Invitation to submit an offer
Partner search platform

Since 2000, the Interreg Alpine Space programme (hereafter "the programme") strives for cooperation in and between the Alpine regions and supports transnational projects in the Alpine area fostering territorial development and cohesion. These projects bring key stakeholders of the cooperation area together to develop joint actions for shared solutions on specific Alpine issues.

The Land Salzburg (Austria), department for economy, tourism and municipalities, sub-department regional development and EU regional policy, as managing authority (MA) bears the overall responsibility for the implementation of the programme and it carries out procurements of external services needed to support programme implementation. The MA and the partner states of the programme are supported by a joint secretariat (JS). To learn more about the programme, please consult the website www.alpine-space.eu.

Procurement procedure

The programme intends to set up a web-based partner search platform. This platform shall be used for the calls for project proposals still to come in this running programming period 2021-2027 and shall be used until the programme has been closed (which is currently envisaged for end of 2031). In case a successor programme will be set up and the platform has proved to support the establishment and/or enlargement of networks and communities this platform shall also be used in the programming period 2028+. The aim of the present direct award procedure according to § 46 of the Austrian procurement law (BVergG 2018) is to select a service provider to technically develop and host such a platform in the period 2024-2031... The contract will be set up based on Austrian law and concluded with the Land of Salzburg.

Companies or consortia of companies interested in the present procurement are invited to submit an offer via e-mail to js@alpine-space.eu by Friday 19 January 2024, **1 pm**. The offer shall reflect the specification of services pointed out below.

Any questions with regard to this present procurement procedure and essential for setting up the offer shall be formulated in English and sent to js@alpine-space.eu by Wednesday 10 January 2024. The answers to all questions received will be published on the same website where this present procurement document is available and will be made available by Friday 12 January 2024. These Q&A shall be considered when settting up the offer.

Timeline

The contract is planned to run from February 2024 until end December 2031. An online kick-off meeting will be held with the contracted company late January 2024. During this meeting, the work plan for the following months will be discussed and fine-tuned and first exchanges on content will take place.

The following time schedule is foreseen for the delivery of services:

- February 2024: Design and set up of the partner search platform
- March 2024: testing and finalising the tool
- April 2024: Launch of the partner search platform
- Until end 2031: Hosting and maintenance of the partner search platform by the service provider.

Required content of the offer

Please make sure that the offer is in English and contains:

- suggestions as regards the approach that shall be followed to deliver the services;
- examples of previous similar projects;
- a detailed price list.

The offered price shall cover any costs arising from the complete delivery of the services described below. Additional costs will not be reimbursed. VAT is to be indicated separately and prices have to be indicated as fixed prices. For the price offer the template provided by the contracting authority shall be used.

No reimbursement of costs arising from the elaboration and submission of the offer will take place. Please note that products and content elaborated in the framework of the contract (texts, pictures, graphical elements, etc.) shall be handed over to the contracting authority for further use.

Please be aware that the Land of Salzburg as contracting authority may request additional documents to verify the authorisation of the company to deliver the service, its professional reliability as well as its financial, economic and technical ability to perform the services.

Specification of services

Background information

The Interreg Alpine Space programme (ASP) launches on a regular basis calls for project proposals in order to find and finance projects that will tackle one of the four priorities of the programme:

- Priority 1: Climate resilient and green Alpine region
- Priority 2: Carbon neutral and resource sensitive Alpine region
- Priority 3: Innovation and digitalisation supporting a green Alpine region
- Priority 4: Cooperatively managed and developed Alpine region

Projects selected last several years and bring together several partners from different alpine countries. Partners include local and regional authorities, research institutes and businesses. More information on the currently funded projects can be found on the programme website (www.alpine-space.eu/projects). The contracting authority estimates that the number of users of the platform at the time of its launch will be no more than the number of subscribers to the programme´s newsletter (1'300 users). The number of users/subscribers will certainly increase by 2031, but probably not exceed 5'000. During the calls, potential applicants approach both their Alpine Space Contact Points (ACP) in their country and the Joint Secretariat (JS) or Managing Authority (MA)[1], asking for support & guidance in partner search in other countries. While this may work in some cases, it's often difficult because the type of partners sought are very specific.

What is the partner search platform?

The platform should create a community around the calls for projects. It should facilitate the search for partners and help the programme to get an understanding of the idea trends related to the calls.

The partner search platform shall allow stakeholders interested in Interreg Alpine Space to connect according to the following criteria:

- find a partner to join a project proposals
- find a project to be involved in or
- offer or find a specific expertise

It will be a non-commercial platform, mainly used during the calls for projects but not exclusively.

Who are the target audiences?

- **Potential applicants** looking for a project to be included in
- **Lead partners** looking for a partner in the framework of a project proposal
- **Observers** who would like to bring their expertise to a project
- **ACPs, MA and JS**, who would like to easily connect people interested in the ASP/call for projects
- **Other stakeholders like representatives of the European Commission, the Alpine Convention, other members of the programme committee, other (Interreg) programmes or macro-regional strategies**

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[1] All the contacts are available at www.alpine-space.eu/contacts/js-ma-acp

How should it look like?

The partner search platform shall be a subdomain of alpine-space.eu (e.g. matchmaking.alpine-space.eu or partnersearch.alpine-space.eu). The registration process and platform should be **easy and simple to use**.

Registration

- The registration should include the profile details below, as well as the questions found in the "Filters" section.
- Registration should be easily possible. A single sign-on linked to Jems (jems.alpine-space.eu), the programme´s joint electronic monitoring system used to apply to the calls, could be one possibility. This would allow people to create just one profile in case they want to apply/seek a partner.

Personal information

- First name
- Last name
- Organisation
- Type of organisation (drop-down list)
    - National, regional or local public authority
    - Higher education and research institution
    - School, education and training centre
    - National, regional or local development agency
    - Interest groups including NGOs and citizens' association
    - Sectoral agency
    - Enterprise (incl. SME)
    - Infrastructure and (public) service provider
    - Business support organisation, including chambers of commerce, networks and clusters
    - Other
- Role (in their organisation)
- Country (drop-down menu. See filters for details)
- City[2]

Participation in an Interreg Alpine Space project before

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[2] Should be linked to a NUTS2 entry, as this will help regional targeting in the future.

- Yes/No

Participation in other EU funded project before

- Yes/No

I would like to receive the Interreg Alpine Space newsletter

- Yes/No

Filters / Search tool

The following filters shall be used during the registration process and in the partner search section:

I would like to

- Find a partner for a call for proposals
- Find a project to be involved in
- Find a specific expertise

Country (multiple choice)

- Austria
- France
- Germany
- Liechtenstein
- Switzerland
- Slovenia
- Italy
- Other

I am interested in (required during the registration – multiple choice)[3]

(Short description: "The following topics are based on the Interreg Alpine Space priorities. For more information, visit www.alpine-space/priorities")

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[3] Other entries might be considered in the future

- Climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention (Priority 1)
- Biodiversity and green infrastructure (Priority 1)
- Energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions reduction (Priority 2)
- Circular and resource efficient economy (Priority 2)
- Research and innovation capacities (Priority 3)
- Digitalisation (Priority 3)
- Governance (Priority 4)
- Institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders (Priority 4)

Field(s) of expertise (required during the registration – multiple choice)[4]

- Management of natural resources
- Energy efficiency
- Heritage and tourism
- Transport and mobility
- Urban and regional planning
- Landscape planning
- Infrastructure, construction and renovation
- Education and training
- Governance, partnership and cooperation
- ICT and digitalisation
- Health and social services

It should also be possible to enter keywords to find partners, this will help if anyone is looking for someone from a particular institution. The search should extend to the profile details, as something in the description could be part of the search result (example "Hydrogen Energy Consultant").

User profile

In addition to the information provided during the registration process, users shall have the option to add the following fields to their profile:

- Profile picture
- Description (open field where they could add what they are looking for/expectations. Something

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[4] Other entries might be considered in the future

similar to what exists on LinkedIn, but related to the Alpine Space)

- Language(s) spoken
- Link to their Linkedin profile
- Other links, e.g. website

Inbox / connect with other

The platform should allow people to write to each other. An inbox shall be available and an email notification shall be sent to ensure that people connect to the platform to read the message. This is especially important for the Alpine Space Contact Points, to make sure they are not missing any information.

Nice to have features

To be included in the offer as optional services.

- Registration via the e-monitoring system of the programme (jems.alpine-space.eu) would be the preferred solution by the programme; as this interface might cause additional costs and the bidder might have other practical solutions in mind, the bidders are invited to propose a solution and respective costs and indicate the interface with jems as an optional service.
- View potential partners on a map
- Subscribe to newsletters (including national newsletters)
- Be able to extract data for statistical purposes
- Possibility for the Interreg Alpine Space Programme and the Alpine Space Contact Points to invite users to specific events
- Possibility to register for events
- Comment on a project idea / submit a project idea.

Other expected features of the platform

- Field of expertise' and 'Priorities/special interests' should be editable by the contracting authority, as they are likely to change for the next programming period.
- The user profile should show when the person was last connected to the platform (e.g. was active last week, last month, etc.). This would be an easy way to distinguish active from passive users.
- Users should be able to close their accounts and delete all data stored in the system.
- An automatic reminder should be sent before or after a call. Users should also be able to unsubscribe if they are no longer interested in the partner/project search.
- In addition to a partner search tool, people are looking for events where they can meet other people.

- Hosting shall be provided until end 2031. Maintenance to ensure a smooth technical running of the platform should also be foreseen until end 2031. For hosting and maintenance the bidder shall offer a monthly lump-sum. Moreover an hourly rate should also be indicated in the offer in case any improvement needs to be made between 2024 and 2031.