

DEPUTY MINISTRY OF TOURISM

Subsidy Scheme (a) for the organisation of conferences and incentives (b) for undertaking incentive travel (c) for product launches in Cyprus (De minimis)



A. OBJECTIVES OF POLICY

De Minimis Aid Rules

The present Scheme has been prepared by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Cyprus in accordance with the provisions of the Commission's Regulation (EU) no. 2023/2831 of 18 December 2023 on the application of the Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid.

De minimis aid refers to small amounts of state subsidies which are exempt from the obligation of being communicated to the European Commission, as they are considered as not affecting trade between Member States and / or not distorting or threatening to distort competition within the European Union. The maximum total de minimis aid granted to any single undertaking by all the Competent Authorities of Cyprus over any period of three fiscal years may not exceed the amount of €300.000 .

B. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- i. The date of organization of the conference/meeting, corporate meeting/conference or product launch event in Cyprus falls between November 1st and April 30th. In case the event takes place in the province of Nicosia and in rural/mountainous/remote areas, the application will be examined regardless of the period of its implementation.
- ii. Accompanying members and children are not covered by the Scheme except in the case of persons with disabilities where the accompanying members are considered as participants.

- a. Conferences / meetings of non-governmental, non-profit organizations / associations / higher education / academic institutions with at least 75% of participants from abroad.

For the purposes of this Scheme, the following are considered eligible expenditure:

- Tour of the participants or their companions
- Speaker hospitality (airline tickets and accommodation)
- Transportation for the guided tour within the framework of the Conference.
- Transportation for cases where the conference is held in a different district than the district where the participants hotel
- The cost for interpreter service during the conference/meeting

- The cost of providing audio description for the visually impaired during the conference/meeting
 - Fee for a sign language interpreter during the conference/meeting.
 - Audio-visual and other equipment rental
- b. Corporate conferences and corporate incentive trips with at least 75% of participants from abroad
For the purposes of this Scheme, the following are considered eligible expenses:
- Guided tour and/or cost of team building activities included in Heartland of Legends
 - Transportation for excursions / team building activities
 - Airline tickets of participants.
- c. Product Launches in Cyprus
For the purposes of this Scheme, the following are considered eligible expenditure:
- airline tickets of participants (company executives, journalists, bloggers, vloggers, celebrities, models, etc.) from abroad
 - accommodation of the participants (company executives, journalists, bloggers, vloggers, celebrities, models, etc.) from abroad
 - The rent of the space where the product launch event will take place
 - The fee of the local advertising agency.

C. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

1. Beneficiaries for organizing conferences / meetings of non-governmental, non-profit organizations / associations and educational / academic institutions:
 - a. Non-governmental, non-profit Organizations, Organizations, Associations, Companies and Foundations, which are registered as non-profit with the Registrar of Societies and Foundations.
 - b. Higher Education Institutions and Academic Institutions registered with the Registrar of Societies of Cyprus (including state Universities).
 - c. Organizations, Associations, Companies, and Foundations abroad, which are duly registered as non-profit in the countries from which they come and have the necessary official registration certificates.
 - d. Higher Education Institutions and Academic Institutions abroad, which are duly registered in the countries from which they come and have the necessary official certificates of registration.

Non-beneficiaries: Government Services, Ministries and Departments of Ministries, Parastatal Organizations and Councils, Independent Services of the

Republic of Cyprus, Public Services and Public non-profit organizations, Local Authorities, Political Parties, associations, companies, institutions and bodies whose main resources come from the state budget as well as partner meetings held within the framework of European programs.

2. Beneficiaries for the organization of corporate conferences and corporate incentive trips:
 - a. Licensed foreign travel and tourism agencies
 - b. Companies from abroad
3. Beneficiaries for product launch events:
 - a. Companies from abroad which will launch in Cyprus any of their products for the international market for the first time in the presence of journalists/bloggers/vloggers from abroad.
 - b. Companies which are based in Cyprus, and which will launch any of their products on the international market for the first time in the presence of journalists/bloggers/vloggers from abroad.

D. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION AND AMOUNT FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

1. Conferences / meetings of non-governmental, non-profit organizations / associations and higher education / academic institutions
 - a. The maximum amount for financial support per case is:
 - i. For conferences up to 50 people - €2.000
 - ii. For conferences from 51 to 100 people - €5.000
 - iii. For conferences from 101-150 people - €7.000
 - iv. For conferences from 151 – 200 people €10.000
 - v. For conferences from 201-300 people €13.000
 - vi. For conferences from 301-400 people €17.000
 - vii. For conferences from 401-600 people €22.000
 - viii. For conferences over 600 people €30.000
 - b. The calculation of the financial support will be made by taking into account the following criteria and will be based on the following eligible expenditure and the maximum amount indicated as the case may be

- The month of the meeting conference
 - The venue of the conference/meeting
 - The area of the conference.
 - Accessibility of the conference/meeting to people with disabilities
- c. In case of approval of financial support, the amount of the financial support that will be paid by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism will be calculated based on the supporting documents and invoices that will be sent as well as on-site inspections.
- d. Eligible Expenditure

For the purposes of calculation and payment of the financial support, a rate will be given for the following eligible expenditure, taking into account the maximum amounts indicated on a case-by-case basis.

- i. Guided tour by a licensed guide with a maximum amount of €150 / guided tour –
- ii. Bus for sightseeing with a maximum amount of €400 / per bus. It is noted that based on the number of participants, the corresponding bus should be used
- iii. Airfare for the speakers with a maximum amount of €600 from European and Middle Eastern Countries and €900 from any other destination.
- iv. Accommodation for speakers with a maximum amount per night of €80 for the days of the conference/meeting
- v. Dinner / lunch for participants with a maximum amount of €40 / person
- vi. Rental cost of the room in which the Conference/meeting will be held

The following expenditure will be covered at a rate of 80% of the total cost as the case may be:

- i. Interpreter
 - ii. Sign language interpreter
 - iii. Cost of audio translation
2. Corporate conferences and corporate incentive trips
- a. The financial support is calculated taking into account the following criteria:
 - The month of realization
 - The venue
 - The resulting overnight stays.
 - If the conference/meeting has taken place in the past in Cyprus
 - Accessibility of the conference/meeting to people with disabilities
 - b. The maximum financial support amount per case is €20,000
 - c. The event should take place between November and April
 - d. In case of approval of the financial support, the amount of financial support that will be paid by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism will be calculated based on the final supporting documents that will be sent.
 - e. Eligible Expenditure
 - For the purposes of calculation and payment of the financial support, a rate of 40% will be given for the following eligible expenditure, taking into account the maximum amounts mentioned.
 - i. Guided tour and/or team building activities included in Heartland of Legends with a maximum amount for guided tour €150/day and for group activities €30/person/activity.

- ii. Bus for sightseeing/group activities with a maximum amount of €400/ per bus. It is noted that based on the number of participants, the corresponding bus should be used.
 - iii. Air ticket of the participants with a maximum amount of €600 from European and Middle Eastern Countries and €900 from any other destination.
 - iv. Accommodation for speakers with a maximum amount per night of €80 for the days of the conference/meeting
 - v. Dinner / lunch for participants with a maximum amount of €40 / person
- The following expenditure will be covered at a rate of 80% of the total expenditure as the case may be:
- i. Interpreter
 - ii. Sign language interpreter
 - iii. Cost of audio translation
3. Product launch events in Cyprus
- a. The maximum financial support amount per case is €30,000
 - b. The event should take place between November and April
 - c. During the launch event, at least two journalists from foreign media who have the obligation to publish a relevant article abroad must be present.
 - d. In the cases where the launch event takes place in the context of a corporate conference without the presence of foreign journalists, the financial support will be given based on the provisions for the organization of conferences as mentioned in this Scheme.
 - e. Accompanying members and children are not covered by the Scheme

E. SPECIAL TERMS, CONDITIONS AND OBLIGATIONS

1. For the organization of conferences / meetings of non-governmental, non-profit organizations / associations and higher education / academic institutions:
 - a. In case of approval of the financial support, it is assumed that the beneficiary agrees to keep a list of registrations with the names of the conference participants, country of habitual residence, the organization they represent and the signature of the conference participants. The list should be presented to the Deputy Ministry of Tourism after the end of the conference/meeting.
 - b. In case of approval of the financial support, it is assumed that the beneficiary agrees to grant the right to attend the conference / meeting free of charge to 1-2 representatives of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism after first being requested by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism
 - c. In case of approval of the financial support, it is assumed that the beneficiary agrees to the participation of research staff on behalf of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism during the conference for the purpose of collecting data on conference tourism after first being requested by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism.

- d. In case of approval of the financial support, the reference of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism on the website of the conference as a sponsor of the conference / meeting and the display of the logos of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism and the Cyprus Convention Bureau, which will be linked to the website of the Deputy Ministry
- e. www.visitcyprus.com , is an obligation of the beneficiary. The logos will be sent to the beneficiary by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism electronically with a confirmation letter of the financial support approval of the conference.
- f. In case of approval of the financial support, the display of the logo of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism of the Cyprus Convention Bureau and #visitcyprus in the official program, printed materials, banners, and electronic means of promotion of the conference / meeting where the Deputy Ministry of Tourism will be mentioned as a sponsor, is an obligation of the beneficiary.
- g. In case of approval of the financial support, the viewing of the promotional video of Cyprus in the context of the conference/meeting as well as the viewing of the video on the website of the conference/meeting, is an obligation of the beneficiary.
- h. The Cyprus Convention Bureau of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism conducts an (anonymous) electronic conference survey of the level of satisfaction of the delegates for selected conventions each year. In case of approval of the financial support, it is assumed that the beneficiary agrees, if requested, to send an electronic message to all participants from abroad, which will include the link that will lead to the online address of the electronic questionnaire. The results concerning the specific conference / meeting will be communicated to the beneficiary.
- i. The beneficiary will be informed whether the conference he/she organizes has been selected for the research before the end of its work and will be responsible for sending the relevant email immediately after the end of the conference.
- j. In case of approval of the financial support, it is assumed that the beneficiary agrees to participate in the process of collecting statistics on conference tourism and incentive travel of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism, as specified in the Questionnaire that will be sent during the statistical survey.

Provided that those beneficiaries who do not participate in the statistical data collection process, is assumed that they are not interested in participating in the Incentive Schemes of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism and therefore will not be entitled to apply to the Deputy Ministry for financial support through the various Subsidy Schemes and other related to Conference Tourism and Travel Incentives financial supports, announcements, assignments, or collaborations with the Deputy Ministry.

It is further provided that in case of non-participation of the beneficiary in the statistical data collection process, the Deputy Ministry reserves the absolute right to cancel the approved amount of financial support and/or claim any amount of financial support that has been paid.

1. In case of approval of financial support, the Conference/Meeting should meet the objectives of the National Tourism Strategy 2030 and specifically be organized

outside the peak season for coastal areas, be technologically upgraded and generally contribute to sustainable development (does not strain the natural environment, the local community, local products etc.

2. For the organisation of corporate conferences and corporate incentive trips

- a. In cases where the applicant is a licensed Tourism and Travel Agency from a country inside or outside the European Union, in accordance with the provisions of article 6-(1) of the Tourism and Travel Agencies and Guides Law of 1995 (No. 2) of 2013, the applicant cannot carry out in the Republic, on an organized or permanent basis, the activities referred to in article 3 of the Law under reference and therefore the applicant should be represented by a licensed Cyprus Tourism and Travel Office.
- b. In cases where the applicant is from a country outside the European Union, who is active in conference tourism professionally and for a fee, in accordance with article 3 of the Tourism and Travel Agencies and Guides Law of 1995 to 2013, the activities referred to in reference article may only be exercised by locally licensed tourism and travel agencies and therefore the applicant should be represented by a licensed Cypriot Tourism and Travel Agency.
- c. In case the applicant is a company from a country either inside or outside the EU. and organizes a conference for its own purpose and not professionally and for a fee is not required to be represented by a licensed Tourism and Travel Agency.

F. GENERAL TERMS, CONDITIONS AND OBLIGATIONS

1. Applications should be submitted to the Deputy Ministry of Tourism at least one month before the start date of the event.
2. The approval of the financial support should be ensured by the Deputy Ministry before the start of the event.

3. In case of approval of the financial support, it is not allowed to secure other financial support from the Deputy Ministry or from any other Public Body or Organization for the same event or action.

4. The submitted applications will be examined in order of priority according to the date of their submission to the Deputy Ministry and until exhaustion of the funds provided in the annual budget of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism.

It is noted that the Deputy Ministry of Tourism reserves the right to prioritize applications submitted by applicants who have not already secured a previous financial support from the referenced Scheme within the year.

5. The Deputy Ministry of Tourism will treat all documents and information received in connection with the Subsidy Scheme as personal and confidential and will not publish or disclose any information submitted, without the prior written consent of the applicant.

6. The applicants of the referenced Subsidy Scheme unconditionally accept all the terms, conditions, obligations, and provisions it includes.

7. The Deputy Ministry reserves the right to request additional information in cases it deems necessary.

8. It is noted that the Deputy Ministry of Tourism will carry out checks to confirm the data submitted in the application. to confirm the information submitted in the application. In cases where a deviation from the data submitted in the application is found, the financial support will be cut off and the applicant beneficiary will be excluded from the Subsidy Schemes of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism.

G. APPLICATION

Applications should be sent together with the following documents, as noted below, only to the email address ccb incentives@visitcyprus.com :

1. For the organization of conferences / meetings of non-governmental, non-profit organizations / associations and higher education / academic institutions, the applicant should submit:

- a. The relevant application completed in Annex A1.
- b. Official letter on official letterhead, which will inform the Deputy Ministry of Tourism about the organization of the conference / meeting in Cyprus and include summary information about the conference.

- c. The Declaration for unitary enterprise completed, attached as Annex B, relevant model of which is included in the Regulatory Administrative Act issued by the Commissioner of State Aid Control, KDP 62/2014, under the authority of article 25 of the State Aid Control Laws of 2001 until 2009 and Regulation 2 of the 2009 and 2012 State Aid Control (De minimis Aid) Regulations.
 - d. The written statement completed, issued pursuant to Regulation 3(2) of the Control of State Aid (De minimis Aid) Regulations of 2019 and 2012 in Annex C.
 2. For the organization of corporate conferences and corporate incentive trips
 - a. The relevant application completed in Annex A2.
 - b. Official letter on official letterhead, which will inform the Deputy Ministry of Tourism about the organization of the conference / meeting in Cyprus and include summary information about the conference.
 - c. The applicant should submit the completed Declaration for unitary enterprise attached as Annex B, the relevant model of which is included in the Regulatory Administrative Act issued by the Commissioner of State Aid Control, KDP 62/2014, under the authority of article 25 of the State Aid Control Laws of 2001 to 2009 and Regulation 2 of the State Aid Control (De minimis Aid) Regulations of 2009 and 2012.
 - d. The written statement completed, issued pursuant to Regulation 3(2) of the Control of State Aid (De minimis Aid) Regulations of 2019 and 2012 in Annex C.
 3. For product launch events
 - a. The relevant application completed in Annex A3.
 - b. The final or preliminary program that has been prepared for the group, which will be hosted in Cyprus.
 - c. The final or preliminary name list of the participants with reference to the capacity of each of the participants.
 - d. The applicant should submit the completed Declaration for unitary enterprise attached as Annex B, the relevant model of which is included in the Regulatory Administrative Act issued by the Commissioner of State Aid Control, KDP 62/2014, under the authority of article 25 of the State Aid Control Laws of 2001 to 2009 and

Regulation 2 of the State Aid Control (De minimis Aid) Regulations of 2009 and 2012.

- e. The written statement completed, issued pursuant to Regulation 3(2) of the Control of State Aid (De minimis Aid) Regulations of 2019 and 2012 in Annex C.

Only applications that are duly completed and accompanied by the above documents will be considered.

Confirmation of receipt of applications is the sole responsibility of the applicant.

H. EVALUATION PROCEDURE

Upon receipt of the application by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism, the evaluation of the application will follow, and the applicant will be given an official response from the Deputy Ministry of Tourism for its decision within fifteen (15) working days from the date of receipt of the application.

I. SUBMISSION OF PRINTED MATERIAL ORDER

Orders for printed materials of the Deputy Ministry (forms, maps and bags) should be submitted by the applicants in good time to the competent officer of the Deputy Ministry, Mr. Savvas Andreou, tel. +357 22 69 11 85, ctowarehouse@visitcyprus.com com noting the title of the forms, quantity and language. The available electronic forms are posted on the website of the Deputy Ministry www.visitcyprus.com - Media.

The applicant is responsible for receiving the order from the Deputy Ministry's warehouse in Nicosia (Alexandrou Ypsilanti 1, 2234 Latsia) after first being notified of the preparation of the order. In case delivery of the order is requested via a courier company, the cost of transport will be borne by the applicant.

J. REQUIRED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR THE DISBURSEMENT OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

All claims for the payment of the financial support amount must be received by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism no later than two months from the end date of the event. Any delay leads to the loss of financial support.

The following supporting documents should be submitted to the Deputy Ministry of Tourism after the conclusion of the conference / meeting / event:

1. For the disbursement of the financial support for the organization of conferences / meetings of non-governmental, non-profit organizations / associations and higher educational / academic institutions, the applicant should submit:

A. Official letter on official letterhead, including the following:

- The result of the conference / meeting.
- Evaluation of the services offered by the hotel / venue where the conference / meeting was organized and the social program (excursions, restaurants, etc.).
- List of conference participants.
- Request for the payment of the financial support based on the supporting documents mentioned in the Scheme

B. Invoice from the applicant (excluding VAT)

C. Original invoices from third parties and which will concern the eligible expenditure as mentioned above. It is noted that invoices from travel agencies must state separately the cost of each eligible expenditure. Please note that VAT is not an eligible expenditure.

D. The final list of registrations with the names of the conference participants, country of habitual residence, the organization they represent and the signature of the conference participants.

E. Photos from the conference / meeting.

F. The Declaration in **Annex D** signed by the beneficiary.

G. The Conference Tourism Statistics Survey completed in **Annex E**.

H. Documents proving compliance with the obligations of the organizer of the conference / meeting, which are mentioned in Paragraph E.1 above, such as:

- Screenshot of the conference/meeting website where the Deputy Ministry of Tourism is mentioned as the sponsor of the conference and the logos of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism and the Cyprus Convention Bureau are shown with a link to the website of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism.
- Screenshot of the conference/meeting website showing the promotional video of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism.
- Copy of the program of the conference / meeting and other forms of the conference / meeting showing the logo of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism and the Cyprus Convention Bureau.
- Photographic material with the banners of the conference / meeting showing the logo of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism and the Cyprus Convention Bureau.

2. For the disbursement of the financial support for the organization of corporate conferences and corporate incentive trips:

A. Invoice from the applicant to the Deputy Ministry of Tourism

B. Original invoices from third parties and which will concern the eligible expenditure as mentioned above. It is noted that invoices from travel agencies must state separately the cost of each eligible expenditure. Please note that VAT is not an eligible expenditure.

C. The final Occupied Rooms Status (Rooming List) printed by the reservation system of the hotel(s) of accommodation.

D. Official letter from the beneficiary on official letterhead, including the following:

- The result of the incentive trip. Evaluation e.g. of the services offered by hotels, the local tourism and travel office, restaurants and other places that have been used during the group's stay in Cyprus.
- The name list of the participants, noting next to each name, the names of accompanying members / children if there were any.
- Occupied Rooms Status (Rooming List) of the accommodation hotel(s) excluding accompanying members and children

E. Screenshot of the conference/meeting website where the Deputy Ministry of Tourism is mentioned as the sponsor of the conference and the logos of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism, and the Cyprus Convention Bureau are shown with a link to the website of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism.

F. Screenshot of the conference/meeting website showing the promotional video of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism.

G. Copy of the program of the conference / meeting and other forms of the conference / meeting showing the logo of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism and the Cyprus Convention Bureau.

H. Photographic material with the banners of the conference / meeting showing the logo of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism and the Cyprus Convention Bureau.

I. The Declaration in **Annex D** signed by the beneficiary.

J. The Conference Tourism Statistics Survey completed in **Annex E**.

3. For the disbursement of the financial support for product launch events:

A. Invoice from the applicant to the Deputy Ministry of Tourism

B. Third party invoices that will cover at least the amount of the financial support. It is noted that invoices from travel agencies must state separately the cost of each eligible expenditure. Please note that VAT is not an eligible expenditure.

C. Official letter from the beneficiary on official letterhead, including the following:

- The result of the launch event. Evaluation e.g. of the services offered by the hotels, local tourism and travel office, restaurants and other venues that have been used during the launch event.
- The name list of the participants, noting next to each name, the names of accompanying members / children if there were any.

D. Links through which the viewing of Cyprus and the Deputy Ministry on Social Media is demonstrated.

E. Photographic material/video (press wall photos, press conference, etc.) demonstrating the promotion of Cyprus and the Deputy Ministry of Tourism.

F. The Declaration in Annex D signed by the beneficiary.

The amount financial support will be paid to the beneficiaries only upon presentation of all the above supporting documents and provided that all the terms, conditions, obligations and provisions of the Scheme are met.

In case all supporting documents are not fully submitted, the payment process will be interrupted.

The Deputy Ministry of Tourism reserves the right to investigate the submitted supporting documents and data and to request additional clarifications or the presentation of additional supporting documents and data.

In case it is established by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism that any untrue information has been submitted by the beneficiaries or that all the terms, conditions, obligations, and provisions of the Scheme have not been complied with, the Deputy Ministry reserves the absolute right to sanction the approved amount of financial support and/or claiming any amount of financial support that has been paid.

Also in such case, in addition to the other sanctions, the offenders will be excluded from any participation in the offered Incentive Schemes and other related to Tourism Conferences and Incentive Travel financial support, notices, assignments or collaborations with the Deputy Ministry

K. VALIDITY OF THE POLICY

The policy is valid on an annual basis with effect until December 31 of each year or until exhaustion of the available funds. The Scheme shall be automatically renewed for next year, unless otherwise decided by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism.

The Scheme is subject to change without notice. Refer to the website of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism for information - www.visitcyprus.com - Discover Cyprus - Cyprus Convention Bureau or directly at www.cyprusconventionbureau.org

L. FURTHER INFORMATION

Deputy Ministry of Tourism
Elena Economou (Ms)
Assistant Clerical Officer
ccb incentives@visitcyprus.com
Τηλ. +357 22 69 11 86

Deputy Ministry of Tourism
Lemesou Avenue 19, 2112 Nicosia
P.O. Box . 24535, 1390 Nicosia
Tel.: +357 22 69 11 00