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Horizon 2020 aims to bridge the gap between research and the market. Access to funding is part of this, helping to ensure that entrepreneurs and businesses have the capital they need to turn their ideas and products into commercial successes.
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Support for entrepreneurs and growing businesses

SME Instrument – The SME Instrument [1] is a new scheme introduced under Horizon 2020. It provides grants to help small businesses develop their ideas, build and develop prototypes, get their products validated, provide demonstrations for potential customers, and help them to commercialise their products. Within ICT, the instrument focuses on Open Disruptive Innovation [2]: new products or services that have the potential to significantly change or replace existing markets.

Access to risk finance – Horizon 2020 [3] funds are available, through financial intermediaries, to provide businesses and entrepreneurs with the capital they need to develop their ideas and products. The access to the funding can be finalised in different forms, either as loans or as equity investment, where the capital is provided in exchange for a stake in the business.

Read more about access to finance for small and medium sized businesses [4].

Read more about EU funding opportunities [5].

Driving innovation through new demand

Public Procurement – Public procurement [6] can be an effective way of driving innovation from the demand side. Awarding public contracts can provide the money needed to scale up production of innovative products or to perform research and development into new solutions to public sector issues.

Inducement prizes – Inducement prizes [7] are a new instrument introduced under Horizon 2020. They provide prize money for completion of specific technological challenges that have not yet been achieved. They have the potential to attract additional private investment, encourage new entries into a market, and can capture the public imagination.

EU regional funds: complementing H2020 actions for innovation

ICT Innovation Vouchers – Voucher schemes target funding to help improve a particular aspect of a business. ICT Innovation Vouchers [8] are available for small businesses in any field to develop their ICT capabilities. The vouchers are administered by regional authorities and can be used to pay for

various services including web design, training staff in digital skills, or developing new ICT-based business models.

Tags:

financing innovation [9]
ICT innovation [10]
SME instrument [11]
Open Disruptive Innovation [12]
Public procurement [13]
Inducement prizes [14]
Innovation vouchers [15]

Last updated on 03/03/2015 - 17:42

Source URL: http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/financing-innovation

Links
[1] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/sme-instrument-0
[2] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/open-disruptive-innovation-0
[3] http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/
[4] http://www.access2finance.eu/
[5] http://europa.eu/youreurope/business/funding-grants/eu-programmes/index_en.htm
[6] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/public-procurement
[7] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/inducement-prizes
[8] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/ict-innovation-vouchers-scheme-regions
[9] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/financing-innovation
[10] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/ict-innovation
[11] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/sme-instrument
[12] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/open-disruptive-innovation-0
[13] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/public-procurement-0
[14] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/inducement-prizes-0
[15] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/innovation-vouchers