

**Selection criteria and procedures for the 2021-2027 INTERREG Caraïbes programme,**  
**except for projects submitted under priority 5 of the programme**  
**Validated by the Monitoring Committee on 10 March 2023**

## **1 – How to apply?**

The programme has defined two procedures for submitting applications:

### 1.1 – Call for Projects:

The call for projects is a procedure dedicated to receiving complete projects on the basis of specifications defined jointly with the partnership.

These projects will be appraised by the Joint Secretariat (JS), presented to the Technical Committee for a technical opinion on the applications, and will then be presented to the Steering Committee for decision.

### 1.2 – Ongoing submission (“au fil de l’eau”):

Additionally, the submission of complete project proposals is possible throughout the programming. These projects will be appraised by the JS, presented to the Technical Committee for a technical opinion on the applications, and will then be presented to the Steering Committee for decision.

The programme will operate primarily by Call for Projects. In-between two periods of Call for Projects, it will be possible to apply through the ongoing procedure.

## **2 – Who to contact?**

- The Joint Secretariat (JS):

The JS of the INTERREG Caraïbes programme is a body that assists the Managing Authority (the Regional Council of Guadeloupe) and the Monitoring and Steering Committees in the performance of their functions by ensuring the operational management of the programme.

It also has, among other functions, the mission to inform and raise awareness among project holders, to appraise projects applying for a European grant in order to assess their admissibility and eligibility, and to analyze them with a view to their presentation to the Technical Committee and then to the Steering Committee. In addition, the JS supports project holders throughout the implementation phase (expenditure reports, audits, etc.) and during the closing phase of the project.

- Regional Contact Points (RCPs):

The Regional Contact Points will be the Joint Secretariat's relays with the programme's partners and will be responsible for informing potential beneficiaries on the programme and its funding opportunities, assisting them until they submit a complete application to the Joint Secretariat as well as assisting them with the physical and financial implementation of their projects. Project lead partners are therefore advised to get closer to them in order to structure their project and elaborate their application.

The Regional Contact Points in the eligible EU territories are based within the French Outermost Regions: Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Saint-Martin. In eligible non-EU territories, they are based in international organisations with a regional remit that are programme partners (the ACS, the OECS, CARICOM/CARIFORUM).

### **3 – What documents must be included in the application file?**

The application file submitted to the JS via the information system must contain the following elements:

- A duly completed application form, sent both in French and English;
- The budget annex of the application form;
- A logical framework presenting the proposed project;
- A letter of commitment from the project leader;
- Letters of commitment from the various EU and non-EU partners;
- The various supporting documents requested in support of the application, including: supporting documents relating to the applicants (Kbis, organisational statutes of the applicant and partners...) and supporting documents relating to the request for subsidy (quotes, documents relating to staff expenses...).

### **4 – What extra-EU expenditure is eligible under the programme?**

- Use of ERDF credits on non-EU territory:

Non-EU partners are not eligible for an ERDF grant under the INTERREG Caraïbes programme. Expenditure incurred by non-EU partners will not be eligible for the programme, whether it is incurred in EU or non-EU territory.

However, EU partners have the possibility of incurring expenditure in extra-EU territory. Such expenditure shall then be eligible for a support from ERDF resources, subject to compliance with national and Community rules on eligibility of expenditure (in particular Articles 63 to 68 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 and Article 37 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059) and provided that they are incurred in the framework of a project that contributes to the achievement of the objectives of the INTERREG Caraïbes programme.

- Articulation with external financing from the European Union:

The Managing Authority of the INTERREG Caraïbes programme manages an 11<sup>th</sup> EDF envelope delegated by the European Commission. Therefore, it is possible for certain project partners

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In addition, it is possible for certain project leaders located in non-EU territory to apply for an EDF subsidy from the INTERREG Caraïbes authorities to co-finance their activities. The Managing Authority of the INTERREG Caraïbes programme manages an 11<sup>th</sup> EDF envelope delegated by the European Commission.

Project leaders eligible for such a grant are those located in one of the following territories: Antigua and Barbuda; The Bahamas; Barbados; Belize; Dominica; Dominican Republic; Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Suriname; Trinidad and Tobago; Aruba (NL), Bonaire (NL), Saba (NL), Curaçao (NL), Saint Barthélemy (FR), Sint Eustatius (NL), Sint Maarten (NL), Anguilla (UK), British Virgin Islands (UK) and Montserrat (UK).

The application for an EDF grant will only be eligible if submitted within the framework of an INTERREG Caraïbes project, led by an EU-based project lead partner, developed according to the application form validated by the programme authorities, and submitted according to the above-mentioned submission procedures. Thus, a non-EU partner in an INTERREG Caraïbes project will be able to apply for an EDF grant using the EDF Annex to the application form provided for this purpose.

For the 2021-2027 programming period, an articulation between ERDF credits of the INTERREG Caraïbes programme and NDICI credits will be sought for.

## **5 – How is the quality of project proposals evaluated?**

In accordance with provisions of Articles 22 and 30 of EU Regulation 2021/1059, the selection of operations is based on an analysis of applications based on non-discriminatory and transparent criteria and procedures.

Firstly, application will be appraised in order to assess their eligibility, consistence with regulation and operational quality by the JS.

The main eligibility criteria are:

- The project is consistent with EU and national regulation;
- The project brings together *a minima* a project lead partner located on one of the Outermost Regions of the programme's cooperation area, and a non-EU partner;
- The project's partner shall cooperate *a minima* in two out of the four following cooperation dimensions: the development and implementation of Interreg operations, the staffing or financing thereof;
- The project contributes to the achievement of a thematic priority and a specific objective of the programme (a project that contributes to more than one priority or to more than one specific objective may benefit from of a specific bonus during the project's analysis);
- The project is consistent with one of the intervention fields defined by the programme.

A project that does not meet the eligibility or legal conditions for INTERREG funding will be not proposed to the Technical Committee for opinion neither to the Steering Committee for decision: it will only be presented for information regarding its rejection.

Secondly, and in accordance with the abovementioned Regulation, applications that meet the eligibility requirements will be qualitatively assessed by the programme partners in order firstly to define with objectivity an opinion on the project and secondly to rank and prioritize the projects<sup>1</sup>. Three types of criteria will be examined, namely:

- Transversal criteria, applicable to all applications. They aim at assessing the operational quality and the structuring dimension of the project, the relevance of the partnership and the added value of the cooperation, and the prospects for capitalization for the cooperation area;
- Criteria specifically defined for each specific objective of the programme, with regard to the programme's intervention strategy;
- Additional criteria to enhance the scores of projects incorporating specific measures to meet the cross-cutting objectives of the European Union (compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, sustainable development, environment and climate, non-discrimination, inclusion of people with disabilities, gender equality, etc.) and/or whose objectives and activities contribute to the programme's strategy beyond the priority and specific objective under which they have applied.

All these criteria for the qualitative evaluation of the application files are detailed in the Appendix. They will be the subject of a weighted rating (from 1 (very insufficient) to 4 (very satisfying)) by every programme partner, and the average score will be consolidated in the Technical Committee. Transversal and thematic criteria are used to define thresholds that will guide the opinion on the project:

- Should the project score below 1,5 to each of these criteria, it will receive a defavorable opinion;
- Should the project score between 1,5 and 2,5 to each of these criteria, it will be adjourned;
- Should the project score above 2,5 to each of these criteria, it will receive a favorable opinion.

Projects with a favorable opinion will be prioritized based on their score.

Lastly, the Steering Committee will decide on the programming of the operations presented. The consolidated score and opinions of the Technical Committee on operations will be transmitted to the members of the Steering Committee to facilitate decision-making on the granting of INTERREG funding and the programming of operations. Assisted by the Joint Secretariat, the Technical Committee will also prepare the draft agenda of the Steering Committee, prioritizing the projects presented for decision. This agenda distinguishes:

- For the information of the Steering Committee:
  - projects whose appraisal has concluded that they are ineligible;

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<sup>1</sup> "In order to optimise the contribution of Union funds to the achievement of the objectives of the Programme", Art 73 of Regulation (EU) No2021/1060.

- projects adjourned by the Technical Committee (projects whose score is insufficient);
- For decision of the Steering Committee:
  - projects with a favorable opinion, presented by theme and prioritized by descending score;
  - projects with a defavorable opinion (excluding grounds of ineligibility).