

FAQs



01 What is the MSME Loan-Grant Facility?

The MSME Loan-Grant Facility is a project implemented by the Ministry of Commerce, Manufacturing, Business Development, Cooperatives and Consumer Affairs. It is an EC10 million-dollar facility to provide post-COVID-19 pandemic relief to registered Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs). This facility is a combination of 70% grant and 30% loan funding at an attractive 3% interest rate with no collateral requirements.

Do I qualify?

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Applicants must be Saint Lucian nationals between the ages of 31 and 60 with a registered Micro-, Small or Medium-sized Enterprise.

Defining MSMEs

- MICRO ENTERPRISE – up to 5 employees, annual turnover not exceeding \$100,000. Net assets don't exceed \$75,000.
- SMALL ENTERPRISE – 6-20 employees, annual turnover not exceeding \$500,000. Net assets don't exceed \$200,000.
- MEDIUM ENTERPRISE – 21-50 employees, annual turnover not exceeding \$1,000,000. Net assets don't exceed \$500,000.

NB: Before commencing the application process, businesses or companies must be registered at the Registry of Companies and Intellectual Property (ROCIP). As part of the registration process, the Small Business Development Centre (SBDC) provides assistance with preparation of the Statutory Declaration.

03 How do I sign up?

The application process is relatively simple and seamless. Both online and offline application forms are available via the Ministry of Commerce's portal on the Government of Saint Lucia's website: <https://commerce.govt.lc>. Alternatively, physical (paper) application forms can be picked up at the Ministry of Commerce or persons can complete the application form at the Ministry's help desk. The Ministry of Commerce is located on the Fourth Floor of the Heraldine Rock Building, Waterfront, Castries.

- a) Applications will be accepted from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.
- b) The deadline for receiving applications for the 2nd call is Tuesday 30th April, 2024 at 12:00 p.m..

04 What documents do I need?

The application must be completed (with original signature), and submitted with a business plan that includes financial projections (cash flow and income statement) for up to twelve (12) months or one (1) year.

Only one (1) application per person is permitted. An individual may only benefit from the Loan-Grant Facility once. Applicants must provide two valid forms of identification: the national ID card (front and back), the passport and/or a driver's license. Expired documentation will not be accepted.

A copy of the Business Registration Certificate must be supplied and proof of residence established through a recent utility bill (an electricity, water, phone or cable bill issued within the last three months). Partners in the business should show agreement to apply for the loan by way of a signed letter and evidence of valid ID.

It should be noted that owners of Limited Liability Companies require a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation, copies of Incorporation documents (such as Articles of Association/Company Bylaws, Share Allotment, Notice of Directors, Notice of Secretary, Notice of Address), the Board Resolution indicating approval of borrowing by the company (if applicable) and a Certificate of Good Standing for companies registered over a year. The Certificate of Good Standing is issued by the Registry of Companies and Intellectual Property (ROCIP).

Where applicable, a Partnership Agreement, evidence of additional funding via a letter/statement from a funding agency, and Absolute Power of Attorney must be supplied. Supporting documents include proforma invoices/quotations, licenses, health certificates/certification, letters of intent etc.

Additionally, applicants must undergo a credit check, relevant training and technical assistance, as well as adhere to the programme's monitoring requirements if successful.

05 How much money can I apply for?

Pre-venture businesses may borrow up to \$10,000, while businesses in existence for no more than 2 years can seek up to \$20,000 in funding. Businesses in existence for over 2 years can access up to \$25,000.

N.B. Applicants are not guaranteed the full amount applied for, as it is subject to review and approval by the Evaluation Committee.



What are the priority areas?

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Priority areas include manufacturing (e.g. agro-processing.), Agriculture, Agro-tourism, and Services (Beauty and Wellness, Creative Industries, ICT and Professional Services).

07 What areas do not qualify?

Accommodation and non-profit businesses do not qualify under this facility.

What can the funds be used for?

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Eligible Use of Funds: In keeping with our guidelines, funds may be used for the following purposes: equipment upgrade/modernisation; food safety standards/certifications; the purchase of raw materials; direct supplies and promotional material and implementation of IT solutions; obtaining technical assistance; facilitating product and service development; retrofitting (fixtures and amenities) premises for standardization; training programs that benefit the business (e.g. QuickBooks); packaging and design.

Ineligible Use of Funds: Funds should not be used for the payment of overheads such as salaries, rent and utilities; personal use; travel costs; interest owed on outstanding loans; tax arrears; debts and provision for losses or debts; items already financed by another framework, building expansion, and items for retail and consumables.

09 Who approves the loan application?

The Ministry of Commerce through the Evaluation Committee, which comprises of qualified individuals, from key Business Support Organizations.

What is SLDB's role in the project?

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The Saint Lucia Development Bank serves as the disbursement agency for the facility.

We hope you find this guidance helpful and look forward to receiving your application. For more information, contact us today at 468-4218 or 468-4223 or e-mail msmeloangrant@gmail.com. Our competent team is more than willing to assist you along this journey. Don't miss out on this once in a lifetime opportunity. Sign up as soon as you can!