

## Austrian National Platform - Funding Model -

Austria's National Platform **Klimaneutrale Stadt** supports 47 large, mid-sized and small Austrian towns and cities in achieving climate neutrality by combining long-term capacity building, strategic planning, innovation funding, and peer learning. It is coordinated at national level by the Federal Ministry for Innovation, Mobility and Infrastructure (BMIMI), in close cooperation with the Climate and Energy Fund and the Research Promotion Agency, and operationalised through three dedicated support organisations, including Salzburg Institute for Regional Planning and Housing, ÖGUT and AustriaTech.

The platform builds on over 20 years of Austrian experience in urban R&I, smart cities, and related programmes. It is aligned with Austria's 2040 climate neutrality target and operates in synergy with the European Mission on Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities.

The core philosophy is to:

- treat cities as long-term partners, not project beneficiaries
- invest in governance, skills, and institutional capacity
- complement this with targeted R&I and deployment funding



**1 EU Mission City**  
Klagenfurt

**10 Large Pioneer Cities**  
Vienna, Graz, Linz, Klagenfurt, St.Pölten,  
Villach, Salzburg, Wr. Neustadt, Innsbruck,  
Dornbirn, and  
**35 mid-sized and small Pioneer Towns**

**Platform Coordination Team**  
Federal Ministry for Innovation, Mobility and  
Infrastructure (BMIMI), FFG, Climate and  
Energy Fund, AustriaTech, ÖGUT, SIR

Total funding mobilised for city-facing calls and programmes over three years  
reached approx. **100–110 million EUR**.

Federal Ministry for Innovation, Mobility and Infrastructure:  
approx. **20 million EUR per year** (2023–2026)

**Climate and Energy Fund:**  
approx. **8–15 million EUR per year**, depending on annual federal budgets

Platform operations are funded separately  
from city-facing calls. Estimated operational  
budget equals **600,000 – 1 million EUR** per  
year. A core team of around 10 people across  
BMIMI, Climate and Energy Fund, and  
agencies contributes to implementation (not  
full-time equivalents).

## Funding mobilized for city-facing activities

### Public-Public Partnerships (PPPs) with large pioneer cities

- **20 million EUR** allocated to 10 large cities (>50,000 inhabitants)
- Duration: 5 years, starting in 2023, following open and competitive call launched in 2022
- Funding is not project-based, but flexible and primarily used for:
  - hiring dedicated staff
  - strengthening internal governance and coordination
  - embedding climate neutrality into municipal decision-making
- Over 50 new staff have already been hired across participating cities
- Ongoing call for new PPPs with large Austrian cities to strengthen cities' governance, R&I and capacities on urban climate resilience (3-year partnerships starting in 2027, with a total budget of EUR 8 million)

### Cities commit to three core ambitions:

1. Piloting climate-neutral neighbourhoods (often 2–3 per city)
2. Transforming municipal governance structures for climate neutrality
3. Participating in structured learning and experimentation, facilitated by platform organisations

### Public-Public Partnerships (PPPs) with small and medium-sized cities and towns

- **3.6 million EUR** budget allocated to 13 small and medium-sized cities (10,000-50,000 inhabitants)
- Duration: 3 years, starting in 2026, following open and competitive call launched in 2025
- A second wave of PPPs involving small and medium-sized cities and towns will begin in 2027 with a €3 million budget (open call ongoing)
- The funding is designed to support implementation-oriented systemic transformation

### Climate neutrality planning for small and medium-sized cities

- **3.2 million EUR** from the Climate and Energy Fund.
- Supports 37 small and medium-sized cities (10,000-50,000 inhabitants).
- Purpose: development of Climate Neutrality Roadmaps.
- Implemented through three competitive calls (2023, mid-2024, end-2024).

### R&I and innovation funding for cities

#### **TIKS - 'Technologies and Innovations for the Climate Neutral City' and related calls**

- National R&I programme active since 2022.
- Annual budget drawn from:
  - Ministry funds (within the **20 million EUR/year**),
  - Climate and Energy Fund (approx. **8 million/year EUR historically**).
- Focus on pilot and demonstration projects, not large infrastructure.
- Cities benefit from a ring-fenced / priority budget line, ensuring they do not compete directly with general R&I applicants.

### Combined R&I and deployment funding (new instrument)

- Launched in 2024 as a special, additional programme.
- **45 million EUR** total:
  - €35 million for deployment and investment,
  - €10 million for R&I.
- Supports combined innovation + implementation projects, particularly in:
  - heating systems,
  - buildings,
  - district-level energy solutions.
- Open to cities and non-city actors (e.g. utilities, energy providers).

## **Future funding opportunities**

Several funding avenues are expected to continue or expand:

- Foreseen continuation of PPPs for small and medium-sized cities.
- Continuation of annual R&I calls with ring-fenced city budgets.
- Potential scaling of combined R&I and deployment instruments, depending on federal budgets.
- Strong emphasis on better alignment with existing regional and national programmes, rather than creating entirely new funding streams.

Renewal of the large-city PPPs is not yet under discussion, as partnerships are only halfway through their 5-year duration.

## **Summary**

Austria's National Platform is characterised by:

- High and stable national funding, fully embedded in federal structures.
- A clear prioritisation of capacity building and governance reform over short-term projects.
- Public-Public Partnerships as the backbone of the platform.
- Complementary R&I and deployment funding to translate capacity into action.
- Professional platform operations with dedicated organisations and staff.

Overall, the model demonstrates that serious investment in people, institutions, and long-term partnerships is a key success factor for enabling cities to deliver climate neutrality at scale.