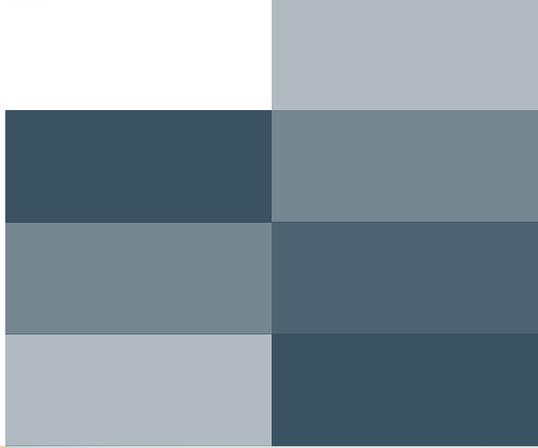


ARCHIPELAGOS

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE



ARCHIPELAGOS PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

Archipelagos is a **multi-year international cooperation program developed by Cassa Depositi e Prestiti**, the Italian Financial Institution for International Development Cooperation, **with the support of the European Commission**.

Up to 1000+ SMEs will be selected across the African continent to join a **dedicated capacity building Program** designed to strengthen their capabilities and increase their readiness for capital markets.

The selected SMEs will embark on a **tailored learning journey** through the **Archipelagos digital platform**, where they will have access to **training, mentoring, and networking opportunities**.

At the end of this Program, the most promising SMEs will receive **specialized support for raising funds** in the capital markets through **innovative debt instruments**, supported by a **guarantee facility from the European Commission**.

Inspired by the **Team Europe Initiative of Investing in Young Business in Africa (TEI IYBA)**, also **young university graduates / young entrepreneurs** will have access to the **capacity building Program** to strengthen their business skills and sharpen their knowledge.



PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Archipelagos Program pursues **3 overarching objectives:**

01

Supporting the growth of African SMEs through the Archipelagos capacity-building Program with tailored training, mentoring, and networking, powered by a dedicated digital platform.

02

Facilitating SMEs access to capital markets through the collaboration with local stock exchanges and a dedicated guarantee facility from the European Commission for the structuring of innovative financial instruments.

03

Creating a more favorable ecosystem for SMEs through the dialogue with local policy makers and institutions, and the engagement of key stakeholders.



KEY INFORMATION

DONOR

European Commission

DONOR'S CONTRIBUTION

€ 30 million Guarantee facility
€ 5 million Technical Assistance

BENEFICIARIES

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs),
and young university graduates / young
entrepreneurs (capacity building only)

IMPLEMENTING INSTITUTION

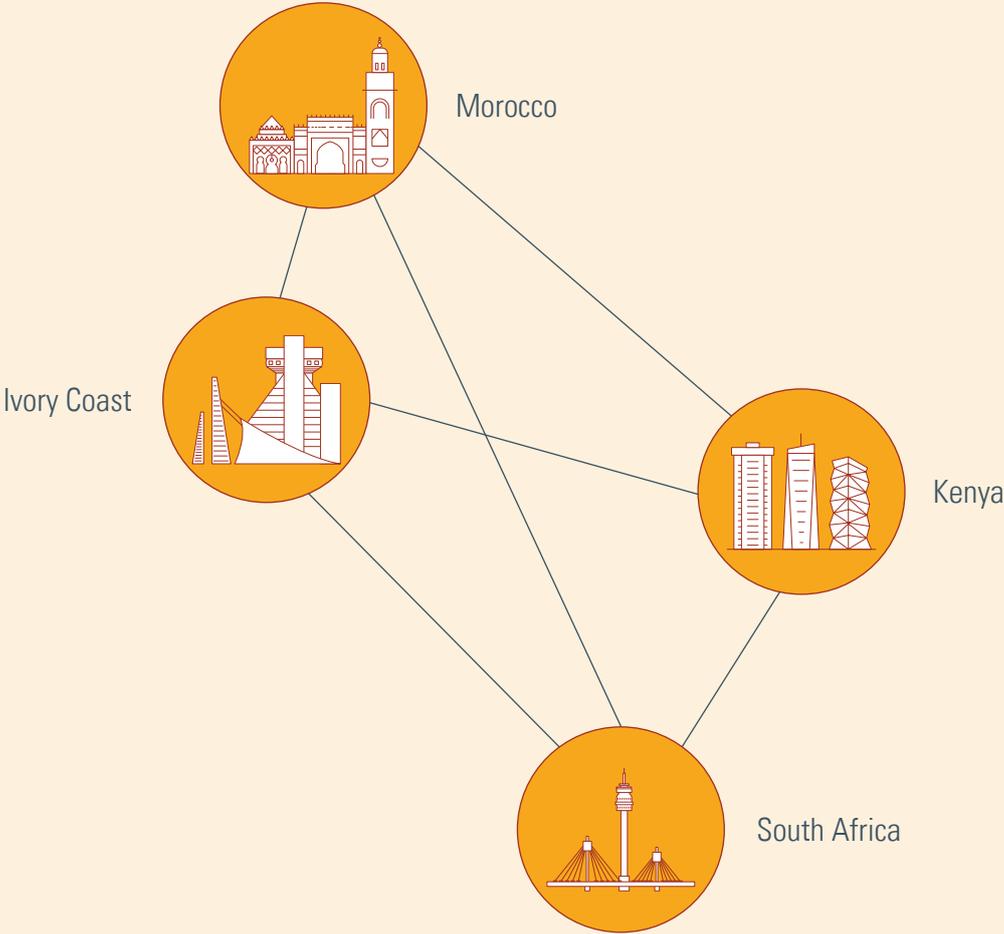
Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP)

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

All African countries, with Morocco, South Africa,
Kenya and Ivory Coast acting as key Hubs

PARTNERS

Local Stock Exchanges, International Investment
Banks, Financial Intermediaries



WHAT WE OFFER

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

CDP and the European Commission, through the project Archipelagos, recognize the importance of supporting the growth and development of African SMEs. To this end, CDP has designed a **dedicated capacity building Program** aimed at strengthening SMEs industrial and operational capabilities and preparing them to access the capital markets.

The Program is **structured around 3 core areas - training, mentoring, and networking - and is delivered through a hybrid model**, combining both asynchronous and synchronous components to offer a comprehensive and interactive learning experience.

Through the **Archipelagos digital platform**, SMEs will have access to a vast **learning**

catalogue of online courses, with **differentiated learning paths** according to the specific needs and stage of development. On top of the asynchronous component, **webinars** will contribute to make the learning journey even more stimulating, engaging, and interactive.

In addition to training, SMEs participating in the Program will also receive **dedicated support** and will have **access to a community of SMEs and investors** providing them the opportunity to make valuable business connections, also at international level.

Access to the **Archipelagos capacity building platform** will be provided also to **young university graduates / young entrepreneurs** that are willing to enhance their business knowledge and entrepreneurial skills.



FOCUS ON LEARNING MODULES

The **learning catalogue** includes **10 modules** focused on **relevant business and financial topics**, with more than **100 hours of learning**, designed and developed by a leading business school, to enhance SMEs capabilities and knowledge. Topics included are:



Investment analysis



Capital market readiness



Derivatives



Governance



Strategy basics



Financial analysis



Internationalization



Strategic partnerships



Ethics and sustainability



Effective communication

ACCESS TO CAPITAL MARKETS

The Archipelagos Program offers a unique opportunity for SMEs to **access the capital they need to grow and scale up their business**.

At the end of the capacity building Program, the **SMEs that demonstrate the readiness and potential to raise funds** in the capital markets will be provided with tailored support and **guided through the fundraising process**.

Selected SMEs will in fact receive **dedicated mentorship and coaching** to best prepare for the **interaction with potential investors** (e.g., support in preparing a compelling investment pitch).

Finally, they will be **supported in the structuring of innovative debt instruments** and secure funding at favorable terms thanks to the first **loss financial guarantee facility from the European Commission** that will enable attracting other investors.



WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR

We are looking for participants willing to:

1

Develop new skills and capabilities by acquiring knowledge and expertise to grow their business and boost competitiveness.

2

Look for guidance and support from experienced professionals to navigate new challenges and receive actionable advice to achieve their goals.

3

Connect with other businesses and establish valuable connections that can help them grow and succeed, by sharing experiences, knowledge, and best practices.

4

Want to explore potential collaborations and partnerships that can support them in achieving their business objectives.

5

Pursue the chance to access debt capital to finance their growth, by connecting with a range of potential investors and differentiating their sources of funding.

Each of the selected SMEs will receive access to the platform for up to 3 key figures within the organization (e.g., founder, finance manager, strategy manager).

In addition to SMEs, the capacity building platform is also open to **young university graduates / young entrepreneurs** that **want to boost their academic journey** and prepare to enter into the business world as well as those who **look for strengthening their entrepreneurial skills**.



ELEGIBILITY CRITERIA

To participate in this Program, **SMEs should meet 5 pre-requisites¹**:

- Be Africa-based (incorporated or with main operations in Africa).
- Have an annual turnover up to USD 50 million, with a minimum threshold of USD 1 million to be eligible for the financial guarantee.
- Be in operation since at least 2 years.
- Be a for-profit corporate (or other type of for-profit legal person).
- Not be subject to any sanction or restrictions.

When shortlisting the SMEs to take part to Archipelagos Program, **various criteria will be considered**, such as the size of the business as

well as their performance in terms of growth and profitability. It will also be examined the sector of reference and the geographical footprint of the SMEs. Additionally, the impact that the SMEs generate in terms of gender, social safeguards, environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors will also be considered. Finally, it will be taken into consideration the overall fit with the Program objectives and the type of support needed.

Young university graduates / young entrepreneurs can **directly apply to request access** to the capacity building platform without undergoing the full selection process.



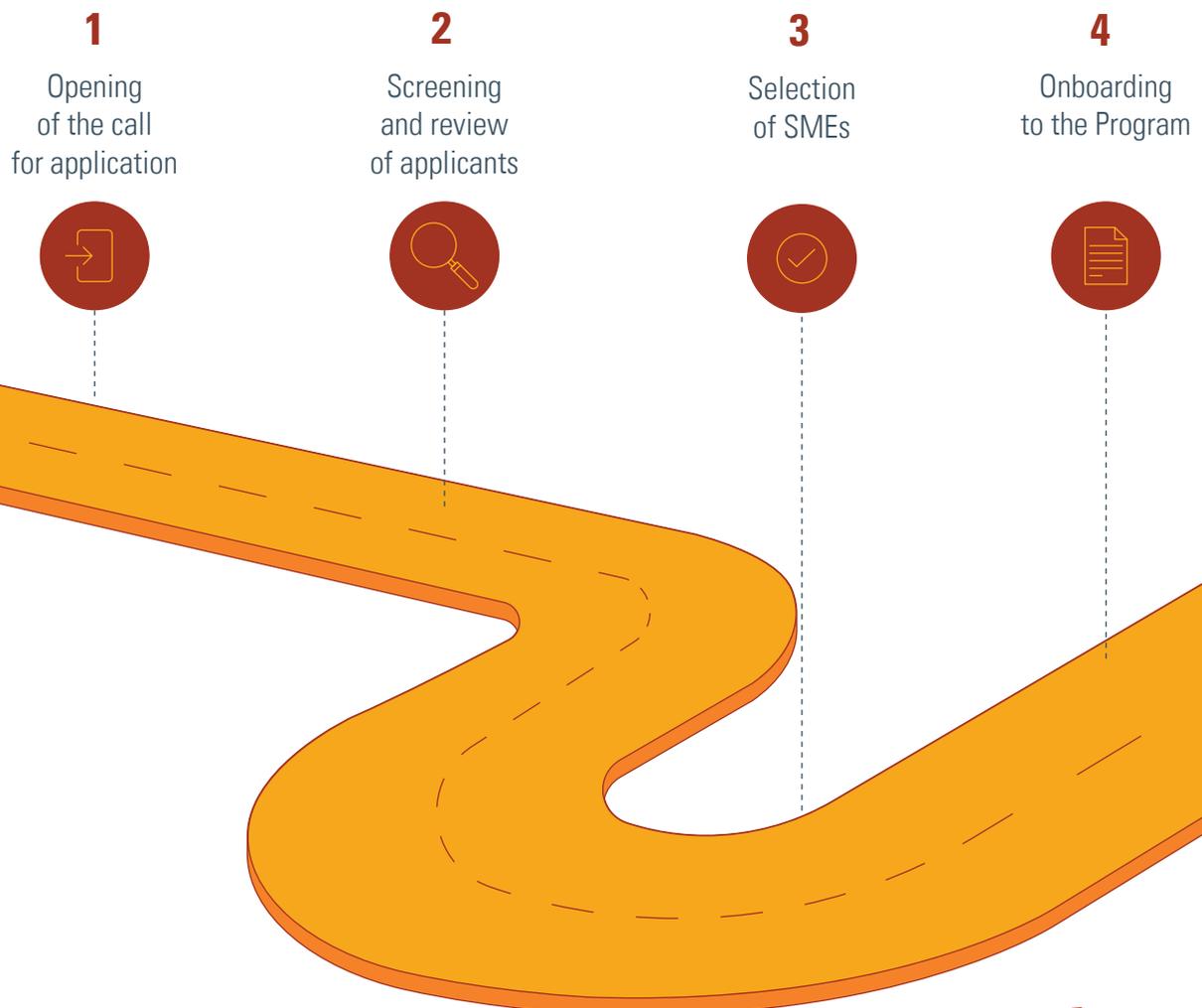
¹ On top of the mentioned pre-requisites, SMEs must be able to provide evidence of compliance with local regulations and not be subject to any local and / or EU sanction under regulatory, fiscal and juridical issues, nor being domiciled in one of the EU non-tax cooperative countries.

SELECTION PROCESS AND ENROLLMENT

The selection process is carried out through a **public call for application**, which is open to all interested SMEs and young university graduates / young entrepreneurs (link to the application form can be found in the section “How to apply”).

A dedicated team will thoroughly evaluate submitted applications on a rolling basis and carefully screen the SMEs according to the established criteria.

Selected applicants will be **contacted** to begin the **onboarding** process, ensuring all participants are fully prepared to take advantage of the Program’s resources and support.



HOW TO APPLY

Are you willing to **apply and join the Program** to grow your company and enhance your business skills?



Link to the application form

Click on the link or scan the QR code to apply through the dedicated form

CONTACTS AND REFERENCES

For more information on the Archipelagos Program and for any question about the application process, please contact: **infoarchipelagos@cdp.it**

Or visit our website: **<https://archipelagos-learning.abzt.de/>**



In collaboration with:



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