



Open Call 2

Guide for Applicants



TranS4MErs



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1. Introduction

The Guide for Applicants defines all the rules and procedures of the First Open Call and Transformation Programme of the ADMA TranS4MErs project.

1.1. Programme Overview

The Open Call is the competitive process by which SMEs apply to have access to the Transformation Programme. The Transformation Programme is the set of services and direct funding provided by the ADMA TranS4MErs project to support manufacturing SMEs in the digital transformation. An overview of the Open Call and Transformation Programme can be found in [Error! Reference source not found.](#)

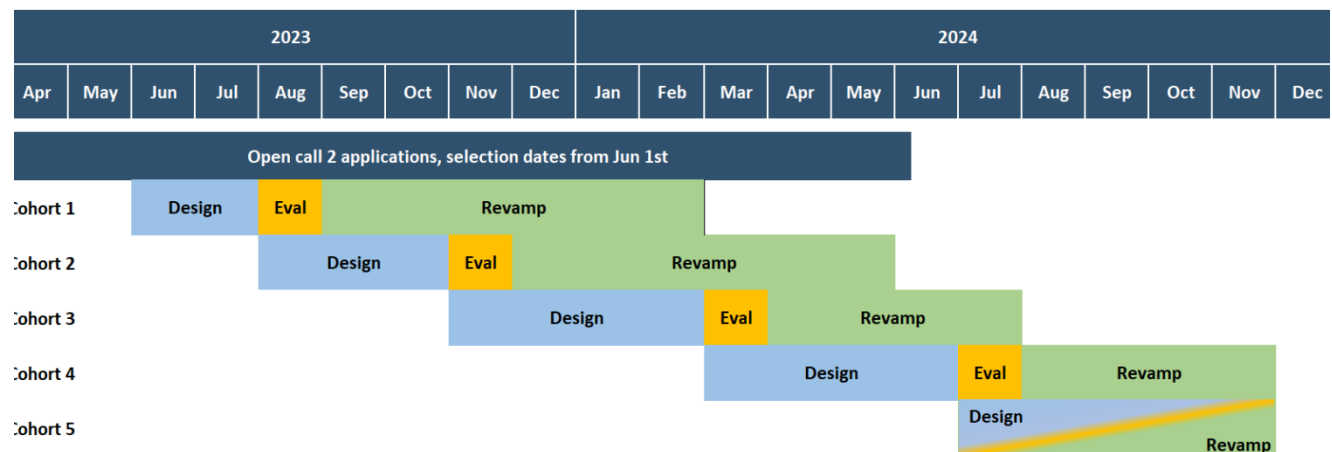


Figure 1 Open Call and Transformation Programme overview

Applications to the Open Call will be accepted from April 1st, 2023, until June 5th, 2024, with selection dates every two weeks until June 2024. At each selection date, eligible SMEs will be selected using first-come-first-served criteria. Which means that if the number of SMEs to be selected per country is exceeded, the ones that submitted the application earlier will be selected. After the selection is completed at each selection date, the SMEs will be invited to sign the service agreement and enter the Transformation Programme.

The Transformation Programme is organized in two phases, the Design Phase, and the Revamp Phase. The Design Phase spans from Jun 1st, 2023, until October 15th, 2024, divided in 5 cohorts, starting on June, August, November 2023, March and July 2024. During this phase the SMEs will have the support of one TranS4MER to design the Transformation and Implementation plan which will be the basis for selection for the Revamp Phase.

The Revamp Phase spans from September 2023 until November 2024. divided in 5 cohorts, starting in September, December 2023, April and August 2024. SMEs will



implement the Transformation and Implementation Plan using the services provided by the consortium and by external service providers.

Relevant Links and Contacts

Project website: <https://trans4mers.eu/>

Open call application form: <https://www.f6s.com/adma-trans4mers-opencall2>.

Helpdesk: info@trans4mers.eu

1.2. Structure of the Document

The Guide for Applicants, this document, groups relevant information in 7 sections. Section 1 (Introduction) provides an overview of the programme and the document. Section 2 defines concepts applicable to the Open Call and Transformation Programme. Section 3 (Design Phase Submission Process) defines the rules and procedures to apply to the Open Call. Section 4 (Design Phase Evaluation and Selection) defines the rules and procedure to perform the selection of SMEs to enter the Transformation Programme. Section 5 (Revamp Phase Submission and Selection) defines the procedures for submission of the Transformation and Implementation Plan and selection for the Revamp Phase. Section 6 (Revamp Phase Procedures) describes procedures for the Revamp Phase of the programme. Section 7 (Responsibilities of the Beneficiaries) defines the obligations of the SMEs that join the Transformation Programme in both phases.

2. General Information

2.1. Terms and Definitions

Table 1 Terms and definitions

Term / Expression	Definition
ADMA	Advanced manufacturing represents a Key Enabling Technology. It uses new knowledge and innovative and cutting-edge technologies such as robotics, 3D printing, artificial intelligence, high-performance computing and modelling, to produce complex products like aeroplanes and medical devices. It also optimises processes towards products having no defects, avoiding any waste, reducing industrial pollution, material consumption and energy use.
Transformation Programme	Set of services and direct funding provided by the ADMA TranS4MErs project to support manufacturing SMEs in the digital transformation.
Application Eligibility Criteria	Criteria used to assess if an application can be considered for the programme. Possible values (Yes/No)
Application Eligible or Non-Eligible	Application that is or is not compliant with eligibility criteria
Application Recommendation	Evaluation provided in F6S Platform by selected F6S users stating that the SME is potentially engaged with the programme. Possible values (Yes/No) and short justification
Application Recommendation Tier 1	Recommendation provided by a TranS4MEr or a member of the consortium
Application Recommendation Tier 2	Recommendation provided by a member of a Digital Innovation Hubs or Enterprise Europe Network



Term / Expression	Definition
Application Timestamp	Timestamp of the final submission of an application. If the application is reopened and resubmitted the last date will be considered.
Contract Deadline	Date and time until when the selected SMEs need to provide contractual information.
F6S Application Form	Application form available in F6S Platform
F6S Platform	Platform provided by F6S
FSTP	Financial support to third parties. Payments made to entities that are not members of the consortium.
FSTP – Lump Sum	Payment made to the third party based on the achievement of a milestone.
Open Call	Competitive process to access the Transformation Programme.
Open Call selection date	Intermediate assessment of applications and selection to the Transformation Programme.
Open Call close date	Date and time when applications close.
Open Call Selection First Come First Served	Applications submitted earlier have priority over applications submitted later.
Open Call Selection Prioritization	Rules used to order applications.
Reserve List	Eligible SMEs that will wait, per country, in case selected SMEs do not provide contractual data.
SME	An incorporated enterprise that complies with the rules defined by the European Commission to be qualified as an SME ¹
SME – Autonomous Enterprise	An autonomous enterprise is not a partner with or linked to another enterprise
SME – Partner Enterprise	The enterprise holds a minimum of 25% (Capital or voting rights in another enterprise, or 25% (Capital or voting rights) are owned by another enterprise.
SME – Linked Enterprise	Linked enterprises are those that form a group through the direct or indirect control of the majority of voting rights of an enterprise by another or through the ability to exercise a dominant influence on an enterprise.

¹https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/conferences/state-aid/sme/smedefinitionguide_en.pdf



Term / Expression	Definition
SME Reserve List	Eligible SMEs that did not get a voucher but are in a waiting list in case contracting procedures are not complete by the deadline.
SME Selected	SME that was granted a voucher to participate in the Design Phase.
Design Phase Voucher	6-8hrs of Trans4MEr time with the SME
Design Phase FSTP Voucher	Direct funding of 450EUR (four hundred fifty euros) provided to 275 SMEs.
Revamp Phase Voucher	1 Voucher consists of 10 tokens @ 4hrs each to request services & tools available in the catalogue
Voucher Allocated	Vouchers that are allocated to SMEs
Voucher Available	Vouchers that are not allocated to SMEs
Voucher Capacity	Number of SMEs that can be supported per country
Voucher Revoked	Voucher that was made available if an SME does not provide contractual information, or if the information provided was found to be not accurate or misleading. As stated in the service agreement.
Score, Expert	<p>Unless otherwise stated, experts in will rank each criterion with marks between 0 and 5. Half point scores are not given.</p> <p>Score values will indicate the following assessments:</p> <p>0: Fail. The application fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.</p> <p>1: Very poor. The criterion is addressed in an unsatisfactory manner.</p> <p>2: Poor. There are serious inherent weaknesses.</p> <p>3: Good. While the application broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses that would need correcting.</p> <p>4: Very Good. The application addresses the criterion well, although certain improvements are possible.</p> <p>5: Excellent. The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.</p>
Score, Per Committee	When the evaluation is made by a committee the average score of each criterion is rounded to the nearest point or half point (1, 1.5, 2, ..., 4, 4.5, 5), before computing the overall score.

Term / Expression	Definition
	Overall score is the sum of the scores of each criterion multiplied by the respective weight, rounded to the nearest integer value.

2.2. Eligibility Criteria

2.2.1. Type of Beneficiary

The accepted applicants for the ADMA Trans4MErs Open Calls are SMEs acting in the domain of Advanced Manufacturing.

- An SME will be considered as such if complying with the European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC and the SME qualification guide. As a summary, the criteria which define an SME are:
 - Independent (not linked or owned by another enterprise), in accordance with Recommendation 2003/361/EC.
 - Headcount in Annual Work Unit (AWU) less than 250.
 - Annual turnover less or equal to €50 million OR annual balance sheet total less or equal to €43 million.
- Advanced manufacturing represents a Key Enabling Technology. It uses new knowledge and innovative and cutting-edge technologies such as robotics, 3D printing, artificial intelligence, high-performance computing and modelling, to produce complex products like aeroplanes and medical devices. It also optimises processes towards products having no defects, avoiding any waste, reducing industrial pollution, material consumption and energy use.²
- Start-ups that do not have yet annual turnover or balance sheets are also considered eligible given that they fulfil the criteria (a) and (b) of the SME definition.
- In case an SME enters the ADMA Trans4MErs Transformation Programme it will remain eligible even if, at a certain point during the sub-project execution, it does not fulfil criteria (b) or (c) of the SME definition.
- The organisations must not have had convictions for fraudulent behaviour, other financial irregularities, unethical or illegal business practices.
- The participating organisations must not have been declared bankrupt or have initiated bankruptcy procedures.
- It is not under liquidation or is not an enterprise under difficulty according to the Commission Regulation No 651/2014, art. 2.18.

²https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/research-area/industrial-research-and-innovation/key-enabling-technologies/advanced-manufacturing_en?msclkid=424412b6b97711ec9fc4ac6e5c4420bc

- It is not excluded from the possibility of obtaining EU funding under the provisions of both national and EU law, or by a decision of either national or EU authority.
- Please note that a signed version of the Honour Declaration and the SME Declaration will be requested during the contract preparation phase.

2.2.2. Eligible Countries

Applicants from the following countries are eligible to receive funding through this Open Call:

- A legal entity established and based in one of the EU Member.

2.2.3. Technological Areas

Only manufacturing SMEs operating in the Advanced Manufacturing domain, acting as technology or service adopters, are eligible to be funded by the programme.

Acting as a technology adopter means that the activities to be performed in the context of the ADMA TranS4MErs project are in the scope of improving manufacturing processes and products.

2.3. Support Provided

During the Transformation Programme, the SMEs will receive the following support:

- Design Phase
 - Design Phase Voucher (section 2.4), or
 - Direct funding to pay TranS4MEr support (section 2.5).
- Revamp Phase
 - Revamp Phase Voucher, 1 Voucher consists of 10 tokens @ 4hrs each to request services & tools available in the service catalogue (section 2.6).
- Both phases
 - Access to the ADMA TranS4MErs platform which includes a catalogue of services provided by consortium members and third parties (section 2.7).
 - Invitations to xChange events. Travel and accommodation costs are not included.

2.4. Design Phase Voucher



The goal of the Design Phase for the SME is to develop the Transformation Plan and Implementation Journey Guide plan with the assistance of a Trans4Mer. The SME may choose to work either with a person affiliated with the consortium or with an external provider.

If the SME chooses to work with a member of the consortium, the SME will be granted with a voucher to work with a Trans4ME. It is anticipated that on average each SME will have eight hours of dedicated support.

2.5. Direct Funding (FSTP)

The consortium will provide 275 vouchers of 450€ in the form of lump sum, to be used by the SMEs to pay for external Trans4Mers services during the Design Phase.

The request must be made in the application form, mentioning a tentative external trans4mer. During the Design Phase SMEs are free to choose any external Trans4MER to work with.

Once the Transformation and Implementation Plan is submitted the consortium will verify the two following conditions before making the payment to the SMEs:

- The Transformation and Implementation Plan was created with the support of an external supplier;
- The external supplier is a certified Trans4MEr.

Please note that the support is provided by the ADMA Trans4Mers project to the SME. It is the responsibility of the SME to contract the external provider and discuss operational and financial arrangements with the service provider. The ADMA Trans4Mers Project shall not be involved in such a process and shall not have any responsibility in cases of contractual breaches between the SME and the service providers.

2.6. Revamp Phase Voucher

Each SME participating in the Design Phase can apply to receive a voucher for the Revamp Phase which includes 10 tokens that can be used to request services from the service catalogue (section 2.7). The tokens will be redeemed in the Revamp Phase to support the implementation of the Transformation and Implementation Plan.

2.7. Service Catalogue

The service catalogue will be available in the ADMA Trans4Mers xChange platform and includes:



- A list of services available to be used in the Revamp Phase
- Services can be of two types:
 - In scope of the project, cost is covered by tokens
 - Out of scope of the project, cost must be paid by the SME
- For each service the catalogue includes:
 - Description of the service
 - Cost: Payable with tokens or EUR
 - Scheduling restrictions (number of services per month)

2.8. Number of Companies to be Supported

The ADMA Trans4MErs Project is committed to support SMEs across Europe and has defined the number of SMEs to be supported per country. The list is available on the project website.

The project website will also list the rolling number of applications by country and announce countries where applications are already closed, after each selection date.

In the end of the Open Call, the ADMA Trans4MErs Project may update the number of supported SMEs per country to adjust on higher or lower applications than expected.

2.9. Language

English is the only official language of the ADMA Trans4MErs project. Submissions done in any other language will not be eligible and will not be evaluated. English is also the only official language during the whole execution of the ADMA Trans4MErs programme. This means that all communication will be in English, and all deliverables will only be accepted if in English.

2.10. Document Formats

Unless otherwise stated in specific questions of the application form, any document requested in any of the phases must be submitted electronically in PDF format without restrictions for printing.

2.11. Multiple Submissions



Only one proposal will be accepted per SME. In case an SME submits more than one proposal, only the application submitted first will be considered. Later applications will be deemed ineligible.

2.12. Absence of Conflict of Interest

Applicants shall not have any actual or/and potential conflict of interest with the ADMA TranS4MErs selection process and during the project implementation. All cases of conflict of interest will be assessed case by case by a review committee.

ADMA TranS4MErs consortium partners, its affiliated entities, employees, and permanent co-operators cannot become a recipient of support via the Open Call. This would be in breach of the European Commission's rules.

2.13. Ethical Issues

ADMA TranS4MErs complies with the fundamental ethical issues particularly those outlined in the “European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity”.

All applicants must submit a self-assessment ethics questionnaire, available in the Proposal Template, to confirm that their proposal does or does not have ethical issues. If the SME must answer “Yes” to any of the questions in the template, the SME needs to need to contact the ADMA TranS4MErs Helpdesk for guidance, as required. The ADMA TranS4MErs consortium may check during the evaluation of a proposal if this declaration is in line with the contents of the proposal itself and reserves itself the right to contact the companies for clarification and eventually take necessary steps depending on the ethical issues. Proposals that fail to properly address ethical issues or inadequately deal with privacy aspects will be rejected.

2.14. Data Protection

To process and evaluate applications, ADMA TranS4MErs will need to collect Personal and Industrial Data. F6S Network Limited, as the Open Call Coordinator will act as Data Controller for data submitted through the F6S platform for these purposes. The F6S platform's system design and operational procedures ensure that data is managed in compliance with The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR). Each applicant will accept the F6S terms to ensure coverage.

Please refer to <https://www.f6s.com/terms> to check F6S platform data privacy policy and security measures.



2.15. Fixed Dates and Tentative Dates

The ADMA TranS4MErs project has planned the Open Call and Transformation Programme to ensure that each phase has enough time allocated to each phase for successful completion. The project recognizes that unforeseen events might occur.

To keep transparency and fairness among applicants the Open Call selection dates and the Design Phase end date are fixed dates and will only be updated in case of unforeseen events.

All other dates mentioned in this document are tentative and may be updated to accommodate specific needs of the SMEs and the consortium.



3. Design Phase

Submission Process

3.1. Overall Process

Timeline for applications are as follows:

- Application period opens: April 1st, 2023
- Selection dates: First and third Wednesday of each month from June 2023 until June 2024
- Application period closes: June 5th, 2024, 17h00 Central European Time.

Applications are submitted by the SMEs on the F6S portal, which include questions related to the programme and specific acknowledgement to the conditions of the programme.

After the selection dates, the programme management committee will select eligible applications and invite the SMEs to submit the documents for contract preparation.

If an SME fails to meet the deadline to submit the documents as listed in section 4.5, the invitation is cancelled, and another SME, who was placed on the reserve list, will be invited to participate.

3.2. Open Call Publication

The Open Call is defined by the following documents:

- Guidelines for Applicants: This present guide aims to assist potential applicants. The document provides a full set of information regarding the Open Call for application to the ADMA Trans4MErs programme.
- Service Agreement Template, which provides a template of the service agreement that the successful applicants will be requested to sign, which will include:
 - Honour Declaration, which declares that all conditions of the Transformation Programme are accepted by an SME provider legal representative.
 - SME Declaration, which evaluates the status of the SMEs participating at in the Transformation Programme. This is only for the SME partner.

3.3. Proposal Preparation



Please follow the steps:

1. For the proposal preparation, the applicants are requested to apply online and answer all mandatory questions (with no exception) at:

<https://www.f6s.com/adma-trans4mers-opencall2>.

2. It is highly recommended to submit your proposal well before the selection dates as selection will be made in a first come first served mode per country. If the applicant discovers an error in the proposal, and provided the call close date has not passed, the applicant may request the F6S ADMA Trans4MErs team to re-submit the proposal (for this purpose please contact us at support@f6s.com). However, ADMA Trans4MErs cannot guarantee resubmission will be done in time if requested shorter than 2 working days before the selection dates or open call close date.

3. If a proposal is reopened and resubmitted the timestamp considered is the one of the final submissions.

It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the proposal. Failure of the proposal to arrive in time for any reason, including network communications delays or working from multiple browsers or multiple browser windows, is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. Late submissions are not permitted. The time of receipt of the application as recorded by the submission system will be definitive.

3.4. Proposal Submission

The F6S platform will be the entry point for all Transformation Programme proposals that will be submitted to ADMA Trans4MErs. Interested applicants should register at the ADMA Trans4MErs F6S page (<https://www.f6s.com/adma-trans4mers-opencall2>).

Only proposals submitted within the Open Call duration will be accepted.

Proposals submitted by any other means will not be considered nor evaluated.

A full list of applications will be drafted containing basic information for statistical purposes and clarity (which will also be shared with the European Commission for transparency).

The application reception will close as indicated in Section 3.1 There will not be any extensions unless there is a Force Majeure situation (e.g., a major problem caused by the F6S platform and not by the applicants, which makes the system unavailable for a long period).

Applicants will be notified of a successful submission via F6S Portal if notifications are not disabled in the personal page of F6S Portal.



3.5. Recommendation Process

The application form contains two mandatory fields that allows the applicant to request a recommendation, the name of the person and the email address.

Once the application is submitted, the F6S platform will automatically request a recommendation from the person, no additional action from the applicant is required.

In the selection dates, the project will select applications from that received a recommendation from Tier 1 profiles (Trans4MEr or a member of the consortium). In the selection dates, applications with Tier 1 recommendations will have priority over Tier 2 profiles (member of a Digital Innovation Hubs or Enterprise Europe Network)

Recommendations are used only to assess if the applicant is committed in participating in the programme, they are not used to rank applications.



4.Design Phase

Evaluation and Selection

4.1. Proposal Eligibility Criteria

The following proposal eligibility criteria also apply:

- I. Each SME may submit only one (1) proposal. In case an SME submits more than one proposal, only the first application will be accepted.
- II. SMEs may participate in maximum one (1) Transformation Programme with one application. SMEs that have entered or have been invited to enter the programme, even if they have not signed the contract for any reason, are automatically excluded from participating in second Open Call even if they submit a different proposal.
- III. SMEs may re-apply for second Open Call; however, it is mandatory to flag that this is a resubmission.
- IV. Proposals from a partner or linked SMEs (see table of Terms and Definitions) must demonstrate that there is no risk of double funding. The fundamental principle underpinning the rules for public expenditure in the EU states that no costs for the same activity can be funded twice from the EU budget, as defined in the Article 111 of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation.

4.2. Eligibility Check

A manual filtering process will be used to discard ineligible proposals. The eligibility criteria check will verify:

- I. The proposing entity is a legal entity established in EU, eligible for EC funding under the rules of H2020 [Y/N]
- II. The proposing entity is an SME as defined in section 2.2.1[Y/N]
- III. The proposing entity is a manufacturing SME in the ADMA domain [Y/N]
- IV. The proposal includes a valid recommendation [Y/N]
- V. Are the participation rules as expressed in sections 2 and 3 followed [Y/N]
- VI. Is the participation rule as expressed in section 4.1 followed [Y/N]
- VII. Is the application form written in the English language [Y/N]?



A Proposal is eligible if the ALL answers to the previous criteria are Yes.

If not earlier, after the call closes (June 5th, 2024) proposals being marked as ineligible will get a rejection letter including the reasons for being catalogued as ineligible. No further feedback on the process will be given. Applicants are entitled to use the redress process defined in section 4.6.

4.3. Selection of Design Phase Proposal after the selection Dates

At each selection date, the consortium will select and invite for contracting eligible SMEs that received a Tier 1 recommendation (TranS4MEr or a member of the consortium), received within two calendar days from the selection date, using a first come first served allocation per country.

Eligible proposals are ordered with the following criteria:

- I. Country
- II. Then from the earliest submission to the latest submission, first come first served allocation.

Invitations will be issued per country in the order defined in ii.

Please note that if the number of applications exceed the number of vouchers available per country, applications submitted earlier will be selected.

4.4. Final Selection of Proposals in the Design Phase

After the open call closes, the eligible proposals are sorted using the following criteria:

- I. Country
- II. Then in two groups, first group, applications with Tier 1 recommendations (TranS4MEr or a member of the consortium), second group, applications with Tier 2 recommendations (member of a Digital Innovation Hubs or Enterprise Europe Network).



- III. then from the earliest submission to the latest submission, first come first served allocation.

Invitations will be issued by this order (ii, iii) per country.

Please note that if the number of applications exceed the number of vouchers available per country, applications submitted earlier will be selected.

4.5. Service Agreement Invitation

After the Open Call selection and final selection, the ADMA Trans4MErs coordinator will start the contract preparation in collaboration with the proposals' coordinator that have been invited. The Contract preparation will go via an administrative and financial checking (and potentially into technical or ethical/security negotiations). On a case-by-case approach, a phone call or teleconference may be needed for clarification.

The objective of the contract preparation is fulfilling the legal requirements between the ADMA Trans4MErs consortium and every beneficiary of the call. The items covered will be:

To validate the status information of the SME, the following documents may be required:

- I. SMEs declaration: In the event the applicant declares being non-autonomous, the balance sheet and profit and loss account (with annexes) for the last period for upstream and downstream organisations should also be provided.
- II. Status Information Form. In case this is not a start-up, it includes the headcount (AWU), balance, profit & loss accounts of the latest closed financial year and the relation, upstream and downstream, of any linked or partner company. In case it is a start-up, legal document of the official founding date.
- III. Legal existence. Company Register, Official Gazette or other official document per country showing the name of the organisation, the legal address and registration number and a copy of a document proving VAT registration (in case the VAT number does not show on the registration extract or its equivalent).
- IV. In cases where the number of employees and/or the ownership is not clearly identified: any other supporting documents which demonstrate headcount and ownership such as payroll details, annual reports, national regional association records, etc. In case it is a start-up, legal document of the official founding date and declaration of ownership.

It should be emphasized that each SME should provide at contract preparation time a valid VAT number. Failure to provide the VAT number will automatically result in proposal rejection.



The request, by the ADMA Trans4MErs consortium, of the above documentation will be done including deadlines. In general, the sub-project negotiation must be concluded within two weeks. In case an SME fails to provide all information within the above period, the application is automatically rejected and the next application on the reserve list is invited.

During this phase, SMEs will need to match with a Trans4MEr to get support in the Design Phase, Only SMEs matched with a Trans4MEr, either internal or external, will be able to sign the service agreement.

At the end of the negotiation phase, the service agreement will be signed between the ADMA Trans4MErs Consortium represented by its coordinator and the beneficiary SME.

Please note that the service agreement/contract will cover the complete programme.

4.6. Redress Process

Within 3 working days of the delivery of a rejection letter considering the proposal as ineligible, the proposer may submit a request for redress if they believe the results of the eligibility checks have not been correctly applied.

In that case, an internal review committee of the ADMA Trans4MErs consortium will examine the request for redress. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of such requests, and equal treatment of applicants.

Requests must be:

- I. Related to the evaluation process or eligibility checks.
- II. Clearly describe the complaint.
- III. Received within the time limit (3 working days) from the reception of a rejection letter considering the proposal as ineligible or the Selection Report information letter delivered.
- IV. Sent by the SME legal representative that has also submitted the proposal.

The committee will review the complaint and will recommend an appropriate course of action. If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could affect the eventual funding decision, it is possible that all or part of the proposal will be re-evaluated.

Please note:

- I. This procedure is concerned only with the evaluation and/or eligibility checking process. The committee will not call into question the scientific or technical judgement of appropriately qualified experts.
- II. A re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the final decision on whether to fund it or not. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on other criteria.



- III. The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score.
- IV. Only one request for redress per proposal will be considered by the committee. All requests for redress will be treated in confidence and must be sent to the Project Coordinator via email to info@trans4mers.eu.

In case the redress procedure accepts the complaint, and the application was submitted earlier than a selected application, both applications will be invited to enter the Design Phase.

4.7. Resubmission process

If following an accurate recommendation an application is rejected and the SME wishes to be reassessed in the future, the SME needs to submit a request in the helpdesk via info@trans4mers.eu, justifying why they should be reassessed. The project will move the application to “in progress” so that the applicant can update the data and resubmit the application.



5. Revamp Phase

Submission and Selection

5.1. Overall Process

During the Design Phase, SMEs and TranS4MErs will create the Transformation and Implementation Plan which will be submitted in the F6S Platform.

Applicants will be notified of a successful submission via F6S Portal if notifications are not disabled in the personal page of F6S Portal.

The ADMA TranS4MErs consortium will evaluate the Transformation and Implementation Plan, rank applications, and invite SMEs to the Revamp Phase.

5.2. Cohorts

In order to allow SMEs to start working in the implementation of the Transformation Plan and Implementation Journey Guide, the Revamp phase is divided in three cohorts depicted in Table 2.

Table 2 Revamp Phase cohorts

Cohort	Application Date	Start Date	End Date	Vouchers
1	Jul 31 st , 2023	Sep 1 st , 2023	Feb 28 th 2024	130
2	Oct 31 st , 2023	Dec 1 st , 2023	May 31 st , 2024	130
3	Feb 28 th , 2024	Apr 1 st , 2024	Jul 31 st , 2024	60
4	Jul 3 rd , 2024	Aug 5 th , 2024	Nov 30 th , 2024	All available
5	Until Oct 15 th , 2024	Sep 2 nd , 2024	Nov 30 th , 2024	All available

The minimum number of Revamp phase vouchers is 320 divided per cohort as defined in Table 2. If after the end of the selection period of Revamp Phase of Transformation Programme 1, the project verifies that it will be possible to increase the number of vouchers in the Revamp Phase of the Second open call, the additional capacity will be allocated to cohort 1. In cohort 5, evaluation procedures are started immediately after the application is submitted so that applications are evaluated and onboarded as soon as possible.

SMEs that participated in the Design Phase of the first Transformation Programme and did not participate in the Revamp Phase of the programme can apply in any cohort of Revamp Phase of the second Transformation Programme.

If in any cohort the number vouchers allocated is lower than the vouchers available, the balance will be added to the following cohort.

5.3. Internal Evaluators

Due to the nature of the TranS4MErs Open Calls, an internal team of experts will be defined to evaluate the Transformation and Implementation Plans. The following criteria will be applied for the selection of experts:

- I. At least 70% of the evaluators will be from the industry and business environment, from which at least 30% will represent the manufacturing user perspective,
- II. At least 40% will be women,
- III. Each expert must have at least 10 years' experience in any of the areas of the advanced manufacturing domain,
- IV. Experts that have already evaluated proposals for the EC will be preferred

5.4. Eligibility Criteria

The following proposal eligibility criteria apply:

- I. Applications to the Revamp Phase are restricted to SMEs that successfully participated in the Design Phase.
- II. Applications must include ethics assessment, identifying ethics and security issues and include appropriate mitigation measures. Failing to identify ethical issues or providing inadequate mitigation measures, will result in proposal disqualification.
- III. Each SME may submit only one (1) Transformation and Implementation Plan. Multiple submissions are a disqualifying factor. In case an SME submits more than one Transformation and Implementation Plan, all proposals that they have submitted will be automatically excluded from the evaluation process.
- IV. If a Transformation and Implementation Plan is not selected to participate in the Revamp Phase, the SMEs may re-apply at subsequent Open Calls, however, it is mandatory to flag that this is a resubmission.



5.5. Criteria to Evaluate Transformation and Implementation Plans

Transformation and Implementation Plans will be evaluated with the following criteria:

- I. **Alignment and Excellence:** Application/SME must demonstrate a clear set of objectives aligned with the definition of the Trans4MERS goals and with the general objectives of the project.
- II. **Impact:** Applicants must define their ambition and a clear set of expectations aligned with the objectives of the OC. Proposals must demonstrate impact of the Trans4MERS programme and its contribution to SME development.
- III. **Implementation:** Applicants must provide credible evidence that the project team is committed to learn/ grow and has the necessary skills, infrastructure, and management experience to be able to deliver the Transformation and Implementation Plan

Individual scoring and the final score are defined in section 2.1.

All criteria have the same weight.

5.6. Consensus Meeting

In the end of the evaluation period the consortium will review the scores provided by the different experts to assess the following items:

- I. Significant discrepancies in the scores of specific proposals.
- II. Consistent significant deviations in scoring from specific evaluators.

If the any of the deviations are identified, the consortium will hold consensus meetings to consolidate the scores. If significant discrepancies are not resolved, the consortium may request a third evaluator to score the relevant proposals.

In the case of adding a third evaluator, the final score of each criterion is computed according to the following formula:

Score = (lowest score + medium score * 4 + highest score) / 6

5.7. Ranking and Selection



At the end of each evaluation process all Transformation and Implementation Plans will be ranked in a single list, independent of the countries. The criteria for the ranking of the Transformation and Implementation Plans will follow the rules:

- I. Rule 1; The Transformation and Implementation Plans will be ranked based on their overall score (sum of the criterion 1 to 3).
- II. Rule 2: In case following Rule 1 there are Transformation and Implementation Plans in the same position, priority will be given to Transformation and Implementation Plans that have higher scores in the criterion Alignment and excellence.
- III. Rule 3: In case following Rule 2 there are Transformation and Implementation Plans in the same position, priority will be given to Transformation and Implementation Plans that have a higher score in the criterion Impact.
- IV. Rule 4: In case following Rule 3 there are Transformation and Implementation Plans in the same position, priority will be given to the one submitted earliest.

The SMEs with the highest scores will be selected to participate in the Revamp Phase, regardless of the countries where they are based.

If the SME is not selected to participate in a cohort and the Transformation and Implementation Plan is scored above the minimum threshold it will be automatically considered for the next cohort.

5.8. Redress Process

Within 3 working days of the delivery of a rejection letter considering the proposal as non-eligible or an Evaluation Summary Report that ranks the proposal below the selection borderline, the proposer may submit a request for redress if s/he believes the results of the eligibility checks have not been correctly applied, or if s/he feels that there has been a shortcoming in the way his/her proposal has been evaluated that may affect the final decision on whether to enter the Revamp Phase of the Transformation Programme or not.

In that case, an internal review committee of the ADMA Trans4MErs consortium will examine the request for redress. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of such requests, and equal treatment of applicants.

Requests must be:

- V. Related to the evaluation process or eligibility checks.
- VI. Clearly describe the complaint.
- VII. Received within the time limit (3 working days) from the reception of a rejection letter considering the proposal as non-eligible or the ESR information letter delivered.
- VIII. Sent by the SME legal representative that has also submitted the proposal.



The committee will review the complaint and will recommend an appropriate course of action. If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could affect the eventual funding decision, it is possible that all or part of the proposal will be re-evaluated.

Please note:

- V. This procedure is concerned only with the evaluation and/or eligibility checking process. The committee will not call into question the scientific or technical judgement of appropriately qualified experts.
- VI. A re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the final decision on whether to fund it or not. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on other criteria.
- VII. The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score.
- VIII. Only one request for redress per proposal will be considered by the committee. All requests for redress will be treated in confidence and must be sent to Project Coordinator via the helpdesk email address.

In case a proposal under the redress procedure is re-evaluated and the new evaluation score is higher, it will be compared with the proposal that has entered the Revamp Phase of the Transformation Programme with the lowest ranking. The comparison will use the ranking rules as expressed in section 5.7. In case the proposal under the redress procedure ranks higher then both proposals will be invited to enter the Revamp Phase.



6. Open call Procedures

During the Revamp Phase, SMEs will implement the Transformation and Implementation Plan created in the Design Phase, submitted for evaluation, and selected for support.

6.1. Provision of Services Granted

Each SME can request services from the Service Catalogue up to the balance of tokens available or without limit if the service is to be paid. Service Providers will receive service requests sorted by ranking and must select the SMEs to accept from the highest ranked to the lowest ranked. Each Service Provider is responsible to define timeframes to select SMEs, however SME selection can only start two weeks after the official Kick-off of the Revamp Phase.

Service provision is a responsibility of the Service Provider. The Service Catalogue includes detailed instructions on how the service must be requested and is provisioned. The ADMA Trans4MErs project is not responsible for the capacity and timeframe of service delivery.

If an SME encounters any problems in the fulfilment of the service request, they should contact the Service Provider, then the Trans4MEr they have worked with and the project helpdesk.

6.2. Report of Services Received

After receiving a service, the SME is requested to report the service delivery and the quality of the service received. This information will be used to verify effort claims and maintain the que quality of the services provided.



6.3. Transformation and Implementation Plan Updates

The ADMA TranS4MErs project acknowledges that SMEs need to adapt their strategy to react to changes in the business and technological domains. During the Revamp Phase SMEs are allowed to update the Transformation and Implementation Plan as long as the actions to be implemented remain in the scope of the ADMA TranS4MErs project and the SME notifies the consortium of such updates.

Updates will be assessed case by case. If the SME or the actions to be implemented cease to be in the scope of the ADMA TranS4MErs project the participation in the Transformation Programme may be terminated.

6.4. Selection of Alternative Services

The SME is allowed to select new services from the service catalogue if they have tokens available or if the selected service replaces a service previously selected.

Provision of newly selected services is conditioned by the availability of the service provider.

6.5. Procedures Related with Direct Funding

Payment of the FSTP voucher to the SME, will be performed after the Transformation plan is submitted and there is evidence of involvement of the TranS4MEr.



7. Responsibilities of the Beneficiaries

The selected SMEs are indirect beneficiaries of European Commission funding. As such, they are responsible for the proper use of the funding and ensure that the recipients comply with obligations under Horizon 2020 specific requirements as described in Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

The obligations that are applicable to the recipients include:

7.1. Conflict of Interest

Beneficiaries must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the sub-project is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests').

They must formally notify the ADMA Trans4MErs coordinator without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. The ADMA Trans4MErs coordinator may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

If the sub-contract consortium member breaches any of its obligations, the sub-contract may be automatically terminated. Moreover, costs may be rejected.

7.2. Data Protection and Confidentiality

During implementation of the sub-project and for four years after the end of the sub-project, the parties must keep confidential any data, documents, or other material (in any form) that is identified as confidential at sub-contract signing time ('confidential information').

If a beneficiary SME requests, the Commission and the ADMA Trans4MErs consortium may agree to keep such information confidential for an additional period beyond the initial four years. This will be explicitly stated in the sub-contract.



If information has been identified as confidential during the sub-project execution or only orally, it will be confidential only if this is accepted by the ADMA TranS4MErs coordinator and confirmed in writing within 15 days of the oral disclosure. Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, they may use confidential information only to implement the Agreement.

The sub-project may disclose confidential information to the ADMA TranS4MErs consortium and to the selected reviewers, who will be bounded by a specific Non-Disclosure Agreement.

7.3. Promoting the Action and Give Visibility to the EU Funding

The beneficiary SMEs must promote the sub-project, the ADMA TranS4MErs project and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner and to highlight the financial support of the EC. The ADMA TranS4MErs Communication team will guide and support these communication activities.

Unless the European Commission or the ADMA TranS4MErs coordinator requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any communication activity related to the action (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.), any publicity, including at a conference or seminar or any type of information or promotional material (brochure, leaflet, poster, presentation etc.), and any infrastructure, equipment and major results funded by the grant must:

- I. display the EU emblem;
- II. display the ADMA TranS4MErs logo and
- III. include the following text: This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101037866.

When displayed in association with a logo, the European emblem should be given appropriate prominence. This obligation to use the European emblem in respect of projects to which the EC contributes implies no right of exclusive use. It is subject to general third-party use restrictions which do not permit the appropriation of the emblem, or of any similar trademark or logo, whether by registration or by any other means. Under these conditions, the Beneficiary is exempted from the obligation to obtain prior permission from the EC to use the emblem. Further detailed information on the EU emblem can be found on the Europa web page.



Any publicity made by the beneficiary SME in respect of the project, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, must specify that it reflects only the author's views and that the EC or ADMA Trans4MErs project is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

The EC and the ADMA Trans4MErs consortium shall be authorized to publish, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, the following information:

- I. the name of the beneficiary SME;
- II. contact address of the beneficiary SME;
- III. the general purpose of the project;
- IV. the amount of the financial contribution foreseen for the project; after the final payment, and the amount of the financial contribution actually received;
- V. the geographic location of the activities carried out;
- VI. the list of dissemination activities and/or of patent (applications) relating to foreground;
- VII. the details/references and the abstracts of scientific publications relating to foreground and, if funded within the sub-project, the published version or the final manuscript accepted for publication;
- VIII. the publishable reports submitted to ADMA Trans4MErs;
 - IX. any picture or any audio-visual or web material provided to the EC and ADMA Trans4MErs in the framework of the project.

The beneficiary SME shall ensure that all necessary authorizations for such publication have been obtained and that the publication of the information by the EC and ADMA Trans4MErs does not infringe any rights of third parties.

Upon a duly substantiated request by the sub-project coordinator, if such permission is provided by the EC, the ADMA Trans4MErs, may agree to embargo project publicity if disclosure of the information indicated above would risk compromising the beneficiary's security, academic or commercial interests.

7.4. Financial Audits and Controls

The European Commission (EC) will monitor that ADMA Trans4MErs beneficiaries, and the beneficiary SME comply with the conditions for financial support to third parties set out in Annex I of the ADMA Trans4MErs grant agreement and may take any action foreseen by the grant agreement in case of non-compliance vis à vis the beneficiary concerned.

Moreover, the EC may at any time during the implementation of the ADMA Trans4MErs project and up to four years after the end of the ADMA Trans4MErs project, arrange for financial audits to be carried out, by external auditors, or by the EC services



themselves including the European Anti-Fraud office (OLAF). The audit procedure shall be deemed to be initiated on the date of receipt of the relevant letter sent by the EC. Such audits may cover financial, systemic and other aspects (such as accounting and management principles) relating to the proper execution of the grant agreement. They shall be carried out on a confidential basis.

The beneficiary SME shall make available directly to the EC all detailed information and data that may be requested by the EC or any representative authorised by it, with a view to verifying that the grant agreement is properly managed and performed in accordance with its provisions and that costs have been charged in compliance with it. This information and data must be precise, complete, and effective.

The beneficiary SME shall keep all sub-project deliverables and the originals or, in exceptional cases, duly authenticated copies – including electronic copies – of all documents relating to the sub-project contract for up to five years from the end of the project. These shall be made available to the EC were requested during any audit under the grant agreement.

To carry out these audits, the beneficiary SME shall ensure that the EC's services and any external body(ies) authorised by it have on-the-spot access at all reasonable times, notably to the sub-project applicant offices, to its computer data, to its accounting data and to all the information needed to carry out those audits, including information on individual salaries of persons involved in the project. They shall ensure that the information is readily available on the spot at the moment of the audit and, if so requested, that data be handed over in an appropriate form.

On the basis of the findings made during the financial audit, a provisional report shall be drawn up. It shall be sent by the EC or its authorized representative to the beneficiary concerned, which may make observations thereon within one month of receiving it. The Commission may decide not to consider observations conveyed or documents sent after that deadline. The final report shall be sent to the beneficiary concerned within two months of expiry of the aforesaid deadline.

On the basis of the conclusions of the audit, the EC shall take all appropriate measures which it considers necessary, including the issuing of recovery orders regarding all or part of the payments made by it and the application of any applicable sanction.

The European Court of Auditors shall have the same rights as the EC, notably right of access, for the purpose of checks and audits, without prejudice to its own rules.

In addition, the EC may carry out on-the-spot checks and inspections in accordance with Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities.

7.5. Activities Reporting



Supported SMEs must use the ADMA TranS4MErs Platform to:

- I. Report the progress of the project, update information on outlined KPIs in their Transformation and Implementation Plan,
- II. Request services from the consortium
- III. Report service delivery and quality of the services provided
- IV. Any other information requested from the consortium to track progress and perform quality assessment of the programme and services provided.

7.6. Internal Communication

The operational communication channel will be the ADMA TranS4MErs xChange Platform. For formal communications, between the ADMA TranS4MErs consortium and the SME the communication channel is email.

