



# The Nordic-Baltic Leader Cooperation Award



## The Best Local Area Development Project – APPLICATION FORM

Please send the completed form and photos via e-mail to [LeaderTNC@maainfo.ee](mailto:LeaderTNC@maainfo.ee)  
 Deadline for submission is **17th May 2013**  
 Information: [www.maainfo.ee/LeaderTNC](http://www.maainfo.ee/LeaderTNC)  
**You can apply your project only in one category. If the project seems to be suitable for more than one category then please choose the category that fits the best.**

### Examples of transnational cooperation projects expected to apply in this category are:

- Projects which have enabled local area development;
- Village development;
- New solutions for delivering service and infrastructure;
- Local business support or business diversification and innovation.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

<b>Title of the project</b>			
Cross-border Entrepreneurs Blekinge/ Warmia-Mazury			
<b>Information on the transnational cooperation project</b>			
Start date:	07/04/2011	End date if completed, or the current stage:	To be finished September 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2013
Duration of the (planned) actions in months:	27	Total project budget (in EUR):	298 826,64 EUR
Countries involved:	Sweden, Poland	Number of partners:	3



<b>List of participating partners</b> (LAGs and other organisations involved)		
Lead partner:	Country:	Project location:
Leader Blekinge	Sweden	Ronneby, Blekinge
Partners' names:	Country:	Project location:
Brama Mazurskiej Krainy	Poland	Nidzica, Mazury
Warmiński Zakątek	Poland	Dobre Miasto, Warmia

<b>Project contact:</b> (in Nordic-Baltic region)			
Title (Mr/Ms) and name:	Ms Iwona Slojka	Name of organisation:	Leader Blekinge
Position in the project:	Project Leader	Address of organisation:	Soft Center 1, SE-372 25 Ronneby
E-mail:	Iwona.slojka@leaderblekinge.se	Telephone (inc. country code):	+46 734 29 23 99
Languages spoken:	English, Swedish, Polish	Project website:	<a href="http://www.leaderblekinge.se/projekt/cross-border-entrepreneurs.asp">http://www.leaderblekinge.se/projekt/cross-border-entrepreneurs.asp</a> <a href="http://www.szwecja.warminskizakatek.com.pl/">http://www.szwecja.warminskizakatek.com.pl/</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/CrossborderE">https://www.facebook.com/CrossborderE</a>

<b>Person submitting project</b> (if different):			
Title (Mr/Ms) and name:		Name of organisation:	
Position in the project (if any):		Address of organisation:	
E-mail:		Telephone (inc. country code):	
Languages spoken:		Website:	

## Description of the project

### Summary of the project (up to 100 words)

The transnational project aimed at business development through establishing business contacts between Polish and Swedish rural firms. Business contacts consist in reciprocal visits and study tours, organizing and participating at fairs in both countries that enable testing products and services. The testing groups from both countries visit each other for inspiration and business development, combining taking part in local fairs with testing local food and tourist offers like fishing. Evaluation of joint events is an important part of the project. The firms receive feedback needed to meet the expectations from potential business partners and visitors from the other country.

### Shared Objectives

Need for the project and background: Why the project was started, who developed the idea, what kind of targets the project has or is expected to achieve and the main target groups? How the international dimension added value? (up to 100 words)

The idea of the project was developed by Leader Blekinge working on a project for transnational cooperation. One of the team members has a Polish background and experience in business and tourist development, the Swedish team member has experience in transnational Leader-projects and rural development. A study tour to Poland and visit at several Leader-groups resulted in establishing contacts with two Leader-groups from Warmia-Mazury that were interested in starting a cooperation. Both Polish Leader-groups have great experience in working with entrepreneurship and wanted to extend the work to the transnational level. Main target groups are entrepreneurs and NGOs.

### Main Joint Activities:

What kind of actions took place and where? Please include both - the joint and individual actions - which were undertaken by the partners. (up to 200 words)

12 international activities took place during the project, 3 remains during the last 4 months. This includes participation at four fairs in Sweden and three fairs in Poland. Project Management was conducted by five Steering Committee Meetings that were held both in Sweden and in Poland. The last one will be held in August 2013 for evaluation of the project. Locally in Sweden and in Poland the project was managed by local Steering Committees. They consist of representatives from the local municipalities and members in the Local Action Groups. The Swedish participants took part twice in a Polish Rural Parliament organized every year in Maróz in Mazury. The Swedish group will participate again in May 2013, preparing a workshop for the Polish visitors at Maróz. The Polish partners participated in the Swedish Rural Parliament in Ronneby in September 2012. Together with local fairs and field visits, the test groups visited both countries, evaluating services that partners from both countries regard as their best practice. The Swedish partner has worked with 29 entrepreneurs in order to make them ready for the Polish market. The Polish partners have used another method in selecting the participating entrepreneurs. Both methods have been successful.

### Results and transferability

What was achieved? What is the added value of the project? Can the results or methodology of the project be used by others? Will the project or actions started during the project continue after completion? (up to 100 words)

Reciprocal testing of products and services contributed much to the development of small firms and enabled them matching with potential partners on the other side of the Baltic Sea. In Blekinge, Sweden, **5 new firms have started during the project, all of them by entrepreneurs with non-Swedish background (four Polish, one Lithuanian)**. It proved the need of **diversity** while working on the promotion of export issues. Entrepreneurs with Polish background formed a network **KompetensPo(o)len** that helps other companies to meet the Polish market and will continue the activities after the project. See more at [www.facebook.com/kompetenspolen](http://www.facebook.com/kompetenspolen)

## Lessons learnt

What new experiences were learnt? Were there any educational aspects? (up to 100 words)

Fairs: the companies got knowledge on both right product choice and price level, as well as the importance of display and language skills. The display of products played a bigger role in Sweden, so before the last Christmas fair the Swedish group organized a workshop on selling techniques and product display at fairs for the Polish participants. The Swedish companies going to Poland got important help from the entrepreneurs with Polish background, both with language and culture differences.

Testing tourist products: the companies got feedback regarding the level of service, information and price level.

## Why the project should receive the award.

### 1. Benefits for local area development

How have the regions, organisations and stakeholders who participated in the project benefited? (up to 100 words)

Both Blekinge and Warmia/Mazury regions were visited by foreign entrepreneurs that delivered feedback on the services and products. Transnational workshops were held and many contacts were established. Stakeholders got in contact with the guests from the other countries as their companies were hosting the visitors. The visitor groups consisted of both organizations and stakeholders that could gather inspiration and experiences from reciprocal visits.

Participation in the Rural Parliament in Sweden (Ronneby 2012) and Rural Parliament in Poland (Maróz 2011, 2012, 2013) gave the opportunity of dissemination of best practice from both regions as well as information about the companies.

### 2. Transnational Cooperation and Partnership

How has this project promoted cooperation and partnership locally and transnational? What kind of stakeholder groups was involved - during and/or after - the project? (up to 100 words)

The project is still running and an evaluation meeting will be held in August 2013. Participation at seven fairs and four Rural Parliaments with information about the participating companies and regions have resulted in many personal meetings and establishing of new business contacts. The Leader websites, the project facebook page, leaflets and many articles in newspapers and

information at seminars are so far the main sources of information. The partners are planning to continue the cooperation by signing a Letter of Intent in August 2013.

### 3. Level of innovation

What was new or innovative about the project? This could be a unique or specific new action, solution, result or effect. (up to 100 words)

The project has focused on product development and a range of new tourist products has been tested for a new foreign target group.  
One method developed within the project is the concept of selling product at fairs.  
Another method used by the Swedish partner has been to use entrepreneurs with a Polish background as selling agents for the Swedish companies. For instance: The fishing offer in Blekinge has been created by a Polish fishing guide introducing a Fishing safari experience to the Polish market. The cultural translation is very important in creating new business.

### 4. Impact on regional development

What are the positive effects of the project for those who participated, particularly partners in the Nordic-Baltic regions? (up to 100 words)

The project partners had very little knowledge of each other before the project started. This has now changed due to many transnational activities with approximately 250 participants.  
Participating in fairs in combination with study visits has resulted in an understanding of the conditions across the Baltic Sea. The enthusiasm and fantastic development in Warmia-Mazury have inspired entrepreneurs from Sweden to start improving their products. The test area is of course the partner's area but the best products can then be launched all over Poland or Sweden. Dissemination of the "theme village" concept developed in Warmia/Mazury to Blekinge has been important.

### 5. Any other elements of the project which might be interesting?

A new type of networking between entrepreneurs participating in the project has started in Blekinge. Several one-day study tours have all resulted in new contacts and business deals.  
The Swedish companies get much help of their Polish colleagues from the network, working together on new attractive tourist offers like Fishing Safari or Photo Safari. Business contacts gave practical results, for example contract for windows imported from Poland by a Swedish company or Polish groceries sold by small shops in Sweden.

## PHOTOS

Please send at least 5 photos (minimum 1000 Kb) of project activities separately to an e-mail: [LeaderTNC@maainfo.ee](mailto:LeaderTNC@maainfo.ee). Please give every photo a **title, location, date and the name of the photographer**. In case the photos are too big for sending by e-mail, then you should contact organizers to get some additional instructions for uploading them.

**Please note** that organisations including the Rural Network Units may use these photos free of charge in the publication of information on nominated projects, on the competition website, in the best practice databases and in presentations about the competition. Photos will be not used for commercial purposes.

## Collected information

Provided TNC project Information will be used only for competition purposes. It may be used in the publication of information on nominated projects, on the competition website, in the best practice databases and in presentations about the competition. Personal information will be kept confidential.