

Workshop

EU Funding opportunities and Lessons learnt

Date: 31/10/2019



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



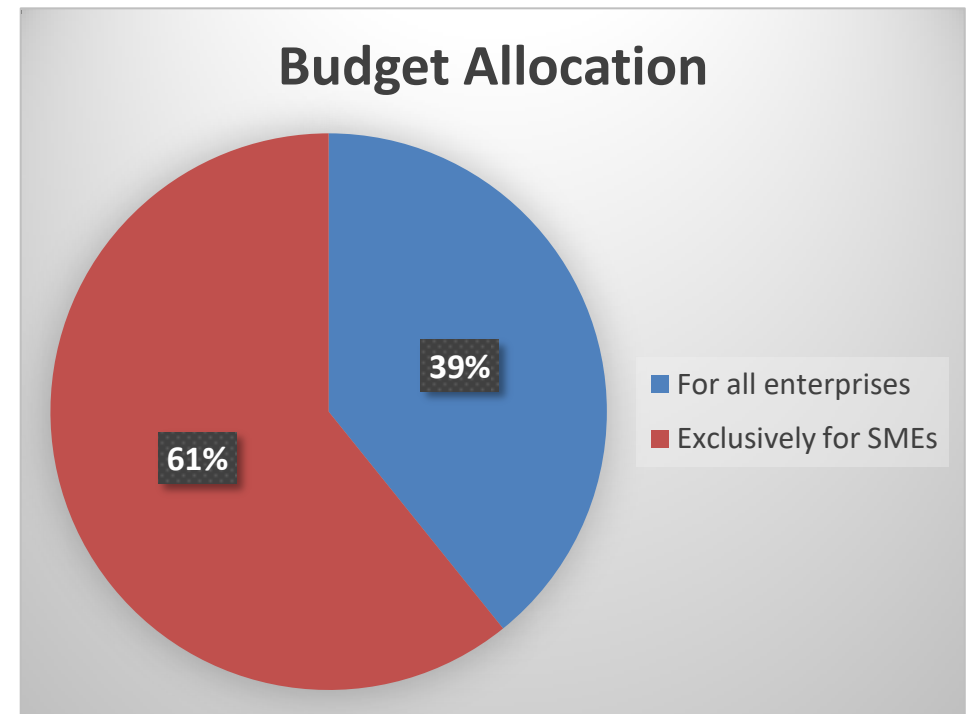
Business Enhance ERDF Grant Schemes

Budget allocation €51M under Operational Programme I

€40.8M EU Funds

€10.2M National Funds

- Priority Axis 1: *Investing in research technological development and innovation*
- Priority Axis 2: *Consolidating Investment in the ICT Sector*
- Priority Axis 3: *Enhancing Malta's Competitiveness through investment in SMEs*



Business Enhance ERDF Grant Schemes

- Initiative launched in July 2016.
- €51 million in the form of non-repayable grants.
- To date, 7 schemes issued under Operational Programme I 2014-2020.
- 6 of these Grant Schemes, with an allocation of €31 million, exclusively address the needs of SMEs.
- At present there are 10 open rolling calls and the online application form may be accessed through the following link www.sfd.gov.mt/application

| | | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Call 1 - Business Enhance RD&I Grant Scheme – Measure 1 Feasibility Studies | | 31 Dec | 31 Jan | 28 Feb | 30 Mar |
| Call 2 - Business Enhance RD&I Grant Scheme – Measure 2 Research & Development Projects | | 31 Dec | 31 Jan | 28 Feb | 30 Mar |
| Call 3 - Business Enhance RD&I Grant Scheme – Measure 3 Investment in Research Infrastructures | | 31 Dec | 31 Jan | 28 Feb | 30 Mar |
| Call 4 - Business Enhance RD&I Grant Scheme – Measure 4 Process Innovation | | 31 Dec | 31 Jan | 28 Feb | 30 Mar |
| Call 1 - e-Commerce Grant Scheme | | 31 Dec | | | |
| Call 3 - SME Growth Grant Scheme | 29 Nov | 31 Dec | 31 Jan | 28 Feb | 30 Mar |
| Call 3 - Start-up Investment Grant Scheme | 29 Nov | 31 Dec | 31 Jan | 28 Feb | 30 Mar |
| Call 1 - SME Diversification and Innovation Grant Scheme | 29 Nov | 31 Dec | 31 Jan | 28 Feb | 30 Mar |
| Call 1 - SME Internationalisation Grant Scheme | 29 Nov | 31 Dec | | | |
| Call 1 - SME Consultancy Services Grant Scheme | 29 Nov | 31 Dec | | | |

Support Grant Schemes

| Grant Scheme | Deliverable | Max. Grant | Aid intensity (up to) |
|---------------------------------------|--|------------|-----------------------|
| SME Consultancy Services Grant Scheme | Business Plan, Feasibility Study, Reviews | €4,000 | 80% |
| e-Commerce Grant Scheme | e-commerce website/mobile app to enable online sales/bookings | €5,000 | 50% |
| SME Internationalisation Grant Scheme | Active Participation in an International Business Promotion Fair | €10,000 | 50% |

Investment Grant Schemes

| Grant Scheme | Deliverable | Max. Grant | Aid intensity (up to) |
|---|--|------------|-----------------------|
| SME Growth Grant Scheme | Investment in Tangible & Intangible Assets | €500,000 | 20% / 30% |
| Start-up Investment Grant Scheme | | €300,000 | 50% |
| SME Diversification & Innovation Grant Scheme | | €200,000 | 50% |

Business Enhance RD&I Grant Scheme

This Grant Scheme addresses the objectives of Priority Axis 1 of Operational Programme I.

Supports enterprises through investment in RD&I under four different measures with a total allocation of €20 M:

- Measure 1 – Feasibility Studies
- Measure 2 – Research and Development Projects
- Measure 3 – Investment in Research Infrastructures
- Measure 4 – Process Innovation

Aid intensities

| Measure | Enterprise Size | Aid Intensity % | Effective Collaboration % |
|-----------|------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Measure 1 | Micro / Small | 70 | |
| | Medium | 60 | |
| | Large | 50 | |
| Measure 2 | Micro / Small | 45 | +15 |
| | Medium | 35 | +15 |
| | Large | 25 | +15 |
| Measure 3 | All enterprises | 50 | |
| Measure 4 | SMEs | 50 | |
| | Large (in effective collaboration) | 15 | |

Application and Selection Process

Planning for your application –

- Identify the potential investment to be considered
- Determine which scheme best fits the planned investment
- Developing a sound and concrete Business Plan
- Robust Business Plan giving due consideration to the respective scheme Selection Criteria
- Obtaining the necessary Compliance Certificates
- Preparing the Financial Statements (*as applicable*)
- Obtaining Permits (*where applicable*)
- Securing evidence of private match financing
- Ensuring that application is complete and that all necessary documentation has been uploaded with application

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**.

Risk Assessment / Extent of Need for Support

Excellence

Impact and Sustainability

Quality and Efficiency of implementation

Applications need to attain 50% of the total score or higher.

Selection Criteria - Quality and Innovation

- Applications should reflect quality throughout, both in the concept of the proposal as well as in the business plan. Quality proposals become more important considering the element of competition as allocated funds diminish.
- Applicants should invest time and resources to submit proposals which are also innovative to have their projects stand out and secure a competitive edge.

2020 Commitments

The initiative remains operational until 31st December 2020.

That leaves around one year to secure commitment of funds.

On this premise, although the awarding of Grants is on a first-come-first served basis, the budget availability becomes a determining factor.

Contribution of the project towards National Priorities

Describe how the project contributes towards National Priorities.

Reference should be made to official documents such as:

- *Small Business Act for Europe / Small Business Act for Malta*
- *Europe 2020 Strategy with the flagship initiative being 'An integrated policy for the globalization era'*
- *Digital Agenda for Europe*
- *Digital Economy for Malta*
- *National Research and Innovation Strategy 2020*

Effective integration of the OP's Horizontal Priorities Environmental Sustainability, Equal Opportunities

Describe how the project's design takes Environmental Sustainability issues and Equal Opportunities in its broadest sense into consideration.

Reference should be made to official documents such as:

- *Sustainable Development Strategy for the Maltese Islands 2007-2016*
- *Sustainable Development Act*
- *Equal Opportunities Act*

Guidelines for Implementation

Eligible expenditure:

- Incurred by the beneficiary;
- Incurred within the period and for actions and activities set out in the Grant Agreement;
- Identifiable and verifiable, recorded in the beneficiary's accounts in accordance with the applicable accounting standards;
- Must comply with the applicable national and EU legislation including laws on taxes, labour and social security; and
- Must be reasonable and comply with the principle of sound financial management.

Procurement:

- Minimum Technical Specifications should be clearly drawn-up in a request for quotations;
- All procurement of goods, works and services is to be made from sources external and unrelated to the beneficiary Undertaking;
- Beneficiaries should ensure that any situations that could present conflicts of interest when undertaking procurement are avoided;
- VAT and other any other taxes are ineligible.

Publicity:

- The IB will publish on its website the name of beneficiaries;
- The IB may request the beneficiary to collaborate in the organisation of events or promotional activities;
- Beneficiaries must ensure the visibility of the intervention assisted under Operational Programme I 2014 – 2020;
- Visibility measures should be proportionate;
- The Beneficiary is responsible to keep evidence of compliance.

Project Results:

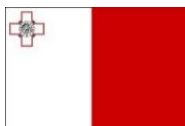
Verifications, whilst assessing the correct administration of the project, shall mainly focus on the achievement of the project results.

Projects need to ensure that any results outlined in the application are achieved by project end and maintained during the durability period.

Failure to meet the set objectives and results will have adverse impacts on the reimbursed amounts.

Measures and Support Division
MEAE

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