



Diversity **E**quity **I**nclusion

DEI4SME Digital tool development outline and call to suppliers

University of Vaasa
Vaasa, Finland, 2025



Outcomes to be achieved in the DEI4SME project

- 1) To produce a ready-to-use open-access **digital tool (in a form of a website and related app)** based on the blueprint for the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) management (*developed by the external supplier with the DEI4SME team's guidance and inputs).
 - 2) To ensure that the tool is usable and easy to apply in the higher education institutions (HEI) education and smaller and medium enterprises (SME) context through the development of the user manuals (*user manuals to be developed by the DEI4SME team).
- SMEs will receive a digital tool to **plan, implement, and report measurable DEI activities** in line with the ESG requirements in the EU.
 - HE Institutions will receive digital education infrastructure to develop graduates' skills needed to lead **change toward social responsibility in SMEs**

Technical specifications for digital tool

- Created **one webpage with the digital open-access tool** that can be used to manage DEI in SMEs when accessing it through the desktop computer or laptop.
- Created **one related to the website application with the digital open-access tool** that can be used to manage DEI in SMEs when accessing the tool through the mobile phone or any other portable device (e.g., tablet).
- **Both versions (website and app) should follow design of the existing communication tools**, e.g., website of the project <https://dei4sme.eu/> , at least in the major features (communication guidelines available), yet ensuring functionality for the user
- **Word press** used for the tool manager interface
- Technology should be **made to be transferable** in case the server needs to change or website integrations made
- The webpage and app should be **functioning in several languages**: English, Finnish, Lithuanian, and German (translations will be provided by us, but functionality should be provided by the supplier)
- The website and app is functioning in different browser interfaces and mobile device specifications.
- The way tool is functioning **adheres to GDPR and other legal requirements** set within the EU for handling company and personal data.
- The digital tool should adhere to The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and be based on the principles of **Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, and Robust**. Any other actions to improve accessibility are welcomed, for example, if possible, sound guides could be implemented on the website.

Timeline for the supplier & tool development

- Offer from the supplier received by **November 12th, 2025 (end of the day)**. Announcement about the selected supplier latest by December 2nd, 2025.
- **Phase 1:** Working on tool development (website & app): December 2025 – February 2026. First version of the tool (website & app) ready for testing at the end of February 2026
- **Phase 2:** Testing the tool with SMEs, educators, and other stakeholders: March-May 2026 – taken care by the University of Vaasa and their partners, no action from supplier is needed
- **Phase 3:** April-June 2026 – implementing feedback received from tool testing. July-August 2026 – tool (website & app) ready to be used and tool development project to be completed.

N.B. Offer received from the supplier should feature costs according to the timeline indicated, also, should include costs concerning Phases 1 and 3.

By issuing an offer supplier commits to stick to the indicated timeline, since the EU project has strict guidelines for funding available per timelines indicated.

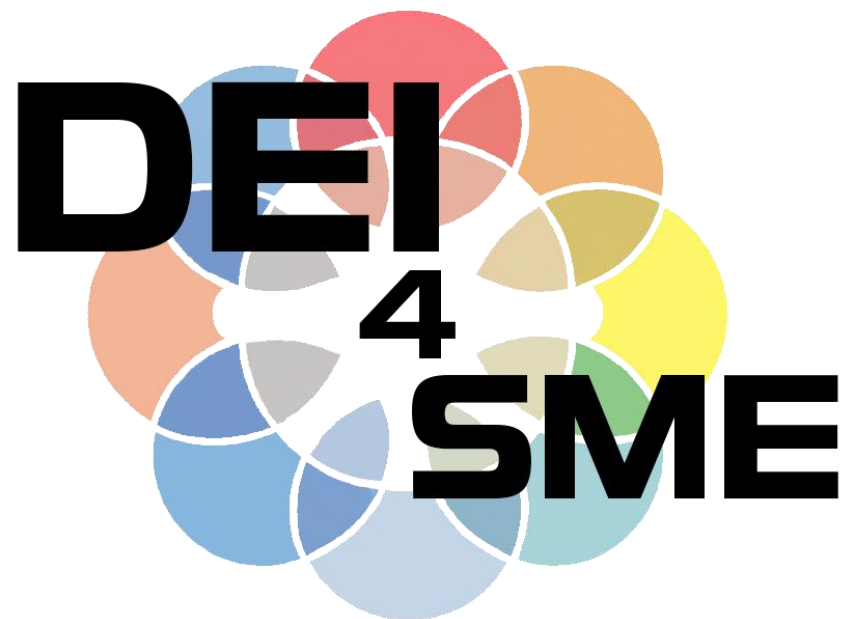
Indicators to measure success of the tool development

Quantitative indicators:

- 1) Created **one webpage with the digital open-access tool** that can be used to manage DEI in SMEs when accessing it through the desktop computer or laptop.
- 2) Created **one application with the digital open-access tool** that can be used to manage DEI in SMEs when accessing the tool through the mobile phone or any other portable device (e.g., tablet).

Qualitative indicators:

1. The digital open-access tool is perceived as functional by the HEI and the SMEs; (obtained through feedback and tests conducted by the HEI and SME representatives in four countries).
2. The digital open-access tool is perceived as useful in teaching DEI management within the HEI institutions; (obtained through feedback and tests conducted by the HEI representatives in four countries).
3. The digital open-access tool is perceived to be useful when implementing and reporting DEI issues within the SME context; (obtained through feedback and tests conducted by the SME representatives in four countries).
4. Involvement of the target groups into the online tool development process (pilot action) to create an inclusive environment that fosters diversity and equity. (observed through the various interactions with the stakeholder groups)



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Blueprint of the digital tool



Landing page

How would you like to benefit from the digital tool for managing social sustainability in SMEs? I would like to:

1. Assess and develop my competencies in social sustainability

3. Build social sustainability report for a company

2. Build a legal compliance report on social sustainability according to VSME standard

4. Integrate social sustainability in strategic management of a firm

1. Assess and develop my competencies in social sustainability

- My individual competency assessment (suitable for all individuals working or leading in SMEs, including single entrepreneurs)
 - Opens a self-assessment form to be filled. After filling the form, user receives results indicating the maturity of a person built on the standard descriptions explaining what the indicated maturity level means. The form to be filled will be designed using DEI4SME surveys. In the digital tool, we should be able to manage what is included in the form and what comes out as results.
 - Filled form with results and recommendations to be downloaded in pdf, no data stays online, but temporary saving while filling the form should be in place to prevent loss of information in case of network disruptions. The results and recommendations could come in two separate pdf files.
 - Downloaded pdf should have a nice design and outline, in case the user would like to share it on social media or use for reporting, application for funding or other purpose.

2. Build a legal compliance report on social sustainability according to VSME standard

- First: Pre-fill SME profile to determine which reporting requirements apply according to VSME standard
- Second: Reporting regulation-based form appears (data points to be filled regarding social sustainability) according to VSME standard for social aspects
- Filled form according to VSME reporting standards to be downloaded in pdf or editable form for company to report, no data stays online, but temporary saving while filling the form should be in place to prevent loss of information in case of network disruptions.
- Form that is downloaded has nice structure and simple yet professional design highlighting each section
- Possibility to add data for several years (adding windows with year of reporting) to create a comparative report for up to 5 years on legal issues and their progress.
- Depending on company's country, recommendations and links to other regulations in the country are suggested for consideration, but no reports are performed according to them. Links to certain legislations and examples made available.
- The forms to be filled and recommendations should be editable on the back interface of the tool, so that information could be updated as per regulatory changes

3. Build social sustainability report for a company

- Pre-fill SME profile to determine which reporting requirements apply according to VSME standard and which questions about the firm should show up in the subsequent sections.
- When filling the form, user can open examples of how to fill the form and see some of the best practices under each of the five sections and questions within them; company has a chance to add own logo to the form
- After filling all the relevant questions, the website automatically generates evaluation of firm's maturity level according to the inputs provided and shows this as a result at the end of the page
- Filled form to be downloaded in pdf or editable form for company to report, no data stays online, but temporary saving while filling the form should be in place to prevent loss of information in case of network disruptions. Form that is downloaded has nice structure and simple yet professional design highlighting each section
- Form is structured in five sections (one is exactly as taken from Choice No. 2 on legal reporting):

01

DEI in firm's strategy making (keywords: strategizing, strategic business development, business model development, growth, expansion)

02

DEI in firm's strategy implementation (keywords: strategy communication, strategic practices at work, key performance indicators, managing operations)

03

DEI in firm's human resource management (keywords: recruitment, promotion, appraisals, teamwork, leadership, whistleblowing, integration, skill development, knowledge sharing)

04

DEI in firm's product or service development (keywords: accessibility of product or service, customer relationships, customer needs)

05

Legal compliance according to VSME standard

4. Integrate social sustainability in strategic management of a firm

- All steps the same as in the Choice No. 3
- Additionally:
 - Explanation of what are the maturity levels of social sustainability in strategic management of the firm
 - Explanation of how firm can enhance its maturity level and more extensive list of best practices, including some learning materials
 - Possibility to submit suggestions on best practices that firm is doing to be entered in EU-level best practice repository for integrating social sustainability in strategic management of the firm with notification function for tool admin that such suggestion was submitted
 - Possibility to add data for several years (adding windows with year of reporting) to create a comparative report for up to 3 years on firm's progress.

Relevant examples

- <https://test.esgtool.eu/en/esg-tool>
- <https://meandyoutoo.app/en/>
- <https://talent4life.eu/tool/public/>
- <https://fokus.utu.fi/>
- <https://globaledge.msu.edu/tools-and-data/diagnostic-tools/core>
- <https://www.dnb.com/fi-fi/tuotteet/db-risk-analytics>
- ESG reporting tools overview: <https://www.coolset.com/academy/best-esg-reporting-software-tools> & <https://www.gartner.com/reviews/market/esg-management-and-reporting-software>
- And here, including market overview for ESG digitaltools: <https://www.prophix.com/blog/esg-software/>
- <https://www.intellex.com/>
- <https://www.workiva.com>
- Ecovadis tool
- **Free ESG tool:** <https://interreg-baltic.eu/project/sustool/>
- <https://www.gartner.com/reviews/market/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-dei-tech-tools>
- <https://monimuotoisuusarviointi.fi/en/>
- <https://www.techtarget.com/searchhr/software/feature/20-diversity-and-inclusion-tools-to-power-your-DEI-program>
- <https://www.disco.co/blog/best-ai-tools-for-dei-programs>
- <https://www.icmm.com/en-gb/guidance/social-performance/2024/tools-for-dei>
- https://seppo.io/discovering-dei/?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjw782_BhDjARIsABTv_JC6dcD2_g2wQXy-lcliJ3ZgzqHalorF65AUfvR9sBPEP3Sg60x2vG8aAtY2EALw_wcB



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