

Briefing: URBACT III – Call for proposals for the creation of Implementation Networks

1.0 Introduction

This briefing introduces URBACT III, a funding programme jointly financed by the European Regional Development Fund and EU Member States. URBACT does not directly invest in urban development. Instead the programme facilitates the sharing of knowledge and good practice between cities and other levels of government, with the aim to improve the quality of planning and implementation of integrated urban plans and programmes in cities.

The programme is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF); the total budget for 2014-2020 is €74 million, including €68 million dedicated to projects promoting sustainable urban development.

The first call for proposals for the creation of 15 Implementation networks has been published with an opening date of 22 March. The main objective of Implementation Networks is to improve the capacity of European cities to manage sustainable urban policies and to strengthen their ability to implement integrated strategies for sustainable urban development. **The total budget for a project will be between €600,000 and €750,000 depending on the scope and size of the consortia.**

2.0 Thematic areas

The call priorities are based on the thematic areas of the EU cohesion policy for 2014-2020 of which four will be of particular interest to borough priorities:

- **Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors (TO4)**
 - *Promoting low-carbon strategies for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multi-modal urban mobility*
- **Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency (TO6)**
 - *Investment in the waste and water sectors, promoting green infrastructure and improvements to the urban environment, and reduction in air pollution.*
- **Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management (TO5)**
 - *Supporting investment for adaptation to climate change, including ecosystem-based approaches, promoting investment to address specific risks, and ensuring disaster resilience.*
- **Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures (TO7)**

- *Supporting multimodal mobility, developing and improving environment-friendly (including low-noise) and low-carbon transport systems, developing railway systems, and promoting noise-reduction measures, improving energy efficiency and security of supply.*

3.0 Objectives

The call is organised around four specific objectives, and projects should be directed at meeting one or more of these objectives in any of the thematic areas.

Specific objectives:

- To improve the capacity of cities to manage sustainable urban policies
- To improve the design of sustainable urban policies
- To improve the implementation of sustainable urban policies
- To ensure that practitioners and decision makers at all levels (including elected representatives where appropriate) have access to knowledge and knowledge exchange and on all aspects of sustainable urban policies

4.0 Funding and co-financing

The total budget for a project will be between €600,000 and €750,000 depending on the scope and size of the consortia. The ERDF will provide funding of 70% for cities from more developed regions and 85% for less-developed and transition regions.

In addition, funding of a maximum of €127,000 is available to cover the costs of expertise/consultancy assistance in addition to the project budget.

Funding primarily pays for external expertise, staff time, preparation of an action plan, travel, and meeting expenses. Funding cannot be used for infrastructure, equipment, investments or pilot projects,

5.0 Timescale for bidding

22 March 2016: Planned opening date for the call

22 June 2016: Deadline for submissions

6.0 Eligible Beneficiaries

The main objective of Implementation Networks is to improve the capacity of European cities to manage sustainable urban policies and more especially to strengthen their ability to implement integrated strategies for sustainable urban development. This call will thus be targeting:

- cities from the EU 28 Member States
- that already have an integrated urban strategy/ action plan addressing a specific policy challenge

- and secured funding to finance the implementation of this strategy/ action-plan

7.0 Partnerships

Implementation Networks should involve 7-9 partner cities from at least 3 Member and Partner States, with one city acting as lead partner. The consortium should be a balance between partners from less developed regions and those from more developed/transition regions.

8.0 Next steps

Any boroughs interesting in participating in an URBACT project consortium should [contact LEPT](#) with any queries, expressions of interest or project ideas. LEPT will be monitoring partner searches and can broker places in consortia on behalf of boroughs.

Andrew Luck, Transport Manager,

Email: andrew.luck@londoncouncils.gov.uk

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7934 9646

Kate Mouncher, Communications and European Projects Officer

Email: Kate.Mouncher@lept-eu.org

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7934 9643