



EU4BUSINESS: CONNECTING COMPANIES

Project funded by the European Union (EU)

EU Grant Contract, ENI/2019/411-865

CALL FOR TENDERS

Selection of a service provider to organise a study visit:
The SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Background information

Eurochambres – The Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry – represents the interests of 1,700 Chambers and their 20 million member companies from all economic sectors across Europe (www.eurochambres.eu). Eurochambres is a nonprofit international organisation headquartered in Brussels, Belgium. Its vision is an integrated, globally competitive Europe, fostering business prosperity and socio-economic progress.

One of Eurochambres' policy priorities is Neighbourhood and Enlargement, recognising the untapped potential in EU neighbouring countries. Eurochambres' engagement in **the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region** is reinforced through the implementation of the EU4Business: Connecting Companies (EU4BCC) project, among others.

1.2 About the EU4BCC project

[EU4BCC](#) is a project initiated by Eurochambres and funded by the European Union (EU) under the EU4Business initiative. It aims to foster sustainable economic development and job creation in the EaP countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine¹, and to promote business opportunities.

EU4BCC is organised on a sectoral basis targeting five economic sectors where the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) from the EaP region have a significant growth potential – bio-/organic food, creative industries, textile, tourism and wine.

The activities implemented in the framework of EU4BCC include study visits, a mobility exchange programme, and business to business (B2B) meetings in different economic sectors, among others.

1.3 Legal background

This call for tenders is launched in the framework of the grant contract (reference number ENI/2019/411-865) signed between the European Union and Eurochambres on 12 December 2019. Therefore, some of the specific provisions of the general conditions of the grant contract ENI/2019/411-865 as outlined in Annex 5 apply to subcontractors/service providers.

2 PURPOSE OF THIS CALL FOR TENDERS

2.1 Objective of the Call for Tenders

This call for tenders aims to identify a service provider to support Eurochambres in preparing, organising and assessing:

- A study visit – The *SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine* for 35 participants coming from the EaP countries².
- B2B meetings between the SMEs coming from the EaP and EU-based SMEs.

2.2 About Organic Food Iberia

¹ In line with the Council Conclusions of 12 October 2020 and in light of Belarus's involvement in the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, recognised in the European Council Conclusions of February 2022, the EU has stopped engaging with representatives of Belarus public bodies and state-owned enterprises. Should there be a change of the context this may be reconsidered. In the meantime, the EU continues to engage with and, where possible, has stepped up support to non-state, local and regional actors, including within the framework of this project.

² The delegation will be accompanied by a representative from Eurochambres, therefore the service provider needs to consider travel and accommodation for 36 participants in total.

Organic Food Iberia is the largest international trade fair in Southern Europe and a leading international fair for organic professionals in the Iberian Peninsula. It prioritises organic principles and strives to be the ultimate networking, educational, and business event.

Participants will be able to discover the latest news in the sector, try different products, be in contact with wholesalers, retailers, supermarkets, distributors, restaurants and other representatives from the sector.

Applicants are welcome to propose organising the tour around a different international trade fair, provided that the suggested alternative also revolves around bio-/organic food and wine, and it is pertinent to the purpose of this activity.

2.3 About the activity – *The SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine*

Eurochambres has designed an activity, – *The SME and BSO tour focused on focused Bio-/Organic Food and Wine* – to equip EaP SMEs and BSOs along with representatives from the national CCIs with a thorough understanding of the Bio-/Organic Food and Wine landscapes in the EU.

This one-week study visit includes capacity-building workshops on export procedures and EU standards, exposure at Organic Food Iberia (or a similar trade fair) for the products of the SME participants and valuable networking opportunities with the ultimate goal of bolstering the region's business landscape, driving economic growth, and fostering innovation and competitiveness.

The SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine should represent an immersive experience for participants to reap several key benefits:

1. **Market Access and Export Opportunities:** By attending the workshop, SMEs can gain invaluable insights into the requirements, regulations, and strategies for exporting organic food and wine products to the EU market. This knowledge can empower SMEs to expand their market presence, explore export opportunities, and tap into the vast EU consumer base.
2. **Quality Improvement:** Exposure to the EU's organic food and wine standards can drive improvements in product quality and production processes among SMEs. This leads to enhanced competitiveness and the ability to meet international standards, not only for the EU market but also for other international markets.
3. **Networking and Partnerships:** The tour provides a platform for SMEs to engage in targeted B2B matchings and meetings, enabling them to establish valuable partnerships with EU-based distributors, retailers, and potential buyers. These connections can facilitate market entry and distribution agreements, leading to increased sales and business growth.
4. **Knowledge Exchange:** The event offers an opportunity for knowledge exchange between EaP SMEs and their EU counterparts. This cross-border learning can result in the adoption of innovative practices, sustainability measures, and organic production techniques, contributing to the overall development of the organic food and wine sector in the EaP region.
5. **Visibility and Brand Recognition:** Participation in the tour and trade fair elevates the visibility and brand recognition of EaP SMEs within the EU market. Exposure to a broader consumer base can lead to increased demand for their organic products, thus strengthening their market presence.
6. **Supportive Ecosystem:** Involving relevant BSOs and CCIs ensures that SMEs in the region will receive comprehensive support and guidance throughout their export journey. BSOs can assist SMEs in navigating regulatory processes, accessing funding opportunities, and building capacity, while CCIs can advocate for favourable trade policies.

This initiative aims at engaging **35 participants** including 25 SMEs, 5 relevant BSOs, and 1 representative from each of the five national Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI) within the EaP. Additionally, a supervisor from Eurochambres will accompany the delegation for monitoring purposes.

3. SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

The services to be provided are twofold:

- Planning and organisation of *the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine* in June 2024 including programming, promotion, participant preselection, capacity building workshops, B2B meetings, visits to local stakeholders, active participation of the delegation in Organic Food Iberia (or a similar trade fair), and evaluation of results.
- Handling the logistical aspects of *the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine*, including travel arrangements, accommodations, local transportation, and catering.

3.1 Planning and organisation of *the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine*

- Agenda planning:** prepare a detailed agenda *for the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine* tailored to the needs and expectations of the participants. The agenda should cover five days and include the following:
 - A welcome cocktail/dinner on the first evening to allow participants to get to know each other.
 - A capacity-building training workshops on export procedures and EU standards.
 - Pre-arranged B2B meetings for the participating SMEs.
 - Visits to relevant local stakeholders.
 - Dedicated time at Organic Food Iberia (or a similar trade fair) to allow participating SMEs to showcase their products in a joint booth rented for this purpose.
- Promotion:** ensure the promotion of the activity in the EaP countries and the EU through social media. On its side, Eurochambres will promote the event among the final beneficiaries of the EU4BCC project and will gather expressions of interest from potential participants and forward them to the service provider.
- Application form:** prepare the application form that should be filled out by interested participants.
- Preselection of the participants:** compile a list of 35 participants working in EaP-based BSOs and SMEs, interested in attending the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine. The list of participants shall follow the below distribution:
 - 25 SMEs
 - 5 BSOs³
 - 1 representative from each of the five national CCI within the EaP.

The profiles of the participants should be carefully revised to ensure they are in line with the programmes of the Tour and of the trade fair to maximise the outcomes of this activity.

Applicants must demonstrate the capability to engage a minimum of 13 women or representatives from women-owned companies.

The final list of participants will be subject to approval by Eurochambres.

- Participant guidelines:** prepare an informational document for the participants and distribute it electronically at least one week prior to the event. The document shall include at least the following items:
 1. Introduction:
 - Brief overview of the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine
 - Introduction of the organising team
 - Contact details of organisers and assistance during the *activity*
 2. Event schedule with detailed itinerary, including dates, timing, and venues
 3. Meeting details:

³ *The selection process for SMEs and BSOs should consider a geographic component, aiming to involve an equitable representation of participants from each country. In the event that the desired distribution is not attained, the service provider is required to provide explanation in the final technical report.*

- Format and duration of the meetings
 - Tips on how to prepare for B2B meetings
4. Logistics:
- Venue details
 - Transportation information
 - Accommodation details
 - What participants should bring: business cards, marketing materials such as brochures, samples, ...
5. Useful contacts: Medical facilities, embassies/consulates, support team, police, ambulance...
- f. **Online preliminary meeting(s)** with the participants to:
- Present and explain the agenda and provide clarifications to the potential questions, including the B2B meetings.
 - Provide an overview of the Spanish market and the exhibition as well as tips and tricks on the marketing materials to be brought by the participant.
 - Provide information about the format, opportunities and the requirements of *the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine*.
 - Discuss the participants' expectations in terms of opportunities they are seeking.
 - Provide information about the training workshops and learning outcomes of the participants.
- g. **Facilitation of this activity:** ensure active engagement of all participants during the entire duration of the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine. This encompasses guiding each participant through the entire agenda, ensuring attendance in all the activities planned, and actively participating in scheduled one-to-one or group meetings. The service provider's representatives shall be available throughout the visit, promptly addressing any participant concerns and facilitating seamless communication when needed.
- h. **Facilitate visits to meet relevant stakeholders:** identify and select local stakeholders (importers, distribution chains...) that could host the delegation from the EaP.
- i. **Design and conduct a capacity-building workshop focused on export procedures and EU standards.** The objective is to empower participants with both the theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary for crafting effective export strategies and initiating successfully exports to the EU market. The training duration should be a minimum of half a day, with at least a dedicated and distinct module tailored for companies operating in the Bio-/Organic Food sector and the wine industry. Participants shall prove the knowledge acquired through a final quiz that will be prepared by the selected service provider.
- j. **Secure and coordinate B2B meetings:** Ensure that the participants attend at least 125 meetings in total, i.e. about 5 meetings per participating SME with EU-based SMEs. The list of EU-based SMEs shall prioritise women—owned businesses.
- Each participant should have individual personalised scheduled meetings according to their profiles and needs.
 - The final report should encompass a comprehensive list detailing the meetings conducted by each participant with their respective counterparts. This list should explicitly outline the purpose of each meeting and must be endorsed through signatures from both participants.
- k. **Venues:** the service provider should secure a designated area for the B2B meetings either at the premises of the trade fair or/and at a separate venue.
- l. **Experts' fees:** the applicants can insert in the budget the costs associated with engaging external experts in cases where in-house experts are not available.

m. Visibility rules: the service provider shall ensure that the project's branding and the visual identity are consistent and present across all produced materials, including social media platforms, brochures and stand displays etc., during the event and thereafter, and in compliance with the visibility rules of the European Commission (Art. 6, Annex 5) and the New Visual Identity Guide (Annex 4).

n. Post event follow-up:

- Create and distribute a survey among the participants to collect feedback on the activities and better evaluate the concrete outcomes/benefits.
- Identify and showcase success stories to be shared on the different social media platforms by Eurochambres.
- Provide a final report summarising the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine, including results, impact and challenges. The report should be submitted to Eurochambres within 30 days following the end of this activity.

3.2 Logistical aspects of the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine

The service provider should ensure meticulous organisation of travel, accommodation, meals and local transportation for **a total of 35 BSO participants from the EaP** plus a representative from Eurochambres⁴. The following points should be taken into consideration:

a. Travel services shall include transportation for 36 individuals. The transport may involve flights and/or other means of travel to/from the participants' respective countries. The service provider shall:

- Ensure the most convenient and cost-effective route for the travellers. This includes offering non-stop flights for the required route. If a non-stop option is not available, the service provider shall arrange an indirect flight consisting of a maximum of two subsequent flights and without an overnight layover in a transit country. For the Ukrainian participants, the service provider should cover an overnight stay in a transit country, if required.
- Book and purchase round-trip tickets with 1 piece of registered luggage.
- Cover all visa fees (if applicable), cancellation insurance, airport charges, agency fee and other related cost⁵.
- In cases where indirect flights involve different airlines, the service provider shall provide assistance to participants who miss their connecting flight without their fault and find an optimal solution to reach the place of destination.
- Send the reservation confirmation and other travel documents free of charge to the participants within 3 working days after the booking is confirmed. The lengthy procedure for obtaining visa for Armenian and Azerbaijan participants shall be considered by the service provider when booking the tickets.
- Provide the travellers with all necessary documentation required to support the visa application, when necessary.
- The service provider should gather the boarding passes and include them in the final report.

b. Accommodation for 36 individuals for 5 nights: the service provider shall arrange single room accommodations with breakfast for all participants in a 3-star hotel or above. Ideally, the selected hotel shall be within walking distance (less than 1.5 km) of the venue of the trade fair, and the places where the B2B matchmaking and capacity-building workshops will take place. If not, local transportation should be organised.

⁴ *Travel costs for the representatives of the service provider, if applicable, should also be considered while planning the budget.*

⁵ *Although travel insurance is strongly advised for all participants engaging in this activity, it is not mandatory for the service provider to procure it. Nevertheless, the recommendation to have a travel insurance in place during this activity shall be communicated in writing to each participant. Eurochambres may request proof of this notification.*

- c. **Catering** or DSA⁶ (when and if needed) for 36 persons for 5 days:
- The service provider shall provide catering services (lunch and dinner) for the participants in line with the established agenda. Catering may be provided in a single location or at different venues based on the agenda and meeting locations. The meals shall be prepared using high-quality, fresh ingredients and in line with proper food preparation processes and hygiene standards.
 - The service provider shall ensure sufficient choices for the participants with special dietary requirements such as vegetarians, vegans, people with allergies and those with religious dietary restrictions.
 - The purchase price shall cover the catering cost per person, service charges, and other related cost.
- d. **Local transport** for 36 individuals: The service provider shall arrange transportation for the participants during the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine as follows:
- Transportation to/from the airport when participants arrive overnight.
 - When the walking distance is considerable (over 1.5 km), transportation to/from the venues of the trade fair, the B2B matchmaking, and the capacity-building workshops as well as any other local visit scheduled.
 - The service provider shall ensure the necessary fleet capacity based on the needs of the participants.
 - The purchase price shall be per person and include transportation services, and other related costs.

4. EXPECTED RESULTS

The service provider should be able to demonstrate the added value of the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine for the participants, report and prove the following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- 35 participants joining the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine.
- At least 125 B2B meetings are organised and successfully conducted between participating SMEs and EU-based SMEs.
- Average score obtained by SMEs and BSOs in the knowledge quiz conducted at the end of the training session is 7.5 out of 10.
- A minimum of 3 business opportunities created. The term opportunities encompasses various trails such as sales contract, partnership agreements, letter of intents, or memoranda of understanding.

Should these above-mentioned figures not be reached, the service provider shall provide justified explanations in the final report. Payment of the final balance is subject to Eurochambres evaluation of the above outlined KPIs and/or approval of said justifications.

5. PROFILE OF THE SERVICE PROVIDER

Eligibility criteria

The candidates shall be:

- Commercial or non-commercial legal entities.
- Registered in one of the Member States of the EU, or one of the five countries of the EaP (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova or Ukraine).
- Established for at least 3 years.
- Have extensive experience in delivering services similar to the ones object of the current Call for Tender, and in delivering services to SMEs and/or BSOs.
- Able to provide financial statements for the last 2 completed fiscal years.

⁶ Daily subsistence allowance.

Exclusion criteria

To avoid the conflict of interest, the candidate applying for the call for tenders should not have had any involvement whatsoever in the EU4BCC project. This implies that applicants cannot be members of:

- Sectorial Consortia
- BSOs Partnerships awarded to conduct the sub-grant actions
- Board of Sectorial Experts

Selection Criteria

Applicants should have the following professional experience and financial capacities:

Professional experience

Applicants should be able to:

- Provide evidence of similar previous experiences, in particular, in organising events (e.g. study visits, conferences, festivals, workshops, matchmaking meetings), and facilitating highly interactive events (e.g. by using Participatory Leadership or other similar methods, co-active participation, use of collective intelligence to make decisions, set purpose-oriented and collectively agreed agenda, priorities and outcomes, engaging all participants, collectively defining and reaching out needs, etc.).
- Rely on a solid team to implement the activities and be able to involve experts with at least 3 years of experience in the food and wine sectors. CV of the members of the team in charge of the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine shall be provided.

Note! The tenderer shall not include previous experiences which led to a breach of contract and termination by a contracting authority as references for this application.

Financial capacity

To assess the financial capacity of the proposal, applicants are requested to provide financial statements for the last two completed fiscal years.

6. MAXIMUM BUDGET AVAILABLE FOR THE DELIVERY OF THE SERVICES

For the delivery of the services as described in section 3 the maximum available budget is 117,000 euro (without VAT and other taxes). The budget should be proposed in EURO and should be all inclusive.

7. MODALITIES OF PAYMENT

Modalities of payment will be the following:

- First instalment: **30%** of the above-mentioned amount will be paid to the Contractor after the signature of the Contract and within 30 days of receipt of the correct invoice.
- Second instalment: **30%** will be paid after the approval of the agenda and the final participants list by Eurochambres and within 30 days of receipt of the correct invoice.
- Final payment: **40%** will be paid after the implementation of the activities (outcomes should be fully reached) and after approval of the final report and justifications if any (please refer to section 4) and within 45 days of receipt of the correct invoice.

8. PROVISIONS OF THE GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE GRANT CONTRACT ENI/2019/411-865 APPLICABLE TO THE SELECTED SERVICE PROVIDER(S)

The following provisions of the EU Grant Contract, ENI/2019/411-865 are applicable to the selected service provider(s) (see the full text in Annex 5):

- Article 3. Liability of the EU.
- Article 4. Conflict of interests and code of conduct.

- Article 6. Visibility of the EU.
- Article 16. Financial checks of the EU and record keeping.

9. PRIVATE DATA PROTECTION

The service provider must comply with all applicable data protection laws and shall process personal data of the applicants of the SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine solely for the purpose of the performance of the services as outlined herein and as permitted by the provisions of the GDPR⁷ and according to the national data protection laws of their country, where appropriate. The service provider shall limit access and use of personal data to that strictly necessary for the performance, management and monitoring of the services as outlined herein and shall adopt all appropriate technical and organisational security measures necessary to preserve the strictest confidentiality and limit access to this data.

10. NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS

If, Eurochambres receives **only one offer** in response to the present Call for Tender, and it is administratively and technically valid, the contract may be awarded provided that the award criteria are met.

11. APPLICANTS' OFFER

The same applicant can only submit one offer. In case the applicant submits more than one offer, all applications in which that applicant has participated will be excluded.

Applicant offer must be written **in English** which is the working language of the EU contract. The offer should include the following documents:

- Tender submission form (See Annex 1).
- Filled in Organisation and Methodology (See Annex 2).
- Proposed budget (See Annex 3).
- CVs of the proposed team.
- Financial statements for the last two completed fiscal years.

Applicants should propose an estimated timeline for all the activities, starting from the planning phase and extending to the reporting stage. The timeline should be based on the expectations regarding the duration of each stage and necessary steps to implement the proposed approach and methodology.

If any of the services mentioned above are not directly available from/to the candidate, it must be clearly indicated in the methodology and an alternative solution should be proposed. Prior written approval of Eurochambres, the subcontractor is allowed to subcontract part of the service, provided that the subcontracting does not involve any of the core activities such as the design of the capacity-building workshops, the drafting of the agenda, or the selection of the participants. For example, services that can be subcontracted may include travel and accommodation, local transportation, catering, etc.

12. HOW TO APPLY AND DEADLINE

Applicants are invited to submit offers for the organisation of *The SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine* **BY EMAIL** at the following email address eu4bcc@eurochambres.eu by **Friday, 16.02.2024 (17:00 CET)**, at the latest.

⁷ Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation) available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02016R0679-20160504>.

Applicants should use the following subject when sending the application email: ***SME and BSO tour focused on Bio-/Organic Food and Wine ENI/2019/411-865***. By submitting an offer, applicants accept to receive a notification of the outcome of the procedure by electronic means.

Applicants may alter or withdraw their offers by written notification prior to the deadline for submission of tenders. No offers may be altered after this deadline.

For more information regarding this Call for Tender, please contact the project's team via email at eu4bcc@eurochambres.eu. Any clarification requested by the bidder will be published on the [Call's website](#) to ensure equal treatment to all applicants. We strongly encourage applicants to regularly monitor this page for any updates and clarifications provided throughout the process.

13. SELECTION PROCESS

The received offers will undergo a thorough evaluation process based on the following steps:

1. Eligibility and administrative compliance: the Selection Committee will first assess the eligibility and administrative compliance of the received offers. Only eligible candidates will proceed to the next step of the evaluation.
2. Comprehensive evaluation: the evaluation committee will then evaluate the following components of the application and the applicant in this strict order:
 - The technical, professional and financial capacity (Annex 1 + supporting documents)
 - Technical offer (Annex 2 and Annex 3)
 - Financial offer (Annex 3)

Award decision

Offers will be evaluated on the basis of the following award criteria and weighting:

1. Quality - 80%
2. Price - 20% (the price considered for the evaluation will be the total price of the tender).

14. TIMELINE

- Invitation to the tenders - 17.01.2024
- Deadline for requesting clarifications – 12.02.2024
- Deadline to submit applications – 16.02.2024
- Assessment of the offers by the evaluation committee – 21.02.2024
- Notifying selected and non-selected applicants – 23.02.2024
- Signature of the service contract – 27.02.2024

15. ATTACHEMENTS

The following annexes are attached to the present call for tenders:

- ANNEX 1. Tender submission form
- ANNEX 2. Organisation and methodology template
- ANNEX 3. Budget template
- ANNEX 4. EU4BCC Visual Identity Guide (November 2023 version)
- ANNEX 5. Provisions of the General conditions of the EU grant contract applicable to subcontractors