

Business Enhance ERDF Grant Schemes SME Consultancy Services 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 SME Consultancy Services Grant Scheme is one of the measures under the Business Enhance ERDF Grant Schemes 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’*.
- This SME Consultancy Services Grant Scheme addresses Priority Axis 3 *‘Enhancing Malta’s competitiveness through investment in SMEs’*.

Identified Challenges

- SMEs must survive in the highly volatile environment and adapt rapidly to market requirements.
- SMEs do not have the necessary in-house capabilities and depend on external Consultancy Services to conduct studies to assess and evaluate their operations, proposed investments and opportunities.
- SMEs invest in their operational day to day activities and are not always ready to take on soft initiatives to undertake such initiatives.
- Consultancy is critical in enabling SMEs to take timely interventions to support their sustainability through different actions.

Scheme Details

Scheme assistance

Maximum Grant capped at €4,000, part-financing eligible expenditure up to 80%.

Eligible Undertakings

Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises.

Eligible Actions

Consultancy Services for Business Plans;
Feasibility Studies;
Organisation and Operations Review;
Process and Systems Review.

Services should be procured from an external consultancy 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 Consultancy Service Providers 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 perform intra-group activities whose principal activities fall under classes 69 'Legal and Accounting Activities', 70.10 'Activities of head offices' or 70.22 'Business and other management consultancy activities' of NACE Rev. 2.

Actions resulting in the design and production of advertising material.

Overview of Additional Provisions

The project has to have an incentive effect and start of works may only be initiated after the date of the granting of the aid.

The services contracted shall not be of a continuous or periodic nature nor relating to the Undertaking's usual operating costs, such as routine tax consultancy services, regular legal services or advertising or related to the legal and regulatory obligations arising from the nature of the Undertaking's operations and economic activity.

Capability for private match financing the project.

All funding is based on reimbursement of eligible costs.

Approved projects shall be based and operational in Malta.

Assessment 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.

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

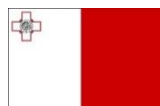
**Next cut-off dates: noon of Tuesday, 31st October 2017;
noon of Thursday, 30th November 2017;
noon of Friday, 29th December 2017.**

Documents to be uploaded with the application form –

- Quote from Consultancy 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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