



**GOVERNMENT
OF MALTA**

MINISTRY FOR THE ECONOMY,
EUROPEAN FUNDS AND LANDS

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIAT
FOR EUROPEAN FUNDS



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for Malta**
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Equipment and Machinery SME Grant Scheme

Notes to Applicants

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Introduction

The Equipment and Machinery SME Grant Scheme is an aid scheme under the Business Enhance Grant Schemes designed to address the needs identified in the Operational Programme I “Fostering a competitive and sustainable economy to meet our challenges” as approved by Commission Implementing Decision C (2014) 99 66 Final dated 15 December 2014.

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:

- Equipment and Machinery SME Grant Scheme Guidance Notes.

Call for Applications

The scheme shall be administered through an open rolling call. The Measures and Support Division shall issue a public open call (rolling-call) for interested eligible Undertakings to submit their applications. Applications will be assessed and evaluated and eligible applications scoring at least 50% of the selection criteria shall be awarded the grant. Grants shall be awarded on a first-come-first served basis subject to budget availability.

The Measures and Support Division shall publicise the calls through various media including local newspapers, websites and other media sources. 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.

De Minimis Aid

The aid under this scheme is granted as *de minimis* aid 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, as amended. In terms of the provisions of this Regulation, each single Undertaking may not receive more than €200,000 in *de minimis* aid from any source of public funding (EU Structural Funds or any other State Aid) for a rolling period of three fiscal years.

Before filling in this application, applicants should first determine the amount of *de minimis* aid that the Undertaking has received / applied for in the reference period, in the **de minimis Declaration Form** which can be downloaded from <https://fondi.eu/business-enhance/resources/general-documents/>

In determining the amount of *de minimis* aid received by the Undertaking during the applicable reference period, the Applicant must take into consideration the following:

- The total *de minimis* aid approved and received by the enterprises making up the single Undertaking;
- Any state aid being applied for and / or *de minimis* aid pending approval;
- The amount of state aid applied for in the application being submitted under this Grant Scheme.

Single Undertaking includes, all enterprises having at least one of the following relationships with each other:

- (a) one enterprise has a majority of the shareholders' or members' voting rights in another enterprise;
- (b) one 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 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 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) through one or more other enterprises shall also be considered to be a single Undertaking.

Any *de minimis* aid received would have been notified to the Undertaking by the grantor in writing. In this regard, applicants are to upload a signed copy of the ***de minimis* Declaration Form** in [Annex V](#) of this document.

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that this declaration is correct and complete. Should it result otherwise, the application may be rejected or lead to an eventual recovery of funds subject to the applicable recovery rates as issued by the European Commission.

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.

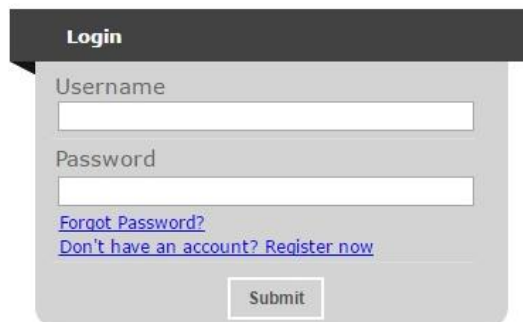
The image shows a login window with a dark grey header containing the word "Login" in white. Below the header, there are two input fields: "Username" and "Password". Under the "Password" field, there are two blue hyperlinks: "Forgot Password?" and "Don't have an account? Register now". At the bottom 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 – Equipment and Machinery SME 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.

Figure 2: Selection of Priority Axis

This section will request the user to select the relevant **Priority Axis (PA)** and insert the **Project Title** and **Project Summary** accordingly.

The user is to click the **radio button** next to the available **Priority Axis**, in this case this would refer to **'PA 3 – Enhancing Malta's competitiveness through investment in SME's'**.

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 project. 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 – **Equipment and Machinery SME Grant Scheme**

The **Priority Axis** field will automatically show the title of **Priority Axis 3 – PA3 Enhancing Malta’s competitiveness through investment in SMEs.**

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 3 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.**

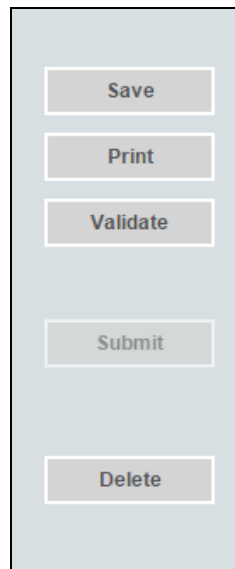


Figure 3: List of Function Options

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 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	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).

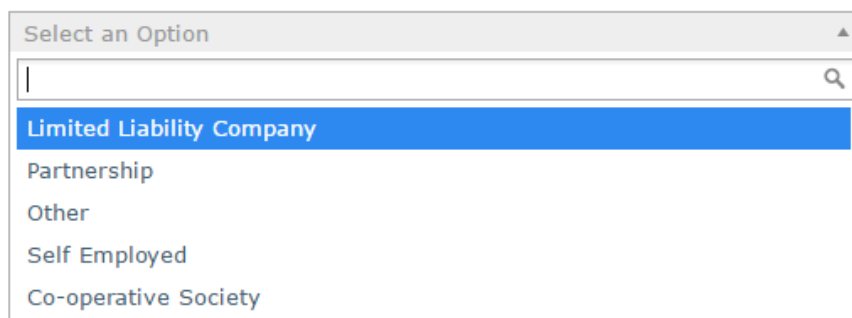


Figure 5: Legal Form of the Enterprise

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 MBR;
- 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 afore-mentioned 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

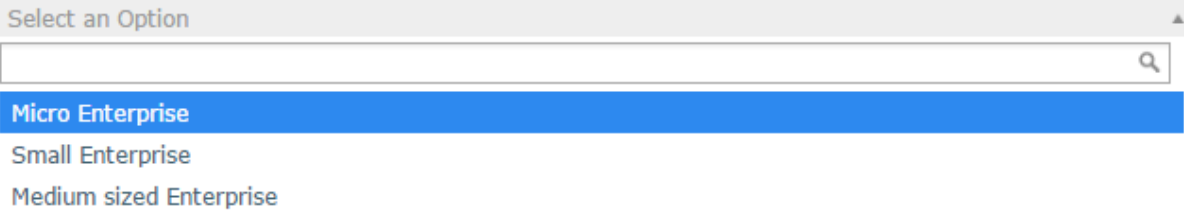
One needs to then determine the size of the Undertaking by calculating the Headcount, Turnover and Balance Sheet Total of the Applicant enterprise. This should be done by following the steps explained in the ‘**User guide to the SME definition**’. This can be accessed from: <https://fondi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/SME-Definition-User-Guide.pdf>

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

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:



The image shows a web form element. At the top, there is a label: "In line with the provisions of the above quoted EC Regulation, the Undertaking is:". Below this is a dropdown menu with a grey header containing the text "Select an Option". The dropdown is currently open, showing a search box with a magnifying glass icon on the right. Below the search box, three options are listed: "Micro Enterprise" (highlighted in blue), "Small Enterprise", and "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, guidance in writing may be sought from the Business Registers at The National Statistics Office (NSO) through email br.nso@gov.mt or phone 2599 7359 in order to determine the respective NACE Code.

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 written communication with 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)

At this stage of the application it is recommended that the Applicant fills in the De Minimis Declaration form. The aid under this scheme is granted as *de minimis* aid 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. In terms of the provisions of this Regulation, each single Undertaking may not receive more than €200,000 in *de minimis* aid from any source of public funding (EU Structural Funds or any other State Aid) for a rolling period of three fiscal years.

Section 2.3: Past Experience in EU Funded Projects

In this section the Applicant is to indicate if the Applicant company, Undertaking 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. The user is to provide all relevant details as shown below.

2.3 - Past Experience in EU Funded Projects

Do the Applicant company, Undertaking or Directors have any previous experience in the implementation of projects co-financed through structural funds or other EU Programmes?

- YES
- NO

In the box below, please explain your above reply.

Figure 10: Past Experience in EU Funded Projects

Section 3: The Project

Section 3.1: Project Details

This section introduces the Applicant Undertaking to the project itself. The application will automatically show the project 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 shown in Figure 11.

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

The Applicant is to specify the outcome of the investment being proposed and for which assistance is being sought. In this regard, applicants are required to select the proposed investment from the available list of 4 options.

The proposed investment is aimed at:

- Expanding the Operations
- Diversifying the Operations
- Innovating the Operations
- Initial Investment

Figure 12: Outcome of initiative

Define the project by describing the proposed work, specifying its main characteristics. Indicate the items that will be procured through the project (*a maximum of 3 different items*)

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 short description of the proposed project by specifying its main characteristics and what it is proposing to attain and **clearly** indicating the items, with a maximum of 3, that will be procured through the project. One can have multiples of the same item. (Max 5,000 characters)

What would the 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: Project Excellence

Define the project excellence by describing the proposed work, in terms of:

- a. The level that the investment seeks to maximise the internationalisation of the Applicant.**

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

- b. How will the project address any identified gaps within the enterprise and/or the specific sector the enterprise operates in.**

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. 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. *Factual and statistical evidence to back up the justification will render the application more robust.* (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. **The return on investment (ROI) and potential cost reductions. You are requested to provide the current turnover and costs, as well as the projected increase in turnover and projected costs as a result of the proposed project.**

The application will be evaluated in terms of the project's impact vis-à-vis the return on investment (ROI). This will be done by dividing the projected increase in turnover by the cost of the machinery. The application will also be evaluated on the potential cost reductions to the operations of the applicant by calculating the difference in the cost to sales ratio.

- b. **Explain how the applicant plans to make the enterprise more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges ahead through this investment.**

Applicant is to include details on the challenges faced by the enterprise. 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 ahead, through this investment. (Max 5,000 characters)

- c. **Contributions to Improvements in the Undertaking's business model.**

Enterprises are to identify the benefits of implementing the project and the efforts made to invest. Elaborate on how, as a result of the proposed project, the Undertaking will realise a more sustainable and resilient 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 Applicant should ideally provide an organigram or description of the organization's structure. In the Application the applicant is to identify the segregation of the level of management and control and include an overview of the expertise of the key personnel who will lead the project.

Applicants are to provide information about any internal control standards and systems that are in place within the enterprise, and the methodologies to be adopted during the implementation of the proposed project.

Any quality standards, such as quality planning, quality control, quality assurance and quality improvement in relation to the proposed project, adopted by the applicant and provided in the application will also be considered.

Any documentation supporting the above, including any organigram, 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. where Applicants have already assessed the options obtained.

Applicants are to:

- present a GANNT Chart/Implementation Schedule of the proposed actions
- include an assessment of the potential implementation risks, the probability of these risks happening and the identification of measures to mitigate same risks
- demonstrate the capacity to deliver the project and that they have a contingency plan to compensate for adverse effects on timetable, expenditure, and outputs.

Where assessment of the quotations obtained or where required licences/permits are already in possession of applicant these should be provided.

All of this information and documents are to be uploaded in [Section 7](#) of the Application Form.

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. The HR capacity, both internal and external, to implement the project should be outlined. 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. The applicant is to demonstrate the capacity to deliver the project and puts in place a contingency plan to compensate for adverse effects on timetable, expenditure and outputs. (Max 5,000 characters)

Section 3.6 - National and Horizontal Priorities

Confirm that the planned investment respect the National and Horizontal Priorities.

Projects that are not in line with either the National Priorities or Horizontal Priorities, being Environmental Sustainability and Equal Opportunities, will not be considered eligible. Therefore, applicants are to tick 'YES' to the provided questions.

Furthermore, those projects that support the 'YES' reply with an explanation and justification of their reasoning (in the space provided), including how the planned investment is linked to and respects National and Horizontal Priorities will be rewarded. (Max 5,000 characters)

Section 4: Financial Plan

4.1 Financial Plan

The investment project proposal must include a comprehensive budget breakdown.

The user should insert a sub-activity in relation to the Activity **Equipment and Machinery**, 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.

As outlined in the Guidance Notes, this Activity 'Equipment and Machinery' is capped to only **3 sub-activities**. However, each sub-activity may then have multiples of the same item. Therefore, where a project intends to present an application for 10 items of sub-activity A, 5 items of sub-activity B and 2 items of sub-activity C, these are NOT to be inputted as 17 different sub-activities but as follows:

- 10 items of Sub-Activity A
- 5 items of Sub-Activity B
- 2 items of Sub-Activity C

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.

Once the activity has been identified the user is to describe the sub-activity/ies linked to that activity.

Important notes re category of activities:

Investment Priority (IP)

This is set with the Call and will be included automatically with every Sub-activity listed.

Start and End date

Insert these from the calendar that pops up when the calendar field is clicked on.

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.

Investments should be concluded by 31st December 2023.

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

Describe the specific sub-activity and define the category of that item to ensure easier reference to supporting documents including the respective specifications and quotations provided.

Comments

Applicants may provide further information as necessary.

Financial Plan

Financial Plan					
Elig.	<input type="text"/>	VAT Elig.	<input type="text"/>	Total Elig.	<input type="text"/>
Non Elig.	<input type="text"/>	VAT Non Elig.	<input type="text"/>	Total Non Elig.	<input type="text"/>
				Total	<input type="text"/>

Gozo Contribution Financial Plan					
Elig.	<input type="text"/>	VAT Elig.	<input type="text"/>	Total Elig.	<input type="text"/>
Non Elig.	<input type="text"/>	VAT Non Elig.	<input type="text"/>	Total Non Elig.	<input type="text"/>
				Total	<input type="text"/>

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.

Any other costs shall be include in the '**Non Eligible**' field.

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.

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.

A soft copy of this declaration form is to be uploaded under **Section 7 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.

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](#)
- De Minimis Declaration – [refer to Annex V](#)
- 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
- Technical Specifications
 - The set of minimum technical specifications against which the quotations provided were sought. These should determine the minimum characteristics of the equipment and/or machinery identified by the beneficiary, and that a supplier must provide. These should be clear, accurate and contain a description of the beneficiary's needs to enable the suppliers to provide the asset/s which meet those needs.
- Quotations
 - Submit at least 3 comparable and valid quotations in respect of each sub-activity in line with the set minimum technical specifications and obtained from three different external and unrelated suppliers to the applicant. Quotations not meeting the requested technical specifications may not be considered by the beneficiary.
- 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
- 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 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 together with a Profit & Loss Statement certified by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) is to be provided.

In the case of a Start-up established not over 2 years from the date of application (*including Sole Trader/self-employed*) not having the above documentation, a Profit & Loss Account/Income Statement, Cash Flow Projections 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.

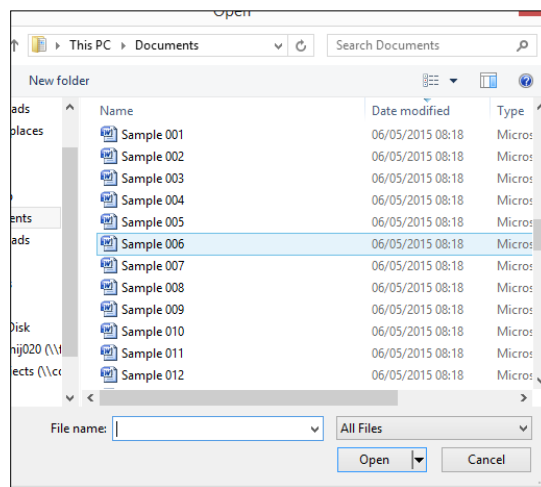


Figure 12: Choosing a file to upload

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 13) 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 13).

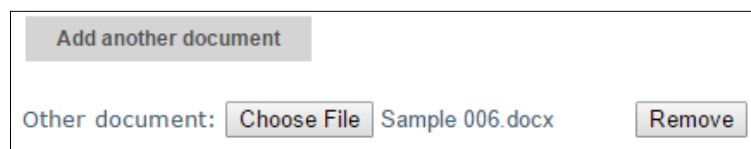


Figure 13: Functionality button showing uploaded file

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.

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

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.

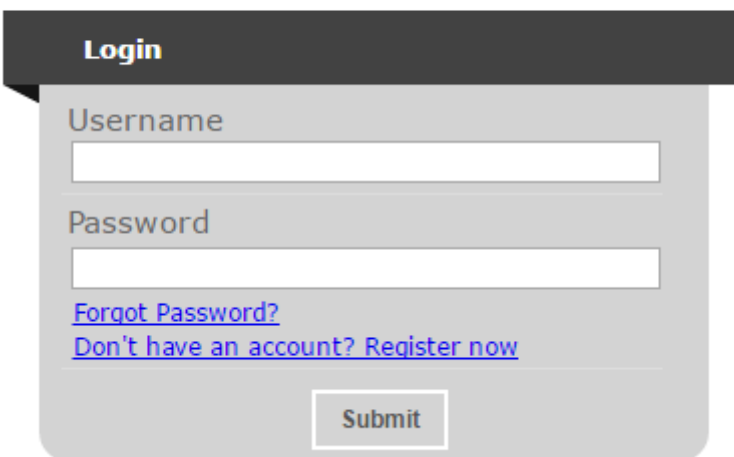
ANNEXES

Annex I: Registering for the first time

The user is to log in to the web-based version of the SFD14-20 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 14). 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.



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". Under 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 14: 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 15) 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.

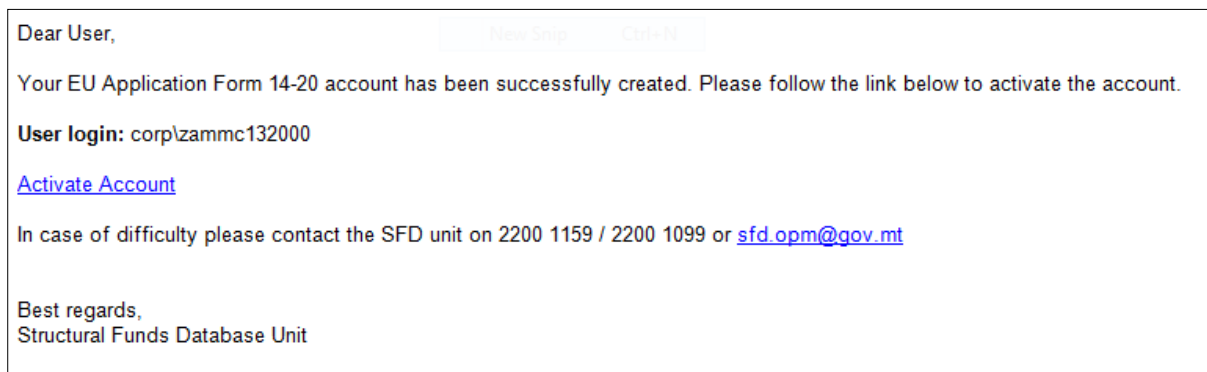
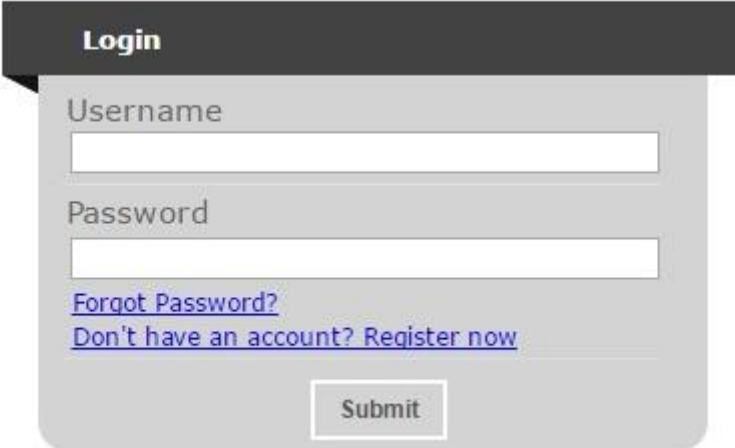


Figure 15: Email confirming registration

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 16: 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.

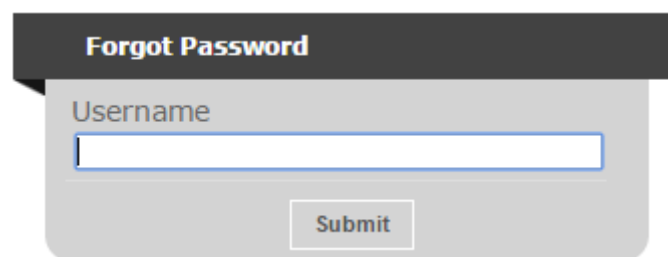
The image shows a user interface for a 'Forgot Password' function. It features a dark gray header bar with the text 'Forgot Password' in white. Below this is a light gray rounded rectangle containing a text input field with the placeholder text 'Username' and a 'Submit' button centered below the field.

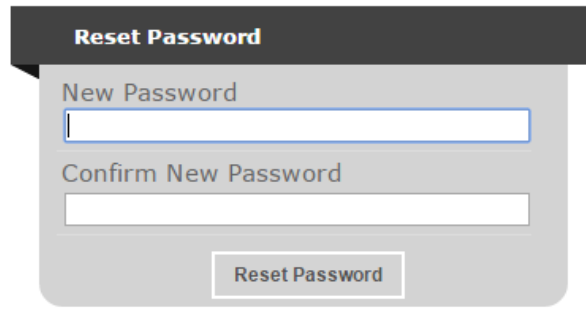
Figure 17: Forgot Password Screen

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 18: 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 19 below) which in turn will generate a screen informing the user that the application form is being exported (see figure 20). Applicants are to click on the “floppy disk” icon found at the top right corner of the screen (see figure 20) and may generate this application form in Excel, Word or PDF format as required.

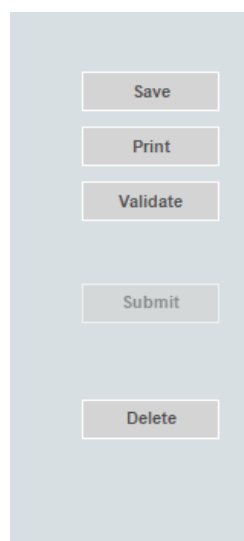


Figure 19 - Exporting Application Form

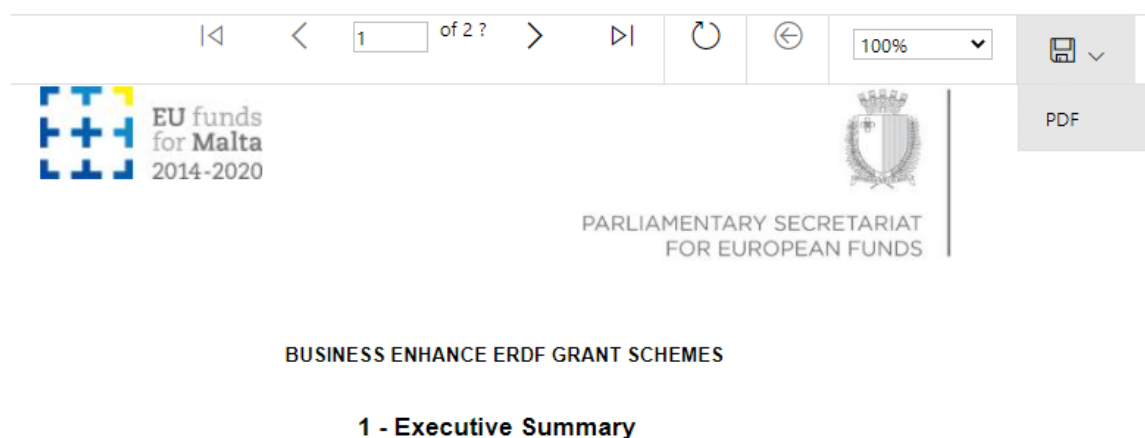


Figure 20 - Exporting Application Form to Excel, Word and/or PDF

In case of section 4, the declaration form can be exported for signature (see figure 21).

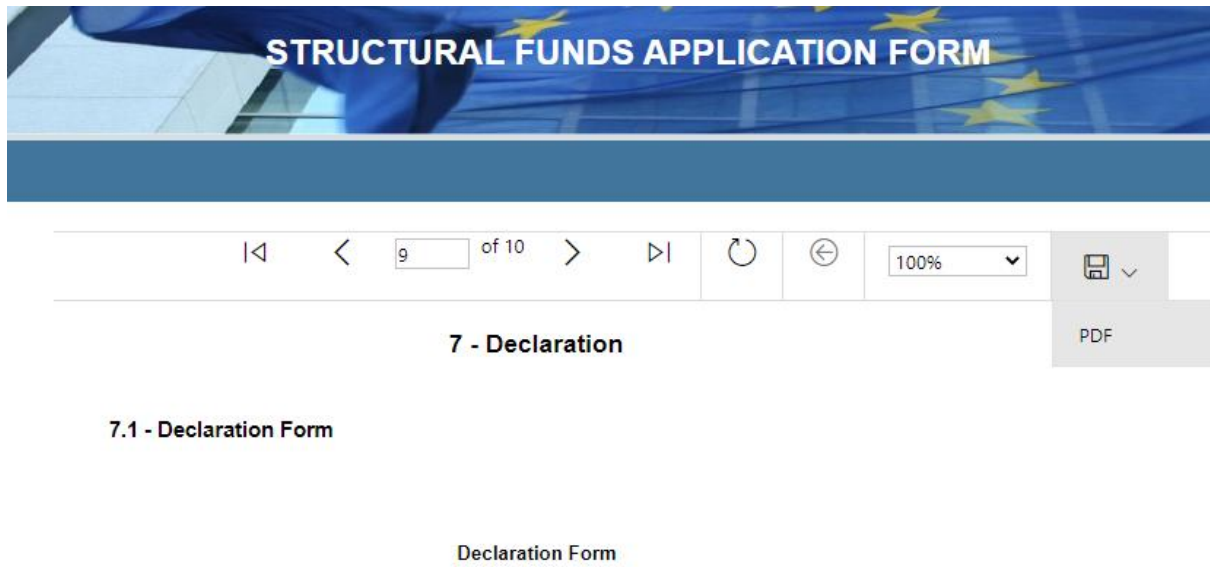


Figure 21: Exporting Declaration Form to .PDF

Annex V: De minimis Declaration Form

As this scheme falls under the *de minimis* Aid regulation, Applicants will need to fill in the *de minimis* declaration form. This form can be found from: <https://fondi.eu/business-enhance/resources/general-documents/>

Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 allows a 'single undertaking' to receive an aggregate maximum amount of de minimis aid of €200,000 under all *de minimis* aid measures, over a period of three 'fiscal years'.

A **Single Undertaking** includes, all enterprises having at least one of the following relationships with each other:

- (a) one enterprise has a majority of the shareholders' or members' voting rights in another enterprise;
- (b) one 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 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 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.

The applicant is to choose the scheme from the drop down menu on top.

The Applicant is to calculate the amount of de minimis aid received to date by filling in Sections 1, 2 and 3 of this declaration form.

Section 1

In Section 1 the Applicant is to give a detailed account of the funds received by the applicant enterprise, partner enterprises and linked enterprises under the *de minimis* regulation. A more detailed explanation on how to determine Linked and Partner enterprises can be found in the 'User Guide to the SME definition' booklet.

Applicants need to fill in the following details:

Date: The date the funding was received by the beneficiary.

Source/Grantor: The department, division or agency that was overseeing the scheme.

Type of State Aid (Measure Name): The title of the Scheme under which the funding was granted.

Awarded to: The name of the beneficiary Undertaking that the grant was awarded to.

Amount in €: The amount of funds awarded under the Scheme

SECTION 1 - DE MINIMIS STATE AID AWARDED

Date	Source/Grantor	Type of State Aid (Measure Name)	Awarded to	Amount in €
TOTAL:			A1	€ -

Figure 22: Section 1

Section 2

In Section 2 Applicants are to give a detailed account of Funding applied for under the *de minimis* regulation that is still pending on approval.

Date: The date that the Applicant applied for the funding.

Source/Grantor: The department, division or agency overseeing the scheme.

Type of State Aid (Measure Name): The title of the Scheme under which the application for funding was submitted.

Awarded to: The name of the beneficiary Undertaking that the grant was applied for under.

Amount in €: The amount of funds that the Undertaking had applied for.

SECTION 2 - DE MINIMIS STATE AID PENDING FOR APPROVAL

Date	Source/Grantor	Type of State Aid (Measure Name)	Awarded to	Amount in €
TOTAL:			A2	€ -

Figure 23: Section 2

Section 3

In Section 3 the Applicant is to input the Amount that will be claimed in the application that is to be submitted.

The amount of funds received previously, the amount of funds that are awaiting approval, and the funds being applied for will be summed up automatically at the bottom of the form.

If the beneficiary Undertaking has not received any funding under the *de minimis* regulation, Applicants are to leave sections 1 and 2 empty and need only fill in section 3.

Once these sections have been completed, the Applicant is to then complete the declaration (See Figure 24) by specifying the amounts of *de minimis* aid that the **Single Undertaking** has received during the current fiscal year and the two fiscal years preceding the application. These should be taken from the information provided in the previous sections.

DECLARATION			
I declare that a comprehensive amount of <i>de minimis</i> aid received to date during the current fiscal year and the previous two fiscal years is:			
Fiscal Year 2020	Fiscal Year 2021	Fiscal Year 2022	Total
			€0.00

Figure 24: Total amount of *de minimis* aid funds received

The Applicant is to then complete the declaration form by completing the fields as follows: **Business Undertaking** (Full Legal Name), **VAT Registration Number**, **Name and Surname** of the individual authorized to fill in the *de minimis* declaration form (Block LETTERS), **Position in Establishment** of the person signing the *de minimis* declaration form. The declaration form is to be signed (in blue ink) and dated in the spaces provided accordingly (See Figure 35).

A breakdown of the source, type and amount of all *de minimis* aid received as well as that applied for from any State aid grantor, is presented overleaf.

Business Undertaking (Full Legal Name)

VAT Registration Number

Name and Surname (BLOCK LETTERS)

Position in Establishment

Signature

Date

Figure 25: Applicant Details

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/business-enhance/resources/business-enhance-erdf-forms/>. 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, 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



Operational Programme I - European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020
"Fostering a competitive and sustainable economy to meet our challenges"
Aid Scheme part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund
Co-financing rate: 80% European Union; 20% National Funds

