



CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FOR PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS IN THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR

The Chamber of Small & Medium Sized Industries of Thessaloniki (VETH) participates in the project: “Enhancing the Competitiveness and Sustainable Growth in the Agrofood Sector through the promotion of Circular Economy” with the Acronym Agrofficiency, which is implemented under the Cooperation Programme “Interreg V-A Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020”, via Business Support Center (information on the project: <https://esupportplatform.agrofficiency.eu/>).

The project is a result of a collective transnational effort with the following partnership from Greece and Bulgaria:

Lead Partner – LB: Chamber of Small & Medium Sized Industries of Thessaloniki (VETH, Greece).

Partner – PB2: Small Enterprises’ Institute of the Hellenic Confederation of Professionals Craftsmen and Merchants (IME GSEVEE, Greece).

Partner – PB3: Greek Association of Supply Chain Management (EEL.BE, Greece).

Partner – PB4: Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry – Blagoevgrad (Bulgaria).

Partner – PB5: Renewable Energy Sources Cluster (Bulgaria).

BUSINESS SUPPORT CENTER (BSC)

Services

Services provided by the BSC include, but are not limited to, assistance to SMEs of the Cross-Border agri-food sector (Regional Units of Thessaloniki, Serres, Kavala, Drama, Xanthi, Rhodope, Evros) in solving **operational problems, manufacturing, technology, IT, personnel**

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management, marketing, sales, finance, subsidies, accounting, business strategy, as well as any other sector required for the development and expansion of SMEs in the agri-food sector, innovation, productivity growth, improving of management, as well as reducing the financial concentrations of the sector.

Business Consulting

Agrofficiency Business Support Center (BSC) will provide assistance to entrepreneurs through business consultancy that serves customers, whether start-ups or existing businesses. Therefore, the consultancy services will be short and highly targeted with one-to-one consultancy sessions with customers seeking personalized business support.

Each beneficiary enterprise will receive consultant support services, which will concern entrepreneurs and / or business executives who will participate in the following training actions. Consultancy will be provided by specialized business consultants and qualified professionals and will cover the thematic modules of supply chains and logistics, sustainability and circular economy.

Training

Within the framework of BSC operation will be implemented:

- **Sic consultancy workshops** for businesses specifically active in the agri-food sector and its wider ecosystem, in the cross-border region of Greece-Bulgaria. The training workshops will be conducted around the themes “**finance**”, “**marketing**” and “**design**”. Specifically, in the workshops, participants will be trained on the preparation of Operational Plans, Marketing Plans and Strategic Plans. **In the consulting workshops, participants will have the opportunity to be trained on how they could further develop their businesses, using tools such as operational and strategic planning and marketing, to make them more attractive to potential investors.** The duration of the workshops will be **6 hours**. The Workshops will take

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place in person, if conditions of pandemic allow. Otherwise, they will take place online.

The training material of the workshops and seminars will include the following thematic areas:

- Startup entrepreneurship and business opportunities in the Agri-food sector.
 - Business Plan/ Business Model Canvas.
 - Methods of financing, outreach to new investors and preparedness for new investment ideas.
 - Preparations of proposals.
 - Access to new markets.
 - Marketing plan.
 - Strategic plan.
- **A 40-hour online seminar with 20 participants.** The seminar concerns the production of an open online educational material lasting 40 teaching hours on issues related to the preparation of: a) Business Plan, b) Marketing Plan, and c) Strategy Plan, in an agri-food business, within the framework of the deliverable 5.1: “Training Seminars & Counselling Workshops” of ΠΕ5: “Pilot Support Activities” of the Agroefficiency project. The main objective of the training material is to support the employees and entrepreneurs of **SMEs of the agri-food sector in the Greece-Bulgaria Cross-Border area** in order to: a) **prepare a business plan for funding** b) **extend their business activities** and c) **define the suitable strategy for further business development.**
 - **Two 20-hour training seminars with 20 participants.** The subject of the seminars will concern issues of supply chains and logistics as well as sustainability and circular economy, in addition to the general principles of business administration.

SME's participation in training workshops and seminars

SME's participation in the training workshops and seminars of the Business Support Center is free of charge. Interested enterprises are invited to submit a relevant application for

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participation. After the provision of the free service, each enterprise will be notified in writing of the amount of state-aid equivalent (indirect aid) it will receive, noting in particular that it is **de minimis** aid. The de minimis rule (aid of minor importance) was introduced in 1992, amended in 2006, and concerns the Commission's policy on state aid to small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as to enterprises active in the transport and processing and marketing of agricultural products. De Minimis Aid is small amounts of State Aid given to an enterprise which **cannot exceed €200,000 over any three fiscal years** to any company irrespective of size or location. Such amounts of De Minimis Aid are regarded as falling outside the category of State aid that is banned by the EC Treaty and can be awarded to an enterprise without notification to or clearance from the European Commission.

Notification: businesses will not receive financial funding.

Selection Criteria

The criterion, on the basis of which the enterprises will be selected, is the relevance of their object of engagement, in relation to the sectors of the project.

1. An enterprise (product processing – commercial – service provider) operating in the wider agri-food chain (from the field to final consumption) and is established on the Greek side of the Cross-Border region (Regional Units of Thessaloniki, Serres, Kavala, Drama, Xanthi, Rhodope, Evros).
2. An enterprise that has demonstrated activities related to the green economy and the introduction of circular economy methods in their operation.

In addition, particular priority will be given to:

1. Newly established enterprises.
2. Enterprises set up by women or young people.
3. Very small enterprises (1-9 employees).

Application Documents

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The supporting documents that must accompany the application for participation in the program are the following:

1. **Solemn declaration** of the legal representative of the enterprise according to the attached template.
2. Printing of the tab "**Registry - Business Data**" from the electronic platform of the Independent Authority for Public Revenue, as they appear on the taxisnet, from which the non-suspension of their business activity and the business activity code can be derived.
3. A **short curriculum vitae** of the participant(s).
4. Photocopy of the **Police Identity Card** or Passport photocopy of the participant(s).
5. **Certificate of registration of the enterprise with the relevant Chamber.**

For the selection of the beneficiary enterprises, a **priority order** will be given, based on the date of submission of the application and all the required supporting documents.

However, taking into account the objective of the action for equal participation of male and female entrepreneurs, two distinct priority solutions will be given for enterprises legally represented by male and female entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurs and business executives interested in benefiting from the free consulting support are invited to submit to the VETH the attached application form, signed by the legal representative of the company, as well as the above participation documents, via email to: agrofficiency@veth.gov.gr, by Monday 21-11-2022.

Enterprise obligations

Each beneficiary enterprise is obliged to comply with the terms of this call. At the same time, the company should **cooperate on a substantial basis with the consultants / experts** who will support it, providing them with the necessary information that will be requested in the

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context of the consulting support. Participation in this support action implies full acceptance of the conditions by the enterprises.

Business information

The application form can be found online on the website of VETH (www.veth.gov.gr), as well on the project's website (agrofficiency.eu). The selected enterprises will be announced on 30-12-2022 on the project website, as well as on VETH's website and social media.

For any further information or clarification, you can contact the Business Support Center (Dr. Z. Rizou) via email to: agrofficiency@veth.gov.gr

Information on the project:

“Enhancing the Competitiveness and Sustainable Growth in the Agrofood Sector through the promotion of Circular Economy” with the Acronym Agrofficiency, which is implemented under the Cooperation Programme “Interreg V-A Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020”, can be found on the website: <https://agrofficiency.eu/>.

Within the framework of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) [Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of The European Parliament and of The Council of 27 April 2016]- we inform you that the Personal Data entered in the application will be used exclusively in the context of the implementation of the "Agrofficiency" project.

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