

a higisigin

Malta's 2024 Incentive Schemes Summary

ARE

6

Table of Contents

01

GROWTH

Application for Industrial Space Accelerate 2024 Business Development INVEST - Support for Initial Investment Projects MicroInvest Skills Development Rent Subsidy

02

EDUCATION

Get Qualified 2017-2024

03

EMPLOYMENT

Qualifying Employment in Innovation and Creativity

04

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Business START Start-up Finance

05

RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Eureka Instruments Exploring Research Grant Innovate - Innovation Aid for SMEs Patent Box Deduction Research & Development 06

SUSTAINABILITY

Green Mobility Scheme Smart & Sustainable Investment Grant



01 - Growth Schemes

Application for Industrial Space

This scheme is available for Small Business Activities

Summary

This scheme is available to small businesses (company/partnership/sole trader) employing less than 10 employees, in need of industrial space (operations, storage, offices, other) for the carrying on of their trading activities.

Target Applications

Small-scale businesses employing less than 10 employees.

Conditions

- No arrears with the Inland Revenue Department/ VAT Department/ Social Security Department; or
- Existence of a repayment agreement with relevant authority

Aid

Industrial Space of up to 300 sqm.

Application

Application Form as issued by Malta Enterprise, endorsing:

- Last three tax return
- Plan layout
- Bank reference
- Incorporation document / Partnership contract

Accelerate 2024

Summary

Accelerate supports undertakings in their initial 7 years in financing their participation in an Accelerator Programme recognised by Malta Enterprise.

This measure is intended for ventures with potential for growth, that have a viable business concept based on sound technical and scientific knowhow and that are in the process of developing the technology into a market ready offering.

Target Applications

- Registered businesses within the European Economic Area
- Businesses that do not have a material presence in Malta may only be supported in participating in an Accelerator Programme being held in Malta
- Established not earlier than 7 years from submission of application

Conditions

Engaged or plan to be engaged in one of the following activities:

- Manufacturing;
- Software development;
- Industrial services analogous to manufacturing;
- Health, Biotechnology, Pharmaceuticals and Life Sciences;
- Other economic activities which are enabled through knowledge and technology, and which have the potential to expand internationally as may be approved by Malta Enterprise

Exclusions

- Undertakings intending to carry out activities related to construction and real estate.
- Undertakings whose revenue or future revenue is generated directly from the outcome of games of chance

Aid

Grant up to Eur100,000

Eligible Costs

- Accelerator participation fees
- Travel and per diem
- Corporate Service Provider fees
- Rent of business premises in Malta
- Rent of plant, machinery and equipment

Application

Application deadline is 31st October 2030

Business Development

Summary

The Business Development Scheme aims to facilitate value-added projects, including new business initiatives, start-up, expansions and transformation activities that contribute to the regional development of Malta. Supported projects are expected to lead to new business opportunities, creation of skilled and highly-skilled employment, increased competitiveness or widening market reach.

Target Applications

Undertakings investing in one of the following eligible projects:

- Setting-up, expansion and modernisation of an eligible activity
- Environmental Actions
- Innovative New Business
- Facilitate Employment of Workers with Disabilities
- Collaborative Projects
- Upgrading of Facilities (Industrial Sites and Hotels)
- Establishing and upgrading Artisanal Facilities
- Business RE-engineering and Digital Transformation
- Access to Markets and Certification

Conditions

- Applicants must not be defaulting on Income Tax, VAT and Social Security payments
- Applicants must be eligible to receive de minimis aid

Exclusions

Applicants generating revenues, directly or indirectly, from:

- Gambling activities
- ▶ The sale of real estate as a business activity
- Wholesale or retail activities
- ▶ The provision of financial services.

This exclusion does not include technology providers who may generate revenue by servicing directly or indirectly enterprises engaged in the above activities.

Aid

- Cash grant or tax credit
- Amounting to 75% of eligible costs, capped at €300,000 over 3 years

Eligible Costs

- Wage Costs
- Lease and Rental of industrial and non-residential properties
- Shared industrial or business facilities
- Advisory Services
- Procurement of Tangible and Intangible Assets
- Digital Technologies
- Construction and related services of industrial sites, hotels and artisanal workshops
- Relocation of employees

Application

Application deadline is 30th September 2023

INVEST - Support for Initial Investment Projects

Summary

This measure is intended to sustain the regional industrial and economic development of Malta by facilitating initial investments.

Target Applications

- Undertakings investing in one of the following eligible SME and large enterprises (supporting regional industrial and economic development)
- Applicant operates from Malta and is incorporated in the European Union as a limited liability company, a partnership en nom collectif, en commandite or co-operative or similar set-up.

Conditions

- Qualifying activity (Manufacturing, Repair/Overhaul/ Maintenance, Industrial services, Information Technology, and furthermore)
- At least 25% financed through own resources/ external financing

Exclusions

- Defaulting on Income Tax, VAT and Social Security Payments (in total exceed € 1,000)
- Undertaking considered difficult
- Activities listed down in Art. 1 (2), (3), (4) and (5) of the General Block Exemption Regulation
- Being a research and knowledge-dissemination, public entity

Aid

- Tax credits
- Cash grants
- Loan Interest Rate Subsidies
- Loan Guarantees (for SMEs only) (dependent on the size and the location of the project)

Eligible Costs

Eligible investments must result in one of the following:

- Setting up of a new establishment
- Extension of the capacity of an existing establishment
- Diversification of existing business
- Fundamental change in an overall process
- Acquisition of assets of an establishment that would have closed down

- Application deadline is 30th September 2026
- Project must have started after 1st January 2024.

MicroInvest

Summary

Aid in the form of tax credit to applicants investing in eligible costs.

Target Applications

Undertakings (including Start-ups, Family businesses and self-employed).

Conditions

- No more than 50 full time employees but at least 1 as at time of application
- ► Turnover or annual balance sheet did not exceed € 10 Million
- Should be registered with the VAT Department (unless exempted)
- Costs must be incurred between 1st January & 31st December
- Maximum amount stated in the de minimis regulation not be exceeded

Exclusions

- Activities included in the de minimis Regulation
- If applied for investment aid measures (i.e. Investment Aid Tax Credits)

Aid

- Tax credit (45% of eligible costs and additional bonus of 20% for undertakings operating from Gozo)
- Capped to € 50,000 over any period of 3 consecutive fiscal years (increased to € 70,000 if operating in Gozo, is classified as a family business or is female-owned)

Eligible Costs

- Increase in wage costs
- Furnishing and refurbishing of business premises
- Investment costs
- Motor vehicle costs
- Certificate costs

Application

One application per calendar year including costs incurred during the previous year.

Skills Development

Summary

Through the Skills Development scheme business undertakings may be supported to provide training with the scope of developing and updating the skills and knowledge of their workforce, thus aiding them to perform more effectively.

Target Applications

- Registered undertaking (including self-employed) carrying out a qualifying economic activity in Malta. Such qualifying activities include manufacturing activities.
- Undertakings providing qualifying training, such as training that leads to the acquisition of skills, know how or knowledge directly related to the business operations of the applicant and the development of the current and future function of the trainees within the organisation

Conditions

- Registered undertakings (including self-employed) carrying out a qualifying economic activity in Malta
- Applicants must not be defaulting on Income Tax, VAT and Social Security payments
- Applicants must not be considered as Undertakings in Difficulty

Exclusions

Training focusing on corporate culture/values/ organisational behaviour is not applicable.

Aid

- Cash grants
- Tax credits (dependent on size) Or a combination of both

Eligible Costs

- Wage costs of trainees, covering direct contact hours during which the trainer and trainee are interacting as part of an approved training programme, whether this is delivered physically or online
- Wage costs of internal trainers, covering direct contact hours during which the trainer is delivering the training irrespective of whether the training is delivered physically or online

Application

When submitting the claim, the beneficiary should submit all the documentation as required in the claim form provided by the Corporation which shall include:

- Attendance sheets (or time sheets as applicable) for each training module signed by the trainee and the trainer.
- Copies of certificates issued to trainees confirming participation in the training programme and achievement of the training outcomes

Rent Subsidy

Summary

This measure is intended to support businesses engaged in industrial activities, that require industrial space for:

- starting a new business
- expanding or diversifying operations
- optimising supply chains

The support subsidises rental of private industrial premises required for long term development strategies and short-term temporary rentals to address specific requirements.

Target Applications

Undertakings engaged in the following activities:

- Manufacturing
- Artisanal Activities (NACE 90.3)
- Industrial Packaging
- Maintenance and repair of motor vehicles
- ▶ Repair of machinery & electrical equipment
- Warehousing and logistics of activities incidental to the above activities

Exclusions

The support shall not be awarded in respect to the renting of:

- Any property owned by an undertaking, legal person or group of legal persons, that are related to the applicant;
- b) public property where the rent charged is below market rates;
- c) Showrooms, display areas, customer handling areas and similar areas.

Conditions

To be considered for support the applicant must meet all the criteria established below:

- a) The applicant must not have any dues related to VAT, Income Tax, & Social Security Contributions;
- b) The applicant must not be engaged in activities specifically excluded under the de minimis Regulation;
- c) The applicant must at the point of application be employing less than 250 persons on a fulltime basis;
- d) The applicant must not be subject to collective insolvency proceedings or must not fulfil any criteria under Maltese law for being placed in collective insolvency proceedings at the request of its creditors

Aid

The support will cover fifty percent (50%) of the rental costs up to a maximum of fifty-thousand-euro (\leq 50,000) per annum covering the first three (3) years of a supported rental agreement.

Eligible Costs

Eligible costs shall only include the rental of the required space and must exclude tax and other services (such as cleaning, reception and security services) that may be included with the rental agreement.

Application

Applicants will be required to provide a draft copy of the rental agreement (if the agreement is still to be signed) or a copy of the original rental agreement for the premises on which the support is requested.

02 - Education



Get Qualified 2017-2024

Summary

GET QUALIFIED is an initiative that supports the personal development of individuals for the achievement of qualifications and certifications required by industry. The incentive is applicable to individuals following a course of studies leading to a certification, diploma, degree or post-graduate degree courses.

Target Applications

University students or other educational services.

Conditions

Courses must be eligible (or case by case evaluation).

Exclusions

- Costs of seminars or conferences
- SEC/MATSEC examinations
- ECDL core
- ECDL Advanced

Aid

- ► Tax credit (recovering 70% of the costs incurred)
- Capping applies depending on the MQF Level

Eligible Costs

- ► Fees paid by the individual to the university, institution or other entity recognised by the Malta Enterprise for the training and educational services leading to the approved qualification.
- Fees for sitting for examinations required to achieve the approved qualification.
- List of eligible courses: <u>https://getqualified.maltaenterprise.com/Courses</u> <u>/Index</u>

Application

When submitting the claim, the beneficiary should submit all the documentation as required in the claim form provided by the Corporation which shall include:

- Attendance sheets (or time sheets as applicable) for each training module signed by the trainee and the trainer.
- Copies of certificates issued to trainees confirming participation in the training programme and achievement of the training outcomes



03 - Employment schemes

Qualifying Employment in Innovation and Creativity (Personal Tax)

Summary

This measure facilitates employment of non-residents in roles which are currently not addressed by the local labour market by temporarily easing the tax expenses incurred by such individuals through a fiscal incentive.

Target Applications

Undertakings employing people in a role directly engaged in carrying out, or management of research, development, design, analytical or innovation activities.

Conditions

Undertakings must employ non-Maltese resident people conducting industrial research, experimental development, product development, product or process innovation, undertaking systematic use of data using techniques for the creation of new knowledge, or mathematical synthesis.

Exclusions

- Individuals domiciled in Malta
- Individuals having benefitted from deductions available to investment services expatriates
- Individuals who fully disclose employment income as chargeable to tax in Malta

Aid

15% tax rate for a consecutive period of up to 4 years (additional application for 5 more years).

Eligible Costs

Not applicable.

Application

Applicants are required to use the official application issued by the respective body.

04 - Entrepreneurship Schemes



Business START

Summary

Business Start provides early seed funding for small start-ups that have an economically feasible business concept to further develop their business proposal prior to seeking further funding or third-party equity.

Target Applications

Small Start-ups in the development of a venture to be engaged in:

- Manufacturing;
- Software development;
- Industrial services analogous to manufacturing;
- Health, Biotechnology, Pharmaceuticals and Life Sciences.
- Other innovative economic activities which are enabled through knowledge and technology providing services or products which are currently not readily available, or which shall be provided through a process which is novel.

Legal entity can be in the form of self-employed, cooperative or limited liability company.

Conditions

- Unlisted small enterprise
- Less than 50 FTE employees as at date of application.
- ► Have an annual turnover OR balance sheet total of less than €10million.
- Key persons must have experience/ knowledge in the operative fields

Exclusions

- Activities listed in Article 1 (2), (3), (4) and (5) of the Commission Regulation (where applicable).
- Listed enterprises
- Enterprises which are not 'small'.
- Applicants controlled by owners of:
 - a) existing businesses or other undertakings that are operative or have interests that exceed 25% in other undertakings in the same or related sector.
 - b) an undertaking operative in the same or related sector that had closed down in the twelve (12) months preceding their establishment date.

Aid

Grant up to € 10,000 (in tranches).

Eligible Costs

Not applicable.

- Application not later than 30 Oct. 2026
- Requests for support to be submitted within 36 months from the date of establishment.
- Applicant to still qualify as a 'small start-up' on the date of submission of application

START-UP Finance

Summary

Start-up Finance aims to support Small Start-up Undertakings that demonstrate a viable business concept and show commitment to expand and further develop their economic activity.

Target Applications

Small start-ups at various stages in their development process.

Conditions

- 'Insert' / 'Pictures' from the top menu ribbon. Less than 50 full time employees and annual turnover or an annual balance sheet not exceed € 10 Million (links with other undertakings must meet the criteria)
- Not listed on stock exchanges
- Must undertake specific eligible activities (details mentioned in the guidelines), which activities include manufacturing, health, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and life sciences

Exclusions

Engagements in real estate, gambling, wholesale or retail trade of goods or services to which the eligible undertaking has no added value in the carrying out of his economic activity.

Aid

Repayable advance (support between \in 500,000 and \in 1.5 Million) with a premium of 2% above the ECB's base rate and a minimum of 10% pre-tax-profit per annum must be repaid.

Eligible Costs

Not applicable.

Application

In order for a start-up undertaking to be considered for support, the applicant shall be required to submit the full application form within sixty (60) months from the date of registration.

05 - Research and Innovation Schemes



EUREKA Instruments

Summary

EUREKA supports the development of rapidly marketable innovative products, processes and services across all technological sectors through collaborative Industrial Research or Experimental Development projects up to 36 months in duration involving partners from Malta and other EUREKA countries.

Target Applications

- Entities of rapidly marketable innovative products
- Processes and services across all technological sectors through collaborative Industrial Research or Experimental Development

Conditions

- Network Projects: at least 1 independent participant from another EUREKA country is required to join
- Submitting a R&D Pre-proposal

Exclusions

- Undertakings in difficulty
- Activities listed down in Art. 1 (2), (3), (4) and (5) of the General Block Exemption Regulation
- Research and knowledge-dissemination organisations

Aid

Innowide: grant of € 60,000.

Eligible Costs

Not applicable.

- Different applications for the different programs
- Different calls per year
- Malta participants through Research & Development

Exploring Research Grant

Summary

The scope of Exploring Research Grant is to support businesses in planning better their R&D initiatives, with the aim of achieving a comprehensive feasibility study.

Such feasibility study could form the basis of an application for support through other measures offered by Malta Enterprise to carry out R&D projects.

Target Applications

Limited liability companies, partnerships and cooperatives undertaking a Feasibility Study (establishing the technical, operational and commercial risks).

Conditions

- Feasibility Study (identifying the technical, operational and commercial risks, needed resources)
- Applicant must not be defaulting on Income Tax, VAT and Social Security Payments
- Applicant must not be considered as an 'undertaking in difficulty'

Exclusions

- Undertakings whose activities are listed down in Art. 1 (2), (3), (4) and (5) of the General Block Exemption Regulation
- Undertakings that are a research and knowledgedissemination organisation
- Public entities
- Undertakings that are subject to an outstanding recovery order following a previous Commission decision declaring an aid granted by Malta illegal and incompatible with the internal market

Aid

Cash grant up to € 100,000 capped at:

- 50% of eligible costs for large undertakings;
- 60% of eligible costs for medium-sized undertakings;
- ▶ 70% of eligible costs for small undertakings.

Eligible Costs

- Wage costs
- Contractual research, technical knowledge, and patents
- Other operating expenses

- Application not later than 30th October 2026
- First contact Business First
- Submitting the complete application prior to the start of the project (between Jan 2024 and Oct 2026), with a commitment to implement and finalise the profit within 52 weeks of commencement date

Innovate - Innovation Aid for SMEs

Summary

Innovate aims to support SMEs in carrying out projects leading to product, process and organisational innovation through collaboration with Research & Knowledge-dissemination organisation or through innovation advisory services through funding for the secondment of Highly Qualified Personnel, and access to innovation advisory and support services.

Target Applications

SME with scope for growth in collaboration with Research & Knowledge-dissemination organisations.

Conditions

- Presentation of Business plan
- Applicant business is established less than 5 years prior to application submission, or
- Applicant business employs less than 5 full time employees at time of application

Exclusions

- Applicants defaulting on Income Tax, VAT and Social Security payments
- Applicants considered Undertakings in Difficulty

Aid

- ▶ Grant up to 50% of the costs
- Capped at € 250,000

Eligible Costs

- Wage Costs of highly qualified personnel seconded from a Research and knowledge-dissemination organisation
- Innovation advisory services
- Innovation support services

- ► Application deadline is 30th October 2026
- Application to be submitted prior to the start of works

Patent Box Deduction

Summary

The Patent Box Deduction Rules, 2019 establishes a fiscal regime for income arising from patents, similar intellectual property (IP) Rights and copyrighted software. The rules additionally provide that small companies may utilise the patent box rules on income from any intellectual property based on an invention that could be patented.

A taxpayer qualifying for the Patent Box deduction will be entitled to deduct a percentage of its income from taxable income. This deduction will be adjusted depending on the percentage resulting from dividing the qualifying IP expenditure by the total expenditure related to the particular IP.

Target Applications

The deduction allowable under the patent box regime is linked to real and substantial R&D activity carried out by the person in generating the IP.

The Qualifying IP Expenditure shall consist of expenditure incurred directly by the beneficiary for or in the creation, development, improvement or protection of the qualifying IP and expenditure incurred by the beneficiary for activities related to the creation, development, improvement and protection of the qualifying IP subcontracted to persons not related to the beneficiary.

Conditions

The Costs associated to the qualifying asset include personnel costs, material costs used for particular research project, and costs incurred in relation with plant, machinery and equipment.

Exclusions

Not applicable.

Aid

Any person incurring qualifying IP expenditure may claim a deduction which may reduce the chargeable income form qualifying IP by up to 95%.

Eligible Costs

Patent box regime may be claimed on income arising from patents, similar intellectual property (IP) Rights and copyrighted software.

Application

Must include documentation confirming the research activity.

Research and Development

Summary

Support measure in favour of enterprises involved in Industrial Research and Experimental Development activities, leading towards the development of innovative products and solutions.

Target Applications

- Undertakings that need support for Industrial Research and Experimental Development activities
- Legal entity can be in the form of partnership, cooperative or limited liability company.

Conditions

Must be in good standing in terms of Income Tax, VAT and Social Security Payments.

Exclusions

- Undertakings in difficulty
- Undertakings conducting activities listed down in Art. 1 (2), (3), (4) and (5) of the General Block Exemption Regulation
- Research and knowledge dissemination organisations

Aid

- Cash grants, tax credits or combination of both.
- Calculated as percentage of the cost incurred, dependent of type of research and size.
- ► 50-80% of the eligible costs for industrial research and 25-70% of the eligible costs for experimental development, depending on size of the applicant and satisfaction of additional criteria.

Eligible Costs

- Personnel costs
- Instruments and equipment
- Contractual research, technical knowledge and patents
- Land and buildings
- Other operating expenses

Application

Application must include:

- A description of the project
- Estimated project start and end date
- Location/s where the project is to be implemented
- Breakdown of budgeted expenditure
- Project plan



06 - Sustainability Schemes

Green Mobility Scheme

Summary

The Green Mobility Scheme shall support the transition to more sustainable transportation by accelerating the uptake of electric vehicles used in business for the transportation of goods and people, by supporting investment in recharging infrastructure required for vehicles which are an integral part of a business activity.

The scheme shall also support leasing of clean or zero-emission vehicles.

Target Applications

Business registered with the Malta Business Registry requiring support on investment in charging infrastructure within own commercial premises for vehicles which are an integral part of a business activity.

Conditions

Applicants must employ at least 5 full time employees at the time of application.

Exclusions

- Applicants defaulting on Income Tax, VAT and Social Security payments
- Applicants considered Undertakings in Difficulty

Aid

- Interest Rate Subsidy (on loans required for investing in Charging Infrastructure)
- Tax Credits

Eligible Costs

- Investment in Charging Infrastructure up to 50% of eligible costs including construction, installation, upgrade or extension of recharging or refuelling infrastructure
- Lease of Commercial Vehicles up to 60% of the extra cost of leasing a clean/zero emission vehicle as opposed to a combustion fuel vehicle. The aid may cover up to 36 months lease.

- Application deadline is 30th September 2026
- Projects should wait for the Approval of the Corporation before Start of Works occurs

Smart & Sustainable Investment Grant

Summary

The Smart and Sustainable Investment Grant provides business funding to support investments that lead to more sustainable processes. These investments are expected to enhance the competitiveness of the enterprises through the optimisation of the use of resources in their activities.

Target Applications

Undertakings investing in the following activities:

- Waste Minimisation
- Sustainable Materials
- Energy Efficiency
- Water Efficiency
- Sustainable Digitisation

Conditions

- Limited liability companies registered with the Malta Business Register, partnerships or selfemployed
- Must operate from licenced commercial premises
- ▶ Planning an investment project of at least €10,000, having the aim to achieve sustainability, improved environmental performance or digitisation leading to growth potential
- Employ at least one full time employee registered with Jobsplus

Exclusions

- Undertakings engaged in activities specifically excluded under the de minimis Regulation
- Applicants that are defaulting on Income Tax, VAT or Social Security Contribution payments

Aid

Cash grant, equal to 50% of eligible expenditure up to \pounds 100,000 per project.

Eligible Costs

The Smart and Sustainable Investment Grant may support investments and modifications in plant, machinery, equipment and technologies that lead to a quantifiable reduction in CO2 emissions of at least ten percent (10%) (directly in relation to the investment). The CO2 savings must be clearly substantiated through the submission of a carbon footprint report compiled by a warranted engineer or competent person as may be acceptable to the Corporation.

Application

When applying, the applicant will be required to provide full details and costs to be incurred. The application requires that a technical analysis by a competent person (such as an engineer) on the environmental and energy savings is submitted (on a template provided by the Corporation) quantifying the gains to be achieved through the project. The application should also include a report on the current carbon footprint, and the forecast reduction in CO2 emissions following the completion of the project

Key Contacts

Contact our experts



Sara Farrugia

Direct Tax Manager

Tel. +356 2342 4267 Sara.Farrugia@bdo.com.mt

<u>Bio</u>



Luca Mizzi

Direct Tax Supervisor

Tel. +356 2342 4118 Luca.mizzi@bdo.com.mt

<u>Bio</u>

For more information:

BDO MALTA Triq it-Torri Msida MSD 1824 Malta Tel: +356 2342 4000 info@bdo.com.mt This publication has been carefully prepared, but it has been written in general terms and should be seen as containing broad statements only. This publication should not be used or relied upon to cover specific situations and you should not act, or refrain from acting, upon the information contained in this publication without obtaining specific professional advice. Please contact BDO Malta to discuss these matters in the context of your particular circumstances. BDO Malta, its partners, employees and agents do not accept or assume any responsibility or duty of care in respect of any use of or reliance on this publication, and will deny any liability for any loss arising from any action taken or not taken or decision made by anyone in reliance on this publication or any part of it. Any use of this publication or reliance on it for any purpose or in any context is therefore at your own risk, without any right of recourse against BDO Malta or any of its partner, employees or agents.

BDO Malta, a Maltese civil partnership, is a member of BDO International Limited, a UK company limited by guarantee, and forms part of the international BDO network of independent member firms.

 $\ensuremath{\mathsf{BDO}}$ is the brand name for the $\ensuremath{\mathsf{BDO}}$ network and for each of the $\ensuremath{\mathsf{BDO}}$ Member Firms.

Copyright $\ensuremath{\mathbb{C}}$ 2024 BDO Malta. All rights reserved. Published in Malta.

www.bdo.com.mt

