

## COASTOUR - FAQs

**Costs of travel expenses to tourism-relevant brokerage/matchmaking/pitching/investor events focusing on sustainable and digital tourism solutions and technology providers addressing organizational challenges identified; does this include also attending tourism fairs and workshops which aim at promoting and selling SMP services (e.g. accommodation)? For example, International Tourism Fair in Berlin, Brussels Holiday Fair 2024, etc.**

Yes, companies can apply for grants to participate in tourism fairs with the aim of addressing and improving their sustainability targets. The focus of the application should not be on selling their tourism products and services. However, it is strongly recommended that companies apply for a combination of different activities, integrating travel expenses with other eligible activities from the provided list in the application form.

**Purchase, installment, and use of sustainability impact monitoring IT equipment, such as water consumption meters, smart waste scales, tablets, and other smart communication tools to encourage guests to sustainable behavior. (Limit of maximum 20% of total grant amount); does the “Limit of maximum 20% of total grant amount” refer to the amount of voucher per single SME or to the total grant of the project?**

Grant amount per single SME identified in the “Budget scheme” document during application.

Accordingly, it is not possible to apply for the monitoring equipment only, but it has to be combined with other eligible activities, such as sustainability consultancy services.

**Is it possible to send an application as a collection of SMEs, if they have a common issue that they want to address?**

No, it is individual application per tourism SME.

**Are there any criteria that the company must respect when choosing the expert/supplier? Is the comparison of 3 quotations compulsory?**

Local contact points accessing the application will evaluate the price provided by the SME compared with 2 similar suppliers/experts. If the company have already conducted comparison with 2 other providers, they can include it in the answer to the question 33: “33. Is there any other relevant information you would like to share with us to support your application?”. It is compulsory to ensure that grants ensures value-for-money.

**When does the validity of the expenses start? From the moment of the application or from the communication of the award or from the signing of the grant agreement?**

From the start date agreed and filled in the Grant agreement, that cannot be earlier than the date of signature of the grant agreement.

**Does an information filled in the application form should be in native language?**

Applications must be submitted in the original national language of eligible countries (Denmark, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, Lithuania) or English. Applications submitted in any other language will be deemed ineligible and will not be evaluated.

**Are patent fees allowed?**

No, only external expert support fees for the preparation process of patent applications are allowed.

**How strict do we need to be if the budget specifications change through the process of the project?**

Any changes related to budget specifications or activities implemented must be confirmed by the local contact point and confirmed with an official amendment to the grant agreement signed.

**Are PCs and other technological office tools allowed?**

Only purchase, installment, and use of sustainability impact monitoring IT equipment, such as water consumption meters, smart waste scales, tablets, and other smart communication tools to encourage guests to sustainable behavior are eligible costs. (Limit of maximum 20% of total grant amount).

IT tools not related to the improvement of the sustainability performance of an SME, nor included in the recommendations derived from sustainability assessments, sustainability certification schemes, and strategies are ineligible costs.

**What about if someone says he needs 3k for strategy, but then spends 3 k on consulting?**

Any changes related to budget specifications or activities implemented must be confirmed by the local contact point and confirmed with an official amendment to the grant agreement signed.

**If “the minimum score to be eligible for funding is at least 3 in each category”, this means that applicants without previous experience in implementing sustainability activities are automatically non eligible?**

The evaluation score benchmarks, how well the question is being answered, hereby lack of sustainability is not excluding to receive score of 3, as long as applicant have put efforts to reply to this question in details explaining reasons, why they have not implemented any sustainability activities before.

- ❖ 0 – None: The information requested is missing, incomplete, or considered irrelevant or inadequate.
- ❖ 1 – Poor: The information provided lacks relevant quality and contains significant weaknesses.

- ❖ 2 – Fair: While the overall information provided broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses.
- ❖ 3 – Good: The proposal addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be necessary.
- ❖ 4 – Very good: The proposal addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.
- ❖ 5 – Excellent: The information provided is clear, coherent and successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question.

**Before signing the grant agreement, company has at first to check the service provider and the price of the service? It means during the signing moment all the services and its prices already has to be added into grant agreement? And during the company evaluation moment the evaluation committee already see the list of the experts?**

If a company already knows which service provider they want to engage, they can include it in the budget form with the agreed-upon price. If not, they can indicate that they have not yet identified a specific company but can estimate the price by referencing similar service providers in the market. The evaluation committee is committed to assisting companies in finding the relevant service provider.

**So the grant will be paid directly to the SME's after they will implement all services?**

Yes. Also after they have reported on the expenses with invoice and bank statement.

**Is it possible to request an advance payment for the project?**

No, grant is being transferred to the tourism SME only based on provision of invoice and bank statement after implementation of the activities applied for.

**One of the criteria for participation is the profitable company. How the company should proof that it does not face any financial difficulties? To provide some data?**

With the Declaration of Honour signed by the Legal Representative of the applying SME confirms, that they are not excluded from applying for this grant due to financial reasons.

**According to the regulations in our country, the payment for the expert service means the agreed amount (e.g. 200 eur.) + VAT. How to cover the VAT? Do the companies cover the VAT from their side?**

Budget scheme attached to the application should provide services costs without VAT.

**Regarding the eligible expenses:**

- a. **Are PCs and other technological office tools allowed?**

PCs– are not sustainability monitoring tools or equipment, hereby only equipment that has something to do with sustainability monitoring is allowed.

**b. Are desks, chairs and other non-technological office tools allowed?**

No.

**c. Are patent fees allowed?**

No, only application development fee for external expert is allowed. Not the patent fee itself. The same is for sustainability certifications – only external expert services can be covered, not the certification fee itself.

**d. If there are activities worth €100k in the budget, should the company report them all or just show that more than €9k have been spent?**

They should provide proof of invoice and payment bank statement referring either to the whole amount of €100k identifying what the grant amount of 9000 EUR have been applied for or provide previously mentioned documentation only for the grant amount of €9k.

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