

**Looking for partnership in INTERREG EUROPE 2nd call**  
***Topic: Aligning municipal and corporate sustainability goals***

**Background**

The European Green Deal aims to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. Many actors are key players to reach sustainability targets at EU level, such as cities and enterprises. In addition, regulatory incentives (taxonomy regulation, CSRD, SFDR) will require certain companies to publish non-financial reports on ESG to prove their commitment.

**Overall goal and sub-objectives**

**The project proposal aims to bring together the municipal and corporate sectors / private economic players to achieve sustainability goals.**

Our company, EDC Debrecen Urban and Economic Development Center, wants to take the experience and good practices gained through our activities to a next level: to **match the city's strategic goals** - which are aligned with the EU Green Deal targets - **with the sustainability commitments of local businesses, thus contributing to the Community's climate neutrality commitments.** This includes but is not limited to the coordination of CSR activities and integrating them into the Sustainable Urban Development Strategy of Debrecen through establishing a Public-Private Cooperation Policy. It also involves understanding the sustainability ambitions of businesses and supporting them in achieving these goals.

**Our further objectives** are:

- Gain information about the CSR ambitions of companies (multinational corporates, SME-s), what their needs are, in which areas and how they intend to support the city (urban development, NBS, sustainability, environmental protection culture, sports etc.) conducting a survey (questionnaire, interviews etc.)
- Match ambitions to city demand, thus supporting them in achieving business actors' goals.
- Establish the base for a long-term cooperation, elaborate a public-private cooperation model/policy, including the financial aspects (how can a company finance a development in the city or donate to the municipality)

**Who we are? What are we dealing with? What experiences do we have?**

EDC Debrecen is a local development agency established by the Municipality of Debrecen (Hungary). It operates as a non-profit limited company.

Focus areas:

1. Economic development (related with mainly multinational companies):
  - supporting local companies
  - investment promotion
  - cooperation platform
2. Urban development (collaborating with the municipality):
  - development and maintenance of strategic documents
  - generating and writing project proposals
  - project management of EU funded projects
3. Business development (regarding business actors/SME-s):
  - supplier program management

- entrepreneurial community building
- economy analysis
- facilitating companies to access for funds

One of EDC Debrecen's focus areas is investment promotion. Furthermore, the company manages and implements economic and urban development initiatives. Its success is demonstrated by the fact that since 2015, thanks to the investment promotion activities, several companies have relocated to the city, creating thousands of new jobs. In addition to new investors, the company places great emphasis on assessing the satisfaction of existing businesses and improving the business environment. Over the past 8 years, EDC Debrecen has developed several methods: (1) organising regular visits to companies ("on-tour" sessions) to learn about their profile and hold management meetings. In addition, (2) the business environment is constantly monitored by means of questionnaires, and the needs of businesses are regularly assessed. Since last year, (3) providing trainings for businesses. Thanks to these, we have gained a lot of experience and have extensive databases on the business environment in Debrecen.

The Urban Development team, another division of EDC Debrecen, generates and implements EU-funded projects at national and international level. The company is exclusively responsible for the development and regular revision of the Sustainable Urban Development Strategy of Debrecen(SUDS) and prepares proposals for the decision-making process of the municipality.

#### **Policy instrument to be improved**

The SUDS is in line with the European Commission's Handbook on Sustainable Urban Strategies. It is currently under preparation, but its main objectives have already been identified: the horizontal objective is "*Liveability, sustainability, climate adaptation*". The strategic objectives include "*Strengthening the internationally competitive economy, improving the business environment*". The strategy is a dynamic document, i.e. it is subject to continuous review.

**We are open to join a consortia as a partner** in this theme in the INTERREG EUROPE call (2) A greener Europe Policy objective. For further information, contact Erika Jacsmenik (senior urban development expert) tel: 0036304623415; email: [jacsmenik.erika@edc.debrecen.hu](mailto:jacsmenik.erika@edc.debrecen.hu) or Gyula Dézsi (urban development expert) tel: 00362418868 ; email: [dezsi.gyula@edc.debrecen.hu](mailto:dezsi.gyula@edc.debrecen.hu)