



D1.1 – Project Implementation Handbook & Work Plan

DIGITOUR - Boosting the tourism sector in Europe through digital tools and innovation

Action number: 101038133

COORDINATOR:
VENETIAN CLUSTER



This project implementation handbook (D1.1) was funded by the European Union's COSME Programme

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Project deliverable

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Abstract	D1.1 – Project Handbook is the manual to be referred to by all consortium members about the project content and implementation. It includes workflow diagrams (Gantt chart), work breakdown structures, the deliverable list (including technical and management deliverables), the main technical project milestone list and overall project assessment processes.		
Revision history			
<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Author (organisation)</i>
V1	27/01/2021	First draft of the Project Implementation Handbook and Work Plan (D1.1)	VENETIAN CLUSTER



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Content

1	Introduction	1
2	Project summary	2
2.1	Project abstract	2
2.2	Project objectives	2
2.3	Consortium	3
2.4	Gantt chart	3
2.5	Deliverables and milestones	5
3	Management structure and procedures	7
3.1	Organisational structure	7
3.2	Composition of organisational elements	7
3.3	Organisational responsibilities	7
3.4	Decision making procedures	9
3.5	Internal communication	10
4	Procedures for financial management and reporting	15
4.1	Eligible costs	15
4.2	Responsibilities for financial management	19
4.3	Timeline for reporting to EISMEA	20
4.4	Periodic reports	20
4.5	Final report	21
4.6	Procedures for financial monitoring and reporting	21
	Annexes	24
	Annex 1: Template for meeting minutes	24
	Annex 2: Template for monthly timesheets	25
	Annex 3: Check list for financial reporting	24
	Annex 4: Template for progress report	25
	Annex 5: Template for financial statement	27



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Figures

Figure 1. Gantt chart	4
Figure 2. Project organisational structure	7
Figure 3. Internal communication flows	11

Tables

Table 1. Consortium partners	4
Table 2. List of deliverables	5
Table 3. List of milestones	6
Table 4. Composition of organisational elements	7
Table 5. Internal communication tools	11
Table 6. Email addresses of project team.....	13
Table 7. Reporting timeline	18
Table 8. Procedure for financial monitoring and reporting	20



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1 Introduction

This document is developed as part of the **DIGITOUR (Boosting the tourism sector in Europe through digital tools and innovation)** project, funded by European Union's COSME programme under Grant Agreement number 101038133.

WP1 – Project management aims at performing global project coordination and support tasks at regional and European level phases between partners, project management and the European Commission (EC). The activities performed in WP1 will provide the basis for administrative, technical and financial management of the consortium and will ensure the technical and financial quality required for a successful project.

The objective of **D1.1 – Project Handbook** is to detail the proceeding rules for the project, including workflow diagrams (Gantt chart), work breakdown structures, the deliverable list (including technical and management deliverables), the main technical project milestone list and overall project assessment processes. D1.1 is structured by the following sections:

- Project summary
- Management structure and procedures
- Procedures for financial management and reporting
- Annexes:
 - Template for meeting minutes
 - Template for monthly timesheets, to be used by all project team members
 - Check list for financial reporting
 - Template for progress reports
 - Template for financial statement (as included in the GA)

Important and related documents:

There are a number of official documents of the project that should be referred to:

- **Consortium Agreement:** the internal agreement signed between the members of the consortium establishing their rights and obligations with respect to the implementation of the action in compliance with the Grant Agreement.
- **Grant Agreement (GA)** (No. 101038133): the contract concluded between the EC (representing the EU) and the beneficiaries under which the parties receive the rights and obligations (e.g. the right of the Union's financial contribution and the obligation to carry out the research and development work).



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2 Project summary

This chapter presents a brief summary of the project including: abstract, objectives, consortium partners, Gantt chart (related to the timely management) and deliverables and milestones (related to the management of project outcomes and achievements).

2.1 Project abstract

Tourism sector is among the most important and fast-growing economies in Europe and it is now unprecedentedly confronted with the challenges of COVID-19. Tourism is connected and plays a vital role in the growth of other economic fields, like transport, culture, and creative industries. SMEs are the backbone of the tourism in Europe, and are those that were affected the most by the epidemic in 2020. Thousands of tourism businesses in Europe, from micro to small and medium sizes, could not operate for more than 12 months. This year, those SMEs can play a crucial role in the process of revitalising the tourism sector in Europe. The challenges faced so far have no analogy and it is hard to predict how long it will take to recover the tourism industry. But it is clear and it is important more than ever to turn these challenges into new sustainable opportunities, where digital tools and technologies could play a vital role.

DIGITOUR aims to increase the competitiveness and resilience of tourism SMEs in Europe to manage and respond to the new era of the tourism sector by upskilling their digital knowledge, boosting innovative sustainable ideas and solutions, and fostering cross-border and cross sectoral partnerships.

To this end, DIGITOUR will:

- support over 100 SMEs through financial support, through an Up-skilling and Capacity Building and a Collaboration Innovation Voucher;
- foster cooperation among tourism SMEs and players of the digital ecosystem at the territorial and cross-border level;
- provide ongoing mentoring support and tutoring to tourism SMEs, including technical support to incubation, acceleration and scaling-up;
- assess the level of digital readiness of SMEs and monitor impacts on their level of digitisation, providing recommendations beyond the project;
- foster networking at the European level by offering SMEs access to international collaboration platforms and networks;
- promote encounter between public bodies and SMEs.

2.2 Project objectives

DIGITOUR aims to increase the competitiveness and resilience of tourism SMEs in Europe to cope with the new challenges of the tourism sector by upskilling their digital knowledge, boosting innovative sustainable ideas and solutions, and fostering cross-border and cross sectoral partnerships. To achieve this general objective DIGITOUR expects to reach the following Specific Objectives:



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SO1) Improve digital skills and capacities of tourism SMEs and increase their knowledge of digital tools/ technologies through training and individual advisory support (at least 100 SMEs will be supported through up- skilling and capacity building individual vouchers).

SO2) Boost innovative ideas for digital solutions by tourism SMEs to improve their offer of products and services and their management, marketing, and promotion in novel and sustainable ways, adapting to the new challenges of the tourism sector (at least 19 projects by groups of SMEs, involving at least 38 SMEs, will be funded through collaboration innovation vouchers).

SO3) Foster cross-sectoral and cross-border partnerships among tourism sector SMEs and stakeholders, and providers of innovative, digital and smart solutions and new technologies (at least 138 SMEs will be connected to providers of digital solutions and technologies and will be in touch with their peers in at least 12 countries; at least 19 collaborative projects will be launched, bringing tourism SMEs to cooperate among them and with providers of innovative, digital and smart solutions and new technologies).

2.3 Consortium

The project gathers 10 European entities (Table 1) from several European regions (Italy, Czech Republic, Spain, Serbia, Bulgaria, Germany, France, Denmark), representing different sectors (tourism, academia, industrial production, culture, ...).

Table 1. Consortium partners

#	Name of partner organization	Short name	Country
1	VENETIAN CLUSTER SRL	VHC	Italy
2	LONGARONE FIERE SRL	LFD	Italy
3	BIZGARDEN SRO	BizGarden	Czech Republic
4	ASOCIACION CLUSTER DE TURISMO SOSTENIBLE DE ARAGON	TSAC	Spain
5	ASOCIACION INVESTIGACION, DESARROLLO E INNOVACION EN ARAGON	IDiA	Spain
6	KLASTER PUTEVA KULTURE	CCR	Serbia
7	CONSULTING CLUSTER VERITAS LTD	VERITAS	Bulgaria
8	ITALIENISCHE HANDELSKAMMER MUNCHEN-STUTTGART CAMERA DI COMMERCIO ITALO-TEDESCA EV	ITALCAM	Germany
9	AGENCE DE DEVELOPPEMENT ET D'INNOVATION AQUITAINE LIMOUSIN POITOU CHARENTES	ADI N-A	France
10	AARHUS UNIVERSITET	AU	Denmark



2.4 Gantt chart

The project tasks will be implemented according to the following timeline (Figure 1). Beneficiaries will pay attention to this timeline in order to properly organise their activities and fulfil all deadlines.

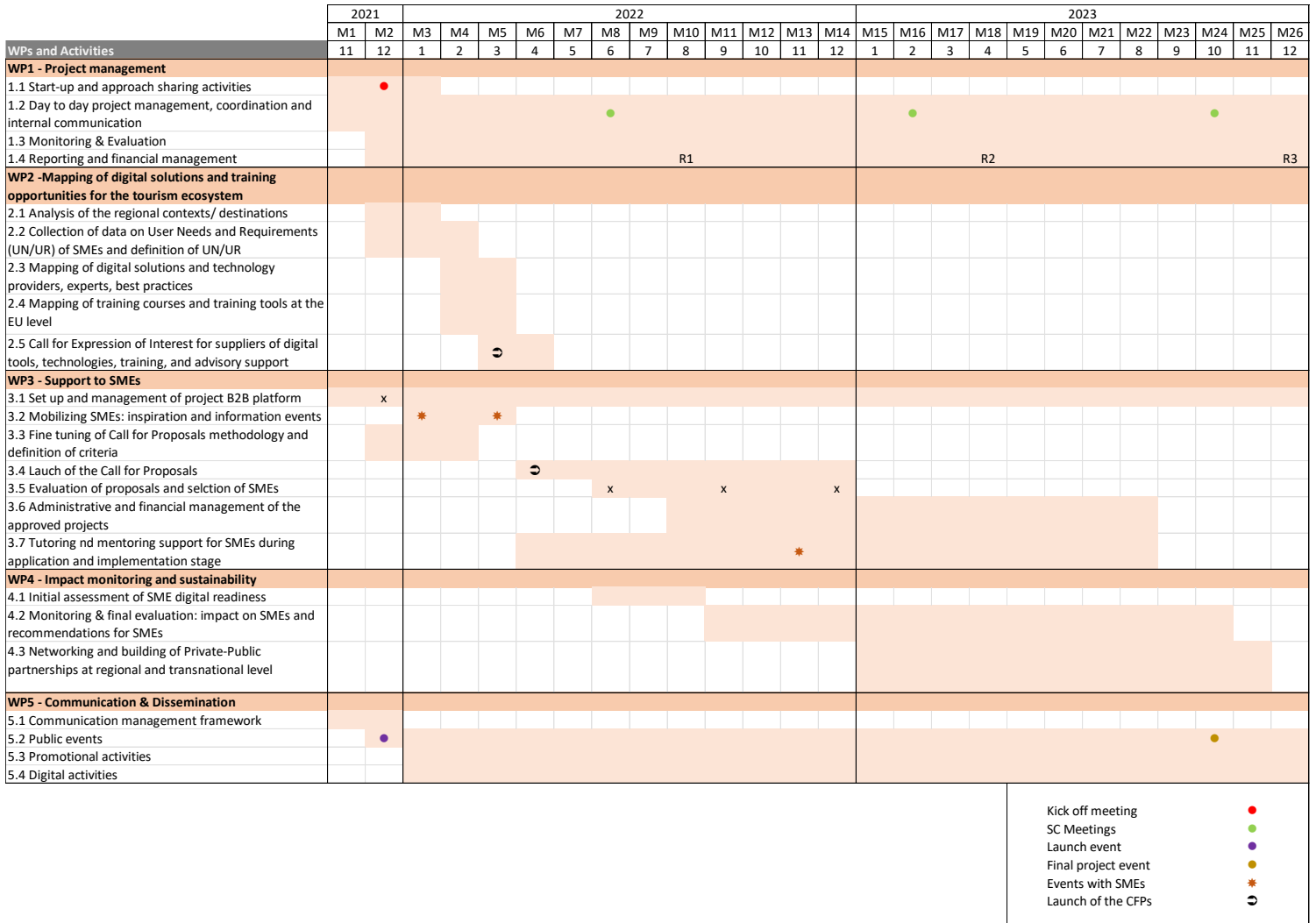


Figure 1. DIGITOUR Gantt chart



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2.5 Deliverables and milestones

Table 2 includes the list of deliverables planned for all the WPs, as well as its responsible organisation and deadline.

WP	Deliverable Number	Deliverable name	Resp. Partner	Type of deliverable	Deadline
WP1	D1.1	Project implementation handbook & work plan	VHC	Report	09/01/2022
WP1	D1.2	Internal collaborative online platform	VHC	Other	09/01/2022
WP1	D1.3	Risk register	VHC	Report	09/01/2022
WP1	D1.11	Consortium Agreement	VHC	Report	09/01/2022
WP2	D2.2	Final UN/UR questionnaire	BizGarden	Report	09/01/2022
WP3	D3.1	B2B Platform	VHC	Websites, patents filing	09/01/2022
WP5	D5.1	Communication Plan and Dissemination Strategy	VERITAS	Report	09/01/2022
WP5	D5.2	Communication Guidelines	VERITAS	Report	09/01/2022
WP1	D1.4	Report of project Kick-off meeting	VHC	Report	09/02/2022
WP1	D1.6	Monitoring Plan, partner monitoring template/ matrixes and a m	VHC	Report	09/02/2022
WP2	D2.1	Overall strategic recommendations related to digitalisation of th	VERITAS	Report	09/02/2022
WP2	D2.3	SMEs questionnaires	BizGarden	Report	09/02/2022
WP5	D5.5	Post-event Report, including media coverage report of launch pre	LD	Report	09/02/2022
WP5	D5.7	Promotional Materials	VERITAS	Report	09/02/2022
WP2	D2.4	Final UN/UR document	BizGarden	Report	09/03/2022
WP3	D3.4	Draft of the final Call Announcement, full Call details	VHC	Report	09/03/2022
WP2	D2.5	Catalogue of digital solutions of the tourism ecosystem	IDIa	Report	09/04/2022
WP2	D2.6	Report on training opportunities	AU	Report	09/04/2022
WP2	D2.7	Call for Expression of Interest	IDIa	Report	09/04/2022
WP3	D3.5	Call page	VHC	Websites, patents filing	09/04/2022
WP2	D2.8	List of digital sector companies/ entities registered on the projec	IDIa	Report	09/05/2022
WP3	D3.3	Reports on Inspiration and Information events including participa	VERITAS	Report	09/05/2022
WP3	D3.6	Final Call Documents in English and national languages	VHC	Report	09/05/2022
WP3	D3.7	List of Evaluation Committee Members	VHC	Report	09/05/2022
WP3	D3.10	Protocol for tutoring and mentoring support	ADI N-A	Report	09/05/2022
WP1	D1.10	Technical Progress Report covering the first third of the project	VHC	Report	09/09/2022
WP3	D3.9	Signed Agreements with SMEs	VHC	Report	09/02/2023
WP4	D4.1	Information report on Digital readiness assessment within DIGIT	BizGarden	Report	09/02/2023
WP3	D3.8	Call Evaluation Process Reports (2)	VHC	Report	09/05/2023
WP1	D1.7	Monitoring reports by partners (3)	VHC	Report	09/10/2023
WP1	D1.8	Progress self-evaluations (3)	VHC	Report	09/11/2023
WP3	D3.2	B2B Report	VHC	Report	09/11/2023
WP3	D3.11	Overall report on the tutoring and mentoring support	ADI N-A	Report	09/11/2023
WP4	D4.2	Digital publication "On the road to the digital future – inspiration	BizGarden	Report	09/11/2023
WP4	D4.3	Report on networking activities and the establishment of PPPs	AU	Report	09/11/2023
WP1	D1.5	MoM and Report of SC meetings (3)	VHC	Report	09/12/2023
WP4	D4.4	Report the improvement in the uptake of digitalisation, innovati	BizGarden	Report	10/12/2023
WP5	D5.3	MoM of Communication meetings (3)	VERITAS	Report	10/12/2023
WP5	D5.6	Post-event Report, including media coverage report of final proje	VERITAS	Report	10/12/2023
WP5	D5.11	Report on Social Media management	VERITAS	Report	10/12/2023
WP1	D1.9	Final self-evaluation report	VHC	Report	09/01/2024
WP5	D5.4	Final Communication and Dissemination Report	VERITAS	Report	09/01/2024
WP5	D5.8	Press releases (30)	VERITAS	Report	09/01/2024
WP5	D5.9	Articles submitted to national and international media (20)	VERITAS	Report	09/01/2024
WP5	D5.10	Project newsletters (4)	VERITAS	Other	09/01/2024

Table 2. List of deliverables



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Similarly, Table 3 provides the list of milestones, including responsible organisation and deadline for these achievements.

#	Milestone	WP	Leader	Month
MS1	User Needs and User Requirements of tourism SMEs are collected	WP2	BizGarden	4
MS2	The Call for Proposals for tourism SMEs is launched	WP3	VHC	6
MS3	Approved SME projects start implementation	WP3	VHC	9
MS4	Initial assessment of digital readiness of tourism awarded SMEs	WP4	BizGarden	10
MS5	Completion of projects by tourism SMEs	WP3	VHC	22
MS6	Project final event	WP5	VERITAS	24

Table 3. List of milestones



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3 Management structure and procedures

This chapter presents the project organisational structure, together with the responsibilities and composition of the different elements considered in it. Furthermore, procedures and guidelines for decision making and internal communication are defined.

3.1 Organisational structure

The organisational structure (Figure 2) is simple and clear to ensure the achievement of the project goals and outputs, as well as to guarantee effective collaboration among partners.

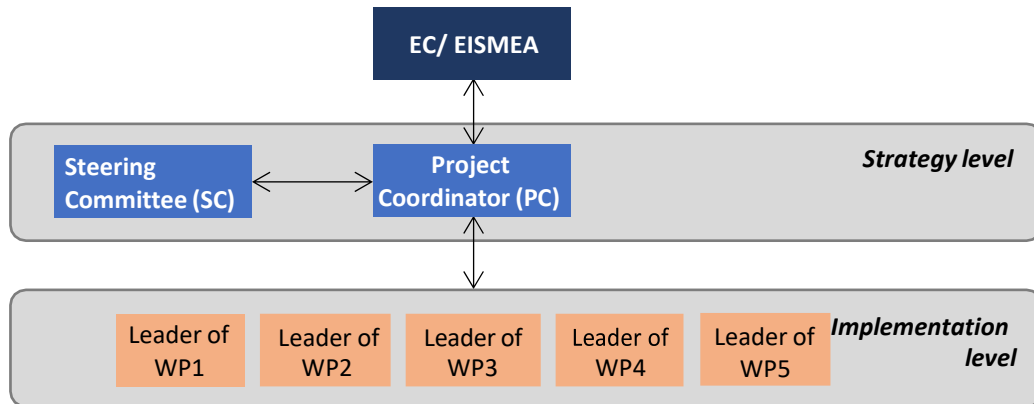


Figure 2. DIGITOUR project organisational structure

3.2 Composition of organisational elements

The composition of the organisational elements is as follows (Table 4):

Table 4. Composition of organisational elements

Role	Name
Project coordinator (PC)	Project manager (PM) – Sergio Calò Financial Manager (FM) – Maurizio Malè Innovation Manager (IM) – Sergio Calò
Steering Committee (SC)	One representative per partner (10 in total)
Work Package Leaders (WPL)	WP1: VHC WP2: IDiA WP3: VHC WP4: BizGarden WP5: VERITAS

3.3 Organisational responsibilities

The organisational structure is composed of the following elements, which have the responsibilities mentioned below.



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Project Coordinator (PC)

The PC has the overall responsibility for meeting the project objectives within the agreed constraints regarding schedule, cost, scope and quality. The overall responsibility for coordinating implementation of activities will be of the Management Team (VHC), which will communicate and coordinate with partners' Responsible Project Managers (RPMs) and WP Leaders throughout project lifetime, as necessary.

The PC is the legal entity acting as the intermediary between the beneficiaries and the Agency. The PC shall, in addition to its responsibilities as a beneficiary, perform the tasks assigned to it as described in the GA.

The responsibilities of the PC include:

- To report all relevant information relating to the project to the EC and to ensure that adequate reporting procedures are in place to assess progress against the work plan;
- To ensure adequate communication internally among the project team and to prepare plenary meeting minutes and provide regular operational reports (including activities achieved, resources consumed, deviations and corrective actions) to the Steering Committee;
- To perform the daily project management and ensure the quality achievement of all planned project activities, in interaction with Work Package leaders;
- To detect any deviations in a timely manner and to report deviations to the Steering Committee to resolve any deviations.

Steering Committee (SC)

In view of supporting the Management Team in its tasks and ensuring strategic monitoring and decision-making within the consortium, a Steering Committee (SC) will be established and formed by one representative of each partner including the Project Manager and Financial Manager. The Steering Committee will meet three times, following the kick-off meeting and before the end of the project: the first SC meeting will be held in Germany, the second in Bulgaria, the third in Spain. During each SC meeting, the progress of the project will be discussed.

The SC provides the strategic guidelines to the PC and steers the project according to the agreed objectives.

The SC will manage the activities of the Consortium and is the highest decision making and monitoring body of the Consortium. Responsibilities of the SC include:

- To verify milestones delivery and quality and to assist the PC in the achievement of the overall project progress and quality;
- To decide upon measures in the framework of controls to ensure the effective day-to-day coordination and monitoring of the progress of the technical work affecting the project as a whole – in coordination with the PC;
- To ensure the general conflict management, if necessary, and decide upon any corrective actions that may be considered necessary to ensure a successful project implementation;



Any Party of the SC:

- should be present or represented at any meeting;
- may appoint a substitute or a proxy to attend and vote at any meeting;
- and shall participate in a cooperative manner in the meetings.

Work Package Leaders (WPL)

Each WP has a well identified and justified leader who is in charge of implementing operational work with the support of other partners.

WPL are responsible for the technical coordination of their respective work packages including the coordination of the tasks' leaders, deliverables, milestones and workflow between the work packages. Responsibilities of the WPL include:

- To develop an implementation plan for their WP and to ensure the successful completion of the assigned activity (Work Package or Deliverable) in accordance with the project GA;
- To transmit documents and information connected with the WP or deliverable between the partners concerned and to ensure an efficient communication between the contributors within each work package;
- To report progress and any deviations from assigned activities to the PC and transmit project deliverables of the partners within the WP and any documents and information connected with the WP to the PC.

Each WPL will be responsible for the organisation of work and outputs of the WP and for the timely solution of any problems that may arise. This will include definition of the lowest level of tasks for individual WPs.

3.4 Decision making procedures

The project executive coordination will be led by a Management Team constituted by a Project Manager (PM), a Financial Manager (FM), an Innovation Manager (IM) from the LP VHC. The decision board will be the Steering Committee (SC) including a representative per Partner. WP leaders will be responsible for the development of activities inside the respective WPs and will refer directly to the LP. There will be WP leaders' meeting (online or as side events to SC meetings) to

discuss about executive aspects of the project. Each partner defines internally a Responsible Project Manager (participating in SC), a Financial Manager (FM), an Innovation Manager (IM) and a Communication Manager (CM). The same person can have more than one role, but it is important to identify inside the partner the responsible person for each of these fields, so that there is a direct link with the LP and between Partners for each project aspect. An Evaluation Committee (EC) will be constituted for the evaluation of proposals in the Call for Proposals and also for impacts monitoring and evaluation of supported projects and SMEs; the EC will include one representative by each Partner, including at least one tourism expert and one business support expert, and will act in coordination with the IMs to define and share evaluation procedures and methodology.



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The organisational structure fits to the exigencies of a sound management of a consortium of 10 partners; from the previous long experience in managing projects, it is known that the organizational structure proposed is able to guarantee a good management performance in all project phases and to cope with eventual problems or needed changes in the implementation of activities.

The decision mechanism must be flexible and light but able to guarantee the control of action and its results and impacts, as well as the involvement of all partners and their specific know-how in different sectors (tourism, digitalisation, public governance, etc.). Inside the Steering Committee, decisions will be taken preferably with the consensus method, looking for unanimity; when this is not possible, the majority of voting partners will decide (one vote per partner).

In case of equal votes, the Lead Partner will have double vote and the final decision. The LP is also responsible about feasibility of decisions and their correspondence to the GA and Programme's rules; therefore, it might stop or change Consortium's decisions that are not in line with those requirements.

3.5 Internal communication

Besides physical meetings, to be preferred for discussing and taking decisions, also online meetings will be held among different subjects (general SC among all partners, or specific restricted meetings among WP leaders, Innovation Managers, Communication Managers, etc.), in order to increase the frequency of meetings without too many travels and to keep a good continuous monitoring of project activities and spirit of sharing and collaboration among all partners.

3.5.1 Internal communication goals

The most relevant goals of internal project communication are the following:

- Ensure a smooth taking of strategic decisions and problem solving;
- Make all partners aware of the progress in each Work Package (WP);
- Share and validate project outputs;
- Exchange opinions, clarify doubts;
- Build a trust network among partners.

Figure 3 shows the communication flow and the nature of communication within the project between various organisational elements (internal and external).



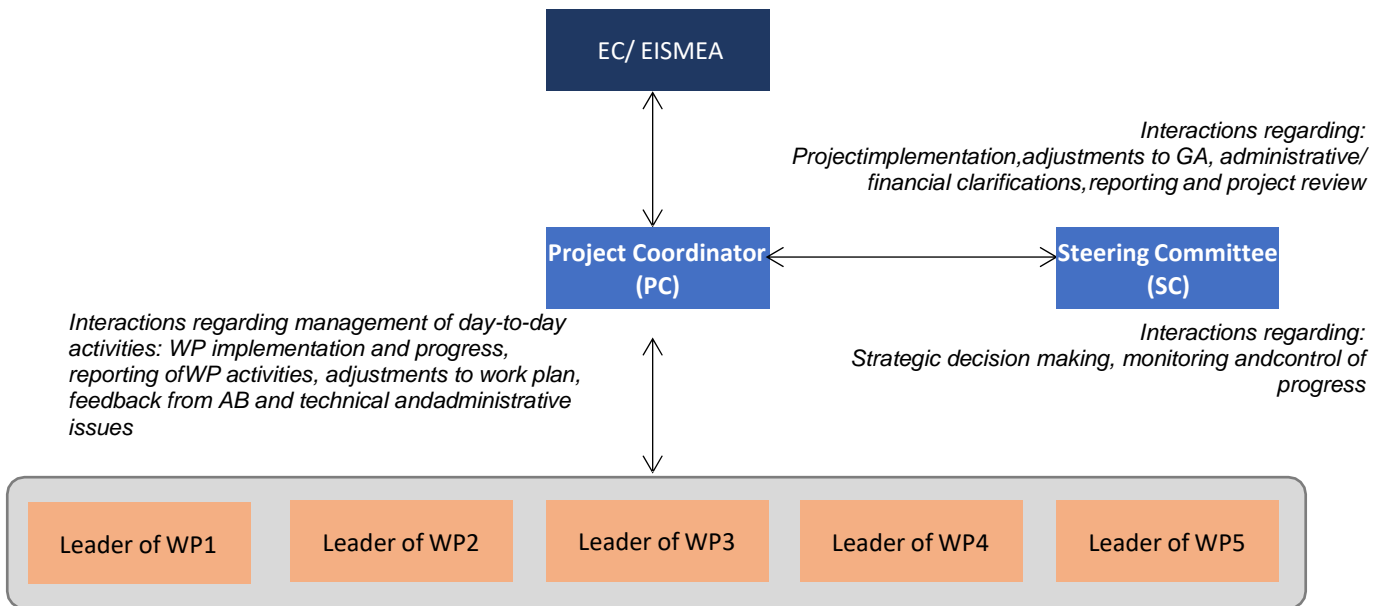



Figure 3. Internal communication flows



3.5.2 Internal communication tools

Different internal communication tools have been defined for the project. These are presented in Table 5, explaining its purpose and date or frequency, when applicable.

Table 5. Internal communication tools

Communication tool	
<p>CONSORTIUM MEETINGS</p> 	<p>There will be two kind of consortium meetings: Coordination meetings (Steering Committee) Consortium conference calls</p> <p>Coordination meetings: Purpose: Make strategic decisions and discuss the progress achieved in the different WPs, make decisions about future activities and next steps, as well as to solve any difficulties and other technical and administrative issues. All beneficiaries shall be represented in the coordination meetings. Date/ frequency: Kick-off meeting in Italy at the beginning of the project Meeting in Germany (M8) Meeting in Bulgaria (M16) Meeting in Spain by (M24)</p>



Communication tool	Details
	<p>Moreover, they will, most likely, be virtually organised as well, or will take place aside the final event of the project.</p> <p><u>Consortium conference calls:</u> Purpose: Conference calls will be held regularly with the aim to: Discuss the work progress within specific WPs; Define responsibilities and actions to take; Agree on any potential amendments to the work plan; Clarify doubts, exchange ideas; Conduct internal reviews, make strategic decisions; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolve technical/administrative issues. Conference calls are to be organized on Skype. Date/ frequency: monthly</p> <p>Consortium meetings will be preceded by an email to all partners including the date for the call and proposed agenda. Meeting minutes will be circulated by the PC (or others, as agreed upon) after the call. Comments will be sent by the participants on the draft minutes which will then be finalised. The follow up actions / next steps defined in each meeting will be listed in the minutes to allow a clear understanding of responsibilities and to better track the progress of the project. The minutes will be shared on Google Drive.</p>
<p>MAILING LIST</p> 	<p>Purpose: The regular individual email addresses of the partners will be used. The list of project team emails is shared on the internal collaborative platform.</p>
<p>GOOGLE DRIVE</p> 	<p>Purpose: This internal collaborative online platform will support the project activities and allow for an effective virtual communication between partners. Partners will share documents within each Work Package and have access to the most up-to-date documents and information. A shared folder on Google Drive will be identified as main tool to share documents and information and all partners will have full access as “Editor”.</p>

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3.5.3 Consortium email contacts

Table 6 gathers the list of emails from the project team members.

Table 6. Email addresses of project team

N.	Partner	Name	Email
1	VENETIAN CLUSTER SRL (VHC)	Sergio Calò	sergio.calo@venetiancluster.eu
		Dafne Sgarra	dafne.sgarra@venetiancluster.eu
		Carlotta Campanini	carlotta.campanini@venetiancluster.eu
		Maurizio Malè	maurizio.male@venetiancluster.eu
		Morgana Campagnolo	morgana.campagnolo@venetiancluster.eu
2	LONGARONE FIERE SRL (LFD)	Gianangelo Bellati	gianangelo.bellati@gmail.com
		Maria Valentina Vanceo	Mariavalentina.vanceo@venetiancluster.eu
3	BIZGARDEN SRO (BizGarden)	Jan Orava	jan.orava@koplac.cz
		Sona Vanyova	sona.vanyova@koplac.cz
		Ludek Kuhr	l.kuhr@bizgarden.cz
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3.5.4 Organisation of consortium meetings

This section provides indications on the preparation, implementation and follow-up of consortium meetings.

3.5.4.1 Notice of a meeting

The coordinator of the SC shall convene the meetings of the SC, and shall give notice in writing of a meeting to each Member of the SC as soon as possible and no later than 14 calendar days for an ordinary meeting and 7 calendar days for an extraordinary meeting.

3.5.4.2 Meeting agenda

The SC chairperson shall prepare and send to each Member of the SC a written (original) agenda no later than 7 calendar days for an extraordinary meeting. Any agenda item requiring a decision by the SC members must be identified as such on the agenda.

Decisions will only be binding once the relevant part of the minutes has been accepted.

Any decision may also be taken without a meeting if the PC circulates to all members of the SC a written document.

Decisions taken without a meeting shall be considered as accepted if, within 15 calendar days no member has sent an objection in writing to the chairperson. The decisions will be binding after the chairperson sends to all members of the SC and to the PC a written notification of this acceptance.

3.5.4.3 Minutes of meetings

The coordinator of the SC shall produce written minutes of each meeting which shall be the formal record of all decisions taken. He/she shall send the draft minutes to all members within 10 calendar days of the meeting.

The minutes shall be considered as accepted if, within 7 calendar days from sending, no member has sent an objection in writing to the chairperson with respect to the accuracy of the draft of the minutes.

The coordinator shall send the accepted minutes to all the Members of the SC.



4 Procedures for financial management and reporting

The implementation of the project should follow the rules and guidelines for the COSME programme. The GA is the document which sets out the rights and obligations, it is legally binding and the terms and conditions applicable to the grant awarded to the DIGITOUR partners for implementing the project. As stressed in the GA, the reimbursement rate corresponds to 75% of the project costs and the pre-financing corresponds to 50% of the Grant.

The following is a series of important points / rules to be considered.

4.1 Eligible costs

The project's total eligible costs are the consolidated ones that have been approved by the Agency. As underlined in the Grant Agreement, the grant must not produce a profit. To be eligible for European Union funding, costs must satisfy the following criteria, detailed below according to the type of cost.

4.1.1 For Actual Costs (a):

- (i) they must be actually incurred by the beneficiary;
- (ii) they must be incurred in the period set out in Article 3 of the GA, with the exception of costs relating to the submission of the periodic report for the last reporting period and the final report (see Article 15 of the GA);
- (iii) they must be indicated in the estimated budget set out in Annex 2 of the GA;
- (iv) they must be incurred in connection with the action as described in Annex 1 of the GA and necessary for its implementation;
- (v) they must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular recorded in the beneficiary's accounts in accordance with the accounting standards applicable in the country where the beneficiary is established and with the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices;
- (vi) they must comply with the applicable national law on taxes, labour and social security, and
- (vii) they must be reasonable, justified and must comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

4.1.2 For Unit Costs (b) and Flat Rate Costs (c):

(b) Unit Costs: they must be calculated as follows: {amounts per unit set out in Annex 2a of the GA multiplied by the number of actual units};

The number of actual units must comply with the following conditions:

- the units must be actually used or produced in the period set out in Article 3 of the GA;
- the units must be necessary for implementing the action or produced by it, and
- the number of units must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular supported by records and documentation (see Article 13 of the GA);

(c) Flat Rate costs: (i) they must be calculated by applying the flat-rate set out in Annex 2 of the GA, and the costs (actual costs or unit costs to which the flat-rate is applied must comply with the conditions for eligibility set out in this Article.



4.1.3 Specific conditions for costs to be eligible

Costs are eligible if they comply with the general conditions (see above) and the specific conditions set out below, for each of the following budget categories:

- A. direct personnel costs;**
- B. direct costs of subcontracting;**
- C. direct costs of providing financial support to third parties;**
- D. other direct costs;**
- E. indirect costs.**

'Direct costs' are costs that are directly linked to the action implementation and can therefore be attributed to it directly. They must not include any indirect costs (see Point E below).

'Indirect costs' are costs that are not directly linked to the action implementation and therefore cannot be attributed directly to it.

A. **Direct personnel costs**

Personnel costs are eligible, if they are related to personnel working for the beneficiary under a written employment contract (or equivalent appointing act) and assigned to the action ('costs for employees (or equivalent)'). They must be limited to salaries (including during parental leave), social security contributions, taxes and other costs included in the remuneration, if they arise from national law or the employment contract (or equivalent appointing act).

Beneficiaries may also declare as personnel costs additional remuneration for personnel assigned to the action (including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of their nature), if:

- a. it is part of the beneficiary's usual remuneration practices and is paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required;
- b. the criteria used to calculate the supplementary payments are objective and generally applied by the beneficiary, regardless of the source of funding used.

By definition, personnel include permanent and temporary staff registered in the payroll system of a beneficiary whose costs are accounted for as staff costs. Such persons must be:

- directly employed by the beneficiary in accordance with its national law;
- under the beneficiary's sole technical supervision (the technical output must belong to the beneficiary);
- remunerated in accordance with the normal practices of the beneficiary.

In order to substantiate the time worked on an existing project (and therefore the eligible costs declared as personnel costs), the beneficiary must show the **actual hours worked**, with reliable time records (i.e. timesheets) either on paper or in a computer-based time recording system. Time records must be **dated and signed at least monthly** by the person working for the action and his/her supervisor. **Annex 2: Template for monthly timesheets** provides the template for this.

If the time-recording system is computer-based, the signatures may be electronic (i.e. linking the electronic identity



data (e.g. a password and user name) to the electronic validation data, with a documented and secure process for managing user rights and an auditable log of all electronic transactions).

Time records should include:

- the title and number of the action, as specified in the GA;
- the beneficiary's full name, as specified in the GA;
- the full name, date and signature of the person working for the action;
- the number of hours worked/daily for the action in the period covered by the time record;
- the supervisor's full name and signature;
- a reference to the action tasks or work package described in Annex 1 to the GA, to easily verify that the work carried out matches the work assigned and the person-months reported to the action;
- a brief description of the activities carried out, to understand and show what work was carried out.

Information included in timesheets must match records of annual and sick leave taken, and work-related travel.

Types of eligible personnel costs

A.1 Personnel costs are eligible if they are related to personnel working for the beneficiary under an **employment contract** (or equivalent appointing act) and assigned to the action ('costs for employees (or equivalent)'). They must be limited to salaries, social security contributions, taxes and other costs included in the remuneration, if they arise from national law or the employment contract (or equivalent appointing act).

They may also include additional remuneration for personnel assigned to the action (including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of their nature), if:

- (a) it is part of the beneficiary's usual remuneration practices and is paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required;
- (b) the criteria used to calculate the supplementary payments are objective and generally applied by the beneficiary, regardless of the source of funding used.

A.2 The costs for natural persons working under a direct contract with the beneficiary **other** than an employment contract or seconded by a third party against payment are eligible personnel costs, if:

- (a) the person works under conditions similar to those of an employee (in particular regarding the way the work is organised, the tasks that are performed and the premises where they are performed);
- (b) the result of the work carried out belongs to the beneficiary (unless agreed otherwise), and
- (c) the costs are not significantly different from those for personnel performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary.

A.3 Costs of owners of beneficiaries that are small and medium-sized enterprises ('**SME owners**'), who are working on the action and who do not receive a salary are eligible personnel costs, if they correspond to the amount per unit set out in Annex 2a of the GA multiplied by the number of actual hours worked on the action.

A.4 Costs of 'beneficiaries that are **natural persons**' not receiving a salary are eligible personnel costs, if they correspond to the amount per unit set out in Annex 2a of the GA multiplied by the number of actual hours worked on the action.

Calculation

Personnel costs must be calculated by the beneficiaries as follows:



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(a) for personnel costs declared as actual costs (i.e. budget categories A.1 and A.2):

- for persons working exclusively on the action: {monthly rate for the person multiplied by number of actual monthsworked on the action}. The months declared for these persons may not be declared for any other EU grant. The 'monthly rate' is calculated as follows: {annual personnel costs for the person divided by 12} using the personnel costs for each full financial year covered by the reporting period concerned. If a financial year is not closed at the end of the reporting period, the beneficiaries must use the monthly rate of the last closed financial year available.

- for persons working part-time on the action: {daily rate for the person multiplied by number of actual days worked on the action (rounded up or down to the nearest half-day)}. The number of actual hours declared for a person must be identifiable and verifiable (see Article 13 of the GA). The total number of hours declared in EU grants, for a person for a year, cannot be higher than the annual productive hours used for the calculations of the hourly rate. Therefore, the maximum number of hours that can be declared for the grant are: {number of annual productive hours for the year minus total number of hours declared by the beneficiary, for that person for that year, for other EU grants}.

The 'daily rate' is calculated as follows: {annual personnel costs for the person divided by number of individual annual productive days} using the personnel costs and the number of annual productive days for each full financial year covered by the reporting period concerned. If a financial year is not closed at the end of the reporting period, the beneficiaries must use the daily rate of the last closed financial year available.

The 'number of individual annual productive days' is the total actual days worked by the person in the year. It may not include holidays and other absences (such as sick leave, maternity leave, special leave, etc). However, it may include overtime and time spent in meetings, trainings and other similar activities. The Agency may accept other calculation methods (such as, for instance, hourly rates, daily rates calculated with annual personnel costs and 215 fixed annual productive days or a pro-rata apportionment of the monthly salary costs), if it considers that they reflect the actual costs incurred, in a fair, objective, realistic way and if there are sufficient records to support these costs (see Article 13 of the GA).

(b) for personnel costs of SME owners or beneficiaries that are natural persons without a salary declared on the basis of unit costs (i.e. budget categories A.3 and A.4): {hourly rate multiplied by number of actual hours worked on the action}.

The number of actual hours declared for a person must be identifiable and verifiable (see Article 13 of the GA). The total number of hours declared in EU grants, for a person for a year, cannot be higher than the annual productive hours used for the calculations of the hourly rate. Therefore, the maximum number of hours that can be declared for the grant are: {number of annual productive hours for the year minus total number of hours declared by the beneficiary, for that person for that year, for other EU grants}.

The hourly rate is the rate set out in Annex 2a of the GA.



B. Direct costs of subcontracting

(including related duties, taxes and charges, such as nondeductible value added tax (VAT) paid by beneficiaries that are not public bodies acting as public authority) are eligible if the conditions in Article 10.1.1 are met.

C. Direct costs of providing financial support to third parties

C.1 **Direct costs of providing financial support in the form of prizes** are eligible if the conditions set out in Article 11a.2.1 of the GA are met.

D. Other direct costs

D.1 **Travel costs and related subsistence allowances** (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible value added tax (VAT) paid by beneficiaries that are not public bodies acting as public authority) are eligible if they are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel.

D.2 The **depreciation costs of equipment, infrastructure or other assets** (new or second-hand) as recorded in the beneficiary's accounts are eligible, if they were purchased and written off in accordance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual accounting practices. The **costs of renting or leasing** equipment, infrastructure or other assets (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible value added tax (VAT) paid by beneficiaries that are not public bodies acting as public authority) are also eligible, if they do not exceed the depreciation costs of similar equipment, infrastructure or assets and do not include any financing fees.

The only portion of the costs that will be taken into account is that which corresponds to the duration of the action and rate of actual use for the purposes of the action.

D.3 **Costs of other goods and services** (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as nondeductible value added tax (VAT) paid by beneficiaries that are not public bodies acting as public authority) are eligible, if they are purchased specifically for the action.

Such goods and services include, for instance, consumables and supplies, dissemination, protection of results, certificates on the financial statements (if they are required by the Agreement), translations and publications.

E. Indirect costs are eligible if they are declared on the basis of the flat-rate of 7% of the eligible direct costs.

4.1.4 Support to third parties:

The reimbursement for Third Party Financing corresponds to 75%. It is recommended to read "Guidelines for Awarding Financial Support to Third Parties".

Project coordinators need to ensure that a notification concerning their Call for Third Party Financing is included in the Funding and Tenders Portal, where it will be possible to manage the Cascade Funding Calls.

Following Article 11.a.1, the beneficiaries must provide financial support to third parties in accordance with the conditions set out in Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement. As minimum conditions, it must be included:

(a) the maximum amount of financial support for each third party.

The amount of financial support per individual third party cannot exceed ten thousand euros EUR 10,000;

(b) the criteria for calculating the exact amount of the financial support;

(c) the different types of activity that qualify for financial support, on the basis of a closed list;



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- (d) the persons or categories of persons that may receive financial support, and
- (e) the criteria for providing financial support.

Moreover, all beneficiaries are requested to ensure the Commission, the Agency, ECA and OLAF that they can exercise their rights of checking and auditing also towards the third parties receiving financial support within the DIGITOUR project.

In case of non-compliance with Article 11a of the GA, the costs related to the financial support to third would be ineligible and rejected. The project support to third parties (SMEs) is key for the DIGITOUR project. Thus, all partners will ensure a proper implementation of the whole action and of the financial support to the selected third parties.

4.2 Responsibilities for financial management

Each Party shall be solely responsible for justifying its costs with respect to the Project towards the Agency. Neither the Coordinator nor any of the other beneficiaries shall be in any way liable or responsible for such justification of costs towards the Agency.

The beneficiaries must keep the records and documentation supporting the costs declared, in particular the following:

- a. for actual costs: adequate records and other supporting documentation to prove the costs declared, such as contracts, subcontracts, invoices and accounting records. In addition, the beneficiaries' usual cost accounting practices and internal control procedures must enable direct reconciliation between the amounts declared, the amounts recorded in their accounts and the amounts stated in the supporting documentation;
- b. for flat-rate costs: adequate records and other supporting documentation to prove the eligibility of the costs to which the flat-rate is applied. The beneficiaries do not need to identify the costs covered or provide supporting documentation (such as accounting statements) to prove the amount declared at a flat-rate.

Annex 3: Check list for financial reporting provides a checklist for the beneficiaries to ensure that they keep record of all supporting documentation.

Payments to beneficiaries are the exclusive tasks of the Coordinator. In particular, the PC shall:

- notify the beneficiaries concerned promptly of the date and composition of the amount transferred to its bank account, giving the relevant references;
- perform diligently its tasks in the proper administration of any funds and in maintaining financial accounts;
- undertake to keep the Agency's financial contribution to the Project separated from its normal business accounts, its own assets and property.

4.3 Timeline for reporting to EISMEA

The project reports presented in Table 7 must be submitted to the Agency according to the deadlines stated in the GA.



Table 7. Reporting-timeline

Reports	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Periodic Report																										
Interim Report																										
Final report: - final technical report - financial report																										

4.4 Periodic reports

The coordinator must submit the following periodic report(s):

- Progress report required by month 10;
- Interim report required by month 18, covering period from month 1 to month 17;
- Final report required by month 26, covering period from month 18 to month 26.

Periodic reports shall be submitted within 60 calendar days of the end of the reporting period and shall contain:

(a) Periodic technical report:

- (i) an **explanation of the work carried out** by the beneficiaries;
- (ii) an overview of the **progress** towards the objectives of the action, including milestones and deliverables. This report must include explanations justifying the differences between work expected to be carried out in accordance with the GA and that actually carried out. Project coordinators will report on milestones and deliverables will be uploaded into the system. In particular, this report will not be linked to a request for payment and it will be mainly focused on the selected tourism SMEs for the support mechanism;
- (iii) summary for publication by the Agency;
- (iv) answers to the **'questionnaire'**: answers to the questions covering issues related to the action implementation and its impact;

(b) Periodic financial report: it will be linked to a request for interim payment and it will cover two thirds of the project implementation.

- (i) An **individual financial statement** (Annex 4 of the GA) from each beneficiary, according to Art.15.3 (b.i.) of the GA;
- (ii) An **explanation** of the use of resources and information about subcontracting;
- (iii) A **periodic summary financial statement**, as automatically created by the electronic exchange system;
- (iv) A **certificate** of the financial statements;
- (v) Reporting about the organization of the **financial support to third parties**.

A general template is provided in **Annex 4: Template for periodic report**.

4.5 Final report

The coordinator must submit (within 60 days following the end of the reporting period) a final report, which includes the request for payment of the balance. The final report must include a **final technical report** with a summary for



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publication, and a **final financial report** containing the final summary statement, consolidating the individual financial statement(s) for all reporting periods and including the request for payment of the balance. The individual financial statements must also detail the receipts of the action.

Each beneficiary must certify that:

- the information provided is full, reliable and true;
- the costs declared are eligible;
- the costs can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documentation that will be produced upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations; and
- that all the receipts have been declared (for the last reporting period).

4.6 Procedures for financial monitoring and reporting

All beneficiaries must keep proper accounts and supporting documents to justify each single cost incurred and generated by the action. Original documents and records must be kept in an appropriate medium that safeguards its integrity for **five years after the date of payment** of the balance of the European Union contribution. Evidence of costs, explanations and justifications must be readily available for inspection by the EISMEA and/or the European Commission and their authorised representatives, as well as by the European Anti-fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors. As stressed by Article 17.3 of the GA, under Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and Article 161 of the Financial Regulation No 966/2012, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) may — at any moment during implementation of the action or afterwards — carry out audits, and it has the right of access for checks and audits.

4.7.1 Timesheets

All project members should fill in and sign their timesheets every month. Timesheets to be used are according to the one provided in *Annex 2: Template for monthly timesheets (DIGITOUR timesheet template.xlsx)*. Project timesheets should be stored in the Google Drive.

4.7.2 Internal financial monitoring

The internal financial monitoring (M7, M14, M22) aims to:

- Monitor deviations compared to the budget in Annex 2 of GA; thus, allowing the implementation of corrective measures on time;
- Allow partners to get used to financial management procedures;
- Implement a timely financial management, avoiding the implementation of financial reporting procedures only before the submission of the financial report (end of the project).

The process will be as follows (Table 8):

Table 8. Procedure for financial monitoring and reporting



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Time	Action
M3	The PC sends to all partners the D1.1 and all annexes to D1.1. These documents are also stored in the Google Drive.
M3	The PC conducts a conference call <u>with the partners</u> to explain financial management procedures.
Monthly	<u>ALL</u> beneficiaries fill in and sign the monthly timesheets. Monthly timesheets are stored monthly on Google Drive.
Continuous	<p><u>ALL</u> beneficiaries keep proper accounts and supporting documents to justify each single cost incurred.</p> <p><u>ALL</u> beneficiaries should have a physical project folder with all the evidence documents that justify the information filled in in the financial report (such as payslips, invoices, contracts, proofs of payments, etc.). In the checklist attached you'll find all the documents you need to keep in the physical project folder. <i>Annex 3: Check list for financial reporting</i> provides a checklist for the beneficiaries to ensure that they keep record of all supporting documentation.</p>
M7, M14, M22	<p>Internal financial monitoring is conducted:</p> <p>1st – The PC sends an email to all partners asking them to conduct the financial monitoring process.</p> <p>2nd – <u>ALL</u> beneficiaries fill-in the file “DIGITOUR_internal financial monitoring.xls”. This Excel file is provided in <i>Annex 6: Template for internal financial monitoring</i>. Beneficiaries shall have 14 calendar days to fill in the file.</p> <p>Beneficiaries should store the “DIGITOUR_internal financial monitoring.xls” filled-in in the Google Drive. 3rd – The PC reviews the “DIGITOUR_internal financial monitoring.xls” to validate the actual costs only regarding its consistency and according to the budget. Beneficiaries are responsible for their financial management.</p> <p>The PC shall have 14 calendar days for reviewing.</p> <p>The PC may contact the partners for clarifications in costs.</p> <p>4th – An <u>SC conference call</u> is held to discuss any deviations or corrective measures to be taken.</p>
M24-M25	<p>Financial reporting is conducted:</p> <p>1st – The PC sends an email to all partners asking them to conduct the financial reporting process.</p> <p>2nd – <u>ALL</u> beneficiaries fill-in the file “DIGITOUR_internal financial monitoring.xls”. Beneficiaries should store the “DIGITOUR_internal financial monitoring.xls” filled in in the Google Drive. Beneficiaries shall have 14 calendar days to fill in the file “DIGITOUR_internal financial monitoring.xls”.</p> <p>3rd – The PC reviews the “DIGITOUR_internal financial monitoring.xls” to validate the actual costs are correct and according to the budget.</p> <p>The PC shall have 14 calendar days for reviewing.</p> <p>The PC may contact the partners for clarifications in costs.</p> <p>4th – The PC must inform all the beneficiaries once their costs are validated and the PC shall ask them to fill in their individual financial statements in the Participant Portal.</p> <p>5th – <u>ALL</u> beneficiaries must fill-in their individual financial statements in the Participant Portal.</p> <p>6th – The PC shall review and sign the final financial project statement and submit the financial report.</p>

Documents to be considered for financial management and reporting include:

- DIGITOUR GA



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- DIGITOUR Consortium Agreement

Annexes

Annex 1: Template for meeting minutes

	 Funded by the European Union	DIGITOUR PROJECT Template for meeting minutes
Topic:		
Date:	Place:	
Attendees:		
TOPICS DISCUSSED		
[Description of topics discussed]		
NEXT STEPS		
[Description of next steps or follow-up actions]		



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Annex 2: Template for monthly timesheets



EU Grants: Time-sheet: v1.0 – 15.05.2018

EU GRANTS TIME-SHEET (DAILY RATE)	Reporting period number:	[insert RP number (from DD/MM/YYYY to DD/MM/YYYY)]
--	--------------------------	--

Project name (acronym):		Project number:	
Beneficiary name:			
Name of the person:		Type of personnel (see Art 6.2.A MGA):	

MONTH	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	
ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF DAYS (rounded to nearest ½ day)												TOTAL	
Activities linked to the project														
Activities linked to other EU projects														
Other activities														

MONTH	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	[month/ year]	
ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF DAYS (rounded to nearest ½ day)												TOTAL	
Activities linked to the project														
Activities linked to other EU projects														
Other activities														

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT FOR PROJECT DURING THIS REPORTING PERIOD	
Work packaged number	Activities

SIGNATURES

For the participant (supervisor): _____

Person:

Name:

Date:/...../.....

Date:/...../.....

Signature:

Signature:

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Annex 3: Check list for financial reporting

Organisation	
1.Personnel Costs	
Actual Costs:	
Invoices and accounting records plus proof of payment of Staff/volunteers involved in the project, including the social charges and payment to Social Security (ex. Payslips)	
Proof of formal connection (all staff/volunteers involved in the project. ex: Work Contract; Contracts; Subcontracts)	
Timesheets dully filled and signed.	
Daily/hourly rate calculation method.	
2.Other Direct Costs	
Travel Costs:	
Flight Receipts, boarding passes, hotel and subsistence receipts and proof of payment.	
Other Costs:	
Invoices and proof of payment.	
3.Subcontracting Costs	
Contract, Invoices and proof of payment (You should demonstrate the “best value for money”. Ex: Three proposal, call for tenders).	
4.Indirect Costs (Flat Rate)	
Keep detailed and adequate records and other supporting documents to prove that the costs to which the flat rate is applied are eligible.	

These documents may not be requested but it is important that beneficiaries keep them in case the European Commission requests them or the project is selected for an audit. Please be aware that beneficiaries should retain ALL records for 5 years after the Final Report approval.



Annex 4: Template for progress report

Grant Agreement Number: 101038133 - DIGITOUR



Progress Report

DIGITOUR – Boosting the tourism sector in Europe through digital tools and innovation

Action number: 101038133

Project Coordinator: Venetian Cluster

Reporting period covered: From [day/month/year] to [day/month/year]

Reporting date: [day/month/year]

This report (Progress Report) was funded by the European Union's COSME Programme (2014-2020)

"The content of this report represents the views of the author only and her sole responsibility; it cannot be considered to reflect the views of the European Commission and/or the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME) or any other body of the European Union. The European Commission and the Agency do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains."

This report (D5.1 – Project Handbook) was funded by the European Union's COSME Programme (2014-2020)

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Annex 5: Template for financial statement

As presented in the GA, the individual financial statement is

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR [BENEFICIARY [name] /AFFILIATED ENTITY [name]/LINKED THIRD PARTY] [name]] FOR REPORTING PERIOD [number]

Eligible ¹ costs (per budget category)							Receipts			EU contribution				
A. Direct personnel costs		B. Direct costs of subcontracting		[C. Direct costs of financial support]	D. Other direct costs	E. Indirect costs ²	Total costs	Income generated by the action	Financial contributions given by third parties to the beneficiaries	Total receipts	Reimbursement rate % ³	Maximum EU contribution ⁴	Requested EU contribution	
A.1 Employees (or equivalent)	A.3 SME owners without salary			[C.1 Financial support]	D.1 Travel									
A.2 Natural persons under direct contract and seconded persons	A.4 Beneficiaries that are natural persons without salary			[C.2 Prizes]	D.2 Equipment									
					D.3 Other goods and services									
Cost form ⁵	Actual		Unit		Actual	Actual	Actual	Flat-rate ⁶						
	a1	No hours	Total a2	b	[c]	d	e = 0,07 * (a1 + a2+ b + d)	f = a1 + a2+ b +[c] + d+ e	g	h	i= g+h	j	k = f*j	l
[short name beneficiary/ affiliated entity/linked third party]														

The beneficiary/affiliated entity/linked third party hereby confirms that:
 The information provided is complete, reliable and true.
 The costs declared are eligible (see Article 6).
 The costs can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documentation that will be produced upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations (see Articles 12, 13 and 17).
 For the last reporting period: that all the receipts have been declared (see Article 5.3.3).

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