

## URBACT III Briefing

### 1.0 Introduction

This briefing introduces URBACT III, a funding programme jointly financed by the European Regional Development Fund and EU Member States. [The first call for proposals has now been published with a deadline of 16 June 2015](#). The total 2014-2020 budget is €74 million, including €68 million dedicated to projects promoting sustainable urban development. URBACT III objectives and actions are especially suited to local authority partners.

URBACT facilitates the sharing of knowledge and good practice between cities and other levels of government, to promote sustainable urban development. Partners create Action Planning Networks to share good practice and develop solutions to urban challenges, to be shared with all stakeholders involved in urban policy throughout Europe.

### 1.1 Thematic areas

The call priorities are based on the [thematic areas of the EU cohesion policy for 2014-2020](#). Listed in bold below are the 4 thematic areas most relevant to borough work. The call is open to project applications in any of the thematic areas.

70% of the budget is concentrated on certain thematic areas, which include:

- **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.*

However, the call is open to projects in all thematic areas. Therefore 30% of funding is also available to projects which may fall under:

- **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.*

### 1.2 Project 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

### 1.3 Types of actions that will be funded

URBACT provides funding for decision-makers and practitioners to create Action Planning Networks for the exchange of information related to sustainable urban development. Through these networks partners learn from the experiences of others, devise ways to tackle shared challenges, and engage with stakeholders to improve their own local policies.

Actions fall into three categories:

- 1) **Transnational exchange:** Sharing of experience and good practice among cities across Europe to better implement integrated strategies for sustainable urban development.
- 2) **Capacity-building:** improve city capacity to develop and implement integrated urban policies and to allow them (and other stakeholders) to share the knowledge needed to foster integrated sustainable urban development.
- 3) **Capitalisation & dissemination:** the production and dissemination of new knowledge which builds on existing experience and knowledge from the URBACT partners and from similar or complementary European projects/programmes.

Examples of activities could include capacity-building seminars, study visits or peer-review involving elected representatives, professionals and/or local groups to increase the knowledge and capacity for sustainable urban development, as well as various communication activities such as website platforms for exchanging knowledge or publication/conferences directed at particular thematic areas. Projects should produce an action plan based on shared knowledge and findings of the project.

### 1.4 Funding

Total budgets 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% of the project budget, with a co-financing requirement of 30%.

In addition, funding of a maximum of €127,500 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, however an Action Planning Network can be used as the foundation to bid for funding for these activities from other EU programmes.

### **Next Steps**

Any boroughs interesting in participating in an URBACT project consortium should contact Alex Quayle ([alex.quayle@lept-eu.org](mailto:alex.quayle@lept-eu.org)) to discuss their idea. LEPT will be monitoring partner searches and can broker places in consortia on behalf of boroughs.

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### **Further Information**

Deadline for submission of proposals: **16 June 2015**

Full details of the project objectives, priorities and potentially funded actions:

[http://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/media/urbactiii\\_call\\_for\\_proposals\\_actionplanningnetworks.pdf](http://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/media/urbactiii_call_for_proposals_actionplanningnetworks.pdf)

URBACT have published a guide to participating in Action Planning Networks:

[http://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/media/urbactiii\\_guide\\_to\\_actionplanningnetworks.pdf](http://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/media/urbactiii_guide_to_actionplanningnetworks.pdf)

To find out more about previously funded URBACT II projects:

<http://urbact.eu/en/our-projects/>