Annex e. Examples of projects by type

This annex provides inspiring examples on each challenge within the key topics. For every challenge, it outlines the specific issues to be addressed, along with their context and relevance within the Alliance Initiatives.

1 Educate, plan, and manage risks to enhance the resilience of tourism SMEs

Bridging the gap between theory and practice in sustainable tourism

Navigator topic Sustainability & Social Responsibility / Risk Management   **Transition Pathway topic** 12, 21, 23

Example
A group of guesthouses develops and tests a new carbon-neutrality methodology for small accommodations.

Partners
Alliance: Type 2 – Tourism Ecosystem.
Partners: 2 guest houses, 1 local guide, 1 tourism research institute.

Value
Partners share access to academic research and co-create an online tool to guide reduction actions, turning academic theory into a practical tool.

Background / problem to solve

There is a significant gap between academic knowledge and practical application in the tourism sector, especially when dealing with ecological and social challenges. This challenge encourages stronger collaboration between universities and SMEs to turn academic knowledge into practical solutions that fit the real needs of tourism companies.

Activating territorial resilience through storytelling, local cooperation, and heritage-based experiences

Navigator topic Sustainability & Social Resp. / Risk Management / Marketing   **Transition Pathway topic** 7, 8, 12, 26

Example
"Taste of Our Land" route, a multi-day experience that highlights local food heritage and provides stable business year-round.

Partners
Alliance: Type 3 – Cross-Sectoral.
Partners: 1 rural accommodation, 1 organic farm, 1 culinary school.

Value
Partners pool resources to create a unified online presence, shared marketing, and a single booking system.

Background / problem to solve

Invite tourism SMEs to collaborate with local stakeholders (local authorities, associations, residents, producers, etc.) to strengthen the community's ability to face climate, economic, or social challenges. The objective is to create and test concrete actions —offers, narratives, and authentic cultural or agri-food experiences—that showcase local resources, foster cooperation, and build a fresh, appealing story for the destination.

Improving energy efficiency and circular practices in tourism SMEs

Navigator topic Sustainability & Social Responsibility / Risk Management   **Transition Pathway topic** 7, 8, 12

Example
A group of B&Bs and restaurants forms a "Green Operations Alliance" to jointly hire a sustainability consultant and purchase energy-efficient appliances at a bulk rate.

Partners
Alliance: Type 1 – Only Tourism SMEs.
Partners: 3 guesthouses, 2 restaurants.

Value
Partners gain shared access to expert knowledge and leverage collective purchasing power to reduce operational costs and environmental impact.

Background / problem to solve

Support SMEs in identifying critical consumption points for water and energy and implement cost-effective efficiency measures, such as rainwater harvesting, leakage monitoring, greywater reuse, energy-saving solutions (e.g., efficient appliances, insulation), and the integration of renewable energy sources (e.g., solar or wind systems) to reduce operational costs and environmental impact.

Using data to anticipate risks and understand visitors

Navigator topic Digital & Tech. Adaptation / Risk Management / Marketing   **Transition Pathway topic** 9, 15, 16

Example
"Smart Season" dashboard that uses shared visitor data to develop and promote targeted, off-season packages.

Partners
Alliance: Type 2 – Tourism Ecosystem.
Partners: 3 travel agencies, 1 DMO.

Value
The alliance leverages the DMO's data API and a shared analytics dashboard to make data-driven decisions and stabilize business throughout the year.

Background / problem to solve

Enable small tourism businesses to easily access useful data and information (weather, visitor numbers, water availability, local alerts, and change of visitor trends) and use it to anticipate and adapt decisions (adjusting opening hours, changing offers, or preparing for potential problems).

Human resources and financial preparedness

Navigator topic Human Capital / Risk Management   **Transition Pathway topic** 19, 21, 22, 23

Example

"Staff Mobility Alliance" to create a shared pool of trained employees who rotate between businesses to ensure year-round employment and reduce recruitment costs.

Partners

Alliance: Type 1 – Only Tourism SMEs.
Partners: 2 hotels, 1 resort, 1 restaurant.

Value

Partners gain a stable, skilled workforce and reduce HR expenses by using a shared legal framework and a joint training program.

Background / problem to solve

Build strong teams and financial strategies to increase crisis preparedness. Support SMEs in implementing short-, mid-, and long-term human resources strategies (staff mobility, retention, upskilling) and basic liquidity plans (emergency funds, access to credit) to enhance adaptability during crises.

2 **Shape tourism offerings by considering factors such as seasonality, social impact, and challenges to promote responsible and tourism offerings while mitigating the effects of overtourism.**

Developing flexible and sustainable offers to reduce seasonality

Navigator topic Sustainability & Social Responsibility / Marketing   **Transition Pathway topic** 7, 8, 26

Example

A coastal hotel, a local spa, and a yoga instructor collaborate to create a "Winter Wellness Retreat" package, which fills a business gap during the low season.

Partners

Alliance: Type 1 – Only Tourism SMEs.
Partners: 1 hotel, 1 spa, 1 yoga studio.

Value

The alliance uses shared branding and a single booking system to market a high-value, off-peak product.

Background / problem to solve

Encourage tourism SMEs to design and implement flexible tourism services that address seasonality and employment instability. These services should promote social sustainability while supporting and strengthening local economies throughout the year.

Ensuring stability and sustainable living conditions for the seasonal workforce

Navigator topic Human Capital / Risk Management   **Transition Pathway topic** 9, 12, 19, 21

Example

Create a pilot program for shared, affordable seasonal worker housing.

Partners

Alliance: Type 2 – Tourism Ecosystem.
Partners: 2 restaurants, 2 hotels, 1 city council.

Value

The alliance leverages the city council's resources to secure stable living conditions, improving staff retention and recruitment for all participating businesses.

Background / problem to solve

Promote joint initiatives with local stakeholders to improve working and living conditions for seasonal workers. This includes offering training, accommodation, and local benefits, and exploring sustainable housing solutions (shared housing, modular units, or agreements with municipalities that protect land use). Strengthening team spirit and regional attachment can help build a loyal, recurring workforce.

Human-centred approaches to managing overtourism

Navigator topic Sustainability & Social Resp. / Risk Management / Marketing   **Transition Pathway topic** 12, 25, 26

Example

A museum and local artisans partner with a neighbourhood association to create "off-the-beaten-path" cultural tour that redistributes visitor flows away from a crowded city center.

Partners

Alliance: Type 2 – Tourism Ecosystem.
Partners: 1 museum, 1 local artisan guild, 1 neighbourhood association.

Value

The alliance creates a new tourism product that improves both the visitor experience and the quality of life for residents.

Background / problem to solve

Rethinking overtourism responses by developing innovative, inclusive strategies that go beyond restrictive controls; promoting hospitality, social cohesion, and human-centred public spaces. Ensure that both residents and visitors are at the heart of creating welcoming and balanced public spaces that support community wellbeing and positive tourism experiences.

Collaboration and shared value creation between all tourism actors and across sectors

Navigator topic Sustainability & Social Responsibility / Risk Management   **Transition Pathway topic** 7, 8, 21

Example

"Farm-to-Guest" initiative where the hotels commit to sourcing local produce and the farmers offer exclusive tours to guests.

Partners

Alliance: Type 3 – Cross-Sectoral.
Partners: 3 hotels, 1 farmer cooperative.

Value

The alliance creates a stable local supply chain, a new revenue stream, and an enhanced, authentic visitor experience for guests.

Background / problem to solve

Address the fragmentation and lack of trust among tourism stakeholders by fostering effective partnerships across sectors. Promote collaborative approaches that overcome political and organizational barriers, enabling the creation of shared value that benefits local communities and small businesses alike.

3   Develop tools and methodologies to improve the management of tourism offerings and visitor flows.

Optimizing visitor flows through data and digital solutions

Navigator topic Digital & Technological Adaptation / Sustainability & Social Resp.   **Transition Pathway topic** 9, 15, 16

Example

Real-time booking and capacity management app that uses geodata to prevent overcrowding and protect a sensitive environment.

Partners

Alliance: Type 2 – Tourism Ecosystem.
Partners: 1 nature park management, 2 tour operators.

Value

The alliance creates a new digital tool that protects a natural resource and ensures a high quality, sustainable visitor experience.

Background / problem to solve

Using integrated digital tools and data-driven systems to manage visitor flows more effectively. These solutions should help prevent congestion and environmental degradation, particularly in areas with limited infrastructure or during seasonal peaks, ensuring a balanced and sustainable visitor experience.

Digital literacy and skills for smart tourism management

Navigator topic Digital & Technological Adaptation / Human Capital   **Transition Pathway topic** 15, 16, 19, 23

Example
A group of hotels and restaurants partners with a local business school to create a "Digital Skills Academy" that offers customized training on data analytics and smart management tools.

Partners
Alliance: Type 2 – Tourism Ecosystem.
Partners: 2 hotels, 2 restaurants, 1 business school.

Value
The alliance upskills managers, enabling them to use data to improve operational efficiency and competitiveness.

Background / problem to solve

Enhance the digital capabilities of tourism SMEs by improving their skills in areas such as basic data analytics, online presence, smart management tools, and AI-driven decision-making. Strengthening these skills will enable SMEs to manage their operations more sustainably, improve efficiency, and deliver personalized experiences to visitors.

Improving digital connections and integration for tourism SMEs

Navigator topic Digital & Tech. Adaptation / Marketing   **Transition Pathway topic** 9, 15, 16

Example
Single website and integrated booking system to sell a unified "Bike & Wine Tour" package.

Partners
Alliance: Type 1 – Only Tourism SMEs.
Partners: 1 bike rental company, 1 B&B, 1 local vineyard.

Value
The alliance increases visibility and revenue by offering a seamless, multi-service product that is easy for the customer to book.

Background / problem to solve

Many small tourism businesses operate in isolation, with limited visibility and disconnected systems. By adopting interoperable digital tools (connected through simple APIs to regional platforms, mobility services, and tourism offices) SMEs can coordinate more effectively, increase their visibility, and offer better visitor experiences through joint offers, packages, and integrated information.

Reducing the carbon footprint of visitor mobility

Navigator topic Sustainability & Social Responsibility / Risk Management   **Transition Pathway topic** 3, 7, 8, 12

Example

A remote hotel offers guests a "Green Transport Pass" as an alternative to personal cars.

Partners

Alliance: Type 2 – Tourism Ecosystem.
Partners: 1 hotel, 1 local transport authority, 1 micro-mobility company.

Value

The alliance provides guests with a sustainable mobility solution, reducing the environmental impact of travel to the destination.

Background / problem to solve

Tourism businesses and destinations face growing pressure to cut emissions from visitor transportation, one of the sector's biggest environmental impacts. Practical solutions include promoting slow tourism, encouraging public and shared transport, organizing collective shuttles from mobility hubs, and creating integrated low-carbon travel packages.

4   Strengthen knowledge, awareness, and skills related to resilience and sustainability among mid- and top-level management in tourism SMEs.

Practical sustainability training and mindset shift

Navigator topic Sustainability & Social Responsibility / Human Capital   **Transition Pathway topic** 8, 12, 19, 23

Example

A group of SME managers enrols in a co-designed training program led by a sustainability consultancy, focusing on practical implementation of sustainable practices.

Partners

Alliance: Type 2 – Tourism Ecosystem.
Partners: 3 SME managers, 1 sustainability consultancy.

Value

The alliance provides tailored, hands-on training that addresses the specific needs of tourism businesses and fosters a shift from theory to action.

Background / problem to solve

Many tourism SMEs lack access to practical sustainability training connected to data-driven management and market needs. There is also a need for a deeper mindset shift, moving beyond superficial commitments to sustainability towards meaningful, actionable practices.

Formalizing sustainability practices and certifications

Navigator topic Sustainability & Social Responsibility / Marketing   **Transition Pathway topic** 3, 8, 12

Example

A cohort of hotels in the same region collectively pursues a shared eco-label certification by jointly hiring a consultant and sharing best practices.

Partners

Alliance: Type 1 – Only Tourism SMEs.
Partners: 4 hotels from the same region.

Value

The alliance streamlines the certification process and enhances market credibility by demonstrating a collective commitment to sustainability.

Background / problem to solve

Many tourism SMEs struggle to formalize their sustainability efforts through proper practices, documentation, and certifications. This gap reduces their credibility and limits their ability to communicate their positive impact effectively.

Digital monitoring for resource efficiency and resilience

Navigator topic Digital & Tech. Adaptation / Sustainability & Social Resp.   **Transition Pathway topic** 7, 8, 9, 15, 16

Example

Install smart sensors and create a dashboard to monitor and manage energy and water consumption.

Partners

Alliance: Type 3 – Cross-Sectoral.
Partners: 1 rural hotel, 1 restaurant, 1 local tech company.

Value

The alliance uses technology to enable data-informed decisions, leading to a measurable reduction in operational costs and resource consumption.

Background / problem to solve

Many tourism SMEs lack the digital tools and skills needed to monitor and manage energy and water consumption effectively. This limits their ability to make data-informed decisions, improve operational efficiency, and strengthen resilience strategies.

Cybersecurity and risk management

Navigator topic Risk Management / Digital & Technological Adaptation **Transition Pathway topic** 9, 15, 16

Example
A group of hotels and a booking platform form a "Cybersecurity Alliance" to jointly hire a consultant, conduct a vulnerability assessment, and co-develop a shared risk management plan.

Partners
Alliance: Type 1 – Only Tourism SMEs.
Partners: 3 hotels, 1 booking platform.

Value
The alliance strengthens data security and risk preparedness by implementing a unified, expert-driven strategy across the partnership.

Background / problem to solve

Tourism SMEs often face vulnerabilities due to limited cybersecurity awareness and insufficient risk preparedness among staff. Many businesses lack tailored training and structured plans to address digital threats and emergency situations effectively.

5   Design effective campaigns to raise awareness on key issues such as heritage preservation and climate action.

Credible, transparent and actionable sustainability communication

Navigator topic Marketing / Sustainability & Social Responsibility **Transition Pathway topic** 8, 12

Example
Communication campaign that transparently details the tour's environmental impact and funds the NGO's conservation work.

Partners
Alliance: Type 2 – Tourism Ecosystem.
Partners: 1 tour operator, 1 environmental NGO.

Value
The alliance builds customer trust by demonstrating a direct and measurable contribution to a local conservation project, avoiding greenwashing.

Background / problem to solve

Building trust and legitimacy in sustainability communication, such as carbon offsetting claims, to avoid greenwashing and engage stakeholders effectively.

Motivating responsible visitor behaviour

Navigator topic Sustainability & Social Responsibility / Marketing   **Transition Pathway topic** 7, 8, 26

Example

Gamified "Eco-Challenge" for guests, where they earn points for eco-friendly actions that can be redeemed for discounts at local businesses.

Partners

Alliance: Type 1 – Only Tourism SMEs.
Partners: 3 small hotels/guesthouses, 2 local restaurants.

Value

The alliance uses a reward-based system to increase guest engagement in sustainability and create new revenue for local businesses.

Background / problem to solve

Tourists often resist injunctions or restrictions but can be encouraged to adopt eco-friendly actions through proven behavioural techniques (nudges, gamification, incentives). Small businesses need simple, ready-to-use strategies to engage visitors in energy saving, waste sorting, and respect for local ecosystems without compromising their experience.

Designing targeted campaigns to promote off-peak visitation and responsible tourism

Navigator topic Digital & Tech. Adaptation / Marketing   **Transition Pathway topic** 9, 15, 16, 26

Example

Data-driven campaign for an "Arts Fall Festival" to attract new visitor segments during the low season.

Partners

Alliance: Type 2 – Tourism Ecosystem.
Partners: 1 DMO, 2 museums, 1 local performing arts group.

Value

The alliance leverages the DMO's visitor data and a shared advertising budget to create an effective campaign and stabilize business.

Background / problem to solve

Tourism SMEs face challenges in creating effective, data-informed campaigns that encourage visitors to travel during off-peak periods and adopt responsible behaviours. Such campaigns can help balance visitor flows and reduce environmental and social impacts.

Fostering social sustainability and hospitality

Navigator topic Human Capital / Sustainability & Social Responsibility   **Transition Pathway topic** 19, 21, 22, 26

Example
"Community Host" training program for their staff, building better relations between residents and tourists.

Partners
Alliance: Type 2 – Tourism Ecosystem.
Partners: 2 hotels, 2 restaurants, 1 neighbourhood association.

Value
The alliance trains frontline staff to be authentic ambassadors, improving community well-being and enhancing the overall visitor experience.

Background / problem to solve

Encouraging tourism businesses to integrate social sustainability into their operations is key to creating welcoming destinations. Strengthening hospitality and building positive relationships between visitors and residents can improve community wellbeing and contribute to a more balanced tourism experience.

6   Create accessible tourism services to ensure inclusivity for all visitors.

Clear and consistent communication of accessibility

Navigator topic Accessibility / Digital & Technological Adaptation   **Transition Pathway topic** 16, 25

Example
A museum, a theatre, and a public park jointly hire a consultant to conduct a professional accessibility audit and create a single, shared online platform with verified information.

Partners
Alliance: Type 1 – Only Tourism SMEs.
Partners: 1 museum, 1 theatre, 1 public park.

Value
The alliance provides travellers with disabilities with clear, reliable information, building trust and expanding the customer base.

Background / problem to solve

Tourism SMEs frequently encounter difficulties in providing clear, accurate, and consistent information about accessibility features for travellers with disabilities. This limits the inclusivity of services and reduces trust among potential visitors.

Training and mindset shift for accessible tourism

Navigator topic Accessibility / Human Capital   **Transition Pathway topic** 19, 21, 23, 25

Example

A group of hotels and restaurants partners with a local disability advocacy organization to provide interactive workshops for staff on empathetic communication and high-quality service for all visitors.

Partners

Alliance: Type 2 – Tourism Ecosystem
Partners: 4 hotels/restaurants, 1 disability advocacy organization.

Value

The alliance fosters an "inclusive host" mindset among staff, ensuring that all visitors feel welcome and receive respectful, quality service.

Background / problem to solve

Many tourism SMEs and their partners lack the training and awareness needed to provide fully accessible services. Addressing this challenge requires fostering a mindset shift across the tourism value chain, recognizing accessibility as a fundamental right and ensuring staff are equipped to meet diverse visitor needs.

Formalizing accessibility strategies, plans and assessments

Navigator topic Accessibility / Risk Management   **Transition Pathway topic** 23, 25

Example

"Barrier-Free" alliance to jointly hire a consultant and develop a formal, multi-year accessibility strategy and action plan.

Partners

Alliance: Type 1 – Only Tourism SMEs.
Partners: 1 café, 1 gift shop, 1 B&B.

Value

The alliance establishes a clear, documented, and measurable plan for improving accessibility, ensuring legal compliance and enhancing visitor confidence.

Background / problem to solve

Many tourism SMEs lack structured approaches to accessibility. Establishing formal plans, conducting regular self-assessments, and implementing corrective actions (including staff training) can contribute to meet legal requirements and quality standards while improving visitor confidence.