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**DigAccess**  
**AGROTOURISM**

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Digital Transition for accessible agrotourism

Action 101167990

**CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

**FOR SOCIAL ECONOMY**

**ENABLING ORGANISATIONS**

**TO PARTICIPATE IN A CAPACITY BUILDING**

**PROGRAM ON DIGITAL SOLUTIONS FOR**

**ACCESSIBILITY**

**FOR RURAL TOURISM SOCIAL ENTERPRISES**

### **Disclaimer**

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## 1. GLOSSARY AND DEFINITIONS

**Agrotourism and rural tourism businesses:** enterprises offering hospitality, catering and outdoor activities in rural areas. As in some countries agrotourism is legally bound to agricultural enterprises, thus narrowing the potential target group, in the project DigAccess the terms agrotourism and rural tourism are to be considered as synonyms.

**SEs:** Social Economy Enterprises (SEs) as defined by the European Commission<sup>1</sup>.

**Enabling Organisations (EO):** An EO in the tourism sector in rural areas is, among others a group or entity that supports the development of the relevant SMEs by providing resources, training, advocacy, and networking. These organizations can be governmental or non-governmental and work to foster a supportive ecosystem for sustainable and socially responsible agrotourism and generally tourism in rural areas, often at local, regional, and national levels.

**SMEs in social economy:** Social economy in the tourism sector in rural areas refers to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and cooperatives that blend agricultural and other relevant practices with tourism while prioritizing social objectives like sustainability, community development, and inclusion. These SMEs often operate as non-profit cooperatives, social enterprises, or clusters, reinvesting profits to support local employment, preserve cultural heritage, and promote sustainable practices. Social economy entities, within the tourism sector in rural areas, serve local economies, empower small producers, and provide tourists with authentic experiences connected to local culture and agriculture.<sup>1</sup>

A Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise is considered as such if coherent with the Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC and the SME user guide.<sup>2</sup>

A social economy enterprise is an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an

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<sup>1</sup>[https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/social-economy-eu/social-enterprises\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/social-economy-eu/social-enterprises_en)

<sup>2</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32003H0361>

entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives. It is managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involves employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities.

The Commission uses the term 'social economy enterprise' to cover the following types of business:

- Those, for who the social or societal objective of the common good is the reason for the commercial activity, often in the form of a high level of social innovation;
- Those, whose profits are mainly reinvested to achieve this social objective;

Those, where the method of organisation or the ownership system reflects the enterprise's mission, using democratic or participatory principles or focusing on social justice.

**Implementing partner:** DigAccess project partner issuing the call at national level and coordinating the participation of selected applicants.

**Applicant:** an EO who submits the request to participate in the capacity building program for SMEs.

## 2. AIMS OF THE CALL – DIGITAL SOLUTIONS FOR ACCESSIBILITY CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

This **call for expression of interest** is addressed to **Social Economy Enabling Organisations (EOs)** that are willing to participate in a **capacity-building and technical assistance programme**. This programme focuses on digital solutions to improve the accessibility of facilities in the Rural and Agro-tourism sectors (Social Economy SMEs).

The primary goal of the programme is to provide participating EOs with the **knowledge, tools and support** they require to effectively assist rural tourism social economy SMEs in improving their activities, strengthening their online presence, and optimising the hosting experience for **visitors with disabilities**. By leveraging the opportunities offered by modern digital technologies, EOs will be able to guide tourism facilities toward more inclusive practices. This will also support the digital transition of Social Economy SMEs.

Applicants to this Call can enrol in the program by sending the application form (see 6. SUBMISSION PROCESS) and will be selected according to the criteria specified in the call for expression of interest (see 7. EVALUATION PROCESS).

Applications may be submitted by individual EOs. They may also be submitted in a partnership of two EOs. These companies must be linked through a collaboration agreement.

The total number of EOs expected to be selected in the five participating countries (Greece, Italy, Portugal, Poland, and Cyprus) is at least 10.

Selected applicants will benefit from multiple opportunities across two different Phases.

In Phase 1, selected Eos will:

- participate in a three-day Capacity Building session;
- receive additional personalised support and training.

In Phase 2, the professionals who took part in the Capacity Building Session will:

- become part of a transnational network of accessibility and tourism experts and practitioners;
- participate as experts and trainers (Digital Mentors) during a four-month programme that includes support and training sessions for rural tourism SMEs and agrotourism businesses through the implementation of Individual Digital Development Plans towards accessibility (IDDP).

The capacity building programme's supporting scheme was constructed based on an analysis carried out on a sample of 100 tourism and hospitality enterprises, which enabled a Framework to be drawn up. The analysis produced an **'Innovation Outcomes Matrix'** illustrating several concrete solutions, categorised into five groups, that can be proposed, among others, to rural tourism SMEs. These solutions include training and mentoring activities, technical assistance, and referrals to service providers for more complex interventions.

### 3. ABOUT THE PROJECT

DigAccessAgrotourism is an EU funded project (COSME-SEED, Action 101167990) aimed at making the EU agrotourism and rural tourism sector more

inclusive, supporting both businesses and individuals with disabilities. The project fosters a sustainable, digital, and accessible rural tourism sector, ensuring equal participation for all. To do so, the project is guided by the following objectives:

- Map the needs of agrotourism organisations from the partner countries in terms of digitalisation and accessibility.
- Map the needs of 'enabling organisations' in the tourism sector from the partner countries in supporting their members with regard to digitalization and accessibility.
- Develop national capacity building, training, mentoring and advisory activities to support agrotourism organisations of the social economy to digitally upskill in technologies and data driven solutions for becoming more accessible.
- Develop transnational capacity building and training activities for supporting 'enabling organisations' to improve their capacity for guiding their agrotourism members and social entrepreneurs in digital transition towards digital social innovations in terms of becoming digitally more accessible.
- Involve operators into the project activities.

DigAccess-Agrotourism is implemented by a consortium of 7 partners:

- OIC Poland Foundation, PL (coordinator)
- EUROSUCCESS Consulting, CY
- Legacoop Emilia-Romagna, IT
- FENACERCI, PT
- Greek-Italian Chamber of Commerce, GR
- Cyprus Agrotourism Company, CY
- ARFIE, BE.

You can find all the details on the project website ([digaccess-agrotourism.eu](https://digaccess-agrotourism.eu)) and national partners' websites.

## 4. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

To be selected, applicants must fulfil the following requirements.

The applicant (and its co-applicant in case of a partnership agreement) must be:

1. a legal entity;
2. an Enabling Organisation (see glossary) that provides services, assistance and representation to Social Economy Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, as defined by the European Commission (see glossary).

3. The applicant (and co-applicants, in case of a partnership agreement) is established/registered (legal office) in one of the following countries:

- EU Member State;
- EEA countries and countries associated to the COSME part of the Single Market Programme or countries which are in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement and where the agreement enters into force before grant signature<sup>3</sup>.

4. The applicant is active in one of the countries of implementation of the project (Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal).

5. The applicant (and co-applicants, in case of a partnership agreement) is compliant with the following situations:

- Is not bankrupt or being wound up, is not having affairs administered by the courts, has not entered into an arrangement with creditors, has not suspended business activities, is not the subject of proceedings concerning those matters or is not in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations.
- Is in compliance with its obligation relating to the payment of social security contributions and the payment of taxes, in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which it is established.
- Is not subject to a conflict of interest in connection with the grant/with the project partners.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/smp/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation\\_smp\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/smp/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_smp_en.pdf)



- Applicants to the current call must confirm in their application form that they meet all eligibility criteria. It is mandatory for applicants to the call which underwent any changes in their legal status since being selected in the call to communicate these changes to the implementing partner, which is in charge of the support granted.

Applications submitted by a partnership agreement are eligible, however, an application cannot have more than one co-applicant.

For partnership agreements, the following additional requirements apply to the co-applicant:

1. Be an Enabling Organisation (see glossary);
2. Demonstrate a clear added value to the application;
3. Has a demonstrable longstanding collaboration with the lead applicant.

## 5. COMMITMENTS EXPECTED FROM THE SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Successful applicants are expected to commit at least two staff members to take part in the following activities:

- Take part in DigAccessAgrotourism Train-the-Trainer session. To be held in Bologna in January 2026, in groups of 9-10 people. The TtT sessions will last 3 days and encompass the following subjects:
  - Digital basics for the tourism sector
  - Digital accessibility: an inclusive online presence
  - Inclusive tourism: digital solutions for accessibility and the perspective of the end users.
  - Successful social enterprises in rural tourism: redefining business models.
  - Methodologies and tools for digital product & services development, including collaboration with IT providers.
- Participate in disseminating information about the project and the opportunities it offers to SMEs in the rural tourism and agritourism sectors, including among EO members, where possible.

- Participate in building and implementing individual digital development plans by providing mentoring and training activities based on the TtT content and existing skills, and by supporting training from other providers.
- Participate in demo days presenting the results of the implementation of the individual digital development plans
- Participate in monthly one-line meetings
- Facilitate technical assistance to SMEs through internal resources or by supporting other actors.
- Join an online collaborative platform and promote it among SMEs.
- Participate in monitoring of the implementation of the individual plans by the SMEs
- Participate in preparation of final reports summarizing the results of the implementation of the individual digital development plans

## 6. ADVANTAGES FORESEEN FOR THE SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Beyond the increased awareness and skills about accessibility and digital solutions for accessibility, the successful applicants will gain access to the following additional advantages.

### **In Phase 1:**

- Fully funded participation to the Train-the-Trainer sessions, including transport to and from the location of the sessions, accommodation and subsistence costs.
- Certification of the skills acquired issued and signed by the implementing partners.

**In Phase 2**, accessible only for professionals coming from the EOs participating in the Train-the-Trainer sessions:

- Remuneration based on experience and on the salary grid of each implementing partner for the participation in the organisation and delivery of individual accessibility and digital development plans (IDDP).
- Access to additional knowledge, experts and service providers through DigaccessAgrotourism online collaborative platform.

## 7. APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants must submit their application in one of the languages of the project, namely English, Polish, Portuguese, Greek or Italian from **1st of October 2025 to 29th of October 2025** by completing the application form available at this link. You can select your language at the top of the form.

Each applicant can submit only one application and will receive an acknowledgment email of the submission of the application.

Paper/printed versions submitted by post or other means will not be accepted. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit an application. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered. Moreover, no additions or changes to an application can be made after it has been submitted.

## 8. EVALUATION PROCESS

### **Phase 1: Evaluation of the Eligibility of the applications:**

All applications received by the closure of the call will be reviewed, according to the nationality of the applicants, by a three people committee established by the project partners in each country.

In the first phase, applications will be evaluated against the eligibility criteria described under '4.ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS'.

Please note that the following applications will be deemed ineligible:

- Submitted after the closure of the call;
- Submitted by an ineligible applicant;
- Completed in languages other than those indicated in section 7. Submission process.
- Failure to comply to the above mentioned eligibility criteria and/or from an applicant that is in a situation of exclusion.

### **Phase 2: Technical and substantive Evaluation:**

Only the eligible applications will move to the evaluation phase.

During this phase the implementing partner might request additional information.

All eligible applications will be reviewed against the following technical evaluation criteria:

- Membership and constituency of the Enabling Organisation.
- Real commitment and motivation of the applicant organisation towards supporting accessibility and digital solutions for accessibility in rural tourism and agrotourism;
- Existing internal capacities with respect to accessibility and/or digitalization;

Criteria	Score	Weight
Membership and organisation of the Enabling Organisation.	0 – 5	30%
Commitment and motivation of the applicant organisation towards supporting accessibility and digital solutions for accessibility in rural tourism and agrotourism;	0 – 5	30%
Existing internal capacities with respect to accessibility	0 – 5	20%
Existing internal capacities with respect to digitalization	0 – 5	20%

The Selection Committees will score the criteria on a scale from 0 to 5 (half-point scores may be given):

- **Fail (0):** The proposal fails to address the criterion, or it cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
- **Poor (1):** The criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
- **Fair (2):** The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
- **Good (3):** The proposal addresses the criterion well but there are a certain number of shortcomings.

- **Very good (4):** There is a small number of shortcomings but overall, the proposal addresses the criterion very well.
- **Excellent (5):** The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion with no or minor shortcomings.

The evaluation period, including the preliminary eligibility check and the technical evaluation, shall take max. 10 days, starting from the closing date of the call.

In the evaluation, a comparative advantage will be recognized to applications demonstrating that the EO:

- is working to address issues from an intersectional perspective;  
and/or
- promotes gender balance at all levels, including supervisory and managerial levels;  
and/or
- takes concrete actions towards inclusion of people with disabilities;  
and/or
- supports employment and entrepreneurship among the youth (18-35 years)

Applications will be evaluated by the project partners. If a conflict of interest for an evaluator is detected, another evaluator shall be nominated.

All applicants will be informed via email of the outcome of the evaluation process within 21 days from the closure of the call.

## 9. MODALITIES OF THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The training will be organized in two groups and within two fixed dates: 21st-23rd January 2026 or 27th-29th January 2026. Participants will be informed about their assigned session at a later stage of the recruitment process. Two additional days should be reserved for travel.

The project foresees financial support for the Social Economy Enabling Organisations participating to the Capacity Building Sessions (CBS) in Bologna in the form of Financial Support to Third Parties. This financial support is destined to cover part of the travel, accommodation and subsistence costs of two people per

Organisation participating to the CBS. Successful applicants selected under this Call for expression of interest, can receive financial support, in the form of reimbursement of travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses, depending on the distance they will need to travel to reach Bologna, where the 3 days CBS will be held, according to the table below. The financial support is provided if the participant from the selected EOs attends the whole activity and upon submission of an expenses report, accompanied by scanned copies of the proofs of payments. For travelling, greener modes of transport should always be favoured, when possible.

For accommodation the project partner organising the CBS, Legacoop-ER, will provide the option of pre-booked rooms in one hotel, at a negotiated rate.

For subsistence costs, the lunches, coffee breaks and one dinner will be provided by the organising partner and will not be included in the expenses to be reimbursed.

For travelling and accommodation, there will be no reimbursement for participants that come from less than 20km from Bologna.

Country of Origin of the Participant EO:	Maximum amount to be reimbursed:
Cyprus	1.163 EUR
Greece	1.010 EUR
Italy	688 EUR
Poland	1.010 EUR
Portugal	1.103 EUR

## 10. CALENDAR OF THE CALL

Calendar of the Call	
<b>Call</b>	Call for expression of interest for social economy Enabling Organizations, to participate in a capacity building

	program on digital solutions for accessibility for rural tourism enterprises.
<b>Eligible applicants</b>	European Enabling Organizations of the social economy. For all eligibility criteria, see section 4
<b>Publishing date</b>	1st October 2025
<b>Deadline to request clarifications</b>	15th October 2025
<b>Deadline for submission of applications</b>	29th October, 5pm CET
<b>Expected communication of results to applicants</b>	Within 21 days from the deadline for submission, i.e. before the 20th of November 2025
<b>Preparation and signature of the Agreements</b>	Within 30 days after the communication of approval of the application
<b>Start/end date of the expected engagement</b>	21st–23rd January 2026 or 27th–29th January 2026 – assigned session to be confirmed

## 11. FURTHER INFORMATION

To better understand the call, we invite all applicants to read about the project, objectives and activities on the project website (<https://www.digaccess-agrotourism.eu/en/about-us>).

To request clarifications on this call, please contact:  
[karolina.rzechula@oic.lublin.pl](mailto:karolina.rzechula@oic.lublin.pl)

## 12. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Consortium and all parties involved shall take all necessary measures to prevent or end any situation that could compromise the impartial and objective performance of the contract. Such conflict of interests could arise in particular as

a result of economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties, or any other relevant connection or shared interest.

Participation in this call is strictly forbidden to any applicants which, at the time of the present Call publication, have a direct or indirect control over any consortium partner.

All cases of potential conflicts of interest must be declared and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

### **13. PRIVACY POLICY**

Any personal data provided under this Call, in any of the documents or forms on the on-line platform, will be processed by each Project partner in compliance with article 13 of EU Regulation 2016/679 "Information to be provided where personal data are collected from the data subject".

### **14. COMPLAINTS, SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES AND APPLICABLE LAW**

This call shall be governed by the law of the country of the implementing partner.

Complaints about the selection process can be addressed to [sekretariat@oic.lublin.pl](mailto:sekretariat@oic.lublin.pl). In the object of the email, state "DigAccess - Complaint".

The parties shall endeavour to settle arising disputes amicably. If, and to the extent that, any such dispute, controversy or claim has not been settled amicably, the court of the nationality of the project partner shall have exclusive jurisdiction. Nothing in the agreement shall limit the parties' right to seek injunctive relief in any applicable competent court.

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