



Greening social economy SMEs and entrepreneurs in the proximity and social economy ecosystem through transnational co-operation

SMP-COSME-2022-SEE

INFO SESSION
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Policy background

International level

- **UN:** Adoption of 17 SDGs of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015)
- **ILO:** Conference report on decent work and the social and solidarity economy (2022)
- **OECD:** Policy brief on making the most of the social economy's contribution to the circular economy" (2022) + Recommendation of the Council on the Social and Solidarity Economy and Social Innovation (2022)

EU level

- 2019: **EU Green Deal:** new growth strategy to transform the EU and make Europe the first climate neutral continent by 2050
- 2020: European **Industrial Strategy:** ecosystem-based approach
- 2021: **Updated** Industrial Strategy: 14 industrial ecosystems of which one "proximity and social economy"

Policy background

- 2021 - **SEAP**: *Building an economy that works for people: an action plan for the social economy*
 - “Support transnational cooperation to boost the capacity of the social economy to adopt and develop greener practices, products and services, (and to improve their digital capacities)”
 - SWD (2021) 373. **Results of the public consultation for the SEAP**
 - “Lack of **visibility** of the role and potential of the social economy model in the green transition” + “Lack of investment in **capacity-building** of social economy organisations and public authorities in the green context”
 - Launch a transition pathway for the “Proximity and social economy” industrial ecosystem
 - SWD(2021) 982. **Scenarios towards co-creation of a transition pathway**
 - “Fully enabling the ecosystem as agent for the green transition”
 - “Social economy actors generally face investment and operational constraints, but also lack green skills”
- 2022 - [Transition Pathway for proximity and social economy industrial ecosystem](#):
 - ➔ Co-creation and co-implementation process: 7 Green Action Areas – 13 Actions

SMEs going green and resource efficient

○ Performance of the P&SE ecosystem

- 13% of its SMEs are **not taking measures** to be more resource-efficient

○ What actions is your company undertaking to be more resource efficient?

- 61% 'minimising waste'
- 56% 'saving energy'
- 52% 'saving materials'
- 19% 'design products that are easier to maintain, repair or reuse'

○ Difficulties encountered in trying to set up resource efficiency actions

- 34% '**complexity** of administrative or legal procedures'
- 31% '**cost** of environment actions'
- 27% '**lack** of specific environmental **expertise**'
- 25% 'difficulty to adapt environmental **legislation** to its company'

○ Tools that would be most helpful to become more resource-efficient

- 33% '**grants or subsidies**'
- 26% '**consultancy** on how to improve resource efficiency'
- 24% 'demonstration of **new technologies or processes** to improve resource efficiency'
- 20% better **cooperation** between companies **across sectors** so that new processes to re-use waste and by-products can be developed'





Overall objectives of the call

Supporting **transnational** and **cross-sectorial cooperation**, and exchange of **good practices** to enable green transition of social economy by:

- boosting the **capacities** and **skills** of staff and management within social economy SMEs and entrepreneurs to green their **operations** and develop **sustainable products** and **services**;
- encouraging the **uptake of sustainable alternatives** and **innovative solutions** through capacity building, incubation and acceleration, advisory services and coaching;
- fostering **cooperation** between **social economy entities** on the one hand, and **mainstream businesses, academia** and **public authorities** on the other.

This call covers the following themes with the aim to:

- Improve the **environmental footprint** of social economy SMEs and entrepreneurs;
- Boost **sustainable contribution of social economy** towards environment and climate goals;
- Enable the development of **local green markets** and **short value chains**;
- Test, implement and scale-up **innovative green solutions**;
- Improve **assessment** and **communication** about environmental impact of social economy SMEs;
- Design **investment** or **financial vehicles** enabling the green transition of social economy;
- Enable use of **digital technologies** for green purposes, e.g. resulting in **more efficient processes** and **new business models**;
- Assess **skills, infrastructure** and **investment** needs for social economy to deliver on the green transition.



Scope of activities

*Proposals shall focus on (1) Provision of direct financial support for **capacity building and training** through:*

- facilitating **knowledge transfer** and **exchange of good practices**
- setting up **targeted trainings** and **peer to peer learning** programs
- supporting SMEs in the social economy to set up or benefit from **financial support schemes** enabling their green transition
- empowering **management** and **employees** of SMEs in the social economy to introduce or implement new green practices and techniques

Scope of activities

*Proposals shall focus on (2) Provision of **advisory services** and **technical support activities** related to financing, incubation, acceleration and scaling-up of sustainability processes and activities to:*

- improve **sustainable management** of social economy SMEs
- facilitate business **partnerships** and **cooperation** with business support centres, academia and incubators
- foster **cross-sectoral cooperation**
- foster stakeholders' cooperation **and pooling of resources**
- support financing of **ad hoc advisory and consultancy** services aiming to reduce SMEs' environmental footprint.

Mandatory activities

1) *Organisation of transnational capacity building activities*

- Number of transnational capacity building activities organized, with mandatory minimum to achieve: **4 activities per year of the project's execution**;
- **Reach out** and **diversity** of participation;

2) *Organisation of coaching, mentoring and business support activities targeting social economy*

- Number of coaching, mentoring and business support activities organized, with mandatory minimum to achieve: **30**;
- **Reach out** and **diversity** of participation;

Mandatory activities

3) *Delivering capacity building through advisory services*

- Number of SMEs and entrepreneurs who benefited from advisory services, with mandatory minimum to achieve: **40**;

4) *'Support to third parties':*

- **50%** of the grant **must be directed to SMEs and entrepreneurs**
- The support to third parties **cannot be provided** through services offered **by the consortium directly**
- Number of **SMEs** and **entrepreneurs** supported financially with respective activities, with mandatory minimum to achieve: **60**.

The support to third parties can be channeled through (a combination of) tools such as lump sums for:

- training in support activities
- advisory and consultancy services
- travel, accommodation and subsistence costs necessary to participate in support activities

Possible additional types of activities (non-mandatory)

- **Mapping** (e.g. barriers in a specific sector, existing funding opportunities and investment needs, identification of business support centers, impact investors' activities);
- Organisation of matchmaking events or activities to kick-start multi-stakeholder initiatives;
- Production of **materials** (e.g. for communication, dissemination, training);
- Identification of concrete **next steps** (e.g. financing of infrastructure, participation in clusters);
- **Reporting** on the **results** of implemented capacity building and expertise sharing activities as well as on the uptake of innovative solutions by social economy SMEs to green their operations, services and products
- **Other activities** in line with the objectives of the call.

Non-eligible activities:

- Development/improvement of the physical infrastructure.

Expected impacts of the call

- **Improved capacity** of social economy SMEs and entrepreneurs to perform on the green transition;
- **Enhanced transnational** on the identification and implementation of sustainability practices for the proximity and social economy ecosystem;
- Fostered **cross-sectorial cooperation** and **knowledge transfer** between social economy SMEs and start-ups, mainstream businesses, consultancies, business support centres, incubators and accelerators with regard to the uptake of **green skills** and the development of more **sustainable products and services**;
- **Evidence-based** integration of **sustainable innovative processes** by social economy SMEs and start-ups boosting their **competitiveness** and creating potential **new market opportunities**;
- **Further investments** by/in social economy SMEs and entrepreneurs - sustainable alternatives, capacity building and knowledge transfer.

Q&A

Thank you for listening !

Any questions?