



Strand DIGITAL

**DREAM**Digital Resilient Europe
for Advanced Manufacturing

Partners



DREAM Open Call: A Successful Initiative for Integrating Digital Technologies in Manufacturing

The DREAM Open Call has proven to be a highly effective program for supporting small and innovative projects that integrate digital technologies into manufacturing environments. Tailored to for-profit SMEs, the initiative encouraged collaborations between digital technology firms and manufacturing end-users, marking a significant step in advancing manufacturing through digital innovation.

Eligibility and Funding Details

The Open Call was restricted to for-profit small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), requiring each applicant to form a consortium comprising at least one partner from the digital sector and one from the manufacturing sector. Each SME was allowed to submit only one proposal, with only the most recent submission considered for evaluation. Projects could receive funding up to €30,000, with a structured payment plan of 40% pre-funding and 60% final payment upon approval of the final report and project deliverables.

Application and Evaluation Process

Applications were managed through the DREAM submission platform, where SMEs submitted their proposals online by the specified deadline, accompanied by necessary documentation including an application form, consortium details, and financial viability information. Late submissions were not entertained.

The evaluation process involved a rigorous multi-phase review. Initial screening assessed eligibility and completeness, followed by an expert review evaluating criteria such as technological innovation, market potential, project plan quality, and consortium expertise. The final selection was based on these expert assessments.

Support and Compliance

To ensure successful project implementation, the DREAM program provided ongoing support through follow-up sessions, training, and reporting templates. Projects were capped at nine months, concluding by May 30, 2024. Beneficiaries were required to





comply with the lump sum methodology and maintain documentation for fiscal regulation compliance, though detailed accounting documents were not required.

A comprehensive final report, including a section on resilience preparedness, was mandatory. The DREAM consortium conducted interim reviews to monitor progress and address any issues. Applicants also needed to confirm compliance with legal and ethical standards, ensuring no conflicts of interest and no duplication of previously funded activities.

Insights and Best Practices

The DREAM Open Call has brought valuable insights for future European projects. Key takeaways include:

1. **Clear Eligibility Criteria:** Clearly defining and communicating eligibility requirements ensures that applicants understand the necessary consortium structure and project scope.
2. **Transparent Funding and Payment Structure:** Clearly outlining funding limits, project duration, and payment schedules helps manage applicants' expectations and financial planning.
3. **Structured Application Process:** An online platform with a straightforward application form streamlines the submission process and ensures all required documentation is provided.
4. **Robust Evaluation Process:** A multi-phase evaluation, including initial screenings and expert reviews based on specific criteria, ensures a fair and thorough assessment.
5. **Ongoing Support and Compliance:** Providing follow-up sessions, training, and reporting templates supports beneficiaries throughout the project lifecycle, ensuring compliance with financial regulations without excessive documentation.
6. **Final Reporting and Reviews:** Detailed final reports and interim reviews are essential for monitoring progress and addressing issues promptly.

