



CALL FOR PROPOSALS "SUPPORT TO SMES FOR INTERNATIONALISATION"

1. Introduction and Background

Deadline for submission of project proposals

The Call is conducted as an open procedure in the form of a **permanently open call**. Project proposals will be accepted from **July 1, 2025, at 11:00 AM** until the available funds are exhausted, and no later than **December 30, 2026, at 2:00 PM**.

Background:

The Call is launched within the framework of the Competitiveness and Cohesion Programme 2021–2027 (PKK 2021–2027), Priority 1: Strengthening the economy by investing in research and innovation, supporting business competitiveness, digitalisation, and developing skills for smart specialisation, Specific Objective RSO 1.iii: Strengthening the sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in them, including through productive investments.

The Call is aligned with the Smart Specialisation Strategy 2029 (S3). It contributes to the Special Sub-goal 3.4: Increasing the market reach of innovative products, under the Special Goal 3: Increasing innovation efficiency.

2. Subject and Purpose of the Call

Subject of the Call:

- To strengthen the international competitiveness of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by facilitating their participation in international trade fairs. The goal is to present products and services to the international business community, enter new foreign markets, and foster business cooperation with international partners.

Purpose of the Call:

- To increase the capacity of SMEs to participate in global markets and to contribute to the increase of their share in the total export of goods and services.

3. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for this Call are legal or natural persons that are **micro, small, or medium-sized enterprises** (including newly established enterprises), in accordance with the definition of enterprise size set out in Annex I of the GBER (Regulation 651/2014), who cumulatively meet the following conditions:

- They have at least one employee based on working hours in the year preceding the submission of the project proposal.
- They have been registered for performing economic activity for at least 12 months prior to the submission date of the project proposal.



- At the time of submission, they are registered for an eligible activity within which the project is implemented.
- They have a positive EBITDA for the last available official data before submitting the project proposal.
- Their business revenues, for the year with the last available official data before submission, amount to at least 50% of the total project value.
- They are not undertakings in difficulty according to the GBER definition.
- They are not in pre-bankruptcy, bankruptcy, or liquidation proceedings, nor are they insolvent or over-indebted.
- They have no outstanding obligations to the state (taxes, contributions).

Conditions regarding the number of applications or projects:

- **Number of applications:** An applicant may submit only one project proposal.
- **Number of financed projects:** An applicant can be awarded only one grant.

4. Financial Allocation, Grant Amounts, and Aid Intensities

Financial allocation:

- **Total:** €25.000.000,00

Grant Amounts:

- **Minimum grant amount:** €6.000,00
- **Maximum grant amount:** €120.000,00

Aid Intensity:

- **Micro and small enterprises:** Up to **75%** of eligible costs.
- **Medium-sized enterprises:** Up to **60%** of eligible costs.

Type of Aid:

- Funding is awarded as de minimis aid according to Regulation (EU) No. 2023/2831, with a total maximum amount of €300,000 per single undertaking over any period of three fiscal years.

5. Project Eligibility

The project proposal must meet all of the following eligibility criteria:

- **Implementation must not start before the proposal submission** (except for the trade fair registration fee, which is eligible from December 5, 2024) and **must not end before the contract is signed, with a maximum duration of 24 months.**
- The project must contribute to the objectives of Priority 1 and Specific Objective RSO 1.3 and be aligned with the National Development Strategy 2030 and the Smart Specialisation Strategy 2029.



- The project must be ready for the commencement and completion of activities according to the plan in the Application Form.
- Project activities must be focused on participation in international trade fairs outside the Republic of Croatia.
- The products that are the subject of the project must not be on the list of the Regulation on the list of military goods, defence-related products, and non-military lethal goods.
- The project must comply with the "do no significant harm" (DNSH) principle.
- The project must respect national regulations and state aid rules, without double financing.
- The project could not be implemented without support from the PKK, ensuring added value.
- Project activities must not be in ineligible sectors:
 - Real estate.
 - Gambling and betting activities;
 - Financial and insurance activities;
 - Legal and accounting activities;
 - Wholesale and retail activities;
 - Libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities;
 - Sports, entertainment and recreational activities;
 - Production, processing and marketing of tobacco and tobacco products;
 - Primary production of agricultural products;
 - Fisheries and aquaculture sector;
 - Trade or production of goods for military purposes, defence products and non-military lethal goods.

6. Eligible Project Activities

Eligible activities include participation as an exhibitor at international trade fairs abroad, where the fairs must be related to the thematic priority areas defined in the S3. Each project can cover **participation in a maximum of four (4) international trade fairs**, including:

- Rental of exhibition space.
- Set-up, furnishing, and preparation of the stand, including necessary connections (electricity, water, internet).
- Rental of equipment (ICT, catering, projectors, etc.).
- Entry in the exhibitor catalogue.
- Production of promotional materials for the fair.
- Hiring an interpreter during the fair.
- Transportation of employees and equipment/exhibits.
- Accommodation for employees during the fair.
- Project promotion and visibility activities.



- Activities related to horizontal principles.

7. Eligible Costs

Eligible direct costs for participating in a trade fair include:

- Registration fees for the fair (eligible from December 5, 2024).
- Rental of exhibition space (unequipped or standard stand).
- Set-up, furnishing, and preparation of the stand, including cleaning and connections.
- Rental of equipment such as ICT, catering equipment, etc.
- Entry in the exhibitor catalogue.
- Production of promotional materials for the fair.
- Interpreter services during the fair.
- Transportation of equipment and exhibits.

Eligible per diem and accommodation costs (calculated as unit costs):

- Per diems for the duration of the fair + a maximum of 2 days before and 2 days after the fair.
- Accommodation for the duration of the fair + a maximum of 2 nights before and 2 nights after the fair (in an establishment up to 4 stars).

Indirect costs, incurred as a direct result of the project implementation, calculated at a flat rate of **up to 7%** of the total eligible direct costs:

- Project promotion and visibility.
- Implementation of horizontal activities (e.g., promoting accessibility for persons with disabilities, gender equality, and non-discrimination).
- Preparation of the project proposal.
- Travel costs – transportation of employees.

Costs must be incurred after the proposal submission, with the exception of the fair registration fee from December 5, 2024, and must be properly documented.

8. Other Important Terms and Information

Conditions and information that are crucial for successful application and implementation of the project:

- **Advance Payment**
 - It is possible to receive an advance payment of up to 30% of the approved funds with a solemnized blank promissory note.
- **Sustainability Obligation**



- Project results must be maintained for the project's durability period (3 years after the final payment).
- **Proof of Cost Eligibility**
 - Costs must be documented (invoices, contracts, proof of payment) and in accordance with the Call rules.
- **Reporting Obligation**
 - Regular reporting on project progress, finances, and indicator achievement is required.
- **Financial Corrections**
 - Failure to achieve the indicators may result in financial corrections according to the Call's methodology.

9. Contact Information

For all questions, clarifications, and support in preparing the project proposal, please do not hesitate to contact us. Contact us via e-mail (info@kardinalnapravila-savjetovanje.hr) or phone (+385-99-265-8526). We are at your disposal for all the information and advice you need for a successful application.

