

Call title: Research for the Benefit of SMEs

Call identifier: FP7-SME-2013

Date of publication: 10 July 2012 at 17.00.00, Brussels local time

Deadline: 15 November 2012 at 17.00.00, Brussels local time¹

Indicative budget: EUR 252.31² million³

Activity/ Area	Indicative budget (EUR million)
2.1 Research for SMEs FP7-SME-2013-1	169.56
2.2 Research for SME Associations FP7-SME-2013-2	55.00
2.3 Demonstration Activity FP7-SME-2013-3	27.00
2.4 Coordination and support action FP7-SME-2013-4	0.75

The budget for this call is indicative. The final budget awarded to actions implemented through this call for proposals may vary:

- The final budget of the call may vary by up to 10% of the total value of the indicated budget.
- Any repartition of the call budget between the different actions may also vary by up to 10% of the total value of the indicated budget for the call.

Topics called: the call is open to all research fields

¹ The Director-General responsible may delay this deadline by up to two months.

² Figures in the Annexes to the Decision are presented in EUR Million and rounded to two decimal points for consistency and presentational purpose.

³ Under the condition that the draft budget for 2013 is adopted without modifications by the budgetary authority.

Activity/ Area	Topics called	Funding Scheme
2.1 Research for SMEs (<i>SME.2013.1</i>)	The call is open to all research fields ⁴	Research for the benefit of specific groups (in particular SMEs) - BSG
2.2 Research for SME Associations (<i>SME.2013.2</i>)	The call is open to all research fields	Research for the benefit of specific groups (in particular SMEs) - BSG
2.3 Demonstration Activity (<i>SME.2013.3</i>)	The call is open to all research fields	Collaborative projects - CP
2.4 Coordination and support action (<i>SME.2013.4</i>)	Analysis on the currently available models and methodologies on direct face-to-face support, mentoring and coaching to SMEs and direct actions to test and validate the developed scenario(s). Up to one proposal will be selected for financing.	Coordination and Support Action (Supporting Action) - CSA-SA

Eligibility criteria

- The general eligibility criteria are set out in Annex 2 to the work programme and explained in the guide for applicants (three different guides for applicants are available, one for each activity). Please note that the completeness criterion also includes that part B of the proposal shall be readable, accessible and printable.

Funding scheme	Minimum conditions
Research for the benefit of specific groups (in particular SMEs)	At least 3 independent legal entities, each of which is established in a MS or AC, and no 2 of which are established in the same MS or AC.
Collaborative Projects	At least 3 independent legal entities, each of which is established in a MS or AC, and no 2 of which are established in the same MS or AC.
Coordination and Support Actions (supporting action)	At least 1 independent legal entity.

⁴ Research proposals within the scope of Annex I to the EURATOM Treaty, namely those directed towards nuclear energy applications, should be submitted to relevant calls under the EURATOM Framework Programme (2012-2013).

- The following additional eligibility criteria apply in this call for **Activity 2.1 Research for SMEs**:
 - At least 3 participants must be SMEs independent⁵ of each other established in at least 3 MS or AC.
 - At least 2 participants must be RTD performers⁶ independent of each other and from any other type of participant that is not an RTD performer.
 - If there are any 'Other enterprises and end-users', they must be independent of any other participant.
 - SMEs that are research centres, research institutes, contract research organisations or consultancy firms are not eligible as SME participants, however they are eligible to take part as RTD performers, other enterprisers or end users. This eligibility criterion will be checked definitely and finally at the end of the negotiation, before the signature of the grant agreement.

- The following additional eligibility criteria apply in this call for **Activity 2.2 Research for SME Associations**:
 - At least 3 participants must be SME associations/groupings independent of each other established in 3 MS or AC. An alternative to this is that there may be 1 European SME association/grouping established in a MS or an AC. This association/grouping must be made up of a minimum of 3 legal entities independent of each other established in 3 MS or AC. SME associations/groupings are legal persons, composed mostly of and representing the interests of SMEs and/or physical persons having the same kind of activities.
 - At least 2 participants must be RTD performers (having the capacity to carry out research at the request of the association(s)/grouping(s)), independent of each other and from any other type of participant that is not an RTD performer.
 - At least 2 participants must be SMEs ('Other enterprises and end-users') established in 2 MS or AC and they must be independent of any other participant.

⁵ Independence: As defined in Article 6 of Regulation (EU) No 1906/2006 of 18 December 2006 laying down the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in actions under the Seventh Framework Programme and for the dissemination of research results (2007-2013)".

⁶ As defined in Article 2 of Regulation (EU) No 1906/2006 of 18 December 2006 laying down the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in actions under the Seventh Framework Programme and for the dissemination of research results (2007-2013): "'RTD performer' means a legal entity carrying out research or technological development activities in funding schemes for the benefit of specific groups as identified in Annex III to Decision No 1982/2006/EU".

- The following additional eligibility criteria apply in this call for the **Activity 2.3 Demonstration Activity**:
 - The coordinator of the project must be an SME.
 - At least 3 legal entities that are independent of each other and each of which is established in a different Member States (MS) or Associated Countries (AC). The consortium must include minimum 2 SMEs independent of each other from at least 2 different MS or AC. These 2 SMEs must be/have been participants together in a successful FP7 'Research for SMEs' project, or participated as 'Other enterprises and end-users' and/or SMEs that were members of the participating SME Association in a successful⁷ FP7 'Research for SME Associations' project. Such project must have finished or be in its last year of operation by the submission deadline date. In addition to this minimum consortium requirement, the participation of additional SMEs that have not taken part in the above mentioned research project is possible.
 - At least 75% of the declared total budget shall be carried out by the SME(s).

- The following additional eligibility criteria apply in this call for the **Activity 2.4 Coordination and support action**:
 - The requested EU contribution per project is maximum EUR 750 000.
 - The requested EU contribution for the analysis on the available models and methodologies shall not exceed EUR 250 000.

Evaluation procedure:

- The evaluation criteria and scoring scheme are set out in Annex 2 to the work programme.
 - Proposal page limits: Applicants must ensure that proposals conform to the page limits and layout given in the guide for applicants, and in the proposal part B template available through the electronic Submission Services of the Commission.
- The Research Executive Agency will instruct the experts to disregard any pages exceeding these limits.
- The minimum font size is 11. All margins (top, bottom, left, right) should be at least 15mm (not including any footers or headers).
 - The evaluation will follow a single stage procedure.

⁷ An FP7 research project can be considered successful if it meets all the requirements of the interim or final review.

- Experts might be asked to carry out the individual evaluation of proposals remotely.
- The procedure for prioritising proposals with equal score for this call will differ from Annex 2 as follows: the first step (point 'i') making reference to topics is suppressed, and point "ii" (now point 'i') indicates that the proposals will be prioritised first according to the scores for the criterion 'Potential impact' and, when these scores are equal, according to the scores for the criterion 'scientific and technological excellence' (ref. guide for applicants).
- Please note that for this call, the threshold for the 'Potential impact' criterion will be 4 (instead of 3) and the overall threshold will be 11 (instead of 10).
- A reserve list of proposals per activity will be established.
- The following will be evaluated under the impact criterion for **Activities 2.1 Research for SMEs** and **2.2 Research for SME Associations**:

Within part B of the proposal, the rules on dissemination and use, including intellectual property rights management and the settlement of internal disputes, are described. In particular, part B should contain provisions related to the remuneration of the RTD performers especially if different from the default regime, clearly indicating the ceiling for remuneration agreed within the consortium and the related consequences in terms of allocation of ownership and use and dissemination rights.

Indicative timetable:

Evaluation results estimated to be available within 3 months after closure date. Grant agreement signature: it is estimated that the first grant agreements related to the call will come into force 6 months after the closure date.

The objective is that all grant agreements will have been signed within 6 months after the adoption of the ranked list of proposals.

Consortium agreements:

The participants are deemed to have concluded a consortium agreement before the signature of the grant agreement.

It addresses issues such as the internal organisation of the consortium, the management of the European Union financial contribution, rules on dissemination and use, including intellectual property rights management and settlement of internal disputes.

The forms of grants and maximum reimbursement rates which will be offered are specified in Annex 3 to the work programme.

Flat rates to cover subsistence costs:

In accordance with Annex 3 of this work programme, this call provides for the possibility to use flat rates to cover subsistence costs incurred by beneficiaries during travel carried out within grants for indirect actions. For further information, see the relevant Guides for Applicants for this call.

The applicable flat rates are available on the Participant Portal at:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_documents under 'Guidance documents for FP7/Financial issues/Flat rates for daily allowances'.