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the European Union



**Supporting recovery and business transformation of lighting & furniture
SMEs for the Europe Industry of Tomorrow**

1st OPEN CALL FOR BUSINESS DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS

Applicant guide

v. 27.03.2023

Please note that this applicant guide may be used for information purposes only. The information given in this guide is subject to changes. Proposals will have to be submitted using the online application form provided at https://clustersubmissionplatform.eu/eurocluster_post/business-digital-transformation-projects-1st-open-call/



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About SILEO project

SILEO Eurocluster project is co-financed by the Single Market Programme (SMP/COSME Pillar) of the European Union. SILEO gathers seven key lighting and furniture clusters from Austria, France, Italy, Romania and Spain.

COVID-19 has shown that resilience matters and laid bare the ‘resilience divide’ between small and large firms. SILEO Consortium will support the European Small and Medium-sized Enterprises - SMEs of lighting-furniture sector to recover fully from the crisis, become more resilient and better prepared for the digital and circular transition needs and challenges. **SILEO Eurocluster project will help the European lighting & furniture SMEs to be pro-active actors of this transition.**

SILEO Consortium aspire to capture all the digitalisation potential for the furniture and lighting SMEs with a concerted effort channelled through an open and inclusive ecosystem for innovation and technology business upgrading with accompanying business support measures including expert consultancy, business resilience building guidance, reinforced by direct financial support schemes and talent placement service to help companies attract talents.

The project proposes **direct financial funding scheme through financial support to third parties** (cascade funding), joint talent placement services and internationalization actions to accelerate the recovery of lighting and furniture SMEs, support them in becoming more resilient to future shocks, better prepared for disruptions in supply and value chains, greener in business operations and stronger connected to technology ecosystems through strategic partnering.

SILEO CONSORTIUM		
 European Lighting Cluster Alliance	1. ELCA European Lighting Cluster Alliance	Italy
 CLUSTER FRANCE	2. Cluster Lumière	France
 C I C A T	3. CICAT Lighting Cluster	Spain
 LUCE IN VENETO	4. Rete di Imprese Luce in Veneto	Italy
 business upper austria B I C BUILDING INNOVATION CLUSTER	5. Business Upper Austria - OÖ. Wirtschaftsagentur GmbH (BIZUP) Building Innovation Cluster (BIC)	Austria
 TRANSYLVANIAN FURNITURE CLUSTER	6. TFC Transylvanian Furniture Cluster	Romania
 CLUSTER FVG LEGNO ARREDO CASA	7. Cluster Legno, Arredo e Sistema Casa FVG	Italy



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PROJECT FACTS:

Project Acronym:	SILEO
Project Title:	Supporting recovery and business transformation of lighting & furniture SMEs for the Europe Industry of Tomorrow
Project Reference:	Grant Agreement n° 101074564
Call Identifier:	SMP-COSME-2021-CLUSTER
Project duration:	36 months (01.09.2022 – 31.08.2025)
Project budget:	1.438.835,42 EUR 1.050.000,00 EUR will directly benefit lighting and furniture SMEs in the form of financial support (to third parties)/ lump sums / prizes
Website:	https://clustercollaboration.eu/eu-cluster-partnerships/euroclusters/sileo SILEO Open Calls Application portal https://clustersubmissionplatform.eu/eurocluster-calls/

Outlook of SILEO Open Calls for funding support

The SILEO Consortium envisaged 5 typologies of the Financial Support to Third Parties - FSTP to be activated through open calls for the cascade funding, during the project course. The SILEO budget for the FSTP (financial support) open calls is 1.050.000,00 EUR.

The following financial support schemes for lighting and furniture SMEs are planned:

- 1. SILEO Hack Day Travel Support for lighting & furniture SMEs** (financial support through lump sum)

Two 1-day international Hackathons “*SILEO Tech challenge - Hack Days to Drive Innovation in Lighting & Furniture*” - will be organised by Rete di Imprese Luce in Veneto and Transylvanian Furniture Cluster in Italy and Romania. To help maturation of ideas and investment projects, SILEO Consortium will support lighting and furniture SMEs participation to the project hackathon events and to help them taking active part in the match-making with technology providers with the SILEO Hack Day Travel Support.

Two open calls envisaged, one per hackathon event. 1st Call planned for May 2023, 2nd Call planned for 2024.
- 2. SILEO Business Digital Transformation Projects** (financial support through lump sum)

Financial support to SILEO Business digital transformation projects aims to facilitate collaboration of lighting and furniture SMEs with digital technology providers/facilitators and access to specific expert consultancies to boost business green and digital transition.

Two open calls envisaged. 1st Call planned for 17 April 2023; 2nd Call planned for January 2024.
- 3. SILEO Advance Technology Uptake Projects** (financial support through lump sum)

Financial support through the SILEO Advance Technology Uptake Projects will be offered to support lighting and furniture SMEs in implementing / developing / integrating the new advanced technology(ies) into their business operations to support company resilience, digital and green transformation.

Two open calls envisaged. 1st Call planned for January 2024; 2nd Call planned for September 2024





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4. SILEO Talent Placement Projects (financial support through lump sum)

Financial support through the SILEO talent placement projects aims to help SMEs attract talents - young professionals to reinforce company digitalisation and circular economy transitions, and to facilitate the job placement of new graduates in the world of work.

Two open calls envisaged. 1st Call planned for November 2023; 2nd Call planned for April 2024

5. SILEO Best Company Story-telling video Contest – cash prizes

To support companies' visibility and international appeal, lighting and furniture SMEs will be invited to take part in the SILEO International Contest for the "Best SME Storytelling" video, showcasing their green and/or digital transition success story (-ies).

One open call planned for September 2024.

The **maximum amount to be granted per SME by SILEO project shall not exceed €60.000,00 in total** even in the case of multiple granted financial support scheme types (lump sums) to the SME during the lifetime of SILEO (Hack Day travel vouchers, Business Digital Transformation Projects, Advance Technology Uptake Projects, Talent Placement Projects). This applies for all the 4 calls (with 2 cut-off dates) in case a SME would apply to the subsequent calls as well. Best Company Story-telling Video Contest prizes received by SMEs do not count towards the €60.000 limit.

In case the number of expected applicants cannot be reached in the first SILEO Calls' cut-off dates, the relevant budget will be relocated to the second SILEO Call's cut-off dates or/and between the financial support schemes as well.

This document summarizes the main points of the 1st Open Call for Applicants, under the SILEO Business Digital Transformation Projects, which will be open from **17 April 2023 at 10:00 CET** (Brussels Time) with a deadline on **20 June 2023 at 17:00 CET** (Brussels Time).





SILEO 1° Open Call - SILEO Business Digital Transformation Projects

1. Objective of the SILEO 1st Open Call for Business Digital Transformation Projects

Within the SILEO project, co-funded by the co-financed by the Single Market Programme (SMP/COSME Pillar) of the European Union, we are launching an Open Call for Business Digital Transformation Projects.

This SILEO Call for Proposals is a unique opportunity for the European lighting and furniture SMEs to support their collaboration with technology providers and digitalisation experts and to facilitate SMEs access to the following expert services as:

- a) **General expert consultancy on company digitalisation processes** (*Which company processes might be digitised to improve its innovation and business potential?*)

OR

- b) **Specific expert consultancy on identified advanced technology(ies) and/or digitalisation process(es) to concretely explore its potential uptake at the company level**, its implementation procedure into the firm operations and scale of investment (*How the specific technology or digitalisation process can upgrade business growth, green and digital transformation, what is its cost-benefit, estimated investment plan and how the implementation of a new technology affects employees, will they need training, is the technology easy to operate, etc.?*)

OR

- c) **General expert consultancy for business transformation and market analysis:** support in market intelligence analysis including outline of the size of (new) market (segments) potentially accessible thanks to the company technological upgrading, product demand, trends, customers, competitors (*What are the new market prospects in view of the company digital upgrading? Considering that all markets are eligible: national, international, existing and brand new, single sector and cross-sector*)

Under 1st Open Call SILEO will select up to **25 projects aiming to access and implement expert consultancies through collaboration with technology providers and digitalisation experts gathered in the “SILEO Pool of Technology uptake facilitators”** with financial support from the SILEO consortium.

Projects must be submitted by an individual SME from lighting and/or furniture ecosystem with specified technology expert selected from the *SILEO Pool of technology uptake facilitators*.

Selected projects will have from 2 to 5 months to implement expert consultancies and receive:

- **Up to € 5.000 per 1 Business Digital Transformation Project.** *The “project” is understood as the consulting activities implemented by Applicant SME together with the selected “SILEO technology uptake facilitator”.*

A SME can apply only to one of the 3 expert services – a), b), or c) described above, and offered by SILEO.

The final number of projects selected under this 1st Open Call will depend on the overall quality of the proposals and available budget.





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2. Open Call timeline

The SILEO 1st Open Call for Business Digital Transformation Projects will be open from 17 April 2023 at 10:00 CET (Brussels Time) with a deadline on 20 June 2023 at 17:00 CET (Brussels Time).

Below please find a detailed Call timeline:

Call Pre-announcement	<i>30 March 2023 12:00 pm CET</i>
Call opening	<i>17 April 2023 10:00 pm CET</i>
Call closing	<i>20 June 2023 17:00 pm CET</i>
Information on Call evaluation results (decision information email)	<p>July 2023</p> <p><i>SILEO application portal</i> https://clustersubmissionplatform.eu/eurocluster_post/business-digital-transformation-projects-1st-open-call/</p> <p><i>SILEO ECCP profile</i> https://profile.clustercollaboration.eu/profile/cluster-partnership-initiative/7ada0e82-45e0-4fed-97bd-87ba498c54a3</p>
Signing of the Sub-Grant Agreement with the SILEO Consortium	<i>Within 3 weeks from the announcement of results (August 2023)</i>
Maximum amount per project	<i>5.000 EUR lump sum for project</i>
Estimated no. of projects to be funded under the 1st Open Call	<i>No. 25</i>
Participants	<i>A single SME from lighting and/or furniture industry</i>
Project duration	<i>Minimum 2 months – Maximum 5 months</i>
Expected starting date of the project	<i>01 September 2023</i>
Envisaged total budget for the 1st Open Call	<i>125.000,00 EUR</i>

3. SILEO Consortium Contact Points

For any enquiries regarding the SILEO project, please contact the project Coordinator Team:

Marta Krakowiak, ELCA, E-mail: marta.krakowiak@elcacluster.eu

Alberto Sozza, ELCA, E-mail: alberto.sozza@elcacluster.eu

For any other enquiry, please contact one of the **SILEO Helpdesk contacts** listed below.





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SILEO SMEs Helpdesk aims to the better support and preparation of the applications through the provision of information, clarifications and answers concerning the SILEO call. The Helpdesk will cover not only the basic issues of the SILEO call, but also specific issues.

SILEO SME HELPDESK			
Country	SILEO Partners	Representatives	E-mail
EU & SMP Associated countries	ELCA European Lighting Cluster Alliance	Marta Krakowiak	Marta.krakowiak@elcacluster.eu
France	Cluster Lumière	Mary Hadidi	m.hadidi@cluster-lumiere.com
Spain	CICAT Lighting Cluster	Andrea Padre Martinez	apadre@secartys.org
Italy – Veneto Region	Rete di Imprese Luce in veneto	Antonella Venza	antonella.venza@luceinveneto.com
Austria	Business Upper Austria - OÖ. Wirtschaftsagentur GmbH (BIZUP) - Building Innovation Cluster (BIC)	Isabella Mantello	isabella.mantello@biz-up.at
Romania	TFC Transylvanian Furniture Cluster	Andreea Toma	andreea.toma@hygia.ro
Italy – FVG Region	Cluster Legno, Arredo e Sistema Casa FVG	Caterina Pezzicar	caterina.pezzicar@clusterarredo.com

4. Eligibility Criteria

We will check the eligibility of all proposals submitted before the deadline via our online application form https://clustersubmissionplatform.eu/eurocluster_post/business-digital-transformation-projects-1st-open-call/.

All the eligibility criteria are listed in this Section of this Guide for Applicants. The projects that do not comply with those criteria will be excluded and marked as ineligible. We will check the eligibility criteria based on the information provided in your application during the whole evaluation process.

An SME already supported under SILEO 1st Open Call for Business Digital Transformation Projects cannot receive funding under 2nd Open Call for Business Digital Transformation Projects, thus it is not eligible to participate in the SILEO 2nd Open Call for Business Digital Transformation Projects.

An SME supported under SILEO 1st Open Call for Business Digital Transformation Projects can apply to participate to other SILEO Open Calls for funding support (Hack Day travel vouchers, Advance Technology Uptake Projects, Talent Placement Projects, and Best Company Story-telling Video Contest).

Under each specific open call, a SME can submit only one application.

The maximum amount to be granted per SME by SILEO project shall not exceed €60.000,00 in total even in the case of multiple granted financial support types (all SILEO Calls combined) to the SME during the lifetime of SILEO. This applies for the whole tenure of SILEO project.



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SMEs, who will not be granted with the SILEO financial support under this Call, can re-present their applications in the 2nd cut-off date (envisaged in December 2023). They can also apply to other SILEO Open Calls listed in above, if fulfilling the respective eligibility requirements.

4.1 Eligible Applicants

Geographical criteria

We are looking for project applications submitted by **a single Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)** [registered legal person] established in the **European Union member states associated to the Single Market Programme – COSME Pillar¹**, with particular focus on the following project partners' countries and regions:

- ✓ Italy – Veneto Region & Friuli Venezia Giulia Region
- ✓ France – Auvergne Rhône Alpes
- ✓ Spain - Catalunya Region
- ✓ Austria - Upper Austria
- ✓ Romania - North-West Region

The priority will be given to applications submitted by SMEs associated to the SILEO project clusters.

Moreover, **at least 10% of the supported SMEs must come from EU regions different from the countries of individual SILEO partners**. Specific attention will be paid to EU-13 countries (*Member states which joined the European Union in or after 2004*) and those EU regions with which the SILEO partners had no previous cooperation and will focus on engaging SMEs from regions with different levels of economic development.

SME definition

An SME will be considered as such if it complies with the European Commission's Recommendation 2003/361/EC. As a summary, the criteria defining an SME are:

- ✓ Headcount in Annual Work Unit (AWU) less than 250;
- ✓ Annual turnover less or equal to €50 million OR annual balance sheet total less or equal to €43 million.

Note that the figures of partners and linked enterprises should also be considered as stated in the [SME user guide](#). For detailed information check EU recommendation: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32003H0361>. SME self-assessment questionnaire: https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/SME-Wizard/smeq.do;SME_SESSION_ID=1sNsNtcy7xcbNo00A83lgtG34f2ngqWbepvXWPuV41icaCTTOW9!881054478?execution=e1s1

Target industrial sector

The target applicants of SILEO Call for Proposal are SMEs (legally registered, including start-ups registered for at least 6 months from the date of submission of application) active in the Lighting and Furniture manufacturing key industries.

¹https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/smp/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_smp_en.pdf





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Lighting industry

The lighting industry covers a complex range of product and services for manufacturing of luminaires, lamps and related components. It includes various industrial segments divided per lighting type (LEDs, CFLs, etc.), application (general lighting, automotive lighting, backlighting, emergency lighting, others), electronics and other components (lighting controls, etc.).

Furniture Industry

The furniture industry covers various products and services markets segmented by material (wood, metal, plastic, and other), by application (home furniture, office furniture, hospitality furniture, upholstered furniture, and other).

Business Digital Transformation Ambition

Applicant SME from lighting and/or furniture ecosystem, must strive for exploring potential of digitalisation process(es) and/or uptake of advanced technology (-ies) to support its company green and digital transition to become more resilient to future shocks or crises, be better prepared for disruptions in supply and value chains, more sustainable in its business operations and stronger connected to industrial and advanced technologies ecosystems.

Advanced technologies and digital solutions

During the intensive project preparation phase, SILEO Partners carried out a preliminary but methodical research on the most requested and relevant advanced technologies that are key to enable digital and green transitions of lighting and furniture companies.

Thanks to this bottom-up exchanges, the following advanced technologies (not exhaustive list) have been individuated as of paramount importance for the lighting and furniture SMEs:

- ✓ **Additive Manufacturing** (3D printing) - The technology will improve resource efficiency in both production and use phases as manufacturing processes and products can be redesigned for AM, as well as extend product life achieved through technical approaches such as repair, remanufacture and refurbishment, more sustainable socio-economic patterns like stronger person-product affinities, closer relations producers - consumers.
- ✓ **Augmented and Virtual Reality** - support implementation of smart products, enhance focus on delivering customer experience and hyper customization for designers and end-users. Customization through VR allow lower product errors, diminish waste, impacting positively the shift towards a low-carbon-based economy.
- ✓ **Big Data & Analytics** - Data-based analysis tools used to visualize bottlenecks and risks in real time and present them in a comprehensible way.
- ✓ **Cybersecurity** - Most of the new building facilities are equipped with grid-connected products incl. lighting, electricity, heating etc. The lighting fixtures are used for the IoT sensors. Unfortunately, this makes them attractive for cyber-attacks. Thus, cyber security technologies should be included into smart lighting products.
- ✓ **Industrial IoT (IIoT) & sensors** - IIoT increase safety and efficiency at production sites, reduce human errors, improve logistic and distribution and thus increasing the resilience of companies to crisis related to suppliers. The integration of sensors or the development of printable codes to the wood logs for the raw material tracking and data acquisition. Available functionalities allow for very precise management





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of light sources so that the lighting is perfectly suited to the function of the ambient, and the energy consumption is maximally rationalised

- ✓ **Robotics** - efficient implemented robotics, such as material handling, welding, MIG, spot and arc welding, etc., will enable SMEs to improve the safety standards, the quality of their products and their resources usage.
- ✓ **Artificial Intelligence** - useful for product proposals via apps and for product development. AI has the potential of impacting the whole product design, increasing customisation. Lower errors and higher creativity in production.
- ✓ **Digitalisation of marketing and online trading**
- ✓ **Image scripting technologies** - This technology can be used to produce photorealistic images of each furniture or lighting product, enabling it to be showcased online in detail. Thus, consumers can view these products online, can zoom in and out without any loss of quality or clarity, or rotate images at any angle. Besides that, portions of the image can even be dissolved in order to reveal hidden components and features
- ✓ **WebAR:** This technology can help businesses in getting products to market in time and effectively communicate the worth and utility of a complicated and expensive product in B2B. It is also a sales tool that allows a customer to easily visualize how a product will fit within their own home. This is achieved with digital models of products that can be placed within real environments using AR technology
- ✓ **Machine learning:** Using artificial intelligence allows one to create a personalized buying experience for every individual customer
- ✓ *Others*

4.2 SILEO Pool of Technology Uptake Facilitators

The SME Applicant **must select technology provider(s) and/or digitalisation expert(s)** to develop the Business Digital Transformation Project **from the SILEO Pool of Technology Uptake Facilitators that can be found here: https://clustersubmissionplatform.eu/eurocluster_post/business-digital-transformation-projects-1st-open-call/.**

The SILEO Pool of Technology Uptake Facilitators includes knowledge and technology providers, tech-savvy companies (technology companies), Digital Innovation Hubs, Competence Centres, Academia, research centres and up-scaling entities, and other bodies who expressed their interest and willingness in supporting SMEs in digital and green transition and answered the specific **Call for Expression of Interest (EoI)** launched by SILEO Consortium partners.

The received EoI applications are evaluated by the SILEO Partners to assess the expertise, competence and knowledge and technology transfer capacity in the target domain of advanced technologies uptake and digitalisation processes for SMEs. The validated organisations are included in the SILEO Pool of Technology Uptake Facilitators published on the [SILEO Application Portal](#) and the [SILEO ECCP profile page](#).

The **SME Applicant can select the technology provider(s) and/or digitalisation expert(s) from the existing list of validated expert organisations, or can propose its own** and submit the Expression of Interest Form (EoI) completed by the proposed service provider to SILEO Coordinator ELCA and Partner of reference for





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country of origin (of the applicant and provider). The EoI form of a new provider must be submitted by email at the latest two weeks before the Call closure (06 June 2023).

The SME Applicant and the selected technology provider(s) and/or digitalisation expert(s) must be two independent legal entities to avoid any conflict of interest. Moreover, there should be no conflict of interest between the technology provider / digitalisation expert and the SILEO project partners.

4.3 Typology of financial support

Successful proposals shall receive the requested financial contribution in the **form of a lump sum**.

The requested lump sum must be dedicated to the implementation of the Business Digital Transformation Project with support of the selected technology provider(s) and/or digitalisation expert(s).

Maximum amount per project must not exceed 5.000 EUR (lump sum).

A lump sum is a fixed amount of money which can be used by SME beneficiaries for several purposes related to the achievement of the project objectives. It is necessary to provide an explanation in the application on how the lump sum will be used including a clear budget proposal. Since the granting of a lump-sum does not foresee the delivery of a detailed financial reporting and timesheets, the use of the project budget will be controlled considering the technical advancements through the project technical reporting (*see section 8 of this document*). The final technical evaluation will assess the coherence of the spent money with the achieved results. However, since beneficiaries will have to keep the original documents of their expenses for five years after the payment of the balance (timesheets, invoices, contracts) in case of an audit, the following rules and limitations per type of financial support must be respected:

- ✓ Only costs generated during the lifetime of the project can be eligible. Period of costs' eligibility is from the Sub-grant Agreement signature date until the end of the project (defined in the agreement).
- ✓ Costs described in the submitted budget must be determined in accordance with the usual accounting and management principles and practices of the SME beneficiary.
- ✓ The financial contribution for the eligible costs per financial support scheme, will be given to the selected SMEs in a form of lump sum.

Applicant will provide an indicative budget allocation in the Application Form in order to allow the evaluator to better understand the organization and implementation of the project.

Period of costs' eligibility

Period of costs' eligibility starts from the Sub-Grant Agreement signature date until the end of the project. Expenditures incurred before the Sub-Grant Agreement signature date are not eligible. Expenditures incurred after project closure date, defined in the Sub-Grant Agreement are not eligible.

5. Application procedure

SME applicants will need to submit their application form through the **SILEO submission platform** https://clustersubmissionplatform.eu/eurocluster_post/business-digital-transformation-projects-1st-open-call/ before the **deadline, 20 June 2023 17:00 pm CET**.





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All the information provided should be complete and valid. After the submission, all the applicants will receive a **confirmation email** with the registered date and time of the submission. Get in touch with us if it is not the case. It is important for you to know that we will not be evaluating any proposal sent after the deadline or submitted outside the dedicated form.

SME can apply to only one type the expert services:

a) *General expert consultancy on company digitalisation processes*

OR

b) *Specific expert consultancy on identified advanced technology(ies) and/or digitalisation process(es) to concretely explore its potential uptake at the company level*

OR

c) *General expert consultancy for business transformation and market analysis*

and **submit only 1 proposal** (as a single SME) under this open call. If more than one proposal is submitted by the same SME applicant, only the last edited proposal which has been submitted will be evaluated. Other proposals will not be eligible.

Applicants must be an SME and declare their SME status in accordance with the SME definition of the European Union in the Declaration of Honour – mandatory annex to the Application Form.

Only civil applications will be accepted. Your project must focus on the development of civil applications and must be limited to them. SILEO will not accept proposals with a military focus.

The proposal must be written in English in all mandatory parts in order to be eligible. Only parts written in English will be evaluated.

5.1 Application Form documents

The Application has to be done online on https://clustersubmissionplatform.eu/eurocluster_post/business-digital-transformation-projects-1st-open-call/

The complete Application consists of the following documents:

- SILEO Application Form (to be completed online)
- Declaration of Honour signed by the SME Applicant (and uploaded online in the pdf format) – template available upon registration in the application section





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6. Evaluation and selection process

6.1 Evaluation criteria

Submitted applications will be evaluated in a one evaluation procedure including eligibility check and quality evaluation: remote evaluation by **7 internal reviewers from the SILEO Open Calls Quality Board** (consisting of representatives of SILEO partners) plus review by **two external experts** (having technical background in advanced technologies and / or digitalisation, and deep knowledge on the lighting / furniture industrial processes, selected by SILEO Consortium).

Prior to assigning proposals to external experts, SILEO partners will perform an eligibility check according to previously defined eligibility criteria. The evaluation will be carried under appropriate ethical conduct, without conflict of interests and will respect the confidentiality of the information received. All the reviewers will have to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement with the SILEO Coordinator to ensure confidentiality of received information.

The reviewers will use specific criteria to evaluate the content of applications. All applications will be ranked according to their total evaluation score with regard to the evaluation criteria, and the applications with the highest scores will be selected for funding. The cut-off will be determined by the amount of funds assigned in this evaluation period, but a certain minimum score (threshold) will be required to ensure a standard of quality. In case of equal evaluation scores of applications and insufficient funding to fund all equally rated proposals, a second evaluation round will be carried out to establish a definite ranking among those equally rated proposals.

The **assessment period shall take max. 40 days**, starting from the closing date of the call. The applicants will receive an e-mail about the outcome of the evaluation directly after the process is finalised along with instructions for the next steps in case the applicant is awarded. The successful applicants will be requested to sign a formal Sub-Grant Agreement within 14 days from the notification of the project approval.

Eligibility Check

The first evaluation step is about verifying some basic eligibility requirements based on the statements from submitted proposal. The submitted proposal will be admissible for the quality evaluation check if it:

- ✓ Is complete, readable and in English in all mandatory sections;
- ✓ Has been submitted via the online form: https://clustersubmissionplatform.eu/eurocluster_post/business-digital-transformation-projects-1st-open-call/ within the deadline (20 June 2023, 17:00 CET);
- ✓ Has been submitted by SME from lighting and/or furniture industry located in the eligible EU countries;
- ✓ Includes the technology provider(s) or digitalisation expert(s) from the validated list of SILEO Pool of technology uptake facilitators (See Chapter 4.2);
 - SME Applicant has indicated the technology provider(s) or digitalisation expert(s) from the existing list of validated expert organisations (link here);
 - or





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- SME Applicant has proposed its own experts through the submission of the Expression of Interest completed by the service provider. The EoI was submitted to the SILEO Coordinator ELCA and Partner of reference for country of origin within two weeks before the Call closure and was validated.
- ✓ Includes the properly filled and signed Declaration of Honour.

Moreover, a first check regarding the eligibility of the participants specified in section 4 will be carried out.

Quality Evaluation

The submitted proposals which will pass the eligibility check will go through the **quality evaluation process** following the specific evaluation criteria.

After the eligibility check, all applications will go through the quality evaluation procedure based on the specific assessment criteria reported below.

The following table explains the different aspects which will be considered for each evaluation criterion:

Evaluation Criteria	Sub-criteria	Score threshold	Score
RELEVANCE	Clarity and consistency of project	3	5
	Pertinence to the Call topic and objectives	3	5
	SME Applicant associated to one of the SILEO Partners' cluster organisations	0	1
	SMEs Applicant from EU countries different from the SILEO partners, with specific attention to EU-13 member countries	0	1
Total Excellence		6	12
IMPLEMENTATION	Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan	3	5
	Team	3	5
	Resources	3	5
Total Implementation		9	15
IMPACT	Extent to which the project support SME green and digital transition challenge and pathway	3	5
Total Impact		3	5
TOTAL		18	32





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1) RELEVANCE will evaluate:

- ✓ **Clarity and consistency of project** – clear description of the applicant ambition and business strategy / actions in the frame of green and digital transition challenges faced by a SME;
- ✓ **Pertinence to the Call topic and objectives** – the proposal objective and activities are aligned with the topic and objectives of the SILEO 1° Call for Business Digital Transformation Projects
- ✓ **SME Applicant association to one of the SILEO Partners' cluster organisations** – if applicant is a SME member of one of the SILEO partner cluster organisations
- ✓ **SMEs Applicant located in the EU countries different from the SILEO partners, with specific attention to EU-13 member countries** – if applicant is coming from the EU countries different from the SILEO partners, with specific attention to EU-13 member countries (Member states which joined the European Union in or after 2004) and those EU regions with which the SILEO partners had no previous cooperation and will focus on engaging SMEs from regions with different levels of economic development.

2) IMPLEMENTATION will evaluate:

- ✓ **Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan** – are the planned activities (analysis, reviews and exchanges with technology provider and/or digitalisation expert logic and effective, are they in line with the main goal of the requested expertise, and is the timetable well planned;
- ✓ **Team** – quality and expertise of applicant project team (staff engaged) and pertinence of the selected technology provider to the envisaged consulting project;
- ✓ **Resources** – the value for money of the cost assigned in order to get the objectives proposed is well demonstrated.

3) IMPACT will evaluate:

- ✓ **Extent to which the project support SME green and/or digital transition challenge** – clear and motivated description on how the project will support SME green and/or digital transition process

The evaluators will score each criterion on a scale from 0 to 5:

0 = The proposal fails to address the criterion or it cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.

1 = Poor – The criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses.

2 = Fair – The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.

3 = Good – The proposal addresses the criterion well but there are a certain number of shortcomings.

4 = Very good – There is a small number of shortcomings but overall, the proposal addresses the criterion very well.

5 = Excellent – The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion with no or minor shortcomings.

Each criterion will be scored out of 5 points. The threshold for individual criteria are defined in the table reported on page 15.

Evaluation in case of equal scoring:





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- In case of proposals with **equal overall scores submitted by Applicants SMEs associated to the SILEO project clusters** and the **Applicants from EU regions and/or countries different from the regions or countries of individual SILEO partners**, the prevailing one is the proposal that has the higher score in the criterion of “Impact”, then “Relevance” and then “Implementation” in this order.
- In case of proposals with **equal overall scores submitted by Applicants SMEs associated to the SILEO project clusters**. The prevailing one is the proposal that has the higher score in the criterion of “Impact”, then “Relevance” and then “Implementation” in this order.
- In case of proposals with **equal overall scores submitted by Applicants from EU regions and/or countries different from the regions or countries of individual SILEO partners**, the priority will be given to applications submitted by SMEs EU-13 countries (Member states which joined the European Union in or after 2004). If the equality persists, the prevailing one is the proposal that has the higher score in the criterion of “Impact”, then “Relevance” and then “Implementation” in this order.

Each evaluator (7 SILEO reviewers and 2 external evaluators) will produce an **Individual Evaluation Report**. The final scores will be calculated as an average of the individual assessments provided by the Evaluators.

After individual evaluation, the result will be a **preliminary ranking list**. Only proposals with all individual criteria rated above the threshold will be considered eligible and included in the preliminary ranking list.

The **final ranking list** will result from the decision taken by consensus (minimum $\frac{2}{3}$ of the votes) of the SILEO Open Calls Quality Board during the dedicated decision meeting.

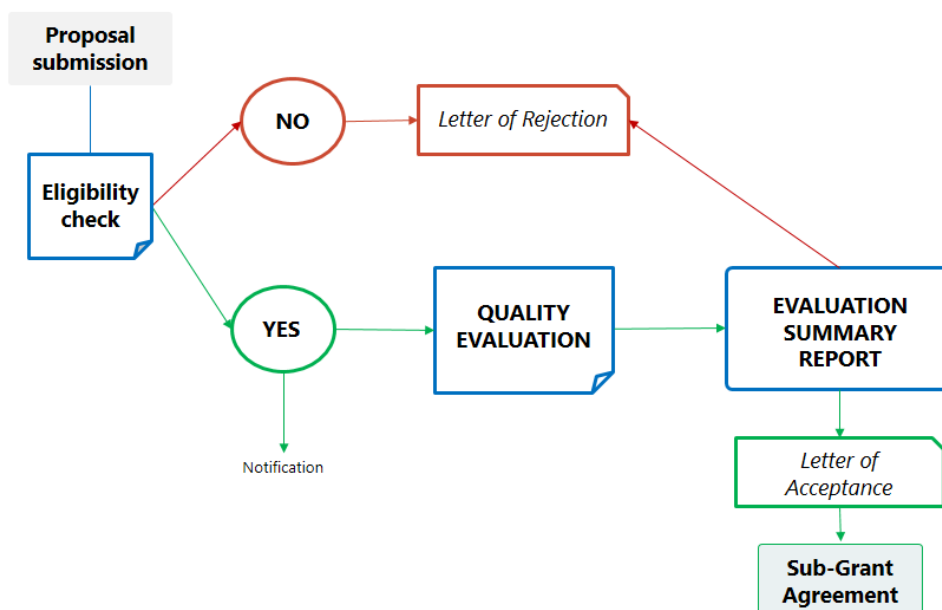
Communication of evaluation results

The **results of the eligibility check** will be communicated to all applicants via email, both to who will pass and to those who will fail to pass it. The applicants who will not pass the eligibility check will receive a notification why they are not eligible for the SILEO call.

The applications, who pass the eligibility check, will go through the technical qualitative evaluation process.

The **results of the quality evaluation process** will be communicated to all applicants (qualified for this 2nd evaluation step) through an email including the respective evaluation report summary.

The successful applicants will be invited to sign the Sub-grant Agreement with the SILEO Consortium.





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Publication of information about the SILEO Open Call results

The information on the awarded projects (following the signature of the Sub-grant Agreements between SME applicants and the SILEO Consortium) will be published on the SILEO ECCP profile page, SILEO Application Portal, Funding & Tenders Portal, Enterprise Europe Network local branches and all the SILEO communication channels including social media and Partners' institutional websites.

6.2 Complain

For any complaints regarding the SILEO Open Call results, please contact your local contact point (*see chapter 3 of this document - SILEO Consortium Contact Points*) within **3 days** after the announcement of the Open Call results. Your email should include the following information:

- SILEO Application Platform username and application name
- Applicant contact name and details
- Object of your complaint
- Information and evidence of the alleged breach

The SILEO Open Calls Quality Board, which consists of representatives of the SILEO partners, 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 SILEO Open Calls Quality Board 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 SILEO Open Calls Quality Board with an updated assessment.

The final decision on the complaint will be communicated by SILEO Open Calls Quality Board 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.

7. Contracting

Once an applicant has been selected for the SILEO financial support, a **specific financial agreement – Sub-Grant Agreement** (a *template is available on the SILEO application portal*) will be signed between the awarded SME and the SILEO Consortium (Coordinator and Partner of Reference), regulating the financial support, beneficiary and partners obligations, legal provisions and payment modalities.

List of SILEO Partners of Reference for Applicant country/region:

Country	SILEO Partners
EU & SMP Associated countries (<i>other than listed below</i>)	ELCA European Lighting Cluster Alliance
France	Cluster Lumière
Spain	CICAT Lighting Cluster





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Italy – Veneto Region	Rete di Imprese Luce in veneto
Austria	Business Upper Austria - OÖ. Wirtschaftsagentur GmbH (BIZUP) Building Innovation Cluster (BIC)
Romania	TFC Transylvanian Furniture Cluster
Italy – FVG Region	Cluster Legno, Arredo e Sistema Casa FVG

Successful Applicants will be invited to participate in a **2-hours online Kick-off Meeting** hosted by the SILEO Coordinator and one of the SILEO partners (Partner of reference for one of the target countries) to learn more about the SILEO Business Digital Transformation Projects implementation rules, reporting and payment modalities. Attending the Kick-off Meeting by successful Applicants is mandatory.

8. Monitoring and Reporting

After the implementation of the SILEO Business Digital Transformation Project, **SME Beneficiary must report the work performance to the SILEO Consortium to enable the evaluation of the degree of fulfilment of the project work plan.**

Final Report of the SILEO Business Digital Transformation Project

To successfully complete the Business Digital Transformation Project, each SME Beneficiary must elaborate and submit the **final report** to the SILEO Consortium, via email to Coordinator and Partner of Reference, within 2 weeks of the project end date. The specific reporting deadline will be set in the Sub-Grant Agreement signed between the parties.

The final report consists of three parts:

- 1° part describe the project performance and the major results status including a description of the consultancy and work done, with final deliverables included if envisaged, i.e., a market study, or report, and deviations from the proposed work plan that may have arisen with the related solutions applied;
- 2° part must list the incurred expenditures and contain copies of the corresponding invoices to proof that the costs have been incurred and paid out within the project duration;
- 3° part includes a short feedback section about the financial support service offered by SILEO Consortium, to be completed by SME beneficiary.

9. Funding scheme

9.1 General payment terms

- ✓ All payments will be made in Euros (€).
- ✓ Expenditures incurred before the Sub-Grant Agreement signature date, or after the project duration period are ineligible for remuneration.
- ✓ Costs incurred for the implementation of the project must be used for the sole and close purpose of achieving the objectives of the project and its expected results, in a transparent manner consistent with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.





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- ✓ SME Beneficiaries must set up internal agreements regulating their cooperation with technology provider(s) and/or digitalisation expert(s). SILEO will not be responsible for paying any costs applied for and incurred by the beneficiaries in case of non-compliance with the terms and conditions of the SILEO funding scheme.
- ✓ Payments will be made to SME beneficiaries by the SILEO Partner of Reference assigned to specific SME beneficiary (Partner contact point for target country), defined in the Sub-Grant Agreement.
- ✓ Submission of an application does not constitute an entitlement for funding.
- ✓ The recipients of the (financial) support from SILEO (“Beneficiaries”) must ensure that the European Commission, EISMEA Agency, 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 beneficiaries' premises.

9.2 Beneficiaries obligations

Supporting documentation

The SME Beneficiary must -for a period of five-years after the payment of the balance- keep records and other supporting documentation in order 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 must keep the records and other supporting documentation until the end of these procedures.

The SME Beneficiary must keep the original documents. Digital and digitalised 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.

All the above-mentioned obligations will be duly defined and acknowledged by in the SILEO Sub-Grant Agreement signed between the SME Beneficiary and the SILEO Coordinator and Partner of Reference.

Financial capacity

The SME applicant must have the financial capacity to carry out the actions described in their proposals and to properly manage the financial support granted to them.

Each SME must be in alignment with the following situations:

- ✓ Is no bankrupt or being wound up, is not having affairs administrated 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 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.





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Double funding

The SME applicant cannot apply for and/or receive funding outside of SILEO for a similar project that could lead to a potential double funding of the same action. The SILEO Consortium will carry out the necessary control actions with other SMP Eurocluster Consortia and other EU-funded projects to verify that there are no double funding or operational capacity conflict ongoing.

The above-mentioned statements regarding financial capacity and double-funding must be confirmed by the SME applicant in the Declaration of Honour, to be submitted along with the Application Form as a mandatory annex.

Selected SMEs should be able to provide some basic information of their financial standing upon request from the SILEO Consortium.

The following documents could be asked after the selection procedure:

- ✓ Copy of the profit and loss account
- ✓ Balance sheet for the last two years for which accounts have been closed. Failing that, appropriate statements from banks shall be submitted.

In case of SMEs (or startups) without a financial history or track-record, an audit of their current fiscal period (certified by an external auditor) or a self-declaration, including a Business Plan for the on-going financial year could be required.

9.3 Payment scheme

SME Beneficiaries will receive 50% of their estimated eligible costs (lump sum up to 5.000,00 EUR) listed in the approved project application form within 2 weeks after signing the SILEO Sub-Grant Agreement. These costs will be pre-financed and paid via bank transfer by the SILEO Project Partner assigned to specific project (Partner contact point for target country, defined in the Sub-Grant Agreement).

The remaining 50% funds of the lump sum will be transferred to SME beneficiary within 14 days after approval of the final report, by the SILEO Partner of Reference assigned to specific project (defined in the Sub-Grant Agreement).

The projects lasting 2 months will receive only the final payment within 14 days after approval of the final report, by the SILEO Partner of Reference assigned to specific project (defined in the Sub-Grant Agreement).

PAYMENT SCHEME:

Payment scheme	SILEO Business Digital Transformation Project
Lump sum	Up to 5.000,00 EUR per project
2 instalments	<i>Pre-financing, only for projects longer than 2 months: within 14 days from signature of the Sub-Grant Agreement (50%)</i>
	<i>Final payment: within 14 days from the approval of the final performance report (50%, or 100% for projects shorter than 2 months)</i>





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10. Additional information and conditions for SILEO Business Digital Transformation Projects winners

10.1 Data management

Personal data and information are provided in the application form for the immediate purpose of allowing a full and successful evaluation of applicants and for providing additional innovation support to SMEs. This includes:

- Name of the applicant and contact details of the applicant (telephone number, postal address, country, internet site)
- Name and details of the contact person (e-mail, telephone number)
- VAT Registration Number of the company
- Financial information of the company (number of employees, annual turnover or balance)

In case that a SILEO Business Digital Transformation Projects is awarded, the following additional information of all awardees are required:

- Bank account reference (IBAN and BIC codes);
- Information about the grant recipient's representative: Name and Surname, Position, Telephone number, Mail address, Signature

Data concerning the service provider is delivered in the application form and in the final reports with the purpose of permitting the evaluation of the action.

Any personal data will be processed by the 'data controller' of the Coordinator or the Consortium Partners serving as national help desks with the purposes of implementing, managing and monitoring the action or protecting the financial interests of the EU.

The persons whose personal data is processed have the right to access and correct their own personal data. For this purpose, they must send any queries about the processing of their personal data to the following email address Coordinator and Partner of Reference.

Personal data will be processed in compliance with applicable EU and national law on data protection.

The General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679/EU) guarantee 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 SILEO objectives and work plan.

Submitting an application to the SILEO Call for Business Digital Transformation Projects implies full, complete and unreserved acceptance of these regulations.





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10.2 EU Funding visibility requirements

For dissemination and use of results generated through the financial support from SILEO, the SME beneficiaries must credit the SILEO project through proper citation and visibility of the SILEO logo and EU emblem, including the disclaimer reported below:



Co-funded by
the European Union

This project has indirectly received funding from the European Union's Single Market Programme, via the Open Call #1 – SILEO Business Digital Transformation Projects (Grant Agreement No 101074564)

All visibility requirements will be communicated to the SME beneficiary after the signing of the Sub-Grant Agreement with the SILEO Consortium.

11. Gender equality, diversity and social inclusion

SILEO 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.

12. Disclaimer

Purpose: This text is explaining the SILEO Open Call for Business Digital Transformation Projects for information purposes only. No rights can be claimed based on this document. This document does not reflect the views of the European Union and/or the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA). Neither the European Union nor the other EC bodies can be held responsible for them.

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

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 voucher scheme, even if advised of the possibility of such damages.

Direct Damages: SILEO's liability for direct damages will be limited to the amount of the financial contribution awarded to the applicant pending of payment.

