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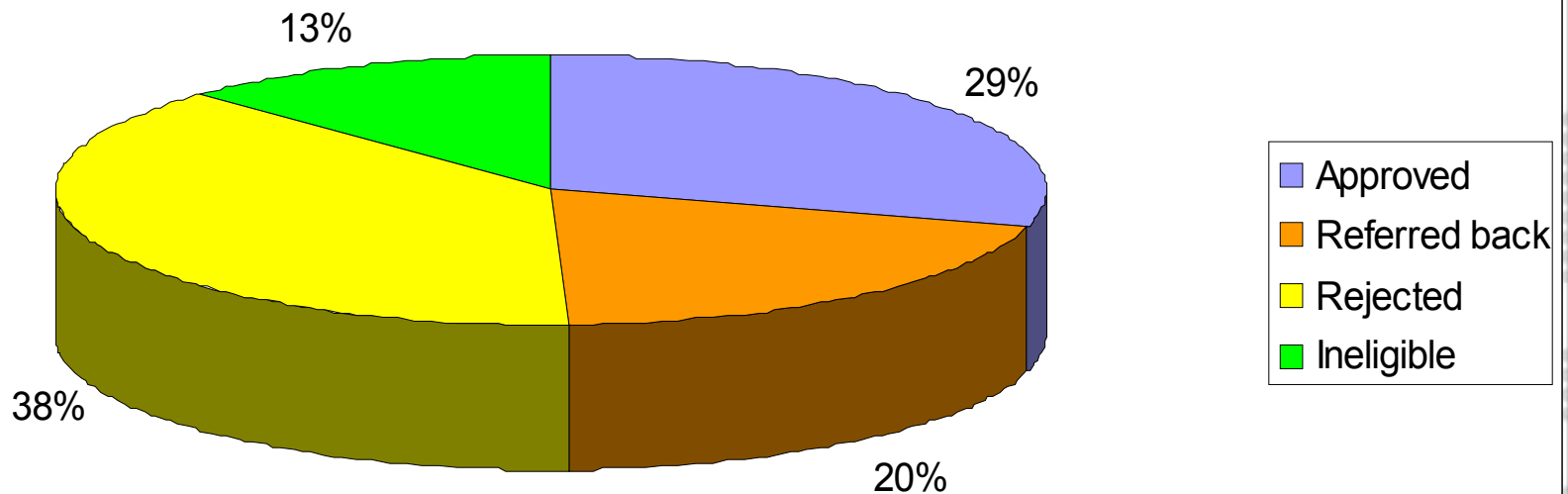
# Project Applications: What can go wrong and how to prevent it



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# Context: NWE success rates

Interreg NW Europe calls 1-5





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# Selection Criteria

Projects tend not to compete with each other; they all undergo a technical assessment against 14 selection criteria, listed in the Guidance Notes

• Most common areas of weakness:

→ **Transnationality**

→ **Innovativeness**

→ **Partnership & management**

→ **Project structure**

→ **Finance**

→ **Value for money & outputs**

→ **Programme & strategic fit**

→ **Administrative issues**





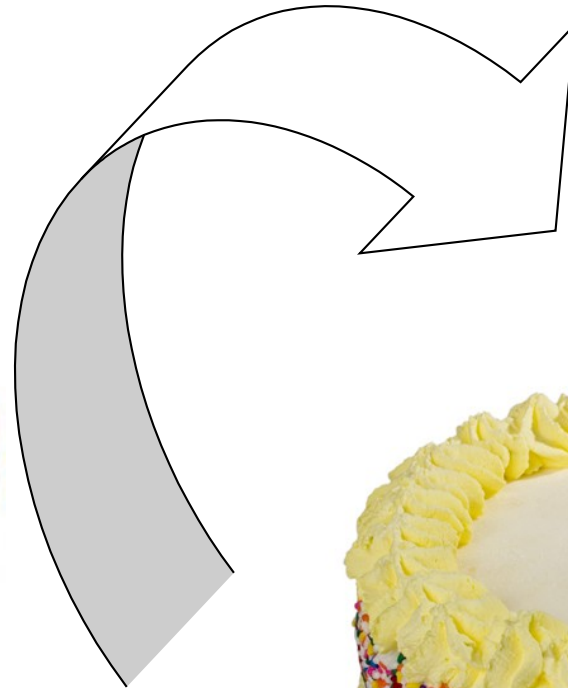
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# Transnationality

Or how to bake the same cake...



ARE YOU EACH BRINGING A CAKE TO THE PARTY?



OR BRINGING  
UNIQUE  
INGREDIENTS TO  
BAKE A SHARED  
CAKE?





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# Transnationality

## Features of 'good transnationality'

- Clear common vision before development of action plan
- Topic important for NWE as a whole (easier when technically focussed) – check the OP! Has wide NWE impact
- Addresses topic which is impossible to tackle alone
- Do everything together (plan, implement, investments, comms)
- Communications: disseminate results widely; have collective, not separate, communications activities
- Stress why each partner brings something special & different
- Outputs include common product or strategy, useable over NWE, e.g voucher scheme, NWE brand or product



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# Innovativeness

## Some suggestions

- Check the list of currently approved projects (available on the website [www.nweurope.eu](http://www.nweurope.eu))
- If necessary, contact those projects to find how your activities differ from theirs
- Also check the projects which were funded during the Interreg IIIB period (2000-6) – also on the website or by asking contact points
- Also check what has been done elsewhere, and find evidence to build your case
- Ensure that investments are truly pilot or demonstrations projects
- Try different investments and approaches in each region



# Partnership & Management

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- Involve partners in planning from the start
- Be clear about the partnership and management structure
- Details what meetings, where, when & for what purpose
- Give partners clear tasks or WPs to deliver or co-ordinate
- Make it clear why these are the right partners to solve this problem/deliver this project (size, competence, reach, range)
- Each partner contributes something unique, and each benefits from the project
- Think of partners' contributions to impact and dissemination



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# Project Structure

- Write your application for non-technical specialists
- Develop a clear logic chain: Problem → Project idea → Aims → Objectives → Work Packages → Actions → Results
- Every action and investment must link back to the aims and objectives
- Check in advance issues around IPR and state aids
- Think widely about dissemination; who could benefit from the learning? How can we mainstream these ideas?



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- Understand the difference between partners, observers, and external experts (consultants)
- Non-partners who spend ERDF must be procured in line with EU and national rules; explain how you will do this
- Revenue-generating activity; deduct from eligible costs, including future projected income
- Match funding in kind can be difficult to audit – in UK may be limited to land and property (not in NI), but staff costs of partners are treated like cash match
- Beware of grossly imbalanced partner budgets



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# Value for Money & Outputs

- Tangible outputs are those that will last beyond Interreg funding
- Quantify, where possible
- Quote benchmark figures if you have them
- Focus your plans – ensure actions, spend and outputs fit project aims and objective
- Be realistic and immediate about results
- Check budget against outputs ('what am I buying?'); ensure results are proportionate to budget
- Justify costs



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# Outputs, Results, Impacts

**Outputs** – products of the activities funded (number of reports, seminars held, innovation centres opened)

**Results** – immediate advantages of carrying out these activities (number of regional policy changes, number of new business start ups etc)

**Impacts** – Sustainable long term benefits of any activity (fall in number of long term unemployed, increased regional GDP etc)



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# Programme & Strategic fit

- Explain how your project addresses the challenges in the Operational Programme, especially the SWOT (pp. 41-45)
- Identify how you will extend the work of previous Interreg projects in your field if there are any (check NWE website)
- Talk to Regional or national authorities before submission
- Talk to CPs early on
- Take CP and JTS advice





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## Summary

- Plan well in advance, with all your partners
- Read all the documentation early in the process
- Understand your common vision and objectives
- Involve finance managers in budget setting
- Make use of all the support available
- Make sure you have a plan B....

