

BEFuture- Media Backgrounder

1. What is BEFuture about?

The European Business Events Sector (BE), also known as MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions), needs transformation. Key reasons include the need to limit environmental impacts, in line with the European Green Deal, the European Tourism Pathways and efforts to address climate change. The sector also has a responsibility to help shape societal values and social cohesion by fostering inclusivity and accessibility among diverse groups. Covid, geopolitical events and economic uncertainty have also highlighted the need for event industry resilience and to recover from disruptions and minimise economic impacts for businesses, employees, communities and other stakeholders. For the business events sector to thrive it will therefore need to maintain its competitive advantage and long-term economic viability through innovative and adaptive thinking.

The BEFuture project aims to transform the European business events sector by driving it towards sustainability, inclusivity, and resilience. It will facilitate innovation and collaboration within the industry, support SMEs through an acceleration program, and secure Europe's future as a frontrunner in hosting environmentally and socially responsible corporate events.

2. What does the acronym of the project stand for?

BEFuture stands for *'Shaping the Future of Europe's Business Events sector through a regenerative, resilient and sustainable tourism industry transformation'*.

3. What are the main objectives and challenges of this project?

The BEFuture project aims to transform Europe's business events industry by instilling resilience and sustainability into its core. It envisions an industry that not only thrives on innovation and technology but also prioritises regenerative practices, ensuring a positive and lasting impact. The goals are to:

- Steering the business events sector towards a sustainable and inclusive future.
- Establish an open innovation space for ideas and knowledge exchange for the progress of the industry.
- Develop and empower talent within SMEs and the industry.
- Provide financial support to a minimum of 80 innovative projects across six European countries through a dedicated acceleration program.
- Utilise significant industry events (IBTM World, IMEX, and Mobile World Congress, etc.) to enhance communication and raise awareness.

BEFuture is poised to address the pressing need for a sustainable transformation in the European business events sector, aiming to significantly reduce the industry's carbon footprint and waste production while ensuring inclusivity and positive social impacts.

4. Who are the main partners and stakeholders involved?

This project is coordinated by the [Catalan Tourist Board](#) (Agència Catalana de Turisme), in collaboration with the following partners:

[B. Link](#) (B. Link Barcelona Strategic Projects SL), [Tipik](#) (Tipik Communication Agency), [TVL](#) (Toerisme Vlaanderen), [Linkeus](#), [Vdvo](#) (Verband Der Veranstaaltungsorganisatoren E.V.), [ETFI](#) (Stichting NHL Stenden Hogeschool), [Unimib](#) (Universita' Degli Studi Di Milano Bicocca).

5. What are the main tasks and milestones of the project?

The project has the following key milestones

Business Events Stakeholder map: list of stakeholders that are part of influence in the BE sector

White Paper on the future of the Business Event's industry

Publication of a state of the art and best practices in the Business Event's Industry

Creation of an Innovation Forum

Call for Proposals of Subgrants for SMEs on innovative and sustainability solutions for the BE sector

Showcase of BEFuture innovative projects

The project focuses on 3 essential pillars:

1. Research the Ecosystem

- Developing and promoting a collaborative Business events ecosystem across Europe.
- Fostering broad engagement from diverse sectors to share knowledge and stimulate innovation.
- Identify future scenarios for business events (BE) and synthesise best practices into actionable insights.

2. Capacity building

- Defining new paths for BE's future and capturing best practices in sustainability and impact.
- Transforming insights into practical guidelines for industry and societal advancement.

3. Acceleration programme

- Elevating skills and capabilities for emerging events in Europe.
- Improving access to innovation, leveraging existing resources and funding.
- Encouraging co-creation and the sharing of best practices at local and transnational levels.

To ensure the project is successfully implemented, we will establish a detailed communication and dissemination plan along with effective project management.

6. What are the expected outcomes?

The BEFuture project is expected to enhance the competitive edge of the European Business events sector, positioning Europe into a global benchmark of innovation, technology, and sustainability in the events industry.

7. How is this project aligned with EU policies?

- BEFuture is strategically aligned with EU policies aimed at [sustainable development](#), and the [European Green Deal](#).
- BEFuture places strong emphasis on driving the industry towards a more inclusive future. The project aligns with the [EU's values and initiatives](#) of ensuring that economic and social benefits are accessible to a diverse range of individuals and communities.
- The project's dedication to open innovation and knowledge exchange between diverse stakeholders also aligns with the EU's vision for a collaborative and inclusive business environment.
- The project prioritises skills development by providing support and resources for talent growth in line with the [European Skills Agenda](#)
- The project's emphasis on digitalisation and innovation within the tourism and events sector contributes to the EU's broader goals for tourism sector such as the [Transition Pathway for Tourism](#).

8. What is the project's budget and timeline?

The total budget co-financed by the European Unions is EUR 3.996.773,70 euros of a total of 4.174.193,05 euros and the project has a total duration of 30 months. BEFuture was awarded a grant by the European Union under the COSME Programme "Sustainable Growth and Building Resilience in Tourism: to support the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises".

For more information about the project, please reach out to befuture.act@gencat.cat

Follow the project on [LinkedIn](#).

BEFuture Project Launches in Barcelona to Rethink the future of the Business Events Industry

- BEFuture, supported by the European Union's COSME Programme, offers 30k funding to 80 SMEs for innovative practices in the business events sector.
- Over three years, the project aims to make the Business Event's industry more sustainable and resilient.

Barcelona, 28 November 2023 – The BEFuture project, coordinated by the Catalan Tourist Board, successfully held a Business Event's industry Think Tank workshop in Barcelona to positively impact Europe's business events tourism sector. The goal of the BEFuture project is to shape the BE industry

into a more sustainable, regenerative, resilient, and responsible industry by collecting best practices and enhancing the sector's competitiveness.

“We are delighted and excited to get the opportunity to do this important work together with a strong team of partners. We want to contribute to explore other business models, together with other ecosystems and make BE a future proof industry, aligned with the actual trends and needs” said Sònia Serracarbasa Head of the Catalunya Convention Bureau (Catalan Tourist Board), at the workshop organised by the project partners during IBTM World in Barcelona.

Since its preliminary launch in September, BEFuture has organised two Think Tank workshops to define future scenarios and will publish a call for SME best practices in February 2024. The project plans training programs, a white paper, and an acceleration program in 2025 **offering 30k in funding to at least 80 SMEs from Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands.**

The project involves a network of stakeholders, including convention bureaus, BSOs, and international industry associations. The consortium consists of ACT (Agencia Catalana De Turisme), B. Link (B. Link Barcelona Strategic Projects SL), Tipik (Tipik Communication Agency), TVL (Toerisme Vlaanderen), Linkeus, VDVO (Verband Der Veranstaaltungsorganisatoren E.V.), ETFI (Stichting NHL Stenden Hogeschool), Unimib (Universita' Degli Studi Di Milanobicocca).

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For more information, view the background document.

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