

1. Background

According to the data from the Directorate General of Migration Management, Türkiye has emerged as the largest refugee-hosting country, globally, accommodating more than 4 million refugees. Given this significant number, refugee employment has become a crucial concern for Türkiye and various measures need to be taken to address the employment challenges of refugees.

Owing to the protracted nature of the crisis, the ILO Türkiye has adopted a resilience-based development approach to strengthen the enabling environment for decent work and social justice, and developed a comprehensive, holistic and integrated five-year Programme of Support in response to the refugee crisis in Türkiye. The program aims to enhance the labour market and business development environment by creating decent work opportunities, fostering inclusive socio-economic growth, and reinforcing governance systems and structures.

‘Supporting Resilience and Social Cohesion with Decent Livelihood Opportunities’ project is one of the development cooperation projects under ILO Refugee Response Programme and aims to enhance the resilience and social cohesion of refugees and host communities in Türkiye by promoting access to decent work and sustainable livelihood opportunities. Financially supported by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (USPRM), the project is being implemented between 01.04.2022 – 31.11.2024 in Ankara, Istanbul, İzmir, Bursa, Adana, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Mersin, Konya, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Eskişehir, Denizli, Manisa, and Kilis provinces.

The overall objective of the Project is to enhance the resilience and social cohesion of refugees and host communities in Türkiye by promoting access to decent work and inclusive economic growth underpinned by decent work principles. Main objectives of the project are:

- Refugees and members of host community have better access to the labour market and remain in employment through improved employability and employment services and enhanced social cohesion.
- More and better income opportunities provided to refugees and host communities through sustainable income generation and job creation.
- Working conditions of refugees and host communities improved through enhanced labour market governance and enforcement.

In line with these objectives, the Project envisages “Enterprise Support Programme (ESP)” which consists of:

- Providing financial support **in the form of grant** to facilitate business/entrepreneurship development and employment creation.
- Offering assistance through tailored informative sessions designed to meet the specific needs of enterprises within the program.

To implement the Programme, YTU Yılduz Teknopark will provide implementation support to the ILO Office for Türkiye.

2. Objectives of the Grant Scheme

The Grant Scheme under the Enterprise Support Programme aims to empower potential and existing small entrepreneurs to start viable businesses, enhance the viability and profitability of existing enterprises, and create quality employment opportunities in the process. By providing micro-grants, the intention is to alleviate the costs and administrative obstacles associated with new business development, including access to finance. Additionally, it aims to promote joint ventures between

Syrian refugees and host communities to further strengthen social cohesion and integration

3. Scope of the Grants and Programme

This programme aims to provide support to registered existing small enterprises, with a specific emphasis on fostering their growth and development through the provision of business development services and financial assistance.

The overall budget for the Grant Programme is **1.950.000,00 TRY**.

A total of 15 selected and qualified enterprises in Istanbul, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Adana, Mersin, Kahramanmaraş and Hatay provinces will have the opportunities to receive financial support of up to **130.000,00 TRY**. There will be no requirement of co-funding for the grant scheme.

In addition to financial support, **informative sessions** will be organised for the benefit of the enterprises. These sessions will cover a range of topics that are relevant to the growth and success of the enterprises.

The topics will include ILO programmes towards enterprises, grant application and documentation, business planning and pitching market analysis, innovation, access to finance/investment, social responsibility and sustainability, OSH practices at workplace.

The selection of the enterprises to receive financial support will be based on eligibility criteria and a thorough evaluation process to ensure that the support is targeted towards enterprises with the greatest potential for growth employment creation and impact.

4. What types of business models will be supported ?

- Business models with a strong potential for viable, feasible, scalable and sustainable businesses,
- Business models that are more innovative, technology intensive and have growth potential, **job creation** and contributing to decent work and income opportunities for both refugees and host community members,
- Business models that focus on solutions for socio-economic problems, particularly those that involve creating or adopting IT solutions and training staff to deploy these solutions. Additionally, models that emphasize digital transformation and adopting new ways of doing business such as teleworking and digital marketing
- Business models initiated by youth and women entrepreneurs, as well as models that encourage joint ventures between Turkish and refugee partners to promote financial inclusion, social cohesion, and solidarity.

In addition to the business model, the entrepreneur's experience, management skills, and presentation skills will also be considered in the decision-making process.

5. Eligibility of Applicants

- Application to the grant scheme is available only for Turkish Citizens, Syrians having a temporary protection ID card (with a number starting with 99) who are registered in target provinces.
- Applicants must be authorised in the company to apply for the grant programme.
- Applicants must be over the age of 18 at the date of the application,
- Enterprise of the applicants officially registered in the target province for between 0-5 years at the the date of the application.
- Applicants are expected to have experience, skills and motivation related to the business idea proposed in their models.

- For Turkish citizens, the proposed businesses should fall within the SME category in terms of the number of employees and annual revenue. For Syrians with a temporary protection ID, there is no limit regarding the scale of the business.
- Business models aiming to deliver products or services that are accepted as hazardous to human health and environmental wellbeing are not eligible.
- Women entrepreneurs, young entrepreneurs who create employment will have plus advantage in the evaluations.

6. Eligibility of Actions and Costs

- The applicants must ensure establishment of registered enterprises that are able to comply with the legal requirements. The actions and budget in compliance with such requirements should be incorporated into the business models. Eligible technical expenses projected in the business plans or emerged during implementation should be in line with the below list.

Eligible Compliance Expenses	Eligible Technical / Operational Expenses
Accountant and financial advisor fees	Utilities (electricity, water, gas, internet)
Social security premiums	Machinery, equipment and tools
Patent services	Computers and software
Occupational safety and health measures	Marketing and promotion
	Personnel costs
	Transportation
	Raw materials
	Business/technical consultancy and training services
	Product designing

7. How To Apply ?

After the call is made on the website, applications will be accepted online.

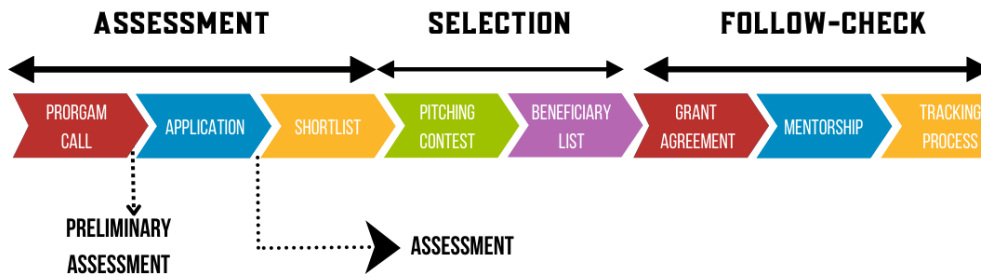
The following documents will be required to be filled/uploaded to the system:

- Online Application Form
- Tax Plate
- If he/she has a SuTP, he/she is asked to upload his/her document
- Photos from the applicant's facilities need to be uploaded.
- Turkish Identity Number

The ILO Office for Türkiye is collaborating with YTU Yıldız Teknopark to implement its Enterprise Support Program. Whereas the grant scheme will be led by the ILO Office for Türkiye, YTU Yıldız Teknopark will assist in the processes of beneficiary selection, facilitate setting-up of the evaluation committees and provide follow-up administrative support for grantees.

Applications and pitching will be conducted in Turkish and English.


8. Application and Selection Processes



The application and selection will involve following steps:

- A. Program Call:** A call for Enterprises will be launched through an online platform. The platform will be accessible at esp.yildiztto.com.
- B. Preliminary Assessment-Eligibility Check:** The received applications will undergo a pre-evaluation by the project team to verify compliance with the specified rules. Applicants will have the opportunity to address any deficiencies using the Eligibility Checklist Test (Annex 2) during the this phase and make necessary revisions.
- C. Final Application:** After the preliminary assessment, finalised applicants will be determined.
- D. Shortlisting:** Applications will be assessed by a committee comprising a minimum of three individuals, as outlined in the Scoring Sheet (Annex 1) and approved by the ILO. The Evaluation Committee will include representatives from the ILO, YTU Yıldız Teknopark officials, and experienced independent evaluators in the sector. Before the evaluating of applications, each member of the Evaluation Committee will be required to sign a Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and Non-disclosure Agreement. After the evaluation conducted by the evaluation committee, 30 applications will be chosen from the overall list.
- E. Pitching Contest:** An online pitch deck presentation event will be organized for the 30 shortlisted applicants. The evaluation committee will assess and choose 15 entrepreneurs (comprising 10 refugees and 5 host community members) as beneficiaries.
- F. Award Decision:** The finalized list of beneficiaries, who will have the opportunity to receive financial support of up to **130,000 TRY**, will be announced on the web site.
- G. Grant Agreement:** A grant agreement will be signed with the grantees using the ILOs standard grant agreement templates including required documents such as final budget form and business model application form.
- H. Mentorship:** Each grantee will benefit from follow-up technical support throughout the Grant Programme. Each enterprise will receive a minimum of 4 hours of support for preparing expenditure plans, ensuring the necessary compliances and receiving other needed assistance. These sessions will be facilitated by experienced mentors in the field. Each meeting will involve assigning tasks to the business, which will then be reviewed in subsequent sessions. Reports and oversight of mentoring meetings will be managed through the platform.
- I. Tracking Process :** After the grant agreement is completed, the feedback and invoicing procedures regarding the use of the grant received by the project owners will be followed.

9. Indicative Timeline for Grant Selection

	Program Call	Application	Shortlist	Pitching Contest	Beneficiary List	Mentorship	Tracking Process
	JAN '24	JAN '24	FEB '24	FEB '24	FEB '24	FEB '24 MAR '24	MAR '24

10. Payments

YTU Yıldız Teknopark will transfer 25% of the grant to the grantee's bank account upon signing the grant agreement. The remaining 75% will be reimbursed at the end of the grant period upon the grantee's submission of reports and supporting documents for incurred expenditures. The grant specified in the agreement represents the maximum amount, and actual payments will be based on verified eligible costs from the grantee's submitted expenditures.

If the interim payment is not utilized within the contract duration, the grantee is responsible for promptly returning the unspent balance to YTU Yıldız Teknopark.

11. Responsibilities of the Grantee

- The grantee commits to use the funds as defined in the business model approved by the Evaluation Committee and in line with the terms of conditions outlined in the grant agreement.
- Considering that the final payment will be transferred on reimbursement basis, the grantee commits to provide necessary funds to implement grant activity as committed in the business model.
- The grantee commits to collaborating with the consultants / service providers assigned by YTU Yıldız Teknopark during implementation of the grant activities.
- The grantee commits to keep accurate and regular records of the grant and make those accessible to YTU Yıldız Teknopark or any third parties designated by YTU Yıldız Teknopark for inspection or verification purposes.