

Interreg North-West Europe 2021-2027

Terms of reference 1st call for capitalisation

11 December 2025

1. Aim of the calls for capitalisation

In the framework of its capitalisation strategy 2021-2027, the North-West Europe Programme is developing various activities and tools aiming to enhance the impact of its projects.

Among the different capitalisation initiatives, the NWE Programme is organising two **calls for capitalisation** by the end of the programming period. The first one will be closing on Thursday, 28 May 2026, and the second one is for now expected to close in May 2027.

The overall objective of NWE capitalisation calls is to support the **further uptake and roll-out of project outputs** developed within the framework of approved NWE projects in the 2021-2027 period, increasing the territorial impact of the Programme.

This first call is open to both running and closed projects from all 5 programme priorities. Projects approved in all regular calls are eligible to apply. Only small-scale projects from call 3 are not eligible for these calls for capitalisation.

2. Capitalisation initiatives expected

Capitalisation initiatives must be based on **one or more project outputs** that have been implemented within an approved project of the current programming period 2021-2027.

The output(s) which the capitalisation initiative will build on needs to be **clearly identified** and reported as **completed or nearly completed** to the Programme. During project implementation, the concerned output(s) must have demonstrated:

- their capacity to successfully impact territories and / or citizens.
- their uptake and roll-out potential.

Capitalisation initiatives will also have to provide evidence that they go **beyond what was initially planned** in their original application form. The outreach and impact of their original output(s) should be extended in one/or several of the following directions:

- New territories
- New types of stakeholders
- New fields or domains of activity

Projects applying for a capitalisation call need **to contribute to at least one of the 3 Programme result indicators**: strategies and/or actions plans taken up by organisations, solutions taken up by organisations or the completion of training schemes.

In their objective to roll-out and support the further uptake of outputs, capitalisation initiatives should also clearly contribute to the Programme's objective of reducing territorial

disparities (economic, social and environmental) in the NWE area. To that extent, proposals are required to have a **strong territorial justification**.

This means they should clearly describe:

- where they will intervene
- why they will intervene in these territories
- who will benefit from the capitalisation initiative activities and results, and how.

They should also explain how enhancing the uptake of the output in one of the three directions (territories, target groups and/or domains of activity) described above can contribute to a more balanced development of the NWE area.

Examples of capitalisation initiatives

In line with the overall objective mentioned above, a capitalisation initiative can:

- extend the uptake of an original output
- adapt an original output for further uptake
- create new outputs based on existing ones

For example, a capitalisation initiative could aim at:

- Supporting the further uptake of already developed solutions in NWE territories
e.g. a project has successfully implemented an energy retrofitting solution for houses in rural villages in Germany, the Netherlands and France and will now propose to replicate it to other NWE countries or regions.
- Supporting the further uptake of already developed solutions in new fields / domains of activity in NWE territories
e.g. a project focusing on the use of algae for energy supply has identified unforeseen opportunities for algae in biobased products in some NWE regions. The capitalisation initiative will be delivering on newly identified opportunities in these or other regions.
- Adapting existing trainings for a new target audience in NWE territories
e.g. a project has successfully implemented a training for employment agencies to enhance their ability to provide NEETS (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) better access to employment and will propose, in the framework of their capitalisation initiative, to adapt this training to unemployed seniors in NWE regions.
- Building on existing outputs from various projects tackling a similar topic, to develop a new strategy
e.g. projects from different programmes that have tested various nature-based solutions to enhance climate adaptation, will partner up to develop a strategy for municipalities on implementing nature-based solutions to tackle heat stress in NWE cities.

If relevant, **investments are possible** in the framework of capitalisation initiatives.

3. Project duration and budget

The duration of capitalisation initiatives will be limited in time to favour implementation ready initiatives. Capitalisation initiatives can run for a maximum of 18 months, and they may take place in parallel with the implementation activities of the original projects.

Considering the limited timeframe and the Programme budget remaining available, the capitalisation initiative budget must be between €200,000 and €800,000 of total eligible costs (TEC).

The maximum ERDF grant rate for partners is 60% of the total capitalisation initiative budget.

All capitalisation initiatives need to be match-funded. Partners from the original project will keep the same grant rate as in the initial approved application form. The partners will need to provide the remaining amount.

4. Partnership

The partnership for the capitalisation initiative should remain focused, easy to manage and quickly operational to implement activities. It can include both project partners and associated organisations.

Only organisations relevant to the selected output(s) for capitalisation and which have a specific role to play in reaching the capitalisation objective should be included in the partnership.

The lead partner and the project partner(s) involved in the development and implementation of the relevant output(s) should be included. In case the former is the same as the lead partner, at least one other partner from the original project should also be involved. For the rest, partnerships from the original project can be fully adapted.

Projects can include new partners or associated organisations to better reach the relevant territories, target audiences or economic sectors aimed for. These new partners will need to show how they can add value with their skills and knowledge, to leverage the project output(s) and enhance territorial impact in NWE.

New partners can come from other projects funded by the NWE Programme or from other ETC programmes (European Territorial Cooperation), thus creating and exploiting synergies

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between existing territorial cooperation projects. They can also be stakeholders involved in other EU programmes (e.g. regional ERDF / ESF, Horizon Europe, LIFE...) or not involved in any EU project.

5. Eligibility and assessment criteria

Specific eligibility and assessment criteria apply for the calls for capitalisation.

The eligibility criteria reflect some of the main features described in the present Terms of reference. In addition, some eligibility criteria from regular calls (step 2) remain applicable to the capitalisation initiative. They are described in full detail in the Programme Manual addendum.

Applications for the call for capitalisation will be assessed based on three main criteria which cover the main programme expectations for capitalisation initiatives.

Each criterion has a different weight in the overall score of the proposal, as outlined in the table below:

Assessment criteria	Weight
Capitalisation potential	30%
Expected impact	40%
Quality of partnership and cooperation	30%

The complete list of **assessment criteria** can be found in the Programme Manual addendum.

6. Who can apply?

Applications for capitalisation initiatives must be based on clearly identified outputs from **approved Interreg NWE 2021-2027 projects**.

Only approved Interreg NWE projects - running or closed - within the current programming period can therefore apply. Small-scale projects from call 3 are not eligible to submit proposals. Considering the timeline and set-up of the call, call 5 projects will also not be able to apply in this first call.

Given the limited budget, only one application per project will be possible in all capitalisation calls. Applicants are, therefore, invited to carefully evaluate the most appropriate timeline to apply and implement their capitalisation initiative.

Administratively speaking, the **lead partner** of the original project must remain the lead partner of the capitalisation initiative. However, it remains possible to leave the leadership of the capitalisation work package to another partner.

7. Funding available

The overall programme allocation is €287 million ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) for the programming period 2021-2027.

For this call, an indicative amount of **€7 million ERDF is made available**, without commitment to full allocation.

8. Application process and selection process

The application process will be organised in a one-step procedure.

The application form will be made available online, on the Joint Electronic Monitoring System (Jems). It will be accessed by using the project partner's existing NWE Jems credentials. It will be pre-filled with information related to your original project, including current partnership and budget details.

Capitalisation initiative proposals must be drafted in English.

Applications should be submitted online by the deadline: **Thursday, 28 May 2026 at 12:00 (noon) CET**.

All eligible capitalisation initiative proposals are assessed against the assessment criteria which are detailed in section 4 of the Programme Manual addendum.

The decision on project applications will be made by the Interreg NWE Monitoring Committee (MC), which is made up of representatives from both national and regional authorities within the NWE Member States.

The Monitoring Committee is expected to meet in **autumn 2026**.

Applicants will be notified of the Monitoring Committee's decision after this meeting, and capitalisation initiative activities may start immediately afterwards.

If approved, the applicant will have to adapt the project's original application form in Jems with, at least, an additional work package and a revised budget.

For further details on the application and selection process, see the Programme Manual addendum specific to this call for capitalisation.

9. Opening and closure of the call

The 1st call for capitalisation will open on **Thursday, 11 December 2025**.

Capitalisation initiative proposals must be submitted in Jems at the latest by **Thursday, 28 May 2026, 12.00 pm (noon) CET**.

10. How to get assistance?

Continuous assistance will be provided by the Interreg NWE network of Contact Points during the phase of project development. They are available to respond to any queries. All lead partners should get in touch with their national Contact Points to discuss any capitalisation initiative idea well before submitting their application.

All contact details can be found on the website <https://www.nweurope.eu/get-in-touch>.

The application package for this call can be downloaded in the "Apply for funding – Calls for projects" section of the website www.nweurope.eu. It consists of:

- Terms of reference for the 1st call for capitalisation
- Programme Manual addendum for the 1st call for capitalisation
- Annex to the Programme Manual addendum
- Programme Manual
- Interreg Programme document