



**TO BETTER
TOURISM**



Co-funded by
the European Union

CALL FOR PROPOSALS GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

Selection of Tourism SMEs to be awarded for the participation to First Mile Sustainability Support Program

[Date of publication 23/10/2023]

[Deadline for submission: 22/12/2023 at 17:00 CET (Brussels time)]

[Apply here!](#)

The present document sets out the rules for submission, selection and implementation of project proposals to be awarded financial support under the First Mile project, co-funded by the European Union (SMP-COSME-2021-TOURSME). This call is drafted in conformity with the provisions foreseen in the First Mile Grant Agreement (n°101085903). The financial support is entirely funded by the European Union.

List of Abbreviations:

- AF = Application Form
- CfP = Call for Proposals
- EC = European Commission
- EISMEA = European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency
- EU = European Union
- GA = Grant Agreement
- SMES = Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 The First Mile project and the Behavioral approach

The present Call for Proposals is launched in the framework of First Mile (contract n° 101085903), a project co-funded by the European Union under the [EU Single Market Program](#) and aiming at improving performance towards sustainability and climate neutrality of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in France, Italy, Norway and Slovenia (see art. 4 for eligible entities) through a behavioral approach.

The project started in January 2023 and will work on its activities and objectives until December 2025. It has an overall budget of €1,256,429.85 and brings together the following six partners, from five European countries:

1. **AViTeM** - Agences des Villes et Territoires Méditerranéens durables (France)
2. **AITR** - Associazione Italiana Turismo Responsabile (Italy)
3. **MIMIR AS** (Norway)
4. **BehaviorSMART OOD** (Bulgaria)
5. **OTL** - Open Tourisme Lab (France)
6. **Turizem Bohinj** (Slovenia)

First Mile is a unique and innovative project applying “Behavioral Tactics” in the tourism sector to improve sustainability, especially by reducing their carbon footprint & environmental impact.

The First Mile™ stands for the immediate actions that tourism SMEs can take with **very low investments but with real progress on their journey towards sustainability** and net zero goals. By focusing on tactics that help introduce easy changes in human behavior (of travelers and tourism workers), SMEs can reduce the footprint of their operations.

But what is a behavioral tactic? It is a strategy employed to influence people's decisions and behaviors. The reason behind employing such tactics is the fact that our choices and actions are influenced by the specific context in which we find ourselves. Either by the cues we receive, the options that are readily available and visible, the choices that seem easiest, even the choices we see other making or influence and opinion of other people. It is then possible thanks to small changes to the context to lead to significant changes in behavior. Small changes to the context can lead to adjustments in the behavior that results in significant accumulated positive change of the sustainability performance.

By focusing on tactics (see Annex I: List of tactics) that help introduce easy changes in the context and in the human behavior (of travelers and tourism professionals), the First Mile project aims to provide concrete support to SMEs to improve their sustainability performance and to reduce their carbon footprint.

In this short [video](#) (add link), Milena Nikolova, one of the main European experts in Behavioral Sciences applied to tourism sustainability, will guide you on a better understanding of First Mile approach.

Make sure to watch the video: it will be necessary to fill out the application form!

Watching the video is compulsory before applying!

1.2 Call key information

Table 1. Key information.

Eligible countries	France - Italy - Norway - Slovenia
Eligible territories	France: all country Italy: all country Norway: Northern Norway Slovenia: 10 municipalities of the Julian Alps Biosphere
Target	Tourism SMEs
Call opening	Monday, October 23/10/ 2023
Financial support	Between 6.250 EUR and 10.000 EUR (depending on the eligible country)

Pre-requirements	Watching this short video offers you a better understanding of First Mile approach. <u>It is necessary to watch the video to fill in the application form !</u>
Topics	Improve the sustainability of tourism SMEs, especially by reducing their carbon footprint & environmental impact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce waste (including single-use plastic & food waste) • Reduce energy consumption (smart use of energy) • Reduce water consumption (smart use of water) • Encourage green mobility (smart mobility) • Improve visitor flow management (smart visits) • Promote local food
Deadline for submission of applications	Friday, December 22, 2023, at 17:00 CET Attention: First Arrived, First served (see article 8)
Notification of award	February 2024
Signature of the Grant contract	Indicatively 4 weeks from the notification award
Indicative First Mile Support Program timeframe	March 2024 - August 2025

This timetable refers to provisional dates and may be updated by the First Mile consortium during the call and selection procedure. In that case, the updated timetable will be published on the project website.

2. CALL OBJECTIVES

2.1 Call outline

The Call for Proposals is launched on a transnational level in the following territories: France, Italy, Norway, and Slovenia. See table 1, art. 1.2 to check eligible territories in each one of these countries.

Participation in this program is completely free of charge for selected SMEs.

The aim of the call is to select a minimum of **80** tourism SMEs: **20** SMEs per each eligible country.
The First Mile Sustainability Support Program has a duration of 18 months.

SMEs selected will receive funding from **local partners** in their country for testing small and smarter changes that are based on human behavior. Local partners are:

- Italy: AITR - Associazione Italiana Turismo Responsabile;
- France: OTL - Open Tourisme Lab;
- Norway: MIMIR AS;
- Slovenia: Turizem Bohinj.

Local partners will implement the following activities:

- Coordinating the First Mile Sustainability program at local level;
- Assessing submitted proposals, in coordination with the lead partner (AViTeM);
- Paying the advance to the selected SMEs;
- Supporting SMEs in identifying the most relevant tactics to achieve the objective that they intend to pursue;
- Training and supporting SMEs in the implementation of the selected tactics;
- Assessing the implementation;
- Facilitating exchange of experience among SMEs;
- Paying the balance to the selected SMEs.

Each local partner will appoint **two national coaches**, who will be the referents for the implementation of the tactics.

The financial and technical support provided through First Mile should be understood as an impulse to initiate or advance the sustainability journey of SMEs and not as an isolated project. It should therefore imply a learning process and represent an impulse which will ideally lead to further steps in improving their sustainability.

The financial support must be used to finance the setup of **two or more behavioral tactics** presented in the annexed List of tactics (see Annex I). This document outlines the set of preliminary tactics that were identified as relevant and appropriate based on the analysis of the needs in the participating countries and their tourism ecosystems. The tactics are generated based on a series of needs assessment activities gradually executed by the consortium team.

The number and typology of tactic(s) to be implemented will be selected by the SMEs together with their national coach, according to the SMES goals and the available financial support. This will happen in a later step after the notification of selection.

Selected tactics might request an alignment to specific contexts. The operational adaptation of some tactics (for example: rewriting a menu, redesigning the space organisation, elaborating a message to encourage more sustainable behaviour etc.) will be ensured by national coaches or/and external experts. (see article 6)

National coaches will accompany SMEs all through the implementation phase, providing support and adjustments through an ongoing evaluation. Financial support will permit the small investments needed to provoke behavioral changes among tourists or tourism professionals.

Note that any of the selected tactics must be preapproved by the First Mile National Coach.

Financed activities cannot start prior to the award of the financial support and the launch of the First Mile Sustainability Support Program. Tactics must be implemented by SMEs in the timeframe of the First Mile Sustainability Support Program (see art. 2.2)

SMEs applying for participating in the First Mile Sustainability Support Program are expected to:

- Share some information about their existing actions or intentions focusing on sustainability;
- Choose one or more topic(s) to work on;
- Be motivated and committed to achieving positive results based on the implementation of two or more behavioral tactics;
- Actively participate in the activities and opportunities proposed by First Mile;
- Accept the “trial and error” method proposed by First Mile... a tactic can be immediately effective or might need some adjustments;
- Have minimum one person from their staff assigned to follow-up on the implementation of the project together with the Local partner. Therefore, they need to dispose of the relevant personnel capacity and availability of time;
- Commit to submitting all requested information on the advancement of the implementation of their project in the established reporting procedures as detailed under art. 11.

2.2 The Support Program

The First Mile Sustainability Support Program has been designed by First Mile experts in behavioral sciences and sustainable tourism. It will take place from March 2024 until August 2025 and will focus on the topics detailed at art. 1.2. It includes a set of activities and services offered by First Mile to guide SMEs in their journey toward sustainability.

You will have access to:

- Capacity building and coaching sessions with some of the best European experts in Behavioral sciences and tourism
- Financial support to implement two or more behavioral tactics;
- An ongoing support by National coaches (two per country) for the implementation of the selected tactics;
- Share experiences sessions with other Alumni SMEs;
- International visibility and promotion of your practices;
- Ongoing support and assessment.

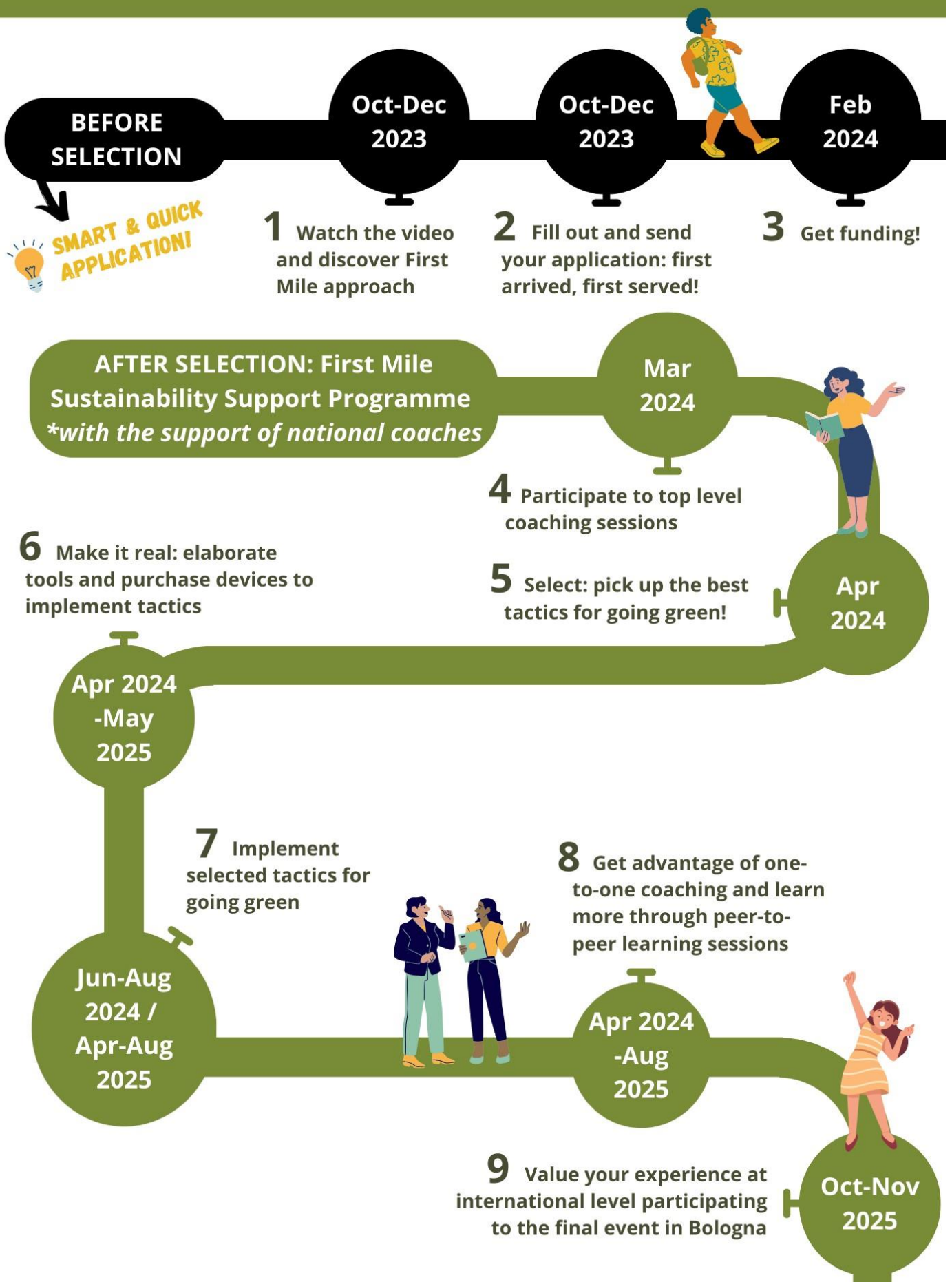
All activities are free and will be run in national languages or with simultaneous translation.

Mandatory activities for SMEs are:

- Participate to a capacity building session on behavioural science approach applied to tourism;
- Participate to at least one collective coaching session run by your national coach;
- Select together with the National Coaches the most appropriate tactic(s) to be implemented;
- Adapt and make operational selected tactic(s) with the support of National Coaches and external experts;
- Implement and adjust selected tactics;
- Report and give feedback on you experience;
- Participate in 3 to 4 -peer learning sessions, to exchange experiences with the other Alumni SMEs and to get feedback during the testing of behavior-smart tactics;
- Participate to the final event in Bologna.

You will also benefit from personalized coaching sessions!

FIRST MILE SUPPORT PROGRAMME



3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for this call for proposal, applicants need to fulfill the following criteria:

A. Activity: Be an SME working in tourism sector. As an example, here below are some tourism categories, based on Nomenclature of Economic Activities (NACE) ¹. This list not exhaustive, just exemplificative:

I.55 - Accommodation services

- Hotels and similar accommodation
- Holiday and other short-stay accommodation
- Camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks and trailer parks

I.56 - Food and beverage service activities Food & beverage services

- Restaurants and mobile food service activities
- Beverage serving activities

N.79 - Travel agency, tour operator and other reservation service and related activities

- Travel agency activities
- Tour operator activities

J.63 - Information service activities

Web portals [related to tourism activities]

The Local partner reserves the right to declare an application not eligible if the SME does not carry out any tourism activity.

B. Size: Be qualified as an **SMEs** ². In this regard, start-ups, micro and medium-sized enterprises, same as any other type of SMES falling under this definition are eligible (and encouraged) to apply to the call. If you are unsure about your enterprise's status you may consult the self-asses SMES tool provided by the EU ³ ;

- Micro enterprise (staff <10 and turnover </= € 10M OR balance sheet total </= € 2M)
- Small enterprise (staff <50 and turnover </= € 10M OR balance sheet total </= 10M)
- Medium-sized enterprise (staff <250 and turnover </= € 50M OR balance sheet </= €43M)

C. Location: Be registered as a company in one of the First Mile eligible countries and operate in one of the eligible territories:

- France:** all country
- Italy:** all country
- Norway:** Northern Norway
- Slovenia:** 10 municipalities of the Julian Alps Biosphere

D. Conflict of interest: In order to be eligible, the SMEs and any person legally authorized to represent it must not be a member of the Board of Directors of one (or more) financing entities listed at art. 1.1.

Only proposals submitted (online) before the deadline will be accepted.

The deadline for this call is the 22/12/2023 at 17:00 CET (Brussels time).

¹ **NACE** codes are the standard European nomenclature of productive economic activities. To help you finding your sector, please access the following web page: <https://nacev2.com/en>

² https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-definition_en

³ https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/SME-Wizard/smeq.do;SME_SESSION_ID= aOicHut9bpeIKRqdJjBEkVz-JZMdmq5RNJc7s0QAhuJJd-C39!1464882683?execution=e1s1

Nevertheless, please keep in mind that the principle of “First come, First Served” will be applied within this call (see art. 8). ONLY one application per applicant can be submitted under this CfP. In the case of submissions by the same applicant of different proposals or multiple submission of the same proposal, only the last one received will enter the evaluation process. Previous applications will be declared as non-eligible. Only complete proposals including all the required information will be accepted for evaluation (see art. 8)

Only one application per SMEs will be accepted.

Applicants will be asked to fill in a Declaration of Honor during the submission process.

In case of non-compliance with the criteria listed in the Declaration of Honor, SMEs will not be considered eligible.

4. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

3.1 Financial support

Depending on where the local partner is based, the individual financial support under this call is capped.

Table 2. Maximum financial support granted (per country).

Country	Eligible region/s	Minimum n° of SMEs selected	Max financial support for tactics (VAT included)	Financial support for travel and accommodation (VAT included)
Norway	Northern Norway	20	9,000 EUR	1,000 EUR
France	All regions	20	8,750 EUR	1,000 EUR
Italy	All regions	20	7,250 EUR	1,000 EUR
Slovenia	10 municipalities of the Julian Alps	20	5,250 EUR	1,000 EUR

The financial support is provided in the form of a **lump sum**⁴ which is a simplified way of cost justification based on the assessment of results and outputs set out in the call and in the Grant Contract.

Selected SMEs and their national coaches will select two or more behavioural tactic(s) presented in the annexed List of behavioral tactics (Annex I).

The selection of tactics will be done within personalized one-to-one coaching sessions with national coaches. According to the goals of SMEs and the available financial support, national coaches will suggest the number and typology of tactics to be implemented. National coaches will rely on a national grid to establish the budget required to implement each tactic. This grid will be previously drawn up at national level by local partners.

The assessment of your project activity/ies will therefore be done based on the outputs, deliverables or other evidence that illustrates the completion of activities under your project, at the quality level expected, and referring to the contract signed with the local partner (see art. 11 and 15 for more details).

The distribution of funding will be modulated based on the progress of the action, as defined in article 11.

3.2 Non-compliance and Grant reduction

The local partner reserves the right not to award the final balance - or reduce the amount of it – in case the SME i) fails to produce the deliverables/outputs listed in the contract and/or ii) participates to a lesser extent in the mandatory activities. In both the first and second cases, the SME may be requested to recover the amount that the local partners will consider ineligible. Subject to what is established in the section "Reporting", it is entirely at the discretion of the local partner to decide the amount that should be recovered, based on the grid described art. 15.

⁴ Lump sum financing is a funding method that involves reimbursing project participation based on fixed amounts. Unlike actual cost financing, the lump sum amount is determined during project setup and specified in the contract. Beneficiaries do not declare their costs and are not subject to financial controls, but they must provide justification that the work has been carried out as specified in the technical section of the contract.

For projects funded as lump sum, beneficiaries are not required to keep records of their actual costs (e.g .invoices). They only need to retain appropriate and sufficient evidence (records, publications, products, material, deliverables, reports, etc.) that the action have been correctly executed as described in the subsidy contract.

In the event of non-compliance, the SME be notified as soon as possible, via the email address registered in the Application Form.

If a third-party beneficiary breach any of its obligations under this Call, the Consortium and the Local partner may apply measures such as rejection of ineligible costs, reduction of the grant, recovery of undue amounts.

Poor, partial or late implementation of the action may be established by the Local partner because of the final report submitted by the selected and based on the project results.

If the final report scores below 60 points in total, the Local partner may reduce the final balance on the basis of poor, partial or late implementation of the action even if all activities reported were eligible and actually took place. In that case, a grant reduction may correspond to -20% (of the total amount granted) if the final report scores at least 50 points and below 60 points.

5. TYPES OF ACTIVITIES ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

Eligible activities are:

- Implementation of 2 or more tactics (annex I) all along the project;
- Travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses

6. TYPES OF COSTS ADMITTEDS

The activities to be implemented will be linked to the selected tactics included in the list of tactics (Annex I).

Accordingly, **eligible costs** include:

- Specific services necessary to implement selected tactics and approved by the local partner. For example: communication strategy advice (including digital marketing services and social media campaigns), graphic design, printing, designing and developing communication supports with behavioral smart approach (ex: signs, brochures, menus, stickers);
- Small equipment and supplies necessary to implement selected tactics and approved by the local partner. The amount available for such expenditures will be allowed up to 30% of the financial support granted in the Contract ⁵;
- Travel, accommodation, and subsistence expenses for participating in the final event in Bologna and to other relevant events. The total amount available for travel and accommodation is 1,000EUR.
For the final event in Bologna only one person per SME is allowed to attend the event.

Non eligible costs are:

- IT hardware and software (except if necessary for implementing at least one of the tactics)
- Internal staff costs for the implementation of the Program activities

The financial support cannot be used to finance activities which have already been implemented under other regional, national or UE funded call for proposals (see Declaration of Honor).

⁵ Sample checks may be carried out during the Support Program and up to 5 years after the payment of the balance to the SME. In case of irregularities, the positive difference between the committed expenditure/s and the maximum threshold will be subject to a recovery procedure.

Recovery of undue amount will be notified to the concerned MSME which must refund the Local partner within 30 calendar days from the date of the recovery notification.

7. HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

All applicants are required to submit their application through the online application form. It is important that all information provided in the form is correct and complete. Furthermore, note that your application will be evaluated only on the information provided in the online application form. It is therefore of utmost importance that you include all relevant information concerning your journey to sustainability there, do not take any information for granted or provide links to external sources with essential information.

Applications can be submitted in your country language (Italian, French, Norwegian, Slovenian).

Questions should be sent by 14/12/2023 to the local partner (see table here below) through the page dedicated on the First Mile website. The First Mile project partners have no obligation to answer the request for clarification.

Table 3. Local partner's contact persons.

Country	Name of the contact person	E-mail
Italy	Mr. Maurizio DAVOLIO Ms Francesca PALOMBO	presidenteaitr@aitr.org palombo.aitr@gmail.com
France	Mr. Benjamin SERVET Ms. Julie JAMMES	contact@opentourismelab.com
Norway	Mr. Bård JERVAN Ms. Ann-Jorid PEDERSEN	baard@nyetider.net ann-jorid@mimir.no
Slovenia	Mr. Klemen LANGUS Ms. Elise BOUHELIER	klemen.langus@bohinj.si elise@bohinj.si

8. SELECTION PROCESS

Submissions for funding will be accepted on a *rolling* basis. Projects will be funded on a **first-come, first-served** basis, in accordance with the criteria specified at art. 9 of this call. There will not be a procedure aimed at establishing rankings. The eligibility for funding will be determined based on the compliance of the eligibility criteria listed here below:

Table 4. Eligibility check list criteria.

1	Completely fulfilled online application form (including the declaration of honor)
2	Registered legal address falling in one of the eligible regions
3	A valid VAT number ⁶ provided
4	Activity sector of the SME covered by the tender
5	Fulfillment of qualitative criteria grid
6	National ID Certificate ⁷ uploaded online

The applications submitted in national languages will be assessed by local partners:

- for French SMEs: assessment by OTL
- for Italian SMEs: assessment by AITR
- for Norwegian SMEs assessment by MIMIR
- for Slovenian SMEs: assessment by Turizem Bohinj

Reminder: SMEs belonging to the local partners' Board of Directors are not eligible.

⁶ The VIES (VAT Information Exchange System) will be used to verify the validity of the VAT number indicated in the application form: https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/vies/#/vat-validation.

⁷ In order to obtain the certificate, the following services are available, per country :

France: <https://avis-situation-sirene.insee.fr/>

Italy: <https://www.agenziaentrate.gov.it/portale/it/web/guest/richiesta-certificati-attribuzione-codice-fiscale-e-partita-iva>

Norway: <https://www.brreg.no/en/business-2/industrial-codes/?nocache=1689156151617>

Slovenia: <https://www.ajpes.si/?language=english>

At the end of the evaluation process, a list of eligible proposals will be drafted, per each country, as well as a reserve list⁸. If a proposal, received in a timely manner, is deemed ineligible for funding or the SMEs refuses to sign the contract, the local evaluation committee may fund one or more proposals from the reserve list.

9. QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

The quality of the application will be assessed based on the following binary matrix:

Table 5. Criteria established for the qualitative assessment.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA					
CRITERIA		Sub-criteria #1	Sub-criteria #2	Sub-criteria #3	Sub-criteria #4
		Clear understanding (Y/N)	Clearly explained (Y/N)	Supported with examples and/or reference/s (Y/N)	Consistent with the Program approach (Y/N)
1	Motivation		✓	✓	✓
2	Comprehension of behavioral approach (*)	✓			
3	Consistency and expectation for the Program		✓	✓	✓

(*) The evaluation of the criteria 'Comprehension of behavioral approach' will be based on closed-ended multiple-choice questions.

In case of need for minor clarifications, the Local partner may contact the applicants' contact person declared in the Application Form, to clarify.

10. POST-AWARD PROCESS

Eligible SMEs will be notified, by the email registered in the Application form, and ask to start the contractualization process (see Annex III, example of sub-contact). In order to finalize this step the following document will be required:

- **Financial Identification Form.** This document, provided by the Local partner before signing the contract, certifies the bank account information of the SMES

11. REPORTING PROCEDURES AND PAYMENTS

SMEs are required to report on the state of their activity's implementation on a regular basis to the local partner of their country and inform and consult them about possible issues (if any) at any time during the program duration. Apart from that, 3 official reporting and feedback rounds are foreseen:

- In April-May 2024, before the implementation of the tactics: **initial report**.
- In October-November 2024, after the 1st implementation of the tactics: **mid-term report**.
- In September 2025, after the 2nd implementation of the tactics: **final report**.

To prepare these reports, SMEs will have to answer online questionnaires and/or to participate in interviews with local partners (only 1 online questionnaire and/or 1 interview per report). The data collected will be both quantitative and qualitative, especially to assess the efficacy of the tactics & to optimize them.

The payments will be made based and conditional on the fulfilment of the commitments indicated by the SMEs in their application form and reporting (except the first payment):

- **50%** of the total grant amount as pre-financing payment at the latest 30 days after the signature and entry into force of the Grant Contract;

⁸ List of projects that could be eligible but not receiving any financial support.

- **30 %** of the grant amount after the approval of the mid-term report, and no later than 30 days after the approval of the report;
- On the condition of compliance with the article 3.2 (Grant reduction), **20%** of the total grant amount will be transferred after the approval of the final report, and no later than 45 days from the approval of it.

12. RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The applicants will be informed in writing about the evaluation results, via email mentioned in the Application Form. The notification can be:

- **Successful:** the application is eligible for funding;
- **Included in reserve list:** An application was successful in the Call, but it has been put in reserve list, in case one of the successful applicants does not finally participate. Up to **5 SMEs** can be included in the reserve list, per country. Subsequent companies will be considered not eligible;
- **Not eligible:** the application is not eligible for funding.

Decisions will be published on the First Mile webpage.

13. COMPLAINTS

Within **5 business days** of receiving the evaluation results, an applicant may submit a written request for objections to the Local partner, if it believes that there has been a lack in the way its application has been evaluated.

The request must be:

- Related to the eligibility checks and/or qualitative assessment;
- Clearly describe the reasons of the complaint;
- Signed by the applicant's legal representative that submitted the application

A designated and independent review committee comprising of two officers of the Local partner will examine the requests. If there is clear evidence that a shortcoming(s) could have affected the eventual decision, it is possible that all or part of the application will be re-evaluated. The final decision will be notified within 5 business days from the reception of the complaint. The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be considered as definite. This score could be lower than the previous one. Only one request per application will be considered by the committee. All requests will be treated in confidential.

14. GRANT CONTRACT SIGNATURE

Once the final list of eligible SMES is established, the selected SMEs will be required to prepare the Grant Contract⁹, in collaboration with the local partner.

Selected SMEs will be required the Grant contract within **7 business days** from the reception of the final version, sent by email to the address indicated in the Application form. If a SMES accepts and sends the signed Grant Contract in time, the Program execution starts.

If the SMES does not send the signed agreement within the 7 working days' deadline, it is automatically excluded and the next beneficiary on the reserve list is contacted.

15. PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA, CONFIDENTIALITY AND COMMUNICATION

All the information submitted by the applicants will be handled only by the First Mile project team involved in the Call for Proposals. The identity of the sender and the content of the proposal will be treated in strict confidentiality by the Selection and Evaluation Committee, who will perform the work impartially applying the highest ethical and moral standards. The application will be stored on a web-based, password-protected collaborative platform to which only the First Mile members will have access. Data regarding the proposal may also be exchanged between the First Mile partners.

Confidential information disclosed by the applicant must be marked as confidential. The applicant shall disclose to the First Mile consortium confidential information, in its sole discretion, if the applicant considers it necessary or desirable for the

⁹ See Annex III for an example of sub-contract.

purpose of assessing the application.

The First Mile consortium will strictly apply confidentiality rules as laid down in its consortium agreement and will not use confidential information of applicants for any purpose other than to meet the objectives of this Call for Proposals.

Any communication or publication made by participants or selected SMEs under this CfP should clearly indicate that the development of the content, output, etc. has received funding from the European Commission within the scope of the First Mile project, displaying the EU logo on all printed, digital or physical material and/goods, including websites and press releases. The following disclaimer furthermore has to be visible:

“The content of this [insert appropriate description; for example: report, publication, conference] represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility; it cannot be considered to reflect the views of the European Commission and/or the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA) or any other body of the European Union. The European Commission and the Agency do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.”

The selected SMEs under this CfP throughout the duration of their involvement within the Program will take appropriate measures to engage with the public about their involvement and to highlight the financial support of the EU.

16. OBLIGATIONS OF THE SELECTED SMES

16.1 General obligations

The selected SMEs has the obligation to properly participate to the activities listed in this CfP and in the grant Contract as well as to keep records and other supporting documentation related to the action for at least 5 years after the payment of the balance.

16.2 Visibility

The SMEs funded must promote the action and its results.

Unless EISMEA requests or agrees otherwise, any communication activity related to the action (including at conferences, seminars, in information material, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via social media, etc.) and major results funded by the grant must:

- Display the EU emblem:



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

- include the following text:

Co-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 EISMEA - European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

17 RIGHT TO USE THIRD-PARTY BENEFICIARIES' MATERIALS, DOCUMENTS OR INFORMATION

EISMEA and the First Mile Consortium reserve the right to use information relating to the action, documents notably summaries for publication and public deliverables as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material received from any third-party beneficiary (including in electronic form). This does not change the confidentiality obligations at art. 17, which still apply. The right to use third-party beneficiary's materials, documents and information includes:

- use for its own purposes (in particular, making them available to persons working for the EISMEA or any other EU institution, body, office or agency or body or institutions in EU Member States and the Consortium; and copying or reproducing them in whole or in part, in unlimited numbers);
- distribution to the public (in particular, publication as hard copies and in electronic or digital format, publication on the internet, as a downloadable or non-downloadable file, broadcasting by any channel, public display or presentation, communicating through press information services, or inclusion in widely accessible databases or

indexes);

- editing or redrafting for communication and publicizing activities (including shortening, summarizing, inserting other elements (such as meta-data, legends, other graphic, visual, audio or text elements), extracting parts (for example: audio or video files), dividing into parts, use in a compilation);
- translation;
- giving access in response to individual requests under Regulation No 1049/200110, without the right to reproduce or exploit;
- storage in paper, electronic or other form;
- archiving, in line with applicable document-management rules, and
- the right to authorize third parties to act on its behalf or sub-license the modes of use set out in points (b), (c), (d) and (to third parties if needed for the communication and publicizing activities of EISMEA and the Consortium.

As the right of use is subject to rights of a third-party beneficiary (including personnel), the third-party beneficiary must ensure that it complies with its obligations under the Beneficiary third-party agreement (in particular, by obtaining the necessary approval from the third parties concerned). Where applicable (and if provided by the beneficiaries), EISMEA and the First Mile Consortium will insert the following information: “© – [year] – [name of the copyright owner]. All rights reserved. Licensed to the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA) and the European Union (EU) under conditions.

18 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Consortium beneficiaries **and selected SMEs** take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the action is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests').

19 CONFIDENTIALITY

During implementation of the action and for five years after the payment of the balance from EISMEA to the Consortium, all parties must keep confidential any data, documents, or other material (in any form) that is identified as confidential at the time it is disclosed ('confidential information'). The confidentiality obligations no longer apply if:

- the disclosing party agrees to release the other party;
- the information becomes generally and publicly available, without breaching any confidentiality obligation;
- the disclosure of confidential information is required by EU or national law.

20 CHECKS & AUDITS

EISMEA and/or the Consortium may - during the implementation of the action or afterwards - carry out audits on the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Third-party beneficiary agreement.

In the context of checks, reviews, audits or investigations, the records and supporting documents mentioned in art. 13.1 must be made available upon written request.

If because of an audit or check, the findings lead to a reduction of the grant, recovery of undue amount will be notified to the concerned SMES which must refund the Local partner within 30 calendar days from the date of the recovery notification. Audits may be started up to five years after the payment of the balance by EISMEA to the First Mile Consortium.

The Third-party beneficiary shall ensure, at any time during the implementation of the First Mile project and up to 5 (five) years after final payment, access to the records.

21 LIABILITIES, DISPUTES

The Consortium cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the third-party beneficiaries because of implementing the Program, including for gross negligence. The Consortium cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the third-party beneficiaries involved in the Action, as a consequence of implementing the Third-party Beneficiary Agreement.

Any dispute that relates to the implementation of the action as described in this call be specifically referred to in the grant contract between the third-party beneficiary and the local partner of reference.

ANNEXES

Annex I - List of tactics (online)

Annex II - Application Form (including the Declaration of Honor) (online)

Annex III - Example of sub-contract

Annex III – Sub Grant Agreement

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[FIRST MILE PARTNER_NAME] established in [LEGAL_ADDRESS], [COUNTRY], represented for the purposes of signing the Sub-Grant Agreement by [LEGAL_REPRESENTATIVE_NAME], as [LEGAL_REPRESENTATIVE_POSITION]

Hereinafter referred to as the “**Financing party**”

and

[COMPANY_NAME], established in [LEGAL_ADDRESS], [COUNTRY], with [VAT_NUMBER], duly represented by [LEGAL_REPRESENTATIVE_NAME], as [LEGAL_REPRESENTATIVE_POSITION]

Hereinafter referred to as the “**Third-party beneficiary**”

WHEREAS

The European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA) (‘EU executive agency’ or ‘granting authority’), under the powers delegated by the European Commission (‘European Commission’) and the Consortium have signed the Grant Agreement n° 101085903 under the [EU Single Market Program](#) (SMP) for the implementation of the project [First Mile](#).

In the framework of First Mile project, an Open Call has been published to provide concrete support to SMEs for improving their sustainability performance and reducing their carbon footprint.

The SME’s proposal has been evaluated and selected for participation in the program and for receiving financial support as a Third-Party beneficiary. The Contracting Parties HAVE AGREED to the following terms and conditions including those in the following documents and annexes, which form an integral part of this Sub Grant Agreement (hereinafter referred as the “Contract”).

Article 1. Scope

The present contract is set-out in the framework of [First Mile](#), a project co-funded by the European Union ([grant agreement #101085903](#)), and aiming at improving performance towards sustainability and climate neutrality of-small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in France, Italy, Norway and Slovenia.

The FIRST MILE project applies behavioral sciences to shape solutions that accelerate the post-COVID-19 recovery of tourism SMEs while improving their sustainability with minimum resources and time.

The project aims to support SMEs by focusing on different set of tactics that help introducing easy changes in the context and in the human behavior..

In the framework of the First Mile project, [Financial beneficiary name], as Financing party is responsible for managing the financial support to SMEs in [Country].

[Third-party beneficiary name] has been selected to be awarded the financial support in the framework of the call ‘Selection of Tourism SMEs to be awarded for the participation to First Mile Sustainability Support Program’.

Subject of the contract is the implementation of the SMEs project related activities, as specified in the First Mile Grant Contract n. 101085903, signed between the [European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency](#) (EISMEA) and the Beneficiary partners.

Article 2. Entry into force

This Contract shall enter into force on the day of its signature by the last contracting party.

Article 3. Activities to be carried out by the Third-party beneficiary

The First Mile project’s financial support to Third-party beneficiary will include the following activities:

1. Activity 1 [to be precised by the Financing party]
2. Activity 2 [to be precised by the Financing party]
3. Activity 3 [to be precised by the Financing party]
4. Activity 4 [to be precised by the Financing party]

Article 4. Deliverables of the activities

The Third-Party beneficiary must submit, to the Financing party, the following documents related to the activities carried out:

1. [to be precised by the Financing party]
2. [to be precised by the Financing party]
3. [to be precised by the Financing party]
4. Proof of participation to the final event in Bologna

If the recipient fails to submit above mentioned documents and report(s), this contract is considered terminated, and the beneficiary has no longer any right to the financial support and will be requested to refund the advance payment received at the contract signature.

Article 5. Support from the Financing party

National coaches will accompany SMEs all through the implementation phase, providing support and adjustments through an ongoing evaluation. Selected tactics might request an alignment to specific contexts. The operational adaptation of some tactics (for example: rewriting a menu, redesigning the space organization, elaborating a message to encourage more sustainable behavior etc.) will be supported and validated by national coaches or/and external experts. When necessary National coaches will also provide one to one coaching session.

Article 6. Payments

The amount of financial support to implement the activities specified in Article 3 is [xxxEUR] (VAT included) and it will be paid in three installments as follows:

- **50%** of the total grant amount as pre-financing payment at the latest 30 days after the signature and entry into force of the Grant Contract;
- **30 %** of the grant amount after the approval of the **Mid-term report**, and no later than 30 days after the approval of the report;
- On the condition of compliance with the call **20%** of the total grant amount will be transferred after the approval of the final report, and no later than 45 days from the approval of it.

In the event that the Mid-term report is not submitted or in the scenario where it is not validated by the Financing party, the Third-party beneficiary will not be entitled to receive the interim payment nor the final balance. Additionally, it will be requested to reimburse the 50% advance received at the contact signature.

Payments will be made after positive assessment of the above-mentioned documents / evidence. The First Mile team commits to evaluate all reports within one month of delivery and complete payment procedures within 30 calendar days after the acceptance of the report.

For the selected beneficiaries established out of the Eurozone, payments will be made in the local currency. The conversion exchange rate shall be the official EUR-LEX¹⁰ exchange rate of the month of the transfer, from the Financing party to the Third-party beneficiary.

¹⁰ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/oj/direct-access.html>

During the implementation of the Program and at the time of justifying the amount of the grant requested, verification will be carried out on the basis of the quality of the deliverables submitted, and evidence of attendance at the compulsory activities foreseen in the project.

Article 7. Assessment of the deliverable

Upon submission of each deliverable mentioned at art. 4, the Financing party will assess the performance of the Beneficiary based on the following table.

Score	Note
Between 100 and 81	Very good
Between 80 and 71	Good
Between 70 and 60	Sufficient
Lower than 60	Poor

If the final report scores below 60 points in total, the Financing party will reduce the final balance on the basis of poor/partial implementation of the action even if all activities reported were eligible and actually took place.

In that case, a grant reduction of - 20% (of the total amount granted) will be applied if the final report scores at least 50 points and below 60 points.

Article 8. Visibility

The beneficiary will fulfil with the following EU visibility requirements:

- posting on the entity's website and/or social media page on receiving financial support from EU funds (rules to be provided by the Financing party)
- presenting the First Mile action results on their website and/or social media page

Any communication activity (including brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via social media, etc.) and any major result funded by this project must:

- display the First Mile logo coupled with the EU emblem
- include the following mention: The [please precise] was co-funded by the EU

The Financing beneficiary will provide the Third-party beneficiary with all the necessary documents and information allowing them to meet the requirements specified in this article.

Article 9. Audits and controls

Controls, audits and checks audits on the proper implementation of the action, and compliance with the obligations under the third-party beneficiary agreement, can be carried out during and after the project life. Although it is not compulsory to provide proof of expenses paid during the final report (e.g. invoices), Third-party beneficiary must keep available, at any time during the implementation of First Mile project, and up to **5 (five) years** after final payment to the Third-party beneficiary.

The audit procedure shall be formally notified to the Third-party beneficiary and will be considered to start on the date of the notification. Such audits may cover financial, qualitative, and other aspects (such as accounting and management principles) relating to the proper execution of the Grant Agreement.

They shall be carried out on a confidential basis.

In the context of checks, reviews, audits or investigations, the records and supporting documents must be made available upon written request.

Article 10. Data collection

The third-party beneficiary gives his consent to the Financing party to collect, record and process all

personal data in the documentation (name, address, etc.). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data.

Article 11. Applicable law and competent court

The contracting parties shall be obliged to settle all misunderstandings arising indirectly and/or directly from this contract peacefully, i.e., based on the signed agreement, and in case they fail to do so, the jurisdiction of the court of [SPECIFY TOWN] will apply.

Signed in 2 original copies.

The Financing party

Name of the Legal representative

Date, signature and stamp (*):

(*) If available

The Third-party beneficiary

Name of the Legal representative

Date, signature and stamp (*):
