



**GOVERNMENT
OF MALTA**

MINISTRY FOR THE ECONOMY,
EUROPEAN FUNDS AND LANDS

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIAT
FOR EUROPEAN FUNDS



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NextGenerationEU

Digital Intensification Grant Scheme

Notes to Applicants

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Introduction

The Digital Intensification Grant Scheme is an aid scheme under the Recovery and Resilience Plan for Malta designed to support digitalisation investment initiatives by eligible enterprises, in eligible sectors, in their digitalisation endeavours and to intensify the digitalisation of operations. Digitalisation is crucial as it can help provide better services and products of higher quality, as well as improve the management of resources to increase efficiency and reach new markets. The investment shall support enterprises to digitalise so they can avoid falling behind by addressing new digital capabilities and digitalised processes such as product and process design and engineering, end-to-end procurement, supply chain/distribution and after-sales.

Scope of Document

This document is aimed at assisting applicants in the compilation of the application form and its submission. Prospective applicants are expected to have read these Notes to Applicants together with the:

- Guidance Notes for the Digital Intensification Grant Scheme; and
- ‘Guidelines for Implementation- Digital Intensification’ issued by the Measures and Support Division.

Call for Applications

The scheme shall be administered through competitive calls. The Measures and Support Division shall issue a public open call/s for interested eligible Undertakings to submit their applications with a clear deadline for submission. The Measures and support Division shall publicise the calls through various media including local newspapers, websites and other media sources. In order to ensure the widest visibility possible, the Measures and Support Division will collaborate with stakeholders, particularly representatives of the business community, and other Government Entities when publicising the call for applications. The Division will also organise information sessions for prospective applicants, where information regarding the schemes, eligibility criteria and the application process will be given.

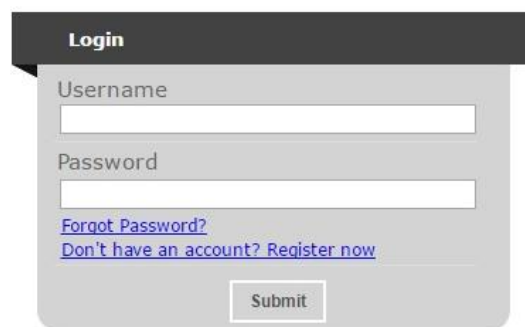
Application Process

Applications may only be filled in and submitted online through the SFD application portal. It is important to note that the online Application Portal is customised to work best with the Google Chrome browser.

Registration and access to the online SFD Application Portal

In order to apply, one must first register to the online SFD application portal, accessible through: www.sfd.gov.mt/application. This process needs to be conducted by the person who will be developing the application on behalf of the Applicant Undertaking. This could either be an individual from within the Undertaking, e.g. an employee / Director / Legal Representative or the Applicant himself / herself in the case of Sole Trader / Self-employed, or an expert entrusted by the Undertaking for this purpose.

A registration window appears on screen as shown in Figure 1.



The image shows a login window with a dark header containing the word "Login". Below the header are two input fields: "Username" and "Password". Under the "Password" field, there are two blue hyperlinks: "Forgot Password?" and "Don't have an account? Register now". At the bottom of the form is a "Submit" button.

Figure 1: Registration Window

First-time Registrants need to register by clicking the “**Don’t have an account? Register now**” link. (Refer to Annex I “Registering for the first time” of this document for a more detailed step-by-step guide.)

Registered users can access the SFD application portal by inserting their username and password details. (Refer to Annex II “Accessing the system” of this document for a more detailed step-by-step guide).

A user's **password can be changed** (if forgotten) by clicking on the "Forgot Password?" link. (Refer to Annex III "Requesting a change in password" of this document for a more detailed step-by-step guide).

Following registration, users can fill in and submit an online application form.

The Applicant's user credentials should not be shared. The system will not allow multiple users to login to the same account at the same time. For security reasons, if multiple users attempt to login to the same account at the same time, the account will be disabled.

Choosing the correct Call

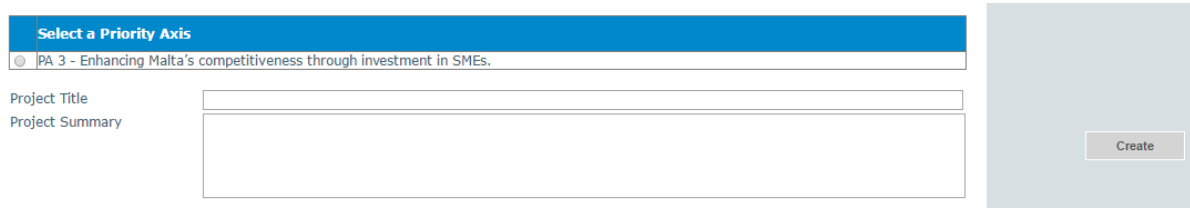
Once the user account has been successfully created, the user will be directed to log into the System. After logging in, the user will be directed to the *home screen* and will receive an email containing the User Login and a link to activate the account.

The Home Screen is divided into two sections. The upper section lists the **Open Calls** and includes a **'New Application'** button. Once the correct call has been identified, in this case it would be 'Call 1 –Digital Intensification Grant Scheme', the user is to click the **'New Application'** button to continue to the actual application form.

The lower section of the home screen contains the details of any application forms that would have been previously created by the user. For new users, the lower section will appear empty as there would be no application forms created yet.

Once an application form is created, the 'View' button found on the homepage, will allow the Applicant to access the respective application form. It is relevant to point out that the system will allow the user to submit more than one investment project under any open call. In such cases, the user should click on the relevant **'New Application'** button to create an additional application form if/and when required.

Once the button 'New Application' is clicked, a new application is generated and a page as shown in Figure 2 opens up.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Select a Priority Axis". At the top, there is a blue header bar with the text "Select a Priority Axis". Below this, there is a radio button selected next to the text "PA 3 - Enhancing Malta's competitiveness through investment in SMEs.". Underneath, there are two input fields: "Project Title" and "Project Summary". To the right of these fields, there is a "Create" button.

Figure 2: Selection of Priority Axis

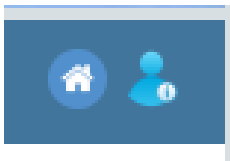
This section will request the user to select the relevant **Component (C)** and insert the **Project Title** and **Project Summary** accordingly.

The user is to click the **radio button** next to the available **Investment**, in this case this would refer to Investment C3-I4: Rolling out measures to intensify the digitalisation of the private sector 'The **Project Title** should be a concise description of the investment project, and suitable to be retained as the permanent investment name. Ideally this should not be longer

than ten (10) words. **Note: Once the 'Create' button has been clicked the field 'Project Title' cannot be amended.**

The Project Summary should be a short non-technical description of the proposed investment. This section will serve as a summary of the investment and therefore the information should be self-explanatory.

The **"Create"** button will allow the user to proceed to the next step. Once this button has been clicked the information is saved in the system.



There are also two icons at the top-right corner of the screen. These icons are visible in all of the application form screens. The 'Home' button will direct the user back to the home screen. The 'Person' button will give users the option to either change the password or sign out.

Should ICT technical support be required, kindly contact the Measures and Support Division on 2555 2642 or msd.eufunds@gov.mt.

Step by Step Guidelines to complete an Application Form

Section 1: Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is a collection of general data that reflects the investment at a glance.

This section is cross-referenced with other fields in different sections of the application form.

This means that some sections (which are greyed out) will be automatically populated by the system. Meanwhile, the remaining fields are to be filled in or ticked as necessary.

The **Call** field will automatically show the **reference** of the respective call for applications.

The **Scheme** field will automatically show the title of the scheme - **Digital Intensification Grant Scheme**.

The **Priority Axis** field will automatically show the title of the Component. The **Project Title** will automatically show the title of the investment project as created by the user previously.

The **Project Summary** will automatically show the summary of the investment project as created by the user previously. This is the only field of the Executive Summary that can be amended in this section.

Project Start Date refers to the date when the project is envisaged to start (*excluding drafting of the application form*). This start date will be a provisional start date, as activities can only start after the signing of the Grant Agreement. This field will be automatically filled in by the system once the Applicant has completed [Section 4 – Financial Plan](#).

Project End Date should reflect a realistic timeframe for the implementation of the project and should not exceed 24 months from the date of the project start date. By the end date the beneficiary must ensure that the investment has been procured, delivered and fully operational, all expenditure incurred, invoiced and fully paid and all relevant licences in place. This field will be automatically filled in by the system once the user has completed [Section 4 – Financial Plan](#).

Grant Requested – Amount of Public Funding needed for the Project. This field is cross referenced and will be automatically filled in once details are inserted in the Financial Plan

fields and the “save experience” button is clicked. On the right-hand side of the application form, Applicants will find 5 different function boxes: **Save, Print, Validate, Submit and Delete.**

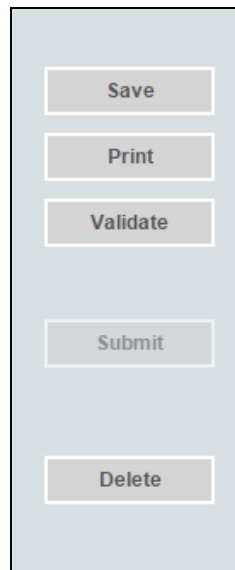


Figure 3: List of Function Options

It is important to note that ‘**Saving**’ the document does not mean that the application form has been submitted to the IB, but only that the information has been stored on the system. This means that the application form can still be updated/amended until the final version is submitted. If the user decides to sign out of the application form at any stage, the data which would have been saved will be retained. When the user decides to commence with completing the application form, by clicking the ‘View’ button in the homepage, the user will be redirected to the ‘Executive Summary’ section, which is the first section of the application form.

The ‘**Print**’ function will allow the user to print the section that they are viewing. This will allow users to distribute the data internally without having to provide their credentials to third parties. **(Refer to Annex IV for further details on how to export the Application Form in excel, word or PDF).**

On the other hand, the ‘**Validate**’ button should be used when the user wants to verify sections of the application form that have been completed. In order to confirm that the application form is being correctly filled in, it is recommended that sections are validated as soon as all the necessary information has been inputted. When the fields of the application form are filled in incorrectly, or data is missing, upon clicking the ‘Validate’ button an error

notification will appear at the top of the page. The error notification will specify what the error is so that the user can rectify and save accordingly. Therefore, when filling in an application in different stages, the user will be prompted by an error if the 'Validate' button is clicked, as there would still be sections not yet filled in the full application form. If no errors are given, then the information inputted can be considered to be correct. Users are reminded that any changes made to a previously validated section will need to be re-validated.

The '**Submit**' button will only be activated once all the sections have been validated. This function will result in the application being submitted for evaluation.

The '**Delete**' button will result in the permanent removal of an application from the SFD application.

On the left-hand side of the application form, the user finds a list of all the sections of the application form. The user can navigate between the different sections by clicking the links on the left-hand side of the page.

Section 2: The Applicant

This section refers to the Applicant Undertaking that is seeking assistance through the Scheme.

Section 2 consists of three (3) sub-sections which are described in further detail below:

Section 2.1: Applicant Details

2.1 - Applicant Details

Applicant Details	
Legal Name of Applicant	<input type="text"/>
Authorized Representative	<input type="text"/>
ID No.	<input type="text"/>
Email Address	<input type="text"/>
Legal Form of Enterprise	<input type="text" value="Select an Option"/>
Registration/Identification No.	<input type="text"/>
Date established	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
Post Code	<input type="text"/>
Phone number	<input type="text"/>
Vat Number	<input type="text"/>
Website address	<input type="text"/>
Project Manager	<input type="text"/>
I.D. No.	<input type="text"/>
Position within Organisation	<input type="text"/>
Phone number	<input type="text"/>
Email Address	<input type="text"/>

Figure 4: Applicant Details

The section 'Applicant Details' is shown in Figure 4 and the respective data fields are to be filled in by the user as follows:

Legal Name of Applicant – The Applicant is to enter in this section its legal name that is:

- Limited Liability Companies – the name as defined in the Memorandum of Articles of Association;
- Partnerships and Co-operatives - the name outlined in the deed of partnership should be inserted in this section; and
- Sole trader/Self-employed persons - are to insert the name of the same self-employed person.

Authorised Representative – The Authorised Representative is an individual appointed by the applicant Undertaking to enter into agreements on its behalf as outlined in the Memorandum of Articles of Association or pursuant to a Declaration of the Board of Directors. In case where the Authorised Representative is not the person identified in the latest Memorandum of Articles of Association deposited with the Registrar of Companies and is nominated through a declaration, a copy of this Declaration is to be uploaded in **Section 7 of the Application Form**. In the case of Sole traders/Self employed this should be the name of the same self-employed person.

ID number – The identification number of the Authorised Representative is to be inserted. Do not include any characters other than **Numbers and one letter**.

e-mail Address – The e-mail address of the Authorised Representative is to be included.

Legal Form of the Enterprise – The user is to choose one of the options provided in the drop-down menu (see Figure 5).

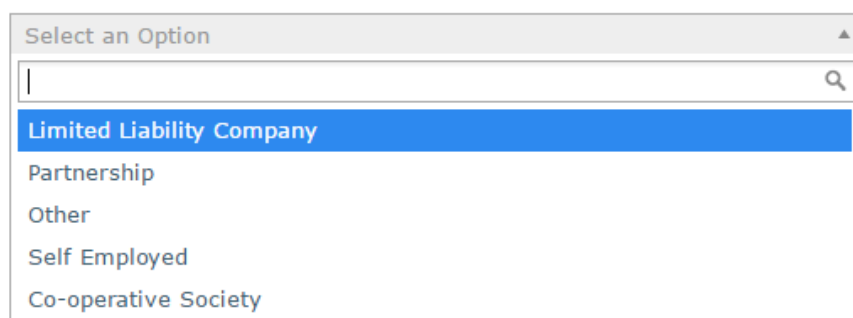


Figure 5: Legal Form of the Enterprise

If the user chooses '**Other**', then the Legal Form of the enterprise is to be specified in the respective field.

Registration/Identification Number – The Registration/Identification Number is the official registration number of the company or partnership in terms of the Companies Act, Chapter 386 of the Laws of Malta or the respective legal framework under which the applicant enterprise is registered. In those instances where the Applicant is not registered under Chapter 386 of the Laws of Malta, the user is to upload the legal document constituting the Enterprise under **Section 7 of the Application Form**. **Sole Traders/Self Employed** should enter their Identity Card Number.

Date Established – The user is to select the date from the dropdown calendar. The Date of Establishment of the enterprise may be one of the following:

- a) for limited liability companies, the Establishment Date shall be the date of registration with the MFSA;
- b) in the case of self-employed, shall be considered to be the date the person registered as a self-employed person with JobsPlus;
- c) in the case of partnerships, the establishment date shall be considered to be the date of the deed establishing the partnership;
- d) in the case of associations the date of the Statute establishing the association.
- e) In the case of co-operatives, the establishment date shall be considered as the date of the registration of the co-operative with the Co-operatives Board.
- f) In the case of others, the establishment date shall be considered as the date of registration of the organisation in terms of the applicable law of its establishment.

Registered Address – The user is to insert the registered address of the enterprise.

Post Code – Insert the respective Post Code.

Phone Number – Insert the phone number of the enterprise.

VAT number – Insert the VAT number of the enterprise.

Website address – Insert the website address of the enterprise. In case the enterprise **does not** have a website, kindly input 'Not Applicable' in the field.

Project Manager – The Project Manager is the person responsible for the implementation of the investment project. Only **ONE** Project Manager can be responsible for the investment project at any one time, even if the investment project is composed of different activities.

Position within Enterprise – The user must provide the Project Manager's position within the enterprise. In case the Project Manager is someone external to the applicant enterprise, then this is to be specified accordingly.

Phone number – Enter the contact number of the Project Manager.

E-mail address – Enter the e-mail address of the Project Manager.

Confirmation by Applicant

Users are to note that when Section 2.1 is filled with the relevant details and validated, a notification email shall be sent to the Applicant to confirm the application. Unless the Applicant confirms the application, the system will not enable submission of the application.

The Applicant needs to indicate the **Size of Undertaking**. The Size of the Undertaking is based on Annex I Commission Regulation (EC) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014. The regulation can be found here:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1404295693570&uri=CELEX:32014R0651>

For more detailed information one may access the online '**User guide to the SME definition**' from

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition/index_en.htm

Basing on the aforementioned regulation, users are to primarily determine the Linked and Partner enterprises and subsequently fill in the details of the respective enterprises accordingly as shown in figures 6 and 7. If any of the Linked and Partner enterprises is represented by either a Trustee or Fiduciary, a declaration by each Trustee or Fiduciary is to be uploaded in **Section 7 of the Application Form**. Any Linked and Partner enterprises listed in the declarations provided by the Trustee or Fiduciary are to be listed together with the other Linked and Partner Enterprises. Should one need more space where to add any Linked and/or Partner enterprises one can do so by clicking on the 'Add another enterprise' button under the respective tables.

In case an Applicant is an Autonomous Undertaking, the user is to insert the words 'Not Applicable' in the first row of the respective tables and a '0' under the column 'Shareholding %'. This will enable the proper saving and validating of data.

Enterprise Name	Registration Number
CRK Ltd.	C99999

Add an enterprise

Figure 6: Linked Enterprises

Enterprise Name	Registration Number	Shareholding %
CRK Ltd.	C99999	25

Add an enterprise

Figure 7: Partner Enterprises

One needs to then determine the size of the Undertaking by calculating the Headcount, Turnover and Balance Sheet Total of the Applicant enterprise. This should be done by following the steps explained in the ‘**User guide to the SME definition**’. This can be accessed from: <https://fondi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/SME-Definition-User-Guide.pdf>

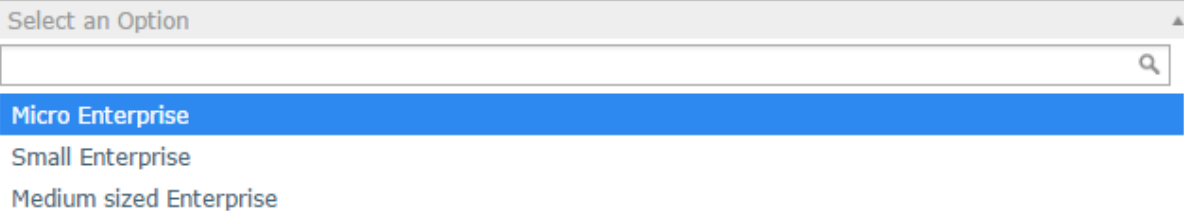
The table below also acts as a guideline on how the Undertaking size can be determined.

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

Large Enterprise is an Undertaking not fulfilling the criteria laid above, that is with staff headcount exceeding 250; turnover exceeding €50m or Balance Sheet exceeding €43m.

Following these workings, the user is to then select one of the options from the list provided (refer to Figure 8) to specify the size of the Undertaking.

In line with the provisions of the above quoted EC Regulation, the Undertaking is:



Select an Option

Micro Enterprise

Small Enterprise

Medium sized Enterprise

Figure 8: Size of Undertaking

Following the completion of this segment the user must save the application form by clicking on the 'Save' button found on the right-hand side of the screen in order to populate the drop-down function found in the next question.

It is essential for all the fields in this section to be completed for the validation to go ahead.

Section 2.2: Applicant's core business activities

NACE Code – The user is to insert the digits of the NACE code describing the commercial activity of the enterprise. Automatically, the respective description of the activity linked to the particular NACE code will show in the space provided.

Applicants are to note that the NACE classification of an enterprise is usually available in the VAT Information Sheet received together with the VAT Certificate issued by the Commissioner for Revenue. In this regard, enterprises are to ensure that the NACE Code in this VAT Information Sheet truly reflects their actual primary economic activity.

In those cases where applicants do not have such document, they may seek guidance from the Business Register at the National Statistics Office (NSO) in writing in order to determine the respective NACE Code.

NSO Business Register:

Tel: 2599 7359

E-mail: br.nso@gov.mt

As evidence of the applicant enterprise NACE Code, one is to submit either a copy of the VAT Information Sheet or a copy of the communication between the applicant and NSO in Section 7.1 of the application form as *Supporting Documents*.

As for start-up enterprises not yet having a VAT Information Sheet in hand, or any other enterprise which in line with VAT regulation are not issued a VAT number by the Commissioner for Revenue, these are requested to determine their respective NACE classification by referring to the NACE Rev. 2 classification which is available online.

In this section, one is to provide further details on the core business activities in which the enterprise is engaged in and provide a background description of the enterprise and its investment project. (Max 5,000 characters)

Section 2.3: Past Experience in EU Funded Projects

In this section the Applicant is to indicate if the Applicant company, Undertaking and/or Directors have any previous experience in the implementation of projects co-financed through structural funds or other EU Programmes. Applicants are asked to indicate if the answer is 'yes' or 'no' and to provide an explanation of the experience of the organisation in handling EU funded projects of similar magnitude, budget or nature.

Section 3: The Investment

Section 3.1: Investment Details

This section introduces the Applicant Undertaking to the investment itself. The application will automatically show the Investment details that the call is tied to.

Location of project

The user is required to specify the address where the proposed intervention will take place. In this regard, the address and post code are to be inserted in their respective fields, whilst one option from 'Malta' or 'Gozo' is to be selected from the provided options. In the locality option choose the location of the project from the dropdown.

Kindly provide the address where the proposed project will take place:

Address	<input type="text"/>
Post Code	<input type="text"/>
Region	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Malta <input type="radio"/> Gozo
Locality	<input type="text" value="Select an Option"/>

Figure 11: Project Address

Section 3.1.1: Proposed Investment Initiative

Define the project by describing the proposed work, specifying its main characteristics.

In this section one needs to specify the outcome of the initiative being proposed and for which assistance is being sought. The user must give a description of the proposed project, specifying its main characteristics and what it is proposing to attain through digitalisation.

Applicant has to explain how the investment intends to go digital by means of these actions:

Specific Digital Solutions (as identified in the Process and Systems Review) including -

1. Hardware
2. Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) and Custom Software
3. Other Digital Solutions
4. Installation including any training costs on the use of the specific item acquired under points 1 to 3 above and included in the purchase price of the item in question, and thus from the same provider.

Applicants are to note that proposals as described hereunder within the Manufacturing and Tourism sectors shall be given priority within the scheme.

- Manufacturing industry - investment that supports the transformation operations and transition to Industry 4.0 by optimising the use of existing technologies and exploitation of emerging technologies and trends such as digital twinning, predictive maintenance, track-and-trace, and modular design amongst others. Investments in digitalisation can thus help such enterprise to improve their efficiency, productivity and customer experience by ensuring they have the right capabilities that is central to their operating model and matching them with a strong skill sets in analytics and IT.
- Tourism industry – investment that ensures that digitalisation is leveraged with a view to enhance operations by addressing not only operational logistics but exploring the possibility of analytical tools and AI to design, adapt and personalise hospitality packages and offerings that maximise client experiences and investment in digitalisation and other technologies that will also contribute towards better resource efficiencies, such as the use of water and electricity

(Max 5,000 characters)

Impact on the proposed initiative be without the assistance being applied for through this scheme

Describe how the Undertaking would be affected if the funding is not secured. The user may refer to examples such as, amongst others, the eventual delaying of the investment project by postponing activities to a later date or opting not to implement this action altogether. (Max 5,000 characters)

Section 3.2: Investment Excellence

The Applicant is to describe the excellence of the project by describing the main characteristics of the proposed project, in terms of:

- a. **The proposed investment concept.**

The applicant is to give details of the state of digitalisation of the enterprise (or in specific areas relevant for the investment) and provide details on the outcome of the initiative being proposed and for which assistance is being sought. Include your investment project existing information, including data on your digitalisation plan, and so on. Indicate the investment purpose and goals. The Applicant is to give details of what the enterprise wants to achieve and explain the need to transform in line with the Process and Systems review. The details on the hardware, software and digital systems necessary for the successful implementation of the investment are to be outlined as per underneath:

- 1 Indicate budget for the project
 - 2 Identify the optimum technology and systems for the business
 - 3 Specify details and provide market testing carried out in relation to the required project (to be presented in a BOQ including the basic technical specifications)
 - 4 Outline the cost of the planned digitalisation investments
 - 5 Set an order of priority for planned digitalisation investments
 - 6 Identify milestones for each digitalisation investment
- (Max 5,000 characters)

b. The level that the investment seeks to maximise the internationalisation of the Undertaking.

One should describe the extent to which the project seeks to exploit the potential of the Undertaking by optimising networking opportunities, and securing or strengthening its presence in the global market. One is to use data from the Process and Systems Review to highlight the state of preparedness of the Undertaking to take up internationalisation initiatives. (Max 5,000 characters)

c. How ambitious the project is and if it is addressing an identified gap in the market for the specific sector.

Applicants should indicate the extent to which the project will be addressing gaps within the applicant enterprise and/or the specific sector it operates in. Using data from the Process and Systems Review the user should focus on the novelty of the

concepts and new approaches to be introduced by the project, and how ambitious the proposed activities are in relation to tangible objectives. (Max 5,000 characters).

Section 3.3 – Project Impact and Sustainability

In this section the applicant should outline the project's impact on the enterprise in terms of:

a. Potential future growth through the return on investment (ROI) and potential cost reductions.

Present details of how much the proposed technology will contribute to increase revenue and reduce costs. Using data from the Process and Systems Review, the applicant is to provide either the Return on Investment (ROI) ratio; or else, quantify the foreseen increase in revenue the investment will make possible. Cost reductions should also be identified here.

b. Mitigation measures that will become possible following the investment in order to avoid negative spill over effects in time of crisis.

The capability of an enterprise to digitalise by addressing new digital capabilities and digitalised processes is crucial for survival and future business growth. Digitalization opens up new economic opportunities. In addition, digital technologies enable new business models, intelligent work and production processes, more effective customer acquisition and better networking.

Applicant is to include details on the challenges faced by the enterprise under the coronavirus pandemic and subsequent challenges. Applicants should take into account all the risks which have been considered and describe what measures will be set up following the investment to ensure that these risks are minimised in order to make the enterprise more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions. (Max 5,000 characters)

c. Improvements in the Undertaking's business model.

The user must define how the business model will improve as a result of the project. Using data from the Process and Systems Review, elaborate on how, as a result of the proposed project, the Undertaking will realise a more sustainable business model. This should include projected outcomes to achieve this business improvement. (Max 5,000 characters)

Section 3.4 – Project Quality and Efficiency of Implementation

Outline the Management and Control systems in place and how these will support the Implementation of the proposed activities. The **management structure** shall be provided together with a short explanation of the roles (*or Organigram*).

Any control systems, including any internal standards and systems that are in place within the enterprise, and the methodologies to be adopted during the implementation of the proposed project are to be provided.

Any documentation supporting the above can be provided in **Section 7 of the Application Form**. (Max 5,000 characters).

Describe the level of readiness and timeliness of the proposed investment.

In this section applicant is to provide details on the state of readiness to start the project, e.g. provide details on the preparedness of relevant specifications and market testing or relevant permits. Such evidence should be provided in Section 7 of the Application Form.

In this section the Applicant should include a work plan (*or GANTT Chart*) to indicate the timeliness of events of the proposed work.

Describe the allocation and capacity of the human resources towards the investment.

The user must identify the level of capacity and resources that will be allocated to the implementation of the project. Reference should be made to both the human and operational resources that the Applicant has and how these will be used during project implementation. One should describe how the project's activities will be operated and maintained after the project's completion, specifying the structures that are, or will be put, in place to implement the planned investment. The roles and functions of any identified personnel must also be defined in relation to the proposed project. (Max 5,000 characters)

Section 3.5 – Project Risk Assessment

Identify and describe any risks that might impact the implementation of the project and indicate the probability of these risks happening.

Applicants should indicate the identified risks, the level of risk the proposed project is exposed to and the probability of these risks happening. Applicants should consider the level of complexity that the project entails. For example, applicants should take into account whether any of the equipment/activities intended to be procured shall require customisation or whether these may be available off the shelf. The introduction of complex customized products/activities will raise the implementation risk. (Max 5,000 characters)

How do you intend to mitigate these risks?

Applicants should take into account all the risks which have been considered and describe what measures will be set up to ensure that these risks are minimised. (Max 5,000 characters)

Section 3.6 - Do No Significant Harm Principle

Confirm that the planned investment respect the conditions of the Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) principle in line with Article 17 of Regulation 2020/852.

For the scope undertaken under this scheme two of the six environmental objectives, being *climate change mitigation* and *circular economy*, have been identified that require a substantive assessment.

Projects that do not respect the above objectives will not be considered eligible. In this regard applicants are asked to confirm that the answer is ‘no’, and to provide a substantive explanation and justification of their reasoning, on the basis of the corresponding questions. Where necessary, applicants are also invited to provide further analysis and/or supporting documents, in a targeted and limited manner, to further substantiate their replies to the list of questions.

1. Climate Change mitigation

The assessment is to indicate if the project is expected to lead to significant GHG emissions. Applicants are asked to confirm that the answer is ‘no’ and to provide a substantive explanation confirming adherence to climate change mitigation.

Example:

Environmental Objective	Yes	No	Substantive explanation
Climate Change mitigation: Is the measure expected to lead to significant GHG emissions?		x	Although the purchase of hardware and equipment will result in increased power consumption, this is minimised because the new system/equipment will be energy efficient. The new investment supported may be replacing less efficient assets with a view to reap operational efficiencies. Applicants will also be encouraged to incorporate possible greening and/or climate mitigation measures. Supporting documentation to sustain this can be provided in Section 7.

2. The circular economy, including waste prevention and recycling

The applicant is to indicate if the project is expected to:

(i) lead to a significant increase in the generation, incineration or disposal of waste, with the exception of the incineration of non-recyclable hazardous waste; or

(ii) lead to significant inefficiencies in the direct or indirect use of any natural resource at any stage of its life cycle, which are not minimised by adequate measures; or

(iii) cause significant and long-term harm to the environment in respect to the circular economy

Applicants are asked to confirm that the answer is 'no' and to provide a substantive explanation confirming that the company is contributing towards the transition to a circular economy including waste prevention and recycling.

Environmental Objective	Yes	No	Substantive explanation
The circular economy, including waste prevention and recycling: Is the measure expected to lead to significant inefficiencies in the use of materials or in the direct or indirect use of natural resources; will it significantly increase waste; or, cause significant harm to the environment?		x	<p>Investments are unlikely to result in significant waste generation. Digitisation is aimed at enhancing operational efficiency and also reducing the use of paper.</p> <p>Beneficiaries will be required to dispose of hardware and equipment following specific procedures to ensure that reuse and recycling will be pursued as much as possible.</p> <p><u>Examples</u></p> <p>That resources procured are resource efficient and durable;</p> <p>Priority given to waste prevention where hardware is reused;</p> <p>Disposal of replaced equipment should be in line with Subsidiary Legislation 549.89 titled Waste Management (Electrical and electronic equipment) regulations lays down measures to protect the environment and human health by preventing or reducing the adverse impacts of the generation and management of waste from electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) and by reducing overall impacts of resource use and improving the efficiency of such use in accordance with regulation 2(2) and Schedule 5 of the Waste Regulations.</p>

			<p>Applicants may seek guidance from the Environment and Resources Authority on the appropriate disposal of WEEE products mentioned above.</p> <p>Supporting documentation to sustain this can be provided in Section 7.</p>
--	--	--	--

When it comes to procurement processes, specifications are to contain conditions related to adherence of relevant DNSH.

Investments involving material changes to buildings located in or near biodiversity sensitive areas (including the Natura 2000 network of protected areas, UNESCO World Heritage sites and Key Biodiversity Areas as well as other protected areas) are excluded under this grant scheme.

Section 4: Financial Plan

Section 4.1 Financial Plan

The investment project proposal must include a comprehensive budget breakdown. In this section, shown in Figure 12, the user is to choose the activity - Specific Digital Solution and insert a sub-activity in relation to the activity, and then for each respective sub-activity one is to insert a start date and end date, describe the sub-activity, insert any comments, and define the budget in the provided fields accordingly. The total costs of the investment will be automatically calculated through the summation of costs of all the Sub-activities inserted by the user. This is further explained field by field below.

Important notes re category of sub-activities:

Specific Digital Solutions (as identified in the Process and Systems Review) including -

Hardware - This cost category should be defined in line with the applicable accounting standards and will need to be recorded in the fixed asset register accordingly

Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) and Custom Software - for assets, particularly intangible assets that are acquired through periodic subscriptions, the eligible investment cost is considered to be the value for first 2 years inclusive of any initial one-time costs. If the full two year cost is not incurred during the project period, subject to at least part of the cost being incurred during this period, the full value of a 2-year subscription will be reimbursed on the basis of the cost incurred during the project period.

Other Digital Solutions - This cost category should be defined in line with the applicable accounting standards and will need to be recorded in the fixed asset register accordingly

Training costs on the use of the specific item acquired under points 1 to 3 above and included in the purchase price of the item in question, and thus from the same provider. This cost category should be defined in line with the applicable accounting standards and will need to be recorded in the fixed asset register accordingly

Investment Priority (IP)

The Investment Priority (IP) that is set with the call and which is relevant to the investment will be included automatically with every Sub-activity listed.

Start and End date

The user is to insert the start and end date for the investment by choosing the dates from the automatic calendar that pops up when the field is clicked on.

In determining the earliest start date for activities, Applicants are to give due consideration to the fact that 'start of works' may not initiate prior to the award of the grant i.e. signing of the Grant Agreement. The signing of the Grant Agreement may only take place following the conclusion of the evaluation process of the applications received by the cut-off date.

Investments should be concluded by 30th June 2026.

If an activity is saved to the financial plan with an incorrect date, the user should delete the activity from the financial plan and re-enter the activity with the correct data.

Description of the Activity/sub-activity

The Applicant is requested to concretely describe what the investment entails and define the implementation of the investment. Reference should be provided to the annexed documents with information on the list of cost items and respective quotations provided.

Comments

If the Applicant does not have any comments, then 'Not Applicable' is to be inserted.

Financial Plan

The screenshot shows a form with two main sections. The top section is titled 'Financial Plan' and contains seven input fields arranged in two rows. The first row has 'Elig.' (white), 'VAT Elig.' (greyed out), and 'Total Elig.' (greyed out). The second row has 'Non Elig.' (white), 'VAT Non Elig.' (white), 'Total Non Elig.' (greyed out), and 'Total' (greyed out). The bottom section is titled 'Gozo Contribution Financial Plan' and has the same layout of fields, but it is entirely greyed out. Below these sections are three buttons: 'Save Financial Plan', 'Remove Financial Plan', and 'Clear'.

Figure 12: Financial Plan

The Gozo Contribution Financial Plan will be greyed out if the user did not provide an address in Gozo in Section 3.1 of this application. On the other hand, if an address in Gozo was provided the user will need to fill out both the 'Total Financial Plan' section and the 'Gozo Financial Plan' section with the same information.

In this section, the user should specify the costs (in EUR) in the fields provided. Users should note that the amounts entered should not contain any characters such as 'comma' but only figures, so that for example an amount of '€20,000' would be simply entered as '20000'.

The '**Eligible**' costs are to be inserted in the respective field. The VAT for both eligible and non eligible costs is to be invariably inserted in the '**VAT Non Eligible**' field.

The '**Non Eligible**' costs indicated under this section need to reflect any expenditure (excluding VAT) related to that Sub-activity but which is ineligible for funding as specified in the scheme Guidance Notes.

The **Gozo Contribution Financial Plan** will be greyed out if the user did not provide an address in Gozo in Section 3.1 of this application. On the other hand, if an address in Gozo was provided the user will need to fill out both the 'Total Financial Plan' section and the 'Gozo Financial Plan' section with the same information.

When all information has been inputted, click on the 'save' button at the bottom of the screen. Once the details have been saved, these will show up at the top part of the Financial Plan and additional Sub-activities can then be added by using the same process.

When adding activities to the financial plan, Applicants are to keep in mind that these should be itemized. Sub-Activities should not be batched together under one activity, instead the Applicant should create an Activity for every Sub-Activity that one intends to include in the financial plan.

Comments

Applicants are to provide any comments that may be deemed necessary such as reference to item specifications or clarifications in relation to any ineligible costs that may still be necessary for the investment implementation. If the Applicant does not have any comments, then 'Not Applicable' is to be inserted.

Section 5: Additional Information

In this section the user is required to provide any additional information related to the previous sections which are deemed relevant. Applicants are requested to make reference to the specific sections by listing the sub-section number for ease of reference. (Max 5,000 characters)

Section 6: Declaration

Section 6.1: Declaration Form

The declaration form is to be signed and dated by the Authorised Representative of the Applicant. This should either be the legal Representative as determined in the Memorandum of Articles of Association or as authorised further to a Declaration of the Board of Directors. In the case of a Sole Trader/Self Employed, the Applicant is required to sign the declaration himself/herself.

It is important that the Declaration form is signed in blue ink.

A soft copy of this declaration form is to be uploaded under **Section 6 of the Application Form**, whilst the **original** copy is to be filed for future reference.

If the information given in the application form is found to be false or deliberately misleading, any EU Funds awarded may be withdrawn and any funds paid may be recovered from the Undertaking.

Under this section applicants may also save a copy of the application form in PDF format. **Refer to Annex VI for further details on how to generate the document in PDF format.**

Section 7: Checklist of Attachments

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that **all** the necessary documents mentioned throughout this Application Form and the respective Guidance Notes are included under this Section. For ease of reference a checklist has been provided in the application form.

After accessing the relevant uploading Section, titled 'Checklist of Attachments', the application form displays an information table containing details of the type of **document**, the name of the **uploaded file** (the column will be empty until a file is uploaded), a '**Choose File**' button, a '**View**' button and a '**Remove**' Button.

When uploading files, Applicants need to ensure that no commas (,) are in the file name.

List of mandatory documents

The Applicant is required to upload the following mandatory documents identified in the above checklist with the application form, as specified in the respective Guidance Notes:

- Declaration Form – refer to Section 6
- Process and Systems Review describing the digitalisation investment in detail and, as a minimum, shall include the specifications identified under section 4.3 of the Digital Intensification Grant Scheme Guidance Notes
- Compliance Certificate issued by the Commissioner for Revenue (CfR)

Requests for the Compliance Certificates (Income tax, FSS and VAT) are to be addressed to the Office of the Commissioner for Revenue generic email - certificates.cfr@gov.mt

To note that in case of a self-employed taxpayer (with no employees), the Social Security Contributions Compliance Certificate is to be requested for the self-employed accordingly.

- NACE Code confirmation – as identified in Section 2.2
- Evidence of Private Match financing

The applicant is to provide documented evidence to prove that the applicant has available private funds, i.e., funds not originating from any source of public funding, to see through the project. This can be evidenced for example through:

- The provision of a Letter of Intent/Sanction Letter issued by a bank (identifying the amount of lending that the bank is willing to lend); or
- Bank Statements certified by a Certified Public Accountant showing that the enterprise has the necessary liquidity; or
- In the case that private sources such as crowd funding etc shall be used, documented evidence that such funds are readily available is to be submitted; or
- Any other documented evidence showing that the applicant has access to the necessary private funds
- Evidence of Market Testing
- GANTT Chart or Implementation Schedule

List of documents to be uploaded where and as necessary

Where applicable, the user is required to upload the following documents identified in the above checklist with the application form, as specified in the respective Guidance Notes:

- Declaration of Authorization
 - The Declaration of Authorization is to be uploaded in those cases where it is applicable. Where the Memorandum of Articles of Association identify the Authorised Representative and are available at the MBR or where the Applicant Undertaking is a Self Employed, no declaration of Authorization is required.
- Certificate of Registration
 - The Certificate of Registration is to be uploaded in those cases where it is applicable. For a Sole Trader/Self Employed this does not apply.
- Copy of Memorandum of Articles of Association / Legal document constituting the Enterprise
 - In those cases where the latest copy of these documents is not deposited with the Malta Business Registry (MBR), a copy is to be uploaded with the application form.
- Audited Financial Statements and/or the Management Accounts – refer to Section 2.1 (pgs. 20-21)

- Copies of any necessary permits
- Declaration by Trustee or Fiduciary – refer to Annex VI
- Additional Supporting Documentation

Applicants are to provide a copy of the **Audited Financial Statements and/or the Management Accounts** dated within the two financial years prior to the year of submission of the application for the applicant enterprise and all the linked and partner enterprises as specified in the Guidance Notes for the Grant Scheme:

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. No documents would need to be submitted if a copy of these documents as outlined hereunder is already deposited with the Malta Business Registry (MBR).

In the case of linked and partner enterprises with an obligation to present Audited Accounts/Annual Accounts at the Registry of Companies in terms of the Companies Act (Chapter 386 of the Laws of Malta), no documentation need to be presented subject to the condition that the last Audited Accounts/Annual Accounts declared are not earlier than for the two financial years prior to the year of submission of the application.

In the case of linked and partner enterprises without a legal obligation to prepare financial statements, the Management Accounts (Profit & Loss Statements/Income Statement and Balance Sheet/Statement of Assets and Liabilities) certified by a Certified Public Accountant.

In the case of a Sole Trader/self-employed, a copy of the Income Tax Return for the last two years certified by a Certified Public Accountant.

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 and a Balance Sheet/Statement of Assets and Liabilities certified by a CPA is to be provided.

Where these Financial Statements are not available on the Malta Business Registry (MBR), accounts are to be uploaded through this section.

The accounts files for the Applicant are to be uploaded as **Audited Financial Statements and/or the Management Accounts** and any other documents are to be uploaded as **Additional Documents**. One should note that each annual accounts should be saved in one *.pdf* document or in a *zip* file.

In order to upload a file, the User must click on '**Choose File**' following which, he/she will be prompted to select the file to be uploaded.

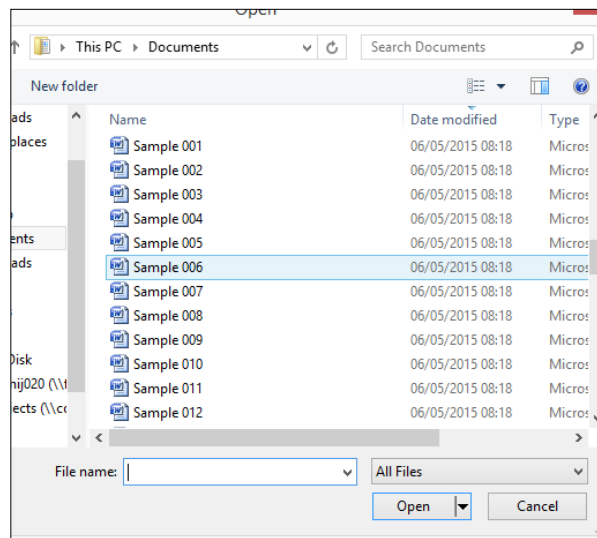


Figure 13: Choosing a file to upload

When the file is chosen (and the User clicks on 'Open') the system returns to the uploading screen where the file is now shown in column 3 of the table. It is important to point out that at this stage the file is still not uploaded in the system. In order to upload the file in the system the User will need to click on the '**Save**' Button (on the right of the screen) following which the file will be shown as uploaded (in column 2).

At this stage the User may opt to either continue inputting other documents (by clicking on the relevant '**Choose File**' buttons in the other rows), viewing the document (by clicking on the '**View**' button) or removing the document (by clicking on the '**Remove**' button).

The User will have the option to also upload documents which are not listed in the information table. This can be done by clicking the 'Add another document' button (figure 14) beneath the previously mentioned information table. On clicking such button the User will be prompted to choose a document to be uploaded.

Once selected, the document name will appear adjacent to the 'Choose File' button (as shown in figure 14).

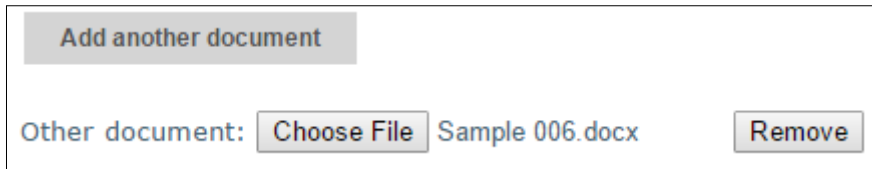


Figure 14: Functionality button showing uploaded file

At this stage the document is not actually uploaded to the system. This will take place only when the 'Save' button is selected. Before the application form is saved, the User can click on the 'Remove' button and the selected file will be removed (without being saved). Alternatively, clicking on 'Choose File' will allow the User to select another document which will replace the one previously selected.

Once the User is satisfied that the correct document to be uploaded has been selected, the applicant may proceed with saving the application form (following which the document will be uploaded). The User will know that the upload has been successful because the document will appear as 'Other' in the information table. There is no limit on the number of 'Other' documents that can be uploaded in the system.

Once the application is fully validated, one may submit the application. Once an application is submitted an email will be received with the application number. This is to be retained by the Applicant together with the original Declaration Form and a copy of the Application for future reference.

ANNEXES

Annex I: Registering for the first time

The user is to log in to the web-based version of the SFD Application portal on www.sfd.gov.mt/application.

Click on the “**Don’t have an account? Register now**” link. This will direct the user to the Registration Screen, (see figure 15). All data fields requested in the User Profile are **mandatory** and will be captured in the application form submitted.

* This website is best optimised for Chrome and Mozilla Firefox.

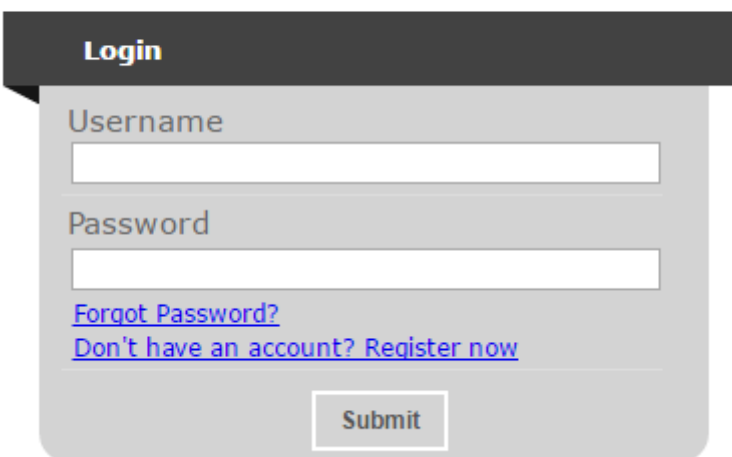


Figure 15: Register User Profile

Step-by-Step guidelines to filling in the user profile window follow:

Organisation Name: This section should show the name of the organisation that is filling in and submitting the application. Consultancy firms and external individuals filling in the application on behalf of an Applicant Undertaking may use the same profile to fill in and submit multiple applications. However, each operation must be linked to only **ONE** Undertaking.

First Name and Last Name: This section should show the name of the person who is registering the account. This individual will hereinafter be referred to as the “**Registrant**”.

Address & Post code: The Enterprise’s registered address and Post Code are to be inserted in these sections.

Telephone Number: The Registrant's work telephone number is to be inserted in this section.

Mobile Number: The Registrant's mobile number is to be inserted in this section. In cases where this is not possible, the number '0' should be inserted.

ID number: The Registrant's Identity Card number is to be inserted in full, e.g. 12345M. Do not include any characters other than numbers and one letter.

VAT Number: The VAT number of the Enterprise, as per VAT certificate, is to be inserted in this field.

CORP Account (if any): This data field is applicable to Registrants that are government officers. Registrants that do not have a CORP account are to leave this empty and the system will automatically generate a User account.

Email Address: This section should be filled in with the registrant's contact email address. The registration process will require the insertion of a valid and official email address in order to be completed effectively. Ideally, generic email addresses should be avoided.

Password: The Registrant is to insert a password.

Note: The password chosen must comply with the following established criteria:

- must be at least eight (8) characters long
- must contain at least one character from three of the following four categories:
 - English uppercase characters (A through Z)
 - English lowercase characters (a through z)
 - Numbers (0 through 9)
 - Symbols, for example + = () & ! ?
- Passwords must NOT contain three (3) or more consecutive characters of the Applicant's login, name or surname.
- New Passwords must be different from the last recently used password

Confirm Password: The Registrant is to re-type the password to ensure that this has been inserted correctly.

When **all** the data fields have been inputted the Registrant can proceed by clicking on the **'Register'** button. The user will be prompted with error messages if any data field is left incomplete or is filled in incorrectly.

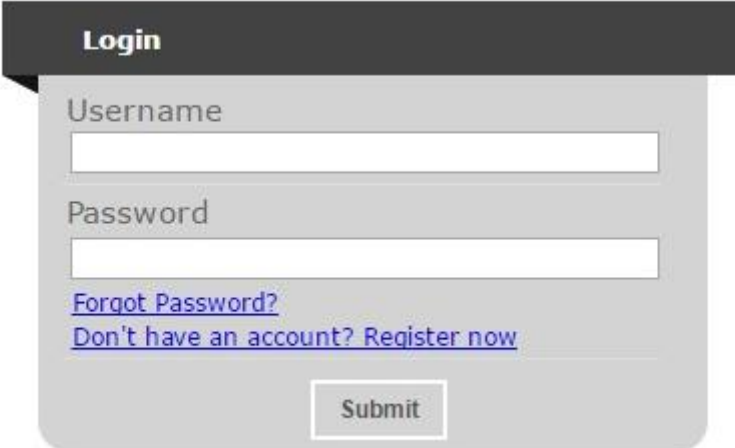
Upon successful registration an automated email will be generated from the SFD system to the e-mail address that the Registrant provided in the user registration form. This email (as shown in figure 16) will inform the Registrant that the SFD14-20 account has been created successfully and will provide the Registrant with a link to activate the account.



Figure 16: Email confirming registration

The account can ONLY be accessed once it has been activated.

Annex II: Accessing the System



The image shows a login form with a dark grey header containing the word "Login" in white. Below the header, there are two input fields: "Username" and "Password". Below the "Password" field, there are two blue links: "Forgot Password?" and "Don't have an account? Register now". At the bottom of the form is a "Submit" button.

Figure 17: Login

If you are already registered, you can proceed to access the system by inserting the Username (provided upon registration) and the password and clicking on the Submit button.

Annex III: Requesting a change in Password

This function should only be used when the Registrant has forgotten his/her password or when he/she has doubts as to whether the security of his/her password has been compromised.

By clicking the **Forgot Password** link the Registrant is directed to a screen where he/she is asked to insert his/her username. In this case the username generated following registration should be inserted.

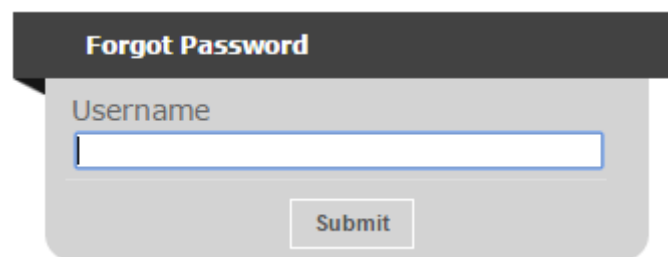
The image shows a user interface for a 'Forgot Password' screen. At the top, there is a dark gray header bar with the text 'Forgot Password' in white. Below this header is a light gray rounded rectangle containing a text input field with the placeholder text 'Username'. Below the input field is a rectangular button with the text 'Submit'.

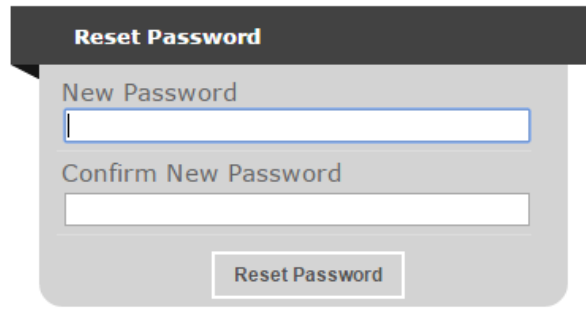
Figure 18: Forgot Password Screen

On pressing the Submit button the user will be informed that an email has been sent to the email address used in the registration process. The user can then follow the instructions and link provided in the e-mail to reset the account password.

Note: There is a possibility that users may also receive a generated email to reset the password even though they did not request it. This may be due to another user trying to access the application form using that username and requesting to reset the password. In such cases the details of the request are recorded (for auditing purposes) and the User should disregard the password change prompt and continue using the current password to log onto the system. In such circumstances it is strongly recommended that the issue is reported to the Managing Authority for further investigation.

REMINDER: Usernames and Passwords are NOT to be shared.

If the request to reset the password is genuine, on clicking the reset link the user is directed to a screen where he/she is prompted to insert a new password as seen in the below figure.

The image shows a mobile application screen titled "Reset Password". The screen has a dark grey header with the title in white. Below the header, there are two text input fields. The first field is labeled "New Password" and the second is labeled "Confirm New Password". Both fields are currently empty. At the bottom of the screen, there is a button labeled "Reset Password".

Reset Password

New Password

Confirm New Password

Reset Password

Figure 19: Reset Password Screen

Once the new password is inserted and confirmed the User is directed to the Home Screen of the application form.

Annex IV: Exporting Application Form to .pdf

Applicants may generate a copy of the online application form, in PDF format, at any stage of the application form process. This can be done by clicking on the print functionality button that is available on the right-hand side of the screen (see figure 20 below) which in turn will generate a screen informing the user that the application form is being exported (see figure 21). Applicants are to click on the “floppy disk” icon found at the top right corner of the screen (see figure 21) and may generate this application form in PDF format as required.

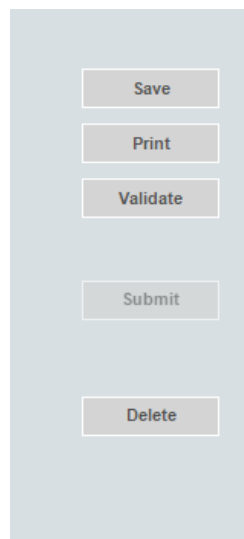


Figure 20 - Exporting Application Form

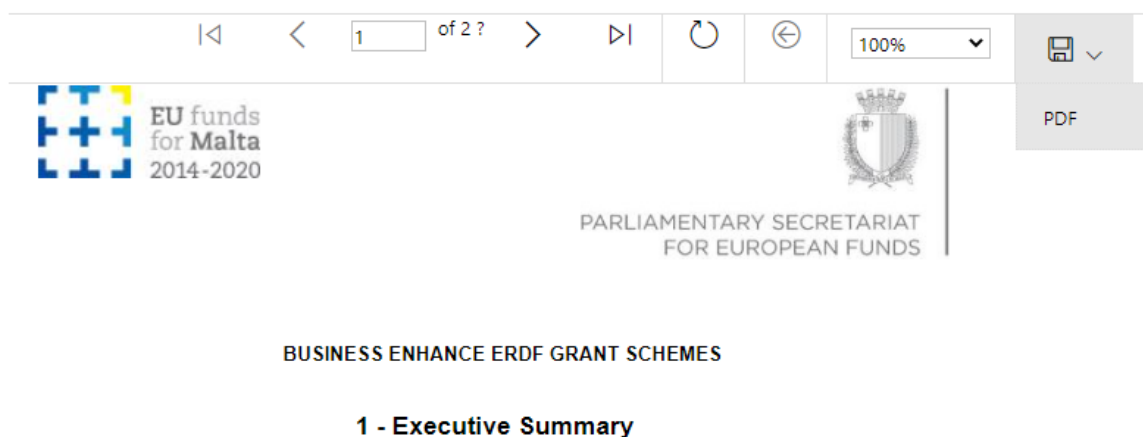


Figure 21 - Exporting Application Form to PDF

In case of section 4, the declaration form can be exported for signature (see figure 22).

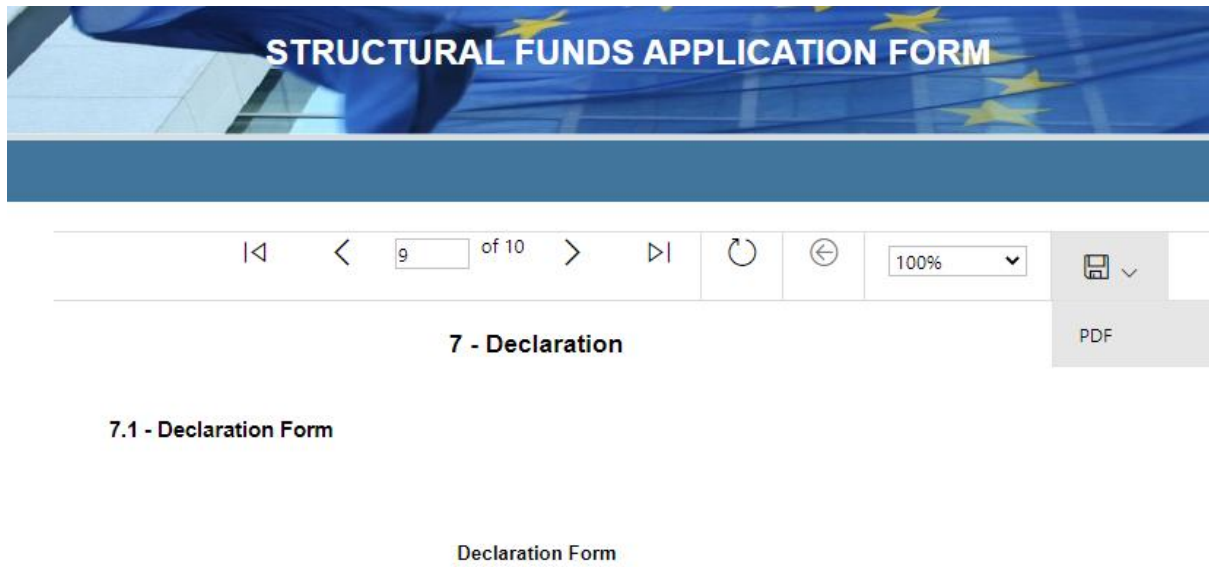


Figure 22: Exporting Declaration Form to .PDF

Annex VI: Declaration by Trustee or Fiduciary in Relation to a Company within a Group

Applicants who have linked or partner enterprises represented by Trustees or Fiduciaries must submit a declaration with the information of these enterprises. The declaration form can be found from: <https://fondi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Declaration-by-Trustee-or-Fiduciary-RRP.xlsx>. A declaration for each enterprise represented by Trustees or Fiduciaries must be submitted.

The declaration should be filled in by the Legal Representative of the Trustee/Fiduciary Company.

On the upper left-hand corner of the declaration the person filling in the declaration should insert the Date of Declaration and the name of the Company applying for the grant in the available fields.

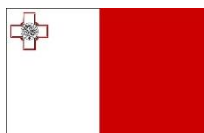
In the left-hand column the Company Registration number, or in the case of an individual, the ID Card No., of all involved is to be listed. In the right-hand column, the name of the Company/Individual/Entity should be filled in.

The declaration must then be signed by the Legal Representatives of the Trustee/Fiduciary Company.

Once the declaration has been signed (in blue ink) it should be scanned and uploaded in Section 7 of the online Application Form.

Failure to submit the Declaration Form, or the submission of an incomplete Declaration Form, will render the Application Form ineligible.

BUSINESS ENHANCE



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