

Funding Guidelines

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Objective

The Baltic Sea Conservation Foundation (hereafter „baltcf“) was founded in 2014 with the aim of funding environmental- and nature protection across the Baltic Sea region. In order to achieve this objective, the founder has allocated a fixed capital stock to the foundation and free capital for project expenditure, which is exclusively used for funding nature conservation and environmental protection projects as defined in the statutes.

In doing so, the “baltcf” operates across the whole Baltic Sea region. It particularly supports cooperation between NGO’s and authorities and funds international projects in the states bordering the Baltic Sea.

The Board of Trustees and the Board of Directors of the “baltcf” developed the present Funding Guidelines in order to provide orientation about basic principles and conditions for funding to all applicants of the “baltcf”. These Funding Guidelines apply to applicants who submit their own projects as well as to applicants seeking co-funding from the “baltcf” in the context of an application submitted or planned with other institutions or donors. The guidelines are based on the provisions of the statutes of the foundation; project applications should therefore always provide evidence of how the planned activities contribute to the objectives of the “baltcf”.

The Funding Guidelines lay down the conditions, application procedures, principles and documentation requirements for the applicant. The specific application forms are provided by the “baltcf” office through our web page www.baltcf.org and are based on the guidelines. The use of these forms is mandatory for the applicant.

Funding principles

Object of the funding

According to § 2.1 of the statutes of the International Baltic Sea Foundation for Nature Conservation, the foundation aims to achieve its objective through funding nature conservation and environmental protection measures and projects in the countries bordering the Baltic Sea that

1. improve the ecological stability and/or the regenerative capacity of the marine environment,
2. contribute to the reduction and/or degradation of pollutants or depositions leading to eutrophication,
3. help to secure and/or improve habitats for rare or protected species and support biodiversity,
4. help to secure, expand, or develop marine protected areas,
5. help to secure, expand, or develop terrestrial protected areas in the Baltic Sea’s immediate catchment area,
6. help to compensate negative effects in the Baltic Sea's natural environment,
7. in keeping with nature conservation requirements, support the maintenance and development of habitats in the Baltic Sea and/or its immediate catchment area.

Eligibility

Eligible beneficiaries include associations, federations, organisations and public bodies operating in the Baltic Sea catchment area and preferably having a non-profit character similar to that of “baltcf”. A corresponding proof of the status of the applicant can be provided by means of a formal official certificate or a written description of activities.

Funds can only be granted to beneficiaries who have submitted a full project application. Approved projects will receive funds only, if they respect the requirements of the “baltcf” regarding reporting and documentation. Foreign organisations can be awarded funds if they can provide evidence that their activities comply with the provisions of German non-profit law. Applicants must secure a reasonable own contribution of at least 10% of the funding that they apply for.

Nature and scope of the funding

The “baltcf” is seeking for long-term project outcomes and would like to generate measurable results and achieve sustainable and viable structures with the allocated funds. Therefore, the funding period that is applied for should normally be at least 2 years and the proposed funding amount at least 50.000€.

In principle the “baltcf” can allocate grants as match-funding. The “baltcf” would like to ensure a most effective and efficient use of the foundation’s means and therefore strives for synergies and leverage effects with other projects and funding instruments. Applications for co-financing of EU- or other publicly funded projects are encouraged.

Project application

Deadlines

Project Concepts can be sent to the „baltcf“ office at an any time. The project application, including proof of the status of the applicant, should be drafted in English or German language. In case of positive evaluation of the Project Concept, a full application should normally be submitted within 3 months. Project applications with a proposed funding amount of up to 100.000€ per year can be decided upon quarterly during the “baltcf” Board of Directors meetings. Project applications beyond 100.000€ will normally be decided upon during the six-monthly meetings of the Board of Trustees.

Content

Applicants should first present their project idea in a Project Concept of 2-5 pages. The content of which should at least include the following:

1. Title of the project
2. Applicant, contact person and legal status of the applying organisation
3. Description of the framework conditions, project background and justification of the necessity of carrying out the project, location of the implementation
4. Objective of the project
5. Activities
6. Implementation timetable and partnership
7. General cost and financing plan
8. Expected measurable results

Costs

The „baltcf“ will only reimburse costs associated with the approved project and for which evidence can be issued. The reimbursement will comply with the approved cost plan and includes the following categories:

1. Personnel costs
2. Overhead, max. 10% of total eligible costs
3. Travel costs
4. Subcontracts
5. Investment costs

Forms

All forms that are necessary for the application are made available in electronic form by the „baltcf“. Project Concepts should exclusively be sent in electronically to the “baltcf” office.

Concepts and applications will only be accepted on the forms that are provided for this purpose by the “baltcf”.

The use of the following forms for the application process is mandatory. Current versions of these forms are published by the “baltcf” on its website:

1. Project Concept
2. Project Application
3. Timetable (can be integrated in 2. Project Application)
4. Budget (can be integrated in 2. Project Application)
5. Call for Funds
6. Mid-Term Report
7. Financial Report
8. Final Report

Project approval

Selection procedure

The „baltcf“ strives for a transparent and objective selection of projects. For this purpose the “baltcf” developed its own selection criteria, according to which every project is consistently assessed. The respective current selection criteria are regularly updated and published on the “baltcf” website.

Decisions regarding funding are taken by the Board of Directors (up to 100.000€ per year) and by the Board of Trustees (beyond 100.000€).

During the selection procedure the „baltcf“ can involve the Project Advisory Committee of the foundation for the evaluation of projects, as far as the applicant does not

explicitly object to this for data protection reasons. All documents are hereby treated confidentially and the principles of data protection are respected.

The funding approval will be issued by the „baltcf“ office.

While allocating the foundation's means, the bodies of the foundation are only bound to legal provisions and to the provisions of the founding statutes of the International Baltic Sea Foundation for Nature Conservation. There is no legal claim to the award of funding by the “baltcf”.

Call for funds

Approved funds should be spent according to the project budget and timetable. Upon approval, the applicant is entitled to request up to 10% of the total funding amount. Subsequent calls for funds are possible six-monthly, but only if at least 80% of the previously allocated amount has been spent. Exceptionally, and in case of high investment spending, calls for funds can occur more often.

Deviations from the project application

Cost shifts of up to 10% in each cost category are possible during project implementation, larger deviations need to be justified and authorised by the “baltcf” in written form.

If approved activities cannot be carried out during the foreseen calendar year, the “baltcf” must be informed in written form. If instead, other activities with comparable costs can secure the implementation of the project, the “baltcf” may authorise this upon request. If this is not the case, the approved funds can be cut accordingly.

Evidence and documentation

Proof of use

Upon finalisation of the project, a complete proof of use should be provided to the “baltcf”. This includes:

1. Final report
2. Financial report
3. Evidence/documentation of the project results (Press releases, pictures, publications, maps etc.)

Reports

Mid-term Reports and Financial Reports should be prepared six-monthly and submitted in electronic form to the “baltcf” office. The “baltcf” templates should be used for reporting. Evidence of all expenses should be provided in the form of invoices and sent to the “baltcf” together with the reports.

Acknowledgment of funding support

All purchases, products and publications, as well as educational and public relations activities carried out in the framework of the project, should include appropriate reference to the funding support provided by the Baltic Sea Conservation Foundation. The “baltcf” is entitled to publish project contents and results on its website or in publications.