



# DCC European Funding Guide

**DIGITAL**  
Cities Challenge

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## The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

*The ERDF aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union by correcting imbalances between its regions. This fund supports sustainable urban development with an integrative and participative approach where cities work together with different stakeholders.*



## The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

### Who?

Cities

### What?

Urban innovative actions such as air quality, circular economy, demo change and culture. In particular, the fund does this by supporting exchanges of experience and knowledge, supporting capacity building, providing specific seminars and peer reviews.

#### Thematic concentration:

- Innovation and research
- Digitalisation
- Support for SME's
- Low-carbon economy

### How?

The resources allocated to these priorities will depend on the category of region:

- In more developed regions, at least 80 % of funds must focus on at least two of these priorities;
- In transition regions, this focus is for 60 % of the funds;
- This is 50 % in less developed regions.

### When?

Ongoing process with different underlying funds available

### How to apply

Check projects in your country on:

[www.ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/funding/erdf/](http://www.ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/funding/erdf/)

[www.ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/funding/accessing-funds/#8](http://www.ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/funding/accessing-funds/#8)

## URBACT

*URBACT interactive cities is a cutting-edge project aimed at exploring how digital, social media and user generated content can improve today's urban management in European cities. URBACT helps cities to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable and that integrate economic, social and environmental urban topics.*

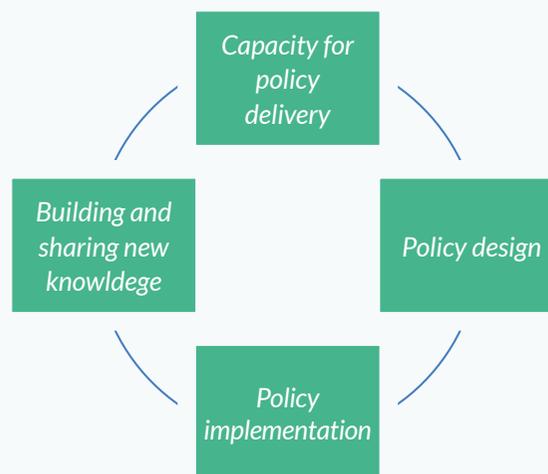
## Who?

Decision makers and practitioners in EU cities.

## What?

The main action is **networking**: connection between cities that share knowledge and expertise, solutions and processes where local stakeholders are involved and the development of better open policies in the cities.

### Four main objectives:



- Capacity for Policy Delivery: to improve the capacity of cities to manage sustainable urban policies and practices in an integrated and participative way.
- Policy Design: to improve the design of sustainable urban policies and practices in cities.

- Policy Implementation: to improve the implementation of integrated and sustainable urban strategies and actions in cities.
- Building and Sharing Knowledge: to ensure that practitioners and decision-makers at all levels have access to knowledge and share know-how on all aspects of sustainable urban development in order to improve urban development policies.

## How?

### Three types of interventions:

- transnational exchanges
- capacity-building
- capitalisation & dissemination

## When?

Call open until April 17, 2019

## How to apply

[www.urbact.eu/](http://www.urbact.eu/)

## Urban Investment Advisory Support (URBIS)

*URBIS is a new dedicated urban investment advisory platform within the Hub. Urbis is set up to provide **advisory support** to urban authorities to facilitate, accelerate and unlock urban investment projects, programs and platforms.*



## Urban Investment Advisory Support (URBIS)

### Who?

Urbis offers its service to cities of all sizes, small and large and from all regions of Europe. It aims to support cities in different stages of the investment programme/ project life cycle, and across the priority themes of the Urban Agenda. It will prioritise cities seeking support related to an integrated sustainable urban strategy, with a view of developing, financing and implementing urban investment programmes.

### What?

- Increased **awareness raising** of existing instruments, programmes, services

- **Tailor-made** technical and financial **advice** to cities
- Exploring **innovative financing** approaches for city investments

### When?

Ongoing process. First submit a request form, then prepare some key documents. All info's to be found online: [www.eiah.eib.org/about/initiative-urbis.htm](http://www.eiah.eib.org/about/initiative-urbis.htm)

### How to apply

via the European Investment Advisory Hub and [www.ict-urbis.eu](http://www.ict-urbis.eu)

## Interreg Europe

*Interreg Europe helps regional and local governments across Europe to develop and deliver better policy. To achieve this goal, Interreg Europe offers opportunities for regional and local public authorities across Europe to **share ideas and experiences on public policy in practice**, therefore improving strategies for their citizens and communities.*



## Interreg Europe

### Who?

Interreg Europe exists to assist three types of beneficiaries:

- Public authorities – local, regional and national
- Managing authorities/intermediate bodies - in charge of the Investment for Growth and Jobs programmes or European Territorial Cooperation
- Agencies, research institutes, thematic and non-profit organisations

### What?

Cooperation, collaboration and community engagement.

1. Interregional cooperation projects
2. Policy learning platform

### How?

- Financial support
- Peer learning
- Expert advice and skills
- Expand your network

### When?

Funding for Interreg Europe projects is allocated through calls for project proposals. Calls are periods of time during the year when applications can be submitted. Each call has an opening and closing date and the next call is not yet announced. Outside of these dates it is not possible to apply for funding with a project proposal.

### How to apply

[www.interregeurope.eu](http://www.interregeurope.eu)

## European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI)

*EFSI is an initiative launched jointly by the EIB Group – the European Investment Bank and European Investment Fund – and the European Commission to help overcome the current investment gap in the EU. EFSI is one of the three pillars of the Investment Plan for Europe that aims to revive investment in strategic projects around the continent to ensure that money reaches the real economy.*



## European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI)

### Who?

Private sector, public sector, banks, national promotional banks or other financial institutions, collective investment vehicles and investment platforms

### What?

EFSI focuses on sectors of key importance for the European economy, including:

- Strategic infrastructure including digital, transport and energy
- Education, research, development and innovation
- Renewable energy and resource efficiency
- Support for small and mid-sized businesses

### How?

EFSI is a EUR 26 billion guarantee from the EU budget, complemented by a EUR 7.5 billion allocation of the EIB's own capital. The total amount of EUR 33.5 billion aims to unlock additional investment of at least EUR 500bn by 2020. EFSI is implemented by the EIB Group and projects supported by it are subject to usual EIB procedures.

### When?

Ongoing process, different for each type of funding.

### How to apply

[www.access2finance.eu](http://www.access2finance.eu)

## Smart Specialization Platform

*The **smart specialization platform** for industrial projects and modernization targeted at regions and cities provides high quality support and services on various thematic areas. The aim is to **create partnerships with other cities or private companies and work together on the development of a technological theme**. Once projects are materialized, other funds can be used for financing.*



## Smart Specialization Platform

### Who?

The S3 Platform provides advice to EU countries and regions for the design and implementation of their Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3)

### What?

- Provide guidance material and good practice examples
- Inform strategy formation and policy-making
- Facilitate peer-reviews and mutual learning
- Support access to relevant data
- Train policy-makers

Examples of successful projects proposed by regions are: cybersecurity, industry 4.0, AI, Photonics.

### How?

Cities should join existing partnerships with help of regional support and could access regional funds

### When?

Ongoing process depending on the stage of the thematic.

### How to apply

[www.s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/](http://www.s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/)

## European funding to support DCC's digital strategies implementation

Overview of the various EC funds supporting city development

Fund	Target	Projects	Partners	Focus	Apply?
<i>ERDF</i>	Regions	Urban innovative actions	Other cities	Exchange best practices	Ongoing process <a href="http://www.ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/projects">www.ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/projects</a>
<i>Urbact</i>	Decision makers & practionners	Transnational exchanges Capacity building Capitalisation & Dissemination	Network of cities	Policy delivery Policy design Policy Implementation Sharing knowledge	Until April 17 2019 <a href="http://www.urbact.eu">www.urbact.eu</a>
<i>Urbis</i>	Cities	Urban investment programmes	Tailormade	Awareness raising Advisory support on innovative financing	Ongoing process First submit a request online <a href="http://Europeaninvestmentadvisoryhub">Europeaninvestment advisory hub</a>
<i>Interreg</i>	Regional & local governments	Financial support, Peer learning, expert advice, B/O development, expand network...		Public policy practice:Cooperation projects Policy learning platform	Open calls TBD <a href="http://www.interregeurope.eu">www.interregeurope.eu</a>
<i>EFSI</i>	Digital & infrstructure projects	Platform coordinating existing projects		Strategic investments	Ongoing process <a href="http://www.access2finance.eu">www.access2finance.eu</a>
<i>Smart Specialization Platform</i>	Countries and regions	Guidance Peer-review Access to data Training	Cities Companies	Research on very innovative and future-oriented topics	Ongoing process <a href="http://www.s3platform.eu">www.s3platform.eu</a>

## Tips for obtaining and managing funding

*The following tips will help you to manage financial instruments for SMEs supported by EC funds and how to best apply for EC funds*

## Tips for obtaining and managing funding



### How to leverage EU funds to support urban development

The Fund Manager of Financial Instruments in Bulgaria (FMFIB) is a good example of how cities can better manage their public investments in SMEs. The Fund's main activity is the structuring and management of financial instruments co-financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds during the 2014-2020 programming period.

The FMFIB enables municipalities to apply for loans they wouldn't typically get from the bank. It targets projects that can become self-sustaining and secured by the future income of the project, making it a low risk option as no additional funding is required and no property needs.

#### Lessons learned from Sofia's experience:

- National level authority involvement is important
- Partnerships lead the way: everyone is interested and concerned by the ecosystem and policy makers feel concerned from the beginning



## Tips for obtaining and managing funding

### How to be successful in applying for EC funds

*Digital + cities = the best  
combination to access funds*

**Lorraine de Bouchony**, CEO of WelcomEurope.

The EU is a real universe of funds with different scales and specific rules. Therefore, it is important to select the right opportunities from the start and only apply to succeed.

To do so, it is recommended to **dialogue with decision makers, before the publication of the calls for projects and to start the process in advance** (some procedures could take up to 2 years before access to funds).

To succeed, cities should bear in mind that:

- "Opportunity is not the only motivation"
- "Don't lead too much projects at the same time". The EU is expecting results, output and impact. Therefore, it is important to set clear goals that can be achieved.
- Get prepared technically and tactically: define targeted budget (incl. extra costs & motivated teams)

**For information on all the different funds available visit:**

[www.ec.europa.eu/info/eu-regional-and-urban-development/topics/cities-and-urban-development/funding-cities\\_en](http://www.ec.europa.eu/info/eu-regional-and-urban-development/topics/cities-and-urban-development/funding-cities_en)