

**Building Administrative Capacities of the Countries
of the Western Balkans and the Republic of Moldova –
Cycle II**

BACID Fund

Second Cycle

Third Call for Proposals

Guidelines for Applicants

Deadline for submission of applications:

15 June 2020

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1 Background

With funding provided by the **Austrian Development Agency (ADA)**, the **Austrian Association of Cities and Towns (AACT)** and **KDZ Centre for Public Administration Research** implemented the programme „*Capacity building in the countries of the Western Balkans and the Republic of Moldova*“, in the period December 2014 to January 2018. The aim of the programme was to strengthen the governance structures of the countries in the region and to prepare them for possible accession to the European Union, with focus on local and regional governments.

After successful implementation of the first phase, the follow-up three-year programme has been approved and **BACID II** relaunched in April 2018.

The programme covers the Western Balkans and the Republic of Moldova¹ (further on referred to as the Region), following the geographic coverage of the ADC Regional Strategy for Danube Area / Western Balkans Region. It is consistent with the strategy's objectives to strengthen regional cooperation and support EU accession as well as with the third thematic priority Governance, Human Rights and the Rule of Law: institution-building in the context of EU accession.

The main framework of the intervention is the EU Enlargement Strategy (2016) as well as the recently adopted EU strategy “A credible enlargement perspective for an enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans”² and ongoing process of EU integrations common to all partner countries: as EU candidate (Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia), EU potential candidate (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo) or EU neighbouring country (Moldova), they have to integrate EU standards in all areas of public policies. The three key reform pillars on this path are rule of law, economic governance and public administration reform.

Following the EU perspective of the Region, the programme supports the implementation of the *South-East Europe (SEE) 2020 Strategy* and its Dimension *Governance for Growth*. As such, the programme has impact on overall the socio-economic development of the partner countries through effective delivery of public services supported by regional and cooperation between national, local, civil, science and business sectors.

Finally, all those strategies are in line with the *United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The defined Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in this Agenda 2030 are a call for action to all countries to promote prosperity while protecting the planet³. The EU accession process is thus also a major accelerator for reforms and transformations that are critical for achieving the SDGs.

¹ The programme area includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

² EU Western Balkans Strategy adopted on 6.2.2018:

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-credible-enlargement-perspective-western-balkans_en.pdf

³ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

The first programme component, the **BACID Fund** is designed as a grant scheme which provides funding for know-how transfer actions implemented by Austrian institutions and experts for the benefit of partners from the Region. It is built upon the experience of the Know-how Transfer Centre (KTC) which was established in 1992 within the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns, in order to facilitate administrative cooperation of cities and municipalities in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) with Austrian counterparts. It was funded by ADA and included about 2,000 successfully completed projects. Since the end of 2008, the KTC was managed by KDZ on behalf of the Association of Austrian Cities and Towns.

In the first phase of the BACID programme, € 180,000 were allocated through five calls for proposals implemented in a period of 36 months and 32 actions were successfully implemented.⁴

2 Objectives

The **UN Agenda 2030** recognizes that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and addresses a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and gender inequality.

The European Commission⁵ and EU member states have already made significant contributions to achieving the Agenda 2030 objectives by integrating the SDGs in all policies. As many of the 2030 Agenda's objectives and goals directly influence areas of work and competences that belong to subnational authorities, regional and local authorities play a crucial role in implementing the SDGs and in designing the policies to achieve them. The BACID Fund therefore **prioritizes support and partnerships with local governments.**

For the EU pre-accession and candidate countries, the path to achieving the set SDGs is to implement EU standards and policies through **EU integration processes.** Therefore, BACID aims at **strengthening the capacities** of entities in the non-EU countries of the Western Balkans and Moldova on its way to the European Union through exposure to Austrian know-how and inter-sectoral partnership.

Following previous experiences of “new” EU member countries, the peer-to-peer approach and transfer of know-how was identified as the most successful tool in gaining practical knowledge. In this way, the targeted countries will be efficiently supported to build structures and cooperation and promote the process of **democratization** and **socio-economic development.**

The added value of the BACID programme is that it fills the gap between the predefined targeted interventions of the EU and other donors at one side, and emerging tailor-made current needs of the beneficiaries to be addressed through mentoring and practical experience.

⁴ More information about the awarded actions is available on: http://www.bacid.eu/Activities_BACID_Fund.

⁵ COM(2016) 740 final COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS: Proposal for a new European Consensus on Development. Our World, our Dignity, our Future.

3 Financial allocation

The total amount available under the BACID Fund is € 200,000. The funds will be distributed through Calls for proposals. If the dedicated amount is not spent in one Call, the remaining funds will be transferred to the following Calls. ADA reserves the right to amend maximum amounts available per Call and per action, or not to award all available funds.

The amount available in the third Call for proposals is **€ 55,000**.

The maximum amount per grant is **€ 8,000**.

The **own contribution** of Applicants and Partners is obligatory and may include in-kind contributions.

4 Eligibility criteria⁶

4.1 Eligibility of actors

4.1.1 Applicants

The BACID fund targets smaller actions for hands-on expert assistance to public administration and CSOs as well as universities, media and businesses on the topics related to European Integration and contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on regional and local level.

The **Applicants** must fulfil the following conditions:

- Be a legal person registered in Austria or in an eligible country in the Region⁷
- Be a public or private entity including both non-profit organisations and the business sector.
- Have been established at least twelve months before launching of the Call for proposals.

4.1.2 Partners in beneficiary countries

Since the main purpose of the grant programme is the transfer of know-how from Austria, at least one Partner besides the Applicant must be involved in design and implementation of the action while either Applicant or one Partner has to be from Austria.

The action may include more Partner organisations from one or more beneficiary countries.

⁶ The eligibility criteria hereby identified will be reviewed after implementation of each Call for proposals and may be amended according to the lessons learnt. They will be approved by ADA before launching of the new Call.

⁷ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

The **Partner** organisations must fulfil the following conditions:

- Be a legal person registered in Austria or in an eligible country in the Region⁸
- Be a public or private entity including both non-profit organisations and the business sector
- Have been established at least twelve months before launching of the Call for proposals.

As part of the Application Package, the signed Partnership Agreement between Applicant and Partner/s must be submitted (using the template available in the Application Package).

Partner organisations may differ from direct **Beneficiaries** of the action.

4.1.3 Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries can be institutions or organisations from the Region, who benefit from the know-how transfer in order to improve their functioning.

In the case that the Beneficiary organisation differs from Partner or Applicant, it is highly recommended to ensure their commitment before submitting the application and confirm it by the proof of agreed cooperation (for example, signed Letter of Intent, proof of ongoing cooperation in the relevant field or similar commitments).

Target group represents individuals that directly participate in the activities, such as citizens, public servants/officials, employees of non-profit organisations or businesses. The target group should be gender balanced and inclusive (e.g. people with disabilities).

4.2 Eligibility of actions

4.2.1 Period of implementation

The action must be implemented in the period of 6 months after the date specified in the Contract as the beginning of the implementation. The grant only reimburses costs of activities implemented after the signing of the grant contract.

4.2.2 Location

The actions must take place in one of the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, or Austria.

In Austria, actions such as research, preparation, desk work and reporting can be conducted by Austrian experts. Study visits, exchanges and travel to Austria by local experts from the Region are not eligible for funding.

⁸ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

4.2.3 Topics

The overall theme is the contribution to the **17 Sustainable Development Goals** integrated in the latest EU policies, as the framework for long-term transformation of the Western Balkan countries. The actions need to be connected to the SDGs, whereby priority is given to SDG 11 (making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable). For reasons of clarity during the evaluation process, it should be specified to which of the 3 topics the action mainly contributes:

- **Economic and social development**
This includes improving job opportunities, business development, gender equality, social inclusion and similar activities.
- **Environmental protection**
This includes measures for sustainable planning, resource management, tackling climate change and similar activities.
- **Strong institutions and partnerships**
This includes fostering partnerships between Austria and the Region, governance and public management reform and similar activities.

For more reference to specific SDGs and its implementation by the European Union please visit the following pages:

- [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- [EU and the Sustainable Development Goals](#)

In that direction, the actions must comprise the **transfer of know-how in the application of European standards** covered by the EU accession **negotiation chapters**⁹.

The BACID Fund **supports multi-sectoral partnership** in the country, i.e. between public institutions at national and local levels, public institutions with CSOs as well as the academic and business sector, as it is crucial for successfully localizing SDGs.

The actions that bring **innovation** to the country, in terms of enabling public administration to introduce and support innovative techniques and methods around achieving the SDGs, will be assessed as highly relevant.

4.2.4 Activities

The following types of activities are eligible for funding:

- 1) **Expert support and mentoring**
- 2) **Workshops, seminars and training**
- 3) **Elaboration of reports, studies, surveys and other documents** (e.g. guidance, roadmap, model decision, etc.)

⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/conditions-membership/chapters-of-the-acquis_en

4.3 Eligibility of costs

Considering the eligible activities, the following types of costs to be covered by the grant are eligible:

- 1) **Fees:** Includes fees for experts, trainers etc. engaged by the Applicant, with a maximum of € 450 per day.
- 2) **Per diems:** For the coverage of meals, transport and accommodation costs of experts engaged by the Applicant and their other expenses such as insurance, material costs, etc., with a maximum of € 170 per day. Per diems can either be paid as flat rates to the experts or handed in as actual costs.
- 3) **Travel costs:** Includes only travel expenses of experts engaged by the Applicant to and within the beneficiary countries. The most suitable transport is to be proposed in the application stage, and may include flight, train or bus ticket. The costs per flight will be refunded in the maximum amount of € 800. The car costs are also eligible under the condition that it is the most efficient transport mean in terms of time and money with the maximum rate per km and under the conditions defined in the Austrian legislation¹⁰.
Please note: First class train tickets and business-class flight tickets are not accepted, unless there is a reasonable justification for its use and is subject to approval by ADA.
- 4) **Costs of events:** May include the costs of renting of premises, audio and translation equipment, translation/interpretation services and refreshment/lunches, in the maximum amount of € 1,000.

The following costs are not eligible as costs of the action:

- Project management costs,
- cancellation fees,
- Minibar or pay TV, or alike.

The Applicant and Partners are taking the commitment to cover all costs additionally identified as necessary for the implementation of the action by signing the Partnership Agreement.

5 Visibility

The Applicant and its Partners are obliged to make the funding provided by ADA visible. All documents developed during the action, as well as reports, shall include the following:

- **Logos** of BACID, ADA, AACT and KDZ as provided in the contracting phase.
- **Explanatory note:** *The Action is implemented with funding from the Austrian Development Cooperation through the BACID grant scheme (Building Administrative Capacities in Danube Region & Western Balkans), managed by the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns and KDZ Centre for Public Administration Research.*

¹⁰ Verordnung der Bundesregierung vom 29. März 1955, betreffend die Gebühren bei Dienstreisen, Dienstverrichtungen im Dienstort, Dienstzuteilungen und Versetzungen (Reisegebührenvorschrift 1955)
StF: BGBl. Nr. 133/1955 idF BGBl. Nr. 223/1956 (DFB), ABSCHNITT II-Dienstreisen, § 4, UNTERABSCHNITT A- Reisekostenvergütung, § 10 und § 11 (<http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10008156>)

- **Disclaimer:** *This publication / document has been produced with financial support of the Austrian Development Cooperation. Views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in this publication / document belong solely to the author(s), and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Austrian Development Agency or the Austrian Government.*

6 How to apply and procedures to follow

6.1 Number of applications and grants

The **Applicant** may submit more than one application, with same or different partners. However, the Applicant may not be awarded more than one grant per Call.

Local organisations from beneficiary countries may be involved as Partners in more than one application. However, they can only benefit from maximum 2 actions per Call one related only to their beneficiary country and additionally one where partners from more countries are involved.

Thus, one entity may not benefit from more than 2 actions during the second BACID cycle. This also applies to entities which have received funding once as Applicant, and once as Partner.

6.2 Application Package

The Application Package is available for download at the webpage: <http://www.bacid.eu/Calls>.

The completed forms are to be submitted electronically to the following e-mail address: bacid@kdz.or.at, within the given deadline.

The Application Package consists of the several simple forms and each of them need to be filled in and submitted in order to consider application acceptable for evaluation:

- 1) **Application Form** (including reporting section)
- 2) **Budget Template** (including reporting section)
- 3) **Partnership Agreement**
- 4) **CVs of experts** as named in Application Form

If the Beneficiary organisation differs from Applicant or Partner, it is recommended to enclose a Letter of Intent signed by the Beneficiary. However, it is not an eliminatory criterion if such a document is not included but effects overall evaluation of sustainability.

Please note that the Application Form and Budget Template are merged in one excel file, with two separate sheets. Additionally, on the website you may find available the **Grant Contract template**.

6.3 Questions and answers

Any questions related to the Call may be submitted to the following e-mail address: acid@kdz.or.at. The answers shall be provided not later than 7 days after submission of the question. Questions that are relevant to all Applicants will be published anonymously on the BACID website as Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) one week before the application deadline.

6.4 Deadlines and timetable

The application may be submitted only after launching of the Call for proposals. An indicative timetable of the present Call is the following:

Activity	Timetable
Launch of the Call for proposals	Mid-April 2020
Deadline for submission of applications	15 June 2020
Information on approved applications	End of July 2020
Award of the contract	August 2020
Contract implementation and reporting	August 2020 to February 2021
Payment	On individual basis, 30 days after approval of the report

7 Evaluation process and criteria

The evaluation process includes three steps:

- 1) The BACID team checks:
 - a) if the application is submitted within the deadline and
 - b) if the eliminatory criteria are met.

If any of these conditions is not fulfilled, the application may be rejected.

- 2) The BACID Fund Evaluation Team shall make the assessment according to defined evaluation criteria based on which the ranking list is drafted.
- 3) ADA approves the ranking list.

The following criteria will be used in order to assess the applications, with the set of eliminatory criteria and evaluation criteria with the total maximum score of 50 points:

Eliminatory criteria	YES/NO
The correct Application Form has been used.	
All sheets of the Application Form have been completed.	
The Partnership Agreement has been enclosed to the Application, filled in and signed.	
All expert CVs have been enclosed to the Application.	
The Applicant is fulfilling the eligibility criteria set out in section 4.1.1 of the Guidelines.	
The eligibility criteria on partners set out in section 4.1.2 of the Guidelines are fulfilled.	
Neither Applicant nor Partner have already benefitted from 2 actions during the second BACID cycle as specified in Section 6.1 of the Guidelines.	
The location of the Action is as specified in the Section 4.2.2 of the Guidelines.	
The requested funding is less or equal to maximum allowed as per Section 3.	
The own contribution is ensured by Applicant and Partners (as explained in the section 4.3 of the Guidelines).	

Evaluation criteria	max. 50 points
Relevance	max. 15 points
Does the action support and/or strengthens partnership with local and regional governments?	
Does the action address any of priority topics identified for the current Call (reference to SDGs)?	
Does the action contribute to the achievement of priorities identified in national, regional and local strategic documents (priority given to local priorities)?	
Does the action introduce innovation, i.e. concepts that are innovative for the country?	
Does the action strengthen gender equality?	
Does the action support vulnerable groups and foster social inclusion?	
Does the action contain measures related to environmental protection?	
Effectiveness	max. 12 points
Are estimated results contributing clearly to the achievement of the action objectives?	
Are activities contributing clearly to the achievement of identified objectives and results?	
Are the activities clear and feasible?	
Is the action taking into account and clearly describes synergies with other actions in the country?	
Does the Applicant and experts have relevant professional experience?	
Efficiency	max. 8 points
Are all activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	
Is the ratio between expected costs and estimated results satisfactory?	
Is appropriate own contribution ensured to cover all necessary costs of the action, that are not covered by the grant?	
Is it likely that the action has multiplier effects?	
Sustainability	max. 15 points
Is the commitment of Beneficiary organisations secured and proven?	
Is the ownership of the partner institutions clear and sustainable?	
Is the action a follow-up of previous actions?	
Are the results likely to be sustainable (financially, institutionally, at policy level, environmentally (if applicable))?	

Additionally, to the eliminatory criteria, the applications that don't reach the following minimum of points shall be rejected:

- Necessary total minimum of points is 30.
- Necessary minimum for the section *Relevance* is 8 points.
- Necessary minimum for the section *Effectiveness* is 6 points.
- Necessary minimum for the section *Efficiency* is 4 points.
- Necessary minimum for the section *Sustainability* is 8 points.

8 Contract award and implementation

Once the evaluation process is completed, all successful Applicants (henceforth Grantees) will be informed and must respond within 10 days if they accept the grant under the offered terms. If a Grantee fails to meet the deadline without written justification, the grant will be relocated to the next Applicant on the ranking list. The Grantees will then receive the contracts and shall return one signed original copy within 2 weeks. Once the contracts are signed, the list of awarded actions will be published on the BACID website: www.bacid.eu.

The date of the beginning of the action shall be defined in the contracting phase, after which the activities may be implemented in the period of 6 months, including reporting.

9 Reporting and payment

No pre-financing will be given before the final report is submitted. In order to receive the payment, the Grantee must submit the following **no later than 28 February 2021**:

- Completed report and financial statement using the provided templates
- Materials produced during the implementation, including photos and lists of participants
- Supporting accounting documents.

Supporting accounting documents must be submitted as **originals** that can be returned after approval upon request, and include the following:

- 1) Request for payment with the specified costs per category and total amount spent.
- 2) For justification of costs of **FEES**:
 - Invoice of expert/s specifying the number of working days and total fees or salary slip if expert is employed by the Applicant.
 - Completed and signed timesheets (using provided templates: please note that the maximum number of working hours per day is 8, and the travel time cannot be charged as working hours).
 - Bank statements on transfers made by Applicant.

- 3) For justification of costs of **PER DIEMS**
 - Bank statement on transfer made by Applicant to expert's account OR signed receipts for cash payments with the words "cash received".

- 4) For justification of costs of **TRAVEL**
 - Bank statements on transfers by Applicant if paid through accounts OR the invoice of the ticket.
 - Original Boarding passes or used train/bus tickets, or, in case of car costs, the justification of the choice of car as the most rational means of transport and calculation of the amount spent per kilometres travelled, in line with the Austrian legislation¹¹.

- 5) For justification of costs of **EVENTS**
 - Original invoice / bill issued by the service provider
 - Bank statement on transfer made to the service provider by Applicant.

¹¹ Please see the footnote 11 above.

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