



European Commission

# Horizon 2020's SME Instrument

Looking for Europe's next innovation leader

As part of the Horizon 2020 programme, the European Commission is selecting potentially disruptive businesses to invest in and support as part of the SME Instrument. SMEs with a strong growth potential and the ambition to become world-market leaders could receive **up to €2.5 million\*** in funding, and world-class **business support** and **mentoring**.



## Who should apply?

We are looking for high growth, highly innovative SMEs with global ambitions. You should be actively investing in innovation, and looking to grow. You should have been established for a while – further than the start-up stage.

### Projects sought

Projects at the **technology readiness level 6 or higher** (technology demonstration) have the best chances to receive funding.



## PHASES



The instrument is structured in three phases, with the aim of transforming **disruptive ideas** into concrete, innovative solutions with a European and global impact. SMEs are recommended to apply for Phase 1, but may also apply directly for subsequent phases:

### PHASE 1

**Concept & Feasibility Assessment**  
*Idea to concept (6 months)*

The SME will draft an initial **business proposal**.

The European Union will provide **€50 000 in funding** and business coaching.

### PHASE 2

**Demonstration, Market Replication, R&D**  
*Concept to Market-Maturity (1-2 years)*

The SME will further develop its proposal through **innovation activities**, and draft a more developed **business plan**.

The EU may contribute between **€0.5 million** and **€2.5 million\*** and provide business coaching.

### PHASE 3

**Commercialisation**  
*Prepare for Market Launch*

The SME will receive extensive support to help polish its concept into a marketable product, and have access to **networking opportunities**.

The EU will not provide funding in this phase.

\*Up to €5 million for health projects.



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