REGIOSTARS
2019
Guide for applicants
The REGIOSTARS 2019

Since 2008, the European Commission hands out annual REGIOSTARS awards to EU-funded projects which demonstrate excellence and new approaches in regional development. With the goal of inspiring other regions and project managers across Europe, participating projects are in the spotlight of communication activities at European level.

The REGIOSTARS are awarded to projects in five thematic categories (smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, urban development and a topic of the year).

In 2019, the REGIOSTARS focus on five areas that are crucial for the future of EU regional policy: promoting digital transformation, connecting green and blue areas with built-up (grey) spaces, combatting inequalities and poverty, building climate-resilient cities and modernising health services – the topic of the year. An independent jury of high-level academics will assess the submitted project applications and crown the winners.

In addition, the public will decide on its own winner through a public on-line vote and award the Public choice award to one of the projects.

The on-line application platform is open from 19 February until 9 May 2019.

The winners in the five categories, and the winner of the public choice, will receive their well-deserved prize at the festive REGIOSTARS awards ceremony, to take place in Brussels in October 2019.

This Guide for Applicants provides you with all the necessary information to make your project a winner. Next to the detailed description of this year’s award categories, the eligibility and award criteria, this Guide contains a practical handbook to guide your through the process.

We are looking forward to receiving your project application!

The REGIOSTARS team
Europe is experiencing a period of momentous change. Across all European regions, technological transformations are impacting on business activities, processes, competencies, models and the built environment. As the pace of technological change accelerates, Europe has the opportunity to seize on new opportunities created by advances in technology, computing and data science. The European Commission is committed to supporting regions in leveraging the changes and opportunities presented by digital technologies and guiding the impacts of technological transformation on society in a strategic and prioritized way.

The European Commission aims for an inclusive digital society which benefits from the digital single market. Building smarter cities, and improving access to eGovernment, eHealth services and digital skills will enable a truly digital European society. To remain competitive, Europe must undergo a digital transformation at all levels and create a favourable environment that supports seamless, open and easy access to this critical resource. The main pillars of a strong digital economy are cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, a world class infrastructure for high performance computing, digital skills, and the digital transformation of the public sector. The European Commission’s Digital Single Market (DSM) strategy highlights that the internet and digital technologies are transforming our world, and economic growth, competitiveness, innovation, job creation and societal progress in general. It supports the development of a digital economy and inclusive digital society where citizens have the right skills to seize the opportunities of the digital world.

Currently, there is a stark digital divide across Europe and its regions, and across the economy and society. There are variations in citizens’ digital preparedness and ability to take advantage of technological transformations: 47% of the EU population is not properly digitally skilled, yet in the near future, 90% of jobs will require some level of digital skills. The large majority of SME and midcaps in Europe are seriously lagging behind in embracing digital innovations. European industry risks falling behind when it comes to building the very foundations of its digital future. We stand on the brink of a new industrial revolution, driven by new generation information technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT), cloud computing, big data and data analytics, robotics, 3D printing and artificial intelligence. The Digital Single Market aims to enable the best possible use of digital technologies’ potential to benefit the economy and society, to create opportunities for start-ups, expand markets for existing companies, contribute to the digital economy, create jobs and transform our public services. Furthermore, it offers opportunities for citizens, provided they are equipped with the right digital skills.

The fragmentation and relatively low public investment in cybersecurity is putting Europe’s societies, economies and infrastructures at risk while the European cyber industry remains highly dispersed, with no major market players.

The European Commission has taken active steps to support regions in undertaking digital transition. The European Commission promotes various initiatives aimed at increasing training in digital skills for workforce and consumers; modernising education across the EU; harnessing digital technologies for learning and for the recognition and validation of skills; and anticipating and analysing skills needs. A number of Initiatives such as the skills agenda for Europe or further digital tools allow access to better social care, health monitoring and recording through.
This include initiatives around eHealth and ageing EU, through for example the eHealth Action Plan and Telemedicine.

eGovernment supports administrative processes, improves the quality of the services and increases internal public sector efficiency. Digital public services reduce administrative burden on businesses and citizens by making their interactions with public administrations faster and more efficient, more convenient and transparent, and less costly. Online public services are becoming increasingly accessible across Europe, with 81% now available online. The E-government action plan aims at setting up a Digital Single Gateway, connecting business registers across Europe and allowing citizens to send their data “once-only” to public administrations.

The Commission proposed to integrate a digital dimension in Smart Specialisation Strategies, in view of the ERDF investments in innovative and smart economic transformation in the 2021-2027 programmes.

Objective & areas of interest

The objective of this category is to identify projects that accelerate the transformation of business and governmental activities, processes, competencies and models to fully leverage the changes and opportunities of digital technologies and their impact across society in a strategic and prioritized way. The call aims at recognising the innovative efforts of regions that focus on areas and issues where they can affectively catalyse and accelerate the opportunities presented by digital technologies, and where their combination of activities can serve as examples for other European regions.

The call invites projects to apply that cover the following non-cumulative areas:

- Development of a digital economy and support of a data-driven economy
- Development of a digital society and access to digital networks
- Support of data protection, cyber-security and trust in digital solutions
- Use and implementation of e-procurement and e-government, in particular in view of the 13 key administrative procedures that will have to be made available online under the Digital Single Gateway
- Development of digital skills and upskilling
- Support for the transformation of health and care services thanks to digitalisation
- Support of research and innovations in digital technologies
- Accessibility and re-use of public data
- Support for the digitalisation of SMEs
- Fostering digital start-ups and scale-ups
Category 2 – SUSTAINABLE GROWTH: Connecting green, blue and grey

Europe’s regions and cities are key actors in the transition towards sustainable development. The EU’s priorities and strategic approach towards implementing the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development were recently set out in a Communication on the next steps for a sustainable European future. The Communications sets how the 10 political priorities contribute to implementing the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and prepares for the mainstreaming of the SDGs in the European policy framework. Truly sustainable development necessarily implies respect for the relationship between the built environment (‘the grey’), landscaped areas and natural protection zones (‘the green’), as well as the relation with rivers, inland waters, the marine areas and coastal areas (‘the blue’). The development of a long-term perspective that reflect these relationships and consider the reciprocal influence between these aspects is crucial for a sustainable future.

Connecting ‘the green’, ‘the blue’, and blue growth are also supported by the wider set of five policy objectives set out for Cohesion Policy 2021-2027. The fifth policy objective, presented as part of the proposed new legislative package for Cohesion Policy 2021-2027, “Europe closer to citizens”, serves as a horizontal goal to support integrated territorial development. It supports sustainable development of urban, rural and coastal areas as well as local initiatives. Waterfront developments, urban regeneration projects and urban renewal strategies have contributed to a more sustainable growth. The objectives ‘smarter Europe’, ‘greener, carbon free Europe’ and ‘connected Europe’ further contribute to achieving sustainable development objectives.

The 'blue' economy represents roughly 5.4 million jobs and generates a gross added value of almost €500 billion a year. The Europeans Blue Growth Strategy is the long-term strategy to support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sector as a whole. Seas and oceans are drivers for the European economy and have great potential for innovation and growth.

A more resource efficient economy and waste prevention can only be realised through integrative measures. Sustainable infrastructure development and the greening of infrastructure are key components for building climate resilient cities. Ecosystems and their services can serve as regulators in coastal and urban areas, e.g. in the context of erosion control or temperature regulation. Integrating the grey, green and blue in cities therefore complements climate change adaptation strategies and reduces risks. The relationship between water management in cities (the green areas supporting transpiration, evaporation and ground water recharge, the grey increasing run-off volumes and providing storage) is another aspect important for managing a better connection between these elements. The EU promotes the transformation towards an inclusive, blue and green growth through the Circular Economy package.

Objective & areas of interest

The objective of this category is to focus on projects targeted at better connecting green and maritime natural environments with built-up areas (‘grey’). The call aims at recognising innovative regional efforts to exploit development opportunities by thinking in terms of integration and thereby achieving sustainable development. This category aims to identify solutions to overcome fragmented thinking.
The call invites projects to apply that cover the following non-cumulative areas:

- Access for the public to ecosystem services
- Greening the grey, e.g. in green infrastructure planning
- Green growth and circular economy
- Sustainable use of ecosystem services
- Promotion of integrated urban regeneration measures
- Sustainable growth to help the transition of coal and carbon-intensive regions
- Circular and low-carbon economy for islands
- Blue growth and sustainable integrated coastal zone management
- Sustainable development of coastal areas, inland waters and rivers
- Capacity building for integrated territorial development measures
- Soil protection measures
Category 3 - INCLUSIVE GROWTH: Combatting inequalities and poverty

The European Union’s goal to strive for economic, social and territorial cohesion tackles one of the main societal challenges European countries and regions face: combatting inequalities and poverty. Member States and the European Union aim to reduce disparities, prevent discrimination, avoid poverty and develop inclusive societies. The proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights in 2017, signed by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, has given significant momentum to this goal. The European Pillar of Social Rights is about delivering new and more effective rights for citizens.

Based on these principles, the European Commission’s policies, cooperation and programmes support and complement the Member State’s policies in employment, social inclusion, social protection, promoting equality and tackling urban poverty. The Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth sets targets to lift at least 20 million people out of poverty and social exclusion and to increase employment of the population aged 20-64 to 75%.

As social policies are an integral part of the Europe 2020 Strategy, the Commission also supports EU countries’ efforts to address their social challenges. The flagship initiatives include the Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion and the Agenda for New Skills and Jobs, which support efforts to reach the Europe 2020 targets. With the Social Investment Package, the Commission provides guidance to Member States to modernise their welfare systems towards social investment throughout life, including employment, pensions and youth support. It sets out an integrated policy framework which reinforces the crucial role of active inclusion by focusing on, among other things, one-stop shops, increasing the take-up and coverage of social benefits, adequate income support and better activation. The European Commission addresses these societal challenges through EU funds, in particular the European Social Fund. In March 2017 the EU adopted a new indicator of “material and social deprivation”, covering the entire population of the 28 EU Member States. The European Commission’s 2009 Communication Solidarity in Health - Reducing Health Inequalities in the EU set out an initial strategy to inform on EU funding to help national authorities and other bodies address inequalities.

The European employment strategy (EES) dates back to 1997, when the EU Member States undertook the establishment of common objectives and targets for employment policy. Its main aim is the creation of more and better jobs throughout the EU. It is now part of the Europe 2020 growth strategy and is implemented through the European semester. The European Commission supports public authorities in engaging in socially responsible public procurement by buying ethical products and services, and by using public tenders to create job opportunities, decent work, social and professional inclusion and better conditions for disabled and disadvantaged people. The Commission coordinates and monitors national policies and implementation of EU law and promotes the sharing of best practices in areas like rights at work, coordination of social security schemes, training, skills and entrepreneurship.

Increasing urbanisation in Europe and the world has come alongside a growing inequality in Europe’s cities. Within the partnership of the Urban Agenda for the EU on urban poverty, cities, EU countries and the European Commission work together to identify EU policies that impact on inclusion of the poor and regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods.
Objective & areas of interest

The objective of this category is to identify local and regional initiatives to fight against poverty and material deprivation, including pockets of poverty in urban areas. This call aims at recognising projects that contribute to fostering more cohesive, inclusive and equal societies.

The call welcomes projects that cover the following non-cumulative areas:

- **Reducing poverty in urban and rural areas**
- **Combatting material deprivation**
- **Fighting against gender-based inequalities**
- **Securing social procurement and socially responsible public-procurement**
- **Tackling all forms of discrimination by specifically focusing on spatial and educational segregation**
- **Skills development for vulnerable groups to respond to labour market shortages**
- **Business development, including job creation targeting the most vulnerable groups**
- **Reducing inequalities in access to quality public services (education, health, housing, etc.)**
- **Promoting transition from institutional to community-based services for people with disabilities and children.**
Building cities that are climate-resilient is one of the most pressing matters for urban development. Adaptation strategies are needed at local, regional, national EU and international levels to anticipate the adverse effects of climate change and prevent or minimize the damage. Such strategies often have an urban dimension, and cities have a major role in their implementation.

The European Commission has, in recent years, been increasing its focus on urban issues, as a response to the fact that by 2020 it is estimated that almost 80% of EU citizens will be living in cities. The political importance of the issue is demonstrated by its inclusion in the 7th Environmental Action Programme (7EAP) under Priority Objective 8, entitled, Sustainable Cities: "Working together for Common Solutions". The overall objective of this policy drive is to enhance the sustainability of EU cities so that by 2050 all Europeans are "living well, within the limits of the planet”.

The EU Adaptation Strategy Package was published in 2013. The partnership of the Urban Agenda for the EU on climate adaptation published its Action Plan in December 2018. The aim is to translate the needs of cities into concrete action through proposals for better regulation and funding and knowledge exchange. Additionally, the Action Plan seeks to achieve a common awareness level on the critical nature of climate change, and to develop city capacities to address the impacts of such a change. Adaptation is complementary to efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions in cities, which are covered by other topics such as Energy transition in cities, Urban mobility, Circular economy in cities, Air quality in cities and Sustainable use of land and nature-based solutions in cities. The Commission further organises and participates in initiatives within the EU and at an international level, addressing needs of cities. The focus areas include sustainable urban development, smart cities, and the covenant of mayors for climate and energy. The European Commission’s initiative Better Funding – Draft Action F3: A new LIFE for urban adaptation projects aims at supporting cities to develop the capacities required to tackle climate change adaption.

**Objective & areas of interest**

The objective of this category is to identify innovative projects and measures that address the most pressing needs of climate adaption measures in building resilient cities.

The call welcomes projects that address the following non-cumulative areas of interest:

- Adaptation projects linked to the implementation of urban adaptation strategies
- Improved urban planning and management
- Early warning systems to reduce disaster risks in cities
- Development of energy-efficient, climate-proof housing and infrastructure
- Development of green infrastructure in cities
- Reduction of emissions and the combination of mitigation and adaptation measures
Ensuring good health status for citizens and delivering improved public health care is one of the goals of the European Union. It is also a prerequisite for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe.

Our health systems in Europe are facing challenges: populations are growing and ageing, and limited resources are stretched. People live longer, but not necessarily in good health and inequalities in access to care are growing. We all agree that health systems are a fundamental part of our socio-economic model in Europe and that a healthy population is crucial for the economic prosperity and the social cohesion of our Union.

One of the European Commission’s priorities is to modernise and improve public health services. The European Commission is working to provide its citizens access to safe and top quality digital services in health and care. In April 2018, the European Commission published a Staff Working Document and a Communication on Digital Transformation of Health and Care in the Digital Single Market, empowering citizens and contributing to a healthier society. These policy documents give direction to EU activities in this field for the coming years and make health an important backbone of future EU policies. The European Commission adopted a legislative proposal for a new European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) Programme in May 2018, based on the proposed Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2021-2027. It will serve as the EU’s main financial instrument guiding investment in people and implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, including health policies. Currently, in the EFSI Regulation, new health solutions, medicines, and social infrastructure are considered priority areas for investment. Therefore, the Commission is reacting to today’s need for finding responses to delivering health services.

EU Member States hold primary responsibility for organising and delivering health services and medical care. Consequently, EU health policy serves to complement national policies, and to ensure health protection in all EU policies.

EU policies and actions in public health aim to:

- Protect and improve the health of EU citizens
- Support the modernisation of health infrastructure
- Improve the efficiency of Europe’s health systems.

The EU aims to ensure good health and to work with EU countries to improve public health, prevent human illness and eliminate sources of danger to physical and mental health. The State of health in the EU is a two-year initiative undertaken by the European Commission that provides policy makers, interest groups, and health practitioners with factual, comparative data and insights into health and health systems in EU countries, allowing for identification of potential policy responses. The EU Health Programme outlines the strategy for ensuring good health and healthcare. This programme is closely linked to Commission priorities such as:

- Jobs, growth and investment (health of population and health care services as a productive factor for growth and jobs)
- Internal market (for pharmaceuticals, medical devices, cross-border health care directives, and Health Technology Assessment)
- Single digital market (including eHealth)
- Justice and fundamental rights (fighting against health inequalities)
EU citizens have the right to access healthcare in any EU country and be reimbursed for their care abroad by their home country as set out in Directive 2011/24/EU on patients’ rights in cross-border healthcare. Ensuring cross-border health care access is a major field of activity, where eHealth Digital Service Infrastructure can offer solutions.

Objective & areas of interest

The objective of this category is to focus on innovative projects, which help modernise health services and bring new approaches to the field, including in transnational and cross-border contexts.

The call welcomes projects that address the following non-cumulative areas of interest:

- Access to high quality and safe health care, in particular focusing on marginalised groups
- Fighting against health inequalities and ensuring equal access to health care
- Boosting job creation, developing healthcare providers’ skills, and tackling shortages in health services
- Improving the health status of the population to contribute to better growth and jobs
- Promotion and fostering healthy lifestyles
- Building innovative, efficient and sustainable health systems
- Preventing disease
- Developing of eHealth and promotion of digital healthcare
- Facilitating cross-border healthcare
Eligibility and Award Criteria

1. Applications for the REGIOSTARS Awards shall meet the following eligibility criteria:
   
a) The application shall be submitted via the REGIOSTARS online platform no later than 9 May 2019, 23:59:59 CET.

b) Applications must be in one of the official EU languages.

c) The maximum number of applications per operational or cooperation programme is 5.

d) The application shall include an endorsement letter of the relevant managing authority.

e) The application shall refer to a project, which has received EU co-financing from the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Social Fund, or a project which has received EU funding under Interreg IPA-CBC or Interreg ENI-CBC programmes, after 1 January 2007.

f) The project must clearly refer to one of the five award categories of 2019. The same project cannot be submitted for several categories.

g) The project should be either fully implemented or should be in a sufficiently mature state for the jury to assess it (i.e. physical implementation should be progressed enough to demonstrate achievement of objectives).

h) The project has not applied in a previous edition of REGIOSTARS Awards.

2. All eligible applications will be assessed by the REGIOSTARS jury against the following award criteria:
   
a) Innovative character of the project in the selected award category. Projects shall not be "business as usual", but should demonstrate new approaches, new organisational methods or the development of new (or significantly) improved goods or services.

b) Good results and impact of the project in relation to its initial objectives and impacts. Projects shall demonstrate their impact on the thematic area and territory concerned and show their results against the initially set targets and objectives. Projects, which are not yet fully finalised, shall describe the results achieved and expected impacts, based on measurable forward planning.

c) Financial sustainability of the project. Projects shall demonstrate their financial sustainability beyond the lifespan of the (initial) EU-funded project period and their future as a self-standing initiative or project.

d) Transferability and possibility to replicate the project in other regions. The project shall demonstrate that it represents good practice in a wider (EU) context and that it inspired/inspires other regions, for instance in the context of interregional partnerships or on-going exchanges with other projects in the same thematic area. The project should also show good ways of communicating its goals and results.
1. Is my project a good candidate for the REGIOSTARS competition?

1. What is the Commission looking for in this competition?
The Commission is looking for innovative, EU-funded projects, which demonstrate new approaches in regional development. The awards scheme encompasses five different thematic topics that change every year. Submitted projects shall fall under this thematic focus.

2. What is this year’s thematic focus?
The five thematic award categories for 2019 are:

- Category 1 (Smart growth) - Promoting digital transformation
- Category 2 (Sustainable growth) - Connecting green, blue and grey
- Category 3 (Inclusive growth) - Combatting inequalities and poverty
- Category 4 (Urban development) - Building climate-resilient cities
- Category 5 (Topic of the year 2019) - Modernising health services

A more detailed description of the categories and an indication of the projects that could be relevant for meeting the award criteria are presented in this Guide. Projects shall thematically refer to one of these categories. The same project cannot be submitted for several categories.

3. Which types of EU co-funded projects are eligible?
All projects which received funding from European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) (including Interreg), Cohesion Fund (CF), European Social Fund (ESF), the Interreg IPA-CBC or Interreg ENI-CBC programmes (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, European Neighbourhood Instrument).

In terms of funding periods, projects from both the 2007-2013 and the 2014-2020 period are eligible.

Also projects and initiatives that combine ERDF or CF with the other ESI Funds (ESF or EMFF or EAFRD) with directly managed EU funds (e.g. Horizon 2020, LIFE, COSME, CEF, EaSI, etc.) or with EFSI are welcome.

Eligibility criteria are presented in the second section of this Guide (‘Eligibility and Award Criteria’).

4. Can I submit a project that started before 2007?
No. The starting date of the project must be after 1 January 2007.
5. **Can I submit a recently completed project?**

Yes. However, please consider that the project should be sufficiently mature (i.e. in order for it to demonstrate progress in the achievement of the original objectives).

6. **Is there a maximum number of applications?**

Yes. A maximum of five applications per operational programme can be submitted. The managing authority of the operational programme ensures with its endorsement that this maximum number is respected.

7. **Is my project mature enough to be submitted?**

The independent jury is going to assess your project based on results already achieved. They will not be able to award your innovative ideas in case you cannot provide evidence they work. If, for example, your project is still in the phase of public procurements, we recommend you to wait with your submission for a next edition of the REGIOSTARS with an appropriate category. Do not forget that you cannot submit your project proposal to the REGIOSTARS awards multiple times.

2. **How do I submit my project?**

2.1. **How does it work in a nutshell?**

You fill in the on-line application and upload an endorsement letter from your managing authority by the below deadline. *That’s it!*

2.2. **Where do I submit the application?**

On the REGIOSTARS online platform: [http://www.regiostarsawards.eu](http://www.regiostarsawards.eu)

2.3. **When is the deadline for submission?**

9 May 2019 23:59:59 CET

2.4. **Who should submit the application?**

Applications must be submitted by the project promoter (= the organization who is/was responsible for the implementation of the project). The application form shall be accompanied by the endorsement form, to be filled in by the managing authority. It is available on the application platform or in part III of the Word application form.

2.5. **In which language can I submit the application?**

The application form is available in English. However, you can submit your project in any other official EU language.

If needed, you can get free of charge a machine translation into English via this web page: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/resources-partners/machine-translation-public-administrations-mtec_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/resources-partners/machine-translation-public-administrations-mtec_en). Please be also aware that in case a translation from the original language to English is not provided the jury will work based on a simple machine translation.
2.6. **How do I indicate the localisation of my project?**

You give either the geo-coordinates or the exact address of the building where the project is located.

For projects with several locations or no fixed location (e.g. employment projects or SME funding), please select the most emblematic one (e.g. where most important investment took place) or choose the location of the project promoter (e.g. the headquarters of the funding agency). For rivers, simply give the name of the river without coordinates.

We will use this information to display the locations of all projects on our website.

2.7. **Can I submit a project that had already been submitted at an earlier edition of the REGIOSTARS Awards?**

No. It is one of the eligibility criteria that a project has not taken part in a previous edition of REGIOSTARS Award – so, only “new” projects can be submitted for the competition. If the proposed project is a "follow-up" project to a previously presented project, it has to be demonstrated that the new project is not merely a continuation, but a completely new project.

2.8. **Can I send the application also by email?**

No. To help you prepare your application, we provide you with the application form in Word format. However, applications have to be submitted directly via the REGIOSTARS online platform: [www.regiostarsawards.eu](http://www.regiostarsawards.eu)

2.9. **Does the application have to be submitted in one step? Can the application be saved and completed at a later date?**

Yes. Every applicant can save his or her progress at any stage in order to complete or correct the application at any time before the end of the deadline. The application will only be finalised once you click on 'submit'.

2.10. **Why does the application form contain two points where project descriptions have to be submitted?**

The short, catchy project description requested under STEP 1 - summary of information on the application platform or under point I/3 in the Word application form will be used for communication purposes. Please provide here a description which demonstrates to the wider public in an easily understandable way why your project is exceptional and how it contributes to improving the life of European citizens. This section of your application form is going to be used without alteration, e.g. for the purposes of the Public choice award as a short description of your project.

Under STEP 3 - description of project on the application platform or point II/1 in the Word application form you can provide a longer, professional project description with all the relevant information you deem necessary for the jury to evaluate your project.

2.11. **What is the information requested under the “impact of the project” under STEP 4 - description of the project on the application platform or point II/5 in the Word application form?**

Please submit here a description of the activities and results that can be attributed to your submitted project. We suggest writing this section of the application form while thinking of all the
positive effects that would not have happened in case the project would not have been implemented.

2.12. Which technical requirements do the images have to meet?

You are requested to submit high-resolution pictures that are going to be used on various communication channels, for instance in printed materials, online and for an exhibition, both during and after the competition itself. These pictures should not be less than 300 dpi or 10 MB.

2.13. What happens, once my project is submitted?

Within a few days after submission, your project (title, short project description, photo) will appear on our website. We will then inform you about the results about the eligibility check. After the jury meeting, we will contact all finalists and winners. If you haven’t heard from us by end of July, your project didn’t make it into the final.

2.14. How does the public vote work?

Once we receive the list of finalists from the jury (July), an online voting tool will appear on our website. You then have the chance to vote for your favorite project. The project with the most votes receives the Public choice award.

2.15. Who can I contact if I have questions?

Please send your enquiries about the application process by e-mail to: regiostars2019@iservice-europa.eu.

3. What is the managing authority’s role?

3.1. What does a managing authority have to do?

The managing authority has a two-fold role:

• Providing the applicant with a signed endorsement form and ensuring that a maximum of 5 projects per programme are submitted;

• Participating in a meeting of the Commissioner for regional policy with all finalist projects in July and at the awards ceremony in October (costs are borne by the Commission).

3.2. Why does the managing authority need to endorse the project application?

First, the managing authority ensures that no more than five applications per operational programme are submitted. Secondly, the managing authority provides an indication to the Commission, whether or not the project been subject to any type of investigation, which could lead to a financial correction linked to irregularities or fraud.

3.3. Can I submit a project without the endorsement of the managing authority?

No.
3.4. Are there any limitations concerning the number of applications by category?

No, this is completely up to the programmes (programme may even have 5 applications in one single category). Overall, Managing authorities are free to use whatever selection process they deem appropriate to identify the endorsed projects for their programme.

3.5. Can an intermediate body sign on behalf of the managing authority?

Yes. However, the intermediate body shall ensure coordination with the managing authority.

3.6. What is meant by ‘the representative’ of the managing authority in the application form?

It is up to the managing authority to decide who signs. In some cases, it may be the head of the managing authority itself, in other cases it could also be the programme manager, or the communication officer (particularly in the case of larger programmes).

3.7. What if the managing authority…?

If the managing authority in charge of the 2007-2013 programme has ceased to exist or changed, the managing authority that is in charge of the 2014-2020 programme (that succeeds the 2007-2013 programme) should endorse the application.

If the same managing authority is in charge of several programmes, it can endorse up to five projects per programme. If successive programmes (2007-2013 and 2014-2020) cover the same territory and in essence the same themes, there should nevertheless be only five projects presented for the entire timespan since 2007.

3.8. Is there a list of all managing authorities?


4. How is my project assessed – and what happens after?

4.1. How does the jury evaluation process look like?

Applications will be examined by an independent jury taking into account the eligibility and award criteria. Only applications which satisfy the first phase of the evaluation (eligibility) will be admitted to the second phase (pre-selection of finalists/award by the jury).

Please carefully read also the guide for applicants in the sections related to the eligibility criteria and award criteria for further details.

4.2. Who sits in the jury?

The jury is composed of 15 high-level, academic members, which are nominated by the Commission. Members work in teams of three (based on their expertise in a given award category) but take the final decision on the finalists and winners together as a group.
4.3. **What happens if my project is selected as a finalist?**

All finalists are invited to participate in:

- A meeting of the finalists with the Commissioner for regional policy combined with a training (July); and
- The Award Ceremony in Brussels (October).

Both finalists and winners will also be included in automatically take part in the online voting for the public choice award. Also, project descriptions will become part of the online database of best practices on the InfoRegio website ([http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/projects](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/projects)). This database is used when selecting projects for Commissioners visits, interviews, good practice examples in magazines or press articles, communication campaigns on social media, etc.

A representative for each of the finalist projects and the communication officers of the respective programmes (= the programmes with finalist projects) will be invited to a special training session in July.

Costs for the participation in the above mentioned events are borne by the Commission.

4.4. **What happens if my project wins?**

All winners will be contacted during July-August by us. To start, we will produce a promotional video for their project. Please note that, in this case, close cooperation with the production company will be required, as well as on site presence for two days of filming between the period of July and September. This video will be presented during the ceremony and published online, followed by a promotional campaign. Non-responsiveness or unavailability to cooperate can be a reason for the European Commission to retract the awarding decision.

Winners will receive the REGIOSTARS awards at the Award Ceremony in Brussels in October. The project manager and a representative from the managing authority will receive a REGIOSTARS trophy and a certificate from the European Commissioner for Regional Policy.

The Commission will also invite the winners to present their project during a dedicated press-event.

Last, but not least, project promoters are encouraged to host small, celebratory events on the day of the awards ceremony. If film crews are sent to your local event to be featured during the ceremony in Brussels, close cooperation and support will be required.

4.5. **When will the REGIOSTARS Awards ceremony take place?**

This year's REGIOSTARS award ceremony will take place during the annual European Week of Regions and Cities ([www.regions-and-cities.europa.eu](http://www.regions-and-cities.europa.eu)). The exact date will be announced on this site and the REGIOSTARS website as well.
Lorem ipsum