

Business Divisions

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (mSMEs)

At EDB, micro, small, and medium enterprises (mSMEs) are recognised as the engine of national economic growth — driving innovation, creating jobs, and strengthening supply chains across the UAE. In 2024, the division delivered a strong year of performance, advancing EDB's strategy to broaden access to finance, simplify pathways for entrepreneurs, and build strategic partnerships across the banking ecosystem.

Performance

2024 marked a year of major growth and impact for EDB's mSME division, as financing volumes expanded, and strategic partnerships deepened across the UAE's small and mid-sized business landscape.

The division delivered an impressive 101% growth in mSME financing, reaching a record AED 6.8 billion by year-end, successfully achieving its annual target. Mid-cap lending was a particular highlight, with financing to mid-sized businesses increasing by 90%, reflecting strong demand and EDB's ability to meet the evolving needs of growing enterprises.

Since the launch of the strategy and up to 2024, the division approved a total of AED 7.8 billion in direct financing for mSMEs. Alongside this, AED 758 million was delivered through indirect financing via EDB's Credit Guarantee Scheme — working with partner commercial banks to unlock funding for small and mid-sized companies across the UAE.

Throughout the year, the Credit Guarantee Scheme was expanded to support a broader range of borrowers, offering longer tenures and more relaxed terms in line with EDB's strategy to make finance more accessible and sustainable for SMEs.

Credit guarantee scheme

In 2024, EDB continued to expand the reach and impact of its Credit Guarantee Scheme, forging new partnerships to strengthen SME access to finance across the UAE. In June, EDB partnered with Commercial Bank of Dubai (CBD) to enhance international trade services for small and medium enterprises.

Building on this momentum, two additional strategic partnerships were announced in October – with Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank (ADIB) and Commercial Bank International (CBI) – further widening the network of institutions committed to supporting the UAE's growing SME sector.

Through the Credit Guarantee Scheme, EDB guarantees up to 50% of the financing extended to SMEs by its Partner Banks, making it easier for businesses to access funding under favourable terms. The scheme continues to focus on supporting projects in EDB's five national priority sectors: Manufacturing, Food Security, Advanced Technology, Healthcare, and Renewables — ensuring that financial support is aligned with the sectors driving the UAE's future economic competitiveness.

Collaboration with Yellow Door Energy saw EDB structure a customised financing solution to support the installation of photovoltaic solar panels all under long-term 20–25-year power generation agreements.

Sustainability

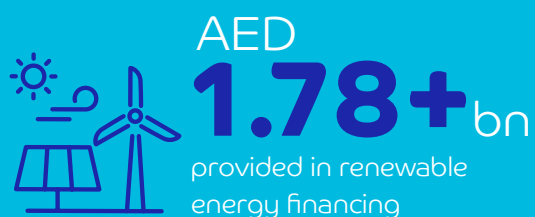
Sustainability remained a defining focus across all of EDB's divisions in 2024, and two products stood out as milestones in this journey.

Solar Energy Financing, introduced by the mSME division in 2023, was specifically designed to support businesses investing in clean energy solutions. The product offers up to 100% financing of the project value for the purchase and installation of solar panels, with loan tenors of up to eight years, loan amounts of up to AED 5 million, and a six-month grace period, providing flexible, accessible capital for businesses seeking to reduce their carbon footprint and energy costs.

Since the launch of its strategy, EDB has provided over AED 1.78 billion in renewable energy financing, including a AED 100 million agreement signed with one of its strategic partners in 2024.



A standout initiative during the year was the Bank's collaboration with **Yellow Door Energy**, a leading provider of distributed renewable energy solutions. Through this partnership, EDB structured a customised financing solution to support the installation of photovoltaic solar panels across 48 sites, including schools, hospitals, and malls in Abu Dhabi — all under long-term 20–25-year power generation agreements.



Business Divisions continued

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (mSMEs) continued

AgriX to complement the Bank's AgriTech loans program

The AgriTech Loans Program was launched to provide critical financial support to SMEs and start-ups operating across the farming sector and related industries. The program includes a commitment of AED 100 million in financing for the UAE's vital food security sector, offering:

- Greenfield and brownfield **project financing**
- CAPEX and working **capital solutions**
- Medium-term **loans or working capital** facilities of up to AED 5 million
- Up to 90% project **financing coverage**

Designed to help farms, local growers, and food suppliers modernise, scale, and adapt to growing demand, the program gives businesses the financial runway they need to invest in technology, sustainable practices, and future-proof operations.

Complementing this, the division launched the AgriX Accelerator Program, a 22-week initiative aimed at helping small farms across the UAE overcome growth challenges and adopt innovative, sustainable agricultural methods.

AgriX connects participants with practical resources, technical expertise, and strategic partnerships, equipping farmers to integrate technology and sustainability into their operations, and helping build a more resilient, efficient agricultural sector for the nation.

Both initiatives align with the National Food Security Strategy 2051 and the UAE's broader sustainability agenda — reaffirming EDB's role in enabling the sectors that will underpin the country's future resilience and prosperity.

Trade finance

In 2024, EDB's mSME division expanded its product suite to better support the working capital needs and growth ambitions of small and medium enterprises.

The division launched 10 new trade finance and working capital products, providing clients with a broader set of tools to secure operations and manage liquidity effectively. These new offerings included:



Supply chain financing



Medical receivables financing



Letters of credit



US dollar lending and deposits



Access to the UAE's Monetary Bill (M-Bill) program, providing an alternative to traditional certificates of deposit

Recognising the specific needs of mid-sized businesses, the division also introduced a tailored solution: the Multi-Lateral Financing product. This product committed AED 300 million in support, giving medium-sized enterprises access to lower pricing, larger loan amounts of up to AED 10 million, and extended loan tenors of up to 10 years.

To deliver these enhanced offerings, EDB signed new agreements with several local banks, creating co-lending, multilateral financing, and portfolio financing options alongside its existing Credit Guarantee Scheme. In total, partnership lending exceeded AED 1 billion during 2024.

FinTech developments

In 2024, EDB deepened its commitment to financial innovation. Through a growing ecosystem of partnerships, the mSME division expanded the Bank's business banking app, EDB 360, offering a comprehensive suite of services tailored primarily to micro and small businesses, including solo traders, entrepreneurs, and start-ups.

In 2024, EDB deepened its commitment to financial innovation... and also reinforced its support for the FinTech ecosystem...

The app now offers smart business tools, innovative lending solutions, incubation programmes, and mentorship opportunities. Seamless, digitally powered solutions like these are helping EDB make banking more accessible, expand financial inclusion, and deliver real-world support for entrepreneurs driving the UAE's economic future.

In the lending space, EDB explored new partnerships to enhance its direct-financing offerings for priority sectors, through its EDB 360 platform. The division worked with multiple service providers to deliver Beyond Banking services such as money transfers, spend management, invoicing and payment acceptance, and spend analytics.

A key highlight was the 2024 partnership with Trade Capital Partners, enabling the Bank to offer supply chain financing and working capital solutions for SMEs through its digital platform.

EDB also reinforced its support for the FinTech ecosystem itself. Through its partnership with peer-to-peer lender Beehive, the Bank offers unsecured loans of up to AED 5 million, as well as invoice discounting, working capital, and term loan financing, giving SMEs more flexible, accessible funding options to fuel their growth.

Internally, the division focused on refining operational processes to enhance the customer experience. By restructuring several back-office data processing systems and accelerating automation, the Bank significantly reduced service turnaround times — a crucial competitive advantage for SME customers.

As part of its broader automation strategy, EDB successfully deployed 27 Robotic Process Automation (RPA) processes across key functions in 2024, with more scheduled for deployment in the coming year.



Business Divisions continued

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (mSMEs) continued

EDB and ECI co-cover scheme

The Bank formed a strategic partnership with Etihad Credit Insurance (ECI) to launch a pioneering Co-Cover Scheme. This innovative collaboration combines the strength of EDB's Credit Guarantee Scheme with ECI's expertise in export credit and investment insurance, creating a streamlined solution to enhance trade credit support and boost liquidity for UAE-based SMEs.

The partnership reflects a shared commitment to drive innovation, enhance financial inclusion, and support the evolving needs of the UAE's most dynamic industries.

This scheme is designed to make access to capital faster and easier for businesses across the UAE, enabling companies to tap into new financing opportunities while protecting their trade receivables and growth ambitions.

The partnership reflects a shared commitment between EDB and ECI to drive innovation, enhance financial inclusion, and support the evolving needs of the UAE's most dynamic industries.



EDB business lab

In 2024, EDB delivered 14 dedicated webinars covering key topics around business setup, growth, and financial management, plus 16 podcasts, offering accessible insights, best practices, and entrepreneurial guidance from industry experts.

The division also launched the Business Lab, a comprehensive online platform designed to equip entrepreneurs with the practical knowledge and tools needed to successfully navigate the challenges of business growth.

The Business Lab offers free, on-demand resources to support SMEs at every stage of their journey — from startup to scale-up. The platform delivers practical guidance on improving creditworthiness and financial literacy, using short films to demystify common business challenges and promote better financial awareness among new and growing businesses.

In addition to video content, the Business Lab provides professional templates and curated learning materials covering essential topics such as strategy, innovation, sales, marketing, and accounting — offering entrepreneurs a real-world toolkit for building resilient, competitive businesses.

Importantly, the Business Lab is also designed to support companies at the pre-financing and pre-banking stages, offering financial literacy training and advisory services to help businesses become credit-ready and better positioned to access banking solutions when the time is right.

14 dedicated webinars
covering business setup, growth,
& financial management

EDB student bootcamp

In 2024, EDB launched the Student Entrepreneurship Bootcamp, a dynamic four-day programme designed to inspire the next generation of Emirati entrepreneurs. Targeted at UAE national students aged 16 to 21, the initiative aimed to equip young talent with the entrepreneurial skills, mindset, and leadership qualities needed to drive sustainable economic growth — and to align their ambitions with the Bank's five national priority sectors.

Throughout the scheme, students engaged in interactive training workshops, received

one-on-one mentorship, and explored opportunities through EDB's internship programme. They also connected directly with government entities and industry experts, gaining real-world insights into the opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship in the UAE's evolving economic landscape.

By the end of the bootcamp, participants had built essential leadership skills to help contribute meaningfully to the UAE's future economic development in line with UAE Vision 2030.

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Looking ahead

As EDB enters the fourth year of its five-year strategy, the mSME division is set to accelerate its impact by launching new initiatives designed to support the growth, resilience, and innovation of micro, small, and medium enterprises across the UAE.

Enhancing cash management services

Following the successful launch of EDB's cash management services in December 2024, the Bank is now focused on expanding and strengthening its offering to better support working capital and trade finance needs across the mSME sector.

In 2025, EDB will continue to build out its cash management platform, introducing an expanded suite of products and services covering over 30 use cases — from liquidity optimisation and payment solutions to advanced receivables and collection services.

Expanding trade finance offerings

EDB will continue to build momentum in expanding its trade finance proposition, offering end-to-end solutions designed to facilitate smoother and more efficient international trade operations for mSMEs.

Building on the initial suite of conventional trade finance products launched in early Q2 2024, the Bank will now focus on broadening its offering to better serve a wider range of clients.

A key priority will be the development and introduction of Sharia-compliant trade finance solutions, expanding access for businesses seeking ethical and Sharia-aligned financial instruments.

All new products will be subject to careful review and assessment by EDB Governance, ensuring that every offering upholds the Bank's commitment to quality, compliance, and customer-centric innovation.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

Recognising the critical role of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in driving economic diversification and industrial growth, EDB established a dedicated FDI team at the end of 2023, positioning the Bank at the forefront of national efforts to attract strategic international capital.

In 2024, the Bank supported FDI projects totalling AED 7 billion in financing, making a strong contribution to the UAE's government FDI targets and reinforcing the country's reputation as a global hub for business and innovation.

Looking ahead to 2025, EDB plans to expand its Go-To-Market approach and develop specialised offerings specifically tailored to attract and support new waves of foreign investment.

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The Bank will continue to focus on greenfield setups by international companies, encouraging fresh capital investment (CAPEX) into new projects, new capabilities, and emerging sectors, all of which will play a vital role in boosting GDP, advancing industrial competitiveness, and creating high-value jobs across the UAE.

AED 7 bn
support for FDI projects

Private sector engagement

In 2025, EDB will double down on its private sector outreach strategy, deepening engagement with businesses across the UAE and making it easier for new clients to access the Bank's growing portfolio of products and services.

The division will expand its efforts to promote private sector growth, continuing to position EDB as a strategic partner for companies seeking to scale, innovate, and contribute to the national economy. Key initiatives will include:



Expanding the EDB Connect series, hosting events in different Emirates to showcase EDB's offerings and forge new partnerships



Conducting targeted roadshows to business associations, introducing EDB to new clients across diverse sectors



Hosting CEO roundtables, providing a platform for direct dialogue with business leaders to capture market insights, understand emerging challenges, and align future offerings — particularly to support brownfield expansion projects

Beyond events, the Bank will intensify its engagement with current and future clients, expanding awareness about how EDB's solutions support both domestic growth and the UAE's broader FDI attraction efforts.

Tech-enabled growth for start-ups and micro-SMEs

In 2025, EDB will continue to empower start-ups and micro-SMEs. The division will focus on streamlining the onboarding experience, making it faster and easier for entrepreneurs to open business accounts and access EDB's full range of services.

This will be complemented by a growing suite of Beyond Banking solutions, offering practical tools, mentorship, and digital services that go beyond traditional lending to support the real-world needs of early-stage businesses.

New offerings will be seamlessly integrated into a unified digital platform.

New digital services to power business operations

The mSME division will continue to expand its digital ecosystem — introducing a new suite of services designed to streamline operations and simplify financial management for businesses across the UAE.

New offerings will include e-bill payments, debit card services, and a range of value-added solutions such as payroll management and e-invoicing — all seamlessly integrated into a unified digital platform.

By providing end-to-end business support through a single, connected ecosystem, EDB will make it easier for mSMEs to manage cash flow, pay employees, invoice clients, and run their businesses more efficiently, freeing up time and resources to focus on growth.

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Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (mSMEs) continued

Looking ahead continued

Seamless digital onboarding via e-KYC integration

In 2025, EDB will take another step toward delivering a truly digital-first banking experience for startups and FinTechs by introducing seamless onboarding through advanced e-KYC (Know Your Customer) integration.

The rollout of the Digital e-KYC programme will enable customers to verify their identities securely and efficiently online — streamlining the onboarding process, reducing manual errors, and accelerating access to EDB's products and services.

Mentorship and e-concierge services

To build a more connected support network, the Bank is working to establish a mentorship programme in collaboration with accelerators, government entities, and legal firms, offering SMEs and startups access to expert advice, practical guidance, and strategic insight to help them grow sustainably and navigate challenges more effectively.

Complementing this, the division will launch the EDB Concierge service via its EDB 360 digital platform. Through a dedicated call centre concierge, businesses will gain one-stop advisory support for setting up operations in the UAE — from company formation to accessing banking solutions.

This service will be backed by partnerships with key government agencies, ensuring that entrepreneurs benefit from a seamless, transparent, and efficient experience when starting or scaling their ventures.

AgriX accelerator launching first two cohorts

Following a successful Proof of Concept phase in 2024 — during which the AgriX Accelerator mentored a selected group of agriculture businesses

in enhancing their operations and financial performance — EDB is preparing to scale the programme for broader national impact.

In 2025, the Bank will officially launch the first two full cohorts of the AgriX Accelerator, opening up applications and vacancies to a wider pool of eligible farms and agribusinesses across the UAE. Participants will gain access to targeted training, expert mentorship, and practical resources aimed at helping them modernise, scale, and build more sustainable, technology-driven operations.

Importantly, the program's support will not end at graduation. EDB will offer post-programme aftercare and progress monitoring, tracking the ongoing development of participating farms to ensure continued growth and impact over time.

Manufacturing accelerator platform for industrial entrepreneurs

In 2025, EDB will take a major step forward in advancing the UAE's industrial transformation with the formal launch of its Manufacturing Accelerator Program — developed in partnership with the Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology (MoIAT).

This first-of-its-kind regional initiative is designed to directly address the challenges faced by manufacturing entrepreneurs and SMEs, from scaling production to driving innovation and navigating new market opportunities.

Through the program, industrial businesses will gain access to the tools, mentorship, and specialised support needed to modernise operations, accelerate growth, and strengthen their contribution to the UAE's broader industrial strategy.