



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

[Call for Proposals – Tourban Sustainable Urban Tourism Acceleration Programme](#)

Call open from: 16 August 2021 – 20 October 2021

Last revision date: 05 October 2021

This document gathers all questions posed by possible applicants to the Tourban Sustainable Urban Tourism Acceleration Programme. All relevant questions sent to info@blinkbcn.com are incorporated into this document. The document is updated with new questions on a regular basis.

Note that in case of inconsistencies with the [Guidelines for Application to the Sustainable Urban Tourism Acceleration Programme](#), the Guidelines always prevail. Answers provided in this document are of purely informative character but do not have legal validity.

FAQs:

Where do I have to send my application?

The application has to be submitted online via f6s.com platform under the following link:

<https://www.f6s.com/sustainable-urban-tourism-accelerator/apply>

In order to be able to submit your application, you have to create your personal profile on the platform first.

Can I submit my application in local language?

No. All applications need to be submitted in English language.

How can I know if my company is an SME?

You can find the SME definition according to the EU recommendation 2003/361 [here](#) including the user guide and the self-assessment tool.

What if my company does not have a NACE Code? I am an association from Germany and associations are not categorised according to NACE Codes in their registry.

First of all, you need to make sure that your company qualifies as an SME according to the EU recommendation 2003/361. If so, and you fall under one of the eligible categories below...

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

... but do not have a corresponding NACE code, you will have to provide an alternative justification, like e.g. your association's statutes, to prove your activity under one of the categories. If this is your case, please reach out to your national contact point.

This option is not applicable for companies that dispose of a NACE code in general, but it is different from the indicated eligible ones.

**I have already submitted my application but would like to change some details. Can I access it again?**

Please revise your application carefully before submitting. Applications need to be reopened manually by the administrator wherefore it can only be done in justified cases and before the deadline of 20 October 17:00 h CET. To do so please send an e-mail to: lhehn@cambrabcn.cat or info@blinkbcn.com

What if my company does not have a VAT number?

If your company does not dispose of a VAT number please introduce your National Fiscal Identification Number in the respective field instead.

I am self-employed, can I apply?

Self-employed people can only apply if they have a registered company (one-man/woman company). Tourban project cannot hand out financial support to individuals. Self-employed people without a formally registered company are therefore not eligible.

Can I submit a proposal together with other SMEs?

Consortium proposals are not foreseen. You can however describe in your application form collaborations you foresee with other actors and how you will imply them.

If I am an expert from outside of the participating project countries, can I still apply as mentor?

Yes, if you fulfil the minimum criteria set by the call for mentors. There is no restriction on nationality or location of the mentors.

Can only the participating SMEs or also the mentor take part in the project events and conferences?

Participation to the project events and conferences (online trainings, Investor Pitch in Copenhagen, Design Thinking Lab in Barcelona, final conference in Dubrovnik) conference is also open to mentors and other participants, meaning that it is not a restricted event.

The fixed rate to be foreseen in SMEs' project budget estimation to cover travel costs is however related to a SME representatives' participation at the events. SMEs are free to include additional travel costs to cover for their mentor's participation in the budget or to include the fees into their agreement with the mentor.

In the project budget template, can there be more than one type of service listed per topic?

Yes, you can add more than one service per topic. If this is the situation, you should indicate that in the justification part of the budget template and explain the different services and cost per service.

Who can be a mentor under Tourban?

Everybody who fulfils the minimum criteria established by the call for mentors can apply and if admitted will be included into the "pool of mentors". More details can be found in the [call for mentors](#). Tourban project



admits mentors to a general database (the “pool”), the final selection of mentors does however lie with the SMEs, who will select their preferred mentors from the pool.

Do I have to apply with a mentor already chosen?

No, the mentor will be chosen once the proposal has been selected. Tourban has identified a pool of mentors for the Acceleration Programme from which the SME can choose.

In case you have an expert who could be part of that pool, we suggest you recommend them to apply to our [open call for mentors](#).

What do you mean by software development?

By software development we refer to any sort of service linked to IT development. Be aware that the purchase of IT hardware or infrastructure is not eligible.

Could ONE application refer to more than ONE compulsory topic or it needs to be ONLY ONE?

It must refer to AT LEAST ONE topic, wherefore it can refer to ONE single or several different topics.

Could the Project be executed in the metropolitan area of Barcelona or is it required to apply to the city?

The project applies a broad conception of the “urban” environment of the city, wherefore projects can refer and be implemented in the metropolitan areas of the pilot cities. In the case of Barcelona and Dubrovnik applicant companies furthermore need to be formally registered in the metropolitan areas of Barcelona and Dubrovnik.

Are there some requirements regarding the certification schemes (e.g. do they need to be GSTC recognised)?

There are no formal requirements for certification schemes. The certificate therefore does not have to be GSTC recognised. The project does however recommend certificates with a high standard, which might include GSTC recognition. For an overview of available certificates, we recommend reviewing the [inventory of certificates made by Tourban project](#). Note that also local, regional and national certificates are eligible.

Can DMOs also apply?

No, unless they comply with the following criteria: Are considered an SME according to the EU recommendation 2003/361 and fall under one of the following NACE codes according to their registration:

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

For Germany - is it only the area of Kiel or are organisations from all around the country eligible?



Formally companies from all of Germany are eligible (the same counts for Estonia, the Netherlands, Denmark, Hungary). Consider however that Tourban project targets urban challenges in the selected pilot cities (Kiel, Tallinn, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Budapest, Barcelona and Dubrovnik), wherefore you must credibly justify the relevance of your project to the urban tourism challenges of one of those cities. In the case of Germany for the urban area of Kiel.

When deciding which projects to fund, will Tourban suggest a smaller contribution to specific projects, or will they only accept or decline the proposed budget?

This is described in section 6 of the Guidelines. One of the criteria for evaluation is cost-effectiveness, so depending on the recommendation of the Evaluators (based on the assessment of the activities and objectives and budget proposed), we might negotiate the budget of the proposed project and propose a lower budget for its implementation. This is however only the case if it is a recommendation from the evaluator because the cost-effectiveness of the project is not fully demonstrated.

Is the deadline for the actions to be implemented December 2022?

Grant Agreements between Tourban and awarded SMEs should be signed by the end of 2021 to start the action in the very beginning of January 2022. So yes, tentatively the end of the action will be end of December 2022. In any case the duration of project implementation cannot exceed 12 months.

Can you please describe the Design Thinking Lab?

This activity is described in page 7 of the Guidelines. It is a one-day event, celebrated in Barcelona.

The eligibility criteria of the call state that a company can “not be recipient of State Aid through other grants or financing support from national governments or European Union in excess of 200.000€” (de minimis rule). We are a Spanish company and have received ICOs during the Covid crisis. Does this mean that we cannot apply for the Sustainable Urban Tourism Acceleration Programme?

The de minimis rule determines that companies can only receive public financial support up to a maximum of 200.000 € over a three-year period in order for it to be exempt of state aid control. Effectively this means that you cannot receive support exceeding this amount. In the case of ICOs (credits backed by the “Instituto de Crédito Oficial” = Official Credit Institute) the support you have received is not a subsidy but a credit. In terms of de minimis, only the difference in interest rates in between the ICO and markets rates (= corresponding to the support you have been granted) is taken into account. This means that if, according to this calculation, the total financial support you have received in the last 3 years does not exceed 200.000 €, you are perfectly eligible for the Sustainable Urban Tourism Acceleration Programme.

If our company has been recipient of public aid to face the COVID-19 crisis, is this aid falling under the de minimis rule?

Please note that the European Commission has recently published the *Temporary Framework for State aid measures to support the economy in the current COVID-19 outbreak* (see [Communication](#), notably point 22) stating that these specific aids have a threshold of maximum 800.000 € as long as the aid was granted no later than 31 December 2020.

In summary:



- The aid under the Temporary Framework can be cumulated notably with de minimis aid. Provided the rules under the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) and under the different de minimis Regulations are respected, the temporary aid measures covered by this Communication may be cumulated in line with the cumulation rules set out in the GBER and in the different de minimis Regulations, including Regulation (EU) No 1407/20135 .
- This means that the EUR 800 000 direct grant may be cumulated with the EUR 200 000 de minimis support, to provide a total of EUR 1 million of support per undertaking, provided that both set of State aid rules are respected.
- Similarly EUR 100 000 direct grant allowance may be cumulated with the EUR 25 000 de minimis support in the agriculture sector. The cumulation of aid applies for a limited period since the Temporary Framework is only in place until the end of 2020. Undertakings in difficulty are eligible to aid granted under the Temporary Framework, as long as they were not in difficulty on 31 December 2019.

Is VAT an eligible cost?

It depends. If your company is entitled to deduct VAT (following your national fiscal regulations), then VAT is not a cost for your company and therefore you can't include VAT costs in your budget.

On the contrary, if your company is not entitled to deduct VAT, this means that VAT is a cost for you and in this case, you must include it when building your budget.

Who can I contact in my country if I need more information?

For general questions please contact: info@blinkbcn.com (Marta Rojas & Jordi Escribà)

You can also reach out to the below listed people through the Tourban community via chat or post your question directly to the community.

Germany

<p>Ulf Sonntag NIT - Institut für Tourismus- und Bäderforschung in Nordeuropa GmbH +49 (0) 431 666 567 14 ulf.sonntag@nit-kiel.de</p>	<p>Bente Grimm NIT - Institut für Tourismus- und Bäderforschung in Nordeuropa GmbH Tel.: +49 (0) 431 666 5670 bente.grimm@nit-kiel.de</p>
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Denmark

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Estonia

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Spain

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Hungarian Hospitality Employers' Association

btorma@vimosz.org**Does the limit of characters in the Application Form include empty spaces?**

Yes, the limit includes any type of characters, including empty spaces.