CulTourData EU Project

Supporting data-driven innovation
for tourism SMEs in European Capital of Culture

GA n. 101038124

1st OPEN CALL FOR TOURISM SMES

in collaboration with Data/Digital Expert & Creative
professionals

Cultour Data EU Project

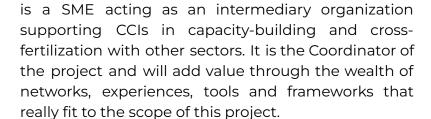|	
Project Acronym	CulTourData
Project Title	Supporting data-driven innovation for tourism SMEs in European Capital of Culture
Project Number	101038124
Project Topic	COS-TOURINN-2020-3-04
Project Duration	25 Months (01.01.2022 - 01.01.2024)
Overall Budget	€ 1,326,437.66 (EU Contribution € 994,827.57)

Partners (Project Consortium)

Consorzio Materahub Industrie Culturali e Creative is a SME acting as an intermediary organization supporting CCIs in capacity-building and cross-fertilization with other sectors. It is the Coordinator of the project and will add value through the wealth of networks, experiences, tools and frameworks that really fit to the scope of this project.

Basilicata Creativa is the cluster of cultural and creative industries of the Basilicata Region, and includes important Italian research bodies (CNR, ENEA), the University of Basilicata and CC companies. It will be the coordinator of the Collaborative Matchmaking and will deal with the major part of the support scheme.

ENAT has the mission to make European tourism destinations, products and services accessible to all travellers and to promote accessible tourism around the world. ENAT will lead all the communication and dissemination activities.

Košice Turizmus is a Public Tourism Agency, and its mission is deeply rooted in the ECoC Košice 2013. It will help manage the support scheme, the ECoCS Watch and the Policy Lab.

Ip Leira is a HEI that includes research centres, four incubators and one start-up accelerator. It will lead the ECoCs Watch and will act as co-coordinator of the Collaborative Matchmaking and of the ECoC Policy Lab.

Economic Development Corporation, City of Chemnitz is the central business support agency for the city of Chemnitz, and is co-responsible for the current realignment and the new foundation of the Destination Marketing Organisation for Chemnitz-Zwickau-Region. It will lead the ECoC Policy Lab, with a full engagement in the running of the ECoCs Watch.

Incubator Leeuwarden is a foundation backed by the Municipality of Leeuwarden, and helps entrepreneurs establish their business and maximise their personal growth. It will co-coordinate the Transformative Bootcamp and will co-coordinate the Collaborative Matchmaking.

Association of Extremadura Tourism Cluster has the main aim to promote the development of the tourism sector in the Extremadura region. They will provide high support in the development and management of the support scheme. The same way they can be a very active voice in ECoCS Watch and Policy Lab.

1.1 Introduction to CulTourData

CulTourData nurtures a multidisciplinary ecosystem involving players in tourism, CC, and digital fields and aims to enhance data-driven, accessible, and transformative cultural tourism across Europe.

Tourism SMEs will be empowered to learn why and how to be a data-driven market player by joining a multidisciplinary Transformative Bootcamp including:
- an inspirational mentoring approach set between digitally advanced SMEs and those lagging behind in the digital transformation process;
- a virtual programme helping them explore and learn more about big data and data-driven approaches that they could usefully apply in their own context ;
- a pattern of Collaborative Matchmaking that will help tourism SMEs move through their digital transformation.

Each tourism SME will be matched with a) a cultural and creative SME or professional and a player active in the field of ICT/digital technology, including data analysts and strategists, that will help the tourism SME develop and/or improve viable and sustainable tourism business models and strategies, including rethinking decision-making and organisational processes, and develop new products and services more accessible and provided with a higher value. They will prove their achievement by sharing videos, pieces of stories, and other creative portfolios that will feed project communication, emphasising how empowerment unfolds through project activities.

The project fosters capacity building and knowledge transfer among ECoCs, supporting them through:

- ECoCs Watch - A system of market intelligence that will help collect and provide open access to a broad amount of data, analysis, best practices, enhancing skills and strategies when these using data for tourism development;
- ECoCs Policy Lab - Stimulating participation in cultural and tourism policy by leading audiences closer to data collected.

The initiative is expected to help ECoCs design its own path to link policies to programmes to funding opportunities.

1.2 Specific Objectives

The project targets tourism SMEs in the European Capitals of Culture ecosystem and supports them to:

- Develop a data-driven approach beyond the right website, tool or application, helping them grasp the importance of making data and analytics part of the tourism business strategies, offers and products, of their organisational processes and culture, if they want to be competitive, sustainable and attractive;

- Build the link between tourism destinations and tourism SMEs; the project focus on European Capitals of Culture and stretches the year event over a long- lasting period - from about ten years before the bid to a very long legacy - and actively involves tourism SMEs in the co-creation of the event, so as to spur sustainable tourism and sustainable development;

- Create a multidisciplinary business approach that leverages synergies between tourism, culture, creativity and digital technology;

- Experience a challenging funnel-like support scheme that includes capacity building, mentoring and learning, along with a collaborative creativity-oriented matchmaking, other than opportunities for financial support;

- Immerse themselves into a fun, evidence-based assessment process that combines communication, impact evaluation and self-assessment.

1.3 Objectives of the call

Through this call for applicants, the CulTourData project will support tourism SMEs by guiding them to make a better use of data, using creative customer-engaging approaches and new technologies. To this end, the CulTourData call will offer grants aiming to:

- support tourism SMEs through the promotion of up-skilling, capacity building and digitalization;

- foster a triple-helix cooperation among tourism SMEs, creatives and data analysis experts;

- provide ongoing mentoring and tutoring support to the awarded SMEs;

- foster networking at the European level by offering SMEs access to international collaboration platforms and networks.

1.4 What the CulTourData project offers

CulTourData project will award 60 (sixty) lump sum grants of 7.000 EUR to finance and support the following activities:

Calendar dates	Launch: 1st March, 2023 **Application deadline: 3rd May, 2023, 17:00 h CET**
Lump sum total budget	€ 420,000

	Top ranked proposals will be granted until the budget is exhausted.
Financial contribution	€7,000 / Tourism SME
Project duration	max. 3 months
Supported activities	- Advisory services that consist in an in-depth mapping of specific tourism SMEs' digitalisation / innovation needs and the guidance to adapt the business processes in order to create the conditions for the deployment of solutions in the field of data collection, analysis and visualization; - Skills improvement, consisting in training and coaching activities to improve the employees' digital skills necessary for a further digitalization of business processes; - Update and Deployment of Technologies, especially emerging technologies, necessary for the data collection, analysis and visualization.
Payment scheme	1 Final payment
Expected outputs	- Proof of concept, prototype and/or beta test of data collection, analysis, visualization, reporting system - Executive Roadmap for the implementation of a data collection, analysis, visualization, reporting system - Digital and Data technologies readiness certificate to prove the upskilling towards the use of data collection, analysis, visualization, reporting system. The information related to the project implementation, and specifically the achievement of these outputs will be described in a technical report, whose template will be provided during the lump sum implementation.

Call in detail

2.1 Who can apply

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) of the tourism sector can apply to receive financial support (one lump sum with a value of 7.000 €). Companies shall meet the following criteria to be eligible:
- Being a small - or medium-sized enterprise (SME), according to the definition in [EU recommendation 2003/361](#):

Company category	Staff headcount	Turnover	OR	Balance sheet total
Medium Sized	< 250	≤ € 50 m		≤ € 43 m
Small	< 50	≤ € 10 m		≤ € 10 m
Micro	< 10	≤ € 10 m		≤ € 2 m

- Having an economic activity related to the tourism sector (see next section);
- Being based in one of the following countries: Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Slovakia, Spain, Portugal.

2.2 What is the tourism sector?

The EU tourism industry ecosystem encompasses a globalised and interconnected value chain comprising off-line and on-line information and services providers (tourist offices, digital platforms, travel technology providers), travel agents and tour operators, accommodation suppliers, parts or all of food and beverage service activities, as well as entertainment activities, museums and other cultural activities, large sport events, gambling, amusement and theme parks, destination managing organisations, visitor attractions and tourism-related transport activities (i.e. passenger transport by land and sea, car rental). Very small companies operate alongside large multinational corporations.

Within the CulTourData call for lump sum grants, to be eligible tourism SMEs must fall under the following categories of tourism industries, in line with selected [Eurostat classes](#):

- I5510 - Hotels and similar accommodation;
- I5520 - Holiday and other short-stay accommodation;
- I5530 - Camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks and trailer parks;
- N79 - Travel agency, tour operator and other reservation service and related activities.

2.3 Eligibility conditions

Proposals will be eligible and enter the evaluation phase if all the following conditions are met.

s/n	Eligibility criteria
1	Applicants must be a SME and declare their SME status in accordance with the SME definition of the European Union as part of the application via this link
2	Applicants must fall under one of the eligible Eurostat Classes
3	Applicants must fall under the territorial scope of CulTourData (section 2.1)
4	Applicants should address the CulTourData defined specific objectives (section 1.2)
5	Applications must be registered on the extensive list at the following link https://deuscci.eu/open-call-tourism-smes/[1]
6	Applicants must select at least one data expert/organization and one artist/creative professionals from the extensive list at the following link https://deuscci.eu/first-european-database-data-for-artists/ NB: Companies that have already business relationships with and/or have identified artists/data experts should invite these ones to register on the extensive list prior their application
7	Applicant will be excluded from participating in calls for grants if it is found to be in one of the exclusion situations described in the next paragraph
8	Applications and supporting documentation must be written in English (applications partially written in another language are not eligible). For each section, the maximum number of characters is indicated and the form will automatically prevent applicants from exceeding this limit.
9	Applications must be submitted through the online submission tool accessible at https://deuscci.eu/first-open-call-tourism-sme/ by the deadline indicated at the Section 1.4 of the present call
10	Only one (1) Annex can be submitted, including diagrams, charts etc. It must be a PDF and can be up to 5 A4 pages long and no larger than 10MB in size. The font size must be Arial 11.
11	Applicants may only apply for and receive 1 (one) lump sum. If more applications from the same SMEs are received, all of them will be rejected.

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[1] The registration to the two extensive lists is always open. One organization can register prior to its application to the call for grants.

2.3 Exclusion criteria

Applicants will be excluded from the evaluation process if the present the following elements:

- Receiving funds and support under the other COS-TOURINN projects (double funding is not allowed);
- Presenting the characteristics of a "company in difficulty", as defined by the EU Regulation n.651/2014 of the European Commission;
- Lack of administrative, technical, operational and financial capacity, necessary to implement the projects' activities, as foreseen by art. 125 of the EU Regulation n. 1303/2013.

2.4 Where, when and how to apply?

Applications must be submitted at the following page: https://deuscci.eu/first-open-call-tourism-sme/
You will need to follow the instructions on the site and fill in all the necessary attachments
Applications must be submitted by 3rd May, 2023 at 17:00 h CET

2.5 Evaluation procedure

As per the project proposal submitted, the evaluation of each submitted application will be carried out by an International Evaluation Panel consisting of 2 experts from the CulTourData consortium partners and one expert from ENAT to evaluate the accessibility criterion. These representatives have solid knowledge on topics related to digital transformation, smart tourism and capacity building and therefore their views and opinions will ensure that the most suitable candidates are selected.
Once the applicants have submitted their proposals, the CulTourData Evaluation team will proceed to:

1. Check eligibility and admissibility (See Who can apply and Eligibility Conditions above) and, if successful;
2. Initiate the evaluation of the content of the proposals (Quality check).

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the excellence, impact and implementation of each proposal that successfully passed the admissibility and eligibility criteria. Participating SMEs will be requested to explain their needs in terms of digitalisation and technical support.

2.6 Evaluation Criteria

Criteria - TOT. SCORE 40	Max. Score
Excellence	**20**
a. Coherence with the objective of CulTourData	5
b. Innovation potential	5
c. Multidisciplinarity in particular concerning the involvement of the creative and cultural sector	5
d. Accessibility of SME services for all users: • Accessibility of data-based systems and interfaces: Provision of universally-designed Websites, mobile applications, exhibits, performances, etc., accessible to the diversity of users, including those with disabilities and other access requirements • Verified accessibility information: Provision of objective information regarding the accessibility of a facility, service or event, in the form of an "Access Guide", allowing customers/audiences to make informed decisions about their ability to use/participate in the service/event. Publication of the Access Guide on an accessible website.	5
Impact	**10**
Implementation	**10**
a. Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan	5
b. Expertise and experience of the team including the external experts	5

Only proposals ranked equal or over 21 points (threshold) and that get at least half of the total points under all Evaluation Criteria will be pre-selected.
In case of ex-aequos, the priority will be given as follows:

1. Score under the Impact section
2. Score under Excellence section
3. Score under the accessibility criteria
4. Gender balance in the project implementation

2.7 Scoring Mechanism

Score	Description
0 - None	The information requested is missing or incomplete
1 - Very Poor	The information provided is considered irrelevant or inadequate, compared to the specific call provisions
2 - Poor	The information provided lacks relevant quality and contains significant weaknesses, compared to the specific call provisions
3 - Fair	The overall information provided is adequate, however, some aspects are unclearly or insufficiently detailed, compared to the specific call provisions
4 - Good	The information provided is adequate with good outlined details, compared to the specific call provisions
5 - Excellent	The information provided is outstanding in its details, clarity and coherence, compared to the specific call provisions.

2.8 General payment terms and beneficiaries' obligations

- All payments will be made in Euros (€) in one instalment at the end of the project.
- Payments will be made by the National Contact Points for the applications received from their respective countries/regions in one instalment within 30 days after approval of technical report;
- Submission of an application does not constitute an entitlement for funding.
- The recipients of the financial support from CulTourData must ensure that the European Commission, the European Anti-fraud Office (OLAF) and the Court of Auditors (ECA) can exercise their powers of control, on documents, information, even stored on electronic media, or on the final recipient's premises.
- Beneficiaries' obligations are the following:
  - The SME/ consortium must - for a period of five-years after the payment of the balance - keep records and other supporting documentation to prove the proper implementation of the action.
  - They must make them available upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits or investigations.
  - If there are on-going checks, reviews, audits, investigations, litigation or other pursuits of claims under the grant agreement (including the extension of funding), the SME/ consortium must keep the records and other supporting documentation until the end of these procedures.
  - The SME/ consortium must keep the original documents. Digital and digitised documents are considered originals, if they are authorised by the applicable national law. Non-original documents may be accepted if they offer a comparable level of assurance.

2.9 Monitoring and reporting Process

The CulTourData Beneficiaries shall provide a final technical report to explain the work implemented and the achievement of the expected outputs max 1 (one) month after the end of the project duration as defined in the sub-grant agreement. The template for the final technical report will be provided during the project implementation.
The purpose of the above is to evaluate:

1. the degree of fulfilment of the project work plan for the relevant period and of the related deliverable(s);
2. the continued relevance of the objectives and breakthrough potential with respect to the scientific and industrial state of the art;
3. the expected potential impact in economic, competition and social terms, and the CulTourData Beneficiary's cooperation to elaborate a dissemination of the results.

3. Confidentiality and Data Protection

GDPR compliance: The General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679/EU) guarantees that the processing of data is carried out in compliance with the fundamental rights and freedoms, as well as the dignity of the data subject with particular reference to confidentiality, personal identity and the right to data protection.

By applying, the applicant agrees on the storage and use of its personal data for the execution of the CulTourData objectives and work plan. The CulTourData consortium commits to handling personal data confidentiality except for the call results, which will contain the following information:

- Information about successful CulTourData grants applications that will be made publicly available before the end of the project containing: project title, names of project partners and short project description (as provided by the applicant in the application template).
- Information about successful CulTourData grants that will be made publicly available after the end of the project: project title, names of project partners, awarded funding and updated short project description (as provided by the project partners in the Final Report).

The processing of data that CulTourData intends to carry out will be based on lawfulness and correctness in the full protection of its rights and its confidentiality pursuant to the general principles of the GDPR and its art.24. Therefore, the competitors are informed of the procedure that the data provided by the applicants will be treated exclusively with reference to the procedure for which they submitted the documentation.

The applicants can exercise their rights towards the data controller, pursuant to article 12 of the GDPR. For any inquiries regarding the processing your personal data, please contact the coordinator (see Annex1)

Application selection and evaluation will be performed under the appropriate ethical conduct and will respect the confidentiality of the information received.

3.1 Intellectual Property Rights and Dissemination

The applicants are advised to arrange for internal contracts regarding Intellectual Property Rights, the use and dissemination of the results generated by the project teams through the funding obtained via CulTourData grants.

For dissemination and use of results generated through the financial support from CulTourData, the recipients must credit the CulTourData project through proper citation and appearance of the CulTourData logo and EU Logo, including the proper citation "This project has received funding from the European Union's EISMEA, COSME Programme, call COS-TOURINN-2020-3-04, under grant agreement number 101038124".

3.2 Gender Equality

CulTourData seeks gender balance. Therefore, applicants are invited to take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action. They must aim for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including supervisory and managerial levels to the extent possible.

4. Disclaimer

Purpose: This text is explaining the CulTourData lump sum for information purposes only. No rights can be claimed on the basis of this document. This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission and EISMEA.

Mistakes or inconsistencies: The CulTourData consortium is not responsible for any mistakes or misinterpretations that this text may cause. In the case of inconsistencies, the CulTourData consortium will determine the steps to be taken, in cooperation with the applicant concerned.

Modification of the Terms and Conditions: The CulTourData partners, represented by the coordinator are entitled to modify these Terms and Conditions (including re-opening/closing dates of the calls, in case of non-granting of funds and/or early depletion of the available funds, or as they see fit) at any time without notice. The current Guide for Applicants will be provided on the websites (….) always mentioning the version number. The most recent version of the Terms and Conditions of the CulTourData lump sum scheme apply and prevail.

Consequential damages: In no event shall either party be liable to the other or any of its affiliates for any consequential, incidental, indirect, special, punitive or exemplary damages (including, without limitation, lost profits, business or goodwill) suffered or incurred by such other party or its affiliates in connection with this lump sum scheme, even if advised of the possibility of such damages.

5. Redress procedure

For the Redress Procedure:

Any complaints against the project selection process have to be submitted by the applicant on behalf of the project to info@cultouriscapital.eu within 8 (eight) calendar days after the notification of the evaluation results.

The applicant shall clearly specify what failures or mistakes have happened during the assessment of the proposal and include clear references to the relevant programme documents (Terms and Conditions, application form, etc.). Prior to filing a complaint, the applicant is strongly advised to request additional information from the SME regional contact point within the timeframe (10 calendar days) available for submitting a complaint. Only one request for redress per assessed application will be considered by the Committee, made up of one representative of each project partner. All requests for redress will be treated in confidence.

The Review Committee will examine the complaint on the basis of the information brought forward by the applicant, will assess the case and decide

whether the complaint is justified or not and will inform the applicant and the consortium on the decision taken.

If the complaint is considered justified, the Review Committee will notify the evaluators to re-evaluate the project application and the related assessment part, subject to the complaint. The evaluators will then provide the Review Committee with an updated assessment. The final decision on the complaint will be communicated by the Review Committee to the applicant in writing within 20 working days from the date of submitting the complaint. This decision will be final, binding to all parties and not subject to any further complaint proceedings within the programme if the complaint is based on the same grounds.

National Contact Points

Country	Name	Organization	Contact Details
Italy	Paolo Montemurro & Giovanni Scaramuzzo	Materahub & Basilicata Creativa	info@materahub.com & segreteria@basilicatacreativa.it
Netherlands	Mardjantie Stienstra	Inqubator Leeuwarden	m.stienstra@bdfriesland.nl
Portugal	Rogerio Costa	IP Leiria	rogerio.l.costa@ipleiria.pt
Germany	Boris Kaiser	CWE	kaiser@cwe-chemnits.de
Spain	Jesus Bravo	Cluturex	info@clusterturismoextremadura.es
Slovakia	Ivana Kavulič	Visit Košice	ivana.kavulic@visitkosice.org