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CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Common Ground: Shaping Regions Across Borders

Regions that connect neighboring states – border regions – are special areas that offer a great deal of potential. The links between them are both close and diverse. However, although cross-border relations between Germany and its neighboring countries have stepped up, different administrative structures on both sides of the borders still impede the joint shaping of the regions. This also applies to the participation of residents in the political processes of shaping a border region. This is exactly where the *Common Ground: Shaping Regions Across Borders* program comes in.

With *Common Ground*, the Robert Bosch Stiftung promotes the cross-border participation of the population in the shaping and development of their region. By providing advice and financial support, the program aims to establish a culture of participation between politics, administration, civil society, and the local population on both sides of the border. The joint conception, organization, and implementation of cross-border participation processes will address regional challenges, harness underlying potential, and find new solutions. The result should be sustainable cross-border participation structures that last beyond the initial three-year term of the program.



Become a Common Ground Region!

Are you facing a challenge in your border region that you want to tackle with the participation of residents on both sides of the border? Do you want to make a difference and unleash potential? In doing so, do you want to work together in a strong cross-border coalition of politics, administration, and civil society? Are you motivated to establish a culture of participation in your border region – with all relevant stakeholders? Then apply for the *Common Ground: Shaping Regions Across Borders* program and become a *Common Ground Region*!

What does our program offer you?

As a selected border region, you will receive support in the selection of topics as well as in the design and implementation of a participation process. The nexus Institute for Cooperation Management and Interdisciplinary Research, which works together with the Robert Bosch Stiftung implementing *Common Ground*, will support and advise you individually and according to your needs. In addition, each selected border region can make use of a regional participation consultant who will accompany the participation process for the duration of the entire funding period. Further training courses will offer the opportunity to learn more about the topic of participation.

The program will also give you an opportunity to network with other municipal and civil society actors from a range of different border regions and to share ideas on issues relating to participation and cross-border cooperation. To this end, professional workshops and networking opportunities will be offered.

A total of up to € 1.3 million in funding is available for up to eight selected border regions to implement cross-border participation processes. The exact amount per region will depend on the plausibly presented financial requirements of the region and will cover a funding period lasting three years. Funding is specifically allocated for participation **processes**, which may consist of several different participation formats, as well as for establishing cross-border participation **structures**. Following this period of pilot funding, selected border regions will receive further support in consolidating their structures for participation. For this purpose, all projects funded in the pilot phase will be scientifically monitored.

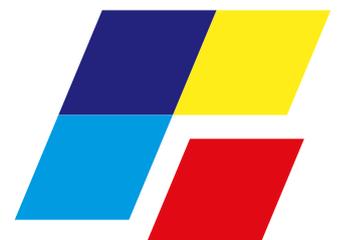




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What are possible topics for cross-border participation?

In principle, *Common Ground* is open to supporting any topic that serves the common good.

Example topics include:

- Projects for the development of cross-border public services, e. g. in the fields of public transport, energy supply, waste disposal, health care, education.
- Projects for the joint development of concepts for the region, e. g. a cross-border tourism, culture, mobility, or climate protection concept, or the joint conceptual design of (public) facilities used by residents on both sides of the border, such as a shared swimming pool.

Who can apply?

The application as a border region is submitted by a main applicant.

This applicant should be a **regional authority**, i. e. a district, municipality, municipal association, or any other local authority from Germany or one of the neighboring countries. A **civil society organization** may also act as the main applicant if it can demonstrate cooperation with a local authority.

The main applicant should apply **together with three other partners** (this is one local authority and one civil society organization per country). These partners must demonstrate their willingness to cooperate by providing Letters of Intent.

Note: The primary applicant may only be a charitable organization. Associated partners may be from the private sector when included as part of a cooperation (see Annex 2: Charitable Status).



How can you apply?

Applying for the *Common Ground* program is a two-step process.

In the first stage, you as the main applicant submit your expression of interest by **November 15, 2021**.

All you need to do is register on the [Robert Bosch Stiftung portal](#) and present your idea. Please understand that we cannot accept postal submissions.

All applicants who have registered by November 15, 2021, will be invited to a day-long workshop on “Good Participation in Municipalities”, which takes place at the end of November. The workshop will provide further information on the *Common Ground* program and the call for applications. The time and location of the event will be announced in due time.

nexus

nexus Institut

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By **February 15, 2022**, you must submit your **final application** (including your budget plan and Letters of Intent) via email to common.ground@bosch-stiftung.de. The relevant application form will be available in November.

A maximum of eight border regions will be selected by the end of March 2022.

The call for applications as well as further key information can be found at: www.bosch-stiftung.de/common-ground.



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