

Funding Opportunities & Project Inspiration for Cross-Border Cooperation

EU programmes and regional instruments – from first idea to flagship project

Cross-border ideas need suitable funding instruments. This overview covers the full spectrum – from small pilot activities for associations and parishes, through education, youth and sport cooperation, to large transnational partnerships. In addition, it presents the Alps-Adriatic Alliance as a regional co-financing instrument and the most important platforms for partner search. For Com(p)AGE partners and stakeholders, these are concrete pathways to further develop topics such as social participation, active ageing, volunteering and vibrant town and village centres.

A · Interreg: the core programmes of territorial cooperation

Interreg Austria-Hungary (AT-HU)

The core programme for the AT-HU border region: co-finance projects with clear added value of cross-border cooperation – such as Com(p)AGE. Topics include social affairs, health, environment, tourism and governance.

→ Programme & calls: <https://www.interreg-athu.eu>

Interreg Danube Region Programme 2021-2027

Transnational cooperation across 14 Danube Region countries: for larger consortia advancing social innovation, services of general interest and territorial cohesion throughout the Danube Region.

→ Programme & calls: <https://www.interreg-danube.eu>

B · Education, youth, sport & citizens

Erasmus+ KA2 – Cooperation Partnerships & Small-scale Partnerships

European cooperation in education, youth and adult learning: sustainable development, European values, open educational resources. Small-scale Partnerships (lump sum of €30,000 or €60,000, from 2 organisations in 2 countries) are the ideal low-threshold entry point – in the youth field (KA210-YOU) via the national agencies.

► **KA210 Youth, 2nd round: ~1 October 2026 (confirm with your national agency)**

→ Erasmus+ portal: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu>

Erasmus+ Sport – Cooperation Partnerships (SCP/SSCP)

Cross-border sport cooperation, grassroots sport and health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA): inclusion and participation through sport, European networks. Small-scale €30,000/€60,000, Cooperation €120,000/€250,000/€400,000. Submitted centrally to EACEA – combines well with intergenerational activity programmes against loneliness.

► **Next deadline: expected early March 2027**

→ EACEA / Funding & Tenders Portal: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/>

European Solidarity Corps

Supports the engagement of young people (18–30) in projects that benefit the community – e.g. volunteering in social institutions, including intergenerational formats.

→ European Solidarity Corps: https://youth.europa.eu/solidarity_en

European Youth Foundation (EYF) – Pilot Activities

Council of Europe grants for local actions addressing the needs of young people: workshops, campaigns, school actions, festivals – based on youth work and non-formal education. Priorities: pluralistic democracy, access to rights, living together in peaceful and inclusive societies, youth work.

→ European Youth Foundation: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation>

CERV – Citizens' Engagement and Participation

Promotes engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union and exchange between citizens of different countries. Projects of at least one year – suited to town twinning, dialogue formats and networks.

→ CERV at EACEA:

https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/grants/2021-2027/citizens-equality-rights-and-values-cerv_en

C · Economy, culture, research & space

SMP / COSME – Sustainable Tourism

Thematic EU programme for tourism routes and tourism SMEs: €1.2–1.4 million per project, 90 % co-financing, mandatory SME cascade (10–30 businesses at €7,000–15,000 each). Consortium: 5–8 entities, of which ≥3 DMOs from ≥2 countries. Inspiration for cross-border nature, culture and culinary routes.

► Follow-up call expected in the first half of 2027 – prepare consortia now

→ EISMEA / Funding & Tenders Portal: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/>

Creative Europe – Culture

Transnational cultural cooperation: cultural heritage, cultural participation, audience development. Small-scale up to ~€200,000 (80 %), medium-scale up to ~€1 million (70 %). A clearly cultural core is a prerequisite.

► Next round expected in spring 2027

→ Creative Europe / EACEA: <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe>

Horizon Europe – Cluster 2 (Cultural Heritage & Cultural Tourism)

Research and innovation programme for projects with a genuine R&I; component: evidence-based policy recommendations, demonstrators, living labs. Docking topic

HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-HERITAGE-06 "Future-proofing sustainable cultural tourism" (RIA, approx. €4–4.8 million per project). Pursue only with an experienced research institution as coordinator.

► HERITAGE-06: opening 13 May 2027, deadline 23 September 2027

→ Funding & Tenders Portal: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/>

EIT Community NEB – Connect & Co-create NEB Open Call 2027

The New European Bauhaus supports beautiful, sustainable, inclusive transformation of public spaces. Connect NEB (€18,000 total: €15,300 grant + €2,700 own funds, single beneficiary) for co-design and living labs – a parish or association can apply alone. Co-create NEB (€58,000 total: €49,300 + €8,700, consortium of 2–4 partners incl. at least one municipality) for visible, place-based transformation of public space. Inspiration: parish courtyards and village centres as the "village living room" or a neighbourhood commons. No prior NEB knowledge required.

► Deadline: 30 September 2026, 17:00 CEST · Online info session: 3 September 2026

→ EIT Community NEB: <https://www.eitcommunity-neb.eu>



D · Regional instrument: Alps-Adriatic Alliance (AAA)

Alps-Adriatic Alliance – co-financing & application preparation

Not an EU programme, but the regional cooperation network of the Alps-Adriatic area (successor to the Alps-Adriatic Working Community; General Secretariat at the Office of the Carinthian Regional Government) – with its own budget for the preparation costs of EU applications (concept development, partner search, travel, proposal writing) and for joint network activities in culture, cultural heritage, tourism, youth and sport. Applications in English to the thematically responsible Thematic Coordination Point (TCP); minimum partnership: 3 ordinary AAA members from 3 different states; the added value for the whole network must be demonstrated. A sensible combination: the AAA finances the initiation and application phase, while the EU programme later finances implementation. Note: confirm the current membership status with the Contact Point in advance.

► **Annual autumn call, historically submitted by ~30 September – confirm the date with the Contact Point**

→ Alps-Adriatic Alliance: <https://alps-adriatic-alliance.org>

Partner search & matchmaking

A suitable consortium is often more decisive than the project idea itself. These contact points help find partners across the border and become visible early:

- EU Funding & Tenders Portal – Partner Search: official partner search directly at each call.
- National Contact Points: e.g. FFG (Horizon Europe) and OeAD (Erasmus+) in Austria, and the respective agencies in Hungary – advice, matchmaking, quality assurance.
- Enterprise Europe Network (EEN): cooperation initiation for SME and tourism-related partnerships.
- AAA – TCPs & Contact Points: thematic coordination points offering advice, partner search and access to the AAA budget.
- Interreg partner databases (Jems): project-idea and partner exchanges of the programmes – partner search and submission run via Jems.
- b2match brokerage events & Erasmus+ PBA/TCA (SALTO): in-person contact seminars and matchmaking formats.

All amounts, rates and deadlines are indicative and for orientation only. Binding are solely the EU Funding & Tenders Portal, the respective call documents, the programme websites and the competent national agency. Status: August 2026. This infosheet is part of the Com(p)AGE platform's material collection; Com(p)AGE is co-funded by the European Union under the Interreg Austria-Hungary programme.