

## Business Bridge – Ukraine-Ready4EU <sup>1</sup>

### Call for Applications 2024-2

**“Financial support combined with additional advice and assistance to up to 1.500 Ukrainian SMEs planning specific activities to integrate into the EU Single Market”**

**opened on 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2024**

#### **Background**

The “Ukraine-Ready4EU” project was initiated and is funded by the European Commission under the “Business Bridge” call of the Single Market Programme. Its objective is to support Ukrainian Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to integrate successfully into the EU Single Market.

#### **Support offered**

Under the brand name Business Bridge, the Ukraine-Ready4EU project offers **financial support combined with additional advice and assistance** to up to 1.500 Ukrainian SMEs planning specific activities to become more active in the EU Single Market and to cooperate successfully with EU business partners.

The Business Bridge financial support can cover the **reimbursement of up to 2.500 EURO external expenses** of the beneficiary related to the implementation of specific activities.

#### **Activities and expenses eligible for support**

Business Bridge financial support can only be granted for eligible activities and expenses, specified in the Annex of this Call for Applications.

#### **Submission of applications**

Applications can be submitted to Ukraine-Ready4EU exclusively via the official online grant application platform<sup>2</sup>, accessible at <https://ukraine-ready4eu.com/business-bridge>.

#### **Deadline for submission**

As long as this Call for Applications is open, applications can be submitted at any time without a specific deadline. Applications will be evaluated on a monthly basis at regular cutoff dates at the end of each month. Applications may only relate to eligible activities and expenses specified in the Annex to this Call for Applications at the time of submission.

#### **Envisaged closure of the call**

This Call for Application will close on 30 June 2025 at the latest due to the end of Ukraine-Ready4EU, or when the maximum number of SMEs that have received Business Bridge financial support has been reached or the total available funds are exhausted (whichever happens earlier). The closure of the Call will be announced in advance on the official Ukraine-Ready4EU project website <https://ukraine-ready4eu.com/business-bridge>.

#### **Conditions of participation and ‘Guidelines for Applicants’**

The conditions of participation in this Call for Applications are specified in the compulsory ‘Guidelines for Applicants’, version March 2024, which are binding for this call.

The guidelines can be found at [https://epo.org.ua/downloads/bb\\_guidelines\\_march2024.pdf](https://epo.org.ua/downloads/bb_guidelines_march2024.pdf)

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<sup>1</sup> Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or granting authority European Innovation Council and SMES Executive Agency (EISMEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

<sup>2</sup> Please note, that during an initial period an interim solution may be active. However, data entered into that interim solution will later be transferred to the final submission platform automatically.

## Annex: Activities and expenses eligible under this Call for Applications

Only activities of the following type will be supported under this Call for Applications:

### **Type 1): Active participation in business meetings at official events, trade fairs, company missions or brokerage events in the EU.**

#### **Eligible activities:**

Eligible activities include travel to and active participation in international fairs, events or meetings in the EU, especially events organized by members of the Cluster Alliance, the European Cluster Cooperation Platform or the Enterprise Europe Network.

‘Active participation’ means that the Ukrainian SME either actively presents the company’s profile, its products, and/or its services to the audience, or it has meetings with potential business partners based in an EU member state (minimum one). Only active participations which can be documented and proved independently, e.g. by official documents of the organizer of the event, are eligible.

The overall objective of the business meetings must be new business partnerships, market entry into the Single Market etc, **additional to the company’s already existing reach/activities** (e.g. they should concern either a new target market, or a new business partnership, or a new product/service marketed in the EU).

#### **Eligible expenses** (examples, non-exhaustive):

- Travel and accommodation (all payments must be executed in accordance with the Ukrainian legislation and norms. Non eligible payments: 1st class tickets or business class flight tickets; accommodation costs exceeding 160 EUR per night (if not absolutely essential and duly justified)).
- Payment for specialized tickets to exhibitions, fairs, roadshows.
- Costs for renting an exhibition booth.
- Booth design and rental of additional equipment.
- Organizational fees or participation fees.
- Payment for support and translation services during the exhibition, business mission.
- Design and printing of promotional materials for company presentation.
- Design and printing of additional printed materials.
- Rent of showroom, exhibition space.
- Payment for transportation of exhibition samples, materials, goods.
- Registration fees for exhibitors.
- Insurance for travellers.
- Cost for money exchange and bank transfers related to the payments above.

## **Type 2): External support to comply with a sustainable, digital and resilient EU economy.**

### **Eligible activities:**

Transformation into a sustainable, digital and more resilient economy is an important topic of the EU industrial policy. To be able to quickly integrate into the EU value chains, Ukrainian SMEs must be able to meet the related requirements of the EU Single Market.

Examples for activities eligible under this topic are:

- Comprehensive energy efficiency audits by external specialists.
- Identification of and examinations for appropriate certificates related to energy, environmental or social issues by external specialists.
- Comprehensive environmental audits by external specialists.
- Comprehensive sustainability audits by external specialists on economic, social and environmental aspects (also taking into account the indirect effects of the EU's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the EU taxonomy for SMEs).
- Comprehensive digitalisation audits by external specialists.
- Comprehensive resilience audits by external specialists.
- Comprehensive analysis of the ecological, technological and economic readiness for the EU Single Market by external specialists (also taking into account the indirect effects of the EU's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the EU taxonomy for SMEs).
- External trainings by experts directly related to those audits.

### **Eligible expenses:**

Only external costs for performing the audits and completing them successfully are eligible:

- Expenses for proven external experts conducting the audits.
- Expenses for related external training and support.

### **Type 3): Examinations and certifications of products, required for the EU Single Market.**

#### **Eligible activities:**

Using external services for the examination and certification of own products or services, required for their export to the EU Single Market. Eligible topics are certifications about the compliance of products with EU standards and norms, or other certificates supporting their purchasing to EU clients or business partners, thus enabling the Ukrainian SME to gain foothold in the EU Single Market.

External support may also be used to prepare such certifications and to pass necessary examinations. If required, the consortium partners of the “Ukraine-Ready4EU” project will support beneficiaries in getting assistance by proven certification experts in the EU or Ukraine.

Typical topics are (non-exhaustive):

- Examination of the requirements for product access to the EU Single Market.
- Compliance with EU product legislation, including required technical files.
- CE certification.
- Application of harmonized EN standards.
- Reach declarations.
- FSC and PEFC certificates (certificates for wood producers).
- Phytosanitary inspections and test certificates.
- Clean certification / eco certification / certificates for organic and food producers.
- Other legal product certifications.
- Product quality assurance.

#### **Eligible expenses:**

Only external costs directly related to obtain the required certificates are eligible:

- Expenses for examinations and certificates by authorized external organisations.
- Expenses for external advisory support by proven experts, e.g. to prepare technical documentation for product certifications or to pass necessary examinations.

## **Type 4): External support for complying with customs or other formal export/import requirements for the EU Single Market**

The EU is one of Ukraine's largest trading partners, which means that there are several opportunities to import and export from the Ukraine to the EU, and vice versa. To support Ukrainian SMEs in exporting to and importing from the EU Single Market, Business Bridge financial support can be used to cover external costs related to customs procedures, or other formal export/import requirements for the EU Single Market.

It is also eligible to use external support for the preparation of customs documents and customs certificates. If required, the Consortium Partners of the "Business Bridge - Ukraine-Ready4EU" project will support beneficiaries in getting assistance by proven external experts and authorized organisations in the EU or Ukraine.

Typical topics are (non-exhaustive):

- Preparation of customs documents and custom certificates.
- Customs brokerage services.
- Entry in the customs register.
- Registration of documents at customs offices.
- Pre-shipment inspection (inspection report confirming the correctness of the quantity/quality of vehicle loading).
- Customs declaration; customs clearance of cargo.
- Certification (legalisation) of commercial documents. Certifying (legalising) commercial documents (e.g. contracts, invoices, specifications, packing lists, Certificates of Origin, and similar documents) at the request of a foreign counterparty.
- Free Sales Certificate.
- Defining the product code or classification under UKT ZED.
- Carnet ATA registration.

### **Eligible expenses:**

Only external costs directly related to customs procedures or other formal export/import requirements for the EU Single Market are eligible:

- Expenses for examinations and declarations by authorized external organisations.
- Expenses for external advisory support by proven experts, e.g. to prepare customs documents and customs certificates.

## **Type 5): External support on patenting and licensing for the EU Single Market**

### Eligible activities:

Intellectual property (IP) and its protection play a pivotal role in fostering economic growth in the EU. Particularly patents, trade marks and designs are essential rights to protect and promote innovations. IP rights increase the value of a company and serve as an indicator of its economic development. Acquiring and/or licensing of IP rights in the EU enables Ukrainian SMEs to gain a foothold in the EU single market.

External support may also be used to prepare an appropriate IP strategy. If required, the Consortium Partners of the “Business Bridge - Ukraine-Ready4EU” project will support beneficiaries in getting assistance by proven external IP experts in the EU or Ukraine.

Typical topics are (non-exhaustive):

- Application of EU patents (EP), EU trade marks (EUTM), or a EU design at an European patent office (EPO) or an European intellectual property office (EUIPO).
- Application of national patents, trademarks, or designs at an EU national IP office (e.g. Deutsches Patent- und Markenamt (DPMA) etc.).
- Prior art search for patents.
- Pre-diagnostic services for trademarks and designs.
- Licensing of EU Patent, EU trademarks, national patents, or national trademarks of an EU national IP office.
- Consultation relating IP.
- Exploitation of EU patents or national patents of an EU national IP offices.

### Eligible expenses:

Only external costs directly related to intellectual property are eligible:

- Expenses for application fees or related IP office fees for EU patents, EU trademarks, EU designs, national patents, trademarks, or designs at an EU national IP office.
- Expenses for the services of a patent attorney.
- Expenses for exploitation of EU Patents or national patents at an EU national IP office.
- Expenses for prior art search, pre-diagnostic services or consultation by professional representatives for IP (e.g. patent attorneys, patent information centre (PATLIB)).
- Expenses for licensing of EU patents, EU trademarks, national patents or trademarks of an EU national IP office.

### Note:

*Each SME can receive Business Bridge financial support by Ukraine-Ready4EU only once, independent of the type(s) of activity they apply for. During the application process, applicants must select the type(s) of activity for which they are applying. It is possible to select one or more of the eligible activity types.*