



Sustainable Path Advancing Community Empowerment -  
New European Bauhaus for Social economy and Transformative living

## D.2.4. CALL FOR BEST PRACTICES 2025 Terms of Reference



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 SPACE-NEST Project

The SPACE-NEST project, **Sustainable Path Advancing Community Empowerment: New European Bauhaus for Social Economy and Transformative Living**, funded under the SMP-COSME programme, is an innovative initiative designed to address the unique challenges faced by rural communities across Europe. By leveraging underutilized or abandoned spaces, SPACE-NEST aims to foster the development of socially-oriented enterprises that drive green economic activities, social inclusion, and sustainable community development.

Rooted in the principles of the [New European Bauhaus](#) (NEB) and the [European Green Deal](#), the project seeks to transform neglected rural spaces into vibrant community hubs. These hubs will be centers for creativity, intergenerational exchange, and economic resilience, helping to bridge gaps in essential services, employment, and connectivity that hinder rural development.

The New European Bauhaus initiative is an enabler for the green transition of our societies and economy. It calls on all Europeans to imagine and build together a sustainable and inclusive future that is beautiful for our eyes, minds, and souls. It aims at transforming different sectors of economy, especially the built environment, making them contribute to our climate goals and to an improvement of the quality of life of all citizens. The New European Bauhaus activates different actors at different levels, from big companies to citizens' initiatives, from national governments to city councils. It is a project of hope and perspectives that bring a cultural and creative dimension to the Green Deal- the European Climate Agenda- to enhance sustainable innovation, technology and economy. The initiative brings out the benefits of the environmental transition through tangible experiences at the local level. It gives space for creation and experimentation founded on:

- **aesthetics**, quality of experience and style, beyond functionality;
- **sustainability**, from climate goals, to circularity, zero pollution, and biodiversity;
- **inclusion**, from valuing diversity and equality for all, to securing accessibility and affordability<sup>1</sup>.

SPACE-NEST focuses on three main objectives:

1. **Revitalizing Rural Spaces:** Transforming abandoned or underutilized spaces to meet local community needs through socially oriented enterprises.
2. **Empowering Social Economy Initiatives:** Creating ecosystems that encourage mutual learning, exchange of best practices, and collaboration among stakeholders.
3. **Establishing a Replicable Model:** Developing a sustainable and scalable framework that benefits rural areas throughout the EU.

The project is implemented through a collaborative consortium across Spain, Italy, and Slovenia, combining expertise in public administration, business innovation, and social

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<sup>1</sup> New European Bauhaus Compass, V4, 2024. URL: [https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/tools-and-resources/use-compass\\_en](https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/tools-and-resources/use-compass_en) (Accessed on: 20. 12. 2024)

economy. The initiative encourages cross-border cooperation and knowledge-sharing, promoting a unified approach to tackling rural challenges while respecting local diversity.

## 1.2 Objective of the Call for Best Practices

Through this Call for Best Practices, SPACE-NEST seeks **innovative and practical solutions that align with its vision of sustainable transformation and community empowerment.**

The selected practices will inspire other regions in Europe, supporting SPACE-NEST's goal to develop scalable and adaptable models for rural regeneration.

## 2. Categories

Two categories of best practices are defined:

**Category 1:** Best practices supporting the regeneration of spaces for sustainable and community-driven initiatives in the SPACE-NEST regions (Malaga (Spain), Bergamo (Italy), Izola (Slovenia)).

**Category 2:** Best practices supporting the regeneration of spaces for sustainable and community-driven initiatives in other EU territories.

## 3. Eligibility

### 3.1 Eligible Applicants

- Public and private entities (NGOs, municipalities, cooperatives, SMEs, etc.) registered in EU Member States

### 3.2 Eligible Best Practices

Eligible Best Practices are initiatives aligned with the NEB values (aesthetic, sustainable, and inclusive transformation) with proven impact in European rural areas that are contributing to shape a resilient future for rural communities.

That means, Best Practices that:

1. Support the regeneration of spaces for sustainable and community-driven initiatives.
2. Foster the Social Economy and innovation in rural areas.
3. Align with the **values of the New European Bauhaus**: Aesthetic, Sustainable, and Inclusive transformation.

For reference, see three examples of NEB projects from Spain, Italy and Slovenia:

- LaFábrica detodalavida (Spain) - <https://lfdtv.org/>
- Krater (Slovenia) - <https://krater.si/en/>

- La foresta (Italy) - <https://laforesta.net/>

## 4. Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria, with a total score of **100 points**. Criteria are adapted from **New European Bauhaus Compass**<sup>2</sup>, with an additional criterion, specific to the SPACE-NEST project. The NEB Compass is a guiding framework which describes the three core values of the initiative and also sets out three working principles that apply across the system of values. The first ambition level sets the baseline. Only if this level is reached, a project can claim to be “NEBish”. The second and third levels build on the starting definitions, expanding them with growing aspirations. **A full NEB project needs to contain all three values and working principles at least at level 1**. The highest levels of ambition always encompass previously mentioned qualities. Each project will have its specific mix of ambitions, depending on the context and resource available.

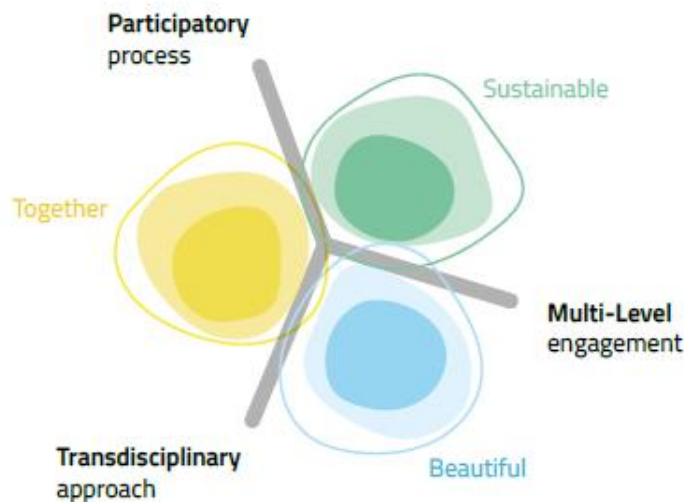


Figure 1: Graphical representation of the NEB Compass with three values (Together, Sustainable, Beautiful) and three working principles (Participatory process, Multi-level engagement, Transdisciplinary approach)



Figure 2: Examples of application of the NEB compass to four projects

<sup>2</sup> New European Bauhaus Compass, V4, 2024. URL: [https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/tools-and-resources/use-compass\\_en](https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/tools-and-resources/use-compass_en) (Accessed on: 20. 12. 2024)

Table 1: Evaluation criteria

	Criteria	Description	Points
<b>NEB Comp ass Values</b>	<b>BEAUTIFUL</b>	<p><b>Ambition I: to activate</b> A beautiful project improves the physical and mental well-being of individuals by considering their senses and emotions, on top of their needs. It activates the cultural, social, and natural qualities of a place/community to create unique and positive experiences. The project fosters awareness of place and heritage in all its diversity, while embracing its own aesthetic.</p> <p><b>Ambition II: to connect</b> A beautiful project enhances opportunities for meaningful social interactions and collective experiences. It reinforces a sense of belonging and enriches lives by connecting different places and people. The new attachments that emerge through the project foster openness and mutual care.</p> <p><b>Ambition III: to integrate</b> A beautiful project enables creation, and the collective re-invention of the places, lifestyles, and communities we identify with. It integrates new cultural and social values, notably through the meaningful experience of a broader 'us' (including the non-human world). In doing so, it aspires to anticipate future transformations, and may generate a long-lasting movement.</p>	<p><b>Max 15</b></p> <p>(5 points for each ambition)</p>

	Criteria	Description	Points
	SUSTAINABLE	<p><b>Ambition I: to repurpose</b> A sustainable project aims to repurpose in order to avoid and reduce environmental impacts and favours durability, adaptability, recyclability. It aims at rethinking services, products and places to reduce pollution and carbon impacts and have minimum use of resources, materials and energy. It looks at the scale of a products' lifecycle. Projects that repurpose are aware of the impact their initiative has on the environment and have the ambition to reduce their environmental footprint.</p> <p><b>Ambition II: to close the loop</b> A sustainable project aims to close the loop, reduce linear processes or transform them into circular processes to aim at zero pollution. It looks at the scale of an (industrial) system. Projects that close the loop actively involve all other actors in the cycle of the design, production, use and discarding phase of their initiative.</p> <p><b>Ambition III: to regenerate</b> A sustainable project aims to give back more than it takes, enhancing rather than depleting biodiversity, incentivising the restoration and expansion of nature. Regenerative sustainability also considers how contexts and environments influence worldviews, paradigms, and behaviours. It looks at the scale of an ecosystem. Initiatives in this dimension are aware of the complete ecosystem they act in and their project's impact over time and space on biodiversity and natural resources.</p>	<p><b>Max 15</b></p> <p>(5 points for each ambition)</p>



	Criteria	Description	Points
	TOGETHER	<p><b>Ambition I: to include</b> An inclusive project grants accessibility (physical, cognitive, psychological, etc.) and affordability for all, regardless of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, ability, age or sexual orientation. Equality of treatment and opportunities is essential but cannot be taken for granted, so it is important to prioritise less-represented individuals, groups and communities.</p> <p><b>Ambition II: to consolidate</b> An inclusive project fosters and equalises relations between users and/or communities, safeguarding the principle of equal treatment and social justice over time. Inclusion and open access to services are secured by formal, structural mechanisms such as funding instruments, business models, planning, policies, regulations and other institutionalisation processes.</p> <p><b>Ambition III: to transform</b> Inclusion inspires new ways of living together, building on solidarity and cooperation, raising awareness of discrimination and injustice. An inclusive project becomes exemplary and replicable, and has the potential to break obsolete social models, create value and bring transformative benefits on a societal level, influencing worldviews, paradigms and social behaviours.</p>	<p><b>Max 15</b></p> <p>(5 points for each ambition)</p>

	Criteria	Description	Points
<b>NEB Comp ass Worki ng princi ples</b>	PARTICI PATORY PROCE SS	<p><b>Ambition I: to consult</b> A participatory project features already-established communication channels and stakeholder participation. At this first ambition level, participation ranges from information-sharing about the project to consultation feeding into decision-making. The information flow is static and mostly one sided: the information flows from the project owner to its audience and then back.</p> <p><b>Ambition II: to co-develop</b> A participatory project engages stakeholders as key partners and advisers in defining and/or co-creating the rules and objectives of the project. The emerging ideas are developed collaboratively by the project and its stakeholders. The information flow is dynamic, exchanges are on an equal foot and information becomes co-designed.</p> <p><b>Ambition III: to self-govern</b> A participatory project aims to enable stakeholders to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with powerholders, at all stages of the project's lifecycle (design, management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) and empowers the community to make decisions and govern the project.</p>	<p><b>Max 15</b></p> <p>(5 points for each ambition)</p>

	Criteria	Description	Points
	MULTI-LEVEL ENGAGEMENT	<p><b>Ambition I: to work locally</b> A multi-level NEB project connects horizontally informal networks (e.g., groups of individuals, neighbourhoods...), and/or formal institutions (e.g. sectoral departments, political groups...) and/or and engages with them to influence the local living environment with a place- based approach.</p> <p><b>Ambition II: to work across levels</b> A multi-level NEB project connects vertically informal networks (e.g., groups of individuals, neighbourhoods...) and/or formal institutions (e.g. government, administrations...) across various scales (e.g. single municipalities with regional authorities, local studies with international research programs), and engages with them to push single-scale initiatives beyond their own dimension (e.g. local, regional, national...).</p> <p><b>Ambition III: to work globally</b> A multi-level NEB project that works at global level reaches for a wider, transformational impact beyond its initial, local scale of application and it connects networks and/or (inter)governmental institutions that, across various levels, share similar purposes looking at the future of the entire ecosystem.</p>	<p><b>Max 15</b></p> <p>(5 points for each ambition)</p>

	Criteria	Description	Points
	TRANS DISCIPL INARY APPRO ACH	<p><b>Ambition I: to be multidisciplinary</b> A multidisciplinary NEB project aims to address a common problem within one field of knowledge. Working in a multidisciplinary way means working independently alongside other disciplines that engage in similar topics.</p> <p><b>Ambition II: to be interdisciplinary</b> An interdisciplinary NEB project aims to address a common problem or issue involving two or more academic disciplines or fields of knowledge. Working in an interdisciplinary way means collaborating with other disciplines towards a shared goal.</p> <p><b>Ambition III: to be beyond-disciplinary</b> A beyond-disciplinary NEB project aims to integrate both formal and non-formal knowledge to achieve a common goal. It aims to bring together people from political, social and economic fields with members of the public to explore possibilities and realise new narratives. By drawing on both local and traditional knowledge and cultural norms and values, it aims to supplement and transform scientific insights for the benefit of society.</p>	<p><b>Max 15</b></p> <p>(5 points for each ambition)</p>
<b>SPAC E- NEST additi onal criteri on</b>	TRANS FERABI LITY	<p><b>Potential for replication and adaptation in other rural areas or communities across Europe, ensuring broader impact.</b></p> <p>The SPACE-NEST project aims to create models of social economy and space regeneration that can be adapted and implemented in different European rural regions. Practices that can be transferred and adapted to other communities enhance the overall impact of the project.</p> <p>Best practices should demonstrate the potential for replication and transferability across different regions or sectors. This criterion ensures that the solutions can be adopted on a broader scale, fostering greater impact and replication across Europe.</p>	<p><b>Max 10</b> (0 – no potential;</p> <p>5 – medium potential (proven experience) ;</p> <p>10 - high potential for replication and adaptation (proven experience outside the region)</p>

Total: 100 points

In order to be selected among the finalists, a project must get at least 5 points for each value (i.e., ambition I must be reached), each working principle and transferability.

## 5. Submission Process

- The online Application Form is in English. Applicants must submit their application filling out [this application form](#) either in English, Italian, Spanish or Slovenian language.
- **Submission deadline:** March 30, 2025 at 12:00 CET.
- Submissions should include:
  - A completed application form.
  - URL to organisation/initiative website (if available)

## 6. Timeline

Milestone	Date
Launch of Call	February 10th 2025
Deadline for Submission	March 30th 2025 at 12:00 CET
Evaluation of Applications	By April 25th 2025

## 7. Activities and Benefits for Selected Best Practices

Those who submit their Best Practice will have the opportunity to attend a Social Economy Mission (SEM) with the travel and subsistence costs covered if they meet the requirement of the call of interest launched by the consortium partners. There will be three SEM in total: one in Izola (Slovenia), Bergamo (Italy) and Malaga (Spain).

Featured on SPACE-NEST's communication channels (partner websites, social media) and European Network of Innovation for Inclusion [LinkedIn profile](#) and [Newsletter](#).

Inclusion in project publications and the final **Best Practices booklet “Rural Renewal: A Guide to Sustainable Transformation through New European Bauhaus and Social Economy Best Practices”**.

## 8. Evaluation and Selection of Best Practices

The evaluation and selection of Best Practices will be carried out by the designated evaluation committee. This committee will consist of one representative from each SPACE-NEST project partner, along with an external evaluator at the regional or EU level. The final

selection of Best Practices will be included in the **Best Practices booklet “Rural Renewal: A Guide to Sustainable Transformation through New European Bauhaus and Social Economy Best Practices”**.

## 9. Contact Information

For questions or additional details, please use contacts written below. In the subject line please include the name of the project SPACE-NEST:

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