

COMPETE Salone COVID-19 Recovery Window Eligibility criteria

Background

The COVID-19 Recovery Window will solicit business ideas from private sector organisations operating within Sierra Leone that can:

- *Strengthen domestic supply chains* to enable small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and off-takers at the top of supply chains to reduce transaction costs, maintain the integrity and efficiency of the supply chain, and ensure that jobs and income opportunities remain for Sierra Leone producers reliant on these chains.
- *Adapt existing machinery and capacity of producers to increase flexibility in the production of essential goods* and for those that are likely to face supply surges *and where opportunities exist to develop long-term, commercially sustainable business lines.*
- *Support improvements to logistics and distribution chains*, especially as social distancing measures will change the manner in which distribution will work throughout the country.

Eligibility criteria

In order to be eligible for COMPETE Salone COVID-19 Recovery Window funding, companies will need to demonstrate the following:

The Company:

- The lead organisation must be a private for-profit company. Only in exceptional cases will COMPETE Salone consider new businesses (start-ups), where there is strong evidence that the new company has credible and experienced investors and management team.
- The private sector organisation must be registered in Sierra Leone, or it could be an externally registered business that has a licence to operate in Sierra Leone.
- All applicants must demonstrate their capacity to implement their proposed project and demonstrate sound financial performance.
- The lead company may collaborate with other organisations, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community organisations. However, it is a condition that the lead applicant and implementer of the business idea must be a commercial company/business.
- The lead company will work with either an already established supply chain (which they have established) or aim to establish a supply chain incorporating Sierra Leonean suppliers and small and medium enterprises that supports the development of their business idea.

The project idea:

- The project idea must address one of the three funding challenges that have been set for the COVID-19 Recovery Window.
- COMPETE Salone will support business ideas that can develop new products, services and business models that incorporate local content produced by Sierra Leonean producers, either in the processed or semi-processed form as well as services, into applicant's business activities to deliver value addition products and services.
- The project must demonstrate how and why through COMPETE Salone funding jobs will be retained or new jobs created both within the lead company and companies and producers within its wider supply chain.
- All business projects must be inclusive in nature: they will need to demonstrate their ability to deliver significant benefits to other SME suppliers, in terms of improved incomes or job creation, rather than solely benefitting the lead company.
- The project must demonstrate that the activities that will be funded by COMPETE Salone will be additional to the company's existing activities and that the project would not go ahead without COMPETE Salone funding. COMPETE Salone could also consider projects that would have gone ahead at a reduced pace or scale in the absence of its support.

Funding:

- The total grant funds requested must be between £100,000 and £400,000. Larger funding requests for projects with the potential to deliver sizeable systemic impact in a particular market or markets would be considered.
- The project promoters including the lead company, collaborating organisations and third parties such as co-investors or banks and other lenders must provide matching funds of at least 40% of the total cost of the business idea. Contributions can be made through a combination of in-kind and cash contributions and this proportion between cash and in-kind contribution will be taken on a case-by-case basis dependent on the logic of the individual project proposed.