



Co-Innovation Workshops

ENISIE – InterReg VA Italia Malta Programme) defines Enabling Network-based Innovation through Services and Institutional Engagement Project

Support and clarifications in relation to these guidelines may be sought through Malta Innovation Hub which may be contacted by calling: +356 22477601 or by email on network@mlsp.com.mt



INTERREG ITALIA – MALTA PROGRAMME Cohesion Policy 2014 – 2020

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Investing in your future





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1. Introduction

ENISIE – (Interreg VA Italia Malta Programme) defines *Enabling Network-based Innovation through Services and Institutional Engagement Project* focusing on innovation and social innovation, and uses the following approaches:

- **Bottom-up** -derived from the direct experience of practitioners
- Targeted -to incubators for business and social innovation
- **Differentiated**-in its work on policies, practices and enabling factors
- Holistic able to maintain an overall view and a balance between the side of "enterprise" and the one of "social" to get to a true Social Enterprise.

ENISIE intends to contribute to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth of the cross-border area moving from the field-based new generation social enterprise environment (innovative start-ups with a social vocation). It encourages the innovation in key areas such as digital health, food tech and sustainable tourism (experiential and seasonally adjusted), to foster the circular trans-border mobility of qualified young people and enable the internationalization from both sides of cross-border territories. The support is intended for innovative start-ups, micro-enterprises and SMEs in the eligible areas, although other areas will also be considered.

2. Scheme Objectives

Enterprises must adapt to changes in the environment, unexpected situations, technological changes and various other challenges. The better a business adapts and aligns its process, the greater the chances of economic growth. InterReg Italia-Malta, ENISIE project assists a business to better align its activities to its strategy and vision.

The intention of the **co-innovation workshops** is to help enterprises learn and establish through the provision of experts in the different areas:

- Identify, train and retain a pool of **co-innovation workshop** experts intended to be self-sustaining following the ENISIE2 effort
- Instil the importance of **multi-professional teams**, including external experts and expertise on **social impact**
- 3 Run pilot Co-Innovation Workshops as part of the training at selected enterprises
- 4 Support these enterprises to **change their culture** to include periodic **co-innovation workshops**
- 5 Draw up **case studies** on each co-innovation workshop experience to disseminate the concept within the industry





The scope of this incentive is to support start-ups, micro enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to realign their business activity, restructure their employees, product and/or service portfolio, optimise the use of technology and embrace green technology and practices with a social impact behind them. SMEs with a vision to grow can seek support from external experts to assist them in carrying out significant changes that will enable them to accelerate development and improve market access.

2.1 Duration and Budgets of the Incentive

The timelines for the support is as follows (*Extended):

- 1 JULY 2021-FEB 2022* : HELP DESK for submission of applications Guidance Services
 - Launch Help Desk introducing them to the concept of Co-Innovation Workshops **ENISIE target** at least 25 Workshop Application Submissions
- 2 JUL 2021-MARCH 2022*: Co-Innovation Workshops Diagnostic Services Select and Run Co-Innovation Workshops for the Business Check and Blueprint complete with outcomes, KPIs and public Case Study- ENISIE Target 12 Co-Innovation Workshops

Budget: <u>€5,000 per enterprise (excl. VAT)</u> (<u>maximum</u> 4 external experts - 100% funding)

3 SEPT 2021- APRIL 2022*: Implement Workshop Recommendations- Accompanying Services

Select and Implement Workshop recommendations complete with outcomes and public Case Study-

ENISIE Target Implementation of seven workshop recommendations. **Budget** max <u>€8,400</u> per enterprise (<u>Excl. VAT</u>) (<u>maximum of</u> 4 external experts - 100% funding)

2.2 Overall Budget

This budget for this scheme is one hundred and thirty-nine thousand Euro (€139,000)

2.3 Eligible Sectors

In line with the targets set by Themed Objective 3 (Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs) of the Interreg V-A Programme Italy-Malta, the activity of the Enisie Help Desk is addressed to SMEs, micro-enterprises and organisations, including newly established ones, mainly in the sectors of intervention in the cross-border area.





Specifically, the prevailing areas of intervention of ENISIE WP7 are the following:

- The **HEALTH sector** extends to basic personal and social services, also linked to the emergence of new poverty and social exclusion phenomena resulting from the COVID crisis
- The **FOOD sector** stands out as an economic asset to be restarted, one of the few to remain stable during the lockdown and which has indeed discovered new potential, linked to direct and local distribution chains, a rethink of the short supply chain and a renewed awareness of the digitalisation of transactions
- The **TOURISM sector**, among those most affected by the pandemic, needing a radical rethink more than others to resist and regenerate its value proposition, including a partial or total transition to other service sectors.

Submissions in the target sectors will be preferred. However, submissions in sectors other than the target sectors will also be considered, especially if they have a strong social innovation element.

In order to be eligible, institutions/enterprises must meet the following requirements:

- be established and active on the date of formal submission of the application
- have their legal and/or operational headquarters, including administrative competence, in the eligible territory (Sicily or Malta)
- not be in bankruptcy or in difficulty (within the meaning of points 20 and 24 of Commission Notice 2014/C 249/01)
- not have received, in the current and previous two financial years, de minimis aid, or have received less than the maximum amount provided for by law.

Furthermore, in line with what is indicated in the project Application form (WP7) and with the innovative services that the ENISIE project can make available, the institutions/enterprises should fall into one of the following cases:

- 1) have a cash flow problem and the need to readjust their business model following the Covid-19 emergency
- 2) need to restructure or re-infrastructure for the purpose of a partial or total transfer to another sector
- 3) be start-ups created after the pandemic emergency (after 01/01/2020).

Recipients should also:

- declare that they are not in any of the situations envisaged in Articles 106 ("Exclusion criteria for participation in contract award procedures") and 107 ("Exclusion criteria applicable to applications") of (EU) Reg. 966/2012
- complete and sign ANNEX 1 DE MINIMIS State Aid Declaration





- declare that the activities for which support is requested under the ENISIE project do not duplicate work already carried out, and have not received, are not receiving and will not receive any other public funding for the same interventions
- declare to have read the privacy notice on Privacy and Data Processing pursuant to Article 13-14 of EU Regulation 2016/679 GDPR: General Data Protection Regulation.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of these Incentive Guidelines, the following definitions shall apply:

3.1 Enterprises

The definition of Enterprises includes SMEs used for the purpose of this incentive shall be that provided in de minimis Regulation (EC) No 1998/2006.

For the purpose of these Incentive Guidelines, the term Single Undertaking shall be defined as per Commission Regulation EU No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid.

Single Undertaking includes, for the purposes of this Regulation, all enterprises having at least one (1) of the following relationships with each other:

- a) one (1) enterprise has a majority of the shareholders' or members' voting rights in another enterprise
- b) one (1) enterprise has the right to appoint or remove a majority of the members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another enterprise
- c) one (1) enterprise has the right to exercise a dominant influence over another enterprise pursuant to a contract entered into with that enterprise or to a provision in its memorandum or articles of association
- d) one (1) enterprise, which is a shareholder in or member of another enterprise, controls alone, pursuant to an agreement with other shareholders in or members of that enterprise, a majority of shareholders' or members' voting rights in that enterprise.

Enterprises having any of the relationships referred to in points (a) to (d) above through one or more other enterprises shall also be considered to be a single undertaking.

The same Regulation states that a group of linked enterprises is considered as one single undertaking for the application of the de minimis rule, but that enterprises which have no relationship with each other except for the fact that each of them has a direct link to the same public body or bodies are not treated as being linked to each





other. The specific situation of enterprises controlled by the same public body or bodies, which may have an independent power of decision, is therefore taken into account.

3.2 Beneficiary

A Beneficiary is the enterprise that is in possession of a Letter of Approval issued by the Corporation, and will benefit from the advice of the experts contracted by the Corporation.

3.3 Letter of Approval

A Letter of Approval is a document establishing the support granted to an undertaking and stipulating any terms and conditions deemed appropriate by the Corporation. In this case this will also identify the experts contracted by the Corporation defining the areas of expertise, the number of hours per expert and the objective of the coinnovation workshop.

3.4 Part 1- Executions of Co-Innovation Workshops

The main outcome is a plan to change and innovate processes, products or services within the enterprise through the innovation experts, introduction of new technology and social impact, re-costing, marketing, logistics and digitisation. The report on this includes a short case-study to be disseminated in order to encourage other enterprises.

3.5 Part 2 - Implementation of Outcomes from Co-Innovation Workshops

The main outcome is **to implement the workshop plan to change and innovate processes, products or services within the enterprise** through the innovation experts, introduction of new technology and social impact, re-costing, marketing, logistics and digitisation. The report on this includes a short case-study to be disseminated in order to encourage other enterprises.

4. Incentive Description

This measure provides financing of experts, as per terms and conditions, to run bespoke co-Innovation workshops in conjunction with the relevant senior management of each applicant enterprise.

The objectives are:

To introduce a sustainable innovation culture within the enterprise





- To use the external expertise to demonstrate **the effective use of co-innovation workshops** to get together diverse professionals towards innovating processes, products and services of the enterprise.
- To appreciate the importance of the role of the lead expert in **institutionalising the role** of innovation manager within the enterprise
- To include **Social Innovation** within the overall concept of innovation in order to meet current **for-purpose** objectives as opposed to **for-profit** objectives only.
- To generate a case study publication to encourage other enterprises to understand and adopt the running of Co-Innovation Workshops.

Part 1- Executions of Co-Innovation Workshops

A team of experts, together with a beneficiary enterprise, are to put together an innovation proposal to cover the following diverse actions. The team of experts needs to include senior management of the beneficiary enterprise who not only understand the enterprise operations but are able to implement recommendations. The rest of the team of experts will be made up of external experts, contracted by the Corporation, so that together with the internal experts will cover all the following workshop actions:

- 1. Lead expert to run the innovation workshop;
- Social Innovation expert for a positive community impact through improvement environmental performance by identifying waste streams and resource usage as well as considering circular economy elements. These experts can come from enterprises that can include NGOs, Public Sector Departments and Local Councils that may collaborate with the enterprise particularly in order for the innovation outcomes to have a positive social impact;
- 3. Technical expert to review the relevant products, processes and services together with the implementation of quality systems and the attainment of product process certifications;
- 4. Costings expert to improve operations, efficiency and accountability following a review process to identify inefficient use of resources;
- Logistics expert to improve the flow of goods, materials and/or information following a review of the interaction between functions, import/export tariffs and duties, reviewing customer handling procedures and propose solutions to enable excellent customer service;
- 6. Marketing expert to assess market dynamics, fluctuation in demand and changes in consumer behaviour to reposition product and service offering as may be required;
- 7. Digitisation expert including the deployment and/ or inclusion of digital technologies in the products and services, such as IoT, artificial intelligence, machine learning, predictive analytics and any other software requirements.





External experts can be selected from the KOINE website as set up by the ENISIE project as well as the re-engineering expert list compiled by the Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with Malta Enterprise. Experts and management are to each have their **2 page cv** submitted with this application for approval. The inclusion of the above in the list indicates that the experts have accepted to be included in this Innovation Workshop.

Submissions with multiple experts will be preferred. However, submissions with less than four experts will also be considered. In such cases, the CVs submitted should reflect expertise in multi areas.

The Corporation will contract <u>a maximum of</u> **four external experts** to run the workshop (against fiscal invoice submission) with a target of an <u>overall of sixty-four (64) hours per enterprise sixteen (16) hours per expert</u>. These <u>16-</u> 64 hours would typically consist of onsite visit (<u>8</u> hours), research and prepare presentation of expert matter (<u>24</u> hours), workshops/Discussion (<u>20</u> hours) and reporting (<u>12</u> hours). Each workshop reimbursement is capped at <u>€5,000 excl. VAT</u>. **Optional extra hourly rates will be borne by the beneficiary enterprise.**

At the end of this Workshop, the recommendations will be considered for further funding in Part 2 which deals with the implementation of these recommendations on site.

Part 2 - Implementation of Outcomes from Co-Innovation Workshops

The co-innovation workshop Experts will be retained to support the implementation of the recommendations.

The Corporation will reimburse the support of the experts (against fiscal invoice submission) with an overall target of eighty (80) hours per enterprise twenty (20) hours per expert with a total combined reimbursement is capped at €8,400 excl. VAT. Optional extra hourly rates will be borne by the beneficiary enterprise.

- 4.1 The team of experts must each submit a quotation indicating the hourly rate and tasks to be executed. The completed quotation will be required as part of the application.
- 4.2 Eligible projects must be new assignments that are to be completed within <u>six (6)</u> weeks 3 months from approval date and should address the analysis, review, recommendations and implementation support.
- The eligible costs shall be the costs of expert services provided by external experts. The appointed experts must not be a direct or indirect employee, director or shareholder of the beneficiary enterprise.





4.4 The expert services provided shall not be a continuous or periodic activity nor relate to the undertaking's usual operating costs, such as routine tax expert services, regular legal services or advertising.

As noted earlier, submissions with multiple experts will be preferred. However, submissions with less than four experts will also be considered. In such cases, the CVs submitted should reflect expertise in multi areas.

Following the successful completion of the co-innovation workshop and reports, the applicant is to put together a proposal to implement the plan developed in Part 1. This is to include:

- Support the beneficiary enterprise to identify and appoint an internal innovation leader responsible to run future co-innovation workshops.
- 2 Retain a long term presence of local Social Innovation expertise input
- Repeated Co-Innovation Workshops to address updates in technology, costings on operations, logistics, marketing and digitisation.

5. Eligibility

5.1 Eligible Entities

The Scheme is open to duly registered micro, small and medium sized companies carrying out an economic activity in Malta and that at point of application employ 1 to 250 people.

5.2 Ineligible Entities

This measure shall not be available to:

- a) Undertakings engaged in activities specifically excluded under the de minimis Regulation (vide Section 10).
- b) Undertakings that at time of application are defaulting on VAT, Income Tax or Social Security.
- c) Public entities defined as: "Ministries, Departments, Entities, Authorities, Public Commissions, Public Sector Foundations and similar enterprises that carry out a public or regulatory function which does not involve the carrying out of an economic activity, whether or not such enterprises are established by law" and





Commercial undertakings in which Government has a direct or indirect holding of more than 25%.

6. Form of Aid

6.1 The aid shall be awarded in the form of a cash grant covering 100% of the costs incurred up to a maximum grant of up to six thousand five hundred Euro (€5,000) incl.

VAT per workshop and another maximum grant of up to eight thousand five hundred Euro (€8,400) incl.VAT per innovation implementation effort.

7. Application Process

- 7.1 Applications are to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of the start of works. Applications submitted after shall not be considered.
- 7.2 Applications are to contain a comprehensive brief of the objectives for the coinnovation workshops a clear explanation of the expected outcomes to determine eligibility and justify the need for support.
 - Incomplete applications shall be rejected.
- 7.3 Only expenditure incurred after the approval of the application shall be eligible for assistance.
- 7.4 All documentation provided by the applicant shall be reviewed and public sources of information may be consulted to verify the request for aid.
- 7.5 Should the request be approved, a Letter of Approval shall be issued specifying the terms and conditions of the award. The Letter of Approval will specify the maximum value which may be claimed as reimbursement of the eligible costs. If the application is not eligible according to the criteria as established in these guidelines, the applicant shall be informed in a form of a rejection letter.

Table 1 - ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR ENTERPRISES FIRST STEP OF ELIGIBILITY					
1.1 Coherence with the main Enisie topics Does the sector in which the recipient operates fall within one of ENISIE's themed areas?	Max score: Very good Good Sufficient Insufficient Nothing	10 points 10 points 8 points 6 points 4 points 0 points			





1.2 Potential impact Is the type of help needed by the recipient compatible with one of the services of the Help Desk?	Max score: 25 points Very good 25 points Good 20 points Sufficient 16 points Insufficient 7 points Nothing 0 points
1.3 Resilience (Adaptability) Does the ownership/management and, more generally, the team of the institution/enterprise have the predisposition/willingness to readjust their business model to the drastic and unpredictable changes of today?	Max score: 10 points Very good 10 points Good 8 points Sufficient 6 points Insufficient 4 points Nothing 0 points
1.4 Innovation/market fit Existing or potential implementation of improved goods, services and/or processes that may lead to a competitive advantage or ensure market continuity	Max score: 10 points Very good 10 points Good 8 points Sufficient 6 points Insufficient 4 points Nothing 0 points
1.5 Financial outlook What prospects for business regeneration/relaunch does the institution/enterprise have?	Max score: 15 points Very good 15 points Good 12 points Sufficient 8 points Insufficient 5 points None 0 points
1.6 Team What are the specific skills in leadership, social innovation, technology, quality, costings of operations, logistics, marketing and digitisation?	Max score: 20 points Very good 20 points Good 18 points Sufficient 14 points Insufficient 7 points Nothing 0 points
1.7 Awareness How will the lessons learnt be disseminated as case studies to motivate others?	Max score: 10 points Very good 10 points Good 8 points Sufficient 6 points Insufficient 4 points None 0 points





Table 2 - ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR RECIPIENT INSTITUTIONS/ENTERPRISES - SECOND STEP OF ELIGIBILITY				
2.1 Summarise how the experts noted above can help your management implement the recommendations detailed in the Business Blueprint? The submission is preferred to be in line with the funding objectives of Social Innovation, and utilisation of Enisie services.	Max score: 2 High Average Low or none (excl	20 points 10 points		
2.2 Potential of the institution/enterprise to establish commercial relations at cross-border level in the Italy-Malta area	Max score: 2 Very good Good Sufficient Insufficient None	15 points 15 points 12 points 8 points 5 points 0 points		
2.3 Potential of the institution/enterprise to create new jobs	Max score: 2 Very good Good Sufficient Insufficient None	15 points 15 points 12 points 8 points 5 points 0 points		
TOTAL	Max score: 50 points			

8. Claim Process

- 8.1 The experts shall submit one tax invoice on completion of the co-innovation workshop complete with the necessary reports. Furthermore, should the experts be selected, they shall submit a further tax invoice for the implementation of the recommendations of the co-innovation workshops complete with the necessary reports projects. Tax Invoices (as specified in the 12th Schedule of the VAT Act Chapter 406 of the Laws of Malta) and an associated receipt or a copy of the Fiscal Receipts (as specified in the 13th Schedule of the VAT Act) covering any costs claimed;
- 8.2 The experts shall be requested to submit all the documentation as required which shall include:





- a) A report analysing the services rendered by the workshop team of experts, highlighting key outcomes and follow-up actions that are being recommended (Part 1);
- b) A report detailing the actions whereby the Workshop recommendations were implemented (Part 2);
- c) Proof of Payment. The expert shall provide a copy of the encashed cheque image or a bank statement clearly identifying the bank transaction confirming the transfer of funds to the recipient. Any procurement must be covered by fiscal invoice/receipt as required by Maltese legislation.

9. Revocation of aid

- 9.1 All projects are subject to audits and evaluation.
- 9.2 The assistance may be revoked if the expert does not adhere to the conditions set out in these Incentive Guidelines and in the Letter of Approval.

10. State aid Rules and Obligations

10.1 Applicable State AiD

^{10.1.1} These Incentive Guidelines are in line with Commission Regulation (EU) No. 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid (the de minimis Regulation), as amended by Commission Regulation (EU) 2020/972 of 2 July 2020 amending Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 as regards its prolongation and amending Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as regards its prolongation and relevant adjustments.

^{10.1.2}The total amount of de minimis aid granted to a single undertaking shall not exceed the amount of €200,000 (or €100,000 in the case of single undertakings performing road freight transport for hire or reward) over any period of three consecutive fiscal years.

^{10.1.3}This aggregate maximum threshold applies in principle to all economic sectors with the exception of the agriculture and fisheries sectors for which different thresholds and criteria apply. The term 'single undertaking' includes also all companies in a group (which fall under the direct or indirect ownership or control of the same ultimate parent company) and relevant partner and linked enterprises as defined in Annex I of Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17th June 2014. This period covers the fiscal year concerned as well as the previous two fiscal years. 'Fiscal year' means the fiscal year as used for tax purposes by the undertaking concerned.





^{10.1.4}This maximum threshold would include all State aid granted under this aid scheme and any other State aid measure granted under the de minimis rule including that received from any entity other than Malta Innovation Hub. Any de minimis aid received in excess of the established threshold will have to be recovered, with interest, from the undertaking receiving the aid.

^{10.1.4}The de minimis declaration form must be filled in and submitted together with the application form.

10.2 Applicability of the Aid

^{10.2.1} Assistance approved under this aid scheme is NOT:

- a. Aid granted to undertakings active in the fishery and aquaculture sector, as covered by Council Regulation (EC) No. 104/2000;
- Aid granted to undertakings active in the primary production of agricultural products;
- c. Aid granted to undertakings active in the sector of processing and marketing of agricultural products, in the following cases:
 - i. Where the amount of the aid is fixed on the basis of the price or quantity of such products purchased from primary producers or put on the market by the undertakings concerned;
 - ii. Where the aid is conditional on being partly or entirely passed on to primary producers;
- d. Aid to export-related activities towards third countries or Member States, namely aid directly linked to the quantities exported, to the establishment and operation of a distribution network or to other current expenditure linked to the export activity;
- e. Aid contingent upon the use of domestic over imported goods;
- f. Aid for the acquisition of road freight transport vehicles granted to undertakings performing road freight transport for hire or reward.

^{10.2.2} Where an undertaking is active in the sectors referred to in points (a), (b) and (c) above as well as in other sectors falling within the scope of the de minimis Regulation, the Corporation will ensure a separation of the activities or distinction of costs. Only those sectors eligible for assistance under the de minimis Regulation will be assisted. Activities in the sectors excluded from the scope of the de minimis Regulation will not benefit from assistance under this aid scheme.





10.3 Cumulation

^{10.3.1} In terms of Article 5 of the de minimis Regulation, de minimis aid granted under this incentive may be cumulated with de minimis aid granted in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) No 360/2012 up to the ceiling laid down in that Regulation. It may be cumulated with de minimis aid granted in accordance with other de minimis regulations up to the relevant ceiling fixed in terms of these Incentive Guidelines.

^{10.3.2} De minimis aid approved under this scheme shall not be cumulated with State aid in relation to the same eligible costs or with State aid for the same risk finance measure, if such cumulation would exceed the highest relevant aid intensity or aid amount fixed in the specific circumstances of each case by a block exemption regulation or a decision adopted by the European Commission. De minimis aid which is not granted for or attributable to specific eligible costs may be cumulated with other State aid granted under a block exemption regulation or a decision adopted by the Commission.

11. Key Contacts

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