SMARTER
SMEs
Strategic Mindsets and Redesigned
Technological Environments Regenerate



TUTORING AND TRAINING KIT

Implementation Support Guide



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Implementation Support Guide of the Tutoring and Training Kit

INTRODUCTION

The **Tutoring and Training Kit or T&T Kit** has been developed as a practical framework to support the digital transformation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurs. This tutor manual serves as a comprehensive guide for tutors responsible for implementing the T&T Kit, offering structured steps, methodological tools, and good practices to ensure a consistent and impactful delivery of services.

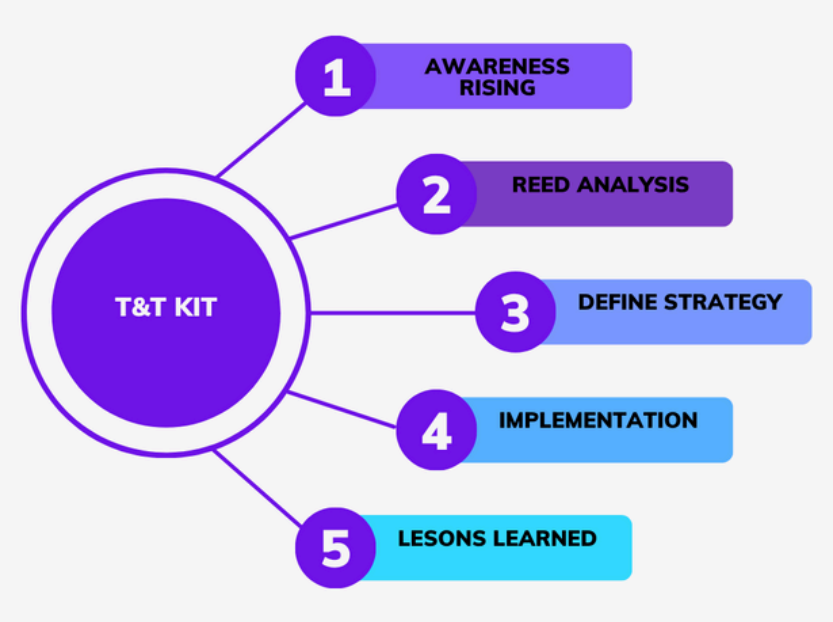
Digital transformation represents not only the adoption of new technologies but also a profound shift in how businesses create value, engage with customers, and organize their internal processes. Many SMEs face challenges in understanding where to begin, how to prioritize investments, and how to align technological change with their overall strategy. The T&T Kit responds to this need by providing a structured, human-centered approach that connects awareness, analysis, planning, implementation, and evaluation in a continuous improvement cycle.

Purpose of the Manual

The purpose of this manual is to guide tutors, facilitators, and trainers, through every stage of the Tutoring &Ttraining Kit methodology. It describes, step by step, how to approach SMEs, assess their digital maturity, define tailored strategies, and support the implementation of innovative solutions. Each phase of the process includes detailed activities, recommendations, and examples that tutors can adapt to the local context.

Beyond providing instructions, the manual aims to promote a culture of collaboration and learning. Tutors are encouraged to act as mediators between technology providers, entrepreneurs, and institutions, ensuring that digitalization becomes a sustainable and inclusive process. By combining technical understanding with empathy and communication skills, tutors can build trust and create long-term partnerships with SMEs.

Structure of the Manual



The manual is divided into five main phases that follow the natural flow of the digital transformation journey:

Chapter 1 - Awareness Raising:

Creating understanding, interest, and motivation among SMEs about the benefits of digitalization.
This phase focuses on building awareness about the importance and purpose of the tutoring process. It involves motivating participants, clarifying expectations, and creating a safe and open environment. The goal is to lay a strong foundation of understanding and commitment from all involved parties.

Chapter 2 - Needs Analysis

Identifying the specific challenges, opportunities, and digital maturity level of each company. In this stage, the specific needs of the mentee are identified through tools such as interviews, surveys, or observation. It helps uncover strengths, weaknesses, goals, and potential barriers. This analysis ensures the tutoring process is tailored to the real and individual needs of the learner.

Chapter 3 - Defining Strategy

Turning insights into a structured Digital Transformation Strategy with clear objectives and actions. Based on the needs identified, clear objectives are set and a structured action plan is developed. This includes defining methods, selecting resources, establishing timelines, and assigning roles. A well-defined strategy ensures the tutoring process is purposeful and aligned with desired outcomes.

Chapter 4 – Implementation

Supporting the execution of pilot projects, monitoring progress, and ensuring practical results. This is the execution phase of the tutoring process. Tutors and mentees engage in planned sessions, activities, and feedback loops. Active participation, monitoring, and ongoing adjustments are key to ensuring progress and maintaining relevance throughout the process.

Chapter 5 - Lessons learned

Consolidating lessons learned, celebrating achievements, and planning continuous improvement.
At the end of the process, results are evaluated against the initial goals. Key takeaways, best practices, and areas for improvement are documented. This phase is essential for continuous improvement and for informing future tutoring practices and strategies.

Attachments

- EU Funding Opportunities



CHAPTER 1
AWARENESS RAISING

The Awareness Raising phase focuses on introducing the Tutoring and Training Kit services to entrepreneurs and SMEs. This phase is designed to build understanding, trust, and engagement around digital transformation opportunities. It helps tutors identify the most effective ways to reach local businesses and communicate the benefits of digital adoption. Successful awareness activities create the foundation for a collaborative process and motivate SMEs to participate actively.



Activity 1.1 **Broadening the Strategy**

Promotion of the service must also be integrated into the tutor's communication strategy. This includes creating concise, attractive messages explaining how the tutoring and training service supports business competitiveness. Social media posts, newsletters, and partnerships with local institutions are key dissemination tools.

The Tube Story, which is available on the project webpage, should be included in the tutor's strategy to promote awareness and engagement of the entrepreneur and SMEs in early phases of the T&T process.
Link to the Tube Story : https://www.smartersmes.eu/videos/

Activity 1.2 **Choice of Communication Channels and Dissemination**

Selecting the right communication channels depends on the SME ecosystem. Online channels such as LinkedIn and email campaigns are ideal for reaching professionals, while local media or events might be better suited for smaller or traditional businesses. The objective is to balance digital visibility with local presence. Each channel should have a clear message and a measurable goal.

Good practice suggests that messages must be consistent and use simple, non-technical language. Case studies or testimonials from other SMEs that benefited from digital transformation can enhance credibility.

Regular updates help maintain interest and establish trust over time.

Activity 1.3 **Workshop Organization (Optional)**

Workshops provide a space for direct interaction and trust-building. They allow SMEs to share experiences and gain practical knowledge about digital opportunities. Tutors should design sessions that are interactive, combining short presentations with group discussions or live demonstrations of digital tools.

The organization of workshops plays a crucial role in building and strengthening professional networks. Workshops bring together individuals and organizations with diverse expertise, experiences, and perspectives, creating a natural environment for collaboration and exchange. Through interactive sessions, discussions, and joint problem-solving, participants have the opportunity to connect on both professional and personal levels, laying the groundwork for lasting partnerships. Beyond the immediate learning outcomes, well-organized workshops foster a sense of community and shared purpose — enabling participants to identify synergies, explore future collaborations, and support one another's growth long after the event has ended.

It is advisable to invite local success stories or industry experts to participate as speakers. This increases engagement and gives credibility to the initiative. After the workshop, feedback should be collected to improve future events and strengthen relationships with participants. Materials like the Technology and Success Story sheets are recommended to be used in this phase to increase the awareness on the importance of the implementation of a Digital Transformation Strategy.



CHAPTER 2
NEEDS ANALYSIS

The Needs Analysis phase aims to identify the specific challenges and opportunities that each SME faces in its digital journey. By conducting structured conversations and using analytical tools, tutors can assess the level of digital maturity and define areas for improvement. The process should be individualized and respectful of the SME's pace and resources.

Activity 2.1 **One-to-One Meeting with the Entrepreneur and the Digital Advisor**

A personalized meeting between the SME and the Digital Advisor is the cornerstone of the analysis. During this session, the advisor helps the entrepreneur reflect on current business practices, digital capabilities, and goals. Open questions and listening skills are key to identifying real needs rather than perceived problems.

The meeting should end with a preliminary list of digital priorities, classified by urgency and potential impact. The advisor may propose short-term actions to build confidence and demonstrate quick results, preparing the SME for deeper transformation steps.

Activity 2.2 **Support with Tools: PESTEL, GAP, and CANVAS (Optional)**

Complementary analytical tools can help clarify the SME's position in its ecosystem. A PESTEL analysis identifies external factors influencing the business environment, while a GAP analysis highlights the difference between the current and desired states. The Business Model Canvas can visualize value propositions, customer relations, and key activities, encouraging strategic thinking.

These tools are optional, but highly recommended for tutors seeking to provide structured and visual support. The results should be discussed collaboratively, helping the entrepreneur make informed decisions. The main goal is to align business strategy with digital innovation possibilities. Additional information on the use of these tools is included on the MOOC course Learning Unit on the following link: https://www.smartersmes.eu





CHAPTER 3
DEFINING STRATEGY

Once the needs are clear,the next step is to define a coherent and realistic Digital Transformation Strategy. This phase turns analysis into actionable plans, ensuring that digital initiatives are aligned with the SME's long-term objectives. Tutors play a key role as facilitators, guiding the entrepreneur through structured reflection and prioritization.

Before starting with the definition of the strategy, you can find some examples of the Digital Transformation Strategies of SMEs:

EXAMPLES OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGIES FOR **SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES**

Example 1

ARREDOLEGNO
Custom Furniture Manufacturing

Sector: Custom-made furniture manufacturing
Employees: 15
Annual turnover: €1.4 million
Target customers: Architects, interior designers, private clients
Starting point: Traditional craftsmanship with limited digital tools (basic website, manual order processing)

1. VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

"We want to become a reference point online for high-quality custom-made furniture, improving internal efficiency and offering customers a personalized digital experience."

12-month goals:

- Increase online business inquiries by 30%
- Reduce average quotation preparation time by 20%
- Launch an online product configurator for custom furniture
- Digitize order management and invoicing processes

2. DIGITAL MATURITY ASSESSMENT (FAST SCAN TOOL)

Strengths:

- Close-knit team, owner open to change
- Basic online presence already in place

Weaknesses:

- Poor integration between production, sales, and administration
- No structured digital marketing activity

Limited knowledge of enabling digital technologies

3. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (FAST STRAT TOOL + TUTORING)

Areas of intervention:

- Web & Digital Marketing: website redesign + SEO + social media presence
- Internal Digitization: introduction of lightweight ERP and CRM systems
- Offering Innovation: development of a 3D configurator for customer use
- Staff Training: basic digital skills training for employees
- Access to incentives: use of digitalization vouchers from the local Chamber of Commerce

4. SUMMARY OPERATIONAL PLAN

Action	Responsible	Timeline	Resources
Website redesign + SEO	External agency	2 months	€5,000
ERP system implementation	Owner + software provider	3 months	€7,000
Social media + newsletter setup	Trained internal sta	1 month	Internal
Basic digital skills training	Tutor + external consultant	2 days	SMARTER SMEs
3D configurator development	Freelance UX + woodworking team	4 months	€10,000
Digitalization voucher request	Owner + SME association (CNA)	1 month	Free support

5. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)

- Number of quotation requests via website
- Average time to prepare a quotation
- Social media followers and engagement rate
- Percentage of orders processed digitally
- Number of employees trained in digital tools

6. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- Quarterly KPI monitoring with tutor
- Internal review meetings for strategy progress
- Expansion of ERP system to additional processes
- Cost-benefit analysis for integrating warehouse management

7. ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP

- Participated in SMARTER SMEs workshops
- Uses cloud tools, email, and collaborative platforms daily
- Actively promotes transformation within the company
- Hired a young professional to support digital marketing and content creation

8. TUTORING DELIVERABLES

- Fast Scan Tool report
- Customized strategy validated with tutor
- Shared operational plan with internal team
- Simple KPI dashboard (Excel)
- Letters of intent with digital solution providers
- Draft plan for co-financing with public support schemes

This example strategy reflects a pragmatic, modular, and sustainable approach, focused on measurable outcomes and enabling a solid, step-by-step digital transformation journey.

Example 2

MECCATRONICA B.G. SRL

Sector: Precision mechanical subcontracting
Employees: 27
Annual turnover: €3.2 million
Typical clients: OEMs in the automotive, packaging, and machinery sectors
Starting point: Partial digitization (advanced CAD-CAM and CNC use, but limited process integration

1. VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

"Digitize key processes to improve production efficiency and traceability, strengthen competitiveness, and attract new clients in the automotive and Industry 4.0 sectors."

12-month goals:

- Reduce order-to-delivery time by 25%
- Automate at least 3 repetitive administrative processes
- Implement digital traceability for production batches
- Create real-time production monitoring dashboards

2. DIGITAL MATURITY ASSESSMENT (FAST SCAN TOOL)

Strengths:

- Strong technical know-how
- Advanced use of CAD-CAM and CNC systems
- Owner is innovation-oriented

Weaknesses:

- Production still managed with Excel and paper-based systems
- No CRM, ERP, or MES in place
- Poor integration between technical, sales, and production departments

3. STRATEGIC LEVERS (FAST STRAT TOOL + TUTORING)

Focus areas:

- System integration (light ERP and MES introduction)
- Traceability and machine data collection (IoT)
- Document digitization and workflow automation
- Staff training and digital role development

4. SUMMARY OPERATIONAL PLAN

Action	Objective	Resources	Timeline	Notes
Selection and ERP setup	Integrate purchasing, production, logistics	Local software provider + internal team	3 months	Basic integration
Installation of machine sensors (IoT)	Real-time data from 3 CNCs	IoT vendor + internal ICT role	2 months	MES integration planned
Order and delivery document digitization	Paperless workflow and traceability	Internal + document management tool	1 months	Automation using templates
CRM adoption	Client/prospect relationship management	Marketing consultant + sales sta	2 months	Linked to website
Staff training	Basic digital tools + cybersecurity	Local training partner	2 training days	Practical sessions included

5. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)

- Average order processing time
- Number of documents digitized per month
- Percentage of digitally tracked orders
- Number of client visits managed through CRM
- Actual usage rate of the ERP system

6. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- Monthly KPI review with entrepreneur and digital lead
- Strategy adjustment every 3 months
- Gradual expansion of IoT to other processes
- Evaluation of digital warehouse integration

7. ROLE OF THE ENTREPRENEUR

- Actively participates in SMARTER SMEs workshops
- Appointed a junior staff member as digital referent
- Supports investment even without immediate return
- Engages with peer companies for benchmarking and experience sharing

8. TUTORING OUTPUTS

- Digital Advisor report
- Customized strategy co-developed with tutor
- Shared operational plan
- Letter of intent for investment with digital vouchers (or Industry 4.0 credits)

This strategy is based on a realistic, step-by-step approach, aimed at improving internal efficiency, leveraging technical know-how, and responding to increasing digital demands in the mechanical sector.

Example 3

NATURABELLA

Sector: Contract manufacturing and packaging of natural cosmetics
Employees: 18
Annual turnover: €1.8 million
Client base: Emerging brands, pharmacies, online retailers
Initial digitalization level: Limited to basic accounting tools and email-based order processing; production tracking still manual

1. VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

"We aim to become a digitally agile SME, capable of smart client interactions, digital tracking of production batches, showcasing the quality of our processes, and opening new commercial channels through online visibility."

12-month goals:

- Implement digital batch and shipping traceability (ISO and GMP compliant)
- Automate at least 3 administrative activities (orders, invoicing, client database)
- Enhance online presence and activate a digital B2B lead generation channel
- Train at least 5 employees in basic digital skills and cybersecurity

2. DIGITAL READINESS ASSESSMENT (FAST SCAN TOOL)

Strengths:

- Motivated owner with a strong interest in digitalization
- Well-structured production processes
- Solid regional brand reputation

Weaknesses:

- No integrated management system
- Outdated website, no SEO or active social channels
- Fully paper-based production documentation
- No CRM to manage current clients or prospects

3. STRATEGIC LEVERS (FAST STRAT TOOL + TUTORING)

Selected actions:

- Introduction of ERP software tailored to cosmetic manufacturing (batch management, inventory, orders)
- Website redesign with B2B content, SEO, and digital catalog
- Adoption of a cloud-based CRM for managing both B2B and B2C relationships
- Staff training on digital tools, order handling, and IT security
- Collection of customer feedback through simple digital tools after deliveries

4. SIMPLIFIED OPERATIONAL PLAN

Action	Objective	Resources	Timeline	Notes
ERP implementation for cosmetics	Traceability and automated compliance	Vertical ERP software + internal sta	3 months	Linked to supplier material data
Website restyling + digital catalog	Increase B2B leads	Specialized web agency	2 months	Includes case studies and contact forms
CRM activation	Client and communication management	Cloud-based CRM + internal sta	1 month	Integrated with newsletters and promos
Digital skills training	Operational digital literacy	SMARTER SMEs tutor + external trainer	2 training days	Includes practical exercises
Customer feedback collection	Service improvement	Google Forms + CRM integration	1 month	Sent after each completed delivery

5. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)

- % of batches digitally tracked
- Number of orders via website
- Customer repurchase rate (B2C)
- Warehouse error reduction
- Number of staff trained with successful outcome

6. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MECHANISM

- Monthly meetings with digital referent and tutor
- Semi-annual review of website content and e-commerce performance
- Collection and analysis of customer feedback
- Ongoing updates on funding opportunities (digital vouchers, rural development funds, national plans)

7. ROLE OF THE ENTREPRENEUR

- Actively leads the change, with an appetite for learning
- Appointed a junior team member as internal “digital champion”
- Participates in digital business events and training sessions
- Promotes a step-by-step, inclusive innovation culture within the company

8. TUTORING OUTPUTS

- Digital Advisor report
- Personalized digital strategy validated with tutor
- Shared operational plan
- Simple KPI dashboard (Excel or Google Sheets)
- Documentation for ERP, CRM, and e-commerce platform implementation
- Letter of intent for applying to digitalization voucher schemes

9. 12-MONTH STRATEGIC ROADMAP SUMMARY

Quarter	Main Actions
Q1	Staff training + ERP implementation kicko
Q2	Web site and CRM launch + SEO + LinkedIn business profile activation
Q3	Initial customer feedback collection+ internal audit for process review
Q4	Strengthened digital marketing+exploration of B2C line and e-commerce

This strategy allows the SME to:

- Strengthen compliance and internal quality
- Reach new customers through enhanced digital visibility
- Streamline operations and client communication
- Foster a realistic, inclusive, and sustainable path to digital transformation

Example 4

Sector: Artisanal production of aged and packaged cheeses
Employees: 22
Annual turnover: €2.5 million
Customer segments: Local large-scale retailers, restaurants, specialty shops, direct sales
Initial digitalization level: Limited to basic accounting software; order tracking and traceability still managed manually

1. VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

"We want to combine tradition and innovation by using digital tools to improve traceability, enhance customer communication, and expand into new markets through direct sales and a stronger online presence." 12-month goals:

- Implement digital traceability of production and shipping batches
- Increase direct sales via e-commerce by 20%
- Improve B2B interaction through adoption of a CRM system
- Train at least 5 staff members in basic digital skills and IT security

2. DIGITAL MATURITY ASSESSMENT (FAST SCAN TOOL)

Strengths:

- Digitally open-minded entrepreneur
- Well-defined and standardized production processes
- Strong reputation and loyal customer base

Weaknesses:

- No integrated management system
- Outdated website, no SEO, no active social channels
- Fully manual tracking of production batches
- No CRM for customer relationship management

3. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (FAST STRAT TOOL + TUTORING)

Selected strategic actions:

- Digitalization of batch traceability and HACCP documentation
- Website redesign with e-commerce integration
- Adoption of a CRM system for managing B2B and B2C relationships
- Staff training on digital tools, order management, and cybersecurity
- Implementation of a simple ERP (including warehouse management module)

4. SIMPLIFIED OPERATIONAL PLAN

Action	Objective	Resources	Timeline	Notes
Traceability software setup	Compliance and process automation	Food-sector ERP + internal team	3 months	Integrated with HACCP plan
Website redesign + e- commerce	Direct sales and brand visibility	Web agency specializing in food	2 months	Shopify-based + product storytelling
CRM system adoption	Client and prospect relationship tracking	Open-source CRM + trained sales sta	1 month	Connected to newsletters and promo tools
ERP implementation	Internal operational digitalization	ERP provider + accountant	4 months	Lightweight and scalable
Staff digital skills training	Digital literacy for daily operations	SMARTER SMEs tutor + external trainer	2 sessions	Includes basic cybersecurity modules

5. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)

- % of digitally tracked batches
- Number of online orders
- B2C customer repurchase rate
- Error rate in warehouse management
- Number of employees successfully trained

6. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MECHANISM

- Monthly monitoring meetings with digital referent and tutor
- Biannual update of website and e-commerce content
- Online customer satisfaction feedback analysis
- Constant review of funding opportunities (digital vouchers, Rural Development Plans, National Recovery and Resilience Plan)

7. ROLE OF THE ENTREPRENEUR

- Personally leads the transformation process
- Appointed an internal junior figure as digital champion
- Attends food-sector digital innovation fairs and workshops
- Encourages a positive attitude toward change among employees

8. TUTORING OUTPUTS

- Digital Advisor report
- Personalized digital strategy validated with the tutor
- Operational plan shared with team
- Simple KPI dashboard (Excel or Google Sheets)
- ERP, CRM, and e-commerce implementation documentation
- Letter of intent for digitalization voucher or grant application

9. 12-MONTH STRATEGIC ROADMAP SUMMARY

Quarter	Main Actions
Q1	Staff training+launch of traceability software
Q2	Website and CRM system live + SEO + social media page setup
Q3	Initial feedback collection + internal process audit
Q4	Enhanced digital marketing+B2C line development feasibility study

This strategy enables the SME to:

- Strengthening food safety compliance through digital tools
- Open new sales channels via e-commerce and improved B2B communication
- Streamline operational processes and documentation
- Build a sustainable internal digital culture focused on practical results



Activity 3.1 **Production of the First Draft**

The Digital Transformation Strategy draft should include several key elements: Vision and Objectives, Digital Maturity Assessment, Strategic Levels, and an Operational Action Plan. The vision sets the direction and desired impact of the transformation, while the maturity assessment provides a baseline for progress measurement. Strategic levels may include areas such as operations, marketing, customer management, and cybersecurity.

The Operational Action Plan translates strategic intentions into concrete steps. It defines responsibilities, timelines, and resources. Each action should be feasible, measurable, and adaptable. Tutors should ensure that SMEs understand that the strategy is a living document that can evolve as the company learns and grows.

→ To develop the first draft, the T&T KIT provides the following prompt to be executed on a Generative Artificial Intelligence (like Ghat GPT, Gemini, etc.):

> *Adopt the role of a digital Transformation consultant expert with the objective of defining a digital Transformation Strategy for an SME. A digital transformation strategy is a comprehensive roadmap that redefines how an organization operates, competes, and creates value through technology, data, and culture. It begins with a diagnosis of the current state—evaluating digital maturity, infrastructure, processes, and culture—to identify gaps and opportunities. From this foundation, a clear vision and mission are set, translating strategic intent into measurable objectives such as improving efficiency, automating workflows, or enhancing customer experience. Governance is established through a dedicated leadership structure (e.g., a digital committee or Chief Digital Officer) to ensure alignment, accountability, and change management, supported by communication and training programs that foster digital culture. The strategy then unfolds across key pillars: process redesign and automation, technological modernization (cloud, AI, cybersecurity), data intelligence, customer experience, and people development. Implementation follows a phased approach—planning and assessment, capability building, execution through pilot projects, and scaling successful initiatives. Write two paragraphs per phase of the Digital Transformation Strategy and the chapters of the report are to following ones: Vision and Strategic Objectives, Digital Maturity Assessment, Strategic Priorities, Summary Operational Plan and Entrepreneurial Leadership. At the end of the Operational Plan include a table with the following concepts: Action, Objective, Resources, Timeline and Notes. Pilot projects are crucial: small-scale experiments in high-impact areas used to test technologies, gather feedback, and validate results before wider rollout. Apart from the strategy it is necessary to define a pilot project to implement the most promising technology considering the situation of the SME, define it as an example, reasoning the need of the pilot project with a well-defined scope, targets and top 3 risks (all of this summarized in two paragraphs). No not made up any information which is not provided in the prompt and adjust the strategy depending on the maturity level. SMEs with the lowest level of maturity should receive a simpler digital transformation strategy with a more limited scope. Consider the following digital maturity of the company, to develop all the digital transformation strategy: "XXXXX".*

→ In the Yellow "XXXXX" zone, the results from the Digital Advisor must be included. And any additional information should also be included in the same spot to make the Artificial Intelligences feedback more accurate. The additional materials of the Defining Strategy phase include sectorial strategies for the main implementation frameworks of the Digital Transformation Strategies on the main relevant sectors. This sectorial strategies should be read to verify that the provided strategy is aligned with the main framework of the sector.

Activity 3.2 **Sending the Draft**

After completing the first draft, the tutor should send it to the SME by email. The message must be clear, inviting the entrepreneur to review the content and provide comments. A short explanation of each section helps the recipient navigate the document easily. Setting a deadline for feedback encourages commitment and accelerates progress.

Activity 3.3 **Feedback Meeting**

The feedback meeting serves to validate the draft and identify a pilot priority. During this session, both the tutor and the SME should discuss feasibility, available resources, and expected benefits. The main objective is to reach a shared decision on where to start implementing the transformation. This collaborative step reinforces trust and shared ownership of the process.
If some of the pilot project parts or other parts of the strategy are too technical, those details should be removed so during the feedback meeting, as an tutor you control all the content and conversation.





CHAPTER 4
IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation phase transforms strategic ideas into practical actions. It focuses on testing, evaluating, and learning from real applications of digital solutions. Tutors act as facilitators and coordinators, ensuring that SMEs receive adequate technical and organizational support.

Activity 4.1 **Select the Technology Supplier**

Choosing the right supplier is crucial for success. SMEs should prioritize providers that understand their size, constraints, and industry. Selection criteria may include experience, customer references, after-sales support, and the ability to offer scalable solutions. Tutors can support SMEs by preparing comparison matrices or providing sample evaluation templates.

Activity 4.2 **Define the Specific Scope of the Pilot Testing**

Defining the pilot scope ensures that expectations are clear and resources are well managed. The pilot should be small enough to control risks but large enough to generate meaningful insights. Key performance indicators (KPIs) should be agreed upon before starting, allowing both parties to measure progress objectively.

Activity 4.3 **The Execution**

During execution, close monitoring is essential. Tutors should check progress regularly, document obstacles, and collect lessons learned. Communication between the SME and the supplier must remain open and transparent. Flexibility and adaptability are critical, as pilot testing often requires adjustments along the way.

TOOL: PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF SMES

Purpose, introduction and structure of the guidelines

The purpose of the guidelines is to provide SME leaders with clear, practical support in the *implementation phase* of their digital transformation strategy. These guidelines translate the strategy into *concrete actions, operational suggestions, and manageable tools,* written in accessible language and focused on getting things done.

The guidelines are organized into the following *7 sections*, each aligned with the main areas of the digital strategy developed (in coherence with the Fast Strat Tool and tutoring outcomes).



7 step flowchart

The various sections are structured to help SME entrepreneurs implement their planned digital transformation strategy. Below is a summary of the contents of each phase and the expected results.

1. Operational Kick-Off: From Strategy to Action

The main content is about:

- How to review the strategy and identify actionable priorities;
- How to build a monthly mini-roadmap (3–6–12 months);
- How to define operational roles: entrepreneur, internal referent, external suppliers.
- Simple operational plan template (action – responsible – timeline – cost).

The expected outputs are related the *Initial operational plan* and a *shared calendar*.

2. Selecting and Managing Digital Suppliers

The main content of the section *Selecting and Managing Digital Suppliers* are about:

- Criteria for choosing the right digital suppliers for a small business
- Checklist for evaluating software solutions that are simple and scalable
- How to negotiate fair and clear contracts (avoid lock-in e ects and hidden costs)
- How to build a collaborative and long-term relationship with providers

The expected outputs are related to the *Supplier comparison sheet* and the *draft service agreement*.

3. Progressive Activation of Strategic Levers

The main content of the section *Progressive Activation of Strategic Levers* are about:

- Actionable tips for each strategic lever (examples: CRM, e-commerce, process automation, digital marketing)
- Start small (pilot actions), test, then scale
- Tools to document progress (Excel, Google Docs, dashboards)

The *Expected outputs* are:

- The action list.
- The test phase reports.
- The documented results.

4. Team Engagement and Culture Change

The main content of the section are about:

- How to explain the purpose of the transformation to the team;
- How to identify and train an internal “digital referent”;
- Approaches to internal training (microlearning, mentoring, video tutorials);
- How to manage resistance and encourage participation;

The *Expected outputs* are:

- The *Staff involvement plan*
- The *digital skills map*.

5. Security, Privacy, and Business Continuity

The main content of the section is about:

- Basic cybersecurity checklist for SMEs.
- Good practices for data backup and device protection.
- GDPR and data management essentials.
- Emergency response plan for digital incidents.

The *expected outputs* are:

- The security checklist.
- The privacy policy template.
- The business continuity plan.

6. Measuring Results and Continuous Improvement

The main content of the section *Measuring Results and Continuous Improvement* are about:

- How to choose meaningful KPIs for digital progress
- How to build a simple dashboard (Excel or Google Sheets)
- How and when to review results and adjust strategy

The *Expected outputs* are:

- The KPI dashboard.
- The internal report templates.
- The decision-making log.

7. Future Evolution and Sustainability

The main content of the section *Future Evolution and Sustainability* is about:

- How to extend the strategy beyond the first 12 months.
- How to monitor changes in the market and digital trends.
- Where to find support (training, funding, peer networks).

The *Expected outputs* are:

- 12–24-month roadmap.
- Digital budget forecast.
- Connection to support ecosystems.

Practical indications for the partners

Format of the Tool

- Interactive PDF version (section-by-section navigation)
- Editable Word/Excel templates for operational use (plans, dashboards, checklists)
- Printable short version (5-page executive summary)
- Available via the SMARTER SMEs project web platform

Partners must decide the format

Target Users

- SME leaders who have completed the tutoring process
- Internal digital referents or advisors supporting implementation

Role of the Tutor

- Present and explain the guidelines at the end of the tutoring path
- Help the entrepreneur tailor the templates to their specific strategy
- Offer follow-up support during the first 2–3 months of implementation

The sections

The guidelines were conceived as a takeaway tool the SME Entrepreneurs can use during the implementation of the digital strategy of their SME. The main descriptive components included in the section are:

- Objective.
- Activities to be implemented.
- Suggestions related the actions, the methods, the tools, roles.
- Detailed expected outcomes.

The description is very schematic, intended to be practical and easy to use.

1. Operational Kick-Off : How to Move from Strategy to Action

Objective

Transform the digital strategy, developed with the support of the tutor, into a **concrete action plan**, with clear tasks, defined responsibilities, and a shared calendar to launch the digital transformation journey.

1.1 How to Review the Strategy and Identify Key Priorities

Actions to be done with the entrepreneur:

- Review the finalized digital strategy together (based on the Fast Strat Tool and tutoring sessions).
- Highlight:
  - The *most urgent actions* (e.g., improve order management)
  - The *quick win***s** (e.g., open a LinkedIn company page)
  - The *highest-impact actions* in the short term (e.g., digitalize quotation processes)

Support tool A "strategic priority" sheet to classify actions into:

Immediately feasible
Mid-term feasible
To be planned later

1.2 How to Create a Monthly Mini-Roadmap (3–6–12 Months)

Recommended method:

- Break down the planned actions into three timeframes:
  - *Phase 1 (0–3 months):* Quick wins and basic steps (e.g., activate CRM, update website)
  - *Phase 2 (4–6 months):* Medium-complexity actions (e.g., digital document management)
  - *Phase 3 (7–12 months):* Structural or strategic actions (e.g., ERP, e-commerce, IoT)

Support tools:

- Timeline table
- Shared calendar (Google Calendar, Outlook) with reminders

1.3 How to Define Operational Roles

Minimum roles to be assigned:

- *Entrepreneur:* Oversees the transformation, actively participates in initial phases
- *Internal referent (even junior):* Coordinates operational steps, updates the plan, interfaces with suppliers
- *External suppliers*: Implement technical interventions (e.g., software, website, consulting)

Recommended activity: Create a "roles map" (on paper or shared tool) listing:

- names,
- responsibilities,
- preferred communication channel (e.g., email, WhatsApp, shared folder)

1.4 Simple Operational Plan Template

Action	Responsible	Timeline (examples)
Activate free cloud-based CRM	Internal referent	By Oct 15, 2025
Basic internal digital tools training	Tutor and external trainer	Oct 10, 2025
Website landing page redesign	Web agency	November 2025
Set up automatic admin data backup	Head of admin dept	October 2025

Tip: Use this same format in Excel or Google Sheets for ongoing monthly tracking

1.5 Expected Outputs

✔ A basic *operational plan* with at least 4–6 clear, scheduled, and assigned actions
✔ A *shared calendar* with automated reminders for tasks and meetings
✔ An updated *roles map* visible to the whole team involved
✔ A digital strategy no longer "on paper," but already *translated into action*

2. Selecting and Managing Digital Suppliers

Objective

Support the SME leader in selecting and managing **digital service providers** (software vendors, ICT consultants, web agencies, developers, system integrators) effectively, avoiding common mistakes unnecessary costs, or unsustainable dependencies.

2.1 How to Select Reliable and Suitable Suppliers

1. Clearly define what you need

- Start from your *operational plan*: What do you want to digitalize? With what objective? With what budget?

- Example: "We want to manage client relationships better" → you need a *basic CRM* with contact, appointment, and communication tracking functions.

2. Compare at least 2 or 3 suppliers

- Request *at least two comparable quotes*.
- Choose suppliers with *experience working with SMEs* in your industry or of similar size.
- Check their *online reputation:* reviews, portfolio, presence on professional platforms.

3. Ask the right questions

- Is the solution *scalable?* Can I start small and expand later?
- Will I be able to *use the system independently* after implementation?
- Are the costs *one-off , recurring, or usage-based*?
- What is the *average response time for support*?

2.2 Supplier Comparison Checklist

Evaluation Criteria	Supplier A	Supplier B
Experience with SMEs in my industry	✓/✗	✓/✗
Transparent, sustainable pricing	€	€
Free trial available	✓/✗	✓/✗
Product scalability	✓/✗	✓/✗
Post-sale support and helpdesk	✓/✗	✓/✗
Compatibility with current tools	✓/✗	✓/✗

2.3 What to Avoid

- Tools that are too complex or oversized for your SME
- Rigid contracts or unclear clauses
- Suppliers with no support or extremely slow response times
- Dependence on a single developer or irreplaceable freelancer

2.4 How to Build a Good Working Relationship

- Schedule an initial alignment call to clarify goals and expectations
- Assign an internal referent for each supplier
- Agree on a mini work plan with clear deadlines and check-ins
- Keep a written record (emails, minutes) of decisions, costs, and changes

2.5 Useful Tools

- Excel template for comparing suppliers Lightweight contract
- or service agreement template, including:
  - Scope of work
  - Timelines
  - Costs

- Mutual responsibilities
- Exit terms and conditions

2.6 Expected Outputs

- At least one selected supplier aligned with the SME's strategy
- A clear, sustainable contract or service agreement
- A shared work plan between the SME and supplier
- Initial implementation of a key action (e.g., CRM, website, management software)

3. Progressive Implementation of Strategic Levers

Objective

Support the SME in progressively activating the *strategic levers* defined in the digital transformation plan, starting with small, manageable steps that allow testing, learning, and gradual scaling.

3.1 What Are Strategic Levers?

They are the *key areas of intervention* identified in the strategy that contribute to transforming the business. Examples include:

- Introduction of a *CRM system*
- Launching an *e-commerce channel*
- Digitization of internal *administrative or production processes*
- Activation of a *digital marketing strategy*
- Use of *IoT and traceability systems*
- Adoption of *collaborative tools* for internal communication

3.2 How to Implement Them Step by Step

1. Start small

- Choose *one or two levers that are simple, low-cost, and high-impact*.
- *Example: begin* with a free CRM trial or create a basic presence on LinkedIn.

2. Test and adapt

- Set *a limited test period (e.g., 30 or 60 days)*.
- *Observe usage, gather feedback, and evaluate benefits*.
- *Adapt tools* and procedures based on real needs.

3. Document what works

- *Keep a simple digital action log (Excel or Google Sheet)*.
- *Note*: what was done, what worked, what didn't, and what could be improved.

4. Expand gradually

- If the *pilot works, scale it up: apply the tool to other areas or involve other employees*.
- *Example:* extend the use of document sharing tools from administration to logistics and sales.

3.3 Support Tools

- Digital Action *Log template*
- *Pilot Plan template (Objective – Tool – Duration – Person Responsible – Result)*
- *Internal feedback form*
- *Simple progress* dashboard (color-coded for clarity)

3.4 Tips for SMEs

- *Don't try to do everything at once: prioritize.*
- *Involve the team in testing and feedback.*
- *Before buying new tools, try to maximize what is already available.*
- *If a tool* doesn't work, *change direction quickly.*

3.5 Expected Outputs

- 1 to 3 strategic *levers activated in the first 3–6 months*
- *Documented results of pilot tests*
- *Internal learning and shared improvements*
- *Increased confidence* and engagement among team members

4. Team Engagement and Cultural Change

Objective

Support the SME in involving its team and fostering a cultural change that integrates digital transformation into daily operations, *overcoming resistance*, recognizing internal potential, and encouraging adoption of new tools.

4.1 How to Explain the "Why" Behind the Change

Suggested activity: Organize a *kick-o meeting* (30–60 minutes), led by the entrepreneur or tutor, to share with the team:

- Why the company is embarking on a digital transformation
- What the goals are (e.g., working more efficiently, reducing errors, offering new services)
- Which tools will be introduced and when
- How each person can contribute to the process

Practical support: Use a simple slide, whiteboard, or printed worksheet with 3 key questions:

1. What will change in my work over the next 3 months?
2. What can I learn or improve?
3. What do I need to face this change?

4.2 How to Appoint an Internal Digital Referent

Who can be the digital referent?

- A younger employee with basic digital skills
- An administrative team member with organizational aptitude
- Even a motivated junior employee or apprentice open to learning

Responsibilities of the referent:

- Act as a bridge between entrepreneur, team, and suppliers
- Follow the operational plan and update progress
- Support the day-to-day use of new tools (CRM, cloud, management software)

Helpful activity: Clearly define *tasks, time allocation, and communication tools* (e.g., weekly checklist, WhatsApp group, shared folder).

4.3 How to Organize Staff Training

Recommended methods:

- *Micro-training sessions:* short sessions (30–60 minutes) during working hours
- *On-the-job learning:* learning by directly using the tool
- *Mini video tutorials or guides:* created by the tutor or sourced online (YouTube, public platforms)
- *Peer support:* more experienced staff help those less confident

Practical examples of content:

- How to log in and use a cloud platform
- How to create a digital quote
- How to manage passwords and protect company data

4.4 How to Address Resistance

Common types of resistance:

- Fear of not being capable
- Belief that “it's not necessary” or “now is not the time”
- Perception that digital means more work or more confusion

How to respond:

- Involve gradually
- Listen to concerns and celebrate small wins
- Show tangible benefits: fewer errors, less paper, more time for valuable tasks

4.5 Expected Outputs

- Kick-off meeting held with at least 60% of the team present
- Digital referent identified with clear responsibilities
- At least one training activity completed (formal or informal)
- Feedback gathered on employee perceptions (even informally)
- Improved workplace climate around digital topics

5. Security, Privacy, and Business Continuity

Objective

Help SMEs adopt *basic digital security and privacy practices*, ensuring the protection of data, the resilience of systems, and business continuity in case of unexpected events or cyber incidents.

5.1 Basic Cybersecurity Checklist

Every SME should adopt a set of minimum security measures, even with limited resources:

Security Measure	Recommended Tool / Tip
Use strong and different passwords	Use a password manager (e.g., Bitwarden, LastPass)
Regular backups of key business data	Schedule automatic backups weekly (external drive or cloud)
Antivirus and firewall on all devices	Even free solutions are sufficient if updated regularly
Enable two-factor authentication (2FA)	Especially for email, banking, and cloud platforms
Limit access to sensitive files	Only authorized personnel should access critical data

Tutor's role: verify with the SME whether these elements are in place; help create a simple checklist if not.

5.2 Privacy and GDPR Essentials

What every SME should know:

- If the company stores customer, supplier, or employee data, *GDPR applies*.
- It is necessary to:
  - o Inform users about how their data is used (privacy notice)
  - o Store data securely and only as long as necessary
  - o Assign a person responsible for data management, even informally
  - o Keep a record of data processing activities (a simple Excel can suffice)

Common areas to review:

- Website contact forms
- Customer email lists
- Invoices and archived contracts
- Cloud storage and access policies

Suggested tools:

- Basic privacy policy templates (available from local trade associations or chambers of commerce
- Training videos on GDPR for micro-enterprises (available online, also in local language)

5.3 Business Continuity Plan

Unexpected events (e.g., power outages, cyberattacks, data loss) can interrupt operations. A *simple continuity plan* helps the SME recover quickly.

Key elements of a basic plan:

- What to do in case of loss of internet or server access
- Who to contact (IT supplier, internal contact person)
- Where data backups are stored and how to access them
- Which activities can continue manually or offline
- How to communicate the issue to customers or suppliers if needed

Support output: fill-in template with:

- Emergency contact list
- Description of key systems
- Step-by-step guide for restoring operations
- Internal communication protocol

5.4 Expected Outputs

- Security and privacy checklist completed
- Internal identification of who is responsible for data and backups
- Privacy policy in place or updated
- Business continuity plan drafted in a simple, clear format

6. Measuring Results and Continuous Improvement

Objective

Enable SME leaders to *evaluate the real impact* of their digital transformation efforts, identify issues, celebrate wins, and adapt the strategy over time through a continuous improvement process that's accessible even for small enterprises.

6.1 What "measurement" means in SME digitalization

- No need for complex systems: *a few simple, clear, periodic indicators* are enough.
- Measurement must be *decision-oriented*: if an action delivers no results, it should be modified, paused, or replaced.
- Measurement should involve the people doing the work: *sta , internal referents, consultants*.

6.2 How to choose the right indicators (KPIs)

1. Align with your strategic goals

Examples:

- Goal: improve customer relations → KPI: number of monthly follow-ups via CRM
- Goal: increase online sales → KPI: monthly ecommerce orders
- Goal: reduce errors → KPI: number of delivery note or return errors per month

2. Ensure they are measurable with available tools

- CRM: number of managed contacts
- Website: traffic, form submissions (via Google Analytics)
- ERP: average order fulfillment time, number of automated orders
- Excel or surveys: customer satisfaction or team feedback

Examples of minimum KPIs for SMEs

Area	Example KPI	Frequency
Customer Relations (CRM)	Number of new contacts handled	Monthly
Sales & Marketing	Website inquiries via forms	Monthly
Operations (ERP)	Average order processing time	Quarterly
Quality Control	Number of errors in delivery documentation	Monthly
Staff Development	Number of employees trained digitally	Quarterly

6.3 How to build a simple dashboard

- Use Excel or Google Sheets
- Create a table with: KPI | Target Value | Actual Value | Gap | Notes
- Add color codes: green = on/above target, yellow = near target, red = o target
- Update regularly (monthly or bi-monthly)

6.4 Continuous improvement process

1. Set review intervals

- Monthly: operational updates
- Quarterly: strategic review with tutor or digital referent

2. Compare expected vs. actual results

- If an action works: consolidate and expand it
- If it doesn't: find the reason (tool design, training gap, process issue) and adjust

3. Document learnings

- Keep track of challenges, solutions, and best practices
- Engage sta : gather feedback on what works and what could be better

6.5 Expected Outputs

- KPI dashboard updated at least every two months
- Strategy adjustments based on data
- A simplified report (table format is fine) of results and decisions made

7. Future Evolution and Sustainability of the Transformation

Objective Help SME leaders *extend the digital transformation beyond the first year*, making it a continuous and sustainable process aligned with future developments, market evolution, and opportunities for growth and funding.

7.1 How to look beyond the 12-month horizon

After the first implementation phase, the company should ask itself:

- What part of the transformation can be *expanded* or **d***eepened*?
- What new needs or opportunities have *emerged* during the process?
- What actions could become part of a *three-year digital vision*?

Examples:

- If the CRM is working → connect it to email marketing tools
- If the ERP has improved operations → extend it to logistics and invoicing
- If e-commerce is active → develop digital storytelling or export strategies

7.2 How to ensure long-term sustainability

A transformation is sustainable when:

- The company develops *internal digital skills*, even basic
- The entrepreneur or digital referent *monitors* changes in technology and the market
- A *budget* is allocated annually to digital innovation (even small)
- Partnerships with digital providers and networks are *maintained over time*

Support activity: create a simple *"digital continuity" checklist:*

- At least one person stays updated (events, newsletters)
- Annual budget for digital investments (even €1,000–3,000)
- At least one action per year to strengthen or expand what's been done
- Participation in a network (association, incubator, cluster)

7.3 Where to find support and funding

Examples of opportunities to monitor:

- National or regional digital vouchers
- Chamber of commerce incentives for innovation and training
- European calls and cooperation projects (e.g., Erasmus+, Horizon Europe)
- Public-private partnerships (e.g., with ITS, universities, or digital hubs)

Tools:

- Subscribe to SME-focused digital innovation newsletters (e.g., DIH, PID)
- Follow local business associations' websites
- Request support from local innovation brokers or consultants

7.4 Drawing a medium-term roadmap

Create a *12–24 month roadmap* (one page is enough), with:

- Strategic directions (e.g., "Improve B2B automation," "Strengthen cybersecurity")
- Planned actions
- Roles and possible funding sources
- Periodic review moments (e.g., every 6 months)

7.5 Expected Outputs

- A basic plan for post-project continuity (2025–2026)
- At least 2 future actions identified and scheduled
- A digital budget estimate
- Connections with at least one source of support or funding



CHAPTER 5
Lessons Learned

The final phase focuses on consolidating results, capturing lessons learned, and ensuring sustainability. Closing the process properly helps build confidence and set the stage for continuous improvement. Tutors should facilitate reflection and encourage SMEs to celebrate success.

Activity 5.1 **Gathering and Documenting the Success Story**

Each digital transformation journey provides valuable insights. Documenting success stories helps inspire other SMEs and showcase the e ectiveness of the Tutoring and Training Kit. The story should include initial challenges, implemented solutions, and measurable results. Photographs or testimonials can enrich the narrative and make it more relatable.

Activity 5.2 **Continuous Improvement**

Digital transformation is an ongoing process. SMEs should periodically review their strategies and adapt them to new technologies and market conditions. Tutors can o er follow-up sessions to reassess progress, identify new opportunities, and support further innovation.

Activity 5.3 **Feedback from the SME/Entrepreneur**

Finally, collecting structured feedback from the SME or entrepreneur ensures the continuous improvement of the Tutoring and Training Kit. Short surveys or interviews can reveal the most valuable aspects of the service and areas needing refinement. This feedback loop guarantees that future iterations remain relevant and e 4ective.



ATTACHMENT 1

EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

To support the pilot projects' priority and find a financing opportunity,the T&T KIT provides information to the following national and international calls:

ITALY

CALL	DESCRIPTION CONDITIONS	FREQUENCY	TYPE	LINK 2025 CALL
Digital Transition Fund (PNRR)	Fondo a supporto di startup e PMI innovative per investimenti digitali (AI, cybersecurity, ERP, cloud). Scadenza 30 giugno 2026 (CSMT)	One- o	Grant + Equity	https://www.csmt.it/it/bandi
Digital Transition SIMEST (PNRR)	Finanziamento agevolato + fondo perduto fino al 40% nel Sud, 25% nel resto d'Italia per spese digitali e internazionalizzazione. Sportello continua	Continuous	Loan + Grant	https://www.simest.it/.../transizione-digitale/
Invitalia – Digital Transformation)	Finanziamenti agevolati e a fondo perduto per trasformazione digitale di PMI e PMI innovative. Fino esaurimento risorse	Continuous	Loan + Grant	https://www.invitalia.it
FESR – Fondi di Coesione 2021-2027	Risorse per digitalizzazione PMI tramite programmi regionali FESR, cofinanziamento UE, importo variabile	Multi-annual	EU Grant	Vedi portali regionali FESR

PORTUGAL

CALL	DESCRIPTION CONDITIONS	FREQUENCY	TYPE	LINK 2025 CALL
Acelerar o Norte	Project where a diagnosis is made of SMEs' digitisation maturity and where they have access to vouchers to support them in the digitisation process			
Bairros Comerciais Digitais	It aims to create an e-commerce platform that brings small businesses together to have an online shop.			
Emprego+digital	Empowering entrepreneurs and employees			

SPAIN

CALL	DESCRIPTION CONDITIONS	FREQUENCY	TYPE	LINK 2025 CALL
HA ZITEK	Apoyo a la realización de Proyectos de Investigación Industrial o Desarrollo Experimental, tanto de carácter competitivo como de carácter estratégico, en el sector empresarial de la Comunidad Autónoma de Euskadi, y en los ámbitos de especialización enmarcados en el nuevo Plan de Ciencia y Tecnología de Euskadi 2030 (PCTI 2030).	January (annual)	Personal and Materiales	Hazitek 2025. Apoyo a la I+D Empresarial - Ayudas SPRI
HA ZITEK	Apoyo a la realización de Investigación Colaborativa, llevada a cabo por las Entidades de Investigación, Desarrollo e Innovación integradas en la Red Vasca de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación de Euskadi, en los ámbitos de especialización enmarcados en el Plan de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación Euskadi 2030.	January (annual)	Personal and Materiales	Elkartek 2025. Apoyo a la investigación colaborativa - Ayudas SPRI
Fast Track Innobideak	Apoyo a la realización de proyectos de innovación en los ámbitos de especialización enmarcados en el Plan de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación Euskadi 2030 y/o la realización de acciones complementarias clave para el impulso de la innovación.	January (annual)	Personal and Materiales	https://www.spri.eus/es/ayudas/fast-track-innobideak/
AEI - Agrupaciones Empresariales Innovadoras	El programa de apoyo a las Agrupaciones Empresariales Innovadoras (AEI) tiene como objeto mejorar la competitividad de las pequeñas y medianas empresas. Subvenciona los proyectos y actuaciones dirigidos a la realización de estudios de viabilidad técnica bien, de forma individual por la parte de la agrupación empresarial innovadora o bien, mediante colaboración entre varias agrupaciones empresariales innovadoras; y desarrollo de proyectos de Tecnologías Digitales de innovadora mediante colaboración entre varias agrupaciones empresariales innovadoras.	Julio (annual)	Gasto de personal	Portal de Ayudas del Ministerio de Industria y Turismo
BDIH Konexio	Apoyo a la incorporación de tecnologías digitales y sostenibles en el diseño y desarrollo de productos y servicios de empresas manufactureras mediante proyectos de análisis de viabilidad, asesoramiento y acompañamiento técnico sobre los activos que componen el Basque Digital Innovation Hub (BDIH) en los ámbitos de robótica flexible y colaborativa, fabricación aditiva, ciberseguridad, máquinas conectadas, materiales avanzados, dispositivos médicos y salud digital y redes eléctricas digitales.	January (annual)	Subcontratar servicios de centros tecnológicos	https://www.spri.eus/es/ayudas/bdih-konexio/

IREL AND

CALL	DESCRIPTION CONDITIONS	FREQUENCY	TYPE	LINK 2025 CALL
Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment (DETE)	The Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment (DETE) funds and promotes enterprise-led innovation through a range of programmes and supports delivered thorugh a range of Irish agencies. The Department o ers the Grow Digital Portal which highlights the opportunities that digital tools and technologies can o er to businesses, and provides advice alongside information on potential supports, training and funding options.			
Enterprise Ireland	Enterprise Ireland is the Irish government's enterprise development agency, investing in and supporting the development of Irish-owned companies on their journey to achieving greater scale and to become global leaders in their field. As part of Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan and funded by the European Union, the Digital Transition Fund/Ciste Trasdula Digiteach will drive transformative digitalisation of enterprise in Ireland, particularly amongst SMEs. The fund will help companies at all stages of their digitalisation journey.			
Enterprise Ireland	Enterprise Ireland is the Irish government's enterprise development agency, investing in and supporting the development of Irish-owned companies on their journey to achieving greater scale and to become global leaders in their field. Enterprise Ireland o ers the Digital Discovery grant which aims to incentivise and support companies to introduce new digital technologies and solutions into their operations.			
Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs)	The Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) in Ireland are a network of 31 offices, each located within a local authority, serving as a first-stop shop for businesses seeking support and guidance. These offices provide a range of services to assist entrepreneurs in starting and growing businesses, including financial assistance, training programmes, mentoring, and advisory services. The Grow Digital Voucher offers small and medium businesses with up to 50 employees financial support to embrace digital technology. A digital for business project report must be completed within the previous two years.			
Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs)	The Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) in Ireland are a network of 31 offices, each located within a local authority, serving as a first-stop shop for businesses seeking support and guidance. These offices provide a range of services to assist entrepreneurs in starting and growing businesses, including financial assistance, training programmes, mentoring, and advisory services. In particular, they offer digital tools, training, and the Digital for Business initiative, which helps analyse existing digital systems.			

GERMANY

CALL	DESCRIPTION CONDITIONS	FREQUENCY	TYPE	LINK 2025 CALL
DigiWohl (Europäischer Sozialfonds Plus (ESF+)	Ein Förderprogramm unterstützt gemeinnützige Träger der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege bei der Entwicklung und Erprobung digitaler Lösungen in der sozialen Arbeit. Ziel ist es, digitale Ansätze stärker in die direkte Arbeit mit Klientinnen zu integrieren. Dabei sollen sowohl die Bedarfe der Nutzerinnen als auch die Voraussetzungen der Mitarbeitenden berücksichtigt werden, um soziale Dienstleistungen zukunftsfähig zu gestalten.	New call planned for Summer 2025	Personel and Materials	https://www.esf.de/portal/DE/ESF-Plus-2021-2027/Foerderprogramme/bmfsfj/digiwohl.html
INQA-Coaching	Das INQA-Coaching Programm, verantwortet vom BMAS, unterstützt Organisationen und Unternehmen dabei, sich zukunftssicher aufzustellen. Es hilft insbesondere bei der Digitalisierung und Modernisierung von Arbeitsprozessen. Fördermöglichkeiten für digitale Vorhaben umfassen unter anderem eine Analyse der Ausgangssituation und konkrete Handlungspläne zur digitalen Transformation, die durch externe Coaches begleitet werden.	Anytime	Funding of consulting fees	https://www.esf.de/portal/DE/ESF-Plus-2021-2027/Foerderprogramme/bmas/inqa-coaching.html

EUROPE

CALL	DESCRIPTION CONDITIONS	FREQUENCY	TYPE	LINK 2025 CALL
Erasmus+	Erasmus+ is the EU's largest education program. Erasmus+ has a total budget of €26.5 billion until 2027 to support projects in the fields of general and vocational education, as well as youth and sports. Among other things, Erasmus+ supports projects that promote the use of digital technologies in education and strengthen digital skills. For more information, visit the European Commission's website.		Personel and Materials	
Digital Europe Programme	The funding program was newly established for the 2021–2027 funding period and has a budget of approximately €7.6 billion. The aim of the program is to support the digital transformation of the economy and society in Europe. Specific funding priorities include the expansion of high-performance computing, the development and strengthening of artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and projects to improve digital skills in businesses and public administrations. For more information about the Digital Europe Program, visit the European Commission's website.		Personel and Materials	

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Project Partners



SMARTER

SMEs

Strategic Mindsets and Redesigned Technological Environments Regenerate