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INTERREG IVA "2 Mers Seas Zeeën"

Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013

INTERREG IVA 2 Seas Clusters: Implementation Guidance

**Operational programme of the European Territorial Cooperation part-financed by
the European Regional Development Fund**



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GENERAL

1. Why this guidance?

The main purpose of this document is to guide clusters through their implementation and inform them on all different aspects starting from their approval until the administrative closure and final payment. The aim is to set out in detail all elements cluster (lead) partners need to know to implement their cluster successfully: the procedures, the necessary documents, the deadlines and the mandatory deliverables.

The first part will focus on the different actors involved in the process; from the cluster partners to the Technical Assistance and the Programme bodies involved during the cluster lifecycle.

The second part will go into more detail on each of the different stages in a “cluster lifecycle” and will guide you through the implementation.

This document should enable all cluster partners to have all necessary information to successfully implement their cluster and should be used next to the standard Programme Guidance documents, including the Programme Manual, First Level Control Guidance, Cluster Initiative Terms of Reference, FAQ, Cluster closure guidance.

2. Who’s involved in cluster implementation?

2.1 The cluster

The Formal Partners

The formal partners are those responsible for the delivery of the results. Only formal cluster partners can directly receive ERDF. Among the formal partners, one partner has been identified as the Lead Partner (LP).

The Associated Partners

A cluster can also involve associated partners, for example organisations who are participating actively in activities but without directly receiving ERDF. Those organisations can only claim travel and accommodation costs through a formal partner. Associated partners take up an active role, for example they share knowledge, results, undertake communication and/or dissemination actions. All associated partners have to be listed in the ‘Associated Partners Overview’ of the Application Form and have to submit an original signed Associated Partners Declaration in which they explain how they will contribute to the cluster.



2.2 Technical Assistance

Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS)

The cluster initiative is of strategic importance for the 2 Seas Programme as it is a unique chance to valorise the thematic results obtained during this Programming period. Because of this strategic importance, the Programme bodies have decided to allocate 100% ERDF to the approved clusters on condition that they fulfil at least two mandatory deliverables (a thematic event and publication). With this ERDF contribution the cluster will consolidate the results obtained and communicate on behalf of the 2 Seas Programme. This means that the Programme, by means through the JTS, needs to check and approve certain elements (such as for example the design of the mandatory deliverables).

For every cluster approved, the JTS appoints one project and one financial officer to monitor the progress of the cluster. They function as the main points of contact for the cluster. Besides their function as assistance, they are also responsible for the ongoing monitoring of the cluster. Regarding this last task, it is of great importance that clusters remain in contact with the JTS during each of the different milestones (like mid-term JTS-LP evaluation meeting, approval of the brochure's design, content, event's agenda...) and that the JTS can evaluate and validate the quality of the results and the thematic importance of the deliverables at all stages.

The territorial facilitators

The role of the network of territorial facilitators is to support all projects – and therefore also cluster-partners on the ground. They have been actively developing clusters and have provided input during the preparation of the Cluster Application Form.

Once a cluster is approved, the role of the facilitators will be transformed to specific assistance on the ground which may take the form of attendance of cluster meetings/workshops/events, advice regarding Programme procedures and management, concrete tips for a wider dissemination in different networks of the Programme area etc. It is clearly recommended that clusters work with one or several territorial facilitators as they have a privileged role interacting between the Programme on the one hand and their specific territory on the other hand.

It should however be highlighted that the main point of contact regarding the delivery of the cluster thematic results will always be the dedicated project and finance officers at the JTS (see above). The facilitator does not have the remit to validate the different milestones but will be of great value during the preparation, development and implementation of each of the different deliverables and results.

2.3 Programme Authorities

The Member States are responsible for the decisions with regard to the clusters. The Programme Steering Committee has delegated all decisions on 2 Seas Thematic clusters to the Capitalisation Working Group in which all Member States have at least one representative. The CWG decides on the approval of a cluster application and on the Request for Phase 2 approval, taking into account the strategic evaluation undertaken by the JTS.



CLUSTER LIFECYCLE

1. Approval by Programme: what next?

Once a cluster is approved by the CWG, the JTS will send a notification letter informing the cluster Lead Partner about the decision. The letter will also include recommendations from the Member States.

All cluster partners will then be invited to the Cluster 'start-up' seminar, in which the JTS will explain all phases of a cluster lifecycle and agree upon a personalised calendar for each cluster.

Please refer to document standard cluster life-cycle.

1.1 Cluster 'start-up' seminar:

The cluster 'start-up' seminar is organised for all cluster partners, although only mandatory for the Lead Partners. During this one day seminar, the JTS will run through the whole lifecycle of the cluster and discuss every Phase 1 in detail with the partnership. This will ensure the approved clusters can have a quick start and have all necessary information for a good delivery of the cluster outputs.

In the morning session, the JTS will provide the participants with a detailed explanation which will cover every part of a cluster life-cycle. In the afternoon session, individual meetings will be organised between each cluster and its designated project and financial officer and a facilitator at the JTS. During this meeting, the planned activities and outputs and the related planning will be discussed, in order to draft a personalised calendar for each cluster clearly stipulating the deadlines which the partnership has to respect.

1.2 Subsidy contract

After the CWG approval, the JTS will prepare the subsidy contract and will send three copies to each approved cluster Lead Partner as soon as possible. The Lead Partner signs all copies, stores one copy at their premises and sends back 2 of the 3 copies to the JTS within two months. Please keep in mind that the original, signed copies are needed to conclude the ERDF payment. One copy will be sent to the Managing Authority and one copy will be kept by the JTS.

1.3 Partnership agreement

A partnership agreement should be drafted and signed by all formal and associated partners. Part A of the agreement, which is mandatory, is provided by the JTS. In part B, the partners can complement the information from part A with any articles that are specific for their partnership. The content of these articles can be defined by the partnership as long as it does not contradict with the the articles of part A or with the Subsidy Contract. The Programme has also developed a document with suggested articles for the B part, which the partnership is free to use. Once the partnership agreement is signed by all formal and associated partners, a copy has to be sent to the JTS.



1.4 FLC designation

All cluster partners have to select a First Level Controller. This has to be selected in compliance with the applicable public procurement rules and according to the relevant national system in place. All costs have to be immediately included in the tender, i.e. costs related to reporting after both Phase 1 and Phase 2. The contract should foresee that, in case of non approval of Phase 2, the FLC service will be stopped at the end of Phase 1.

The FLC proposed can be the same as for the 2 Seas project, but only after a new public procurement has been launched and a new approval has been obtained, specifically for this cluster.

2. Eligibility of expenditure

2.1 Eligibility period

The cluster has a maximum duration of 18 months. This includes the preparation phase as well as the implementation of Phase 1 and of Phase 2. However, if the partnership had foreseen a gap between the end of the preparation phase and the start of Phase 1 in the Application Form, the expenditure claimed in the period in between cannot be considered eligible. By way of exception, cluster seminar related costs held upon request from the JTS can be deemed eligible for phase 1 even if they have been incurred and paid before the starting date of phase 1 and after the end date of the preparation phase.

The start date of the eligibility period for all clusters is 01/01/2013. Although clusters can start their Phase 1 at any given time, the proposed cluster end-date should be 30/09/2015 the latest. Following the end of the cluster, the partnership will dispose of three additional months to administratively close the cluster.

As an exception on the general rule, translation costs linked to the mandatory publication incurred and paid in the three months following the end of Phase 1 can be considered eligible.

2.2 Ineligible costs

As the ERDF rate for clusters is 100%, only staff costs (BL1), external expertise and services (BL3), travel and accommodation (BL4), equipments (BL5) and validation of the expenditure (BL7) are considered eligible in the framework of the cluster initiative.

The expenditure related to administration costs (BL2) and investment (BL6) cannot be considered eligible. Clusters are not allowed to integrate shared costs or in-kind contribution.

2.3 Expenditure Associated Partners

As stated in Section *GENERAL – 2. Who is involved in cluster implementation?* of this Guidance, an active role of the associated partners is expected in the 2 Seas clusters.



Therefore, all travel and accommodation costs incurred by the associated partners can be claimed within the clusters. Nevertheless, no direct ERDF reimbursement can be made from the 2 Seas Programme to the associated partners. The associated partners should get their expenditure reimbursed through the responsible formal partner, preferably from the same Member State. The other option is that the travel costs will be directly paid by the formal partners, who can then directly include them in their list of expenditure of the corresponding progress report.

2.4 15% flexibility rule

The 15% flexibility rule also applies for approved clusters. Partners are accorded a flexibility to deviate their budget from the planned budget approved in the application form up to 15% per budget lines/activities. Please keep in mind that the total budget and the partners' total budgets must remain the same at all times.

2.5 Public procurement

All cluster partners must comply with European and relevant National public procurement regulations whenever they intend to contract an external organisation for supplying goods or services.

For public procurement procedures, please refer to:

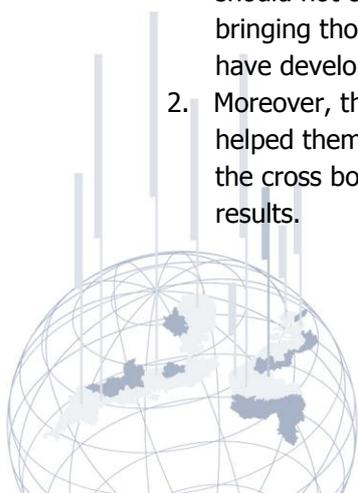
- EU public procurement rules
- National public procurement rules
- Programme Manual

3. Cluster Phase 1

3.1 Mandatory deliverables

The main aim of the cluster initiative is to disseminate the thematic expertise, developed in the projects, throughout the whole 2 Seas Programme area and beyond. In order to realise this, each cluster has to deliver at least two mandatory deliverables: a cross border thematic event and a publication. Both have to contribute to two goals:

1. First of all, the aim of the cluster should be to bring together and consolidate the results of the approved projects and disseminate them through the event and the publication. The partnership should not only disseminate the results of each project, but also highlight the added-value of bringing those projects together. The two deliverables should demonstrate the excellence partners have developed in their chosen theme.
2. Moreover, the publication and the event should also demonstrate how the cross border cooperation helped them to develop this excellence. The two deliverables should demonstrate the added-value of the cross border cooperation and elaborate how the collaboration was crucial in achieving the results.



Due to the special role of clusters and their strategic importance for the Programme in achieving the enhanced communication and dissemination of thematic results in the area, the Programme authorities have decided to fund their actions with 100% ERDF. This means that clusters will have a series of mandatory technical aspects (graphic charts, templates, etc) to respect in relation to the mandatory deliverables and that this will involve a close working relationship with the JTS for the validation of specific milestones during the development and delivery of the mandatory deliverables.

A. Cluster event

a. Content:

The specific theme of the event should be further developed by the cluster and be clearly in line with the information set out in the approved cluster application form. The content should also be clearly and precisely defined in close collaboration with the JTS (see planning table for concrete moments of reporting).

b. Format:

- The mandatory event can take the form of a cross border seminar, conference, parallel workshops, and can include field visits or a combination of these approaches during this single event.
- Event should be free of charge
- There is a graphic chart and visual identity developed by the Programme that should be respected by all clusters. A template has been developed for the Cluster event programme brochure
- The Event should be held in the 3 official Programme languages (EN, FR and NL). This is also the case for clusters without an official/associated partner in each of the Member States. In this case the cluster should make an extra effort to target actors and relevant organisations from the missing Member State to ensure this communication investment is maximised.

c. Target audience:

- Should aim to have at least 200 participants, coming from the whole Programme area
- Should work in cooperation with JTS to develop an enhanced mailing list(s)
- This is a thematic event, held on behalf of the Programme so the participants should have a clear thematic interest.
- The participants should come from a wide range of relevant sectors in order to ensure the integration of the lessons learnt and results into policy development and future action in the 2 Seas area and beyond.
- Focus on awareness-raising in the different territories, for citizens and beneficiaries.
- Media attention: the benefits of ERDF spend in their area should be the key message

d. Publicity requirements

As the Cluster event is considered as a 2 Seas Programme Event, the Programme and the communication supports (block the date emails, invitations, etc) must respect the graphic chart of the 2 Seas Programme.

It is therefore **mandatory** that the announcements start with the following statement:

"The INTERREG 2 Seas Programme Authorities and the cluster partners have the pleasure to invite you to ..."

The 2 Seas Programme cartouche and logo must be highly visible on all invitations and announcements.



Moreover, the Cluster partners are strongly recommended to use the partners' websites to communicate on the event and detail all practical information, highlighting the financial support from the 2 Seas Programme and from the European Union.

e. Cluster event webpage

Prior to the event, the cluster partners should provide all necessary information on the event to the JTS in order to launch a newsfeed on the 2 Seas website and create a webpage for the event. Please note that the Programme is only communicating on the practical information and content of the event and is **not organising event registration** for the cluster.

After the event, PowerPoint presentations and a selection of photographs can be added to this cluster event webpage, they will remain available and can be consulted by a large audience. When available and planned for in the bid, videos on the event can also be added on this webpage.

(See 2013 Annual event material page for an example of an event webpage: <http://www.interreg4a-2mers.eu/left-navigation-box-2/programme-events/annual-events/2013-annual-event-material/en>)

f. Cluster event programme brochure

The clusters should draft a brochure detailing the programme of the event which respects the graphic chart of the Programme. A template is provided (see annex or 2 Seas website: www.interreg4a-2mers.eu/left-navigation-box-2/communication/en) in both a pdf format and in a format suitable for printers. The font, size font and logos must be respected at all times. The format, the number of pages and all contents should be adapted by the clusters.

The logos of the cluster partners can be inserted.

(See document Cluster event programme page 3 for an example from the 2 Seas annual event in Rotterdam.)

For all invitations, Programme and communication supports, a "ready for printing" approval from the JTS is needed before production launch.

g. Timing: Ten-step planning towards a successful cluster event

The cluster event should be developed in the first 6 months of the cluster Phase 1 and should take place around the 9th month of the cluster Phase 1 at the latest, as mentioned in the cluster event guidance.

The date should be chosen in cooperation with the JTS in order to make sure the event date does not conflict with any other EU/Programme event.

Planning	Process steps until the day of the event and after
<p>Step 1: Cluster 'start up' seminar</p>	<p>Agreement on the concept of the event Description about the way of working with event hosts and the JTS</p> <p>Clusters are already advised to think about the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event concept and partners responsibilities - Identify external suppliers (if appropriate) and do not forget to comply with the public procurement rules - Objectives and goals: event specification and budget - Estimated timeline - Proposed date and venue (Location/public transport links/parking/hotels and accommodation in surrounding area)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Estimated Costs: Fixed and variable costs : Number and size of meeting rooms, does the venue charge a room rental, catering (tied catering or independent), Audio/ Video (A/V) equipment, Event staff costs, Interpreters and translation costs...
Step 2: Mid-term meeting	<p>Cluster presents to JTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final content with draft programme and first list of speakers and alternative speakers - Mailing lists (within 1 week, the JTS will suggest additions if needed and complete with its own contacts) - Venue arrangement: catering (possibility of dietary requirements) A/V equipment, sound system, coffee breaks, translation booths) - Proposition of draft invitation with deadlines for registration - Proposition of media strategy and event branding (title, slogan, logo...)
Step 3 D (=event day) - 2,5 months	<p>Launch of the event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send the "Save the Date!" Message - Check the timing with providers (venue, catering, sound equipment, graphic designer, interpreters, and photographer). - Send briefing notes to the speakers/ moderators with proposed timing and requested key messages (approved by the JTS)
Step 4 D - 2 months	<p>Graphic elements and communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send the final template of the Event Programme and all other graphic elements to the JTS for approval
Step 5 D - 1,5 month	<p>Opening of the registration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Official invitations to be sent - Reminder 3 weeks before the registration closure
Step 6 D - 2 weeks	<p>Final preparations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare delegate pack to deliver at Conference (final Programme, list of participants, workshops, notes, presentations, venue plan, badges, evaluation forms of the event...). - Send out press release (if appropriate, see your Communication Department for deadlines) - Close registration and finalise participant lists
Step 7: D Day	Crossborder Cluster Event
Step 8 D + 1 week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send event presentations and photos to the JTS in order to feed the web page on the 2 Seas website
Step 9 D + 10 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send acknowledgments and evaluation forms to the participants with link to the 2 Seas webpage - Send Participant Certificates of attendance when requested



Step 10 D+ 1 month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summarise event conclusions and outcomes: a detailed report should be drafted that summarises the main findings per session/workshop together with the final conclusions of the event. Attention, this detailed report cannot be the publication. The detailed report could however be integrated in the publication. - Analyse feedback evaluation forms - Send conclusions and evaluation to the JTS
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B. Cluster publication

a. Content:

The cluster publication should illustrate how partners worked together to consolidate their existing knowledge and results and explored new synergies. It should therefore also include recommendations for the future.

The publication should focus on a specific theme that is well defined and the content should not be limited to the results of the event only. The cluster should include examples and best practices and testimonies that cover all Member States of the Programme.

b. Key principles to take into account

The Cluster publication is a publication at the 2 Seas Programme level, and will be part of the 2 Seas Magazine collection. This means that,

- The layout of the publication must respect the proposed template and visual style and will need professional production.
- Please refer to annex 1 for Templates and mock-ups available on the 2 Seas Website (in the 3 Programme languages).
- The managing editor of this publication is the Director of the 2 Seas Programme. Therefore, the drafts of the publication should be submitted to and be checked by the JTS for approval at each stage of the production process, and the JTS will finally deliver the "ready for print" confirmation.
- The JTS will check the content is written in the appropriate style and make sure the editorial fits with the Programme's view.
- Cluster partners must obtain prior authorisation and copyright for using pictures, photographs and schemes. Please do not use any materials without authorisation as this is illegal and can lead to prosecution.
- Use relevant examples and personal stories to make your publication lively and attractive!

c. Format:

- The cluster should define the content and draft the table of content of the publication
 - An introduction to present the general context of the cluster and an editorial from an expert or a relevant politician must be considered.
 - **The draft texts must be written in English**, and once approved translated in French and in Dutch. Do not underestimate the time required for translation and the proof-reading of translated texts.
- Prepare a glossary and a list of frequently used expressions in the 3 Programme languages in order



to limit the mistranslations. A 2 Seas glossary is available on the 2 Seas website: <http://www.interreg4a-2mers.eu/left-navigation-box-1/glossary/en>

- The Publication should be available in the 3 official Programme languages (EN, FR and NL). The working documents and the first copy must be provided in English, and then translated in FR and NL.
- The publication should be a minimum of 24 pages in length (per language).

d. Printing:

- Printable electronic version is expected, a paper version is optional (A4 format – 170g paper- colour and matte)
- As printing can be very expensive, please make sure to have a correct mailing list with correct postal addresses or that you have a real opportunity to deliver the cluster publication on the occasion of a thematic event.
- If printing copies are considered, please ask a quote for a **A4 format (4 page cover + inside pages) 2 point stapling - 170g paper – colour on all pages**, including printing and delivery (or dispatching to several addresses if appropriate).

If your providers offer a proof reading service, check if this involves purely lay out errors or includes checking spelling mistakes too.

Attention: a single A4 paper of texts corresponds approximately to 1 and 1/2 A4 paper with laid-out texts and illustrations (or more!).

e. Target audience:

- As a 2 Seas Programme publication, it should not only be an expert-oriented publication, but it should also attract the widest possible audience. It should raise the territories’, the beneficiaries’ and the citizens’ awareness and appreciation of the benefits brought by the 2 Seas Programme to their area.
- The publication should inform relevant politicians, stakeholders and the expert community from the 2 Seas area and beyond, about the results achieved.
- The publication should raise the awareness of the general public and the media on the effective and appropriate use of ERDF.
- The cluster should draft a clear list of interested organisations and stakeholders to whom the publication should be sent.

f. Timing:

- The timetable should be developed during Phase 1 of the cluster and should be ready to be published at the end of Phase 1 at the latest.
- The planning will be closely followed-up at the JTS in order to make sure the deadline is respected. Please also note that Phase 2 cannot be approved without the finalisation (and qualitative approval) of the cluster publication. More specifically, the final English version has to be ready for printing and prove should be provided that the order for translation is at least already sent out. The translations have to be sent to the JTS at the latest one month after the end date of Phase 1.

Planning	Process steps to edit the 2 Seas Magazine.
Step 1 Cluster 'start Up'	Briefing note to be produced: - Define the main goal of this publication - Draft working calendar to propose to the JTS.



seminar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which financial means and external providers will be necessary? - Which internal human resources are needed? - Selection of the Graphic designer and of the printing company (if appropriate)
Step 2: Mid-term meeting with the JTS	<p>Approval table of contents by the JTS Proposal of selected authors/ best practice or examples to include</p> <p>Approval of mailing list by the JTS</p>
Step 3: D (= publication being ready) - 5 to 3 months before publishing	<p>Gather contents from authors and partners Select photos and illustrations (good quality pictures or high resolution photographs).</p> <p>After reviewing, send the draft text to the JTS</p> <p>After JTS Approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conclude contract with graphic designer and printer and confirm timing and delivery requirements - Send final version to be translated into Dutch and French (tip: send a glossary to the translators to limit the mistranslations)
Step 4 D - 3 to 2 months	<p>Kick off meeting with graphic designer and printer Send texts, graphic chart, photos and illustrations (with authorisation) to the graphic designer Send a .pdf resolution of the draft magazine to the authors and the JTS for proof reading. Give a clear deadline for comments and amendments</p> <p>Approval visual style and lay out by JTS</p>
Step 5 D - 2 months to 2 weeks	<p>Proof-reading of Dutch and French translations Send Dutch and French final texts for lay-out to the graphic designer Proof-reading of the final version of the English laid-out magazine</p> <p>JTS approval for English version (Ready for printing confirmation must be formally obtained)</p>
Step 6 D - 2 weeks	<p>Proof reading of the final versions of the French and Dutch laid-out magazine</p> <p>JTS approval for the Dutch and French version.</p>
Step 7: D day: publish/print publication	<p>Upload the 3 versions on the 2 Seas website and on cluster partner websites</p> <p>Mailing with the electronic version in the 3 languages</p> <p>If applicable: distribution printed copies: mail, partner's</p>



3.2 Mid-term evaluation meeting

Half-way during the implementation of Phase 1, the Lead Partner will be invited to the JTS in order to discuss the progress of the cluster. This meeting is mandatory as no other intermediary reporting (by for example progress reports) is foreseen for clusters.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the progress of the cluster and the state of play of the preparation of the publication and the conference. It will also give an opportunity to discuss the preparation of Phase 2 and to discuss the deadlines to be respected. The date of this mid-term meeting should be agreed upon during the individual meeting of the cluster seminar and will take into account the cluster specific life cycle and milestones defined.

3.3 Reporting

Activity report:

The JTS will deliver templates of the Activity Report to the cluster Lead Partner. All cluster partners should provide input in order to enable the Lead Partner to compose a consolidated cluster activity report.

The activity report needs to cover all cluster actions, results and outputs and has to be submitted to the JTS at the latest by the end of Phase 1.

If the cluster is closing after Phase 1, the activity and financial reports should be submitted together within two months after the end date of the relevant phase.

The cluster needs to send a CD-Rom with the activity report and annexes, containing among others, the publication, the agenda and some pictures of the event, communication materials etc.

In case a cluster would like to ask the approval to start a Phase 2, the submission of the Phase 1 activity report will be anticipated at the latest two weeks before the end date of Phase 1 in order to limit the gap between the end of Phase 1 and the official approval of Phase 2 (see chapter 3. Transition Phase: Phase 1 to Phase 2)

The submission of the report is a necessary precondition for the approval of Phase 2, as this will provide evidence of the successful implementation of the thematic event and publication. In order to ensure the quality of the document and anticipate any requests for clarification, the JTS strongly recommends the cluster to submit the Activity report for Phase 1 at least two weeks before the end of Phase 1. This means that the report can be evaluated and validated by the official end date of Phase 1 and the written procedure can be launched that same day.

Finance report

The JTS will deliver the templates of the Financial Report to the cluster Lead Partner. All official partners will complete the templates and propose them for validation to their approved FLC. The Lead Partner will afterwards consolidate the partner financial reports into a cluster financial report which will again be verified by the Lead Partners' FLC.



The financial reports are submitted to the JTS two months after the end date of each phase. The JTS will assess them and once all questions are answered satisfactorily, the activity and the financial report are sent together to the Managing Authority and finally to the Certifying Authority.

If a partner has incurred costs during Phase 1 and has not been able to pay all costs related to Phase 1 before the submission of this first financial report, those remaining costs can be claimed in the second financial report, submitted after the end date of Phase 2. It is not possible to transfer unspent money of Phase 1 to the budget of Phase 2. The money left in Phase 1 is lost.

Reporting templates will be sent to Cluster as soon as possible after the JTS cluster seminar.

3.4 Closure (only applicable if no cluster Phase 2)

Administrative closure

If the cluster closes after Phase 1, they have to submit the Administrative Closure Checklist and all annexes requested. There is no specific closure report to be submitted for a cluster as all required information is given within the other reporting templates (Activity and Finance reports).

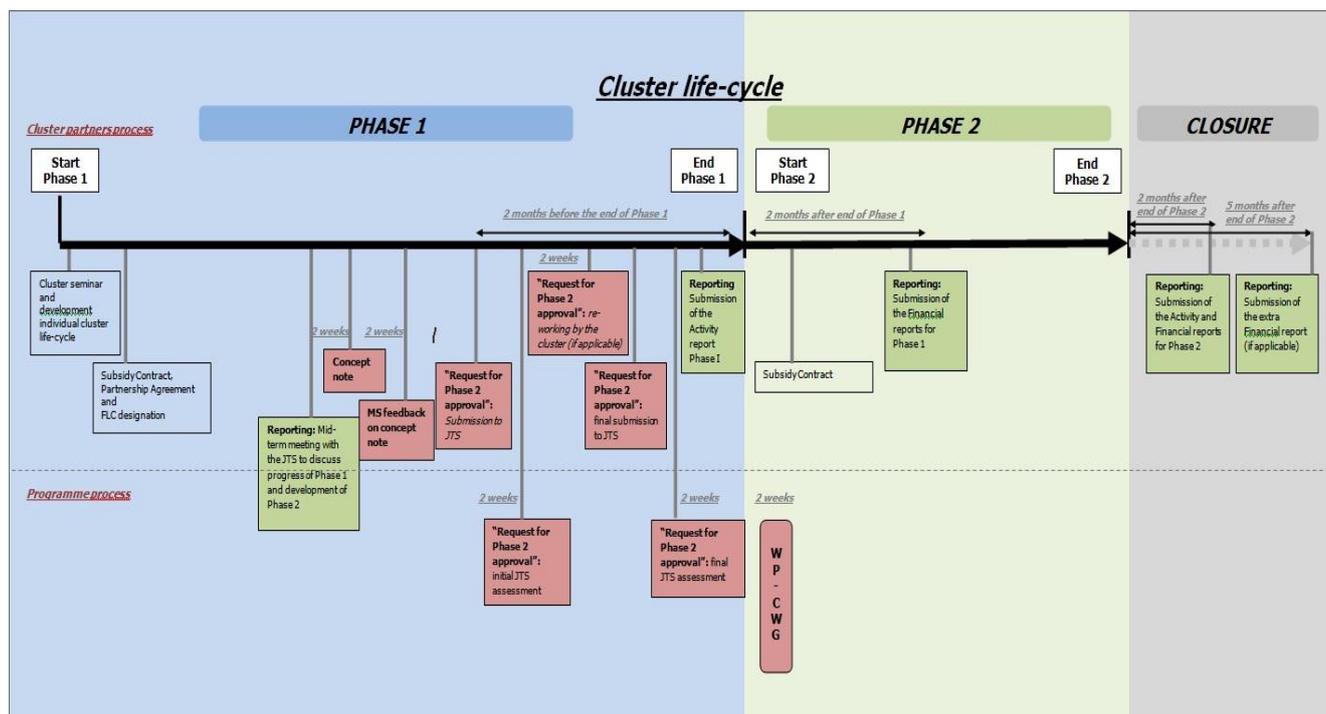
Extra financial report

Similar to 'regular' projects, Clusters can still claim some costs, either administrative costs made and paid up to three months after the end date or costs made during Phase 1 but paid up to three months after the end date. These costs can be claimed through an extra financial report, which has to be submitted at the latest five months after the end date of the cluster. Please ask the JTS for the correct templates.

If a cluster wishes to submit an extra financial report, this final report will have to be accompanied with the filled in administrative closure checklist and all its annexes required (i.e. bank statements).



4. Transition Phase: Phase 1 to Phase 2



As the clusters were initially only approved for the proposed Phase 1, all clusters wishing to undertake a Phase 2 should re-obtain the approval of the CWG to start with their Phase 2. Their approval will depend on the quality of the results delivered in Phase 1 and the added-value of the actions proposed in Phase 2.

The transition between Phase 1 and Phase 2 will be officialised by means of a **“Request for Phase 2 approval”** procedure. This procedure contains three important documents that need to be completed by the cluster; a ‘concept note’, a reworked application form and a request for changes form (similar to a project major modification).

In order to bridge the gap between Phase 1 and 2, the cluster has to start the development of Phase 2, detailing their aims and objectives, activities, results and outputs and budget, already during Phase 1. The changes proposed by the cluster together with the initial recommendation from the notification letter should be discussed with the JTS during the mid-term evaluation meeting. The cluster will be asked to outline in a **concept note**, 2 weeks after the meeting their proposal for phase 2. Member States will then comment on these within 3 weeks and provide feedback to the clusters.

Two months before the end of Phase 1, the cluster has to **submit both the reworked Application Form and the request for changes form** to the JTS taking on board MS recommendations.

The JTS may ask for further clarifications regarding the submission and a final version of the Major Modification will need to be submitted one month before the end date of Phase 1. Once the final version of the Major Modification has been submitted, the **JTS has another two weeks to perform the final assessment. The JTS will send their qualitative assessment** on the “Request for Phase 2 approval” to the Member States by means of a written procedure to the CWG. **All Member States will have ten working days to formulate their remarks.** There are only two possible decisions: approval or rejection.

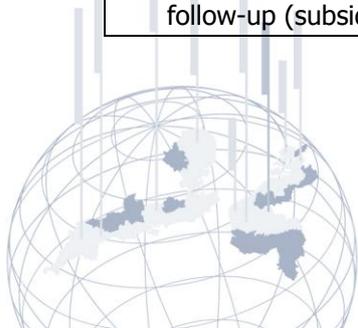


The JTS will notify the cluster of the decision made by the CWG.

ATTENTION: If all parties respect the given deadlines, there will however be a period of two weeks after the launch of the written procedure at the end of Phase 1 and the approval by the CWG of Phase 2. Clusters will therefore be recommended to anticipate this approval and **start at their own risk** with the implementation of their Phase 2 before the Member States' final decision is communicated.

EXAMPLE:

Description of the main steps	Concrete examples of timing Phase 1 ends on 30/06/2014
1. Midterm meeting	Deadline: 06/3/2014
2. Cluster submits a concept note outlining the proposed actions under Phase 2, 2 weeks following the midterm meeting.	Deadline: 20/3/2014
3. Member states provide feedback regarding phase 2 proposal within 3 weeks.	Deadline: 10/04/2014
4. Cluster submits a draft "Request for Phase 2 approval" (revised Application Form and request for modification template) detailing the proposed actions under Phase 2, 2 months before the end of Phase 1.	Deadline: 30/04/2014
5. JTS has 2 weeks to undertake an initial assessment of the draft "Request for Phase 2 approval". At the end of these 2 weeks, JTS sends any requests for clarification to cluster.	Deadline: 14/05/2014
6. If there are any clarifications, cluster has 2 weeks to re-work its "Request for Phase 2 approval" and officially submit it to the JTS one month before the end of Phase 1.	Deadline: 28/5/2014
7. JTS has two weeks to finalise its assessment of the "Request for Phase 2 approval" including the check of the delivery of the two mandatory outputs (through the Activity report).	Deadline: 11/06/2014
8. JTS launches Written Procedure to CWG members, at the latest, on the end date of Phase 1.	Deadline: 30/06/2014
9. CWG has 2 weeks (10 open days) to make a decision – which can only be twofold: Approval or Rejection.	Decision on: 14/07/2014
10. JTS notifies CWG decision to cluster to officially start Phase 2, 2 weeks after the end date of Phase 1, and does all the follow-up (subsidy contract, partnership agreement, notification	Deadline: 15/07/2014



letter etc.).	
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5. Cluster Phase 2

Clusters are given the possibility to launch a second phase during which they can further exploit synergies and develop new actions. Actions should help inform future development potential within the theme. During this phase, partners can make a step forward towards the future; this phase should help building the basis for the future by delivering concrete outputs. The tangibility of results will be a key element during cluster evaluation (both at JTS and MS levels). Therefore, clear milestones will have to be defined in the cluster proposal.

5.1 Subsidy contract

After the approval of the second phase, the JTS will revise the Subsidy Contract and update the document with the period and budget of Phase 2. The JTS will send three copies to the Lead Partner as soon as possible. The Lead Partner signs all copies and 2 of the 3 are sent back to the JTS within two months.

5.2 Partnership agreement

If the partnership for Phase 2 is identical to the partnership of Phase 1, no new partnership agreement will be needed.

Nevertheless, it cannot be excluded that certain changes will require a new partnership agreement; for example if a partner does not wish to take part, if a new relevant partner is added or if the partnership wishes to change or precise some specific roles for Phase 2.

If a new partnership agreement is required, once it is signed by all formal and associated partners, a copy has to be sent back to the JTS within two months.

5.3 FLC designation

In case of an identical partnership, no new FLC designation is needed.



5.4 Reporting

Activity report:

Similar to Phase 1, the JTS will deliver templates of the Activity Report to the cluster Lead Partner who will have to consolidate the information for all partners and complete the document.

The cluster needs to send a CD-Rom with the activity report, containing among others the results of their actions and the communication actions they undertook.

Finance report

The same procedure as for Phase 1 applies for the finance report of Phase 2.

The financial reports should be submitted to the JTS two months after the end date of Phase 2. The JTS will assess them and once all questions are answered satisfactorily, the activity and the financial report are sent together to the Managing Authority and finally to the Certifying Authority for approval.

Costs incurred during Phase 1 which were not yet claimed in the first financial report can be claimed in this second financial report and should clearly mention Phase 1 in the list of expenditure.

The templates for both the activity report as the finance reports will be sent as soon as possible after the approval of Phase 2.

Contrary to Phase 1, for Phase 2 the activity and financial reports can be submitted together two months after the end date of Phase 2.

Please note that no mid-term evaluation meeting with the JTS is foreseen during Phase 2. The JTS with the assistance of the facilitators will monitor the progress of the clusters by ad hoc contacts, meetings or site visits.

5.5 Closure

Administrative closure

As already mentioned for clusters ending after Phase 1, the cluster has only to submit the Administrative Closure checklist, together with its necessary annexes in order to administratively close the cluster and receive the final payment. No specific closure report is needed.

Extra financial report

Similar to Phase 1, Clusters can still claim some costs, either administrative costs made and paid up to three months after the end date or costs made during Phase 1 but paid up to three months after the end date. These costs can be claimed through an extra financial report, which has to be submitted at the latest five months after the end date of the cluster. Please ask the JTS for the correct templates.

If a cluster wishes to submit an extra financial report, this final report will have to be accompanied with the filled in administrative closure checklist and all annexes required (i.e. bank statements).



CHANGES IN THE CLUSTER

It is very important to keep in mind that a cluster differs from a normal project. Taking into account the maximum duration of 18 months, the time to implement modifications is limited. Only one major modification during a cluster lifetime is possible but its main purpose is to further define the future and not to change the past or current situation. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that cluster partners are aware of the binding character of all deadlines, budgets, partner engagements in the Application Form and that changes in the cluster are only possible in case of *force majeure*. Minor changes such as a change of bank details or a change of contact details are allowed and should be communicated by an official letter to the JTS.

For all other changes that might occur during a cluster lifetime, please contact the designated Project and Finance officer at the JTS as soon as possible.



ANNEXES

Annex 1: How to use the 2 Seas magazine template?

A template of the 2 Seas Magazine will be provided to each cluster both in a .pdf format and in a version suitable for printers and in the 3 Programme languages.

These can be downloaded from the 2 Seas website as well: <http://www.interreg4a-2mers.eu/left-navigation-box-2/communication/en>.

These templates allow the graphic designer and (or) the printer selected by the cluster to produce the "2 Seas magazine" issue.



All information regarding the publication home style is included in the version for printers: Lay out, Font (Tahoma) and font size, colour, logos and references to the EU and Programme contributions, disclaimers are compulsory and cannot be adapted.

This means:

Front Cover:

Only the date, the title and the picture can be changed. As the Publication must respect a calendar which will be set up and sent by the JTS, the publishing date will be decided by the 2 Seas Programme and communicated to the cluster.

Page2:

Table of contents: a picture from each chapter must be selected to be displayed on this page.

Page 3:

An editorial is compulsory. The cluster must propose the JTS a text approved by a politician or a local personality involved in European affairs or in the cluster sector. This editorial must deal with the cluster benefits for the 2 Seas area.

Inside Pages:

These must respect the lay-out, colour, font and font size. The cluster must submit the final content to the JTS Project Unit for final approval (see above).

Third page of Cover:

All the paragraphs contained in the template must be completed and mentioned.

The creation of a Cluster logo is not compulsory. The Graphic Designer selected by the Cluster can simply insert the name of the Cluster in Capitals and in bold.

As the Cluster publication is a publication at the 2 Seas Programme level, the managing editor of each publication is the Director of the 2 Seas Programme, and cannot be changed.

Crediting photographers is also a minimum courtesy. The cluster partnership must ensure permission and rights to use the proposed pictures.

Back Cover:

Logos, reference to the Programme and EU contribution as well as the 2 Seas website address must be displayed. Each cluster can add its own logo, partner logos and website address, when existing. But these must be added and must not replace the 2 Seas Programme and reference.



Annex 2: Cluster event brochure template

A template of the Cluster event programme brochure can be downloaded from the 2 Seas website both in a .pdf format and in a version suitable for printers, from the 2 Seas website: <http://www.interreg4a-2mers.eu/left-navigation-box-2/communication/en>.

The Cluster event programme brochure must be provided in the 3 Programme languages.

This template is largely inspired by the last 2 Seas Annual event programme brochure.

The font, size font and logos must be respected. But the format, the number of pages and all contents must be adapted by the clusters. The logos of the cluster partner can be included.

Please note that inside page is an extract from the 2 Seas annual event in Rotterdam, and is only an example. You can adapt it regarding the organisation of your own cluster event.

Remember that you have to start your announcement with the following statement:

"The INTERREG 2 Seas Programme Authorities and the cluster partners have the pleasure to invite you to ..."

A "ready for printing" approval from the JTS is needed before production launch.

The brochure template consists of three pages:

- Front Cover:** Features the 2 Seas logo, the Latin motto "Erant vitae oratio di color uti at quo.", and the text "2 Seas Cluster". The main image shows sailboats on the water with the word "Programme" and "Programma" overlaid. At the bottom, it says "Location - 19 & 20 Month 2013".
- Program Page:** Titled "Thursday 14 March 2013: Day 1". It lists a schedule of events from 13:00-14:00 to 19:00-22:00, including registration, coffee breaks, a lunch, thematic clusters, a welcome session, pre-cluster discussions, networking, and a networking dinner. It also includes a section for "Approved Project showcases" and a small map of the 2 Seas region.
- Back Cover:** Contains contact information for the 2 Seas Programme, including the website www.interreg4a-2mers.eu and the logo for INTERREG IV A 2 Seas Zeeland. It also features the slogan "Investing in your future" and logos for the European Union and the 2 Seas Programme.



Annex 3: 2 Seas Graphic chart

A copy of the 2 Seas Graphic Chart will be provided to each cluster both in a .pdf format and in a version suitable for printers.

This will allow the graphic designer and (or) the printer selected by the cluster to produce any graphic element needed for the cluster communication supports which must respect the 2 Seas Visual identity.

