

Business Enhance ERDF Grant Schemes e-Commerce Grant Scheme

Date: 10/10/2017



Operational Programme I - European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020
"Fostering a competitive and sustainable economy to meet our challenges"
Aid Schemes part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund
Co-financing rate: 80% European Union; 20% National Funds



Introduction

- The e-Commerce Grant Scheme is one of the measures under the Business Enhance ERDF Grant Schemes initiative launched in 2016.
- The initiative has a financial allocation of €51 M and is part-financed through the European Regional Development Fund under Operational Programme I 2014 – 2020 - *‘Fostering a competitive and sustainable economy to meet our challenges’*.
- The e-Commerce Grant scheme addresses Priority Axis 2 of the Operational Programme - *‘Consolidating investment within the ICT Sector’*.

Identified Challenges

- Brick and mortar model is still considered as being the main channel for most businesses in carrying out their commercial activities.
- Whilst the majority of enterprises use internet in their daily operations only 45% of micro enterprises have invested in an online portal.
- A mere 12% of digitally-enabled enterprises claim to conduct online sales.
- Need to increase the number of enterprises conducting online sales, with a resultant increase in turnover from online sales.

Identified Challenges

- 75% of local consumers use the internet.
- 78% of internet users become digital buyers.
- 70% of internet users prefer this medium to attain information on products or services prior to a purchase, whilst only 19% physically visit shops to obtain information prior to buying a product or service.
- 66% of millennials who access the Internet on their mobile, use their smartphones whilst shopping in physical shops for further information on the products of interest and alternative prices.
- Consumers purchasing online twice or three times a month increased to 33% from 20% in 2014, 13% conduct weekly sales online compared to the 3% registered in 2014.

Scheme Details

Scheme assistance

Maximum Grant capped at €5,000, part-financing eligible expenditure up to 50%.

Eligible Undertakings

Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises.

Eligible Actions

The Measure supports investment towards the design, development, implementation and delivery of an e-commerce website and/or a mobile application, or an upgrade of an existing website or mobile application to enable online sales/bookings.

Services should be procured from an external service provider autonomous and unrelated to the Beneficiary Undertaking, registered with the Intermediate Body under the scheme.

The IB issued an Expression of Interest for Service Provider to register under this scheme. The relevant information and Guidelines may be accessed through the website.

Exclusions specific to the e-Commerce Grant Scheme

Undertakings that have an online presence permitting them to conduct online sales through a payment gateway.

Undertakings whose principal activities fall under Computer programming, consultancy and related activities, namely class 62.01 'Computer programming activities', 62.02 'Computer consultancy activities', 62.03 'Computer facilities management' and 62.09 'Other Information Technology and Computer services activities'.

Standard website development and online optimisation that does not include the integration of an online payment or booking system.

Actions resulting in the development of standard mobile applications that do not include the integration of an online payment or booking system.

Assessment, Evaluation and Selection

Gateway Criteria

All applications are required to meet the minimum eligibility requirements set out under the Gateway Criteria to be considered for assessment and appraisal for selection for funding support.

This stage will involve an assessment and a Due Diligence process to establish that these minimum requirements are met.

Complete application form: an Undertaking must submit a fully compiled online application together with all the requested supporting documentation, by the indicated deadline.

Eligibility of Undertaking: the Undertaking is an eligible Undertaking, in line with the respective guidelines and within the state aid parameters.

Eligibility of action and activities: the action for which the applicant is asking for support is eligible and includes eligible activity/activities in line with the incentive guidelines.

Match Financing: the applicant has submitted evidence as to its capacity to match finance the project.

Selection Criteria

The Project Selection Committee will score each application against the set Selection Criteria. Applications will be assessed and evaluated against the selection criteria outlined hereunder, with a total Score of **120 points**.

Extent of need for Support

Excellence

Impact and Sustainability

Quality and Efficiency of implementation

Applications attaining 50% of the total score or higher will be ranked, and funding approval will be issued to applicants in accordance with the ranking order and subject to the budget availability under the respective call.

Applications are to be filled in and submitted online through the link www.sfd.gov.mt/application.

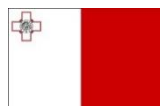
**Next cut-off dates: noon of Tuesday, 31st October 2017;
noon of Friday, 29th December 2017;
noon of Wednesday, 28th February 2018.**

Documents to be uploaded with the application form –

- Quote from Service Provider
- Compliance Certificates
- Financial Statements (where necessary)
- Proof of Private Match Financing
- Supporting Documentation

Measures and Support Division
MEAE

e-mail msd.meae@gov.mt



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