

**SUPPORTING THE  
ADVENTUROUS  
TOURISM INDUSTRY  
IN GOZO THROUGH  
HIRING EQUIPMENT  
REFUND SCHEME  
2022**



**GOVERNMENT OF MALTA**  
MINISTRY FOR GOZO

## Supporting the Adventurous Tourism Industry in Gozo through Hiring Equipment Refund Scheme

### NOTES TO APPLICANTS

#### 1. OBJECTIVE OF THIS SCHEME

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Adventurous activities are one of main touristic pillar-niches of Gozo. The objective behind this scheme is to incentivise private operators within the Adventure Tourism Niche to continue investing in sustainable, modern and up-to-standard equipment, while also increasing their capacity. This scheme provides operators within this niche a partial cash grant to stimulate further investment in eco-friendly and zero-emissions equipment that is hired to clients, ultimately giving further credibility to the Gozo brand as an all-year round sustainable holiday destination. The scheme is expected to contribute to a more competitive and sustainable economic niche market (adventure activities), improve the quality of service offered, improve the ability and capacity of operators, incentivise new businesses within the sector and/or the enlargement of businesses already in place, incentivise sustainable environmental practices and increase tourist expenditure per capita.

#### 2. BENEFICIARIES

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The business entities eligible to benefit from this scheme must be based in Gozo and be operating in the Adventure Tourism industry. Activities within this industry eligible for funds under this scheme include (**in no particular order**):

- Abseiling, rock climbing and bouldering
- Water sports
- Diving
- Cycling
- Segways
- Safety equipment related to adventurous activities

The Directorate does not exclude business entities carrying out any other adventure activities not listed above, depending on their potential contribution to qualitative and sustainable tourism.

#### 3. ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

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**3.1** The business entity must be located in **Gozo** and must be licensed tourism operators/dive-centres, registered with the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA), or must hold a valid operating licence.

**3.2** The business entity must be in possession of a **valid insurance cover** recognising its capacity as operator within the particular tourism activity.

**3.3** **ONE** application is to be submitted per business entity per calendar year.

**3.4** To be eligible to benefit from this scheme, the equipment shall be purchased between **1<sup>st</sup> July 2022** and **31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**. Retrospective purchases shall **NOT** be considered eligible.

**3.5** The Ministry for Gozo will approve or reject the application within a period of **three weeks** following the submission of the application.

**3.6** The Ministry for Gozo will cover **up to 50%** of the eligible equipment pertaining to the activities listed in Section 2 above, up to a **maximum of EUR 5,000**.

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- 3.7 50% of the eligible grant** shall be reimbursed as soon as the applicant provides proof of purchase, whereas the remaining 50% of the grant shall be reimbursed after the elapse of **one year** from the date of purchase and following the receipt of the documentation required.
- 3.8** Upon purchasing the equipment subsidised through this scheme, the applicant is to provide a **photo** of the equipment and its **serial number**. The applicant shall be required to retain the **packaging** of the equipment for a one-year period and the Directorate reserves the right to inquire about such packaging at any time during this period.
- 3.9** During the one-year period, the applicant is required to **immediately notify** the Directorate in cases of loss, theft or fault of the equipment acquired through this scheme. Failure to provide such notification could result in the remaining 50% of the grant being refused, and the funds already provided to be reimbursed by the applicant. At any time during this period, without any prior notification, the Directorate reserves the right to carry **onsite inspections** to verify that the equipment subsidised under this scheme is being used in accordance with the objectives of the scheme.
- 3.10** On the elapse of the one-year period, the applicant shall advise the Directorate on the **condition of the equipment** prior to the final 50% of the grant being reimbursed.

### 4. CONDITIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS SCHEME

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- 4.1** Interested entities should apply by filling in the electronic form and submitting the required documents through the following link. Claims for reimbursements should be made within the same calendar year during which the equipment is purchased. Each application will be acknowledged in writing on the e-mail address provided in the application.
- 4.2** In filling in this electronic form, business entities should provide the requested information, including:
- i. A document indicating the **'name' and 'type' of business entity** (e.g. company registration certificate);
  - ii. Confirmation that the **business is located in Gozo**, including provision of physical address;
  - iii. MTA tourism operators/dive-centres **licence** or valid operating licence;
  - iv. Valid **insurance cover** recognizing its capacity as operator within the tourism activity;
  - v. An **outline** of how the business is engaged in the Adventurous Tourism industry and its product/service offering;
  - vi. A **description of the equipment** to be purchased;
  - vii. **Signed declaration** confirming that the equipment is to be used for hiring purposes and that the Ministry for Gozo shall not be held responsible for the performance and safety standards of the equipment.
- 4.3** 50% of the eligible expenditure will be reimbursed **AFTER** the business entity purchases the equipment and the documentation indicated below is provided:
- i. **Proof of purchase**, including invoices and VAT receipts, of the equipment benefitting from the cash grant;
  - ii. **Photo and serial number** of the equipment purchased;

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- iii. In cases where payments are in other currencies other than Euro, a copy of the exchange rate **on the date of payment** is to be provided;
  - iv. A signed **de minimis declaration form**. For state aid purposes, applicants must not have received **more than €200,000** in *de minimis* aid from any government entity **within a period of 3 years** i.e. in the previous 2 fiscal years and the current fiscal year. Applicants will therefore need to indicate all *de minimis* aid received from any government entity during this period.
- 4.4** The remaining 50% of the eligible expenditure will be reimbursed following the necessary checks as outlined in Section 3 and **AFTER** the business entity provides the below documentation:
- i. **Description and evidence** of the condition of the purchased equipment following the elapse of the one-year period from the purchase date.
- 4.5** The Tourism & Economic Development Directorate, within the Ministry for Gozo will be entitled to make the required verifications on the information submitted. An application can be rejected if the provided information results incorrect or does not satisfy any of the conditions for participation in this scheme. The Ministry for Gozo can also request further information from the applicant prior to making a final decision.
- 4.6** Irrespective of whether the equipment relates to any of the activities outlined in Section 2 above, it remains at the discretion of the Directorate to approve or reject an application following its evaluation.
- 4.7** The Ministry for Gozo is not responsible to verify the performance and safety standards of the equipment subsidised through this scheme. The Ministry shall not be held liable in cases of misconduct and/or unsafe use of the subsidised equipment.
- 4.8** All the documentation required for the reimbursement of funds, as per **clause 4.3**, should be sent **within three weeks from the purchasing of equipment and within three weeks from the elapse of the one-year period** (at the address below):

**Tourism and Economic Development Directorate**  
**Ministry for Gozo**  
**Saint Francis Square**  
**Victoria, Gozo**

### **Claims for reimbursements submitted after this date will not be processed.**

- 4.9** Disbursement of funds will start immediately once the submitted documentation (as per **clause 4.3**), is verified by the Tourism & Economic Development Directorate.
- 4.10** The Tourism & Economic Development Directorate reserves the right to close the scheme earlier than indicated, subject to the allocated funds for this purpose being exhausted. Should this be the case, a notice will be published on the Ministry for Gozo website: [mgoz.gov.mt](http://mgoz.gov.mt).

### 5. STATE AID RULES

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This scheme will be implemented in line with the Commission Regulation (EU) No. 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to *de minimis* aid [OJ L 352/1, 24.12.2013] (the *de minimis* Regulation), as amended by Commission Regulation (EU) 2020/972 of 2 July 2020 amending Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 as regards its prolongation, and amending Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as regards its prolongation and relevant adjustments [OJ L 215/3, 7.7.2020].

No aid will be granted to those sectors expressly excluded from the scope of the *de minimis* Regulation.

The total amount of *de minimis* aid granted to a single undertaking shall not exceed the amount of €200,000 over any period of three consecutive fiscal years. This period covers the fiscal year concerned as well as the previous two fiscal years. 'Fiscal year' means the fiscal year as used for tax purposes by the undertaking concerned.

The term 'single undertaking' includes all enterprises having at least one of the following relationships with each other:

- a) One enterprise has a majority of the shareholders' or members' voting rights in another enterprise;
- b) One enterprise has the right to appoint or remove a majority of the members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another enterprise;
- c) One enterprise has the right to exercise a dominant influence over another enterprise pursuant to a contract entered into with that enterprise or to a provision in its memorandum or articles of association;
- d) One enterprise, which is a shareholder in or member of another enterprise, controls alone, pursuant to an agreement with other shareholders in or members of that enterprise, a majority of shareholders' or members' voting rights in that enterprise.

Enterprises having any of the relationships referred to in points (a) to (d) above through one or more other enterprises shall be considered to be a single undertaking.

The maximum *de minimis* threshold would include all State aid granted under this aid scheme and any other State aid measure granted under the *de minimis* rule including that received from any entity other than the Tourism and Economic Development Directorate. Any *de minimis* aid received in excess of the established threshold will have to be recovered, with interest, from the undertaking receiving the aid.

The rules on cumulation of aid as outlined in Article 5 of the *de minimis* Regulation will be respected.

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### **DECLARATION TEMPLATE TO BE FILLED IN BY APPLICANT**

I, [*Name and ID No. of Applicant*], in the capacity of [*insert designation*] on behalf of [*Name of Entity*], hereby declare that the equipment to be subsidised under the Supporting the Adventurous Tourism Industry in Gozo through Hiring Equipment Refund Scheme is to be used for hiring purposes only and in line with the objectives and requirements of this scheme.

In addition, I hereby confirm that the Ministry for Gozo shall not be held responsible to verify the performance and safety standards of such equipment and shall not be held liable in cases of misconduct and/or unsafe use of the subsidised equipment and/or shall not be held liable in case of any negligent/voluntary/involuntary accident that may happen through any omission or action while the equipment is in possession of the applicant. I understand that this remains the exclusive responsibility of the applicant.

Signature:

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Date:

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### CHECKLIST OF DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED WITH APPLICATION

Clause	Document	Submitted Yes/No
4.2 (i)	A document indicating the ' <b>name</b> ' and ' <b>type</b> ' of <b>business entity</b> (e.g. company registration document);	
4.2 (ii)	Confirmation that the business is <b>located in Gozo</b> , including provision of physical address;	
4.2 (iii)	MTA tourism operators/dive-centres <b>licence</b> or valid operating licence;	
4.2 (iv)	Valid <b>insurance cover</b> recognising its capacity as operator within the tourism activity;	
4.2 (v)	An <b>outline</b> of how the business is engaged in the Adventurous Tourism industry and its product/service offering;	
4.2 (vi)	A <b>description of the equipment</b> to be purchased;	
4.2 (vii)	<b>Signed declaration</b> that the equipment is to be used for hiring purposes and that the Ministry for Gozo shall not be held responsible for the performance and safety standards of the equipment.	
4.3 (iv)	A signed <b>de minimis declaration form</b> .	
n/a	<b>Declaration</b> by the Operator.	

### CHECKLIST OF DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED AT 50% REIMBURSEMENT STAGE

Clause	Document	Submitted Yes/No
4.3 (i)	<b>Proof of purchase</b> , including invoices and VAT receipts, of the equipment benefitting from the cash grant;	
4.3 (ii)	<b>Photo and serial number</b> of the equipment purchased;	
4.3 (iii)	If applicable, a copy of the exchange rate <b>on the date of payment</b> ;	

### CHECKLIST OF DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED FOLLOWING THE ELAPSE OF ONE-YEAR PERIOD

Clause	Document	Submitted Yes/No
4.4 (i)	<b>Description and evidence</b> of the condition of the purchased equipment following the elapse of the one-year period.	