

Marketing Strategy for Micro & Small Enterprises Grant Scheme

Overview of the Grant

Objective: This ERDF-funded scheme supports *micro and small enterprises* in developing a *comprehensive marketing strategy* through non-repayable grants. It aims to boost competitiveness and business efficiency by subsidising professional marketing support.

Duration: Rolling call until 31st December 2026 (subject to budget)

Max. Grant per Enterprise: €10,000

Aid Intensity:

- 60% for start-ups (<5 years old)
- 50% for micro and small enterprises >5 years

Funding Scope: One-time cost for a Marketing Strategy Report by an external, unrelated, and IB-registered service provider.

Eligible Marketing Strategy (Deliverable)

The outsourced strategy must include:

1. Executive Summary
2. Company and Market Analysis
3. SMART Marketing Goals
4. Positioning & Branding
5. Promotional & Digital Tactics
6. Action Plan for Upcoming Year
7. Budgeting, Risk Management & Scalability
8. KPIs & Evaluation
9. Appendices (data, charts, visuals)

Mandatory:

- Final report must include the Declaration of Unrelation, acknowledgment of EU co-funding, and conform with visibility rules (Regulation EU 2021/1060).

Eligible Applicants

Who can apply:

- **Micro and Small Enterprises** based in Malta or Gozo engaged in economic activity.
- Includes self-employed, partnerships, companies, and co-operatives.

Definitions: Micro & Small Enterprises

As per **EU Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014**, a business qualifies based on:

The main factors determining whether an enterprise is an SME are

1. **staff headcount**
2. either **turnover** or **balance sheet total**

Category	Micro	Small
Staff	< 10	< 50
Turnover	≤ €2 million	≤ €10 million
OR		
Balance Sheet	≤ €2 million	≤ €10 million

Eligibility is determined for the **single undertaking**, meaning the applicant **plus all linked or partner enterprises**, based on ownership or control.

Key Exclusions

Entities are not eligible if they:

- Are medium/large businesses
- Are public sector entities not operating commercially
- Fall under NACE Section A (Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry)
- Engage in gambling or betting
- Develop internal marketing strategies or sell them
- Are in financial difficulty (unless covered by COVID-19 derogations)
- Have pending EU State Aid recovery orders
- Plan to apply for the same activity under other national/EU schemes

Declaration Form – Additional Disclosures

The signed Declaration Form submitted with the application must also explicitly disclose:

- Whether the applicant or any owner/director is a **Politically Exposed Person (PEP)**
- Any pending or past **court proceedings or criminal convictions**
- Any **family relationships** between the applicant and other linked parties

These elements form part of the eligibility verification and reputational assessment. Applications may be rejected or withdrawn if found to pose reputational risk or result in negative public perception.

Application Checklist

Application submitted through the online portal with:

1. Signed Declaration Form (including PEP/court/family relationship disclosures)
2. 1 Quotation from IB-registered external service provider
3. Clean MTCA Compliance Certificate (Tax, VAT, SSC - valid within 3 months)
4. Financials,
 - In the case of company, Audited Financial Statements and/or the Management Accounts dated within the two financial years prior to the year of submission of the application in relation to the applicant and the linked and partner enterprises.
 - In the case of a self-employed, a copy of the Income Tax Return dated within the two financial years prior to the year of submission of the application together with a Profit & Loss Statement certified by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), together with a declaration by the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) identifying the Current and Fixed Assets, as well as the Short-Term and Long-Term Liabilities of the applicant is to be provided.
 - In the case of a Start-up established not over 2 years from the date of application (including Sole Trader/self-employed) not having the above documentation, a Profit & Loss Account/Income Statement, Cash Flow Projections (for a minimum of two years) and a Balance Sheet/Statement of Assets and Liabilities certified by a CPA is to be provided.
5. Evidence of Private Match Funding
6. NACE Code Confirmation

Disbursement & Reimbursement

Project Timeline: 6 months from Grant Agreement signing (extensions allowed but subject to penalties)

Payments:

- **80%** upon submission of the Marketing Strategy (PDF with all declarations)
- **20%** after evidence of implementing the “Action Plan for the Upcoming Year”

Eligible Payments:

- Only via traceable bank methods – no cash allowed
- Must match service provider quotation and be backed by receipts, invoices, and CPA-certified bank statements

Key Contacts

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**The objective of this article is to outline the principal areas of family businesses. Accordingly, it is not intended to be provided by way of comprehensive and definitive advice. Interested parties should seek professional advice by contacting DFK Malta Tax & Consultancy Limited before acting upon any information included in this document.*