

EU FUNDING GATEWAY



**Northern Ireland
Executive**

www.northernireland.gov.uk



INTRODUCTION

This document provides a gateway to Northern Ireland stakeholders seeking more information about European Union competitive funding programmes, and provides links to important websites where further details of these programmes and their individual calls can be found.

This document focuses on competitive funding programmes. For information on structural funding please contact the Department of Finance and Personnel.

Feedback is welcomed, particularly in relation to any competitive funding programmes which you would like included. Please [contact us](#) if you have any queries.

The major competitive European Union programmes are listed in this document, and every effort has been made to ensure that the information presented is up to date at the time of publication. All the funding programmes listed contain a brief description and links to the specific Directorate General or Agency managing the competitive funding programme and the relevant databases.

This document has been prepared by the EU Liaison Officers based in the Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels.

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CONNECTING EUROPE FACILITY

The **Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)** finances projects which fill the missing links in Europe's energy, transport and digital backbone. It will also make Europe's economy greener by promoting cleaner transport modes, high speed broadband connections and facilitating the use of renewable energy in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy. In addition the funding for energy networks will further integrate the internal energy market, reduce the EU's energy dependency and bolster the security of supply. By focussing on smart, sustainable and fully interconnected transport, energy and digital networks, the Connecting Europe Facility will help to complete the European single market.

The CEF will better mobilise private financing and allow for innovative financial instruments such as guarantees and project bonds to gain maximum leverage from this EU funding injection.

The CEF is divided into three sectors:

- [CEF Transport](#)
- [CEF Energy](#)
- [CEF Telecom](#)



The [Innovation and Networks Executive Agency \(INEA\)](#) will manage all the EU-supported projects established under the CEF.

BUDGET: €27.4 billion

[Connecting Europe Facility \(CEF\) Programme](#)

[CEF Energy Calls for Proposals](#)

[CEF Energy Previous Projects](#)

[CEF Telecom Calls for Proposals](#)

[CEF Telecom Previous Projects](#)

[CEF Transport Calls for Proposals](#)

[CEF Transport Previous Projects](#)

COSME

COSME is the EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs, running from 2014 to 2020, with a budget of €2.3billion. COSME will support SMEs in the following areas:

- Facilitating access to finance
- Supporting internationalisation and access to markets
- Creating an environment favourable to competitiveness
- Encouraging an entrepreneurial culture

COSME is a programme implementing the Small Business Act (SBA) which reflects the Commission's political will to recognise the central role of SMEs in the EU economy.

BUDGET: €2.3 billion

[COSME Programme](#)
[Calls for Proposals](#)



CREATIVE EUROPE

Creative Europe is the European Commission's framework programme for support to the culture and audiovisual sectors.

Following on from the previous [Culture Programme](#) and [MEDIA programme](#), **Creative Europe**, with a budget of €1.46 billion (9% higher than its predecessors), will support:

- [Culture sector initiatives](#), such as those promoting cross-border cooperation, platforms, networking, and literary translation;
- [Audiovisual sector initiatives](#), such as those promoting the development, distribution, or access to audiovisual works;
- [A cross-sectoral strand](#), including a Guarantee Facility and transnational policy cooperation.

The programme consists of two sub-programmes; the [Culture sub-programme](#) to promote the culture sector, and the [MEDIA sub-programme](#) to support the audiovisual sector.

BUDGET: €1.46 billion

[Creative Europe Programme](#)
[EC Creative Europe Calls](#)
[EC Culture Calls](#)
[EACEA Creative Europe Calls](#)
[Project Selection Results](#)



EMPLOYMENT & SOCIAL INITIATIVE (EaSI)

The [Employment and Social Innovation \(EaSI\)](#) programme is a financing instrument at EU level to promote a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty and improving working conditions.

Structure and funding

EaSI is managed directly by the European Commission. It brings together three EU programmes managed separately between 2007 and 2013: [PROGRESS](#), [EURES](#) and [Progress Microfinance](#).

As of January 2014, these programmes form the **three axes** of EaSI. They support:

- the modernisation of employment and social policies with the [PROGRESS axis](#) (61% of the total budget);
- job mobility with the [EURES axis](#) (18% of the total budget);
- access to micro-finance and social entrepreneurship with the [Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis](#) (21% of the total budget).

BUDGET: €919 million

[Employment and Social Initiative \(EaSI\) Programme](#)

[Calls for Proposals](#)

[Awarded Grants](#)

[Results of Action Grants](#)



ERASMUS+



The [Erasmus+ programme](#) aims to boost skills and employability, as well as modernising Education, Training, and Youth work. The seven year programme will have a budget of **€14.7 billion**; a **40% increase** compared to current spending levels, reflecting the EU's commitment to investing in these areas.

Erasmus+ will provide **opportunities for over 4 million Europeans** to study, train, gain work experience and volunteer abroad.

Erasmus+ will support **transnational partnerships** among Education, Training, and Youth institutions and organisations to foster cooperation and bridge the worlds of Education and work in order to tackle the skills gaps we are facing in Europe.

It will also support national efforts to modernise Education, Training, and Youth systems. In the field of Sport, there will be support for grassroots projects and cross-border challenges such as combating match-fixing, doping, violence and racism.

Erasmus+ brings together seven existing EU programmes in the fields of Education, Training, and Youth; it will for the first time provide support for Sport. As an integrated programme, Erasmus+ offers more opportunities for cooperation across the **Education, Training, Youth, and Sport** sectors and is easier to access than its predecessors, with simplified funding rules.

BUDGET: €14.7 billion

[Erasmus+ Programme](#)

[Erasmus+ Guide](#)

[Calls for Proposals](#)

[Previous Projects](#)

EUROPE FOR CITIZENS

The aim of this programme is:

- To contribute to citizens' understanding of the EU, its history and diversity
- To foster European citizenship and to improve conditions for civic and democratic participation at EU level
- To raise awareness of remembrance, common history and values
- To encourage democratic participation of citizens at EU level, by developing citizens' understanding of the EU policy making-process and, by promoting opportunities for societal and intercultural engagement and volunteering at EU level



The Priorities of the programme for 2016 – 2020 are:

Strand 1: European remembrance

1. Commemorations of major historical turning points in recent European history
[2016](#) – [2017](#) – [2018](#) – [2019](#) – [2020](#)
2. Civil society and civic participation under totalitarian regimes
3. Ostracism and loss of citizenship under totalitarian regimes: drawing the lessons for today
4. Democratic transition and accession to the European Union

Strand 2: Democratic engagement and civic participation

1. Understanding and Debating Euroscepticism
2. Solidarity in times of crisis
3. Combatting stigmatisation of "immigrants" and building counter narratives to foster intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding
4. Debate on the future of Europe

BUDGET: €185.4 million

[Europe for Citizens Programme](#)

[Calls for Proposals](#)

[Project Selection Results](#)

HORIZON 2020

Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020) – in addition to the private investment that this money will attract. It promises more breakthroughs, discoveries and world-firsts by taking great ideas from the lab to the market.

Horizon 2020 is the financial instrument implementing the [Innovation Union](#), a [Europe 2020](#) flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness.

Seen as a means to drive economic growth and create jobs, Horizon 2020 has the political backing of Europe's leaders and the Members of the European Parliament. They agreed that research is an investment in our future and so put it at the heart of the EU's blueprint for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs.



By coupling research and innovation, Horizon 2020 is helping to achieve this with its emphasis on excellent science, industrial leadership and tackling societal challenges. The goal is to ensure Europe produces world-class science, removes barriers to innovation and makes it easier for the public and private sectors to work together in delivering innovation.

Horizon 2020 is open to everyone, with a simple structure that reduces red tape and time so participants can focus on what is really important. This approach makes sure new projects get off the ground quickly – and achieve results faster.

The EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation will be complemented by further measures to complete and further develop the [European Research Area](#). These measures will aim at breaking down barriers to create a genuine single market for knowledge, research and innovation.

BUDGET: €78.6 billion

[Horizon 2020 Programme](#)

[Calls for Proposals](#)

[Participant Portal](#)

[CORDIS Projects & Results Service](#)

NORTHERN IRELAND & HORIZON 2020

The [Northern Ireland Contact Points](#) (NICP) network is a resource available to all potential applicants from Northern Ireland who are interested in engaging with Horizon 2020. Amongst other activities, this support will take the form of:



1. organising relevant events/workshops,
2. assistance with identifying areas of relevance within the competitive EU calls,
3. help in identifying collaborative partners for applications,
4. engaging with National Contact Points and also,
5. practical advice and support with the process itself.



The network is coordinated by Neill Wallace.
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For more information visit the [NICP website](#).

Northern Ireland based NICP network members:

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Brussels based NICP network members:

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INTERREG EUROPE

The [Interreg Europe](#) programme financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) helps regional and local governments across Europe to develop and deliver better policy. By creating an environment and opportunities for sharing solutions, Interreg aims to ensure that government investment, innovation and implementation efforts all lead to integrated and sustainable impacts for people and places.

To achieve their goal, Interreg Europe offers opportunities for regional and local public authorities across Europe to share ideas and experience on public policy in practice, therefore improving strategies for their citizens and communities.

Any actions developed with financial support from Interreg Europe must fall into one of the following four categories:

- Research and innovation
- SME competitiveness
- Low-carbon economy
- Environment and resource efficiency

The Interreg Europe is continuation of INTERREG IVC (2007-2013).

Learn more about the features of the Interreg Europe [here](#).

BUDGET: €359 million

[Interreg Europe Programme](#)

[Calls for Proposals](#)

[Approved Projects](#)

INTERREG NORTHERN PERIPHERY & ARCTIC



Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme

2014-2020

The [Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme](#) 2014-2020 forms a cooperation between 9 programme partner countries; the Member States of Finland, Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom (Scotland and Northern Ireland) in cooperation with the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland and Norway. The NPA 2014-2020 is part of the European Territorial Cooperation Objective, supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and ERDF equivalent funding from non EU partner countries.

Despite geographical differences, the large Programme area shares a number of common features, such as low population density, low accessibility, low economic diversity, abundant natural resources, and high impact of climate change.

Priorities

It is the programme's vision is to help to generate vibrant, competitive and sustainable communities through transnational cooperation. Four priority axes have been developed to achieve the programme vision:

1. Using Innovation to Maintain And Develop Robust And Competitive Communities
2. Promoting Entrepreneurship to Realise the Potential of the Programme Area's Competitive Advantage
3. Fostering Energy-Secure Communities through Promotion of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
4. Protecting, Promoting and Developing Cultural and Natural Heritage

BUDGET: €56 million

[Interreg NPA Programme](#)

[Calls for Proposals](#)

[Information for Applicants](#)

INTERREG NORTH-WEST EUROPE

Interreg North-West Europe (NWE) Programme's mission for 2014-2020 is to produce measurable positive change in the North-West of Europe from a social, spatial economic and environmental point of view based on the following three themes:



- [Innovation](#)
In order to enhance the innovation performance of enterprises (especially SMEs) in North-West Europe, the Programme funds projects that help enterprises exploit research outcomes to develop new technologies, products, processes. The purpose is to have a positive impact on the North-West Europe territory from a social, spatial economic and environmental point of view
- [Low Carbon](#)
Interreg NWE aims to support the shift towards a low carbon economy in all sectors, to promote sustainable transport and remove bottlenecks in key network infrastructures
- [Resource and materials efficiency](#)
To help North-West Europe grow in a sustainable and resource-efficient way, under this theme, Interreg NWE funds projects to accelerate the transition to a circular economy model, based on the principle of "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle"

To achieve its objectives, the Programme will co-finance cooperation projects with **€370 million** of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

BUDGET: €370 million

[Interreg NWE 2014-2020 Programme](#)

[Calls for Proposals](#)

[Advice for Applicants](#)

INTERREG ATLANTIC AREA



As part of the [Europe 2020](#) cohesion policy, [INTERREG Atlantic Area Programme](#) supports transnational cooperation projects in 37 regions of five Atlantic countries: France, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom, contributing to the achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion

The overall objective is to implement solutions to answer to regional challenges in the fields of innovation, resource efficiency, environment and cultural assets, able to generate development and sustainable growth in the Atlantic Area territory.

The Programme focuses on four main priority axes:

- Stimulating innovation and competitiveness, addressing the challenge of accelerating intelligent growth
- 2. Fostering resource efficiency, promoting renewable energies and energy efficiency
- 3. Strengthening the territory's resilience to risks of natural, climate and human origin, to support a better protection and management of the territory
- 4. Enhancing biodiversity and the natural and cultural assets will serve the identified need of protecting the environment and promoting the cultural and natural identity

BUDGET: €185 million

[Interreg Atlantic Area Programme](#)

[Calls for Proposals](#)

[Project Ideas](#)

NORTHERN IRELAND & INTERREG

The main role of the [Special EU Programmes Body](#) is to manage cross-border European Union Structural Funds programmes in Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and parts of Western Scotland.



Special EU Programmes Body
Foras Um Chláir Speisialta An AE
Boord O Owre Ocht UE Projects

Declan McGarrigle is the Northern Ireland regional contact point for INTERREG VB/C (Transnational and Interregional) programmes. His role is to provide information and initial help in the collation of potential bids under the NPA programme and to signpost potential projects under AA, NWE and VC to where they can obtain help on the eligibility criteria and the various programme requirements.

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Visit the SEUPB website for more details on [Interreg VB/C Programmes](#).

LIFE

The [LIFE programme](#) is the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action. The general objective of LIFE is to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of EU environmental and climate policy and legislation by co-financing projects with European added value.

LIFE began in 1992 and to date there have been four complete phases of the programme (LIFE I: 1992-1995, LIFE II: 1996-1999, LIFE III: 2000-2006 and LIFE+: 2007-2013). During this period, LIFE has co-financed some 3954 projects across the EU, contributing approximately €3.1 billion to the protection of the environment.

The European Commission ([DG Environment](#) and [DG Climate Action](#)) manages the LIFE programme. The Commission has delegated the implementation of many components of the LIFE programme to the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises ([EASME](#)). External selection, monitoring and communication teams provide assistance to the Commission and EASME. The [European Investment Bank](#) will manage the two new financial instruments (NCFE and PF4EE).



BUDGET: €3.46 billion

[LIFE Environment Programme
Environment Calls for Proposals](#)

[LIFE Climate Action Programme
Climate Action Grants and Projects](#)

[Projects Database](#)

RIGHTS, EQUALITY & CITIZENSHIP

The [Rights, Equality & Citizenship](#) programme shall contribute to the further development of an area where equality and the rights of persons, as enshrined in the Treaty, the Charter and international human rights conventions, are promoted and protected. Its nine specific objectives are to:

- Promote non-discrimination
- Combat racism, xenophobia, homophobia and other forms of intolerance
- Promote rights of persons with disabilities
- Promote equality between women and men and gender mainstreaming
- Prevent violence against children, young people, women and other groups at risk (Daphne)
- Promote the rights of the child
- Ensure the highest level of data protection
- Promote the rights deriving from Union citizenship
- Enforce consumer rights

Types of actions funded

- Training activities (staff exchanges, workshops, development of training modules,...)
- Mutual learning, cooperation activities, exchange of good practices, peer reviews, development of ICT tools...
- Awareness-raising activities, dissemination, conferences,...
- Support for main actors (key European NGOs and networks, Member States' authorities implementing Union law,...)
- Analytical activities (studies, data collection, development of common methodologies, indicators, surveys, preparation of guides...)

NB: the UK (and hence Northern Ireland) has opted out of the Justice Programme 2014-2020, also managed by DG Justice. It is important therefore that any potential applicants check eligibility requirements for all DG Justice funding programmes.

BUDGET: €439 million

[Rights, Equality & Citizenship Programme](#)
[Calls for Proposals](#)
[Previous Projects](#)



THIRD HEALTH PROGRAMME

The [Third EU health programme](#) is the main instrument the European Commission uses to implement the [EU health strategy](#). It is implemented by means of **annual work plans** which set out priority areas and the criteria for **funding actions** under the programme. The total budget for the programme is **€ 449.4 million**.

The programme has the following **overarching objectives**:

1. Promote health, prevent diseases and foster supportive environments for **healthy lifestyles** taking into account the 'health in all policies' principle,
2. Protect Union citizens from serious **cross-border health threats**,
3. Contribute to innovative, efficient and sustainable **health systems**,
4. Facilitate access to **better and safer healthcare** for Union citizens.



The health programme is managed by the Commission with the assistance of the [Consumers, Health and Food Executive Agency \(Chafea\)](#).

BUDGET: €449 million

[Third Health Programme](#) (policy paper)

[Advice for Applicants](#)

[Calls for Proposals](#)

[Projects Database](#)

CONTACTS

If you have any feedback on the programmes in this document, please get in [contact](#).

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