



ESG LAB – ACTIVITY 4

NATIONAL MENTORING REPORT

Cyprus

Country	Cyprus
Partner Organisation	CIBIT
Reporting Period	16–17 September 2026 (mentoring delivery), with follow-up documentation in September 2026
Number of SMEs Mentored	5
Number of Mentoring Sessions	5
Number of Mentors / Mentoring Support Staff	2

1. Implementation Overview

The national mentoring phase in Cyprus was implemented as a focused two-day online mentoring exercise on 16 and 17 September 2026. Five SMEs representing different business activities participated in five individual Zoom-based mentoring sessions. The process combined a structured ESG and skills diagnostic, company-specific discussion, an initial ESG baseline, identification of relevant data and KPIs, and the preparation of practical follow-up actions.

Two members of the mentoring team supported the process: Ioanna Chrysanthou as facilitator/mentoring team member and Dr Panayiotis Vouros as expert/mentoring support. The same core methodology was used for all SMEs, while the content was adapted to the company's sector, size, ESG maturity and practical priorities. Each SME dossier was then developed into a structured evidence pack containing the baseline note, mentoring notes, action plan, tool/resource record and first ESG Report Draft.

Date	SME	SME Participant(s)	Format
16/09/2026	Cyprus Institute of Sustainability Research & Development (CIS-RD) LTD	Elena Christodoulou, Ivi Michael	Online – Zoom
16/09/2026	SocialSpace Global Media LTD	Christiana Ioannou, Elena Nicolaou	Online – Zoom
17/09/2026	Treedia	Sotiris Karotsakis	Online – Zoom
17/09/2026	Theotokos Travel	Christos Stylianou	Online – Zoom
17/09/2026	A.P. Theodorou Ltd / Office Stationery	Nikos Ioannides	Online – Zoom

2. Profile of Participating SMEs

The participating SMEs covered research and sustainability, professional education and digital services, digital outdoor advertising, tourism/travel services, and office supplies/e-commerce. Their ESG starting points varied from early-stage formal ESG reporting to developing/intermediate sustainability practice. In most cases, the principal need was not the absence of relevant ESG activity, but the lack of a consolidated reporting system with defined data owners, repeatable KPIs, evidence sources and an annual reporting cycle.



SME	Sector / Activity	Blue Economy Connection	ESG Starting Point	Mentor / Support
CIS-RD LTD	Sustainability, research & development, funded research programmes	Research projects	Early-stage formal ESG reporting, sustainability embedded in organisational purpose.	Ioanna Chrysanthou / Dr Panayiotis Vouros
SocialSpace Global Media LTD	Professional education, training, consulting and digital services	Indirect enabling role through training/consulting, no direct operating activity identified.	Developing, existing management and training structures provide a base for ESG integration.	Ioanna Chrysanthou / Dr Panayiotis Vouros
Treedia	Digital out-of-home advertising, sustainability-oriented advertising solutions	Strong environmental/sustainability orientation.	Developing to intermediate sustainability practice, formal reporting and data assurance can be strengthened.	Ioanna Chrysanthou / Dr Panayiotis Vouros
Theotokos Travel	Travel agency, organised excursions and tourism services	Potential indirect connection through tourism and island/coastal destinations.	Early-stage formal ESG reporting, practical priorities around travel, suppliers and customer information.	Ioanna Chrysanthou / Dr Panayiotis Vouros
A.P. Theodorou Ltd / Office Stationery	Office stationery, paper products, computer supplies, toner/ink and e-commerce	ESG relevance through circularity, sourcing, packaging, logistics and waste.	Early-stage formal ESG reporting with strong circular-economy opportunities.	Ioanna Chrysanthou / Dr Panayiotis Vouros

3. Mentoring Implementation

The mentoring process followed a common sequence for all five SMEs. First, available company information and sector context were reviewed to establish a preliminary ESG starting point. During each Zoom session, the SME ESG & Skills Diagnostic Tool was used/reviewed to structure discussion around business and strategic awareness, ESG readiness, digital maturity, sustainability/circular economy and skills/training needs. The discussion then moved to company-specific ESG topics, available evidence, data gaps, candidate KPIs and practical next steps.

Following each session, the mentoring output was translated into a company-specific ESG Baseline Note, a prioritised Action Plan with owners, target dates and evidence requirements, and a proportionate ESG Report Draft. The level of detail was adapted to the maturity of each SME: early-stage organisations were guided towards a small, manageable KPI set and data register, while companies with stronger sustainability positioning were guided towards methodology, claims governance, data assurance and more formal ESG performance tracking.

3.1 Session Structure Used

- Introduction and objective setting.
- Company profile, operating context and sector-specific ESG relevance.
- Baseline review using the diagnostic tool and discussion of current practices.
- Identification of available data sources, missing data and candidate ESG KPIs.
- Review of ESG LAB tools, reporting structure and practical improvement options.
- Agreement/preparation of priority actions, owners, target dates and evidence requirements.

4. Main ESG Needs Identified

Although the five SMEs operate in different sectors, several recurring needs emerged. The most common issue was the need to move from informal or fragmented sustainability practices towards structured, evidence-based ESG management and reporting.



#	Common Need	Observed Implication
1	Structured ESG data collection and evidence management	Quantitative operational, workforce, supplier and impact data were not consistently consolidated in one ESG data register.
2	Relevant ESG indicators and KPI ownership	SMEs required a practical set of sector-relevant KPIs, with clear internal responsibility for data collection and review.
3	Clear ESG governance, roles and responsibilities	Formal ESG ownership, data owners, approval processes and accountability mechanisms required further definition.
4	Target setting and annual action planning	Realistic targets need to be based on verified baselines rather than assumptions, with dates and evidence of progress.
5	A proportionate ESG reporting structure	SMEs needed a simple reporting framework that translates existing information into a repeatable annual ESG reporting output.

4.1 Sector-Specific ESG Priorities

- CISRD: ESG data mapping, research/project impact indicators, stakeholder engagement and first reporting cycle.
- SocialSpace Global Media: training/social impact measurement, environmental office indicators, responsible digital/AI practices and governance integration.
- Treedia: environmental impact methodology, digital-screen energy data, evidence behind sustainability claims and ESG claims governance.
- Theotokos Travel: travel-related environmental indicators, supplier sustainability criteria, responsible-travel communication and customer/social indicators.
- A.P. Theodorou: paper/packaging and toner/ink circularity, responsible sourcing, logistics, product compliance and waste-related indicators.

5. ESG LAB Tools and Resources Used

The mentoring sessions used the ESG LAB diagnostic and mentoring materials as the common foundation. Reporting tools and templates were then applied as post-session mentoring outputs to structure the first reporting cycle. Where adoption by the SME has not yet been independently confirmed, this is stated as a follow-up status rather than as an implemented result.

Tool / Resource	Number of SMEs	Main Purpose / Status
SME ESG & Skills Diagnostic Tool	5	Used/reviewed during the Zoom mentoring to structure readiness and gap identification.
ESG mentoring presentation / learning material	5	Used during the sessions through screen sharing and guided discussion.
ESG Reporting Plan	5	Prepared/recommended as the post-session workflow for priorities, ownership, timing and evidence.
ESG Reporting Template	5	Used by the mentoring team to structure the first proportionate ESG Report Draft for each SME.
ESG LAB Toolkit / learning resources	5	Recommended for KPI selection, governance and implementation follow-up, subsequent SME use requires confirmation.



Tool / Resource	Number of SMEs	Main Purpose / Status
CoP / expert support	5	Expert support was embedded in the sessions through Dr Panayiotis Vouros, no separate post-session referral was evidenced.

6. Main Results of the Mentoring Process

The mentoring target of five SMEs was achieved. All five SMEs completed an online mentoring session and each company was provided with a structured working output consisting of an ESG Baseline Note, priority data/KPI areas, an Action Plan and an ESG Report Draft. The main practical progress was the conversion of broad sustainability topics into company-specific reporting priorities, ownership requirements and evidence-based next steps.

Result Indicator	Result
SMEs mentored	5/5
Mentoring sessions completed	5/5
SMEs using ESG LAB diagnostic / mentoring resources	5/5
ESG Baseline Notes produced	5/5
Action Plans produced	5/5
ESG Report / Draft outputs produced	5/5
SMEs receiving expert support during mentoring	5/5

6.1 Qualitative Progress Observed

- Each SME moved from a broad ESG discussion to a defined set of material topics and data categories.
- Candidate KPIs were tailored to the sector rather than applying a generic indicator list.
- Responsibilities, evidence sources and target dates were built into the Action Plans.
- The SMEs now have a first reporting architecture that can be populated with verified internal data.
- The mentoring outputs establish a practical basis for future annual ESG reporting and follow-up support.

7. Training Needs Identified

The mentoring demonstrated that the next phase of support should focus less on high-level ESG theory and more on hands-on implementation: how to collect data, select indicators, assign responsibility, set realistic targets and convert evidence into a concise ESG report.

Training Need	Frequency	Comment
ESG data collection and evidence management	High	Relevant across all five SMEs, practical registers and source-evidence rules are needed.
ESG indicators and KPI design	High	SMEs need a small, sector-relevant set of measurable indicators with clear owners.
ESG reporting structure and frameworks	High	All five SMEs require support in turning data into a repeatable reporting output.
Internal ESG roles, governance and target setting	High	Responsibility and realistic targets should be formalised after baseline data are available.
Sector-specific material topics / stakeholder engagement	Medium–High	Different sectors require tailored application rather than generic ESG checklists.

The three most important training needs emerging from the mentoring process are:

1. Practical ESG data collection, evidence management and KPI tracking.
2. Design of sector-relevant ESG indicators, ownership and realistic targets.



3. Preparation of concise, proportionate ESG Reports using verified company data.

8. Challenges Encountered

- 1. Limited structured quantitative ESG data:** For several SMEs, the main challenge was not identifying relevant topics but locating consistent, report-ready quantitative data. The approach taken was to define data gaps and create actions for the next reporting cycle rather than estimate values.
- 2. Early-stage formal ESG governance and reporting:** Most SMEs did not yet have a fully consolidated ESG governance structure, KPI dashboard or reporting cycle. The mentoring therefore prioritised simple ownership and data registers before more sophisticated reporting.
- 3. Short implementation and evidence window:** The mentoring sessions were delivered over two days, limiting the time available for SMEs to validate owners, collect internal data and confirm targets during the reporting period. Follow-up validation is therefore important.
- 4. Different sectors and indirect Blue Economy relevance:** The five SMEs had very different operating models and not all had a direct Blue Economy link. Mentoring had to translate ESG into relevant sector-specific priorities without forcing an artificial connection.
- 5. Completion of follow-up evidence:** Participation evidence is available, but formal written SME feedback and separate proof of post-session transmission of materials were not included in the source evidence at the time of preparation.

9. Lessons Learned

1. A practical, sector-specific mentoring approach is more effective for SMEs than starting with complex ESG terminology or broad reporting-framework theory.
2. A structured diagnostic at the beginning of the session helps identify maturity, gaps and priorities quickly and provides a common method across very different SMEs.
3. For early-stage SMEs, establishing data ownership and a small number of reliable KPIs is more valuable than attempting to create a large ESG indicator set immediately.
4. Action Plans are most useful when every priority is linked to an owner, target date and specific form of evidence.
5. Evidence capture and feedback should be integrated into the mentoring workflow immediately after each session so that participation, materials shared, SME feedback and follow-up actions are documented while the engagement is still active.

10. Recommendations

1. Use a two-stage mentoring model: an initial diagnostic/prioritisation session followed by a shorter validation session once the SME has collected its first internal data.
2. Provide sector-specific mini KPI packs and examples for research, training/digital services, advertising, tourism and retail/circular economy rather than relying on one generic KPI list.
3. Require every participating SME to nominate one ESG focal point and identify data owners before the follow-up stage.



4. Use one standard ESG Data Register and Evidence Register across all SMEs so that figures, documents and sources can be traced consistently.
5. Collect the SME feedback form and save proof of materials sent immediately after each session as part of the mandatory evidence workflow.
6. Use Community of Practice/expert support selectively for specialist issues such as environmental impact methodology, claims substantiation, sector-specific reporting questions and circular-economy solutions.

11. SME Feedback Summary

Formal written evaluative feedback from the five SMEs was not included in the evidence available at the time this report was prepared. For evidence integrity, the report therefore does not attribute positive or negative comments to participating SMEs that were not formally recorded.

The available participation evidence confirms that SME representatives attended the online mentoring sessions and engaged with the diagnostic/mentoring process. Each SME dossier contains a short feedback form ready for completion. The feedback should be attached once received so that usefulness, increased understanding, preparedness for ESG data collection and additional support needs can be reported as confirmed SME feedback rather than inferred observations.

11.1 Follow-up Feedback Questions

- How useful was the mentoring session?
- Did the session improve your understanding of ESG reporting?
- Which part of the mentoring was most useful?
- Do you feel more prepared to collect ESG information and KPIs?
- What additional support would be useful?

12. Community of Practice / Networking Contribution

Expert support was embedded directly in the mentoring sessions through Dr Panayiotis Vouros, who is visible in the session evidence together with the facilitator and SME representatives. This support contributed to the structured diagnostic and the translation of sector-specific ESG issues into practical reporting priorities.

No separate post-session Community of Practice referral or additional external-expert connection was evidenced in the material available for this reporting period. Where future specialist needs arise, particularly around impact methodology, environmental claims, circularity or sector-specific reporting, targeted CoP/expert support is recommended.

13. Overall Conclusions

The Cyprus national mentoring phase achieved the core Activity 4 target of mentoring five SMEs. Five online mentoring sessions were completed, and a structured evidence and reporting package was prepared for each SME. Across the participating companies, the most significant ESG gap was the transition from informal sustainability practices or relevant business activities to a structured system of verified data, clear KPI ownership, realistic targets and repeatable ESG reporting.

The pilot demonstrated that SMEs can make meaningful progress when ESG is presented as a practical management and data exercise rather than as a large compliance project. The strongest immediate outcome



was the creation of a company-specific ESG baseline, action plan and first ESG Report Draft for each SME. The next phase should focus on validation: collecting verified internal data, confirming owners and targets, completing written SME feedback, and using the first reporting cycle to establish a reliable baseline for future improvement.

14. Annexes / Supporting Evidence / SME Mentoring Dossier

The National Mentoring Report should be submitted together with the five SME mentoring dossiers and the associated participation evidence. The evidence package prepared for Cyprus includes:

- Annex 1 – SME list and mentoring schedule.
- Annex 2 – Zoom participation screenshots for all five SMEs.
- Annex 3 – ESG Baseline Note for each SME.
- Annex 4 – Mentoring notes for each SME.
- Annex 5 – Action Plan for each SME.
- Annex 6 – ESG LAB tools/material record and follow-up communication template for each SME.
- Annex 7 – SME feedback form/record, to be completed when written feedback is received.
- Annex 8 – CoP/expert support record, where applicable.
- Annex 9 – ESG Report / ESG Report Draft for each SME.
- Annex 10 – National Mentoring Evidence Index.



14.1 Evidence Status Summary

SME	Participation	Core Mentoring Outputs
CISRD LTD	Confirmed	Baseline, notes, Action Plan, ESG Draft
SocialSpace Global Media LTD	Confirmed	Baseline, notes, Action Plan, ESG Draft
Treedia	Confirmed	Baseline, notes, Action Plan, ESG Draft
Theotokos Travel	Confirmed	Baseline, notes, Action Plan, ESG Draft
A.P. Theodorou Ltd / Office Stationery	Confirmed	Baseline, notes, Action Plan, ESG Draft