



Contracting authority: European Commission

Civil Society Organisations as actors of Governance and Development

Annex A.2 – Grant application form – Full application

Reference:

EuropeAid/168597/DH/ACT/RU

Deadline for submission of full applications:

at 20.10.2020 (Brussels date and time)

[Number & title of lot]	n/a
Title of the action:	Step to the future – friendly and comfortable municipalities
Name of the lead applicant	Autonomous non-commercial organization Development centre of Social and Educational Projects «AURA»
Nationality of the lead applicant	Russian

Dossier No	
------------	--

(for official use only)

FULL APPLICATION FORM

1 General information

Reference of the call for proposals	EuropeAid/168597/DH/ACT/RU
Number of the proposal	NEAR-TS/2020/168597/56
Name of the lead applicant	Autonomous non-commercial organization Development centre of Social and Educational Projects «AURA»
Title of the action	Step to the future – friendly and comfortable municipalities
Location of the action	[Do not fill in here if you are applying via PROSPECT] <i>specify country(ies) region(s) that will benefit from the action</i>
Duration of the action	[Do not fill in here if you are applying via PROSPECT]

List of used abbreviations

CSO	civil society organization
PWD	people with disabilities
MA	municipal authority
NPO	non-profit organisation
NGO	non-governmental organization
SE	social entrepreneur
SK	Slovakia
RU	Russia
HR	Croatia
PL	Poland
CZ	Czech Republic
AURA	Autonomous non-commercial organization Development centre of Social and Educational Projects «AURA»
Machaon International	Association of nature conservation Machaon International
SMEs	small and medium-sized enterprises

2 The action

2.1. Description of the action

2.1.1. Description

The project responds to all objectives and priorities set in the call for proposals. It strives to fill the gap in the Russian society by addressing the current as well as long-term needs of the one of its largest vulnerable groups, which is highly affected by the current unstable and dangerous situation of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the statistics, around 10 percent of Russia's total population (estimated to be over 13 million persons) are people with disability. Yet the conditions for their integration and normal everyday life are still highly inadequate and in some aspects because of the COVID-19 crisis even worsen. As a consequence, PWD are one of the most socially vulnerable category of the population in Russia. Often, the income of these people is well below average, however their social service needs are much higher than by healthy citizens. In most cases, they have limited opportunities to attain suitable education and skills for engaging in suitable income-generating working activities. In addition, most of them have no family or helpers.

Russia is fairly progressive in its laws which guarantee equal treatment and rights for people with impairments, e.g. by the Law on the Social Protection for PWD of 1995 aimed at establishing a foundation for ensuring PWD have "opportunities equal to those of other citizens to realize their civil, economic, political and other rights and freedoms". By the same token, suitable infrastructure and information should be accessible to PWD. The problem is in enforcement. The government's failure to enforce its own accessibility laws means that millions of citizens with disabilities, with diverse talents, and contributions to make to the society, cannot lead active social lives, or start families, or hold meaningful work.

Hence, there are challenges both to adapt the environment allowing access for the disabled as well as to change the attitude of most people to be more sympathetic, congenial and empathic towards PWD. The spread of COVID-19 disease is an emergency requiring adequate responses from all layers of the society, but it is also an opportunity to find suitable solutions how to help and integrate this vulnerable group of citizens by the society at large. The proposed project covers some of practical solutions and tests them in collaboration with active stakeholders in the pilot areas identified in the Kaliningrad region in order to attain better conditions for integration and normal everyday of PWD.

Some progress have been achieved in creating barrier-free environment for PWD in large cities of Russia. For instance, in connection to football world championship in 2018, many facilities with access for PWD were developed and PWD-accessible busses were introduced in the city of Kaliningrad. On the other hand, rural areas outside the capital city lack any of such infrastructure. The project addresses this deficit by facilitating collaboration of various local stakeholders to overcome it and help PWD without large investments.

Furthermore, the project recognizes that alongside supporting infrastructure for PWD, stakeholders are in need of better understanding of the culture of communication with PWD and what problems a person with disability faces. The majority population needs help with improving verbal and non-verbal skills with dealing with people with various forms of disabilities in order to be able to delicately and professionally satisfy their needs. Such skills can be attained by training, which allows participants to attain useful skills and competences when interacting with a person with disability, to better understand state norms regulating the accessibility of facilities and, technical means available for use when dealing with PWD.

The overall objective of the project is mobilizing Civil Society Organizations (further CSOs) and other actors in the post-pandemic period towards the development of pertinent opportunities for education, employment and social integration of PWD living outside major cities in Russia and addressing the following specific objectives:

- 1) Creating pilot disability-friendly municipalities which provide effective socio-economic services and an accessible environment for PWD affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in small towns and rural areas of the Kaliningrad region;
- 2) Increasing capacities of CSOs enabling them to play a vital role as providers of educational and psychological assistance to PWD and their family members;
- 3) Sharing and disseminating lessons learnt with other CSOs and organizations dealing with PWD across Russia and internationally.

One of the underlying goals is to break stereotypes about the possibilities of people with disabilities and to show, also with a range of practical examples, that limitations do not exist, and what prevents PWD from realizing their dreams are, above all, barriers in human mind. This goal can be achieved by gradual change

of the behavior and decisions made by governments and the wider society in the Kaliningrad region in relation to PWD who need to be cared for adequately and have equal opportunities. The project strives to incorporate the needs of people with various disabilities into local development agenda, to strengthen social entrepreneurship and volunteer involvement in regard to PWD in pilot municipalities of the Kaliningrad region.

Target groups, final beneficiaries and the key stakeholder groups

The main target group of the project are people with different types of disabilities (adults and children) and their family members living in selected municipalities in the Kaliningrad region: app. 90 wheelchair users, 200 people with mental impairments, 30 hard of hearing people, 80 blind and sight impaired people and hundreds of people with other types of disabilities. They are in urgent need of socio-psychological rehabilitation during and after the COVID-19 pandemic and require disability-friendly and socially adjusted environment, barrier-free infrastructure as well as suitable services, education and employment opportunities in their respective municipality. In addition, there are about further 230 PWD and their family members from other regions of Russia who will directly benefit from the project through activities of 5 supported CSOs.

The second target group consists of various stakeholders (institutions) in the Kaliningrad region which directly or indirectly influence the well-being and level of integration of PWD in the community of each respective municipality. These stakeholders are either legally required to be inclusive and cater for PWD or are voluntarily willing to do so. This target group includes Ministry of Social Policy of the Kaliningrad region, 2 municipal authorities, local museums, schools, leisure centers, NGOs (e.g. Rural tourism association of the Kaliningrad region, Union of creative leaders), and SMEs in particular in recreation and tourism. At least, 25 various stakeholders will be engaged in the project. In general, these institutions lack experience of dealing with PWD and are in need of advice and guidance how to become better adapted and welcoming for those people. They need to cooperate more closely via networking with each other and sharing information and know-how. Thanks to the project, they will unite their efforts and in mutual coordination contribute to building disability-friendly municipalities with improved accessibility and social environment for PWD.

The applicant conducted a survey to identify key stakeholders in this target group in four municipalities and made preliminary agreements with individual institutions about their role in the project. Not all surveyed actors are equally ready and it boils down that only two pilot municipalities will be involved in order to use resources more effectively and concentrate only on the most committed stakeholders which are also willing to contribute themselves, not to be just passive recipients of project support. The achievements of CSO AURA and its supporters to improve the conditions for PWD coupled with determination and resolve how things are done, has opened many doors and there are many organizations and individuals ready to actively take part in the project activities.

The third target group includes CSOs supporting PWD in other regions of Russia. AURA also consulted the project idea and its concept with other CSOs serving PWD across Russia. At least 10 CSOs showed interest to participate in the project activities, sharing information and take part in network. Thanks to the project they will gain access to innovative online platforms for distance learning and e-lessons adapted for people with different types of disabilities, art therapies and other rehabilitation programmes, innovation methodologies of organisation and promotion of post-pandemic social and psychological support programmes. The project intends to directly support through small grants the project activities of the following CSOs which has all interesting track record working for and assisting PWD in various aspects:

- 1) The NPO "Resource Center for Support of People with Disabilities "Life without Barriers" is a local NGO helping people with disabilities in Belgorod and its surrounding area. This NGO focuses on examinations of accessibility requirements and adapting social infrastructure facilities to the needs of PWD and then prepares analytical materials for submission to authorities in order to comprehensively solve accessibility issues related to the needs of PWD.
- 2) The resource training center "Accessible Environment" from Voronezh is an NGO which for more than 5 years has been successfully solving the problems of training people with disabilities and helping to find them employment in demanded professions in industrial enterprises of the region.
- 3) The Autonomous NPO "Osobaya semya" (Special Family) from Karelia provides social services especially to disabled children and protects the rights of all people with disabilities in treatment, education and employment as well as supports their families. The organization has a very interesting experience in organizing inclusive cultural projects and is ready to share this experience.
- 4) The Autonomous NPO "Obschestvo bez barierov" (Society without Barriers) from Ulan-Ude has been providing different kinds of social services to PWD and their family members during last 19 years. The organization active in whole Buratia is especially successful in promoting the philosophy of independent living and the integration of people with disabilities into society through organization of mass events,

gatherings, competitions, festivals, contests and special training. In recent years, the organization has been paying particular attention to the development of inclusive tourism.

5) The Regional public organization of people with disabilities "Integration" is a NGO based in Tatarstan. It helps other organizations in the republic to realize their corporate social responsibility, develops and implements projects aimed at social adaptation of and changing social attitudes towards people with disabilities. It has been engaged in promoting the concept of a successful and independent person with disability through dedicated training and co-operation with other stakeholders.

The key final beneficiary are all PWD in the Kaliningrad region, estimated at 3,000 as well as PWD in other regions in Russia. These people will benefit directly from online platforms created in the project for all PWD as well as from improved infrastructure and services when visiting pilot municipalities in the Kaliningrad region which will serve as a model to other regions. The attitude shift towards better understanding of PWD and their needs among the public and decision-makers in Russia is not of lesser importance.

The final beneficiaries are also organizations supporting or wishing to support PWD in other parts of Russia (50+ regions), such as ministries of social policy, social rehabilitation centres, inclusive boarding schools, regional, local authorities etc. The experience gained and project results will be widely disseminated through printed materials and in a final event. The access to case-studies and lessons learnt will improve their capacity in the field of support and integration of PWD.

The project will also influence other Russian CSOs providing services to PWD in other regions and strengthen their capacity via knowledge transfer, networking and direct support, so they are better equipped to deal with challenges of effective support and integration disabled people during the pandemic as well as in the post-pandemic period. The full intervention logic explaining how the activities will lead to the outputs, then the outputs to the outcomes and finally the outcomes are summarized in detail in the logical framework. The main publications are: Guidelines for disability-friendly municipality/300, handbook for volunteers/300 and handbook for PWD for vegetables and herbs growing. And there will be a set of web resources such as e-learning platform on website of AURA with following educational on-line resources for PWD: courses in website development, in e-commerce with methods of promotion through social media and SEO, in easy souvenirs from clay, painting, photography and video-clips: first steps.

Descriptions of each activity (work packages) and results in detail

The project is designed in three interrelated sets of activities – work packages, each set addressing one specific objective and reinforcing the other two by contributing to the robust project results and long-term effects such as 1) enhanced quality of services for all categories of citizens in terms of accessible environment at the municipality level; 2) improved emotional state of PWD by arousing positive feelings and by facilitating psychological and social rehabilitation and 3) widely disseminated project achievements.

Work package 1: Capacity-building of stakeholders and improved infrastructure for PWD

A prerequisite to make any municipality disability-friendly is not only to cater for physical infrastructure, but even more importantly to break stereotypes and to change attitudes and behaviours among the majority population, in particular those who can improve the conditions for PWD. In other words, the issue at stake is not only to teach involved stakeholders how to develop physical adaptations required to cater for PWD in the urbanized or rural environment, but to cause necessary change in the attitude and awaken a feeling of empathy to better understand PWD, their special needs as well as recognition by the majority population that PWD have strong willingness and desire to be of benefit to the wider community, especially through employment and other social interactions when given a chance. The project envisions to attain inner motivation of involved stakeholders (project ownership) to continue to support and interact with PWD after the duration of the project.

Activity 1.1 Inception conference and accompanying events for key partners and beneficiaries

At the inception stage, Aura and Machaon International will organise an inception conference (2 days, 40 people) in Kaliningrad to launch the project. The conference will present the project's ideas and planned activities to invited guests and media, and will be followed by post conference field visits to pilot municipalities in the Kaliningrad region and working meeting of the project partners (3 days, 20+ people). These events will be attended among others by representatives of various organizations responsible or willing to support PWD such as municipal authorities, local museums, inclusive schools, SMEs, Ministry of Social Policy of the Kaliningrad region as well as representatives of 5 CSOs supporting PWD in other regions of Russia, Asistence, o.p.s. (Czech Republic), Gdynia city council and Foundation Podróże bez Granic (Poland), Center for Inclusion and Social Services (Croatia) and European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (NGO based in Brussels).

The inception conference will address also specific topics striving 1) to improve understanding about the impact of COVID-19 on PWD (presentation of EU and RU data) and about best practices how to help PWD

in pandemic and post-pandemic period; 2) to share practical examples of projects and approaches providing suitable opportunities for education, employment and social integration of PWD in Russia and in EU countries; and 3) to give space for discussion on how to introduce these practices and approaches in the pilot municipalities and in Russia in general.

The plan is to broadcast the conference on-line, so other CSOs and stakeholders supporting PWD as well as PWD in different Russian regions will have possibility to follow it and get access to new knowledge. The conference will also allow PWD-speakers to participate. After the conference, several field visits and working meetings of partners and beneficiaries will be organised: 1) visit to a local greenhouse factory and 2 inclusive schools in order to provide consultations how to construct greenhouses adapted for PWD and how to organise their effective work; 2) working meetings with EU experts and discussion with local CSOs, municipalities and SMEs in order to evaluate existent level of infrastructure and programmes for PWD and to plan study-tours; 3) working meeting of all partners about detailed work plan, distribution of roles, monitoring and evaluation plan, communication and visibility, budget and contributions of partners to the project and 5) special seminar and model guided tour for PWD with examples of good practices in the Kaliningrad region for representatives of participating CSOs.

Results: Improved cooperation, capacity and a joint vision of 10+ representatives of 10+ CSOs increased capacity to provide support to PWD in the pandemic and post-pandemic periods;
Greater political urgency for disability-friendly services at the level of regional and 4 municipal authorities in the pandemic and post-pandemic periods recognized and motivation to help PWD by 30+ stakeholders increased;
Capacity-building programme meeting local needs (both on-site as well on-line format) developed in detail with help of EU experts, Machaon and Aura for RU partners (finalized within 2-4 months after the conference);
Detailed contracts with partners developed (including detailed plan and budget for project implementation for the first year with M&E procedures and preliminary plan and budget for the 2nd and 3rd years);
Communication and visibility plan developed (including project style, work with social media, etc.).

Activity 1.2 Training sessions for employees of 25+ organisations in 2 municipalities

In the pilot municipalities, a series of 10 interactive trainings will be organized by Aura for personnel from the service sector, cultural and tourist institutions and companies, employees of state and municipal authorities (180 persons from 25+ organisations in 2 municipalities). During the training participants learn the rules and skills of interaction when serving PWD, so they can delicately and professionally satisfy their needs. The main purpose of the training is to teach these people the culture of communication with PWD by explaining what problems a person with disability faces and how they can be helped.

AURA has developed such an interactive training programme already. Each training session is designed to use a combination of methods such as model situations, working in mini-groups, role-playing and holding group discussions, watching video materials and applying skill diagnostics. In each training programme, participants receive learning opportunity to better understand the needs of persons with various forms of disabilities and to improve communication and behavioural skills and to gain confidence necessary to apply appropriate communication with individual clients with disabilities. Within the training, participants will be familiarized with world standards in service and hospitality for PWD, the Russian legal and regulatory framework (i.e. laws and state norms regulating the accessibility of facilities), technical means and facilities available for use when dealing with people with disabilities, and other useful skills and competences when interacting with a person with disability. Part of the training are also examples from other EU countries.

In addition to trainings, participating individuals and their organizations will be provided with consultation services how to create better access and social services for people with various disabilities.

Results: 180 employees will be trained to communicate with PWD in 10 trainings. The training sessions will increase capacity of at least 25+ organisations in the pilot municipalities, so their employees better understand the specific needs of people with different kinds of disabilities and are ready and able to provide quality services to PWD and actively participate in the creation of a friendly environment towards people with disabilities in society at large. The feedback from participants will be also used to improve the training itself.

Activity 1.3.2 Study-tours to the Czech Republic and Poland

Machaon International will organize two study-tours to EU countries to allow representatives from the Kaliningrad region (AURA, social entrepreneurs, CSOs, 2 pilot municipalities) and 5 CSOs from other regions (about 28 participants in total) to gain first-hand experience from European partners. The first study tour will be arranged to the Czech Republic and will be co-organized in cooperation with NGO Asistence, o.p.s. (Prague) and Sumava National Park Authority. During the study tour, the participants will have an opportunity to see unique examples of infrastructure and facilities adjusted for PWD in Sumava national park and in Prague. Special attention will be given to volunteering programmes aimed at engaging volunteers to help handicapped people with their past-time

activities (accompanying PWD to various cultural and social events), which NGO Asistence, o.p.s. successfully organizes for many years now. The actual Czech volunteers will share their experience and advice. In Sumava, aspects of accessibility and guided tours for PWD to wild nature will be explored. Preliminary timetable of the study tour is envisioned to be 2-3 days in Prague and 2-3 days in Sumava national park. All logistics and translation will be arranged by Machaon International.

The second study-tour will be arranged to Poland, to the historic city of Gdynia, which is actually well-known in Poland for its extraordinary efforts to make public facilities easily accessible to all and for its exemplary policy for PWD integration. For instance, almost all of the city's buses are currently accessible to those with a disability, and the city also features a unique information system that includes Braille signposts for the visually-impaired. Information boards across the city are easily accessible to those in wheelchairs and most restaurants and museums have handicapped access. Gdynia was the first city in Poland to start introducing and rewarding initiatives to eliminate barriers related to disability. The city organizes an annual competition "Gdynia without barriers", in which people and organizations are publicly appreciated for their work for PWD.

During the study tour, participants will meet with the city advisor on PWD issues and visit various locations with disability-friendly facilities such the Musical Theater, Gdynia Arena, city stadium and others that are fully adjusted to the needs of people in wheelchairs as well as Gdynia city museum, which is barrier free and has a set of guided tours and qualified staff to help people with all types of disabilities including visitors with autism. Furthermore, participants will learn about the work of NGO Fundacja Podróże bez Granic (Travel without borders Foundation), which deals with promotion and implementation of unconventional forms of rehabilitation and social integration of PWD from all over Poland by organizing trips, overseas travel, adrenaline sports (such as parachuting, handbikes and tandems, glider flights, kayaking, skiing, sailing, diving) and special events that are unique in the whole country.

The study tour focuses on disability-friendly environment (adapted infrastructure and social issues) and will include a round table for experience exchange and discussion about the topic and how participants can develop further co-operation. As the city of Gdynia is in relative proximity to the Kaliningrad region, it is expected that there may be more mutual visits within and after the duration of the project. Preliminary timetable of the study tour to Poland is envisioned to be 3-4 days. All logistics and translation will be arranged by Machaon International.

Results: 28 participants in the two international study tours having access to new know-how from European partners, increased capacities and skills to help to PWD and can build further co-operation with them.

Activity 1.4 Information campaign and 3 training sessions for volunteers

A range of activities will focus on engagement and support of volunteers helping people with disabilities. Historically, ordinary people in Russia have limited contact with people with impairments and lack the necessary skills and understanding how to communicate and assist them. Often, prejudice and ingrained stereotypes prevail over personal experience and empathy. Therefore, the proposed project plans to run an information campaign to attract volunteers in the pilot municipalities (esp. through social media) and to offer suitable training and guidance for people willing to accompany individuals with disabilities as companions on trips and in workshops. The training will not only demonstrate that volunteering is not one direction help to those with disabilities, but serves as a source of mutual benefits to healthy people as well, providing them with rewarding ways to work with those experiencing some sort of physical or cognitive limitation and make an enduring difference in the whole community (municipality).

During the duration of the project, at least 3 training sessions (one session consist of 3 days of training) will be organized for people interested to become volunteers (50 persons, with emphasis to lure younger people). The lead applicant will prepare the structure and curriculum of the training, so this can be replicated in any municipality in the future. A similar volunteer programme works excellently in Prague, and the project team will study experience of NGO Asistence, o.p.s. from the Czech Republic and receive consultations from them in order to implement it in the Kaliningrad region in the best possible way (linked with Activity 1.3) Part of the training will have similar elements as the training programme in Activity 1.2 (rules of communication, the Russian legal and regulatory framework, technical means and facilities available for use when dealing with PWD, etc.). However, it will also include special section about how to provide a kind of volunteer support and face-to-face contact with PWD what is especially important in the post-pandemic period.

The training will be tested and about 50 volunteers are anticipated to be trained and available for the help in other activities in the project. In particular, they will be engaged in organisation of AURA events as well as they will be able to accompany PWD to cultural and social events (exhibitions, concerts, theatre performances, museums, cafes, etc.) and other free-time activities (i.e. walking to enjoy nature or to relax in the countryside). In this way volunteers and PWD may have a better possibility to get to know each other. As a final output, the training handbook and guidelines for volunteers with practical cases from the project will be produced at the end of the project and disseminated to other CSOs and municipalities.

Results: At least 50 people trained and involved as volunteers to support PWD and their family members accompanying and assisting PWD after the pandemic period. Furthermore, an online matching system to establish and to maintain contacts between PWD and volunteers will be developed by 2 municipal authorities.

Activity 1.5 Small grant programme to support accessible physical environment and barrier-free facilities

The project recognises the need for investing into barrier-free infrastructure and technical equipment adapted for people with special needs such as access ramps, handicap toilets, etc. On the other hand, the project has limited possibilities to make larger investments into physical accessibility for socially-important buildings and other important infrastructure. Therefore, this activity strives to channel financial resources in the form of small grants and expert advice to those active stakeholders who wish to improve either existing facilities and adapt them to people with special needs or extend their activities encompassing services for PWD in rural municipalities in the Kaliningrad region. Special attention is paid to create an accessible and suitable environment in such places which offer suitable work and leisure opportunities for PWD and act as a model for integration of PWD in the community life. In particular, the project targets and promotes small social entrepreneurs or institutions which are willing also employ PWD and businesses where already people with disabilities work or can directly benefit from their services.

The potential recipients of small grants to be awarded to improve the physical accessibility of socially-important infrastructure were already pre-consulted. As it is difficult for most entrepreneurs and other stakeholders to sufficiently understand what is needed to serve people with disabilities due to lack of experience and contact with PWD, the selection of grant awardees is a result of a lot of joint work and intensive dialogue between AURA and each potential beneficiary in order to create a detailed work plan and budget calculation. In the process, the following proposals to support an accessible physical environment and barrier-free facilities for a total sum of 35,000 EUR are being considered:

1) Adaptation of existing ceramic craft-centre with possibilities to organise ceramic workshops for PWD (beneficiary – individual social entrepreneur). The grant (6,800 EUR) will cover renovation of the workshop and fitting it with necessary adaptations for PWD. The adapted craft centre can provide a job for one person with disability and will host 10 workshops with participation of 12 PWD as part of Activity 2.1.

2) Workshop for sewing to be equipped with sewing machines and accessories adapted for PWD (beneficiary – NGO). The grant (1,800 EUR) will cover purchase of necessary equipment and other items necessary for space adaptation. The workshop will offer vocational training for 14 PWD within Activity 2.3.

3) Improvement of physical accessibility to the Museum "Old German School Waldwinkel" (beneficiary – NGO). With the grant (4,500 EUR), handicap toilet, wider doors, construction of trails and new excursion programme for PWD will be supported. The museum will be visited by PWD participating in Activity 2.2.

4) Extension of amenities at the centre of social and rehabilitation services in Gusevsk (beneficiary – NGO). The grant (4,200 EUR) will fit the centre with handicap toilet and shower room. The centre will be able to host PWD and elderly (possibly 52 individuals for week) in adaptive physical exercises and special gymnastics which are led by a qualified instructor on a regular weekly basis (co-financed from the regional budget).

5) Extension of sport amenities in Polesk (beneficiary – NGO). With the grant (5,500 EUR) equipment (i.e. wheelchair adapted for sport activity) and room adaptation for table tennis for PWD and elderly will be acquired. These people will get an opportunity to take part in this sport activity on a regular basis.

6) Creation of conditions for boat trips with wheelchair users at the water-sports club in Polesk (beneficiary – individual social entrepreneur). The grant (6,400 EUR) will cover construction of a berth and platform with a vertical electric lift and a suitable path to the river. The PWD will be instructed by a Paralympic trainer.

In addition, about 5,800 EUR will be distributed to other barrier-free infrastructure such as access ramps and handicap toilets for 2 coffee shops. Furthermore, a wheelchair-adapted microbus will be purchased by AURA (it will be only partly financed from the project) to be used for transport of PWD taking part in the individual activities of the project as well as social taxi for PWD on demand serviced by other CSOs and organisations in the Kaliningrad region.

The activity is coupled with training of staff and expert consultations, in which also different organisations will be helped to create their plans for adaptation of their buildings and infrastructure for PWD and to attract financial support from state and regional social programmes for suitable measures and adapted facilities allowing easier physical access and movement for PWD to different kinds of services. All above-mentioned beneficiaries will also participate in the implementation of activities under Work package 2 carried out in the Kaliningrad region.

Results: An accessible environment in 8 locations which will offer suitable educational, work and leisure opportunities for PWD and act as a model for integration of PWD in the community life.

Activity 1.6 Creation of 2 inclusive gardens (benefiting 900 schoolchildren and 40 PWD)

One of the specific initiatives to be supported by the project is creation of two inclusive gardens with greenhouses adapted for PWD, i.e. they will be made accessible for such people and operated by them (the idea is still new in Russia). Gardening offers many benefits to our environment as well as to those practicing it. It provides nutritious goods and is often a source of relaxation for most. In sum, gardening positively affects overall human well-being, both physical and mental health. However, this pastime activity, though very beneficial, requires a lot of bending over, pulling and other very physical movements, thus making it difficult and sometimes impossible for people with disabilities. On the other hand, when the garden is adequately adjusted, it can serve its purpose also for PWD. In this respect, the project builds on positive experience of the Center for Inclusion and Social Services (Croatia) which implemented the „Greenhouse Vegetables Production“ project financed by the European Union under IPA IV. Component – Improving Labour Market Access of Disadvantaged Groups. The Croatian project inspired the idea to incorporate training gardens with greenhouses adapted for PWD in the proposed project in Russia and the Croatian colleagues will be consulted at the inception stage in regard to consider technical requirements, operation and plan of educational activities in order to avoid possible mistakes (Activity 1.1). Machaon Int. will help AURA to organise productive cooperation with Croatian colleagues and also share own experience.

Both inclusive gardens with a greenhouse adapted for wheelchair users and people with mental impairments will be erected in two inclusive boarding schools in the region - one in Gusev and one in Guryevsk municipalities. They will serve for educational as well as therapeutic purposes. Herbs and vegetable will be grown in the gardens for local use or for sale (generating savings by reducing food costs and revenue for maintenance), however the main purpose of the gardens is to provide school children as well as other interested people with meaningful work activities helping them increasing their self-esteem and gaining practical work experience leading to increased skills and employability. The process will be supported by volunteers who alongside assisting the disabled can work and learn about gardening. The model gardens with a greenhouse can serve also for showcasing business opportunities for the future.

A representative of AURA already visited both locations, arranged meetings with directors of both schools as well as with technical specialists from a local factory producing greenhouses, and created and agreed with them a preliminary plan and budget for the activity. The grant will cover alongside the construction of 2 greenhouses for vegetables also construction of raised beds for growing salads and herbs (including irrigation system), purchase of ergonomic tools for gardening, quality soil, fertilizers, seeds, etc. It is envisioned that the experience will be captured in an easy-to-read manual how to build inclusive gardens for PWD and how to integrate them in the educational process. This activity also includes special training for educators (from both schools) and volunteers about sustainable gardening and about inclusion of PWD in the garden's operation (future coaches/supervisors responsible for PWD and schoolchildren doing gardening). Each trained garden supervisor will prepare rules of conduct and timetable of use for the garden. The established inclusive gardens with greenhouses adapted to PWD can serve as model for potential business opportunities for the future.

Results: 2 for Russia innovative inclusive gardens created serving educational as well as therapeutic purposes integrating education provided to 900 school children as well as to at least 40 PWD who gain opportunity for meaningful work activities helping them increasing their self-esteem and gaining practical work experience leading to increased skills and employability. Moreover, such accessible gardens offer great opportunities for PWD to leave their homes and pursue meaningful pastime activity even during a pandemic.

Activity 1.7 Creation of conditions for more inclusive and accessible bird-watching

Bird-watching is a popular leisure activity that connects people closer to nature, provides a therapeutic, relaxing and rewarding experience that comes with a wide range of healthy benefits (i.e. improving cardiovascular health). Kaliningrad region, especially its seacoast, has a lot of unique locations to watch wild birds, however these are so far inaccessible for PWD (especially wheelchair users). Therefore, the project will support a set of actions that will contribute to the creation of conditions for more inclusive and accessible bird-watching. These actions led by AURA include the following components:

- 1) Construction of a wheelchair-friendly trail with bird-watching lookout tower and an observation hide for organisation of excursions for PWD in the Curonian Spit national park (12,000 EUR sub-grant);
- 2) Purchase of bird-watching equipment (i.e. binoculars, telescopes) to be provided for excursions;
- 3) Training of local guides and educators from national park staff or interested individuals (e.g. volunteers) to lead excursions and tours including ones for people or children with disabilities;
- 4) Creation of 5 bird-watching excursion programmes for children and adults with different forms of disabilities and publication of informational and methodological materials for the organisation of bird-watching with the participation of PWD.

This activity is then followed by Activity 2.2 (rehabilitation programmes for PWD including bird-watching excursions). The facilities and publication for bird-watching will be also of interest to the general public and become a meeting point of PWD with other users sharing common hobby and recognizing that the disability is not a barrier. The activity will be partly co-financed by NGO Coalition Clean Baltic (Sweden).

Results: The activity will lead to creation of a model wheelchair-friendly bird-watching facility, which does not only serve PWD, but will be a significant contribution to better site management channeling visitors interested in bird-watching into suitable observation spots minimizing the impact of disturbing waterbird populations. It will allow for innovative methodology and guided excursion programmes to be used in the organisation of bird-watching including the participation of people with different forms of disabilities. Furthermore, an easy-to-read info-material for excursions as well as all information on a web-site will be available to Russian-speaking bird-watchers and conservation specialists in all CIS countries. It is anticipated that at least 15 open-air excursions for 220 children (including 70 children with different kinds of disabilities) will be arranged (Activity 2.2) and 30 specialists of 2 regional protected areas and 2 environmental education centers increase their capacities to organise environmental educational programmes for PWD.

Activity 1.8 Promotion of disability-friendly municipalities

All existing and newly created facilities, services and programmes for PWD in the pilot municipalities will be mapped, described in texts and accompanied by photo content under the supervision of AURA to create a overview map and information bulletin about them, so PWD can easily find these information. All the information collected will be presented on the web-sites of AURA and other stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries who are willing to promote facilities and services for PWD. The overview map will be also prepared in a form of a leaflet to be available at information kiosks and participating facilities.

The project recognises that in any disability-friendly municipality it is necessary to provide extra attention to issues of PWD in the pandemic and post-pandemic period. Alongside direct involvement of AURA in consultations and psychological support service for PWD, it is expected that in at least 1 municipality psychological support service via call center and emails will be established. The municipal authority will provide staff and salary. AURA will help with suitable training of staff and provision of adequate equipment for the service. The call center will also be an official source of information about all issues linked to PWD in the pilot municipalities in the Kaliningrad region.

Results: Map and information about facilities and services for PWD developed and presented on the web-sites of AURA and other stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries and in form of a leaflet. Psychological support service via call center and emails will be established.

Work package 2: Improvement of emotional state of PWD by creating positive feelings and facilitating psychological rehabilitation

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has huge negative impact on vulnerable groups of population in Russia, and among those disproportionately affected are people with disabilities. In the circumstances of a pandemic, the interaction of people with each other and with the environment in which they live becomes limited. The regime of self-isolation and restrictions on the movement of people inflicts even more limitations and psychological pressures on PWD and their family members who are forced to spend involuntarily most of their time in a very confined space. It is crucial that in the pandemic as well as in the post-pandemic period these people are provided with sufficient external assistance (e.g. by volunteers) and socio-psychological rehabilitation opportunities in their surrounding area, namely in the municipality they reside. Therefore, special activities were scheduled in the project to empower and make PWD and their family members happier during and especially after the pandemic and open new opportunities in their further life. The project will organize the following social-rehabilitation and education programmes for PWD:

Activity 2.1 3 art therapy programmes for PWD in the Kaliningrad region

There are 3 art therapy programmes for PWD to be implemented by AURA scheduled in the rural municipalities of the Kaliningrad region. Each art therapy includes a set of on-line lessons, individual consultations and about 10 outings or work in workshops where participants will learn together with professional artists and from each other about either painting techniques, ceramics, photography or film making. It is important to mention is that both on-line lessons and outings during the art therapy will be co-organized and led by wheelchair users (e.g. Maria Gendeleva – a painter from Moscow, specialists in film making from NGO "Osobaya semya" from Karelia) who are acquainted with special needs of PWD. Some of the art therapy sessions will be carried out in the ceramic art centre renovated within Activity 1.5. (additional sub-grant of 2,400 EUR will be provided to a social entrepreneur for 10 ceramic master-classes). At least 36 PWD are expected to take part. They will be assisted to produce their own paintings, ceramic art objects, photos or films respectively.

Each outing will be organised in a beautiful natural place of the Kaliningrad region with access for disabled people, so-called „area of inspiration“. The ambience of each art therapy set in the friendly environment for pleasant interaction and catering will be arranged by rural entrepreneurs (project beneficiaries) which will participate in the first work package. The paintings, ceramic objects, photos and films created by PWD in the framework of art therapy programmes will be presented at a special possibly open-air event at the end of project as well as will be used in the promotion of disabled-friendly municipalities involved. All on-line art-lessons (at least 45) created during the project will be available on virtual platforms using electronic resources to alleviate social isolation of PWD during possible pandemic and post-pandemic periods and will be further available on the web-site of AURA after the end of the project.

Results: New models of creative social services as art therapies for PWD developed, tested and promoted. 36 PWD happier, empowered and better integrated to society.

Activity 2.2 Life-changing rehabilitation programmes in Kaliningrad region for PWD and their family members

There is a high demand for rehabilitation programmes in the Kaliningrad region. A series of social rehabilitation, educational and relaxation programmes for people with different types of impairments and their family members will be supported through the project. Individual programmes will be tailored to PWD with different types of disability (wheelchair users, blind and sight impaired people, hard of hearing people and persons with mental impairments). AURA with the involvement of 10+ social entrepreneurs, guides and 30+ volunteers trained in the framework of the project will develop and organise 2 rounds of 4 special rehabilitation programmes for PWD with different types of impairments (3-7-days programme for 7 PWD and 7 companions) called ‘Experience of the lifetime’. The overview of all scheduled longer and shorter programmes for about 600 PWD is in the following table:

	Title of the programme	duration	participants	Responsible organisations
1	‘Experience of the lifetime’: 8 special rehabilitation programmes for PWD (14 people in each)	3-7 days	108	AURA
2	7 Bird-watching educational programmes for children with disabilities	5 hours	70	
3	12 excursion programmes for children with disabilities and their family members	7 hours	170	
4	15 excursion programmes for PWD	7 hours	150	ProfiTour (sub-grant 1,500 EUR)
5	Regular rehabilitation sport training in special gymnastics and table tennis in 2 municipalities		80	2 NGOs (co-financed by state)
6	Regular water sports training – at least one a week during summer led by a paraolympic sportsman		10	NGO and social entrepreneur (sub-grant 2,500 EUR)
	Total number of participants in the Kaliningrad region for the period 2021-2023		600	

Results: Novel rehabilitation and relaxation programmes for PWD developed, tested and further promoted. 10+ social entrepreneurs, guides and 30+ volunteers increased capacities to provide quality services to PWD; 600 PWD happier and empowered.

Activity 2.3 Dedicated sub-grants to enhance skills and improve employability of PWD in Kaliningrad region

Following three initiatives were already identified, their work plans and budgets discussed:

1) Social entrepreneur will receive a grant of 6,800 EUR for preparation and arrangement of 2 courses (each 72 hours) for 30 local tourist guides (including 15 PWD), including development and presentation of a new modul „Extra features of excursion services for PWD“ and information about main tourism attractions in Kaliningrad region and specially in 2 pilot municipalities. The course material will be recorded and available on-line for other interested people (esp. PWD).

2) NGO „ProfiTour“ will receive a grant of 2,300 UR for organisation of 12 excursions to industrial plants for 120 PWD and companions and training by an artist and support for 10 home-based craft makers (making souvenirs from amber).

3) Gusev branch of All-Russian Association of PWD will receive a grant of 2,900 EUR for organisation of sewing courses for 14 PWD (216 hours) and support of creation 5 working places at home.

Results: 12 excursions to industrial plants allow PWD and company managers to see possibilities for PWD find jobs in the industrial sector. All training and material support increase self-esteem and give practical experience to PWD leading to increased skills and employability. 20 part-time jobs (e.g. tourist guides, sewing, making souvenirs from amber at home) for PWD or their family members to be created in the Kaliningrad region.

Activity 2.4 Sub-grants to CSOs dealing with PWD in 5 regions of Russia

A vital part of the project is the collaboration with CSOs working with PWD in other Russian regions through joint capacity-building and provision of financial and methodological support to them. AURA already identified 5 CSOs with an interest to participate in the project and discussed preliminary working plans with them. Each CSO has unique approaches and local experience to support PWD, hence by supporting these CSOs the project enables effective networking and mutual experience exchange.

1) With the support of the project, NGO "Resource Center for Support of People with Disabilities "Life without Barriers" (Belgorod) plans to start the organization of accessible inclusive tours in the Belgorod region. From the sub-grant, at least 6 tourist sites will be adapted and ready to host people with disabilities, at least 60 people with disabilities will improve their knowledge of their native region, get acquainted with its sights and improve their well-being due to new emotions. 6 tour itineraries featuring inclusive tourist routes which are comfortable for tourists with disabilities will be prepared and actively promoted.

2) The resource training center "Accessible Environment" (Voronezh) plans to co-finance the creation of a training center adapted for people with disabilities, to provide vocational training for professions that are in demand and well paid in the labour market. From the sub-grant and with co-financing from Voronezh city grant, 5 complex training programmes will be created for the five professions of a UV printer operator, a milling cutter operator, a 3D printer operator, a welder and a metal painter. The training material will be recorded on video camera and available on-line for other interested people (esp. PWD). At least 50 people will be trained with theoretical and practical exercises and it is anticipated at least 25 people will find suitable employment. These professions are constantly in demand in manufacturing companies of Voronezh, which indicated readiness to employ qualified workers, even if they have a disability. At the same time, these companies are also ready to adapt workplaces and technological processes for effective and safe work of an employee with a disability. Successful principles and approaches applied in Voronezh can be used and disseminated in other Russian regions as well.

3) The Autonomous Nonprofit Organization "Osobaya semya" (Special Family) from Karelia plans to better study accessibility requirements of tourism infrastructure facilities to the needs of people with disabilities. From the sub-grant, it intends to create an inclusive tour for families with disabled children in the city of Petrozavodsk and its region and then to conduct the tour for at least 14 PWD and their family members. It will also create a study film about tourism opportunities for guests with disabilities in the Republic of Karelia. The film should allow not only to present the good examples of inclusive tourism in the republic, but also help launching the necessary processes at the policy level and contribute to the PR campaign in order to attract wider public attention to problems of PWD and exemplify the economic and social potential of inclusive tourism in the Republic of Karelia.

4) The Autonomous Nonprofit Organization "Obschestvo bez barierov" (Society without Barriers) plans to start the organization of accessible inclusive tours in Buratia with special focus to meditation, cultural inclusion and relaxation in nature. From the sub-grant, at least 10 social-rehabilitation programmes (1 day trips) for 190 PWD will be organized in cooperation with the Old Believers Center in two villages of Desyatnikovo, Tarbagatai and near the Baikal Lake.

5) The Regional public organization of PWD "Integration" from Kazan in Tatarstan plans to develop dedicated courses and rehabilitation tours for PWD in the region. From the sub-grant, at least 2 courses on web-site development using wordpress platform (20 hours) and E-commerce applying methods of promotion through social media and SEO (20 hours) will be organized. 5-6 social-rehabilitation tours for 60 PWD using existing infrastructure and services of partner tourism organizations and museums will be arranged.

Results: 5 CSOs supported in other regions of Russia, about 50 people trained and potentially 25 employed in highly demanded professions in Voronezh region, a special film about accessible tourism made in Karelia. Representatives of all five CSOs trained in social rehabilitation programmes for PWD and 230 participants in such programmes from the five regions become happier and empowered.

2 adapted courses on web-site development using wordpress platform and E-commerce applying methods of promotion through social media and SEO accessible for PWD across Russia.

Work package 3: Sharing and disseminating lessons learnt with other CSOs and organizations dealing with PWD across Russia and internationally

The set of activities under Work package 3 are designed to strengthen CSOs and other stakeholders to create an effective social services system for PWD across all the levels and to catalise the social activism in favour of PWD in Russia. They are aimed at sharing the unique project experience and lessons learnt through dedicated promotion and dissemination with other CSOs and municipalities across Russia and improvement of networking and productive exchange between organisations helping PWD.

Activity 3.1 Round tables in 5 regional capitals

In the final phase of the project, 5 round tables will be organised by each regional CSO and in cooperation with the project leader AURA in administrations of 5 regional capitals (Kazan, Belgorod, Petozavodsk, Voronezh and Ulan-Ude) with participation of about 100+ participants of key stakeholders (regional, district and municipal authorities, protected area managers, entrepreneurs in tourism and recreation, museums, NGOs, inclusive schools and state institutions providing services for PWD). Main issues addressed by the round tables are: 1) presentation of the results and lessons learnt during project implementation in different Russian regions and dissemination of best practices to other regions; 2) discussion about effective approaches and challenges with providing post-pandemic support to PWD, promotion of new approaches to social rehabilitation and educational programmes for PWD and the concept of disability-friendly municipality.

Results: At least 100 stakeholders in 5 regions will be informed about real practical examples how to provide effective support to PWD in the post-pandemic period at the local level. New co-operation opportunities for the creation of effective social services system for PWD identified in 5 regions, new ideas how to better support PWD created and how could be further included to project proposals or regional programmes. 5 CSOs enabled to continue their work to support PWD and improved networking among those CSOs and their stronger influence on municipal and regional policies related to PWD issues in 5 regions.

Activity 3.2 Final conference of the project

In addition to 5 round tables organised in administrations of 5 regional capitals, a concluding final conference for about 40+ participants will be organized by AURA in Kaliningrad in co-operation with Machaon International. It will be used as a vehicle to promote the project results to other organisations responsible for the development of pertinent opportunities for education, employment and social integration of PWD in Kaliningrad region such as relevant ministries, scientific bodies, state social services centres, inclusive schools, NGOs, museums, protected areas, district councils and municipal authorities. Most active volunteers, social entrepreneurs and journalists will also take part in the conference.

AURA as well as beneficiaries will present results of their work to support PWD in the post-pandemic period and will discuss the issues of effective approaches and challenges with supporting PWD in the local context, problems and perspectives of development of disability-friendly municipalities in the Kaliningrad region and suitable approaches to induce volunteer movement drive. In the framework of the conference participants will develop a joint memorandum to be sent to relevant ministries.

Important part of the conference will be the presentation of creative works from participants of the project, slide-show of events and moments unusual for wider public (i.e. water sports for PWD, plain air outings, wheelchair users in inclusive gardens, etc.). All conference materials and project report will be presented among others on AURA's and Machaon web-sites. The on-line broadcasting of the conference will be organised, so CSOs and other stakeholders supporting PWD as well as PWD in different Russian regions will have possibility to follow it and to get new knowledge. The concluding project publication "PWD-friendly municipalities" (500 copies), handbook for volunteers (300) will be developed, printed and widely disseminated. Copies of the publication will be provided to all conference participants as well as to other interested stakeholders.

Results: Thanks to demonstration of effective approaches, greater political urgency for better services for PWD and a more clear vision of mechanisms how to create a disability-friendly environment at the level of municipality recognized as well as increased motivation to help PWD by 30+ stakeholders and higher level of funding for PWD. 5 regional CSOs and 25+ other stakeholders exchanged newly acquired know-how and experience and better prepared to provide quality services to PWD. Contribution for incorporating PWD needs into regional development agenda, strengthening social entrepreneurship and volunteer activity to support PWD in the Kaliningrad region.

In addition to conferences and round tables targeted to professional audiences, the project team plans to organise **PR events** presenting project results to the wider public. The PR events will be aimed to raise public awareness and acceptance needs of PWD and catalise social activism to support PWD (i.e. through volunteer assistance or donations). The format and venues of PR events (e.g. exhibitions of project

achievements, small inclusive festivals, etc.) will be identified later and financial means for their arrangement are planned within the budget contingency reserve.

Activity 3.3 Webinars “Development of opportunities for rehabilitation, education, employment and social integration of people with disabilities during the pandemic and post-pandemic periods”

4-5 webinars will be organised by AURA and 5 regional CSOs to ensure the experience of each partner gained during the project as well as outside of project is disseminated to grassroots CSOs and other stakeholders throughout Russia. The format of distance learning is very effective and cheap and helps to involve many people from other Russian regions. It is expected that the webinars will attract about 100 representatives of CSOs helping PWD, municipal, district and regional authorities, social entrepreneurs, PWD from at least 50 regions of Russia. The preparation of the webinars will include identification of participants, selection of speakers, preparation of presentations and other accompanying materials, technical arrangements through for instance distance-learning platform e.g. Zoom.

Results: At least 100 local and regional CSOs, municipal, district and regional authorities, social entrepreneurs from 50 regions of Russia improve their capacities in development of opportunities for education, employment and social integration of people with disabilities. Horizontal connections between grassroots CSOs from different regions established and will be a basis for future co-operative projects. Stronger network of CSOs with a clear vision and novel ideas how to create a rich system of services for PWD at municipality level.

Main studies conducted in view of defining the scope of the action.

The proposed project addresses the issues faced by many PWD exacerbated by the current coronavirus crisis and builds on positive experiences and achievements of the applicant (NGO led by a proactive woman in a wheelchair) in the Kaliningrad region in the recent years. Thanks to the initiatives and follow-up activities of the applicant as well as other CSOs, Kaliningrad region started to position itself as one of the welcoming regions for PWD in Russia.

As part of the preparation of the proposed project, a survey was conducted in four municipalities of the Kaliningrad region – Polesk, Gusev, Guryevsk and Neman. All four municipal authorities have a significant number of people with impairments, so the survey looked at the level of services and adapted infrastructure provided for the PWD in each municipality. There are major differences and different level of progress and needs in each municipality surveyed. In any case, many stakeholders at the local level were identified which have a desire to develop adequate infrastructure and services for PWD and to engage these people in social activities and improve conditions for their employability and recreation. In general, all these stakeholders need guidance and improved understanding how to deal with PWD and how to meet their needs.

The applicant has been cooperating with various similarly focused CSOs in other regions for several years. Within this collaboration, the applicant took part in the project “Comparison of the level of inclusion of PWD into the society in large and small cities examining their barrier-free environment”. The project included in-depth research on issues and challenges faced by PWD and accompanying persons. The study based on an online questionnaire and expert interviews carried out in three regions of Russia in spring 2020 provides informed overview about difficulties and barriers perceived by PWD due to the fact that many of their special needs are insufficiently met. The collected data from the research underpin the proposed project.

After winning the concept note, the lead applicant has led more detailed consultations with relevant stakeholders in the Kaliningrad region, so the proposed activities, outputs and budget could be designed as accurate and realistic as possible. Also more clarity was made how and which CSOs from other regions will participate. The project team also collaborates with the Ministry of Social Policy of the Kaliningrad Region to increase the effectiveness of the implementation of the state programme “Social Support for the Population” and its two sub-programmes: “Accessible Environment” and “Programme for the Development of the System of Comprehensive Treatment and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities”. There is a mutual understanding with representatives of the ministry that the project is in compliance with the national and regional policies and brings novel ideas and strong impetus to improve the lives of PWD in the whole region. The project has political support in municipalities and region concerned.

The full application does not divert much from the presented concept note, but some formats of activities were altered. The 4 seminars envisioned for participating CSOs to take place in the Kaliningrad region were changed to the format of webinars and visits to present rehabilitation and education programmes for PWD and practical learning about the concept of disability-friendly municipality is incorporated in the events at the inception stage and after the concluding conference (e.g. 5 round tables in regional capitals). The applicant conducted a survey to identify key stakeholders (target groups) in four municipalities and made preliminary agreements with individual institutions about their role in the project. Not all surveyed actors are equally ready and it boils down that only two municipalities (Polesk and Gusev) will be involved in order to use resources more effectively and concentrate only on the most committed stakeholders which are also willing to contribute themselves, not to be just passive recipients of project support.

After detailed consultations with specialists and drop-out of a linguist from the project team, it became clear that creation of teaching platform for foreign languages for PWD is quite complicating to establish and would be quite expensive to develop and to maintain, so we decided to skip it from the project and reinforced other more realistic and practical for PWD e-learning topics through on-line lessons within Activities 2.3 and 2.4. In addition, after consultations with involved social entrepreneurs and municipal authorities about working programme, it become clear that new cooperation will allow to support more PWD and their family members in Kaliningrad region than planned at the stage of concept development.

2.1.2. Methodology

The project strives to build on current momentum where Russia as well as Kaliningrad region are in the process of extending legal provisions in favour of PWD (e.g. change on legal status of PWD, reinforcement of social services or introduction of social entrepreneurship) and at the same time various stakeholders ranging from the top level at ministries to the level of small local entrepreneurs (esp. in rural tourism) declare their interest and willingness to support further work of the lead applicant and its partners and wish to take an active role in the development of model disability-friendly municipalities in the Kaliningrad region. It must be pointed out that the issue at stake is not only to teach involved stakeholders how to develop physical adaptations required to cater for PWD in the urbanized environment, but to cause necessary change in the attitude and awaken a feeling of empathy to better understand PWD, their special needs as well as to communicate the willingness and desire of PWD to be of benefit to the wider community, especially through employment and other social interactions when given a chance.

The leading approach of the project is to support disability-friendly municipalities in small towns and rural areas of Russia via multi-stakeholder action networks and improved qualification of its members by training, co-operation and effective transfer of know-how from European partners and from among the participating actors. An emphasis is given to enhance institutional capacity and partnerships of key stakeholders in 2 pilot municipalities in the Kaliningrad region, so they can communicate with PWD in a proper and meaningful manner and provide them with necessary services.

In the post-pandemic period, PWD necessitate psychological aid and social rehabilitation. Suitable means for such rehabilitation easing the strain and loneliness from PWD and their close family members are recreational, educational and creative activities which have a plethora of positive effects, because they help 1) change the usual place of living and allow for new social contacts (possibility to interact in a group); 2) change the social role (transition from being cared for to be the active subject of interaction); 3) mitigate the degree of negative impact of the disability and widen the range of life opportunities; 4) increase one's experience and develop new knowledge and skills and 5) expand one's physical space of operation as well as discover one's talents.

Due to lack of physical infrastructure and adaptive devices, many PWD are deprived of opportunities to live a more decent and enriching life. All activities in the project are designed to improve accessibility and physical conditions for PWD in the small towns and rural areas and at the same time to help changing the attitudes of the general public towards PWD which should be seen as integral part of the municipal community.

One of the underlying methodological approaches is to facilitate transfer of know-how and best practices between EU and Russia. This transfer will be attained by the lead applicant and Machaon International by actively engaging the European partners which have a wide-ranging experience with similar actions as planned in the project. The EU partners will be invited to attend project capacity-building events, to provide expert consultations as well as to assist in the organization of the proposed study tours. Each Russian CSO invited to the project has its unique approaches and local experience to support PWD, hence by supporting these CSOs effective networking and mutual experience exchange will be enabled as well as immediate influence on decision-makers and policy-makers by the network of CSOs will increase.

Another important methodological approach applied is active involvement of local people (first of all youth), particularly in volunteer activities supporting PWD. The engagement of young people in volunteer services will be encouraged via organization of informational campaign, training, practical assistance to PWD under guidance of AURA experts and support of an online matching system and of communication between volunteers and PWD at the level of 2 municipalities. The project helps to stir positive emotions and to increase motivation of young people to take part in socially important activities such as assistance to PWD.

The part of project activities related to inclusive tourism development is based on realistic estimates and marketing research provided by professional agencies as well as on practical experience of AURA and experts in inclusive tourism from Kaliningrad region, Republic of Buriatia and Poland. Right positioning of inclusive tourist products and services as well as their effective promotion, first of all through internet, can attract significant numbers of tourists with special needs from Russia and abroad, and contribute to improved accessibility to the region.

To achieve the objectives of the project, alongside implementation of the project activities, the project leader AURA is in need of investing in its facilities, in particular to the renewal of its office equipment. AURA plans to buy 1 laptop, 2 mobile phones and 1 printer to support the work of the project director, manager and assistant. For training, conferences, PR events a big screen and stand will be purchased.

The main problem that project leader AURA as well as other CSOs supporting PWD in Kaliningrad region face in organizing any offsite programmes for PWD is that the region has an acute shortage of buses and minibuses adapted for wheelchair users. They are in high demand both by organizations helping PWD and by PWD themselves. The only way for people in wheelchairs to be mobile is the state social taxi service, which is strictly regulated by the laws of the Kaliningrad region. The capacity of the buses does not allow the entire group to be transported at the same time. There are only 7 seats and space for only 1 wheelchair. There is a long queue to use these buses. NGO Kovcheg has a bus, but the cost of providing bus with driver is quite expensive (from 20 to 30 EUR per hour). Therefore, a special mini-bus will be acquired during the project which will be used for almost all activities as well as additional social taxi for PWD on demand.

Methodologically, the project builds on previous experience gained in other projects supported by the EU. Project partner Machaon International acts as a methodological and training hub for national parks and tourism entrepreneurs since 2008 and has expert capacity in organizing study-tours with the component of demonstrating suitable infrastructure, programmes and materials for PWD. AURA and selected 5 Russian CSOs will have possibility, for instance, to study experience of national parks Šumava (CZ) and creation of infrastructure and programmes for PWD (most of them supported from other EU grants), NGO Assistance from Prague in volunteering and experience of Machaon International in the organisation of inclusive social tourism in the framework of Golden Altai project in Kazakhstan. The project team will communicate with Center for Inclusion and Social Services in Croatia to study experience of the EU-supported project "IPA – Greenhouse Vegetables Production". Very useful know-how and similar experience is available in Northern Poland and close co-operation is expected with Gdynia city council and Fundacja Podróże bez Granic.

The project will closely cooperate with two ongoing EU-supported projects in the Kaliningrad region, "Ark of Kaliningrad" - development of social entrepreneurship for support and rehabilitation of wheelchair users" and "INKuLtur – promoting the participation of PWD in cultural life". The two mentioned projects are operating in or near Kaliningrad city. In contrast, the proposed project focuses on small rural municipalities and supports other needs of people with different types of disabilities. Hence, our project does not duplicate activities of the above-mentioned projects. We plan to share experience and methodologies developed and strengthen all initiatives leading to improved conditions for PWD in the Kaliningrad region.

In addition, the lead applicant is the only organization from Russia cooperating with EASPD (European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities) – an umbrella NGO representing over 17,000 social and health support provider organisations across Europe and across disabilities and promoting equal opportunities for persons with disabilities through effective and high-quality service systems. It is envisioned to strengthen the collaboration with the international NGO in order to better share the experience and best practices internationally through their network of members in relation to assistance to PWD and how to provide sufficient social services during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

All methods and approaches are based on cooperative relationships with other stakeholders. In this respect, the project team will aim at close collaboration with the Ministry of Social Policy of the Kaliningrad Region to increase the effectiveness of the implementation of the state programme "Social Support for the Population" and its two sub-programmes: "Accessible Environment" and "Programme for the Development of the System of Comprehensive Treatment and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities". There is a mutual understanding with representatives of the ministry that the project is in compliance with the national and regional policies and brings novel ideas and strong impetus to improve the lives of PWD in the whole region.

The applicant has been cooperating with various similarly focused CSOs in other regions for several years. Within this collaboration, the applicant took part in the project "Comparison of the level of inclusion of PWD into the society in large and small cities examining their barrier-free environment". The project included in-depth research on issues and challenges faced by PWD and accompanying persons. The study based on an online questionnaire and expert interviews carried out in three regions of Russia in spring 2020 provides informed overview about difficulties and barriers perceived by PWD due to the fact that many of their special needs are insufficiently met, and especially in rural areas and small towns. There is a lack of barrier-free infrastructure as well as decent culture to deal with PWD is poorly developed. The collected data from the research underpin the proposed project and lead to the conclusion that it is crucial not only to teach stakeholders how to develop suitable physical adaptations required to cater for PWD in the urbanized environment, but to cause necessary change in the attitude and awaken a feeling of empathy to better understand PWD, their special needs as well as their willingness and desire to be of benefit to the wider community, especially through employment and other social interactions when given a chance.

In September 2019 AURA conducted an online survey to examine the impact of tourism on the lives and health of people with disabilities. According to the survey results: 65% travel less than once a year, 13% have never traveled and 10% have never left their apartment/city. 209 respondents noted fatigue, lack of impressions, positive emotions, lack of opportunities for comfortable rest, unwillingness of tour operators to organize trips for people with disabilities, lack of offers on the market of tour services and inaccessible tourist environment (35 attractions of the Kaliningrad region and 27 hotels were analyzed and just few of them are accessible for PWD). AURA is one of the first CSOs in Russia which started to organize social tours and rehabilitation programmes for people with various types of disabilities. Such tours which serve as an important instrument for integration and psychological recovery were highly appreciated by the target audience and various stakeholders. The tours of AURA designed for PWD received a number of prestige awards in several competitions, however the level of state financial support for such inclusive tourism is insufficient. It is necessary to draw further attention of the authorities, private sector and the society to the needs of PWD who, just like ordinary people, want to expand one's physical space of operation, change the usual place of living and interact with other people, increase one's experience and develop new knowledge and skills as well as discover one's talents and interests.

AURA initiated and gathered support of many institutions and sponsors from the Kaliningrad region for an innovative project which created a special walking trail "Royal Pine Grove Walkway – to see and to preserve" in the Curonian Spit national park accessible and adapted to PWD. This trail is very popular with PWD, so we decided to extend this initiative in the Curonian Spit national park by supporting the development of inclusive bird-watching facilities and programmes for PWD.

Like many CSOs, AURA cannot afford to have many permanent employees due to the lack of stable funding. However, after over 4 years a team of specialists has been formed. This team is motivated to work in various projects and activities on a contract basis. Preliminary negotiations were held with those specialists about provision of their time and capacity to the project implementation. It is important to note that at least 3 PWDs will be engaged in the AURA's team within the project. The following table summarises the positions operating in the project:

Organization	Positions in the project
AURA	<p>Project director (woman in wheelchair) will be responsible for the overall project guidance and coordination of the project team. She will be directly involved in the development of training modules and arrangement of inception and final conferences, training for stakeholders, volunteers and CSOs, preparation and arrangement of rehabilitation programmes for PWD, writing guidelines for „disability-friendly municipality“ and handbook for volunteers. She will make contacts with decision-makers and consult all stakeholders how to deal with PWD.</p> <p>Personal assistant will help the project director with moving to all project meetings and events and with collecting of all financial and other documents (e.g. attendance sheets)</p> <p>Project manager will be directly involved in the organisation of all events, development of agreements with beneficiaries, stakeholders, partners and control of their implementation, development of programmes and logistics of 2 conferences, trainings, rehabilitation programmes for PWD, creative outings, etc.</p> <p>Coordinators in 2 municipal administrations will coordinate the implementation of small sub-granted projects, involve volunteers, coordinate the contact between PWD and volunteers and support on-line psychological support service. We also assume these coordinators will be able to initiate own events and work more independently after participation in training and study-tours.</p> <p>PR specialist will be responsible for communication and visibility activities, preparation of text content for web-site and social media and for organisation of PR campaign.</p> <p>Technical specialist will assist SMEs and CSOs (beneficiaries of small-grants programme) to create physically accessible environment for PWD (e.g. bird-watching facilities, inclusive gardens, craft workshop, coffee shops, etc.) and provide consultations to all interested stakeholders how to create appropriate amenities for PWD (barrier-free ramps, shower rooms, toilets, etc.) and assist them during their installation.</p> <p>2 artists (one of them is a wheelchair user) will be responsible for organisation of on-line painting courses and 10 outings for PWD.</p> <p>Translator (a wheelchair user) will help to project director with translation of all reports, communication with EU Commission regarding contracts and other issues, preparation of</p>

Organization	Positions in the project
	the English version of the web-site and articles.
Machaon International	<p>Coordinator of capacity-building activities will organise 2 study-tours in the EU and help to find suitable experts able to support AURA in the implementation of project activities related to volunteers, development of services and infrastructure for PWD. As an experienced manager of EU-supported projects, coordinator of capacity-building activities will assist AURA to manage the project, create the communication and visibility plan, agreements with beneficiaries, subcontractors and partners with clear indicators and reporting rules as well as help with development of narrative and financial reports.</p> <p>Guide and translator (RU, EN, CZ and PL languages) will help during the study-tours and communication with expert organisations and European partners.</p> <p>Accountant will made all necessary financial reports.</p>

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) activities are integral part of the project. A more detailed schedule for M&E will be developed during the inception phase and controlled throughout the project. Monitoring arrangements will focus on two areas – assessing project progress and measuring efficiency of individual actions. To monitor the progress of the project, the lead applicant, all partners and beneficiaries (small grants recipients such as CSOs, social entrepreneurs, NGOs) will have to submit to the project director and manager their half-yearly individual internal progress reports informing on progress in their activities and expected outputs as well as reporting on all challenges or problems identified. The project director and manager will provide feedback to these progress reports. Then, a partner meeting will be set up either online (e.g. by skype) or in person during the events with planned participation of the partners. The partner meetings will be used to discuss all issues and challenges in the project, including performance of project staff members, relations with stakeholders, etc. and to agree on follow-up activities and possible solutions if any problems encountered.

The crucial one will be the partner meeting after the first year of the project. It will discuss an after-first year evaluation, which is needed to identify whether all involved entities are in line with the project aims and budget and whether some extra help is required. The after-first year evaluation will be performed in partnership of external experts, for instance from Asistence (CZ) and Gdynia city municipality (PL), who have experience in the field, but are not affiliated with any of the project partners and beneficiaries evaluated. Based on the outcome of the assessment, cooperation contracts for the 2nd and 3rd years with the partners will be made and can include possible alterations or adaptations when necessary.

At the end of the project, final evaluation with help of external experts will be carried out. A questionnaire will be prepared, and each participating entity of the project (organizations and individuals like PWD) will be asked to fill it in and evaluate the effectiveness of the project and impact on their life. The results of the evaluation will be presented at the final conference and integrated into the final publication. Moreover, external evaluation processes are foreseen for actions and EC external evaluation mission will be conducted during the project time. Representatives of the European Commission will be invited to all key actions of the project, receive regular updates, so an external evaluation processes can be organized at agreed time.

Not less important are monitoring activities linked to the assessment of quality and efficiency of individual actions. This will be done by questionnaires and interviews. Each training/workshop/study-tour/rehabilitation programme for PWD will be assessed and a small report and feature article will be prepared. The assessment results will be used in the process to improve individual activities during the project and respond to the needs of participants. Articles and photos of each event arranged in the framework of project will be placed in the project web-site and promoted through social media. Lessons learnt will be formulated in the form of recommendations for further use of methods and approaches used.

The detailed communication and visibility strategy will be developed during the inception phase of the project. AURA and all supported partners will ensure visibility of the action and the contribution of the EU to its funding by a number of means: 1) the EU logo and acknowledgement of EU funding will be duly placed on and relevant information about the project will be provided in all publications (publications, signs and leaflets) and all materials (presentations, press releases, training and conference programmes, etc.) produced and disseminated during the project duration; 2) project's web-site will include the EU logo and other relevant information; 3) the project presentations will take place at different conferences and meetings within and external to the current project (e.g. at regular conferences in other Russian national parks); 4) all infrastructure, facilities and other items purchased with the help of the project will bear the EU logo and acknowledgement of EU funding; 6) all boxes with instruments, equipment, amenities, etc will include the EU logo and acknowledgement of EU funding and 5) the project team will work with media at both national and

and local levels as a matter of priority to promote the local levels as a matter of priority to promote the project.

2.1.3. Indicative action plan for implementing the action

Year 1 (Planned project start March, 2021)													
	Half-year 1						Half-year 2						
Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Implementing body
1.1 Preparation of inception conference	■	■	■										AURA and Machaon with HR, CZ, PL experts
1.1 Execution of inception conference			■										
1.2 Preparation of 2 trainings for stakeholders			■	■					■				Aura and 2 municipal authorities
1.2 Arrangement of 2 trainings for stakeholders in 2 municipalities (4)				■						■			
1.5 Creation of barrier-free facilities and development of programmes for PWD		■	■	■	■	■	■						Aura and 8 sub-grants beneficiaries (SEs, NGOs and 2 NPOs)
1.6 Creation of 2 inclusive gardens (construction of greenhouses, preparation of materials, handbook)				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Aura and 2 NPOs with support of HR sub-contractor
1.3 Preparation of a study-tour to CZ			■	■	■								Machaon, sub-contractors NP Sumava and Assistance (CZ)
1.3 Arrangement of the study-tour to CZ					■								
1.4 Development of training modules for volunteers, arrangement of info-campaign					■	■	■	■					AURA in cooperation with Assistance
1.4 Arrangement of 1 st training session for volunteers								■					Aura and 2 municipal authorities
1.7 Creation of inclusive bird-watching facilities and arrangement of training for 20 conservation specialists	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				AURA and NP Curonian Spit
2.1 2 art-therapy programmes (painting and photography) x 10 on-line lessons each and 2x3 outings			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Aura and NPO Special Family, social entrepreneurs
2.2 2 programmes for 28 PWD and their family members “Experience of lifetime”, 8 daily excursions for 70 PWD, regular rehabilitation sports trainings for 20 PWD				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	AURA and 10 sub-grants beneficiaries
2.4 Creation and arrangement of courses (web sites creation								■	■	■	■	■	NGO Integration (Tatarstan)

and e-commerce)																
2.3 Preparation of training programme for guides courses																Social entrepreneur and AURA
2.3 Preparation of sewing courses and lines of easy to sew textile production																Gusev branch of All-Russian association of PWD
2.4 Preparation and arrangement of 5 courses for special working professions for 50 persons in Voronezh																Resource training centre Accessible Environment
1.8. Preparation and establishment of psychological support service call centre																AURA and Gusev municipal administration

Activity	Half-year 3	Half-year 4	Half-year 5	Half-year 6	Implementing body
1.3 Preparation and arrangement of a study-tour to Poland					Machaon and subcontractors Gdynia city council and Foundation Podróże bez Granic (PL)
1.2 Preparation and arrangement of 3 trainings for stakeholders in 2 municipalities (6)					Aura and 2 municipal authorities
1.4. Arrangement of 2 nd and 3 rd training session for volunteers, establishment of matching system between volunteers and PWD					Aura and 2 municipal authorities
2.3 Arrangement of training programme for tourist guides					Social entrepreneur Korneva and AURA
2.3 Arrangement of sewing courses, establishment of 5 home-based workplaces and development of manufacturing programme, assistance with distribution of production					Gusev branch of all-Russian association of PWD (sub-grant)
2.3. Preparation and arrangement of amber souvenirs making courses, development of easy-to-make line of souvenirs, establishment of 5+ home-based workplaces and development of manufacturing programme, assistance with distribution					Social entrepreneur ProfiTour (sub-grant)
1.6. Preparation and printing handbook, arrangement trainings programmes and field work in 2 inclusive gardens					2 inclusive schools in Gusev and Gurievsk municipalities, Aura

2.1. 2 art-therapies (painting and photography) x 10 online lessons each and 2x4 outings					AURA and social entrepreneurs (I.e 2 cafes)
2.1 Art-therapy programme in ceramics (5 online lessons and 10 master classes)					AURA and craft workshop (SE)
1.7, 2.2 6 programmes for 28 PWD and their family members “Experience of lifetime”, 26 daily excursions for 220 PWD, regular rehabilitation sports trainings for 90 PWD					AURA, 10 sub-grants beneficiaries, trained guides and volunteers
1.8.Preparation of Map and information about facilities and services for PWD and presentation on the web-sites of AURA and other stakeholders and beneficiaries and in form of a leaflet					AURA, 10 sub-grants beneficiaries, MA of Gusev and Polesk
2.4 Preparation of rehabilitation programmes for PWD in the republics of Tatarstan and Buriatia and in Belgorod region					NGOs Integration, Society without barriers, Special family, Life without barriers and inclusive tourism SMEs, museums, other stakeholders in 4 RU regions
2.4 Rehabilitation programmes for 230 PWD in republics of Tatarstan and Buriatia, and Belgorod region and their promotion (film making in Karelia, social and mass media, web-sites)					
2.4 Assistance with employment to 25+ trained PWD in factories of Voronezh region					NGO Accessible environment
3.3 5 webinars “Development of opportunities for rehabilitation, education, employment and social integration of PWD during the pandemic and post-pandemic”					NGOs AURA,, Machaon, Integration, Society without barriers, Special family, Life without barriers, Accessible environment
3.2 Preparation and printing of guidelines PWD-friendly municipalities” (500 copies), handbook for volunteers (300)					AURA and Machaon
3.2 Preparation and arrangement of final conference					AURA and Machaon
3.3 Preparation and arrangement of round tables in 5 regional capitals					NGOs AURA,, Machaon, Integration, Society without barriers, Special family, Life without barriers, Accessible environment

2.1.4. Sustainability of the action

The main long-term effect of the project should be a changed attitude of the majority population, in particular local stakeholders and decision-makers in rural municipalities in Russia, towards people with disabilities. The project increases the number of people understanding the needs of PWD who can then serve as ambassadors for PWD in the society at large. These ambassadors being personal from social services, local authorities, inclusive schools, NGOs, protected areas, volunteers, etc. who can better deal with PWD by acquiring competences and skills and by overcoming the fears and doubts in interaction with PWD. The changed behaviours towards PWD coupled with practical improvements and enhancements in accessibility and services lead to a safer, more attractive and inclusive environment for PWD and for the whole municipal communities. Improved amenities and accessibility to buildings and services are not only beneficial to PWD, but to the entire society, because such accessibility is also useful for elderly people, families with kids in prams, people with temporary limited mobility (e.g. during their recovery period), etc. Moreover, better relationship toward and mutual acceptance of PWD in public spaces and in general everywhere in the municipality can result. The project envisions to attain inner motivation of involved stakeholders (project ownership) to continue to support and interact with PWD after the duration of the project.

Overall, thanks to the diverse project activities about 1,000 PWD and their family members will benefit in various forms and have a real chance to be happier and to get in shape after the COVID-19 pandemic and to be empowered to defend their rights and be more proactive in the society. They will be able to overcome the restricted conditions imposed to them due to the lack of suitable amenities and opportunities for PWD now. In fact, the project offers new choices for PWD and improves the quality of their lives sharing with them a range of employment and leisure opportunities. When people with disability have more choice, many will feel more freedom and inner motivation to actively contribute to the society. When the disabled persons have choice of employment and conditions for their active life and perceive their usefulness and psychological independence, they will generate added value to the society and income for them. With their income, PWD can become also powerful consumers for instance in the services and tourism sectors creating demand for more activities as AURA is offering and then inclusive tourism can grow funded by the paying clients (i.e. PWD and their family members).

The positive changes exerted on PWD and the robust results establishing disability-friendly municipalities are expected to influence further changes in policies and behaviours. The project does not concentrate on large investments for PWD, rather supports a great deal of smaller projects and immediate practical solutions of which the impact will be felt in the pilot municipalities. The project reduces the huge negative impact on vulnerable group of people with various forms of disabilities in Russia caused by the recent COVID-19 pandemic and compensates for its disproportionate effects on them. The proposed project addresses the interaction of people with disabilities with healthy majority and with the environment in which they live. It helps PWD to overcome their constraints and restrictions on their movement and to receive sufficient external assistance (e.g. by volunteers) and socio-psychological rehabilitation opportunities in their surrounding area, namely in the municipality they reside. Therefore, the increased availability of quality social care services and barrier-free environment in a limited area (municipality level) empowers PWD to better contribute to their community.

The project, by supporting young children with disabilities and their families, contributes to these children's social development and well-being teaching them to be proactive agents of their lives. Mostly, people providing day-to-day care to young and adult PWD are women, so the project also boosts social cohesion by engaging more women in the project activities and improves gender balance and fairness.

In addition to face-to-face types of actions, responding to the current circumstances of a pandemic requiring social distance, the project introduces new forms of services adapted to PWD based on online platforms focused on education, mutual communication and psychological aid. The project will create an e-learning platform (via a project website) for PWD with video lessons, for instance, in painting, photography, website design, e-commerce, etc. These educational options will be available also after the end of the project and expand knowledge, skills and competences of PWD in the long term; so they have a chance to find a job (potentially home-based). We assume that the web-based platform will be used by 300+ PWD in Kaliningrad and other regions.

Thanks to demonstration of effective approaches, greater political urgency for better services for PWD and a more clear vision of mechanisms how to create a disability-friendly environment at the level of municipality will be widely recognized in the public domain. When the examples and increased motivation to help PWD by 30+ stakeholders 5 regional CSOs can lead to a higher level of funding for PWD and newly acquired know-how and experience can enhance the provision of quality services to PWD further. Contribution for incorporating PWD

needs into regional development agenda, strengthening social entrepreneurship and volunteer activity to support PWD in the Kaliningrad region.

Risk analysis and contingency plan.

There are various risks associated with the proposed actions.

1) Low level of participation of PWD and beneficiaries

The risk that there will be a low interest of stakeholders and PWD to participate in project activities is minimum as the lead applicant has already approached various potential participants and they are willing to take part. Only proactive stakeholders and selected CSOs will be involved and later supported by small grants. The project leader AURA has attained a strong authority in the region as one of the first CSOs in Russia to organize social tours and rehabilitation programmes for people with various types of disabilities. Such tours which serve as an important instrument for integration and psychological recovery were highly appreciated by the target audience and various stakeholders. The tours designed for PWD were directly supported by the Ministry of Social Policy and the Ministry of Tourism and Culture of the Kaliningrad Region and received a number of awards in several competitions, for example, finalist of the contest "Best Inclusive Practices 2018", Grand Prix "Itinerary of the Year 2019" at the All-Russian tourist award ceremony and nomination as the best project of social entrepreneurship in the field of social tourism at the regional stage of the All-Russian contest "Best Social Project of the Year 2019".

In a similar way, the project leader AURA initiated and gathered support of other institutions and sponsors for an innovative project to create a special walking trail "Royal Pine Grove Walkway – to see and to preserve" in the Curonian Spit National Park accessible and adapted to PWD, so they can explore the nature of the park and see the Baltic sea without physical barriers. This project, in itself unique in Russia, was one of the winners of the annual PROFI awards in 2019, which are awarded to best entrepreneurs and organizations in the Kaliningrad region. All the PROFI awards are handed over by the minister of the economy of the Kaliningrad region and bring strong regional media coverage and recognition. AURA and in particular its leader a woman in a wheelchair become a visible role model for PWD and how such initiatives can enrich the whole community. It is expected that the results of the project and their promotion will strengthen the position of AURA and attract even more funding and political attention towards the needs of PWD.

The history of AURA demonstrates that things can be achieved. It is expected that quality of the project actions and associated PR events will draw heightened public attention to the issues of PWD. This will eventually draw a genuine interest to take part and even contribute financially by others.

2) Experience to manage a complex project

The risk that the lead applicant as a quite young organization can have difficulty to handle the complexities of this EU-funded project is mitigated by the collaboration with NGO Machaon International which has a rich track record in similar projects in Russia and professional staff to advise the applicant.

3) Impacts and constraints of the pandemic

If the COVID-19 pandemic will continue or reoccur, certain activities focused on physical interactions with PWD will be limited and actions adjusted. When the pandemic continues, conferences and most of the training can be shifted into the online format. The online training sessions will bring together experts and stakeholders who can engage in lively discussions, in the development of new ideas and proposals for better conditions for people with disabilities.

4) External pressures

The project activities could be affected by frequent changes of officials and bureaucrats, i.e. a necessity to rebuild relations with new people. Therefore, complications can arise to influence policy changes. Another external risk is also the relationship between Russia and EU. Direct help from the EU and transfer of European experience are not always seen as positive things in the context of EU sanctions and disagreements between the two sides on certain political issues. The external pressures will be mitigated in coordination with EU. However, the risks are not so high as PWD are not a sensitive political issue, rather an issue which can bring both Russia and EU closer together.

5) Financial strains

The project leader AURA and its partner CSOs are in permanent search of funding for its activities. Also for this project, there will be several sources of co-financing. One of the main sources to contribute to the project implementation are the grant of Coalition Clean Baltic and also small grants from local and regional authorities in the participating regions.

The proposed project fosters public-private partnerships, mutual relations and co-operation of key stakeholders (local leaders, entrepreneurs, CSOs, cultural and educational institutions and tourist companies) in rural areas of Russia. In fact, it creates novel forms of interactions between CSOs and local authorities in local public policy-making in Russia, which rarely took place in the past at all. This collaboration is a key element of project sustainability which reinforces the interest to continue with maintaining facilities and providing services to PWD in a disability-friendly manner also after the completion of the project.

The inclusive tourism and rehabilitation programmes for PWD will be further developed and promoted on a commercial basis by social entrepreneurs and organizations from the project, so various PWD, even real tourists with various forms of impairments including foreign visitors can visit Kaliningrad region and take benefit of special facilities and services created with the support from the project. The tours will be actively promoted via websites, social media and through other information channels, so the tours are continued and even expanded after the duration of the project.

All activities of the project take into account their environmental impact. It exerts added benefits to local communities, rural museums and tourism entrepreneurs through sustainable rural and eco-tourism support. The project will carefully use natural and human potential of rural areas in order to organise psychological aid to PWD and their families. The project will provide methodological guidelines to local authorities and CSOs in different Russian regions. The project contributes to the development of local services for PWD (including online learning, tourism services and vegetable production), i.e. reduces the need to travel and import items, reducing directly CO₂ emissions, and promotes sustainable life styles and more considerate behaviour towards the environment.

The project helps to build better appreciation of needs of PWD, opens space for dialogue with local communities, co-operation with European partners and transfer of innovative methodologies which can lead to exchanges of experience and know-how helping to integrate PWD into the society and to improve social care. In addition, the project promotes Kaliningrad region as disability-friendly at the tourist market. The project envisions to attain inner motivation of involved stakeholders (project ownership) to continue to support and interact with PWD after the duration of the project.

Finally, the project is aimed at sharing its unique experience through dedicated promotion and dissemination with other CSOs and municipalities across Russia by publications and a project website (also adapted for PWD). Final outputs include Guidelines for disability-friendly municipality, handbook for volunteers, final event and final report for the interested parties, all presenting practical cases from the project.

2.1.5. Logical Framework

Annex C to the guidelines for applicants

2.1.6. Budget, amount requested from the contracting authority and other expected sources of funding

Annex B to the guidelines for applicants

(i) Experience in similar actions in the past 3 years

Name of the organisation: Autonomous non-commercial organization Development centre of Social and Educational Projects «AURA» Lead applicant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Co-applicant <input type="checkbox"/> Affiliated entity <input type="checkbox"/>					
Project title: "To see and save" - creation of an educational environment for environmental studies on the eco-route "Royal forest" of the national park "Curonian Spit"			Sector (ref. list of sectors in Sectorial experience in PADOR):		
Location of the action	Cost of the action (EUR)	Role: coordinator, co-beneficiary, affiliated entity	Donors to the action (name) ¹	Amount contributed (by donor)	Dates (from..to) dd/mm/yyyy
Kaliningrad region, Russia	88.262	coordinator	Baltcf (The Baltic Sea Conservation Foundation)	80.208	01.04.2018 to 30.04.2019
			Regional partners	8,054	01.04.2018 to 30.04.2019
Objectives and results of the action		The main objective of the project was to raise environmental awareness among visitors including wheelchair users and improve environmental education taking into account the needs of visitors with disability in the Curonian Spit national park. The project resulted in building the disabled-friendly path "Royal Forest" and other facilities for ecological education in the national park. As part of the project, special guidelines were developed and 24 environmental educators were trained to be able to deal with visitors with various forms of disability and handicaps. 10 out-of-school sessions for children with disabilities were conducted. More details are available at: https://anoaura.ru/ecotrope_uronian_spit			

¹ If the donor is the European Union or an EU Member State, please specify the EU budget line, EDF or EU Member State

(i) Experience in similar actions in the past 3 years (Maximum 1 page per action)

Name of the organisation: Autonomous non-commercial organization Development centre of Social and Educational Projects «AURA»					
Lead applicant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Co-applicant <input type="checkbox"/> Affiliated entity <input type="checkbox"/>					
Project title: Discovering the protected world – creating an accessible educational environment in a natural laboratory				Sector (ref. list of sectors in Sectorial experience in PADOR): n/a	
Location of the action	Cost of the action (EUR)	Role: coordinator, co-beneficiary, affiliated entity	Donors to the action (name) ²	Amount contributed (by donor)	Dates (from..to) dd/mm/yyyy
Kaliningrad region, Russia	33,450	coordinator	Fund of presidential grants	30,000	26.11.2018 to 26.11.2019
		co-beneficiary	Local partners	3,450	26.11.2018 to 26.11.2019
Objectives and results of the action		The key objective was to create sufficient infrastructure and suitable conditions for environmental education for children with disabilities at the territory of the Curonian Spit national park. The project has created various adapted facilities for disabled people in nature such as an observation desk and outdoor eco-toilet with wheelchair access, information stands with information provided in Braille for blind people, etc. 150 teachers received additional training to improve their skills for interacting with children with various forms of disabilities and to use new methods of environmental education. Furthermore, 20 educational sessions were held for 344 children with disabilities. Finally, 7 methodological manuals were developed for eco-lessons with children with disabilities in natural protected areas. More information at https://anoaura.ru/project_discovering-the-protected-world			

² If the donor is the European Union or an EU Member State, please specify the EU budget line, EDF or EU Member State

(i) Experience in similar actions in the past 3 years (Maximum 1 page per action)

Name of the organisation: Machaon International Lead applicant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Co-applicant <input type="checkbox"/> Affiliated entity <input type="checkbox"/>					
Project title: Golden Altai – wealth for local development			Sector (ref. list of sectors in Sectorial experience in PADOR):		
Location of the action	Cost of the action (EUR)	Role: coordinator, co-beneficiary, affiliated entity	Donors to the action (name) ³	Amount contributed (by donor)	Dates (from..to) dd/mm/yyyy
Eastern Kazakhstan	389,000	coordinator	European Commission	350,000	25/02/2014 to 31/07/2017
			Regional authorities	39,000	25/02/2014 to 31/07/2017
Objectives and results of the action		The project was aimed to improve the development of nature-based tourism in the remote mountain villages and protected areas in Kazakh Altai Mountains. Its key mission was to initiate and to advance the establishment of tourist services by local residents and organizations. The project has trained over 300 of local people, supported tourist infrastructure and local entrepreneurs, helped with organizations of tours, festivals and destination marketing. An integral part of the project were social tours for families with children with disabilities and orphans. Over 80 people including PWD took part in these special tours. The project contributed to levelling off disparities in regional development and improving the social environment and rural livelihoods. More information available at https://machaon.eu/detail-project/golden-altai-wealth-for-local-development/ and http://www.goldenaltay.kz/en/			

³ If the donor is the European Union or an EU Member State, please specify the EU budget line, EDF or EU Member State

(ii) Experience in other actions in the past 3 years (Max. 1 page per action and max. 10 actions)

Name of the organisation: Machaon International					
Lead applicant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Co-applicant <input type="checkbox"/> Affiliated entity <input type="checkbox"/>					
Project title: Areas of Inspiration			Sector (ref. list of sectors in Sectorial experience in PADOR):		
Location of the action	Cost of the action (EUR)	Role: coordinator, co-beneficiary, affiliated entity	Donors to the action (name)⁴	Amount contributed (by donor)	Dates (from..to) dd/mm/yyyy
Slovakia, Czech Republic, Estonia and Ukraine	320,000	coordinator	European Commission	192,000	01/06/2017 to 30/05/2019
		co-beneficiary	Local authorities and donors	128,000	01/06/2017 to 30/05/2019
Objectives and results of the action		The project had supported mobility of artists and creative people and creation of a network of art-residences in six rural locations with very appealing natural setting – so called ‚areas of inspiration‘. At the same time, these places served as a hub for creative work, interaction and inter-cultural dialogue with local communities, laboratory of waking up aspirations and creativity of young people living in those areas. Main results: 115 artists from 12 countries participated in 12 art events and 200 quality art-works produced and presented; 50 000 + people, 30+ craft masters and 400+ musicians engaged in events supported by the project; new impulses for the development and enhancement of local life in 6 villages were created as well as local people increased their pride of living in the those areas; art objects enriched the rural space and lure visitors; 9 local cultural operators enhanced their capacity by active exchange of skills and experiences far beyond the countries of the project. More information is available at https://machaon.eu/detail-project/areas-of-inspiration/			

Machaon International acts as a methodological and training hub for national parks and tourism entrepreneurs since 2008 and has expert capacity in organizing study-tours (3-4 per year) with the component of demonstrating suitable infrastructure, programmes and materials for PW

⁴ If the donor is the European Union or an EU Member State, please specify the EU budget line, EDF or EU Member State

