

Guidelines for applications

Sida's Baltic Sea Unit offers resources for initiatives with clear added value to Swedish stakeholders in cross-border cooperation between countries in the Baltic Region.

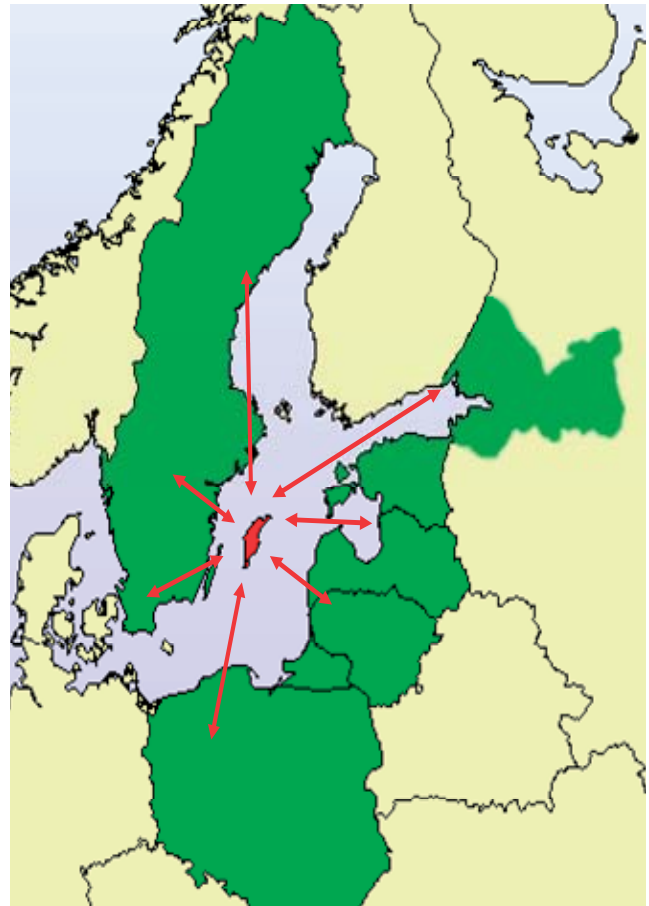
The Baltic Sea Unit's activities focus on promoting the development of cross-border cooperation in the Baltic Region, based on the mutual interests of Sweden and its neighbouring countries.

Financial aid is provided to regional cooperation projects involving Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Russia. Cooperation with Russia is mainly limited to the St. Petersburg area and the counties of Leningrad and Kaliningrad.

The Baltic Sea Unit supports cooperation initiatives above all in areas that are significant from a broad regional or national perspective, such as the environment and energy, civil security and social and health issues, and that concern more than one group of stakeholders on the Swedish side. The Baltic Sea Unit will also engage in promoting contact and network building in R&D, innovation, leadership and training, primarily from a local and regional integration and development perspective.

The Baltic Sea Unit offers financial aid to projects conducted by stakeholders in the Swedish community – municipalities, regions, public authorities and individual organizations. Initiatives may originate from Swedish or foreign organizations, but only Swedish organizations can seek financial aid and be project owners.

The financial aid is provided to initial cooperation projects, ranging from pilot studies, contact-building seminars and workshops to subject seminars and conferences. Projects that are looked on favourably are those involving more than one group of Swedish stakeholders that have potential for sustained autonomous development. As well as offering



financial aid, the Baltic Sea Unit can help with advice and support in structuring the application to enable projects in cross-border cooperation to be successfully executed.

Another function of the Baltic Sea Unit is to help enquiries from organizations in the cooperating countries to be matched with relevant Swedish stakeholders, and to help coordinate new project proposals with existing networks.

The unit also has the ambition to participate regularly in implementing such initiatives and to contribute in various ways to disseminating the outcomes of the projects financed.

Project grants

The maximum aid for a project is SEK 300,000. The projects are built on the initiative and commitment of the stakeholders themselves.

HOW ARE APPLICATIONS SELECTED AND ASSESSED?

The following criteria are applied in the selection of projects qualifying for aid from the Baltic Sea Unit:

General

Aid is granted to projects considered fit for purpose, in terms of the development of cross-border cooperation in the Baltic Region.

Additional expense

Aid is awarded for initiatives outside the scope of the regular activities of the applicants.

Cooperation

Aid is available for cooperation involving two or more countries in the region. The cooperation must engage more than one group of stakeholders on the Swedish side and the stakeholders should consist of different municipalities, regions, public authorities and individual organizations in related sectors. The cooperation must benefit stakeholders in the cooperating countries. Priority is given to projects that clearly illustrate the added value of the cooperation in the cooperating countries.

Project areas

Aid is awarded to projects in the areas of the environment and energy, civil security and social and health issues. Aid is also available for expanding contact and network building activities in R&D, innovation, leadership and training when such activities are regarded as important from a local and regional integration and development perspective.

Sustainability

Projects are assessed on the basis of their potential for leading to continued cooperation after the end of the project period. This assessment takes into account the amount of co-finance over and above the aid granted, any participation in the project by stakeholders other than the project owner, and any past experience that the project owner has of international cooperation.

Potential for development

Projects are assessed on the basis of their potential for continuing to expand or extend the depth of a cross-border cooperation venture, as well as on the basis of their conceivable beneficial side-effects. These may include, for example, projects that develop into EU-related cooperation projects, i.e. projects that lead to an application within an EU programme. At the same time, a need remains for promoting cooperative initiatives that fall outside the scope of EU programmes but that develop integration in the Baltic Region and create natural and stable relationships and contacts between people, regions and countries.

WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCEDURE?

How the Baltic Sea Unit works

Swedish stakeholders are free to send applications, make enquiries and submit ideas to the Baltic Sea Unit throughout the year.

Our administrative personnel maintain ongoing dialogue with the project owner about the application and the structuring of the project. This enables us to propose changes to the application and budget after the application has been submitted.

Here at the Baltic Sea Unit, we strive to give applicants a decision within no more than 25 working days after receipt of their application. However, during July, August and December no decisions are taken on applications. Initiatives are often implemented within a year from when the aid is granted. Where applications are approved, funds must be requisitioned by no later than 30 November in the budget year.

When funds are requisitioned, an agreement is drawn up establishing the terms and conditions regarding the aid provided. On completion of the project, the project owner delivers a final report on the project and the Baltic Sea Unit evaluates the outcome of the project.

The Baltic Sea Unit reserves the right to take part in the performance of any activities for which the project has received aid. The Baltic Sea Unit will also take part in cases where a presentation of the unit's activities is considered appropriate. We also reserve the right to publish information on initiatives via our Website, for example. If the project owner does not agree to this, this must be stated on the application.



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