

## **GUIDANCE NOTES**

### ***Measure 2 – Enhancement of Social and Rural Infrastructure***

***Common Agricultural Fund - Strategic Plan for  
Malta (2023-2027)***

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## **Disclaimer**

The GAL Xlokk Foundation reserves the right, in particular on the basis of the approval or direction by the European Commission, to amend from time to time certain provisions established by this guidance document.

Such amendments may become applicable and enforced retrospectively.

In case of any conflicts between these guidance notes and the text of the Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plan (CAP SP) 2023-2027, the GAL XLOKK Local Development Strategy and other legislative text, the interpretation given by the relevant legislation will be given priority.

The GAL Xlokk Foundation reserves the right to request additional information not included in this Guidance Document, in order to proceed with checks and evaluation of the application throughout the process.

## **The Submission of Documentation**

Applications must be submitted as a soft copy by emailing a zipped folder containing the application and all relevant documentation on [info@galxlokk.com](mailto:info@galxlokk.com) by not later than the submission date of the closing of each batch of this call.

## **Provision**

This notification supersedes any previous guidance notes, website notifications or other media notifications issued on this intervention prior to the launch of this call. Other notifications can be issued on such platforms following the issue of this call.

Further details on the application process may be published in due course on the website of the GAL Xlokk Foundation: [www.galxlokk.com](http://www.galxlokk.com). For more information, GAL Xlokk Foundation can be contacted via email on: [info@galxlokk.xom](mailto:info@galxlokk.xom) or (+)356 2099 8008 during office hours.

## **Definitions:**

**Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency:** The Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency (ARPA) within the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights is the Paying Agency.

**CAP:** Common Agricultural Policy - Strategic Plan is a plan drawn up by each Member State to contribute towards the reaching the aims of the Common Agricultural Policy. CAP Strategic Plans encourage the transition towards a smart, sustainable, competitive, resilient, and diversified agricultural sector, while ensuring long-term food security.

**Checks and controls:** Provide a means of verification that the investment operation complies with, and is in conformity to, the relevant rules and regulations.

**Decision Committee (DC):** The role of the Decision Committee includes the assessment and review of all applications received.

**EAFRD:** European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

**Evaluation:** A periodic collection and analysis of evidence to form conclusions on the effectiveness and efficiency of interventions.

**Grant Agreement (GA):** An agreement signed between the GAL XLOKK Foundation and the selected applicant (beneficiary) containing provisions and conditions related to the support being given.

**Grant Award Letter:** A letter sent by GXF to the selected applicants upon the completion of the selection process as to inform applicants of its outcome. The award letter can include certain conditions and actions expected on the part of the applicant.

**LEADER:** *Liason Entre Actions de Development de l'Economie Rurale*'. The LEADER programme refers to the implementation of the actions included in the Local Development strategies by the LAG to address specific local issues in line with the Common Agricultural policy 2023 - 2027.

**Managing Authority (MA):** A national or regional body designated by a Member State to manage a rural development programme.

**Measure:** An aid scheme for implementing a policy. Each measure sets out specific rules to be complied with by the projects or actions that can be financed. There are two main types of measures: investment measures and area-related aid.

**Monitoring:** Regular examination of the resources, outputs and results of interventions.

**Project Leader:** Is a person who is authorized by the applicant to ensure a project is carried through and in line with commitments. The Project Leader can be contracted directly for matters relative to an on-going project and is expected to have responsibility for the execution of a project.

**Project Selection Appeals Board (PSAB):** An independent Committee that assesses any submissions of appeals.

**Project closure:** Closure takes place after the Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency has issued the final payment to the beneficiary, after it has carried out all the necessary checks and controls.

**Project completion:** A project can be deemed completed when the final request for payment has been submitted to the Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency and paid.

**Results:** The direct effects or changes that arise due to the project.

**Voluntary Organizations (VO):** Eligible VOs shall be those that are fully enrolled with the VO Commissioner and are compliant in their annual returns, as required by Subsidiary Legislation 492.01 of the Voluntary Organizations Act.

## 1 Introduction

These Guidance Notes are intended to assist Applicants in understanding the requirements for requesting and receiving funding support under **Measure 2 – Enhancement of Social and Rural Infrastructure** of the Local Development Strategy (LDS) for the Xlokk Territory 2023-2027.

Applicants are advised to familiarize themselves with these Guidance Notes prior to completing an application. The Guidance Notes, Application Form and all Annexes and other documentation are available on [www.galxlokk.com](http://www.galxlokk.com)<sup>1</sup> during the application period.

Applicants are reminded to ensure that they refer to the latest guidance notes available on the Foundation's website, and that they have filled in the latest available version of the application form that is available for download from the website. **Only the version available at the time of opening of the batch will be considered for evaluation.**

### 1.1 Authorities

The **GAL Xlokk Foundation**, or Fondazzjoni GAL Xlokk (hereinafter referred to as "GAL Xlokk", the "Foundation", "Fondazzjoni GAL Xlokk" or "GXF"), was set up in 2008 to implement the LEADER programme in the South-East territory of Malta, as defined in the following section. The GAL Xlokk Foundation will administer funds under the Common Agricultural Policy - Strategic Plan for 2023-2027, focusing on the local development needs and priorities within the designated Xlokk region, ensuring effective and targeted use of resources to support rural development and community-led initiatives.

Other national authorities may be involved and referred to in the assessment of an application, or during project implementation.

### 1.2 Complementary and demarcation with other interventions

This strategy seeks to build upon the previous LEADER programs of 2007-2013 and 2014-2022. Hence it is important to consider the vision and strategic objectives that were established in the first and second LDS for the Xlokk region for that period.

### 1.3 Contribution towards the LDS needs

Over the years, Malta has witnessed a swift rise in both its population size and density, a trend that is also evident within the Xlokk region. In fact, the population density for this region is higher than the average for Malta. As the number of foreign residents surged, the demographic make-up of this area began evolving into a more culturally diverse community. However, this transformation also led to challenges concerning social inclusion, stemming from barriers related to language and culture.

Furthermore, an opportunity exists to renovate specific structures and artifacts, thereby preserving the region's cultural essence. Equally important is the exploration of opportunities linked to social inclusivity. This can be achieved through a range of events that consider the diverse and evolving demographic composition of the localities within this region. Similarly,

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<sup>1</sup> <http://galxlokk.com/category/documents/>

effective marketing initiatives could be introduced to attract more tourists to less frequented destinations. This would in turn contribute to both the education and tourism objectives which were highlighted within the public consultation meetings.

### ***1.4 Aim, Scope & Objectives of this measure***

The aim of these measures is to enhance the social character of the communities and the rural infrastructure of the localities. Furthermore, the measure aims to implement restoration projects that enhance the landscapes and infrastructure of rural character, prioritizing elements that contribute to the broader community's enjoyment and cultural identity. These efforts also extend to infrastructural developments within the community, particularly in the sectors of culture, sports, arts, crafts, social engagement, and animal welfare, ensuring inclusive spaces that foster well-being, creativity, and shared experiences.

The scope of action of this measure is twofold, and the initiative focuses on preserving and enhancing cultural heritage and community well-being in rural areas. It includes the:

- Restoration of historical buildings or parts thereof located in rural areas
- Preservation of rural artefacts and infrastructure with cultural or historical value
- Development of culture, sports, and animal welfare infrastructure for community use
- Conservation of paintings with significant artistic and historical importance
- Restoration of objects d'art with religious or cultural relevance to the local community
- Rehabilitation of local statues and street niches
- Restoration and safeguarding of historical archives found in the territory
- Creation of therapeutic gardens to support community wellness.

### ***1.5 Rationale***

Based on previous restoration efforts under the LDS, this measure focuses on rural landscapes and infrastructure that offer value and enjoyment to the wider community.

These sites must be reasonably accessible, whether visible from the street or fully open to the public, with historic buildings open daily still qualifying. Community consultations also revealed strong interest in cultural, therapeutic, sports, arts, crafts, social, and animal welfare infrastructure, particularly in urban centers and surrounding areas. Such projects should ensure access for members and regular users, with special consideration given to institutions like schools and rehabilitation centers that directly serve their populations.

### ***1.6 Contribution towards Priority Objectives:***

Actions supported under this sub-measure shall contribute to **Priority Objective 2: Improving the Environment of the Territory.**

This pillar encompasses a range of initiatives aimed at reducing the region's carbon footprint, enhancing the greening of existing gardens, safeguarding vital water resources, establishing effective waste management practices, and promoting the use of alternative transport within



local communities. These efforts align with the CAP Strategic Plan (CAP SP) objective of protecting biodiversity and ensuring its sustainable use.

The action contributes positively to the environment by preserving biodiversity in rural areas and supporting projects that focus on landscaping and the greening of open spaces. Furthermore, the measure plays a key role in the creation, restoration, and conservation of cultural and sports facilities that are actively used by the local community, thereby fostering both ecological and social well-being.

### **1.7 Result indicators addressed by the intervention**

At least fourteen (14) projects leading to the improvement of the environment in the GAL Xlokk territory and the quality of life of the communities of the LAG territory.

### **1.8 Duration**

This batch shall open on **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025** and will remain open subject to availability of funds and/or notifications by the MA informing otherwise. The total maximum duration of the project should be up to **18 months**.

### **1.9 Rolling- Calls**

The call itself will remain open until the entire budget allocation for this Measure is exhausted. GXF will use an **Open Rolling Call Procedure**, meaning that applications received within a particular batch will be assessed separately from those received in subsequent batches.

The Closure dates will be as follows:

Closure 1	16th January 2026
Closure 2	27th February 2026
Closure 3	27th March 2026
Closure 4	24th April 2026
Closure 5	29th May 2026
Closure 6	26th June 2026
Closure 7	31st July 2026
Closure 8	28th August 2026
Closure 9	25th September 2026
Closure 10	30th October 2026
Closure 11	27th November 2026
Closure 12	18th December 2026

The call will close either when the budget has been fully committed or if GXF issues a notification withdrawing the call. GXF may reissue the call in a similar or different format and may provide clarifications and amendments during the open call period without closing and reopening the call. Such updates will be posted on our website: [www.galxlokk.com](http://www.galxlokk.com).

### **1.10 Budget**

The indicative budget available for this intervention is **€427,256**. The grant support for individual projects shall be capped at a maximum of **€30,518**.

*GXF reserves the right to amend the budget allocated.*

### **1.11 Risks in Implementation and Mitigation Factors**

One risk with this measure is that some projects might not be closely connected to the local area—they could be copied and used anywhere. That means they wouldn't really reflect the unique character or needs of the community. To avoid this, the selection process includes a rule: projects must show a strong link to the local territory and its people. This helps make sure the support goes to ideas that truly belong in and benefit the region.

The GAL Xlokk Foundation (GXF) reserves the right to reject an application, including, but not limited to, cases where funds are unavailable under the respective intervention. In such instances, GXF may consider the establishment of a reserve list of project proposals.

This beneficiary will be granted financial assistance amounting to up to 80% of the total eligible expenditure. The Co-financing element must be borne by the applicant.

The VAT element must be borne by the applicant (except where it is non-recoverable under National VAT legislation). Grant Assistance may be provided in respect of non-recoverable VAT only.

### **1.12 Eligible Actions**

The GAL Xlokk territory is made up of seventeen localities, therefore projects must be physically implemented in one of the rural localities within the GAL Xlokk Foundation Territory, as specified in the following table.

<b>Xlokk Territory</b>			
Birzebbugia	Għaxaq	Gudja	Kalkara
Kirkop	Luqa	Marsascala	Marsaxlokk
Mqabba	Qormi	Qrendi	Safi
Santa Luċija	Xagħra	Żabbar	Żejtun
Żurrieq			

## **2 Standard Eligibility Conditions**

### **2.1 Type of Support**

The form of support provided by this measure is a non-repayable grant support in line with any of the forms of financing outlined in Article 83 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115, and as may be announced in this Call for Project Proposals, and/or at the latest in the document setting out the conditions for support.

Operations shall not be eligible for support where they have been physically completed or fully implemented before the application for support is submitted to the Local Action Group, irrespective of whether all related payments have been made.

## **2.2 Description of the type of operation**

Based on the analysis of the territory and the findings outlined in the LDS, the following indicative list presents a few examples of the type of operations which could be supported through this measure:

- The restoration of historical buildings or parts thereof situated in rural areas.
- The restoration of rural artefacts and infrastructure situated in rural areas.
- Projects which involve culture, sports and/or animal welfare infrastructure for the use of the local community.
- The conservation of paintings of significant artistic and historical value.
- The restoration of objects d'art, located within the territory and which have a religious or cultural significance to the community.
- The restoration of local statues or street niches.
- The restoration of historical archives found on the territory.
- The creation of therapeutic gardens.

## **2.3 Eligible Investments**

The eligible costs to be reimbursed through this grant support two types of investments:

- Type 1: Investments that are directly related to restoration projects.
- Type 2: Infrastructural projects within the community in the sectors of culture, sports and arts.

**Only one project can be submitted within the same site and/or premises. For instance, a VO cannot submit a project under the administration of a particular parish church and another VO under the administration of the same parish church**

Eligible costs include the following:

- Overheads which include the expenses incurred that are not directly attributable to a specific project or activity but without which a project cannot be implemented.
- Costs that are directly related to the restoration of the items or object, or artefact or feature.
- Costs that are directly related to the infrastructure under type 2 investment.
- General professional fees (such as architect) up to a maximum of 10% of the total eligible costs of the project.
- Equipment – capped up to a maximum of 20% of the total eligible costs of the project (only eligible under Type 2 investment)

## **2.4 Non-Eligible Costs:**

The following is an indicative list of non-eligible investment under Measure 2:

- The purchase of real estate.
- Productive investments
- Interest on debt
- Value added tax, except in specific circumstances as outlined in Article 64(1) (c) of the Common Provision Regulation (as per National Eligibility Rules- Section 3).
- Value-added tax in the case of State Aid Schemes
- “Simple replacements”, as determined by the Foundation Decision Committee following guidance received by the Managing Authority
- Building and/ or restoration of rubble walls.
- Works in kind

## ***2.5 Eligible Applicants***

The beneficiaries eligible for funding under Measure 2 are :

- Local Councils
  - Regional Councils
  - VOs (complaint with the office of the Commissioner for Voluntary organisations)
  - Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
  - Natural Persons<sup>2</sup>
- **Entities that carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU will be subject to State aid rules as outlined in Section 8 below.**
  - **Prospective applicants with an outstanding recovery order with the Paying Agency cannot be considered for support under this intervention. An outstanding recovery order refers to debt held with ARPA that is either outstanding or where a settlement agreement is not in place.**
  - **In the case of Local Councils, the Permanent Secretary hereby acknowledges that the said project application can be submitted to the LAG. Accordingly, the respective application may now be duly processed by the LAG.**
  - **Parishes must apply as organisations. Clergy may only act as representatives or project leaders, never as applicants or beneficiaries. Where a Parish has its own VO number, it must apply using that number. Where it does not, the Parish must apply**

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<sup>2</sup> “Natural persons who do not engage in any form of economic activity shall be deemed ineligible.”

under the Curia's VO number, supported by formal Curia authorisation, in line with MA Circular 01/2024.

## **2.6 Eligibility Criteria**

The following general eligibility criteria shall apply for the evaluation of proposals for actions to be supported under this measure:

- A. The applicant is able to demonstrate that he/she forms part of (or is the legal representative of) the beneficiary/applicant organization.
- B. Submitted application is completed and duly filled-in<sup>3</sup>
- C. The proposed project will be implemented within the GXF territory;
- D. The applicant is able to demonstrate evidence of sufficient financial capacity required to finance the project and to fund the private financial component.
- E. The proposed project contributed to the general and specific objectives of the measure;
- F. At application stage, voluntary organizations must include a certificate of compliance issued by the Commissioner for Voluntary Organizations, valid up to the end of the year
- G. The project proposal contains evidence of the cultural and/or social activity that is to be created and/or developed as a result of the investment.
- H. The proposed project contributes to at least one indicator target.
- I. The project proposal contains evidence of the social/ cultural/ historical link of the activity to the Xlokk territory, or any of its localities.

*GXF reserves the right to revise the eligibility criteria applicable to the Measure, subject to pre-notification.*

## **3 The Project Proposal**

It is strongly advisable that prior to the preparation and submission of the application, prospective applicants carefully read these Guidance Notes.

More information on each section of the application can be found in the following section.

### **3.1 Project Details**

#### **3.1.1 Filling out Part A - Administrative Forms**

- **Project Title:** Name your project in a way that it can be easily understood and captures the gist of your project.
- **Project Duration:** Insert the number of months required to complete the proposed project. The maximum project duration is **18 months** and thus applicants are advised

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<sup>3</sup> In terms of details as required by the Selection Committee to evaluate the project for eligibility and selection accordingly.

to be realistic in their project in view of the timing constraints<sup>4</sup>. The project duration in months will be calculated from the date of the signing of the grant agreement.

- **Applicant's Information:** To include details of applicant organisation - address, mobile number, email address and position within the entity.
- **Project Leader:** To include details of the Project leader - address, mobile number, email address and position within the entity.
- **Details of Partnership:** To include details of partnership, if applicable<sup>5</sup>.
- **Nature of Activity / Business:** Tick the nature of the business.
- **VAT Declaration:** The applicant should indicate whether the project gives rise to sales. If the project is directly related to sales on which VAT is charged the applicant can recover the VAT element from the VAT department. If the sales are zero-rated (exempt with credit) the applicant will cover the VAT from the LEADER funds. Please read the declaration carefully and tick ☒ accordingly. The declaration will become legally binding once the project is approved and the applicant has signed the Grant Agreement.
- **Source of funding:** The applicant should indicate whether other sources of funding were considered. Please read the declaration carefully and tick ☒ accordingly. The declaration will become legally binding once the project is approved and the applicant has signed the Grant Agreement.
- **Type of Expenditure:** The applicant should indicate under which type of investment the application is being submitted.
- **Project Location:** Details where the project will be located should be provided.

### 3.1.2 Line Items

In this section, the applicant needs to insert the action which will be included as part of the project plan.

An indirect cost of 7% will be applied on the total eligible costs to cover any overheads incurred by the Beneficiary.

All actions need to include the amount Excl. and Inc. VAT.

Work Package	Type of Investment	Line Item
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<sup>4</sup> This recommendation is being made to minimize the frequency of extensions being granted

<sup>5</sup> This section shall be filled out only if the partners will provide **financial contributions** to the investment.

Implementation of cooperation activities of the local action groups	Construction / Restoration / Improving Infrastructure	- Fencing and other works - Infrastructure works
	Conservation	- Native trees and plants
	Equipment & Machinery	- Propagation material -
	Research & Studies	- Feasibility studies
	Technical Personnel	- Landscape architects - Irrigation/Water Engineers - Consultation Fees
	Intangible Investments	- Acquisition of patent rights and licenses
	Overheads	- Overheads

### 3.1.3 Technical Description

Please note that all sections within the Technical Description directly contribute to the ranking criteria.

**Project Description:** Include a description of the project idea, giving reasoning behind the investments. Include information on how the proposed actions and investments are to be carried out, and the aims and objectives of the project.

**Clarity and Sequence:** The central ideas and objectives should be clearly stated and easy to understand. Applicants should ensure that technical terms and concepts are appropriately explained.

**Cross-Cutting Objectives:** Tick which objective(s) the Project will target and include in what way it will be targeted.

**Innovation / Originality:** Explain how the project will incorporate the unique characteristics of the rural area by tailoring solutions to local needs and leveraging regional resources and context through the project proposed.

**Preserving the Uniqueness of Individual Localities:** Explain how the project will prioritize the preservation of local cultural, environmental, and socio-economic characteristics to enhance rural areas' appeal to tourists and support local economies.

**Dissemination and Animation of Activities:** To make sure the project reaches and involves the community, applicants are advised to promote the project by at least one way to promote it, such as events, flyers, social media, or ads. Using two or more methods is encouraged, and applicants must clearly say which ones they'll use.

Beyond the basic requirements of the EAFRD programme, like plaques and stickers, the project should be actively disseminated and promoted within the local community. This could include organizing informative workshops or public events, sharing updates and visuals through social media platforms, distributing flyers or brochures, airing radio segments, or placing ads in local newspapers. These activities help raise awareness, encourage participation, and ensure the community understands the project's benefits. Please note that a project inauguration alone does not count as a valid dissemination or animation activity.

**Applying Digital Dissemination:** The applicant must target at least one digitized channel and mention how will be done. The applicant will have to tick accordingly.

**Relevance to Social Inclusion:** The applicant will have to mention how they plan to facilitate increased participation of women, young farmers, young persons, minorities, and others while ensuring equal opportunities, and tick accordingly.

**Collaboration :** Partnerships are encouraged but not mandatory. A partnership refers to a collaborative arrangement between entities submitting a joint application. If a partnership is formed, all participating entities must meet the relevant administrative eligibility criteria and may benefit financially from the project. In such cases, partners are required to contribute financially, and the applicant must clearly indicate this by ticking the appropriate box, listing the names of the partners, and explaining how each will contribute.

**Risk Associated:** Explain the risks and conditions associated with the project and briefly provide any mitigation and/or preventive measures as well as the actions to be taken in case an adverse event occurs. Given an explanation of risks associated with financial, implementation, capacity, legal, logistical and procurement. Conditionalities beyond the applicant's control are still considered relevant to the project and should also be included

**Neutral / Positive Environmental Impact :** The applicant will have to mention how their project will minimize harm to natural ecosystems, prevent pollution, conserve resources, and enhance environmental conditions, leading to improved air and water quality, better public health, increased resilience to environmental threats, and potential cost savings.

The following is a list, together with maximum scoring, of selection criteria applicable to the measure. The maximum total marks that can be obtained by fulfilling these section criteria is 100%

Description: Project Details (20 points)	
Project idea & Description	<i>High marks will be awarded based on how well the project idea aligns with the rationale and objectives of the call, as</i>



	<i>well as its level of originality. While a clear and detailed description is important, the evaluation will focus primarily on how relevant, innovative, and strategically aligned the proposal is. Projects that present fresh, creative approaches to addressing local needs and demonstrate a strong fit with the call's goals will be rated more highly.</i>
<b>Collaboration (5 points)</b>	
<b>Does the project envisage any type of partnership</b>	<i>High marks will be given if the project partners will be contributing financially towards the project.</i>
<b>Innovation, Originality, and Preserving the Uniqueness of Individual Localities (5 Points)</b>	
<b>How will the project incorporate innovation by leveraging the unique characteristics of the rural area, including developing new products and services and implementing novel methods that connect local resources and different economic sectors?</b>	<i>High marks will be given to projects which include the emergence of new products and services which incorporate the distinctiveness of the area.</i>
<b>Preserving the Uniqueness of Individual Localities – (10 points)</b>	
<b>How does the LEADER initiative prioritize preserving local cultural, environmental, and socioeconomic characteristics to enhance rural areas' appeal to tourists and support local economies?</b>	<i>High marks will be given to projects which may emphasize on locality-specific uniqueness, preserves local distinctiveness and enhances the appeal of rural areas to tourists</i>
<b>Dissemination and Animation of Activities (Digitization) – (5 points)</b>	
<b>Does the applicant have a dissemination strategy?</b>	<i>High marks will be given if the more than 3 channels will be targeted.</i>
<b>Applying Digital Dissemination - (5 points)</b>	
<b>Does the applicant have a digital dissemination strategy?</b>	<i>High marks will be awarded if the applicant contributes to digital dissemination.</i>
<b>Relevance to Social Inclusion – (10 Points)</b>	

<b>Evidenced plans towards facilitating increased participation of women, young farmers, young persons &amp; others. Minorities, and ensuring Equal Opportunities.</b>	<i>High marks will be given towards applicant who will address social inclusion and say how minority groups will be incorporated. Moreover, applicant must include how project will ensure the promotion of equal opportunities.</i>
<b>Risk associated – (10 marks)</b>	
<b>Risk Associated with the implementation and timeline of the project as proposed by the Applicant.</b>	<i>High marks will be awarded to applicants who will mention how they will be targeting risk associated with the implementation of the project.</i>
<b>Neutral/ Positive Environmental Impact (20 marks)</b>	
<b>Applicant will have to select if the project will be of Neutral impact or of Positive impact towards the Environment.</b>	<i>High marks will be given for projects that protect ecosystems, prevent pollution, conserve resources, and improve environmental conditions, resulting in better public health and economic benefits through reduced resource consumption.</i>
<b>Clarity &amp; Sequence (10 points)</b>	
<b>Clarity and Sequence in relation to project proposal</b>	<i>This section is to be left blank by the applicant. The Evaluation Committee will assess and award marks based on the clarity and quality of the project proposal.</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 points</b>

### 3.1.4 Supporting Documents

A checklist of required documents is provided with the online Application Form. Applicants will receive additional instructions during the evaluation process regarding any further clarifications or documents that may be needed.

	Yes	No	N/A
A soft copy of the application form along with the relevant supporting documents need to be sent in one zipped folder to <a href="mailto:info@galxlokk.com">info@galxlokk.com</a>			
A soft copy of the signed application form both in PDF and Word document need to be submitted.			

<p>Soft copies of all annexes, documents and supporting documentation.  <i>The Supported documents are to be individually presented and adequately titled for ease of reference. Failure to individually scan and label such documents will result in the application being deemed ineligible for acceptance.</i></p> <p><b>(applicable for all) *</b></p>			
<p><b>For Project Partners</b></p> <p>Letter of intent confirming their commitment to collaborate and support the project implementation</p>			
<p><b>For Physical Interventions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Proof of ownership of premises or approval from the relevant Authorities; or</li> <li>b. Proof/evidence of lease, management agreement, or guardianship deed (if applicable); or</li> <li>c. Owner's written consent (if premises are leased); or</li> <li>d. Letter of intent from Local Council(s) (if applicable).</li> </ul> <p><b>Planning Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Dated declaration signed by a warranted architect confirming that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The proposed enhancement or use of the premises does not require a Planning Authority (PA) permit</li> <li>○ The proposed enhancement or use does not require a Development Notification Order (DNO)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
<p><b>4) In case of Voluntary Organizations applying under this measure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The latest Compliance Certificate issued by the Commissioner for Voluntary Organizations. In case the Certificate has not been issued an email from the same Office should suffice;</li> <li>b. Signed list of committee members (including their role, ID number and address);</li> <li>c. The latest financial Accounts as submitted to the Commissioner for Voluntary Organizations.</li> </ul>			

<p><b>5) In case of Local councils applying under this measure:</b></p> <p>a) Audited financial statements of year n-1 and n-2. If n-1 year audited accounts are not available, the applicant is to submit management accounts.</p> <p>b) Joint Declaration by Mayor and Executive Secretary of the Local Council, stating that the Local Council commits to its co-financing obligations. This declaration shall be issued not earlier than three months from the date of the submission of the application.</p>			
<p><b>7) In case of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) applying under this measure:</b></p> <p>a) Audited financial statement of years n-1 and n-2 but if n-1 year audited accounts are not available, management accounts are requested (where n is current year);</p> <p>b) VAT Certificate</p> <p>c) IRD and SCC Declarations</p>			
<p>8) Tax Compliance Certificate – A certificate issued not earlier than <b>three (3) months</b> from the date of the application, by the Office of the Commissioner for Revenue (CfR) confirming that the Applicant has submitted all returns and has no pending liabilities with CfR; or can otherwise provide official CfR documented evidence that an applicant is honoring an agreement for settling any outstanding amounts.</p> <p><i>(Not applicable for local councils and Regional Councils)</i></p> <p><i>(Applicable for natural persons, Vos, and SMEs)</i></p>			

<p>9) One (1) Itemized quotation <b>for all project costs</b> (including a recent date and reference number, details of supplier - name, address and VAT number; details of applicant - name and address)</p> <p>Quotations submitted must include specific details to ensure transparency and compliance with the guidelines. These details include: <b>the name and address of both the supplier or contractor and the beneficiary; the VAT number of the supplier or contractor; and the date of the quotation.</b> The quotation must clearly describe <b>the works, services, or supplies being offered, including main specifications, quantities, price per item, and the net amount. A full cost breakdown is required, with VAT shown separately. Any amendments or corrections made using pen, pencil, correction fluid, or eraser must be accompanied by a signature.</b> Quotations must be dated not earlier than <b>three months from the submission date of the application.</b> If the quotation is sourced from a website, it must clearly show the item specifications and price, along with the website address and the date the screenshot was taken.</p>			
<p>11) Annex 2 – Financial Bid/RFQ (Quotation) template</p>			
<p>12) Annex 3 - Auditor's or accountant's declaration not earlier than three months from the date of the submission of the application*</p> <p><i>A signed declaration stating that the applicant is financially sound to cover the 20% co-financing. The declaration should clearly refer to the project being implemented.</i></p>			
<p>13) <i>De minimis</i> declaration (where applicable)</p>			

### 3.1.5 Declaration

The applicant is requested to review the statements in the declaration section and confirm their commitment to abide by the stipulated declarations. If any information is found to be false or intentionally misleading, GXF may withdraw any awarded EU funds and recover any disbursed funds from the applicant organization. These obligations will become binding upon the signing of the Grant Agreement if the application is approved for co-financing. Failure to accept all these declarations will result in the application not being submitted, and any such submission will be considered null and void.

## 4 The Application Process - General Provisions

Interested applicants need to submit the completed application form for Measure 2. It is strongly advisable that prior to the preparation and submission of the application, **prospective applicants read these guidance notes.**

- A. All applications must be fully completed by the Project Leader, with no sections left blank. If any specific requested information is not applicable to the applicant, the field must be filled with the note "Not applicable."
- B. While GXF representatives are available for meetings with interested applicants, it remains the applicant's responsibility to thoroughly read the guidance notes and application form. Applicants are also responsible for ensuring that all requested documentation is correctly presented. They must ensure that both the application form and the required supporting documentation are submitted.
- C. It is not the duty of GXF to verify the above matters irrespective of any meetings that may be held between GXF and the applicants.
- D. Batch 1 of this call for Applications will open on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> of September **2025**. The call itself will remain open until the entire budget allocation for this Measure is exhausted. GXF will use an **Open Rolling Call Procedure**, meaning that applications received within a particular batch will be assessed separately from those received in subsequent batches. The call will close either when the budget has been fully committed or if GXF issues a notification withdrawing the call. GXF may reissue the call in a similar or different format and may provide clarifications and amendments during the open call period without closing and reopening the call. Such updates will be posted on our website: [www.galxlokk.com](http://www.galxlokk.com).
- E. A receipt shall be issued by the receiving officer upon submission of a completely filled-in application form. The issuance of the receipt does not imply that the applicant will be considered as a main beneficiary under this call. The application may be refused and returned to the applicant following the issuance of the receipt notification.

**Disclaimer:** The issuance of the receipt letter does not guarantee that the applicant will be considered a main beneficiary under this call. The application may still be refused and returned to the applicant after the receipt letter has been issued.

## 5 Assessment and Selection

### 5.1 Evaluation - Administrative Checks

GXF will undertake a validity check of all applications that are received.

The GXF decision committee will carry out administrative checks on submitted applications. It is important that the submitted application form is filled-in correctly. In the event that an application is submitted with incomplete documentation or information, a notification letter will be issued to the applicant, granting a period of **five (5) working days** from the date of the letter to submit the missing documentation and/or information. Should the applicant be unable to provide the required materials within this time frame, they may formally request an extension, accompanied by a valid justification for the delay. The DC will be required to determine whether to approve the extension request.

If the requested documentation is not submitted within this time-frame, the application will be automatically disqualified and a rejection letter will be sent to inform the applicant.

The Decision Committee will then carry out verification of the eligibility of the supporting documentation submitted, as well as the screening of the application in terms of the eligibility criteria. It is important to note that it is within the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the content of the application and the supporting documentation submitted is in full and in line with what is being requested.

With reference to the quotation to be submitted by the applicant, the Decision Committee reserves the right to ask for further clarifications or necessary adjustments even after the applicant submits the missing documentation/clarifications. The Decision Committee reserves the right to contact suppliers/service providers to validate the quotations provided.

No further additional information will be accepted after the closing date for each batch of applications unless it is requested. In this regard, it is the applicant's sole responsibility to ensure that the application is complete in the best possible way before submission. Evaluation of the application will be carried out only on the information submitted at application stage or any other information as requested by GXF. **Any false or misleading information will lead to the immediate rejection of the application.**

### 5.2 Assessment and Selection of Applications

The Decision Committee will be responsible for ranking and selecting applications for support. The DC may request the services of a **technical expert** to assist with the evaluation process. The DC also reserves the right to **request additional information or further clarifications** on the project as part of the selection process.

Applications shall be assessed and ranked based on **selection criteria** relevant to the intervention.

The Decision Committee (DC) will award marks according to the established criteria and will rank projects based on the marks obtained. To qualify for selection, proposals must obtain at least **50% of the total marks** for both general and intervention-specific selection criteria. Certain selection criteria may also require a **mandatory 'pass mark'** within the respective criterion.

The selection of projects may be limited by the **available budget**, in which case grants will be offered to the **highest-ranking projects**. Projects that meet the criteria but cannot be funded immediately may be placed on a **reserve list**.

If a project gives rise to **State Aid**, the **State Aid Monitoring Board (SAMB)** will be formally **notified** and consulted to ensure full compliance with **State Aid regulations**.

Furthermore, the DC reserves the right to request project re-dimension in special circumstances.

### ***5.3 Publication of Results***

Once the selection procedure is completed, the LAG shall notify all applicants accordingly (both successful and failed applications). GAL Xlokk shall publish the result of the projects eligible for financial support on its website and notice board.

The successful applicants will receive a '*Letter of offer*'. If the applicant does not sign the Grant Agreement that will follow the Letter of Offer, it will be considered that the applicant is no longer interested in undertaking the project and funds will be relocated according to the discretion of the LAG.

Should the beneficiary sign the Grant Agreement, the eligible period of expenditure shall start from the date of submission of application. If the applicant accepts the offer, the bank payment form should be completed and referred to the Front Office of the ARPA. The form must be endorsed by a bank official.

### ***5.4 Unsuccessful Applicants***

GXF will inform all applicants about the outcome of the selection process. In the notification letter sent to the applicant, reasons why the project was not selected shall be provided. The applicant shall have the right to appeal in writing through a registered letter within 5 working days from receipt of the email/letter of notification of result sent by the LAG.

The appeal is to be addressed to the Chairperson of the Project Selection Appeals Board (PSAB). The PSAB is an independent Committee set up to review in an autonomous way any appeals lodged. The PSAB will be composed of a minimum of three (3) individuals with a Chairperson chairing the appeals process. The appellant is required to sustain the clarifications provided by including justified reasons backed by necessary supporting documentation/testimonials.

The applicants wishing to lodge an appeal must send an email addressed to [info@galxlokk.com](mailto:info@galxlokk.com) within 5 working days from when the applicant receives the notification letter. **The Appeals Board will not consider late appeals.** The letter should include detailed reason/s of why the appeal is being made, supported by any relevant documentation/testimonials.

The decision of the Appeals Board **is final** and the applicant cannot contest this decision. The applicant will be notified in writing the decisions to each appellant. The appeals procedure shall be published on the LAG's website.



### **5.5 Grant Agreement**

Applicants whose proposals for investments have been selected in accordance with the procedure described above, in terms of being eligible and having obtained the necessary scoring for selection, and furthermore, could be allocated the requisite budget for funding, shall be invited to enter into an agreement with GXF by signing the Grant Agreement. More details on the generic provisions applicable in the Grant Agreement and the contractual obligations of the Beneficiary are provided in the subsequent sections. Selected applicants that do not come forward to sign the grant agreement within the stipulated time-frames will have the award withdrawn.

### **5.6 Changes**

Change requests should be approved by the GXF. Any request should be made before the actual expiry of the original time-frame of the project. In cases where amendments to the Grant Agreement are required, the beneficiary must submit a Change Request to GXF prior to the changes being actually implemented (a priori) and the beneficiary must wait for a reply from GXF. Applicants are being advised that changes related to extensions are being restricted<sup>6</sup>.

A change request in the form of an email on [info@galxlokk.com](mailto:info@galxlokk.com) should suffice.

If a request for changes to the contract is submitted after these changes have actually taken place (ex-post), the expenditure related to these changes may be subject to applicable penalties. The written request for changes must indicate the changes required, the necessary justification and relevant supporting documentation.

The Change Request Form can be downloaded from the GAL Xlokk Foundation website from the following link: [Important Documents – Galxlokk](#)

## **6 Contractual Obligations**

Upon signing the Grant Agreement, the Beneficiary becomes legally bound by certain provisions. The following sections provide information on some aspects of the contractual obligations of the Beneficiary.

The Agriculture and Rural Paying Agency (ARPA) may, from time to time, issue further information and guidance.

### **6.1 Retention of Documents**

Beneficiaries are advised to retain all supporting documentation for their records.

#### **Durability of investment**

The following durability periods shall apply depending on the total grant value of the investment:

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<sup>6</sup> Applicants need to be responsible when considering the project duration.

- For investments with a grant value of up to €15,000, the durability period shall extend to one (1) year from the date of the final payment to the beneficiary.
- For investments with a grant value between €15,000 and €200,000, the durability period shall extend to three (3) years from the date of the final payment to the beneficiary.
- For investments with a grant value exceeding €200,000, the durability period shall extend to five (5) years from the date of the final payment to the beneficiary.

The durability period refers to the time during which the beneficiary must ensure that the investment is maintained, operational, and compliant with the objectives and conditions outlined in the grant agreement.

## **6.2 Procurement<sup>7</sup>**

Beneficiaries should note that grants awarded for actions under this sub-measure are public funds. In this regard, all beneficiaries should ensure that any procurement undertaken for cost items to be financed through this sub-measure is carried out in line with the principles of sound financial management, good governance, transparency, and equality together with the provisions of the Manual of Procedures issued by the relevant authorities and with the provisions of the relevant EU and/or National Legislation.

Checks in relation to public procurement will verify that Union public procurement rules and related National rules are complied with and that the basic principles of transparency, objectivity, non-discrimination, and appropriate disclosure have been respected throughout the entire process.

In cases of non-compliance with the rules of public procurement, the financial corrections towards the service provider beneficiary will be determined by the Paying Agency on the basis of the Commission Decision of 14.5.2019 laying down the guidelines for determining financial corrections C(2019)3452 final.

## **6.3 Controls and Penalties**

Beneficiaries must note that by signing the Grant Agreement they are agreeing to undertake an obligation for the relevant checks and controls by the respective Authorities including the following:

- a. The Paying Agency (PA) – Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency (ARPA), Ministry
- b. for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights (MAFA),
- c. The Certifying Body (CB) – Internal Audit and Investigations Department (IAID),
- d. Office of the Prime Minister (OPM),
- e. The National Audit Office (NAO) in view of the fact that public funds are being
- f. utilized for the implementation of the investment,
- g. The Audit Services of the European Commission (EC) and the European Court of
- h. Auditors (ECA) in view of the fact the investment is benefiting from European
- i. Union (EU) funds,
- j. The VAT Department to ensure that VAT Regulations are respected.

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<sup>7</sup> All Beneficiaries of the LEADER programme whose Grant Agreements include costs claimed as *actual costs incurred and paid* (i.e. not as simplified cost options) must follow the procedures outlined in **Circular 001/2023 – Procurement Procedures to be applied by VOs and NGOs** available [here](#).

#### **6.4 Administrative checks on support applications**

Administrative checks on applications for support shall ensure the compliance of the operation with applicable obligations established by Union or national law or by the rural development programme, including those of public procurement, State aid and other obligatory standards and requirements, where applicable. The checks shall, in particular, include verification of:

- The eligibility of the beneficiary.
- The eligibility criteria, commitments, and other obligations of the operation for which support is requested.
- Compliance with the selection criteria.
- The eligibility of the costs of the operation.

#### **6.5 Administrative checks on payment claims by the paying agency (ARPA)**

Once a Beneficiary's project proposal is selected and awarded a grant, the beneficiary will be invited to enter into a Grant Agreement with GAL Xlokk Foundation (GXF). Following the signature of the Grant Agreement and subject to the eligibility rules of the specific intervention, a Beneficiary may start to submit payment claims to the Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency (the Agency) for processing, verification and ultimately payment authorization.

Kindly note that the ARPA Payment Guidelines can be accessed through: <https://agrikultura.gov.mt/en/arpa/Pages/guidelines.aspx>

#### **6.6 Payments**

- A. The facility of interim payments will be provided by the Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency (ARPA).
- B. Interim payments (of up to 80% of the total eligible value of the project) following the submission of a request for reimbursement and financial documentation (including invoices and receipts).
- C. In case of infrastructural works a provisional certificate of works prepared by an engineer/architect must also be presented. The final payment of the remaining 20% of the total eligible cost of the project will be made following the completion of the works and submission of the request for reimbursement together with the necessary financial documentation (including invoices and receipts, and a provisional certificate of works prepared by a warranted architect).
- D. The final payment will be issued once all the necessary on-site verification's and on-the-spot-check are carried out by GXF and ARPA and adherence to the contract is confirmed.
- E. In case of irregularities, penalties and sanctions may be applied by ARPA in line with the above-mentioned guidelines.
- F. Official certification by the architect appointed by the beneficiary is required for settlement of final payment (in case of infrastructural works).

### **7 Compliance with Community Policy**

#### **7.1 General Principles**

It is the responsibility of the Beneficiary to ensure compliance with Community Policy, namely:

- a. Public Procurement
- b. Equal Opportunities
- c. Sustainable development

### **7.1.1 Procurement**

At application stage, applicants are not required to submit quotations for structural works - an Estimate of Works prepared by a warranted architect will suffice. On the other hand at application, one quotation is required for all non-infrastructure components for which funding is being requested.

During the implementation of the project, and whenever a procurement procedure is undertaken, the Beneficiary shall send a letter or email to the chosen and rejected suppliers informing them of the organization's decision.

If the cheapest quotation is not chosen by the applicant, a justification would need to be provided. The applicant is to note that in such cases, the amount of funding co-financed through the EAFRD (2023 – 2027) can only be based on the cheapest quotation obtained.

Should for some reason three (3) quotations cannot be obtained by the applicant, a justification why, should also be provided by the applicant and it would be the Paying Agency's prerogative, after consulting with the GXF, whether to accept such justification or not.

*In accordance with the Public Procurement Regulations, expenditure relating to economic operators convicted of a criminal offence are considered ineligible for funding and such expenditure will not be reimbursed by the Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency.*

Applicants are guided to refer to the "Guidelines on the Submission of Payment Claims related to Investment Measures" issued by ARPA for details related to the required content and format of quotations and other procurement procedures; these guidelines may be downloaded at the below link:

<https://agriculture.gov.mt/en/arpa/Documents/guidelines/investmentMeasuresPaymentGuidelinesFinalEN-V3.0.pdf>

## **7.2 Procurement Procedures for Voluntary Organizations and Natural Persons**

Since natural persons and voluntary organizations are eligible to apply under this measure and are accessing public funds, such Beneficiaries are also guided to respect the procurement procedures and guidelines published from time to time by the Managing Authority and Paying Agency.

### **7.3 Equal Opportunities and Non-discrimination**

Beneficiaries are required to take a pro-active approach to Equal Opportunities and must ensure that at all stages of the implementation of the action/s consideration is given to Equal Opportunities. Equal Opportunities and non-discrimination are not meant to just address gender discrimination but have a wider scope and include race, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation.

#### **7.4 Sustainable Development**

Beneficiaries should include Sustainable Development, wherever possible, in their action/s and must ensure that the operation is structured in such a manner that concrete positive actions towards better sustainability and mainstreaming feature throughout. It is important that environmental matters should also be taken into consideration at all stages of the design, development and implementation of the action and the action should be structured to avoid any unnecessary related environmental damage.

#### **7.5 Publicity**

In case of information and publicity, the main beneficiaries must abide by the provisions of Visual Identity Guidelines available on [fondi.eu](https://fondi.eu) as well as Annex II of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/129 where applicable. In order to meet the requirements of the EAFRD Regulations, beneficiaries must ensure that adequate publicity is given to the project with a view to:

- a. making potential participants aware of the opportunities afforded by it;
- b. making the general public aware of the role of the Community in relation to the project;
- c. ensure transparency of the assistance concerned.
- d. As an example, materials used by the Beneficiary and major correspondence, including contracts signed with third parties must include any acknowledgment of EAFRD support.
- e. Any publicity material, such as advertisements, billboards and information leaflets about EAFRD co-financed projects must acknowledge this support.
- f. Publicity of individual projects must be incorporated into the project budget.
- g. Beneficiaries are to be cautious when determining publicity actions for the project.
- h. Beneficiaries should also ensure that the project benefits from any free publicity and that anything that will be proposed to be funded under the project is either obligatory or adds value to the results of the project, taking into account the value for money principle. In this regard, publicity measures of individual projects should take into account the nature of the project and must be relative to the size and objectives of the project.
- i. The Beneficiary should note that publicity may only be used to increase awareness of what EU funds are used for and to disseminate results. Publicity measures undertaken must be project-specific.
- j. Publicity and information measures must not be used as a marketing tool to promote an organization, its products, services, or infrastructure. Where a project includes an element of marketing, this must be used to complement but not replace the project's obligatory information and publicity measures.
- k. Marketing efforts that go over and beyond the mandatory publicity actions outlined in Annex II of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/129 may be included as a separate activity in the project with a separate budgetary allocation and justified accordingly.
- l. The Beneficiary should always refer to the 'Visual Identity Guidelines' that may be downloaded from the following link:  
<https://fondi.eu/visual-identity-guidelines-2021-2027/>

### **8 .Applicability of State Aid Rules**

No State aid implications will arise in the case of assistance awarded to local councils, regional councils and voluntary organisations that do not carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU.

On the other hand, State aid implications will arise in the case of assistance awarded to SMEs and voluntary organisations that carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU.

In such instances, aid shall be awarded in line with the provisions of Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2831 of 13 December 2023 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to *de minimis* aid [OJ L 352, 15.12.2023, p.1] (the *de minimis* Regulation).

In line with Article 1 of the *de minimis* Regulation, assistance may not be awarded to:

- a) Undertakings active in the primary production of fishery and aquaculture products;***
- b) Undertakings active in the processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products, where the amount of the aid is fixed on the basis of price or quantity of products purchased or put on the market;***
- c) Undertakings active in the primary production of agricultural products;***
- d) Undertakings active in the processing and marketing of agricultural products, in one of the following cases:***
  - Where the amount of the aid is fixed on the basis of the price or quantity of such products purchased from primary producers or put on the market by the undertakings concerned;***
  - Where the aid is conditional on being partly or entirely passed on to primary producers;***
- e) Export-related activities towards third countries or Member States, namely aid directly linked to the quantities exported, the establishment and operation of a distribution network or other current expenditure linked to the export activity;***
- f) Aid contingent upon the use of domestic over imported goods and services.***

Where an undertaking is active in one of the sectors referred to in points (a), (b), (c) or (d) above, and is also active in one or more of the other sectors falling within the scope of the *de minimis* Regulation or has other activities falling within the scope of the *de minimis* Regulation, this Regulation shall apply to aid granted in respect of the latter sectors or activities, provided that the Foundation ensures, by relying on appropriate means such as separation of activities or separation of accounts, that the activities in the sectors excluded from the scope of this Regulation do not benefit from the *de minimis* aid granted in accordance with this Measure.

The total amount of *de minimis* aid granted to a single undertaking shall not exceed the amount of €300,000 over any period of three years. The three-year period is assessed on a rolling basis.

This maximum threshold would include all State aid granted under this aid scheme and any other State aid measure implemented in line with the *de minimis* Regulation, including that received and/or applied for from any entity other than the GAL Xlokk Foundation. Any *de minimis* aid received in excess of the established threshold will have to be recovered, with interest, from the undertaking receiving the aid.

The term 'single undertaking' means all enterprises having at least one (1) of the following relationships with each other:

- a) one (1) enterprise has a majority of the shareholders' or members' voting rights in another enterprise;***
- b) one (1) enterprise has the right to appoint or remove a majority of the members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another enterprise;***
- c) one (1) enterprise has the right to exercise a dominant influence over another enterprise pursuant to a contract entered into with that undertaking or pursuant to a provision in its memorandum or articles of association;***
- d) one (1) enterprise, which is a shareholder in or member of another enterprise, controls alone, pursuant to an agreement with other shareholders in or members of that enterprise, a majority of shareholders' or members' voting rights in that enterprise.***

Enterprises having any of the relationships referred to in points (a) to (d) above through one or more other enterprise shall also be considered to be a single undertaking.

The *de minimis* Regulation states that a group of linked undertakings is considered as one single undertaking for the application of the *de minimis* rule. However, enterprises that have no relationship with each other, except for the fact that each of them has a direct link to the same public body or bodies, should not be treated as being linked to each other. The specific situation of enterprises controlled by the same public body or bodies, in which enterprises may have independent power of decision, should therefore be taken into account.

In terms of Article 5 of the *de minimis* Regulation, *de minimis* aid granted under this measure may be cumulated with *de minimis* aid granted in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2832. It may be cumulated with *de minimis* aid granted in accordance with Commission Regulations (EU) No 1408/2013 and (EU) No 717/2014 up to the relevant ceiling laid down in Article 3(2) of the *de minimis* Regulation.

*De minimis* aid awarded under this measure shall not be cumulated with State aid in relation to the same eligible costs, if such cumulation would exceed the highest relevant aid intensity or aid amount fixed in the specific circumstances of each case by a block exemption regulation or a decision adopted by the European Commission.

The *de minimis* declaration form must be filled in and submitted together with the application form.

In line with the *de minimis* Regulation, records regarding de minimis aid shall be maintained by the Xlokk Local Action Group for 10 years from the date on which the aid is granted under the Scheme.

In line with Article 6(1) of the *de minimis* Regulation, as of 1 January 2026, information on de minimis aid granted under this scheme shall be made publicly available in the central register at national or Union Level. The following information shall be made public:

- ***the identification of the beneficiary,***
- ***the aid amount,***
- ***the granting date,***
- ***the aid instrument, and***
- ***the sector involved on the basis of the statistical classification of economic activities in the Union ('NACE classification').***

## **9 Data Policy**

By submitting the application, the applicant is giving his/her consent to have personal and project details published in line with the obligations in the relevant EU Regulations and other requests by relevant bodies.

### **9.1 Data Protection**

GAL XLOKK has the duty to protect data provided in the Application Form. Any queries regarding Data Protection matters should be brought to the attention of the GAL XLOKK. The officer in charge can be contacted by e-mail on: ***info@galxlokk.com***

### **8.2 Monitoring, Evaluation and Dissemination**

From time to time, the GXF, Managing Authority and/or the Paying Agency, as well as other National and/or EU entities as may be identified, may conduct economic, environmental, or other evaluation of the intervention which may involve the beneficiary in surveys/interviews of various types. GAL Xlokk Foundation officials or consultants/evaluators may contact beneficiaries as necessary. In applying for support under this intervention the beneficiary is deemed automatically as agreeing to cooperate with or take part in such studies, which are important for reviewing the effectiveness of the intervention as well as evidencing implementation of projects. GXF may also request cooperation from beneficiaries vis-à-vis promotion of the CAP -SP, including use of pictures/videos taken from projects supported through this intervention.

## **10 Contact Details**

For more information regarding the Measure, kindly contact the GAL XLOKK Foundation.

**Address:** 269, Main Street, Qormi. QRM 1107

**Telephone number:** +356 2099 8008

**Email:** [info@galxlokk.com](mailto:info@galxlokk.com)



**Website:** [www.galxlokk.com](http://www.galxlokk.com)