

PIA TOURISM – INTEGRATED INCENTIVES PACKAGES
(Regional Programme 2021 2027 – RP Puglia ERDF ESF+ 2021-2027)
Information sheet

Overview

Regione Puglia, the regional government, has created a set of business incentive schemes that offer generous funding for investors, making Puglia one of the best places to start, finance and expand a business in Europe.

PIA TOURISM (INTEGRATED INCENTIVES PROGRAMMES) is one of the business incentive schemes, managed by the regional finance agency **Puglia Sviluppo S.p.A.**, designed specifically for large enterprises and SMEs intending to carry out significant investment projects for the expansion, modernization and renovation of existing properties and facilities in Puglia, already operating in or destined for the tourism and hospitality sector.

Who can apply: beneficiaries

- Large enterprises, as defined by the GBER – General Block Exemption Regulation - Appendix I of EU Regulation n. 651/2014, that have approved annual accounts for at least two previous financial years on the date of application;
- Medium-sized enterprises, as defined by the GBER – General Block Exemption Regulation - Appendix I of EU Regulation n. 651/2014, that have approved annual accounts for at least two previous financial years on the date of application;
- Small enterprises, as defined by the GBER – General Block Exemption Regulation - Appendix I of EU Regulation n. 651/2014, with an average annual turnover of no less than €1,000,000.00 for the previous three years;
- Large and medium-sized inactive enterprises, wholly controlled by a large or a medium-sized enterprise that has approved accounts for at least two previous financial years on the date of application;
- Small inactive enterprises, wholly controlled by a small enterprise, with an average annual turnover of no less than €1,000,000.00 for the previous three years;
- Large and medium-sized enterprises that do not have approved accounts for at least two previous financial years on the date of application but are wholly controlled by a large or a medium-sized enterprise that does;
- Small enterprises that do not have an average annual turnover of at least €1,000,000.00 for the previous three years but are either wholly controlled by a small enterprise that does or have signed agreements with leading national or international hotel management companies that manage hotel facilities classified as 4 stars and above;
- Business networks with legal personality or business consortiums, made up of at least 5 enterprises, the majority of which must be active in the tourism and hospitality sector.

*(For further information on eligible beneficiaries, please refer to the **PIA TOURISM public notice.**)*

Eligible projects

The **PIA TOURISM** funding scheme supports tourism investment projects to be carried out by enterprises already located in Puglia or intending to locate within the region.

Eligible PIA Tourism investment projects must be made up of capital investment projects aimed at:

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- the development of new hospitality activities, based on the renovation and completion of unfinished hotel structures;
- the expansion, modernization and renovation of existing hotel facilities, in order to raise quality standards and/or ratings;
- the creation of hotel facilities, with no fewer than 7 rooms for accommodation, through special maintenance and/or consolidation works, in addition to the renovation and conservational redevelopment of properties, which, on the date of application, have already been declared to be of artistic and historical interest, based on the Code of Cultural Heritage and Landscape;
- carrying out special maintenance and/or consolidation works, restoration and conservational redevelopment of rural buildings, farmhouses, trulli, towers and forts for the purpose of transforming the property into hotel and tourist accommodation facilities, with no fewer than 7 rooms for accommodation;
- the restoration and redevelopment of buildings which have lain abandoned for at least three years and require special maintenance, restoration and conservational redevelopment or building renovation works, destined primarily to hotel and tourist accommodation structures, in addition to congress venues, sports, cultural and recreational venues;
- improving the quality and availability of tourism and hospitality facilities and structures, such as golf courses, tourist ports, sports venues, congress venues (with a minimum capacity of 2,000), theme parks and privately-owned theatres, with the aim of encouraging off-season tourist flows and improving seasonal adjustment.

The capital investment projects **must** be integrated with investments in at least one innovation initiative, relating to digitalization and technological upgrading, and/or one training initiative aimed at upgrading skills relating to digital transformation, sustainable tourism, ecological transition and green reconversion.

The project **may** also include investments for environmental protection measures as well as, exclusively for SMEs, business consultancy services and international business promotion initiatives, including the participation in trade fairs.

*(For further information on eligible projects please refer to the **PIA TOURISM public notice.**)*

Investment limits

The **PIA TOURISM (INTEGRATED INCENTIVES PROGRAMMES)** scheme provides funding for tourism investment projects with overall minimum eligible expenditure of **€5,000,000.00**, up to a maximum of **€40,000,000.00**.

For business networks and consortiums, the scheme provides funding for tourism investment projects with overall minimum eligible expenditure of **€2,000,000.00**, up to a maximum of **€ 5,000,000.00**.

The investment limit, in terms of maximum eligible costs for capital investments is fixed at no more than **95%** of the overall value of the investment project.

Moreover, investment limits, in terms of maximum eligible costs for the other areas of investment, are fixed at:

- €2,000,000.00 for innovation by SMEs;
- €2,000,000.00 for business process and organizational innovation, by SMEs;
- €4,000,000.00 for training initiatives by large enterprises;

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- €2,000,000.00 for training initiatives by SMEs;
- €10,000,000.00 for environmental protection measures by large enterprises;
- €5,000,000.00 for environmental protection measures by SMEs;
- €500,000.00 for business consultancy services and international business promotion initiatives, in addition to up to € 500,000.00 for the participation in trade fairs, exclusively for SMEs.

Eligible expenditure

Eligible investment costs refer primarily to:

- tangible assets, including: land purchase; property purchase and building works; machinery, equipment and furniture; feasibility studies and planning costs;
- intangible assets, including: software licenses or development, acquisition of operating licenses and patents, patented or unpatented technologies and know-how;
- salaries of employees involved in the initial investment project, for a period of two years;
- environmental protection initiatives, involving measures for improving energy efficiency and renewable energy production systems.

Eligible operating costs are related to the following categories:

- training costs relating to employees, involved in the investment project, for courses covering areas identified by the Regional Smart Specialisation Strategy (such as innovation management, digitalization, international business promotion, circular economy and environmental sustainability, design-driven innovation and eco-design);
- consultancy services for the development of new business models, leading to product certification, environmental certification, corporate social responsibility management and ethical and social reporting, based on international standards, new digital strategies, e-business and management systems, including the digitalisation of hospitality services, temporary tourism manager (exclusively for SMEs);
- costs related to international business promotion initiatives and the participation in trade fairs.

*(For further information on eligible expenditure please refer to the **PIA TOURISM** public notice.)*

Levels of funding available

The **PIA TOURISM (INTEGRATED INCENTIVES PROGRAMMES)** scheme provides significant levels of funding for eligible investment projects. The levels of funding available, within the limits indicated in the **PIA TOURISM public notice**, are based on the type of investment as follows:

- Capital investments:
 - 30-40% of eligible costs for large enterprises;
 - 40-50% of eligible costs for medium-sized enterprises;
 - 50-60% of eligible costs for small enterprises;
- Investments for innovation, including business process and organizational innovation: 50% of eligible costs for SMEs;
- Investments for training initiatives:

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- 50-60 % of eligible costs for large enterprises;
- 60-70% of eligible costs for medium-sized enterprises;
- 70% of eligible costs for small enterprises;
- Investments for environmental protection measures and energy savings:
 - 45% of eligible costs for large enterprises;
 - 55% of eligible costs for medium-sized enterprises;
 - 65% of eligible costs for small enterprises;
- Investments in business consultancy services and international business promotion initiatives: 50% of eligible costs for SMEs.

How to apply

Applications must be submitted online, in Italian, through the platform PugliaSemplice:

<https://pugliasemplice.sistema.puglia.it>

following the procedure in the dedicated section “**PIA TOURISM**”

On submitting an application, a protocol number and CUP (Unique Project Code) will be assigned to the application. The CUP must be quoted in all of the invoices and administrative documentation related to costs and expenses for investments included in the PIA TOURISM project.

The initial application, including a description of the investment project, the financial plan and the proposing company's profile will be assessed by Puglia Sviluppo.

Regione Puglia will formally communicate the assessment outcome to the proposing company and, for successful applications, invite the proposing company to present a final draft of the investment plan within 60 days of the application's approval, using the platform PugliaSemplice.

The final draft and supporting documentation will be evaluated by Puglia Sviluppo in order to determine eligible funding.

Regione Puglia will deliberate the overall funding assigned to the project and set out the terms for signing the PIA TOURISM agreement with the beneficiaries.

Where to find the public notice

The **PIA public notice** and all of the official documentation relating the **PIA TOURISM** funding scheme, including the templates for the application procedure are available online at:

<https://www.regione.puglia.it/web/competitivita-e-innovazione/-/avviso-pubblico-pia-turismo-programmi-integrati-di-agevolazione>

Deadline for applications

There are **no fixed deadlines for proposals**, subject to the availability of funds.

For additional information

www.pugliasviluppo.eu - www.regione.puglia.it

E-mail: fdi@pugliasviluppo.regione.puglia.it