

## Danube Strategic Project Fund (DSPF)

# Description of the Initiative

---

### 1 Background

The Project Fund will build upon the experience gained during the implementation of the pilot actions<sup>1</sup> in the framework the Danube Implementation Facility, carried out by the City of Vienna in its capacity as Priority Area 10 "Institutional Capacity and Cooperation" of the EUSDR. Moreover, it shall refer as appropriate to the results, conclusions and recommendations of the "Socio-economic assessment of the Danube Region", which was implemented by Priority Area 8 "Competitiveness" and finalised in November 2015.

### 2 General and specific objectives of the initiative

The Danube Strategic Project Fund (DSPF) shall primarily focus on innovative pre-mature projects which could not be funded so far and respond to the actual needs in the Danube Region functional area. Moreover, it will provide support for projects and initiatives which do not fit into a programme or funding scheme (or which need a combination of several funding instruments). The EUSDR provides an appropriate framework for the identification of such strategic projects, with all countries acting on a level-playing field.

Particular attention should be paid to projects that:

- Have a strategic impact, especially in view of Enlargement and Neighbourhood policies;
- Have connections and/or spill-over effects in the territory covered by the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, with five out of its eight participating countries being also part of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region.
- Include neighboring countries (Moldova and Ukraine)
- Include cross-cutting and/or horizontal measures covering several Priority Areas of the Strategy;
- Follow a multi-level governance approach and implement new solutions for handling expertise by means of accessible common platform and project information, including building networks;
- Support the establishment of economic and social cooperation;
- Foster integration and reconciliation of Danube countries, with a particular focus on the training of young people for a common macro regional identity.

---

<sup>1</sup> Technical Assistance Facility for Danube Region projects (TAF-DRP), Seed money Facility (START I and II), Danube Financing Dialogue, on-line search funding tool (EuroAccess)

### 3 Methodology

The selection procedure for projects will consist of the following steps:

1. Setting up of an advisory committee to make a recommendation of a limited number of projects
2. Setting up of a jury to rank the best project proposals
3. Assessment of the needs of the project (consultancy, financial support, technical assistance)

Criteria for the identification of projects should include:

- Complementarity with other existing funds
- Project sustainability: follow-up investment or policy perspective
- Spill-over effects/impact in particular to the enlargement and neighbourhood countries
- Synergies with other (macro)- regional strategies, in particular EUSAIR
- A social impact element including young people and
- A capacity building element

Financial contributions to DSPF projects:

- € 70.000,00 - € 100.000,00 / DSPF project
- Max. € 969.000,00 in total
- Min. 50% and max. 90% of individual DSPF project budget

Eligible Partnership

- Min. 2 max. 4 partners from at least 2 countries
- Lead Partner must be from the Danube Region
- Project Partners can also be from the Adriatic and Ionian Region

### 4 Expected results and their use

The political character of the project and the involvement of young people from the Danube Region shall lead to an increased visibility of the Strategy, support its sustainability, and make it more known also at the margins of the macro-region. The focus on projects with the potential of follow-up initiatives shall also sustain this approach. The implementation of the project shall support the governance of the EUSDR, deliver an enhanced interaction among relevant stakeholders and thereby support the cross-sectorial approach of the Strategy. An innovative combination of a top-down and a bottom-up approach between the project and the political level will also ensure vertical consistency.

### 5 Sustainability of the project's achievements

The initiative focuses on projects which have already a follow-up perspective. Results will be published on the websites and made available to a wider public. Chosen Projects shall have an impact on both the horizontal and vertical structure of the EUSDR and thereby strengthen its macro-regional governance approach.

### 6 Duration of the initiative

**36 months**

01.09.2016 – 31.08.2019