MANTRA
EoI for Tech-Savvy

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Expression of Interest for Tech-Savvys

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About of MANTRA project

The MANTRA project aims to speed up the green and digital transformation of European manufacturing SMEs by promoting the adoption of advanced technologies and social innovation. MANTRA will create a scalable Europe-wide capacity-building and demonstration program to provide SMEs with essential support, expert networks, and financial resources to develop and implement tailored transformation strategies that lead to more sustainable business models, enhanced competitiveness, and greater resilience.

The MANTRA project also emphasizes the importance of tech-savvy SMEs in driving green and digital transformation. These tech-savvy SMEs, identified through Expressions of Interest calls, will collaborate with traditional manufacturing SMEs to foster strategic alliances and share their expertise in advanced technologies.

1.Call for Expression of Interest for Tech-savvy SMEs

MANTRA is organizing a specific call for Expression of Interest with the aim of identifying and selecting tech savvy SMEs interested in supporting traditional SMEs in their digital, green and social transformation. The selected organizations will be validated and incorporated into the MANTRA Pool of tech- savvy SMEs, which will serve as a key resource to foster strategic alliances between tech-savvy actors and Traditional SMEs.

The current Call for Expressions of Interest is **open from 15.03.2026 with** closure envisaged for **31.08.2027.**

To support the uptake of advanced technologies across traditional sectors, MANTRA is developing a **technical marketplace**. This platform will allow traditional SMEs to discover and connect with a curated portfolio of tech-savvy SMEs that are developing, producing, and commercializing **advanced technology solutions** for the manufacturing industry. These technologies will be aligned with one or more of the **16 Advanced Technologies for Industry (ATIs)** and categorized based on the **environmental challenges** they address.

The marketplace aims to:

- Promote **technology transfer and collaboration** between tech-savvy and traditional SMEs.
- Serve as a **dissemination and visibility platform** for tech-savvy SMEs.
- Maximize the impact on **European industrial competitiveness**.
- Help tech-savvy SMEs expand their **market reach** and foster **strategic alliances**.

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To populate the marketplace, **two open calls for Expressions of Interest** will be launched. EoIs will be assessed by MANTRA project partners, based on criteria such as:

- **Technical maturity and coherence**
- **Alignment with sustainable practices**
- **Relevance to the targeted manufacturing sectors**

Selected tech-savvy SMEs will have their solutions featured on the MANTRA marketplace and gain access to the **partner search service** as part of the project's **capacity building programme**.

In addition, selected tech-savvy SMEs will be invited to participate in a **co-creation process**. This will involve **collaborative workshops** with traditional SME beneficiaries, technology providers, and MANTRA experts. Together, they will identify key technical and non-technical gaps related to technology adoption and integration into business strategy.

This initiative focuses on traditional SMEs in sectors such as **machinery, food, textiles, plastics, ceramics, and metals**, aiming to facilitate targeted, high-impact interventions that drive the **green, digital, and social transformation** of European industry.

Why apply?

Advanced technologies not accessible to SMEs. The offer of digital solutions from large tech vendors is fragmented and not always suited to the specific needs of SMEs. Smaller tech vendors face significant challenges preventing them from being as effective as possible in providing innovation solutions to SMEs. MANTRA programme will offer a tech marketplace, matchmaking and co-creation processes helping SMEs to find the service providers that are better suited to their need

Applying to be part of MANTRA Pool of Tech-Savvy SMEs, an international database of experts and solution providers, offers several benefits and opportunities:

- **To gain visibility across Europe**: This exposure is valuable for SMEs and technology providers seeking to expand their reach, connect with traditional manufacturers, and engage in transformation projects across Europe. Being featured on MANTRA's digital platform ensures your solutions are accessible to a wide network of industrial stakeholders.
- **To be selected by a beneficiary SME as technology provider:** Your organization will be referenced by applicant SMEs beneficiaries of the MANTRA Open Calls for the identification and selection of innovative partners. As part of this pool, you will be highlighted as a trusted provider of advanced technologies and transformation services.

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- **To improve the quality and impact of your services: By** working with diverse SMEs from across Europe, you will gain practical experience and valuable case studies while supporting SMEs in key sectors such as machinery, food, textiles, plastics, ceramics, and metals.
- **To contribute to the development and resilience of the European manufacturing ecosystem**: Your expertise will play a crucial role in strengthening digital, green, and social transformation efforts in traditional industries, enhancing their competitiveness, accelerating technology adoption, and contributing to the EU's broader sustainability and innovation goals.

The MANTRA programme addresses the critical challenge faced by many SMEs—**advanced technologies are often inaccessible due to fragmented offers from large tech vendors**, which are not always tailored to the specific needs of SMEs. Smaller tech vendors face significant barriers in reaching these businesses and providing effective, customized solutions. **MANTRA will bridge this gap** by offering a **tech marketplace**, **matchmaking services**, and **co-creation processes**, helping SMEs find service providers that are better suited to their specific needs, enabling impactful collaborations and successful technology adoption.

2. Who can apply as MANTRA tech savvy?

The MANTRA project is looking for innovative European SMEs with expertise in advanced technology solutions to join its tech-savvy SME Pool, a qualified directory of providers that will support traditional manufacturing companies in their digital, green, and social transformation journeys.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, applicants must meet the following conditions:

1. **Legal Entity**: The applicant must be a legally established entity—natural or legal—recognized under national, EU, or international law and able to act in its own name, exercising rights and obligations.
2. **SME Status**: The applicant must be a **Small or Medium-sized Enterprise (SME)** as defined in the **Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC**, i.e., employing fewer than 250 persons and having an annual turnover not exceeding €50 million and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding €43 million.
3. **Geographic eligibility**: The applicant must be established in one of the 27 EU Member States and Horizon Europe Associated Countries.
4. **Field Experience**: The applying SME must demonstrate at least **2 to 4 years of experience** in the development, production, or commercialization of **advanced technologies** that address digitalization, sustainability, or environmental challenges in the manufacturing sector.
5. **Language requirement**: mandatory English (written and spoken) and knowledge of other languages welcome.

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By meeting these application conditions, European SMEs can play a **pivotal role** in the MANTRA project, driving the **green and digital transformation** of the manufacturing sector. Their expertise in advanced technologies and commitment to sustainability will not only **enhance** their own **competitiveness** but also contribute to the **broader goals** of **environmental stewardship** and **industrial resilience**. This collaborative effort **promises** to create a **dynamic ecosystem** where innovation thrives, fostering **sustainable business models** and robust **industrial competences** across Europe.

3. How to apply?

Technology providers interested in supporting traditional manufacturing SMEs in their digital, green, and social transformation are invited to submit their Expression of Interest (EoI) through the official MANTRA platform. Applications must be submitted online via the dedicated form available on the platform, fully completed in English and within the specified deadline.

The application must be completed in all the sections with the following information:

Section 1. Organisation identity Basic details about the applying organisation, including its official name, type of entity, location, contact information, and a short overview or introduction to its activities.
Section 2. Organisation expertise **2.1. Advanced technologies solutions** Technology applicants are required to demonstrate strong expertise and relevant professional experience in at least one of the listed technology needs. In this section, the applicant should select the technology need they specialize in and provide a brief summary of their knowledge, skills, and capabilities in that field. **2.2. Knowledge and expertise related to Machinery, Food, Textile, Plastics, Ceramics and Metals** As the MANTRA Tech-savvy SMEs will support Machinery, Food, Textile, Plastics, Ceramics and Metals SMEs in implementing their digital and green transformation. The candidates should provide a short description of their expertise and knowledge regarding the six manufacturing sectors.
Section 3. Organisation Team In this section, technology provider applicants should provide a description of the internal team members who will be involved in delivering support to manufacturing SMEs.

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Clear and detailed commercial agreements will be established between tech-savvy companies and manufacturing SMEs. These agreements will define the terms and conditions of the collaboration, ensuring that both parties understand their rights and responsibilities, and facilitating a harmonious and productive working relationship.

For tech-savvy companies, project partners will have the opportunity to request additional information and assess their suitability to participate in the initiative.

It will be the criteria of these partners that determine whether tech-savvy companies can enter the pool, ensuring that only the most suitable and prepared companies are part of the project.

4. Confidentiality and data protection

As part of the evaluation and selection process, MANTRA will gather personal and business-related data from applicants.

The MANTRA Facilitating Platform is responsible for handling this data in strict adherence to the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR) and Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data The MANTRA platform's security protocols and operational procedures are designed to safeguard the confidentiality and integrity of the collected information. To proceed with their application, all applicants must agree to the terms and conditions of the MANTRA platform.

Additionally, MANTRA will only request the essential information required for the assessment and implementation of the funding program, ensuring that data collection remains limited to what is strictly necessary. Please refer to https://babele.co/terms-of-use/ to check MANTRA platform data privacy policy and security measures

5. Absence of conflict

Applicants must ensure that they do not hold any existing or potential conflicts of interest related to their participation in the MANTRA tech-savvy Pool or throughout the entire duration of the project. Any identified situations of conflict will be reviewed and evaluated individually.

In particular, entities involved in the MANTRA consortium, including their affiliated organizations and staff members, are not eligible to as tech-savvy within this call.

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6.Form to apply

MANTRA Tech savvy SMEs		
Organisation legal name in original language		
Organisation name in English		
Abbreviated name of organisation		
Organisation legal address	**Address:**	
	ZIP code:	**City:**
	Country:	
Organisation legal registration number		
VAT number		
Legal representative		
Contact person		
Organisation website		
Social media		
Organisation Profile **Please provide a brief self-presentation of your organisation in relation to the following questions:** **Short presentation of the Organisation (company history, internal organisation)** **What are your characteristic activities in the field of knowledge and technology transfer, advanced technologies, etc?** **What are the main services/products you offer?** **What are the advantages/benefits in using your services?** **(Max. 1,500 characters including spaces)**		

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Tech-savvy SMEs offering products or services related to, or that facilitate the implementation of, any of the following advanced technologies:

Advanced technologies solutions			
Technology application		Description	Your solution
☐	Financial support and access to Funding	SMEs face barriers in accessing financial resources due to complex procedures, lack of access to venture capital, and limited financing options.	
☐	Digital transformation (ERP, AI, Blockchain Adoption)	Many SMEs lack internal expertise and systems for adopting digital technologies like ERP, AI, and blockchain to streamline operations and enhance decision-making.	
☐	Green technology adoption (Industrial Electrification, Green Hydrogen)	Traditional SMEs need assistance in transitioning to sustainable practices and adopting green technologies like energy efficiency, industrial electrification, and green hydrogen solutions.	
☐	Development skills (Digital Literacy, AI Expertise)	There is a shortage of skilled workforce in SMEs, particularly in areas like digital literacy, AI capabilities, and sustainability expertise. Training and development in these areas are crucial.	
☐	Regulatory compliance and support	SMEs often struggle to understand and comply with evolving EU regulations concerning digital transformation, data privacy and environmental sustainability.	
☐	Integration of digital and green technologies	SMEs need help integrating digital and green technologies to enhance operational efficiency while reducing their environmental impact. This requires solutions that are adaptable to their specific needs.	
☐	Access to infrastructure for	Many SMEs lack the necessary infrastructure to adopt advanced technologies. This includes limited	

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Advanced technologies solutions			
Technology application		Description	Your solution
	tech implementation	access to cloud services, automation systems, and cybersecurity solutions.	
☐	Tailored consultancy and guidance	SMEs often require expert consultancy services to navigate their digital transformation journey, design appropriate strategies, and overcome technical and regulatory challenges.	
☐	Customized solutions for specific sectors (textiles, food, etc.)	Different sectors (e.g., textiles, food production, plastics, machinery) have unique technological needs that require sector-specific solutions to drive innovation and sustainability.	

Knowledge and expertise related to manufacturing in the sector of Machinery, Food, Textile, Plastics, Ceramics and Metals		
Manufacturing sectors		Your expertise
☐	Machinery	
☐	Food	
☐	Textile	
☐	Plastics	
☐	Ceramics	
☐	Metals	

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Organisation Team				
Expert name*	**Field of expertise***	**Years of professional experience***	**Speaking languages***	**LinkedIn**

* Mandatory information

Are you currently a member of any officially recognised EU business support networks, such as the European Entreprise Network (EEN), European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP), or Open Innovation?

An EU business support network refers to an EU-recognised programme or platform that supports companies, especially SMEs, startups, and innovators—in growing, innovating, and expanding internationally.

These networks, such as the European Enterprise Network, Open Innovation Test Beds, and the European Cluster Collaboration Platform, help businesses access partners, funding opportunities, innovation services, and market insights across Europe.

They also include cluster organisations and innovation ecosystems that facilitate collaboration between industry, research, and public actors. Being part of a cluster often means participating in these broader EU networks, enabling companies to benefit from cross-border cooperation, knowledge exchange, and scaling opportunities within the European innovation landscape.

☐ EEN – European Enterprise Network

☐ ECCP – European Cluster Collaboration Platform

☐ OITB – Open Innovation Test Beds

☐ EU-funded cluster organisations (sectoral or regional innovation clusters)

☐ EU innovation hubs and European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs)

☐ EU startup and scale-up support programmes and incubators

☐ None (not currently part of any EU business support network)

☐ Willing to register for / explore membership in EU business support networks

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7. Helpdesk contact information

For any questions or clarifications related to the Expression of Interest, please contact the Helpdesk at: info@mantra-project.eu.

The MANTRA Helpdesk team is available to assist you with any inquiries regarding the process, eligibility, information requirements, or technical issues.

Please allow up to 2 business days for a response.

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