



Tourbit



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**Call for Proposals for the
Selection of Tourism SMEs to
be Awarded Financial Support
for the
Participation in the Tourbit Digital
Acceleration Programme**

[Date of publication: 08 February 2023]

[Deadline for submission: 5 April 2023 at 17:00 CET (Brussels time)]

[Apply here!](#)



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of the European Union

The present document set out the rules for submission, selection, and implementation of projects to be awarded financial support under the Tourbit Digital Acceleration Programme. The call uses funds obtained within the scope of TOURBIT project funded by the European Union’s COSME Programme under Grant Agreement no. 101038165.

It is in conformity with the “Guidelines for awarding financial support to third parties” established in relation to the funding programme [COS-TOURINN-2020-3-04](#) (GRO/SME/20/C/07) of the European Commission, under which the Tourbit project is funded, particularly sections 12.1f and 12.2 and the Tourbit Grant Agreement, particularly section Article 11a.

History of changes:

Version	Date	Description of change made
1.0	08 Feb 2023	Initial version
2.0		
3.0		

List of Abbreviations:

- AF = Application Form
- CfP = Call for Proposals
- EC = European Commission
- EISMEA = European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency
- GA = Grant Agreement
- GC = Grant Contract
- SME = Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION	4
1.1 The Tourbit Project	4
2 OBJETIVES AND FINANCIAL PROVISIONS OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS AND THE DIGITAL ACCELERATION PROGRAMME	5
2.1 Call Objectives and General Outline	5
2.2 Financial Provisions	6
3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	7
3.1 Who can participate	8
3.2 Types of Projects and Activities Supported.....	9
3.3 Types of Costs Admitted.....	11
3.4 Administrative and Formal Requirements for Participation.....	11
4. APPLICATION PROCEDURE	12
4.1 Where and How to Apply.....	12
4.2 Deadline for Submissions of Applications.....	12
4.3 Further Information for Applicants	12
5. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS	13
5.1 Check of Proposal Eligibility	13
5.2 Evaluation Criteria.....	13
5.3 Selection	15
6. POST-AWARD PROCESS	15
6.1 Negotiation Phase and Grant Contract Signature.....	15
6.2 Post-Award Administrative Verifications and Required Documentation	15
6.3 Reporting Procedures and Payments	16
7. TIMETABLE	17
8. PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA, CONFIDENTIALITY AND COMMUNICATION	17
ANNEXES	18
Annex A - Application Form.....	18

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 The Tourbit Project

The present [Call for Proposals \(CfP\)](#) is launched in the framework of Tourbit, an EU-funded project supporting the digitalisation of European tourism small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Tourbit's main objective is to foster tourism SMEs' skills and capacity to support their digital transformation and innovation while promoting the resilience and competitiveness of the sector.

The project started in January 2022 and will work on its activities and objectives until June 2024. It has an overall budget of 1,331,570 € and is 75% co-funded through COSME, the European Commission's programme for the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Tourbit brings together the following eight partners from seven European territories:

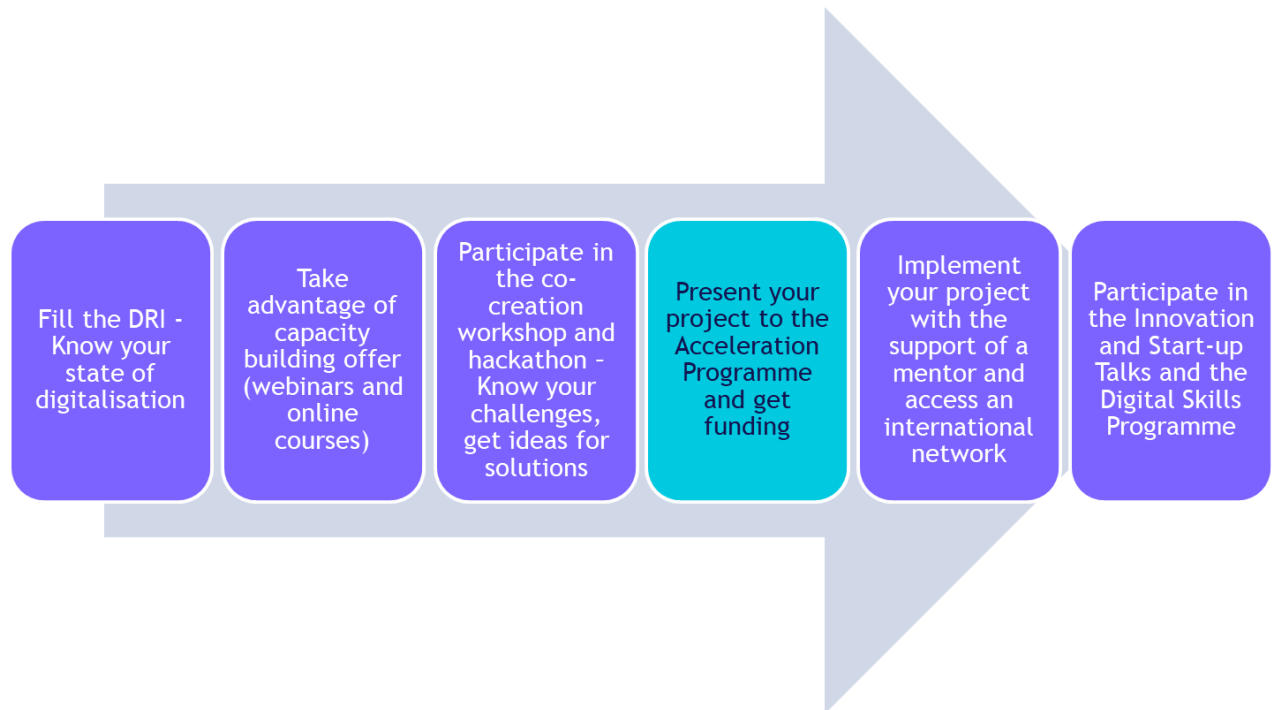
1. [Catalan Tourist Board](#) - Spain (Catalonia) - Coordinator
2. [Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Services and Navigation](#) - Spain (Catalonia)
3. [PARIS&CO](#) - France
4. [ARCTUR DOO](#) (lead of Tourism 4.0) - Slovenia
5. [Cluster hospitality.brussels hosted by hub.brussels](#) - Belgium
6. [Iceland Tourism Cluster](#) - Iceland
7. [Lapland University of Applied Sciences](#) - Finland (Lapland)
8. [NEST - Tourism Innovation Center](#) - Portugal

To support SMEs in their digital transformation, Tourbit sets forward the present CfP. Selected SMEs will be able to participate in the Tourbit Digital Acceleration Programme and thereby have access to knowledge, financial support and a transnational network of experts and peers same as further activities.

The CfP is embedded in a larger set of activities and services offered by Tourbit, which comprise the below offers and represent a comprehensive accompaniment of tourism SMEs in their digitalisation and innovation process:

- The [Digital Readiness Index](#) to evaluate your state of digitalisation
- [Deep Dive sessions](#) to understand applications of cutting-edge technologies for the tourism sector (carried out during May-July 2022, recordings available)
- [Local co-creation workshops](#) (carried out during September and October and 2022 and respectively)
- Transnational online Hackathon (to be launched in March/April 2023)
- The Tourbit Go Digital Skills Programme (to be launched in 2023)
- Innovation and Start-up Talks - online peer-driven workshops (to be launched in 2023)
- The [TourBIZZ](#) - tourism online business community to interconnect tourism SMEs, stakeholders and providers from across Europe

To fully take advantage of the tourism digitalisation pathway for SMEs proposed by Tourbit you are invited to participate in the following activities:



Note that for the purpose of the present CfP it is not necessary for you to take part or have taken part in other Tourbit activities, you are however highly encouraged. **A mandatory activity required before the presentation of your project proposal under the CfP is filling in the Digital Readiness Index¹ to assess your company’s state of digitalisation.** This prerequisite serves you to better understand your digitalisation strengths and weaknesses and know which steps you should take for improvement or in which area of digitalisation you could work on with your project. It is furthermore obligatory for applicants of this CfP to be registered under the [TourBIZZ community](#) and create their profile. The registration is for free.

More information about Tourbit is available on the **project website**: <https://tourbit.eu/>

2 OBJETIVES AND FINANCIAL PROVISIONS OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS AND THE DIGITAL ACCELERATION PROGRAMME

2.1 Call Objectives and General Outline

¹ You can access the Digital Readiness Index online under the following link: <https://dri.aat4.eu/>

There you have to create your account and fill in the questionnaire, whereupon you will receive a report on the digitalisation level of your company.

With the present Call for Proposals (CfP) the Tourbit project aims to select innovative digitalisation projects proposed by tourism SMEs to be awarded financial support and participate in the **Digital Acceleration Programme**.

Under the programme selected tourism SMEs receive direct financial support to implement their proposed digitalisation project. The grant has to be used to finance the support of a service provider such as a mentor, expert, consultant or technology/ innovation provider (see under section 3.3 and footnote 6 for more information). Participation in this programme is completely free of charge for selected SMEs.

The call for proposals is launched on a transnational level in the following territories: **Spain (Catalonia), France, Slovenia, Belgium, Finland (Lapland), Iceland, and Portugal**. Tourbit aims to select a minimum of **62 tourism SMEs, 7-14 SMEs per territory**.

SMEs selected in each of the territories will receive funding from their respective local organisation (see under 1.1), which also functions as a so-called **Local Contact Point** and can be addressed by SMEs on local level.

The programme has a duration of 10 months. This means that SMEs should propose projects, which can be implemented in this time frame. The financial and technical support provided through Tourbit should furthermore be understood as an impulse to initiate or advance the digitalisation process of SMEs and not as an isolated project. It should therefore imply a learning process and represent an impulse which will ideally lead to further digitalisation efforts of the respective SME in the future.

SMEs who present their project to this CfP and intend to receive the funding and participate in the Digital Acceleration Programme are expected to:

- Assess their state of digitalisation through the Digital Readiness Index.
- Be motivated and committed to achieving a change towards digitalisation and innovation within their companies.
- Actively participate in the activities and opportunities proposed by Tourbit.
- Have minimum one person from their staff assigned to follow-up on the implementation of the proposed project together with the service provider and the Local Contact Point. Therefore, they need to dispose of the relevant personnel capacity and availability of time.
- Commit to submitting all requested information on the advancement of the implementation of their project in the established reporting procedures as detailed under section 7.3.

2.2 Financial Provisions

The overall indicative amount available under this call for proposals is **EUR 520,000**. Tourbit partner organisations reserve the right not to award all available funds.

The financial support per individual SME funded under this call is a fixed amount depending on the territory of origin.

- SMEs from Belgium, Finland (Lapland), and Iceland: EUR 9,000
- SMEs from Spain (Catalonia), Slovenia, France, and Portugal: EUR 8,000

The financial support is provided in the form of a **lump sum**, which is a simplified way of cost justification based on the provision of project results and outputs. This means that the expenses of your project will be considered justified if the indicated project results are delivered at a sufficient quality level. The verification of your project activity will therefore be done based on the outputs, deliverables or other evidence that illustrates the completion of activities under your project.

The proposed project needs to be valued at the indicated amount (EUR 9,000/ EUR 8,000) meaning that the proposed activities and project objectives need to be in a cost-efficient relation to the fixed funding amount.

Overview:

Territory	Local Contact Point	Funding amount per SME/ total
Spain (Catalonia)	Catalan Tourist Board AND Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Services and Navigation	EUR 8,000
France	PARIS&CO	EUR 8,000
Slovenia	ARCTUR DOO	EUR 8,000
Belgium	Cluster hospitality.brussels hosted by hub.brussels	EUR 9,000
Iceland	Iceland Tourism Cluster	EUR 9,000
Finland (Lapland)	Lapland University of Applied Sciences	EUR 9,000
Portugal	NEST - Tourism Innovation Center	EUR 8,000
TOTAL		EUR 520,000

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

This section includes all relevant information concerning eligibility criteria structured along the following sections:

- Who can participate (3.1)
- Types of projects and activities supported - What we expect you to do (3.2)
- Types of costs admitted - What you can use the financial support for (3.3)
- Administrative and formal requirements for participation (3.4)

3.1 Who can participate

In order to be eligible for this CfP and the Digital Acceleration Programme, applicants (=companies who apply to the call) need to fulfil the following criteria:

- Comply with the European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC² defining the criteria to **qualify as an SME**.
Therefore, you first of all need to be considered an enterprise. “According to the definition, an enterprise is 'any entity engaged in an economic activity, irrespective of its legal form' (European Court of Justice). It is the economic activity that is the determining factor, not the legal form. In practice, this means that family firms, partnerships and associations or any other entity that is regularly engaged in an economic activity may be considered as enterprises.” (EC SME user guide)
The status of your enterprise as SME furthermore depends on the following two factors: The **staff headcount** (how many people are employed in your enterprise) and your **turnover OR balance sheet total**. The following criteria are established by the European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC:

Company category	Staff headcount	Turnover	or	Balance sheet total
Medium-sized	< 250	≤ € 50 m		≤ € 43 m
Small	< 50	≤ € 10 m		≤ € 10 m
Micro	< 10	≤ € 2 m		≤ € 2 m

In this sense, start-ups, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, same as any other type of SME falling under this definition are eligible to apply to the call.

If you are unsure about your enterprise's status you may consult the SME user guide³.

- Be registered as enterprise in one of the territories of the partnership: **Spain (Catalonia), France, Slovenia, Belgium, Finland (Lapland), Iceland, and Portugal.**
- Fall under one of the following categories:
 - Hotels and similar accommodation (**NACE I5510**)
 - Holiday and other short-stay accommodation (**NACE I5520**)
 - Camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks and trailer parks (**NACE I5530**)
 - Travel agency, tour operator reservation service and related activities (**NACE N79**)

In effect, this requires that your SME's economic activity must be registered under one of the indicated NACE codes⁴ or their corresponding national equivalents in the partnership country.

In case your company falls under a different type of registry (e.g. as is the case for associations in some countries) and does not dispose of a NACE code, is however both

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:124:0036:0041:en:PDF>

³ User Guide to the SME-definition: https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-definition_en

⁴ NACE codes are the standard European nomenclature of productive economic activities. If the applicant is registered in a country that is not using NACE codes, please send an email to the FAQ inbox (info@tourbit.eu).

considered an SME and effectively operating under one of the four indicated categories, you can present your company statutes or another unequivocal alternative justification as proof. Please reach out to your Local Contact Point if this is your case.

All applicants must apply individually. It is not permitted to propose projects in partnership with other SMEs. Only one application per SME is accepted.

In addition, applicants need to fulfil the following criteria:

- Has not received financial support under other Call for Proposals under COS-TOURINN-2020-3-04 (GRO/SME/20/C/07): EU DIGITOUR, CULTOURDATA, SMARTER AOE, TOURISM 4.0, RESETTING, DIGITOUR, TOURINN-ACT and EURO-EMOTUR);
- Has not been declared bankrupt or have initiated bankruptcy procedures;
- Has no convictions for fraudulent behaviour, other financial irregularities, unethical or illegal business practices;
- Is not under liquidation or an enterprise under difficulty accordingly to the Commission Regulation No 651/2014 art. 2.18.

If you are selected for funding, you will have to sign a **Declaration of Honour** (Annex B), where you have to declare that you are not in any of the above-mentioned situations.

Note on State Aid “De minimis regime”: The [“Commission Notice on the notion of State aid as referred to in Article 107\(1\) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union”](#) clarifies that funding coming directly from the European Union, including from an Executive Agency, is not considered as a State Aid. However, it is recommended that each applicant checks with the relevant national/regional authorities whether the same regime is applicable for them.

3.2 Types of Projects and Activities Supported

For your project proposal to be eligible under the CfP it needs to **address one of the following subjects or combinations of them:**

- Digitalisation, automatisisation or improvement of internal processes (digital workspace solutions, DATA ANALYTICS, and data management, improvement of CYBERSECURITY etc.)
- Digitalisation, automatisisation or improvement of client relations and online presence (digital marketing, sales solutions and communication, CRM, Website (including accessibility improvements), SEO, etc.)
- Improvement of products or services using digital technologies (e.g. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, INTERNET OF THINGS, AUGMENTED AND VIRTUAL REALITY, CLOUD COMPUTING, BLOCKCHAIN)

Projects can involve activities such as:

- Planning/ development/ establishment and implementation of (sustainable) digitalisation strategies and action plans, e.g. including aspects of sustainable and responsible digitalisation.
- The improvement of digital capacities of staff. This may include: coaching, mentoring, online courses, twinning, peer learning or other means and methods for skills improvement of staff members.

- Implementation of digital tools and solutions incl. standardisation and compliance adaptation such as adaptation of operational procedures, documentation, data collection etc.

Project implementation:

It is important your project is implemented through the support of a service provider, such as for example a mentor, expert, consultant, and/or technology/innovation provider⁵.

Note that any of the service providers needs to be preapproved by the Tourbit partnership beforehand. You can work with one or several different service providers to implement your project.

For the sake of approving and selecting the service providers, Tourbit has launched a [Call for Service Providers](#) under which mentors, experts, consultants and technology/ innovation providers for digitalisation, innovation and digital solutions can present their candidatures. The call will rest open in parallel to the present Call and will remain so until all selected SMEs have chosen their provider(s). SMEs will be given access to the pool of service providers to find the most appropriate one(s) to support their project implementation. The matching process will furthermore be supported through an **online transnational Matchathon event happening on 4 May 2023** before the start of the Digital Acceleration Programme. If you would like to work with a specific service provider, it can be verified and approved through the established procedure indicated in the [Call for Service Providers](#).

In general, it is important that your project:

- Clearly improves the digitalisation of your SME and/or supports your company's internal learning process on digitalisation
- Can be implemented within the **timeframe of the 10 months** of the Digital Acceleration Programme
- Relies on the support of a service provider for its implementation (NB: Upon approval of your project proposal, you will have to sign a collaboration agreement with your selected provider(s))
- Includes to the extent possible innovative aspects
- European dimension of the activities: projects should contribute to the strengthening of the European tourism ecosystem by giving preference to using European-developed tourism tools/services and/or collaborating with European providers of digital technologies, software and digital services (e.g. online booking systems).

⁵ For your orientation, with the mentioned profiles we are referring to the following kind of professionals (nonexclusive definition - also other types of digital service providers can support you, if approved by Tourbit):

Mentor: A professional who accompanies you and supports your project implementation through advice.

Expert: A professional with specific knowledge on a certain topic beneficial for the implementation of your project.

Consultant: A professional or company providing a specific service or expertise relevant for the implementation of your project.

Technology/innovation provider: A company, start-up or professional providing a digital or innovative solution or service required for your project.

The financial support cannot be used to finance activities which have already been implemented. Financed activities cannot start prior to the award of the financial support and the launch of the Digital Acceleration Programme. **The intended start date for the Programme is 15 June 2023 and the end date 14 April 2024.**

3.3 Types of Costs Admitted

Participation in this CfP and in the Digital Acceleration Programme is free of charge for all SMEs. **The financial support will be granted in the form of a lump sum on basis of a simplified cost justification.**

The above-mentioned activities have to be implemented **through the support of external service providers**. Accordingly eligible costs include:

- Fees for service providers from the Tourbit pool of service providers.
- Specific training and capacity building necessary for the implementation of your project.
- Costs for development and/or implementation of digital tools and digital solutions; and/or software for standardisation and compliance adaptation.

It is necessary to justify and explain the necessity of the cost items related to ‘digital tools, solutions and software’ and how they are purposeful for the larger digitalisation effort in the framework of your proposed project. They are only admitted as an integral and instrumental part for your overall project.

Not eligible costs are:

- Investments in physical infrastructure or equipment (e.g. hardware)
- Consumable goods
- Internal staff costs for the implementation of the project activities

3.4 Administrative and Formal Requirements for Participation

Proposals are eligible only if they meet the following criteria:

- Only **one application** per applicant can be submitted under this CfP. In the case of submissions by the same applicant of different proposals or multiple submission of the same proposal, only the last one received will enter the evaluation process, the rest will be declared as non-eligible.
- Only proposals submitted **before the deadline** will be accepted. The deadline for this call is **5 April 2023, at 17:00 CET (Brussels time)**.
- Only complete proposals including all the required information and documentation will be accepted.
- Only proposals submitted through the below indicated online submission form will be accepted. Paper/printed versions or hand-written versions submitted by post or other means will not be accepted.

4. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

This section includes all the relevant information for a successful application to the Tourbit Call for Proposals.

4.1 Where and How to Apply

All applicants are required to submit their application through the following online application form:

<https://tourbit.eu/call-for-smes/>

You are furthermore required to upload your project description (Annex A - Application Form) under the same link using the official template available for download on the Tourbit website.

It is important that all information provided in the form is correct and complete. Furthermore, note that your project will be evaluated only on the information provided in the online application form and the Annex A (project description). It is therefore of utmost importance that you include all relevant information concerning your project there, do not take any information for granted or provide links to external sources with information essential to understand your project.

We recommend you fill your application in English language. Applications submitted in any other language of the programme are likewise possible (Spanish, Catalan, Slovenian, French, Flemish, Icelandic, Finnish, Portuguese). The programme is aware that applications are submitted by non-native English speakers wherefore they are not evaluated based on the use of language but on the provided content. Please be clear and precise in the explanations you provide in your project proposal.

4.2 Deadline for Submissions of Applications

The call for proposals will be open from 8 February 2023 to 5 April 2023 at 17:00 CET (Brussels time).

Applications submitted after the deadline will be considered ineligible and will not be evaluated. It is therefore strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the application. Failure to submit it on time for any reason, including network communication delays or technical problems, are not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. The time of receipt of the application as recorded by the submission system will be definitive.

4.3 Further Information for Applicants

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 7 days before the deadline for the submission of applications to the following e-mail address info@tourbit.eu, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals. The Tourbit project partners have no obligation to provide clarifications

to questions received after this date. Replies will be given no later than 7 days before the deadline for the submission of applications.

5. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

This section includes information about the evaluation and selection process Tourbit will carry out. The process will be managed and supervised by an independent Selection and Evaluation Committee, which will ensure a fairness and transparency.

The evaluation will be carried out in the following way, as detailed below:

- Formal eligibility check of proposals
- Technical evaluation of the proposal
- Selection procedure

5.1 Check of Proposal Eligibility

Before proposals are evaluated technically, their **administrative eligibility is verified**. Only eligible proposals will be evaluated. The eligibility criteria as referred to in section 3 will be applied to discard non-eligible proposals.

Proposals being marked as non-eligible will get a rejection letter that will include the reasons for being catalogued as non-eligible. No further feedback will be given.

5.2 Evaluation Criteria

Eligible applications will be evaluated against predetermined evaluation criteria, applying predefined weighting factors and thresholds. Each proposal will be evaluated by two independent evaluators with experience in tourism and digitalisation. They will record their individual evaluation result for each proposal in an **Individual Evaluation Report**. A third person will resume the individual evaluation results in a **Consensual Evaluation Report**, which will be made available to the applicant.

The evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

Criterion	Weight	Score	Description
Relevance	50%	0 - 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the proposal targets a certain digitalisation challenge of the SME. • How the proposal responds to industry trends. • How effective the proposed project appears to solve the SME's digitalisation challenge.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which it will advance the SME's digital transformation.
Innovation	10%	0 - 10	Degree of innovation and extent to which the project goes beyond the state of the art and/or its potential compared to existing technology and/or solutions.
Impact	20%	0 - 10	<p>Level of impact in matter of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environment - Society - Economy <p>(e.g. number of potential users of the technology, quality improvement of products/services and processes, potential for enabling new products/services)</p> <p>Extent to which the proposed project is scalable and its contribution to tourism industry competitiveness.</p>
Implementation	20%	0 - 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills and experience of the SME's internal staff to follow-up on the proposal implementation. Extent to which to proposal fits the overall strategy and business model of the SME. Cost effectiveness and efficiency

Tourbit furthermore encourages SMEs to collaborate cross-ecosystem (with providers from other sectors) and transnationally (with providers from other countries) to take advantage of the international scope of the Tourbit project.

For each criterion scores from 0 to 10 are given. Successful proposals must pass the minimum **thresholds of 5/10 at each individual criterion**, while the **overall threshold is 30/50**. Those proposals who pass the threshold are ranked, although passing the threshold does not mean that the project will be funded. A budgetary cut-off applies to the ranking list and only the highest ranked proposals are offered financial support until the call budget is exhausted. The ranking is separately listed for each individual territory and projects are funded according to the budget availability in each territory (see in section 2). Only if there are not sufficient proposals ranked for a specific territory, proposals from other territories of the project consortium as indicated in section 2.2 are taken into consideration. In that case, the proposals are ranked according to their score independently from their territory or origin.

5.3 Selection

The list of selected proposals will be published, and all applicants will be informed via e-mail on the evaluation results of their application even when the proposal has not been selected. In this regard, all proposals will receive an acceptance or rejection letter together with an anonymised version of the Consensual Evaluation Report.

The criteria for the ranking of the proposals will follow the rules below:

- Rule 1: the proposals will be ranked based on its overall score (based on the Consensual Evaluation Report);
- Rule 2: in case following rule 1 there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to proposals that have a higher score in “Relevance”;
- Rule 3: in case following rule 2 there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to proposals that have a higher score in “Impact”;

At the end, a minimum of 62 proposals will be selected according to the territory minimum and maximum (7-14 per territory - see in section 2.1). The rest of proposals will remain in a reserve list.

In the event of selection of a lower number of applications than the total amount of funding available, the Tourbit consortium may re-open the call at a later date.

6. POST-AWARD PROCESS

6.1 Negotiation Phase and Grant Contract Signature

After the evaluation process is concluded and the applicants have been notified, the Tourbit consortium will start the Grant Contract preparation with selected SMEs. The Grant Contract is signed in between the Local Contact Point and the SME and sets the legal conditions and requirements for receiving the financial support.

In case the evaluators in their report have indicated a necessity for adjustment in the project outline related to the project cost effectiveness and efficiency, Local Contact Points and SMEs will enter a negotiation phase entailing possible project adjustment. The adjusted project proposal will be presented to one independent evaluator for approval before the signature of the Grant Contract.

At the end of the negotiation phase, the Grant Contract will be signed between the Local Contact Point and the SME. By signing the Grant Contract, the SME accepts the grant and agrees to implementing the project under its own responsibility and in accordance with the provisions outlines therein and described in the presented application form.

6.2 Post-Award Administrative Verifications and Required Documentation

To validate the status information of selected SMEs, the following documents will be required:

- An **SME declaration form** signed and stamped (if applicable) in which the SME has to confirm it qualifies as an SME (see section 3.1).
- In cases where the **number of employees and/or the ownership** is not clearly identified: any other supporting documentation which demonstrate headcount and ownership such as payroll details, annual reports, national/regional association records, etc.;
- **Financial Identification Form:** A document that verifies the bank account information of the SME. It is signed by the SME's legal representative and the bank representative.

SMEs furthermore have to provide a valid VAT number at the time of the Grant Contract preparation⁶. VIES (VAT Information Exchange System)⁷ will be used to verify the validity of the VAT number of the selected SMEs. **Failure to provide a valid VAT number will automatically result in proposal rejection.**

For SMEs who do not dispose of a VAT number, a national fiscal identification number can be presented instead.

The above requested documentation will have to be provided before the deadline communicated by the Tourbit consortium. In general, the Grant Contract preparation should be concluded within 4 weeks after the notification of the results. In case the negotiations have not been concluded within the above period, the application is automatically rejected, and another SME applicant will be given the opportunity of acceptance.

6.3 Reporting Procedures and Payments

As regards reporting and payment arrangements the following applies for selected SMEs:

SMEs are required to report on the state of their project implementation on a regular basis to their Local Contact Point and inform and consult them about possible issues (if any) at any time during the programme duration. Apart from that three official reporting and feedback rounds are foreseen:

- **Inception questionnaire**, 2 months after the start of the Digital Acceleration Programme to provide an initial feedback and update on the project.
- **Mid-term report**, in month 6 of the programme, after the project half time (5 months project duration). It consists in responding an online questionnaire and holding a reporting interview with the Local Contact Point.
- **Final Report**, after completion of the project in month 11 (10 months project duration). It consists in responding an online questionnaire and holding a reporting interview with the Local Contact Point.

⁶ To be checked at the European Commission services such as: https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/vies/

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/vies/faqvies.do#item_7

The payments will be made based and conditional on the fulfilment of the commitments indicated by the SMEs in their application form and reporting (except the first payment):

- 20% of the total grant amount as pre-financing payment at the latest 30 days after the signature and entry into force of the Grant Contract.
- 30 % of the grant amount after the approval of the mid-term report
- 50% of the grant amount after the approval of the final report and the provision of all project results as stated in the application form of each SME

7. TIMETABLE

Stages	Dates
Opening of the call	8 February 2023
Online informative session	21 February 2023 - 11:00 h CET
Deadline for any questions	7 days before call closure
Deadline for submission of applications	5 April 2023, 17:00h CET
Information to applicants on the evaluation	Maximum 6 weeks after the closure of the call
Notification of award	18 May 2023
Signature of the Grant Contract	Maximum 4 weeks from the notification of the award
Launch of the Digital Acceleration Programme	15 June 2023

This timetable refers to provisional dates and may be updated by the Tourbit consortium during the call and selection procedure. In that case, the updated timetable will be published on the project website.

8. PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA, CONFIDENTIALITY AND COMMUNICATION

All the information submitted by the applicants will be handled only by the TOURBIT project team involved in the Call for Proposals. The identity of the sender and the content of the proposal will be treated strictly confidential by the Selection and Evaluation Committee, who will perform the work impartially applying the highest ethical and moral standards. External evaluators will sign a declaration of confidentiality. The application will be stored on a web-based, password-protected collaborative platform to which only the TOURBIT members will have access. Data with regard to the proposal may also be exchanged between the TOURBIT Selection and Evaluation Committee by way of corporate e-mail. Confidential information disclosed by the applicant must be marked as confidential. The applicant shall disclose to the TOURBIT consortium confidential information, in its sole discretion, if the applicant considers it necessary or desirable for the purpose of assessing the application.

The TOURBIT consortium will strictly apply confidentiality rules as laid down in its consortium agreement and will not use confidential information of applicants for any purpose other than to meet the objectives of this Call for Proposals.

Any communication or publication made by participants or selected SMEs under this CfP should clearly indicate that the development of the content, output, etc. has received funding from the European Commission within the scope of the TOURBIT project (GA no. 101038165) displaying the EU logo on all printed or digital material, including websites and press releases. The following disclaimer furthermore has to be visible:

“The content of this [insert appropriate description, e.g. report, publication, conference, etc.] represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility; it cannot be considered to reflect the views of the European Commission and/or the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA) or any other body of the European Union. The European Commission and the Agency do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.”

The selected SMEs under this CfP throughout the duration of their involvement with TOURBIT will take appropriate measures to engage with the public about their involvement and to highlight the financial support of the EC.

ANNEXES

Annex A - Application Form