

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

For sustainable tourism in the Grand Est (France)



AN ATTRACTIVE REGION

The Grand Est is an attractive region at the heart of Europe, sharing borders to the North and East with Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany and Switzerland and, to the West, with Paris and Ile-de-France.

This unique geographical position, connected to the European megalopolis, makes the Grand Est appealing and accessible to international markets, ranking it among the top five French regions most sought-after by foreign investors.

Its dynamic domestic market, the close proximity of a Northern European clientèle with high spending power and the presence of the Ile-de-France trade area just a stone's throw away make this a choice area for investment and project development in a wide variety of sectors.



With over 6 billion euros in annual consumption, 60,000 direct jobs and 64 million overnight stays every year, the tourist economy contributes both to the growth of the Grand Est and to its brand image and appeal.

UNSPOILT NATURE

The appeal of the Grand Est also lies in the strong identity of its different areas, its historic, architectural and gastronomic heritage and its cultural and sporting vitality. The wealth and diversity of its preserved natural environments, its vast forested areas and its contrasting and emblematic ecosystems make the Grand Est an ideal place for nature-based tourism.

Its mosaic of landscapes, where plains and plateaus are interspersed with lakes and forests, mountains and vineyards, gives visitors and inhabitants alike unparalleled access to nature and all that local tourism, fuelled by history, traditions and modernity, has to offer.



MEANINGFUL TOURISM

Unlike other French regions that have built their tourist economy on highly seasonal mass-tourism, the tourist destinations in the Grand Est (Alsace, Lorraine, Champagne, Ardennes, the Vosges, Moselle) have built their economy mainly on **encounters, social connections, experience and shared expertise**, as well as events and activities that draw on deeply-rooted traditions, for meaningful tourism that is truly rewarding for each individual visitor.

NATURAL TOURISM

There is a renewed trend for tourism that is **more focused on nature**. A need for reassurance, a desire to get away and to reconnect with nature and the success of soft modes of transport all act in favour of **local, greener tourism that is more rooted in regions, their traditions and their wealth of heritage and natural areas**: tourism that is more responsible and environmentally conscious.



TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The Grand Est Region is launching a **call for proposals for sustainable tourism with a view to supporting and funding large-scale, innovative tourism projects led by private operators in the region**. These tourism projects will help building tomorrow's tourism. They should meet the aspirations of both tourists and locals in terms of sustainable development and environmental credentials.

They will cement regional appeal by putting forward a **new and differentiating offer for the Grand Est as a destination**, thereby contributing to its aim of joining the ranks of the world's top ten Smart Tourism destinations by 2025.

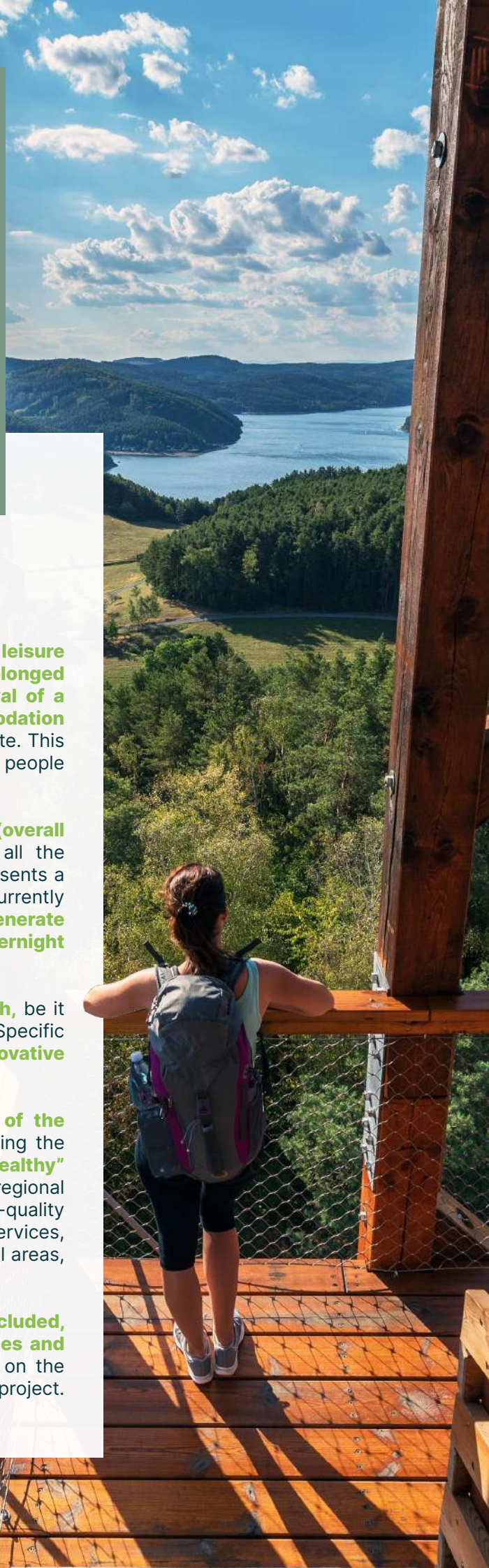
WHAT KINDS OF PROJECTS COULD BE SUPPORTED?

Accommodation or leisure infrastructure projects that contribute to the development of the Grand Est tourist economy.

These projects should be environmentally conscious and contribute to sustainable development and the fight against global warming.

Projects should address the following issues :

- Projects should propose **sustainable leisure infrastructures that generate overnight stays/prolonged stays**, and/or **the creation, extension or renewal of a high-quality, approved or certified accommodation offer**, along with tourist activities on the planned site. This accommodation offer should also be accessible to people with reduced mobility.
- The project should be a **large-scale project (overall investment budget of +/- €3M)**, which meets all the objectives of the Region's tourism policy and represents a major tourism offer in light of the tourism flows currently observed in the area; **as such, this project should generate a significant number of tourism flows and overnight stays, whether directly or indirectly.**
- The project should include an **innovative approach**, be it technological, environmental or organisational. Specific attention will be paid to the creation of a **truly innovative concept** on a site identified by the project leader.
- Proposed projects should **meet the ambitions of the Region in terms of appeal**, which consist of making the Grand Est **a leading in France and in Europe for a "healthy" and "accessible" lifestyle**, characterised by our regional assets: easy living, ease of access, well-being, high-quality agricultural production and food, efficient health services, unspoilt environment, diverse territories and natural areas, local sourcing, etc.
- A significant **consultation phase should be included, bringing together the population, local authorities and tourism stakeholders in the host area**, focusing on the development and genuine social acceptance of the project.



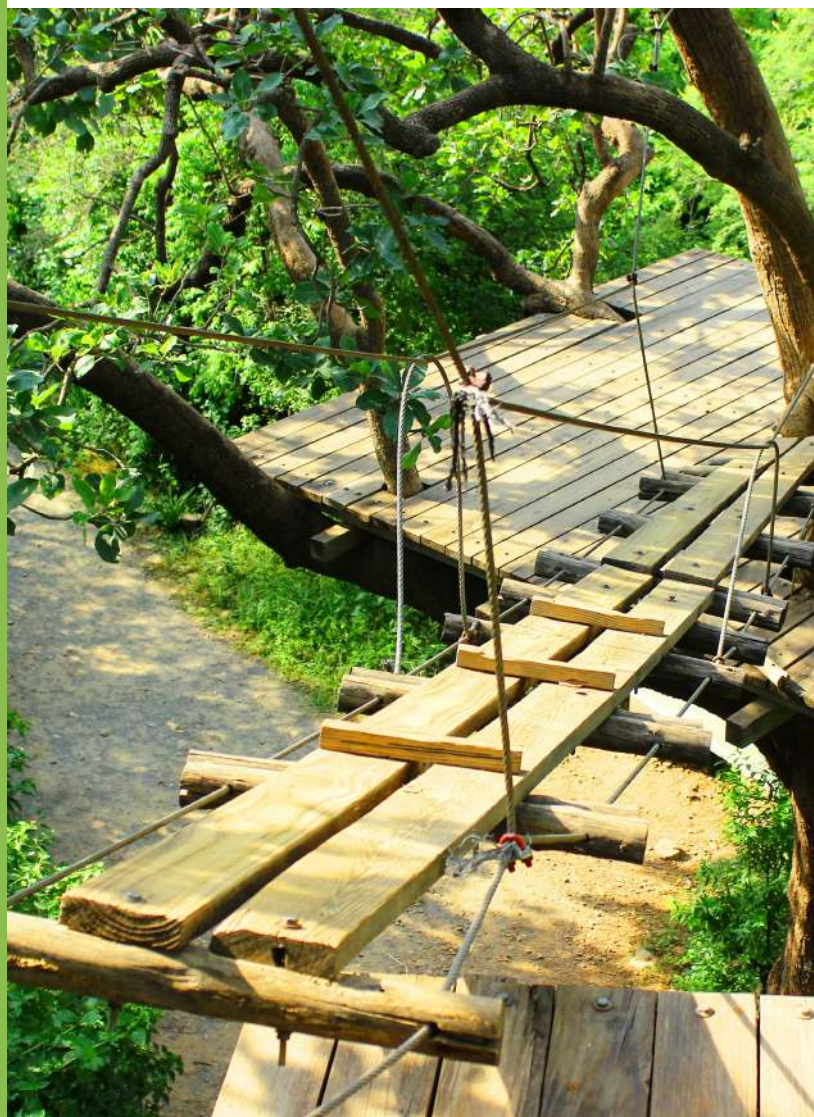
- Projects should address **the issues of sustainable development and the fight against global warming** in both their development and implementation. They will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- **The installation and construction** of the different units required for the project must be conducted with a view to environmental integration, preservation of the natural environment and relevant natural resources (integration and sympathetic fitness of the site's initial landscape structure, small footprint of the building, etc.)
- The **materials used** for construction should be environmentally-conscious (compliance with French Environmental Regulation (RE) 2020 for new constructions, biosourced materials, energy and thermal auditing, BBC Rénovation certification for renovations);

- Projects will aim to meet the following environmental objectives in their daily management:

- Facilities should ensure the **responsible use of water and energy resources**. On this point, the use of non-renewable energy should be prohibited and water withdrawal reduced.
- Particular attention should be paid to **waste recycling** and a significant **reduction in pollution** of all kinds (specifically air, water and soil).
- Particular attention should also be paid to **the consideration, protection and showcasing of biodiversity** in and around the site, as well as in the activities and associated services on offer, and potentially the implementation of environmental compensation mechanisms with the objective of no net loss of biodiversity¹ and priority given to Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and the valuing of ecosystem services.

Selected projects should, at the very least, comply with the ambitions of the Grand Est Regional Biodiversity Strategy (RBS) (<https://biodiversite.grandest.fr>). Credit will be given to consideration and anticipation of the impacts of the project's life cycle.



¹ in accordance with article 69-Law no. 2016-1087 of 8 August 2016 the recovery of biodiversity, nature and landscapes.

- **Transport within the site should be conscious of the environment** and the tranquillity of the surrounding ecosystems, in particular through the prioritisation of public transport and/or the use of hybrid or electric vehicles. To this end, credit may be given to projects including hiking or cycling trails. Moreover, projects should, where possible, make use of existing public transport for journeys to and from the sites; credit may be given to this “soft” accessibility to and from the sites in question.
- For proposed projects that include a catering offer, particular attention will be paid to **local and sustainable sourcing** and the implementation of local distribution channels.
- Generally speaking, the project leader’s **purchasing policy** for the site should be as **responsible** as possible.
- Projects should make sure to **promote local socio-economic benefits for the area** around the site by **stimulating local activity and employment** on a permanent, as well as seasonal, basis.

Generally speaking, project leaders are encouraged to include and use innovative, environmentally-conscious and cost-effective technological solutions, such as those listed by the Solar Impulse Foundation, the Grand Est Region’s partner in implementing its green recovery plan.



At this stage, no site or area type has been pre-selected by the Region as part of this call for projects for sustainable tourism in the Grand Est. **After checking feasibility, project leaders should propose one or more potential sites for the location** (or the development of existing infrastructure) of their project as part of their application. The dedicated international prospecting department of the agency Grand E-nov+ may advise and support operators with this process.

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As part of its “Forest-Timber Plan”, the Region will be particularly attentive to projects in, around or related to regional forest areas.

Similarly, with a view to improving the regulation of its tourism flows, the Region will pay special attention to projects proposed in regional areas undergoing reconversion or under low tourist pressure.



WHO CAN RESPOND TO THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

- All private project leaders, regardless of their status.
- Project leaders may apply as a single structure, a company or a group of companies.
- No fixed legal form is imposed by the Region for group applications.

SCHEDULE

Projects are selected in two phases

- An initial phase to receive projects from operators or groups of operators, who will present a **summary of the project** they intend to develop. This first round will measure the alignment of proposed projects with the Region's objectives and expectations, and select the groups or operators allowed to submit a **detailed proposal**;
- A second phase to receive detailed proposals from the groups or operators selected at the end of the first stage.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS:

1st round : 30 September 2022 (midnight)

2nd round : 31 March 2023 (midnight)

CHOICE OF SELECTED PROJECT OR PROJECTS: JUNE 2023

WHAT ARE THE SELECTION CRITERIA FOR PROJECTS?

1st PHASE

Projects will be examined on the basis of the following criteria, which are **not weighted or ranked**:

- Understanding of the financial and environmental issues (see p3) of the regional authority and the project's ability to address these issues
- References, fitness and relevance of the project leader in light of the context and related issues of the project they are submitting to the Region
- Nature of the envisaged project
- Financing arrangements for the project
- Legal and financial soundness of the project leader
- Relevance of the project's economic model in terms of investment and operation
- Exploration of the land-based capacities of the project location
- Analysis of the market and potential economic benefits

2nd PHASE

Proposals will be examined on the basis of the following criteria:

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT:

- Quality of the proposed tourism concept and response to the current tourism-related issues of the Region
- Quality of the different activities envisaged on the site and relevance of the chosen geographic location
- Innovative nature of the project
- Tourist impact of the proposed project (number of overnight stays generated, etc.)
- In-depth market study
- Implementation schedule

RELEVANCE OF THE PROJECT TO THE ASPECTS RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

- Consideration of the issues of the Region in the design and implementation of the site (integration into its natural environment, protection of the natural setting and resources, chosen materials, etc.)
- Consideration of issues pertaining to sustainable development in the operation of the site (use of water and energy resources, waste recycling, means of transport, etc.)
- Implementation of a tool to qualify and quantify the criteria of the Sustainable Development approach to assess the project's added value
- Means implemented or proficiency of the project leader or members of the group in defining a strategy in favour of biodiversity, sustainable development and the fight against climate change.

QUALITY OF THE LEGAL AND FINANCIAL OFFER:

- Relevance of the envisaged legal and financial arrangements
- Financial soundness and balance of the project
- Finances allocated to each of the pillars of sustainable development.

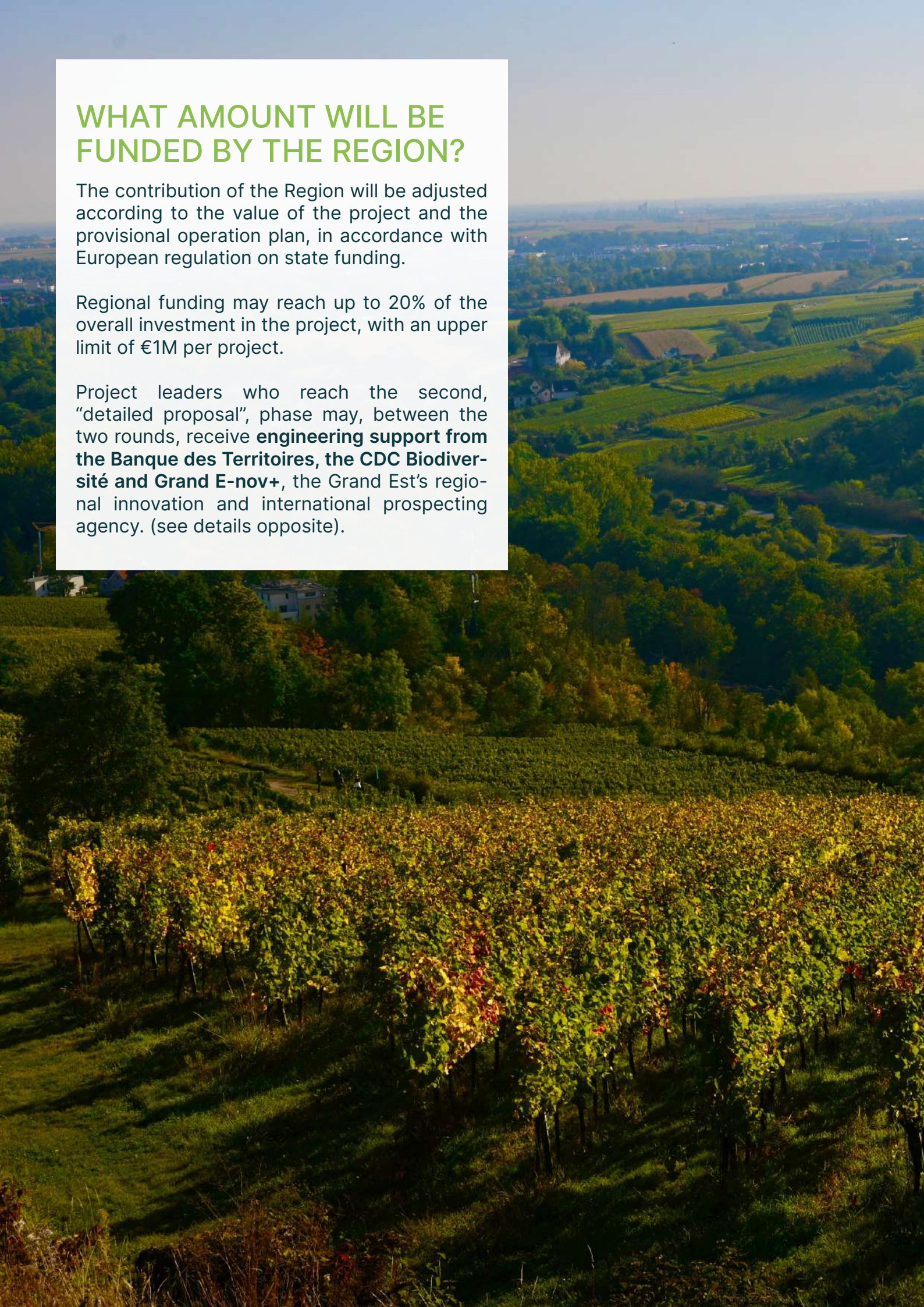


WHAT AMOUNT WILL BE FUNDED BY THE REGION?

The contribution of the Region will be adjusted according to the value of the project and the provisional operation plan, in accordance with European regulation on state funding.

Regional funding may reach up to 20% of the overall investment in the project, with an upper limit of €1M per project.

Project leaders who reach the second, “detailed proposal”, phase may, between the two rounds, receive **engineering support from the Banque des Territoires, the CDC Biodiversité and Grand E-nov+**, the Grand Est’s regional innovation and international prospecting agency. (see details opposite).





BENEFIT FROM THE EXPERTISE OF THE REGION'S PARTNERS

La Banque des Territoires, Caisse des Dépôts group:

- methodological support in developing selected projects (specifying studies to be conducted, market and business model analysis, etc.) and expertise regarding their legal and financial structuring;
- support from local authorities with the location of the selected projects in terms of their hosting strategy (issues and impacts of tourism, necessary planning, etc.)
- possible equity or near-equity funding (shares, shareholder loans, etc.) according to the funding requirements of the selected projects and their legal and financial structuring.

CDC Biodiversité:

- advice and support for better consideration of the biodiversity-related issues of land and property. Insight for project leaders in the decisions and choice of tools that may meet their requirements, expectations, degree of suitability to the theme of biodiversity and specificities of their business sector.

Grand E-nov+ :

- as part of its international prospecting work, the agency Grand E-Nov+ supports tourism project leaders at every stage of their investment projects in the Grand Est Region, including providing an overview of the regional appeal and different ecosystems, identifying available plots of land and buildings, putting project leaders in contact with local stakeholders, etc.)

PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

Project leaders should send their application to the following email address:

projets-tourisme-durable@grandest.fr

In addition to this digital submission, a hard copy must be sent to the address below:

RÉGION GRAND EST

Direction du tourisme

Appel à projets « Tourisme durable »

1, PLACE ADRIEN ZELLER
67070 STRASBOURG CEDEX
FRANCE

For any additional information, please send an email to the Region's Department of Tourism :

christophe-michel.heitz@grandest.fr

or anne.leautier@grandest.fr

See full regulations at :

www.grandest.fr FUNDING section

