



Arctic Europe Tourism Cluster

Annex 2 Content of the procurement

Arctic Europe Tourism Cluster project is looking for a strategic and creative partner for brand marketing and implementation based upon our brand platform “This is Arctic”.

About Arctic Europe Tourism Cluster (AETC) project

The overall project goal for AETC is to build more resilient and regenerative tourism, to meet rapid changes and future expectations for the benefit of the tourism industry, local societies and visitors in Arctic Europe. Within the framework of networking and all three aspects of sustainability the project will concentrate on three main work packages: Arctic culture and year-round development, Arctic sustainability and Arctic digital innovation.

The partners in the project are Finnish Lapland Tourist Board, Swedish Lapland Visitors Board and Northern Norway Tourist Board. 108 tourism companies from the Arctic Europe area (Lapland in Finland, Norrbotten in Sweden and Nordland, Troms and Finnmark in Norway) participate in the project. The main financier of the project is Interreg Aurora and other financiers are Lapin Liitto, Region Norrbotten, Troms Holding, Troms fylkeskommune, Finnmarks fylkeskommune, Innovation Norway and the participants of the project. AETC is the third step of the cross border cooperation project under the Visit Arctic Europe umbrella (former projects VAE I & VAE II 2015-2022), where extensive results were reached through co-operation across borders. The first two phases have shown where emphasis should be placed in the future and the project plan of AETC is based on these findings.

Brand marketing targets

As a basis for the brand development, we will use local stories and local heritage, told in a modern arctic way to strengthen and position the year-round brand. This will be done by using new digital platforms and channels. The goal is to do innovative brand marketing in a wider perspective to new defined target groups especially among end customers. With a strong Arctic Europe brand, tourism can also lead the way to show how good life can be in the arctic and thereby also contribute to the local societies by attracting new residents that are needed as workforce both in tourism and other businesses.

By means of marketing, the **Arctic Europe area becomes well known among visitors as a sustainable all year around destination in selected markets and segments.**

The emphasis is on **developing low seasons to reach all-year round tourism and to strengthen the role of Arctic Culture in tourism.** Marketing activities in the project involves both innovative digital Brand marketing and tactical marketing that are designed to support each other.



Arctic Europe Tourism Cluster

The target of brand marketing is to increase awareness, raise interest and lead final consumers to seek more information about Arctic Europe area travel attractions e.g. from area representatives web pages, company webpages or tour operator's webpages. Created material and actions in brand marketing will therefore be implemented, used and tied closely to tactical marketing actions.

Potential seasons in AETC Project

One of the focus areas of AETC is to develop current low seasons to achieve year-round sustainable development and growth within Arctic Europe. During the autumn 2023 participating companies have identified the long autumn season from August to November as the most potential season for the whole Arctic Europe to develop. The brand marketing should concentrate on the autumn season.

Defined target markets in AETC Project

During autumn 2023 participating companies have identified most potential markets to develop Arctic Europe area potential seasons. The following target markets have been defined: (see annex 3 for deeper knowledge):

- Priority group 1: **DACH, Benelux**. These markets will be included in all project activities and focus is especially on strengthening business in potential seasons.
- Priority group 2: **USA, UK, Italy, France and Spain**. These markets are included in activities where the target is to grow the awareness of the potential seasons in Arctic Europe and therefore included also in the brand marketing activities.

Defined Target groups in AETC Project

Represented Arctic Europe areas, Swedish Lapland, Northern Norway and Finnish Lapland target group definitions are quite similar. Combining the target group strategies for each country has concluded in a common target group segmentation in the AETC project. Please see annex 4 for deeper knowledge.

The prioritized customer target groups are:

- Outdoors lightly active
- Outdoors active
- Attraction seekers

For all target groups important aspects of the development work are arctic culture, nature and sustainability.



Arctic Europe Tourism Cluster

Defined role of culture in AETC Project

Another focus area in AETC project is to renew arctic tourism to meet new customer needs by strengthening the role of arctic culture in tourism. The increase of cultural content will add value to the tourism offering, attract new customers, widen the local value chain, and bring more income and jobs to the local economies. In addition, the global travellers are increasingly searching for experiences that build on local and traditional knowledge. In the project culture is regarded on a wide scale ranging from arctic lifestyle, traditional livelihoods and heritage to handicrafts, design and a rich variety of arts. Both current and historical culture is included. Sami culture is included as a part of the local culture. Culture exists in all seasons and by developing cultural tourism year-round attractiveness will increase.

Defined role of sustainability in AETC Project

The project aims to focus on how to make the tourism in the Arctic Europe more resilient to meet future challenges and move in a more regenerative direction for the whole region. This means we are focusing on all three aspects of sustainability throughout project activities and marketing – ecological, economical and social – with the purpose to support a qualitative development that contributes to the health and well-being of people and ecosystems. It also improves local economies, preserves local cultures and biodiversity, while offering memorable, authentic, life-changing experiences for guests and contributing to an improved arctic destination.

Brand Identity platform for Arctic Europe Area

In the previous project VAE II, a brand identity platform (This is Arctic) with a toolkit for tour operators, DMOs, companies and media were developed, and we wish to continue with the platform but with minor adaptations and adjustments to fit the core of AETC project. See annex 5 and website www.thisisarctic.com

Support to trade distribution channels

Share of individual travellers are increasing in Arctic Europe area, but still the volume of sales by the distribution channel is still well over half of the total trade. Therefore, tour operators, OTA actors and incoming tour operators play an essential role and will be noticed in digital tactical marketing actions. Our wish is that the implementation process also supports the international travel trade business in a way that make it possible for them to use material created in Brand marketing in their own marketing.



Arctic Europe Tourism Cluster

Budget and time frame

The project lasts until 31.7.2026. The aim is that the project will create positive influence already for autumn 2024 but from 2025 with selected partner. The action plan needs to cover ongoing actions until 30.6.2026 noticing defined potential seasons and selected target groups in different markets.

The total budget for brand marketing during the whole project period is EUR 170 000. This includes everything from advertising costs to content production and project management. We need your advice on how to make the best use of the budget.

Content of service

1. Review the identity platform This is Arctic
2. Strategic advice on how to make best use of Brand marketing budget
3. Design, planning and implementation of digital Brand marketing actions in AETC project in accordance with the targets and frames of the project.
4. Content creation for online Brand communication
5. Defining the most effective digital communication channels in order to provide relevant information to the customers from different target groups.
6. Helping in identifying the right influencers to communicate with the project's target groups.
7. Identifying possible strategic partners and initiating possible co-operation with brands that support Arctic Europe area low season development (e.g. Lonely Planet, Fjällräven, National Geographic, Adventure Travel Trade Association)
8. Material creation.
9. Providing Analytics from the campaigns.
10. Implementation of Brand platform.



Arctic Europe Tourism Cluster

Phases

1. Review and updates of Brand Platform “This is Arctic”

The brand platform "This is Arctic" was developed and established in VAE II (see annex 5). Several years have passed, and the focus in AETC has partially shifted compared to previous projects (i.e. focus on Arctic culture described above). We wish to continue building on the foundation of this earlier work but also see the need for updates to make it more timeless, ensuring the platform can endure for many years post-project completion. Additionally, we want to adapt the platform to the new conditions in AETC project. **We request suggestions and estimates on the extent of adjustments needed and the time required for this.**
2. Content & Creativity planning

We are looking for a partner who can act as a sounding board and provide creative suggestions and ideas for brand awareness campaigns based on the content of our brand platform. The focus is on new and innovative digital marketing. **We would like to see references and examples of how such campaigns could look.**
3. Campaign executions

We seek a partner who can execute campaigns through all phases from start to finish and who also has the expertise and knowledge to carry out parts of the work independently. Examples of competencies available in-house in the project team include photography/film, storytelling, advertising via Meta/Google, and idea generation. Although these competencies exist, it does not mean we will necessarily carry out these parts ourselves but have the capability to support the chosen partner in execution. We have some materials from previous projects to utilize, but we also see the need for new photo/video materials from this autumn season. We manage digital advertising via Meta entirely ourselves and thus take advertising costs outside the tender process; should other channels be used; we might need implementation support in the advertising phase as well. **We request a description of how the work and roles can be distributed within the project to achieve the best possible results, both budget-wise and timewise.**
4. Update of online channels

Our website, www.thisisarctic.com, needs to be updated in accordance with the adjustments in our brand platform and continuously populated when used in various campaigns. It can also be further developed to function during the implementation phase, although this is not a requirement. We also have channels for This is Arctic on both Instagram and Facebook that can be used for various campaigns. The Meta social media accounts will only be used for advertising and will not be updated with organic content on a regular basis. **We request proposals on the extent of updates the website requires initially, including the cost and time needed for this.** This does not include any potential use of the website in future campaigns.
5. Implementation and use of Brand platform on company/Tour Operator Level

Implementing the brand platform among companies and travel trade is a crucial step in the AETC project's Exit Strategy. Our companies strongly desire to have a common foundation for the brand and storytelling. **We wish to see proposals on how a long-term sustainable implementation process could look.**