these have prevented equal treatment;
- exceptional circumstances or force majeure render the normal implementation of the planned actions impossible.

If this Call is cancelled, the information on cancellation will be published on the www.skhu.eu website. Any potential losses from cancellation are not entitled for compensation.

14. Annexes to the Call:

Annex I: Letter of consent template

Annex II: Declaration on identical versions template

Annex III: Administrative assessment grid

Annex IV: Eligibility assessment grid

Annex V: Quality assessment grid