

Urban Innovative Actions - English

As stated in the Article 8 of the ERDF Regulation¹, ERDF may support innovative actions in the area of sustainable urban development. In this framework, the European Commission has launched the Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) Initiative in order to identify and test new solutions which address issues related to sustainable urban development and are of relevance at Union level.

The main aim of the UIA Initiative is therefore to provide urban authorities across Europe with space and resources to test bold and unproven ideas addressing interconnected challenges and experiment how these respond to the complexity of real life. Projects to be supported shall be innovative, of good quality, designed and implemented with the involvement of key stakeholders, result oriented and transferable.

Urban authorities should seize the opportunity offered by the UIA Initiative to move from “normal projects” (that could be financed through “traditional” sources of funding, including mainstream ERDF Programmes) and take the risk to turn ambitious and creative ideas into prototypes that can be tested in real urban settings. In other words, UIA can support pilot projects that are too risky to be funded by traditional sources of funding provided that they are highly innovative and experimental.

The UIA Initiative has a total ERDF budget of around EUR 372 million.

UIA projects will be selected through annual Calls for Proposals from 2015 to 2020 on one or more topics proposed by the Commission. Each action can receive up to a maximum of EUR 5 Million ERDF co-financing. Project implementation should take place within a maximum period of 3 years². There is no ideal size for UIA project budgets. Small projects (i.e. below EUR 1 million ERDF requested) may have a reduced probability of being selected as they may struggle to demonstrate that the actions are of sufficient scale to produce meaningful conclusions. Whereas, projects including significant investment costs, particularly at the end of the implementation period, should demonstrate that the cost fit the purpose and are duly justified.

The UIA Initiative is an instrument of the European Union and is managed by the European Commission’s (EC) Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy under indirect management. For the implementation of the Initiative, the Commission has designated the Region Hauts-de-France³ as Entrusted Entity (EE). For the management of the Initiative, a Permanent Secretariat (PS) has been established⁴.

¹ European Regional Development Fund Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1301>.

² In exceptional and well justified cases projects may be extended by maximum 1 year.

³ Formerly Region Nord-Pas de Calais.

⁴ Information and contact details of the Permanent Secretariat can be found here:
<http://www.uia-initiative.eu/en/about-us/meet-team>.