



The **Regional Challenge Fund (RCF)** is a financing facility designed to increase employability, especially youth. It boosts the competitiveness of enterprises in Western Balkan 6 economies by funding investments in equipment and infrastructure for selected cooperative or dual training projects implemented through partnerships between vocational training institutes and enterprises. The grants are allocated through a competitive regional challenge.

The German Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ) has commissioned a total of **39 million Euro** to German Development Bank (KfW) to support investments in cooperative training projects in the WB6 economies. The project executing agency is the WB6 Chamber Investment Forum which is supported by an international consortium of consultants to implement the overall program.

37

projects selected in the first call

In its first call for expressions of interest organized in 2021 the RCF selected **37 projects** to be financed, allocating approximately **15,4 million Euros** to vocational training projects in the Western Balkans 6 Region.

2nd call

Now the RCF opens the second call for Expressions of interest and invites interested consortia of vocational training institutes and enterprises devoted to joint implementation of cooperative training programmes to apply and:

- ✓ Compete for the opportunity to realize substantial investments in training equipment and training facilities at vocational training institutes and encourage the introduction of new technologies
- ✓ Support the development of cooperative training methods to address human resource shortages effectively and strategically approach capacity building
- ✓ Improve employability of trainees/VET graduates and their integration into the labour market
- ✓ Increase productivity and competitiveness of local enterprises as a result of successfully implemented cooperative training programmes

The second call for expressions of interest will be open from **March 7th to April 14th**, 2022, at 23:59. The call is published simultaneously in the six Western Balkan economies: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. The RCF invites applications from all six economies and all economic sectors.

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days hours minutes seconds

[Apply online](#)

The expressions of interest can be submitted by VET consortia formed of vocational training institutes and a minimum of two enterprises jointly engaging in the provision of cooperative VET. Consortia, led by vocational training institutes implementing cooperative or dual VET programmes that lead to nationally recognised certificates in one of the WB6 economies, can apply.

The application process for RCF funding has two stages. Applying consortia submit expressions of interest and supporting documents in the first stage. In the second stage, shortlisted consortia will be invited to submit the full application, including the project proposal and the detailed elaboration of the planned investment.

More information on the eligibility of the applicants, actions, costs, application procedures to follow, and other issues of relevance could be found in the

[Guidelines](#)

Guidelines for the Second Call for the Expressions of Interests

[The schedule](#)

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