CALL FOR TENDERS

2014CE16BAT002

Ex post evaluation of Cohesion Policy programmes 2007-2013 financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund (CF)

Work Package 2

Support to SMEs - Increasing Research and Innovation in SMEs and SME Development.

TENDER SPECIFICATIONS
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1. INFORMATION ON TENDERING

PARTICIPATION

Participation in this tender procedure is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons coming within the scope of the Treaties and to all natural and legal persons in a third country which has a special agreement with the Union in the field of public procurement on the conditions laid down in that agreement. Where the Multilateral Agreement on Government Procurement\(^1\) concluded within the WTO applies, the participation to the call for tender is also open to nationals of the countries that have ratified this Agreement, on the conditions it lays down.

CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS

The tenderer should bear in mind the provisions of the draft contract which specifies the rights and obligations of the contractor, particularly those on payments, performance of the contract, confidentiality, and checks and audits.

JOINT TENDERS

A joint tender is a situation where a tender is submitted by a group of economic operators (consortium). Joint tenders may include subcontractors in addition to the joint tenderers.

In case of joint tender, all economic operators in a joint tender assume joint and several liability towards the Contracting Authority for the performance of the contract as a whole. Nevertheless, tenderers must designate a single point of contact for the Contracting Authority.

After the award, the Contracting Authority will sign the contract either with all members of the group, or with the member duly authorised by the other members via a power of attorney.

SUBCONTRACTING

Subcontracting is permitted in the tender but the contractor will retain full liability towards the Contracting Authority for performance of the contract as a whole.

Tenderers must give an indication of the proportion of the contract that they intend to subcontract.

During contract execution, the change of any subcontractor identified in the tender will be subject to prior written approval of the Contracting Authority.

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\(^1\) See [http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_E/gproc_e/gp_gpa_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_E/gproc_e/gp_gpa_e.htm)
CONTENT OF THE TENDER

The tenders must be presented as follows:

Part A: Identification of the tenderer (see below)

Part B: Evidence for exclusion criteria (see section 2.2)

Part C: Evidence for selection criteria (see section 2.3)

Part D: Technical offer (see section 2.5)

Part E: Financial offer (see section 2.6)

IDENTIFICATION OF THE TENDERER: LEGAL CAPACITY AND STATUS

The tender must include a cover letter presenting the name of the tenderer (including all entities in case of joint offer) and identified subcontractors if applicable, and the name of the single contact person in relation to this tender.

If applicable, the cover letter must indicate the proportion of the contract to be subcontracted.

In case of joint tender, the cover letter must be signed by a duly authorised representative for each tenderer, or by a single tenderer duly authorised by other tenderers (with power of attorney).

Subcontractors must provide a letter of intent stating their willingness to provide the service foreseen in the offer and in line with the present tender specification.

In order to prove their legal capacity and their status, all tenderers must provide a signed Legal Entity Form with its supporting evidence. The form is available on: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm

The tenderer (or the single point of contact in case of joint tender) must provide a Financial Identification Form and supporting documents. Only one form per offer should be submitted (no form is needed for subcontractors and other joint tenderers). The form is available on: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/index_en.cfm

Tenderers must provide the following information if it has not been included with the Legal Entity Form:

- For legal persons, a legible copy of the notice of appointment of the persons authorised to represent the tenderer in dealings with third parties and in legal proceedings, or a copy of the publication of such appointment if the legislation which applies to the legal entity concerned requires such publication. Any delegation of this authorisation to another representative not indicated in the official appointment must be evidenced.

- For natural persons, where applicable, a proof of registration on a professional or trade register or any other official document showing the registration number.
2. EVALUATION AND AWARD

2.1. EVALUATION STEPS

The evaluation is based on the information provided in the submitted tender. It takes place in three steps:

(1) Verification of non-exclusion of tenderers on the basis of the exclusion criteria

(2) Selection of tenderers on the basis of selection criteria

(3) Evaluation of tenders on the basis of the award criteria

Only tenders meeting the requirements of one step will pass on to the next step.

2.2. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

All tenderers shall provide a declaration on their honour (see Annex 1), duly signed and dated by an authorised representative, stating that they are not in one of the situations of exclusion listed in the Annex 1.

The successful tenderer shall provide the documents mentioned as supporting evidence in Annex 1 before signature of the contract and within a deadline given by the contracting authority. This requirement applies to all members of the consortium in case of joint tender.

The model declaration to be inserted in Annex is available on BUDGWEB:

2.3. SELECTION CRITERIA

Tenderers must prove their economic, financial, technical and professional capacity to carry out the work subject to this call for tender.

The evidence requested should be provided by each member of the group in case of joint tender. However a consolidated assessment will be made to verify compliance with the minimum capacity levels.

The tenderer may rely on the capacities of other entities, regardless of the legal nature of the links which it has with them. It must in that case prove to the Contracting Authority that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary for performance of the contract, for example by producing an undertaking on the part of those entities to place those resources at its disposal.
2.3.1. Economic and financial capacity criteria and evidence

In order to prove their economic and financial capacity, the tenderer (i.e. in case of joint tender, the combined capacity of all members of the consortium and identified subcontractors) should provide the following evidence:

- Copy of the profit & loss account and balance sheet for the last two years for which accounts have been closed,

- Failing that, appropriate statements from banks,

- If applicable, evidence of professional risk indemnity insurance;

If, for some exceptional reason which the Contracting Authority considers justified, a tenderer is unable to provide one or other of the above documents, he or she may prove his or her economic and financial capacity by any other document which the Contracting Authority considers appropriate. In any case, the Contracting Authority must at least be notified of the exceptional reason and its justification in the tender. The Commission reserves the right to request any other document enabling it to verify the tenderer's economic and financial capacity.

2.3.2. Technical and professional capacity criteria and evidence

a. Criteria relating to tenderers

Tenderers (in case of a joint tender the combined capacity of all tenderers and identified subcontractors) must comply with the following criteria:

- The tenderer must prove experience in the field of theory and practice of socio-economic analysis and evaluation with at least two projects delivered in this field in the last three years.
- The tenderer must have knowledge of fundamental features of cohesion policy
- The tenderer must prove capacity to draft analytical reports in English.
- The tenderer must prove experience in data collection, data analysis and verification, statistical analyses and drafting reports and recommendations

b. Criteria relating to the team delivering the service

The team delivering the service should include, as a minimum, the following profiles:

Project Manager: At least 10 years' experience in project management, including overseeing project delivery, quality control of delivered service, client orientation and conflict resolution experience in project of a similar size and coverage, with at least 1 year experience in management of team of at least 5 people.

Language quality check: at least two members of the team should have native-level language skills in English or equivalent, as guaranteed by a certificate or past relevant experience.

c. Evidence
The following evidence should be provided to fulfil the above criteria:

- List of relevant services provided in the past three years, with sums, dates and recipients, public or private. The most important services shall be accompanied by certificates of satisfactory execution, specifying that they have been carried out in a professional manner and have been fully completed; services carried out for the DG for Regional and urban Policy need not be accompanied by certificates. Services carried out for DG Regional and Urban Policy need not to be accompanied by certificates.

- The educational and professional qualifications of the persons who will provide the service for this tender (CVs) including the management staff. Each CV provided should indicate the intended function in the delivery of the service.

2.4. AWARD CRITERIA

The tender will be awarded according to the best-value-for-money procedure. The quality of the tender will be evaluated based on the following criteria. The maximum total quality score is 100 points.

- **Quality of the proposed methodology** (50 points – minimum threshold 50%)

This criterion will assess the appropriateness of the methodology for the whole evaluation and of the specific methodology for each task including the final report (data collection and analysis, case studies and theory based evaluations, proposed methodology for synthesizing findings in the Final Report)

- **Organisation of the work** (30 points – minimum threshold 50%)

This criterion will assess how the roles and responsibilities of the proposed team and of the economic operators (in case of joint tenders, including subcontractors if applicable) are distributed for each task. It also assesses the global allocation of time and resources to the project and to each task or deliverable, and whether this allocation is adequate for the work. The tender should provide details on the allocation of time and resources and the rationale behind the choice of this allocation.

- **Quality control measures** (20 points – minimum threshold 50%)

This criterion will assess the quality control system applied to the service foreseen in this tender specification concerning the quality of the deliverables, the language quality check, and continuity of the service in case of absence of the member of the team. The quality system should be detailed in the tender and specific to the tasks at hand; a generic quality system will result in a low score.

Tenders must score above 50% for each criterion and sub-criterion, and above 50% in total. Tenders that do not reach the minimum quality thresholds will be rejected and will not be ranked.

After evaluation of the quality of the tender, the tenders are ranked using the formula below to determine the tender offering best value for money. A weight of 0.7 / 0.3 is given to quality and price respectively.

\[
\text{score for tender } X = \frac{\text{cheapest price}}{\text{price of tender } X} \times \text{price weighting (in absolute value)} + \frac{\text{total quality score (out of 100) for all award criteria of tender } X}{100} \times \text{quality criteria weighting (in absolute value)}
\]
2.5. **TECHNICAL OFFER**

The technical offer must cover all aspects and tasks required in the technical specification and provide all the information needed to apply the award criteria. Offers deviating from the requirements or not covering all requirements may be excluded on the basis of non-conformity with the tender specifications and will not be evaluated.

2.6. **FINANCIAL OFFER**

The price for the tender must be quoted in euro. Tenderers from countries outside the euro zone have to quote their prices in euro. The price quoted may not be revised in line with exchange rate movements. It is for the tenderer to assume the risks or the benefits deriving from any variation.

Prices must be quoted free of all duties, taxes and other charges, including VAT, as the European Union is exempt from such charges under Articles 3 and 4 of the Protocol on the privileges and immunities of the European Union. The amount of VAT may be shown separately.

The quoted price must be a fixed amount which includes all charges (including travel and subsistence). Travel and subsistence expenses are not refundable separately.

3. **TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS**

3.1 **OVERALL PURPOSE AND CONTEXT OF THIS EVALUATION**

The European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy intends to undertake an ex post evaluation of cohesion policy programmes financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF) during the period 2007-2013 in regions covered by Objective 1 and Objective 2 in 28 Member States.

The ex post evaluation is an important instrument to inform national and regional authorities, the general public, the European Parliament and other stakeholders involved about the outcomes of the 2007-2013 generation of cohesion policy programmes. The evaluation will examine the extent to which the resources were used, the effectiveness, efficiency and the socio-economic impact. The evaluation shall identify factors contributing to the success or failure of programmes and identify good practice.

During the 2007-2013 programming period, a stronger focus on accountability for what has been achieved with Cohesion Policy resources has become apparent. This debate was stimulated by the publication of the ex post evaluation for the 2000-2006 period in April 2010, the debate on the requirements for Cohesion Policy for the 2014-2020 period and the economic and financial crisis. At the heart of the reform of the funds for the future is a stronger focus on results and performance.

2 Council regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund
The ex post evaluation of the 2007-2013 period must be completed at the end of 2015. It will be carried out through a number of work packages (listed in annex 2) with the findings summarised in a synthesis report at the end of the process. This work package is one of three devoted to enterprise support. One work package on data collection and quality assessment was launched in advance of the others and its first results will be made available from April 2014 to contractors for the other work packages.

### 3.1.1 Specific context of this contract

In total, some EUR 70 billion of ERDF resources (25% of the total allocation) are invested through 204 Operational Programmes in projects supporting research and innovation and SME growth and development in Member States and regions. Based on reporting by Managing Authorities on categories of expenditure, of that sum around EUR 55 billion is support to firms. This high amount of investment is based on the policy rationale that investing in innovation and enterprises leads to more competitiveness and employment. However, relatively few evaluations provide direct evidence to support this rationale, in particular as regards the effectiveness and impact of the different instruments supported. To date most ERDF evaluations carried out by the managing authorities cover the entire programme rather than a specific field of activity and are often more focussed on its implementation than on results and impacts.

Programmes and their evaluations rarely analyse the place of ERDF in the regional/national research and innovation policy mix. Very few embed the ERDF programme into an existing research and innovation policy or strategy making it difficult to analyse its contribution to observed results at a policy level. For this reason the new regulation for the programming period 2014-2020 requires that operational programmes supporting research and innovation have a research and innovation strategy (this is the ex-ante conditionality on smart specialisation).

This work package is of strategic importance as it follows different studies which confirmed the difficulty to obtain evidence supporting a deep understanding of the rationale for and effectiveness of business and innovation support. Therefore, it should build new grounds for a more effective policy in these fields of support where the ERDF invests significantly. Furthermore, it will experiment with three theory based impact evaluations a methodology which is not sufficiently developed in the evaluation of ERDF programmes.

### 3.1.2 Subject of the contract

The evaluation will analyse how ERDF support is invested with the aim to support SME development and innovation. The actual investments will be compared with available evidence on successful policies. Going deeper, the evaluation will in selected cases explore the policy mix, context and evidence of effectiveness. Finally, it will explore the contribution of ERDF support to observed results. Through the evaluation, evidence will be produced on types of successful interventions and the key success factors.

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This evaluation is one of three on enterprise support which will run roughly in parallel. The successful tenderers will be expected to keep up to date with developments in the other two packages (notably by reading reports). They may cite from the other packages, but should still come to their own conclusions.

### 3.1.3 Financial and output data

Member States and the Commission exchange more detailed data in the period 2007-2013 compared to previous programming periods in relation to the planned and actual use of the funds and the reporting of "core" indicators for the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund.

In relation to the tracking financial inputs, the Member States report annually on progress in project selection using the "categorisation system". This system comprises 86 priority theme codes (the most widely used element of the categorisation system) but also has information on "form of finance", "Territorial dimension", "economic dimension" and "location".

The system of ERDF/CF core indicator reporting (41 indicators) was set out in working documents from 2007 and 2009. It has led to annual reporting at OP level (sometimes also at priority axis level) of cumulative figures for achieved outputs often in relation to initial target value. Work package zero under the programme of ex-post evaluation 2007-2013 will gather and quality assess physical data reported by Managing Authorities in their Annual Implementation Reports. That work package will therefore provide updated data during the implementation of this contract.

The categorisation and core indicator data reported in the 2012 AIR in its raw form is provided in the excel tables on this webpage:


### 3.1.4 Scope of the contract

The work will mainly cover 50 operational programmes supporting research and innovation and SME development and growth (see Annex 3). These 50 OPs represent 62% of the decided amounts in the categories of expenditure concerning support to SMEs (EUR 33.6 billion versus the total EUR 54.6 billion in 204 programmes).

Support to information and communication technologies (ICT) is included in so far as it contributes to the innovativeness and development of SMEs. SMEs active in traded goods and services should be differentiated from SMEs active in local services. The analysis should also differentiate between enterprises below 10 employees, medium sized enterprises (11-50 employees) and enterprises between 51 and 250 employees.

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4 Regulation EC N° 1828/2006, Article 11, requires the reporting of categorisation information in the Annual Implementation Reports (AIRs). The background reference documents on the use of the categorisation system are: 1) Information Note COCOF 09/0008/00-EN of 18 May 2009 - [LINK](#) and 2) The questions and answers sheet (public SFC2007 webpage) updated in early 2012: [LINK](#)

For the analysis of expenditure, the following categories extracted from the IT systems in use for Cohesion Policy (InfoView) are relevant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Decided amount (€)</th>
<th>Project Selection (€)</th>
<th>Rate of selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Technology transfer and improvement of cooperation networks ...</td>
<td>4,847.3</td>
<td>3,683.8</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Assistance to R&amp;TD, particularly in SMEs (including access to R&amp;TD services in research centres)</td>
<td>5,414.1</td>
<td>4,148.2</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Advanced support services for firms and groups of firms</td>
<td>5,274.8</td>
<td>4,807.4</td>
<td>91.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Assistance to SMEs for the promotion of environmentally-friendly products and production processes (...)</td>
<td>1,970.7</td>
<td>1,476.8</td>
<td>74.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Investment in firms directly linked to research and innovation (...)</td>
<td>10,278.4</td>
<td>5,567.3</td>
<td>54.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Other investment in firms</td>
<td>15,090.7</td>
<td>17,282.3</td>
<td>114.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Other measures to stimulate research and innovation and entrepreneurship in SMEs</td>
<td>7,768.7</td>
<td>6,209.9</td>
<td>79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Services and applications for SMEs (e-commerce, education and training, networking, etc.)</td>
<td>1,515.3</td>
<td>650.3</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Other measures for improving access to and efficient use of ICT by SMEs</td>
<td>1,545.6</td>
<td>1,104.5</td>
<td>71.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Support for self-employment and business start-up *</td>
<td>535.3</td>
<td>235.3</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Developing human potential in the field of research and innovation, in particular through post-graduate studies ... *</td>
<td>374.5</td>
<td>361.8</td>
<td>96.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total ERDF</strong></td>
<td><strong>54,615.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>45,527.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>83.4%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In these categories of expenditure significant European Social Fund (ESF) support is also available from other programmes

In the table above, "Decided amount" refers to the amount of EU funding decided between the managing authority and the European Commission to fund projects during the lifetime
of the programme. "Project selection" corresponds to the volume of EU funding that has been allocated to selected projects.

Tenderers should be aware that 3 categories representing more than one third of these expenditure, namely numbers 8, 9 and 15, are too broadly defined to be easily translated into specific instruments and need to be thoroughly investigated. Tenderers should also be aware that further detail breaking down these amounts by form of finance, type of territory, economic sector and location is available by programme with varying degrees of detail and reliability of reporting.

3.2 Tasks

Task 1: Establishing the main instruments funded

This analysis will use the codes of expenditure, indicators and programme documents for the 50 programmes listed in annex 3. The contractor will establish:

- a clustering of the supported SMEs according to their size and sectors. This information will be obtained from the Managing Authorities and the tender should propose an approach to collect it.
- a typology of the main instruments funded,
- the amount of resources allocated to each instrument and group of SMEs (size, sector),
- associated indicators on achievements for each instrument.

By comparing programmes, the contractor may also identify national preferences for instruments or schemes as regards SME development and innovation.

The contractor will also analyse:

- the rationale for the use of instruments and the underlying theories of change,
- whether "innovation instruments" are really targeting innovation in SMEs (and not just their growth as most generic schemes for SMEs).
- the kind of market failure associated with the different instruments,
- any shift of funds from SME innovation activities to generic schemes supporting SME development in the course of programme implementation (2007-2013) and the rationale for this.

In conjunction with the findings of the literature review carried out in parallel (see task 2), the contractor will critically appraise whether the rationales for these instruments are backed by theory or evidence.

At the end of Task 1, the contractor should propose 8 case studies from among the 50 programmes, to be carried out in Task 3. In selecting the 8 programmes, the contractor should consider the amount of funds invested in research and innovation for SMEs, a balance of Convergence Objective and Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective regions or Member States, national and regional programmes, and the presence of a diversified set of instruments. The contractor will also identify 7 instruments to be assessed through theory based impact evaluation (see Task 4).

The contractor will base this work on:
• analysis of the codes of intervention for the programmes held in the DG for Regional and Urban Policy's information systems;

• the results of Work Package 0 which will provide checked data for programme indicators;

• analysis of the documentation linked to the 50 programmes listed in annex 3. This list includes programmes investing more than half of their funds in research, innovation and development of SMEs, programmes investing the most in absolute amounts, and national and regional programmes from Convergence and Regional Competitiveness and Employment objective Member States or regions;

• face to face interviews with managing authorities of these 50 programmes to understand the rationale for the different instruments (and their combination) and to fill in information gaps.

The tender should provide detailed information on how it is proposed to carry out this task including a first proposal for a typology of instruments. The tender should also propose three programmes amongst the 50 listed that could lend themselves to a pilot case study (see task 3).

Task 2: Literature review

In parallel with Task 1, the contractor will carry out a literature review on the prerequisites for SMEs to innovate and grow, the rationale for public support to SMEs and evidence on the effectiveness of different policy tools. The two goals (SME innovation, SME growth) and the related recommended tools should be differentiated.

The offer should mention examples of significant parts of literature: articles, studies, or evaluations to be reviewed under this task. It should outline the methodology for the literature review, how it will succinctly link the evidence from the review with the typology developed under Task 1 and how the findings of the literature will inform the case study methodology.

Task 3: Case Studies in selected regions

The contractor will carry out 8 case studies. These case studies should examine the use of the different instruments in their specific context, their rationale and their effectiveness. They will produce a narrative with a particular focus on the effects of these instruments.

For these case studies, support to research centres/infrastructures or large enterprises will be considered as far as this support also aims to develop SMEs. One of the case studies where the contractor will have identified a significant amount of ESF support to SMEs will also analyse synergies between the funds, identifying gaps and good practices.

The case studies will:

• describe the policy mix impacting SME innovation and development in the studied regions or Member States, and its relevance to the economic situation (taking into account the literature review carried out under Task 2),

• deepen the analysis of the rationale underlying the policy mix in each region or Member State, in particular the role of ERDF,
• describe the use of policy instruments supporting SMEs (and the combination) and the rationale for this use,

• assess the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the funded instruments, using evaluation evidence where available,

• provide good practice examples of the use of policy instruments supporting SMEs, including combination with ESF support,

• consult Managing Authorities and Commission officials on case study findings.

A first case study will be delivered before the others to be used as a pilot. The tender should provide detail on the case study methodology and organisation.

Evaluation questions should include the following. The tender may reformulate them or propose other evaluation questions.

1) Policy mix

What is the policy mix (including regulatory incentives or national schemes if they play a role for regional programmes)? This includes research activities and ICT support that target SMEs. It also includes large enterprises that play an important role to support SME growth.

Does the policy mix fit the maturity of the regional innovation systems? What is the match between policy challenges and policy instruments? Are SMEs cooperating with research centres and how? For Convergence regions: where were research centres built/equipped? Did they take into account the absorption capacity of SMEs and of other research centres in the neighbourhood?

Does this policy address interregional and international cooperation? Is it based on SME demand (bottom up) or does it focus on the availability of support services (top down)?

Are there links with the EC research framework programme? What are the links and synergies with other policies and programmes, including ESF supported activities such as training or support to enterprises? (see categories 74 "supporting human potential in R&I" – or 68 "support for self-employment and business start-up").

What is the rationale for the role of ERDF within this policy mix? How is it important in the policy mix?

2) Implementation of ERDF programmes

How does the ERDF contribute to the development and innovation of SMEs? Is funding concentrated on the most effective interventions and productive areas according to the literature? How did the ERDF support respond to the crisis and its impact on SMEs?

What are the ERDF co-financed instruments to support SMEs (general schemes and innovation schemes): what rationale, what balance and complementarity is there between instruments and their objectives?

What were supported instruments supposed to achieve (theory of change)?
How were investments targeted: to areas with significant potentials or comparative advantages or to sectors facing difficulty? How was the target population defined?

Appropriateness of size of investments: was the funding sufficiently concentrated to make a difference at policy level (including combined with other instruments?)

Financial instruments: what were the criteria to support SMEs (latent innovation potential)? Was market failure examined?

3) Effectiveness of ERDF support

What is the effectiveness of different schemes for SMEs and their combination (e.g. grant versus cluster policy; direct/indirect support)? Do grants crowd out other kinds of instruments such as loans? Is there evaluation evidence on the effectiveness/efficiency of the use of these instruments?

Where interventions are a continuity of ones previously funded by the ERDF: what is the evidence on which to base this continuity?

Was the size of individual grant or loan sufficient to make a difference for the supported enterprises?

Can a success rate of innovation / research projects be established? Is it monitored and evaluated by Managing Authorities?

Did the support generate additional innovation, productivity or output in firms?

Did SMEs change the way their finance their activities? Did SMEs' access to finance improved as a result?

Are new behaviours resulting from the interventions sustainable?

Task 4: Theory based impact evaluations

Most support to SMEs aims to increase firms' productivity or output or to help them produce and trade innovative products and services. In reality, many directly target a change of behaviour within companies that should ultimately result in more innovation activities and sales: more investment in RDI that persists after the support, new ways of working, new collaborations and partnerships, use of new sources of information or ideas, new strategic abilities, new expertise or competencies, etc.. The impact of interventions aiming at behavioural changes cannot always be assessed through counterfactual impact evaluations, in particular as their outcome may lack homogeneity or may spread across different organisations (spill over effects). More "qualitative" approaches need to be rigorously applied, e.g., in the frame of a theory-based evaluation.

Rigorous theory based evaluations are rarely used to assess the effectiveness and impact of innovation instruments. This kind of evaluation is challenging and time consuming as it aims to capture causal chains at the different steps of the logic of intervention. Based on the rationale underlying the instruments supported as identified in Tasks 1 and 3, the

contractor will propose 7 instruments (or a combination) which lend themselves to a theory-based evaluation, preferably in the 8 case studies. The instruments should represent some of the most common interventions supported by the ERDF. In consultation with the Commission, the contractor will select 3, which will be subject to theory based impact evaluations. The evaluator should select at least one expert in the field of theory-based evaluation to advise on methods and implementation of these evaluations. Names should be proposed in the tender document.

The tenderer should explain what approach seems the best fit for purpose to evaluate the interventions supported by the ERDF and detail how it is intended to carry out the 3 theory-based evaluations.

**Task 5: Seminar**

The contractor will organise a seminar with representatives of the Managing Authorities of the 8 analysed programmes, external experts (including the three advising on this evaluation, see 3.7) and Commission officials to discuss and deepen analysis on the emerging findings of the case studies (around 25 persons).

The evaluator will be responsible for the organisation and content of the seminar, including identifying participants, preparing the content of the seminars, leading discussions and writing up the event. The seminar will take place in Brussels. It will be organised by using support from Work Package 1 of the ex post evaluation (“Synthesis”) and the contractor of Work Package 1 will:

- cover travel and accommodation costs for participants from public authorities (maximum 1 night stay, train, flights economy class),
- cover travel and accommodation costs for participants not from public authorities (up to 2 nights, train, flights economy class), as well as a fee appropriate to the level of expertise.

**Task 6 Final report**

The final report will pull together findings of all tasks in a concise report of a maximum of 100 pages. As a background, it will start by summarising the financial and physical data for all Operational Programmes concerning support to SMEs, based on the findings of Work Package 0. Reports of the case studies and the theory based evaluations will form stand-alone reports as annexes to the final report.

The tender should include a draft table of contents and outline the approach to distilling the mass of information and evidence gathered during the evaluation into an analytical and readable report.

**3.3 METHODOLOGY**

A combination of methods will be used in this evaluation, some of which have been signalled in the tasks description above. They include:

- Literature review
• Desk research – analysis of Annual implementation reports and any other supporting documentation from the Member States. Annual implementation reports are stored in the DG for Regional and Urban Policy's databases (SFC2007). The successful contractor will be given access to this system.

• Data analysis, using the information on the categorisation of expenditure and the output data from Work Package 0.

• Interviews with programme Managing Authorities, enterprises or their representatives, experts.

• Case studies.

• Theory based impact evaluation methods.

• Other methodological approaches as appropriate, to be specified in the tender documentation.

The tender documentation should outline how these methods will be combined to deliver the various tasks and answer the evaluation questions. The tender should analyse the major challenges foreseen in this contract and outline strategies to tackle them.

3.4 WORK ORGANISATION

As part of the tender documentation, the team to be involved in this evaluation should be identified, describing their skills and qualifications, quantifying the input of each member of the team in terms of days and explaining the distribution of tasks between the different team members involved. This team should be sufficiently large to carry out different tasks in parallel (literature review, typology of instruments and a pilot case study, as well as 7 case studies, a seminar and 3 theory-based evaluations). Expertise in innovation and SME development is necessary to conduct these tasks efficiently. The tenderer must also demonstrate that the team has the capacity to work in the languages of the countries of selected programmes (see annex 3). The attention of tenderers is drawn to the need for strong co-ordination, guidance and quality control which will be needed for the successful delivery of this contract.

3.5 TIME SCHEDULE

The duration of the tasks is 18 months, starting from the signature of the contract. The deliverables and their timing are specified below.

**Key reports and meetings required by the Terms of Reference**

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<th>End Month</th>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Inception Report</td>
<td>Meeting with Steering Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within 6 months</td>
<td>First Intermediate Report</td>
<td>Meeting with Steering Group</td>
</tr>
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### 3.6 Deliverables

The deliverables of this study will be:

**Deliverable 1:** one methodological inception report covering all Tasks, including a proposal for a pilot case study and an elaborated methodology.

**Deadline:** within one month after the signature of the contract.

**Deliverable 2:** the first intermediate report presenting the results of Tasks 1 and 2 and the pilot case study, including a proposal for the 7 remaining case studies and for 7 instruments for theory-based impact evaluations.

**Deadline:** within six months after the signature of the contract.

**Deliverable 3:** the second intermediate report: 8 case studies carried out under Task 3, result of seminar (under Task 5) and identification of 3 theory-based evaluations (cf Task 4).

**Deadline:** within ten months after the signature of the contract.

**Deliverable 4:** the third intermediate report: result of the 3 Theory-Based evaluations each of which should be accompanied with an executive summary and a description of the methodology applied.

**Deadline:** within fifteen months after the signature of the contract.

**Deliverable 5:** the draft final report responding to Tasks 1-5 of these specifications. The draft Final Report should cover each of the tasks and contain a synthesis report with chapters. Excel spread sheets should accompany the draft final report incorporating the data gathered under Task 1. The 8 case studies and the 3 theory-based evaluations should be provided as an annex.

**Deadline:** within seventeen months after the signature of the contract.

**Deliverable 6:** one final report.

**Deadline:** within eighteen months after the signature of the contract.

Beside the above mentioned deliverables, the contractor will have to submit a progress report of 2 pages maximum every month.

A hard copy and an electronic version of each report are required. For final reports one hard copy and an electronic version (three CD, Word format and PDF format or equivalent application compatible with MS Office) are required. The Commission will provide details for the layout of the reports.
The contractor will provide presentation material for each of the reports in English (PowerPoint or equivalent application compatible with MS Office) for the use of Commission services.

All reports will be delivered in English. **Tenderers should note that a high standard of written English and capacity for clear and concise expression of complex ideas is required in all deliverables.** An executive summary of the final report specified above will be delivered in English, French and German.

The contractor may be invited to present the results of the evaluation to the Member States and the Commission services (three meetings in Brussels). The travel costs for these presentations will be paid separately.

The quality of the evaluation will be assessed by the Commission services using the quality criteria set out in annex 4. The assessment of the quality will be published by the Commission.

### 3.7 Organisation of the Study

There will be a single contract with the Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy for this evaluation.

As part of the **tender documentation**, the tenderer should identify the members of the core team and experts responsible for the Member State work. Effective planning of the fieldwork is essential and this should be reflected in the days allocated to the core team as well as the Member State experts. The person responsible for the quality of the content of each deliverable (including proper editing of the draft final report in terms of its content) should be identified. In addition the tender documentation should describe for each member of the team his/her skills and qualifications and quantify the input in terms of days and explain the distribution of tasks between the different team members involved. The tenderer should prove that their team has the capacity and knowledge to work in the fields of expertise required and in the languages which will be needed for the analysis and interviews.

The contractor will identify 3 experts to give advice throughout the evaluation, comment on the deliverables, and participate in the seminar. These experts should have in-depth knowledge of the areas of innovation and SMEs' development, one of them being expert in theory-based evaluation.

The Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy will establish a steering group representative of the relevant Directorates of the Directorate General as well as other interested Directorates General. The contractor will provide documentation for and attend four meetings of the steering group. It is anticipated that the meetings will take place in order to discuss the inception report, the first intermediate report, the second intermediate report, and the draft final report.

The contractor will be expected to attend a kick-off meeting plus three progress meetings with the Evaluation Unit of the Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy in Brussels reviewing the progress of the study and resolving any problems arising. These meetings will be arranged according to needs arising.
4. **VOLUME OF CONTRACT**

€1,000,000 maximum (lump sum, including fees, travel expenses and other costs).

5. **TERMS OF PAYMENT**

The Contractor shall submit requests for all payment, expressed in euros, to the Commission.

For payment arrangements, see Article I.4 of the draft service contract.

6. **CONTRACTUAL TERMS AND GUARANTEES**

For the contractual terms, see the draft contract published on Inforegio.

Guarantee: Not applicable

7. **OPENING OF TENDERS**

Tenders will be opened on ..., at 16.00 at BU29 06/48, DG Regional and Urban Policy, Avenue de Beaulieu, 29, 1160 Brussels. Tenderers may be present at the opening of tenders. Each tenderer may take part or send a representative.

8. **CONTENT, STRUCTURE AND GRAPHIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE FINAL DELIVERABLES**

All studies produced for the European Commission and Executive Agencies shall conform to the corporate visual identity of the European Commission by applying the graphic rules set out in the European Commission's Visual Identity Manual, including its logo7.

The Commission is committed to making online information as accessible as possible to the largest possible number of users including those with visual, auditory, cognitive or physical disabilities, and those not having the latest technologies. The Commission supports the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0](http://www.w3.org/TR/2010/REC-webcontent-accessibility-20101201) of the W3C.

For full details on Commission policy on accessibility for information providers, see: [http://ec.europa.eu/ipg/standards/accessibility/index_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/ipg/standards/accessibility/index_en.htm)

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7 The Visual Identity Manual of the European Commission is available upon request. Requests should be made to the following e-mail address: [comm-visual-identity@ec.europa.eu](mailto:comm-visual-identity@ec.europa.eu)
Pdf versions of studies destined for online publication should respect W3C guidelines for accessible pdf documents. See: http://www.w3.org/WAI/

8.1. Content

8.1.1. Final study report

The final study report shall include:

- an abstract of no more than 200 words and an executive summary of maximum 6 pages, in English, French and German;

- the following standard disclaimer:

“The information and views set out in this [report/study/article/publication…] are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Commission. The Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this study. Neither the Commission nor any person acting on the Commission’s behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.”

- specific identifiers which shall be incorporated on the cover page provided by the Contracting Authority.

8.1.2. Publishable executive summary

The publishable executive summary shall be provided in English, German and French and shall include:

- the following standard disclaimer:

“The information and views set out in this [report/study/article/publication…] are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Commission. The Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this study. Neither the Commission nor any person acting on the Commission’s behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.”

- specific identifiers which shall be incorporated on the cover page provided by the Contracting Authority.

8.1.3. Graphic requirements

For graphic requirements please refer to the template provided in the Annex 5. The cover page shall be filled in by the contractor in accordance with the instructions provided in the template. For further details you may also contact comm-visual-identity@ec.europa.eu.
ANNEX 1 – DECLARATION OF HONOUR ON EXCLUSION CRITERIA AND ABSENCE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

(Complete or delete the parts in grey italics in parenthese)

[Choose options for parts in grey between square brackets]

The undersigned (insert name of the signatory of this form):

☐ in his/her own name (for a natural person)

or

☐ representing the following legal person: (only if the economic operator is a legal person)

full official name:

official legal form:

full official address:

VAT registration number:

➢ declares that [the above-mentioned legal person][he][she] is not in one of the following situations:

a) is bankrupt or being wound up, is having its affairs administered by the courts, has entered into an arrangement with creditors, has suspended business activities, is the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;

b) has been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of res judicata;

c) has been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authorities can justify including by decisions of the European Investment Bank and international organisations;

d) is not in compliance with all its obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions and the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which it is established, with those of the country of the contracting authority and those of the country where the contract is to be performed;

e) has been the subject of a judgement which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;

f) is subject to an administrative penalty for being guilty of misrepresenting the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in a grant award procedure or another procurement procedure or failing to supply this information, or having been declared to be in serious breach of its obligations under contracts or grants covered by the Union's budget.

➢ (Only for legal persons other than Member States and local authorities, otherwise delete) declares that the natural persons with power of representation, decision-making or control over the above-mentioned legal entity are not in the situations referred to in b) and e) above;

---

8 This covers the company directors, members of the management or supervisory bodies, and cases where one natural person holds a majority of shares.
declares that [the above-mentioned legal person][he][she]:

- g) has no conflict of interest in connection with the contract; a conflict of interest could arise in particular as a result of economic interests, political or national affinity, family, emotional life or any other shared interest;
- h) will inform the contracting authority, without delay, of any situation considered a conflict of interest or which could give rise to a conflict of interest;
- i) has not granted and will not grant, has not sought and will not seek, has not attempted and will not attempt to obtain, and has not accepted and will not accept any advantage, financial or in kind, to or from any party whatsoever, where such advantage constitutes an illegal practice or involves corruption, either directly or indirectly, inasmuch as it is an incentive or reward relating to award of the contract;
- j) provided accurate, sincere and complete information to the contracting authority within the context of this procurement procedure;

acknowledges that [the above-mentioned legal person][he][she] may be subject to administrative and financial penalties if any of the declarations or information provided prove to be false.

In case of award of contract, the following evidence shall be provided upon request and within the time limit set by the contracting authority:

For situations described in (a), (b) and (e), production of a recent extract from the judicial record is required or, failing that, a recent equivalent document issued by a judicial or administrative authority in the country of origin or provenance showing that those requirements are satisfied. Where the tenderer is a legal person and the national legislation of the country in which the tenderer is established does not allow the provision of such documents for legal persons, the documents should be provided for natural persons, such as the company directors or any person with powers of representation, decision making or control in relation to the tenderer.

For the situation described in point (d) above, recent certificates or letters issued by the competent authorities of the State concerned are required. These documents must provide evidence covering all taxes and social security contributions for which the tenderer is liable, including for example, VAT, income tax (natural persons only), company tax (legal persons only) and social security contributions.

For any of the situations (a), (b), (d) or (e), where any document described in two paragraphs above is not issued in the country concerned, it may be replaced by a sworn or, failing that, a solemn statement made by the interested party before a judicial or administrative authority, a notary or a qualified professional body in his country of origin or provenance.

If the tenderer is a legal person, information on the natural persons with power of representation, decision making or control over the legal person shall be provided only upon request by the contracting authority.

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## ANNEX 2 - LIST OF THEMES FOR WORK PACKAGES OF THE 2007-2014 ERDF EX POST EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Data collection and quality assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Synthesis</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Small and medium-sized enterprises, innovation, ICT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Venture capital and loan funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Large enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Environment</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Modelling the effects of transport projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Energy efficiency</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Culture, Tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Urban development and social infrastructures</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>European Territorial Cooperation</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Delivery system</td>
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<td>Effect on macroeconomic aggregates</td>
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## ANNEX 3 – SAMPLE OF 50 OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES

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<td>BE</td>
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ANNEX 4 - QUALITY CONTROL: OUTPUT QUALITY CRITERIA

− Meeting needs as laid out in ToR
− Relevant scope and coverage
− Defensible design and methods
− Reliable data used
− Sound analysis
− Credible results that relate to analysis and data
− Impartial conclusions showing no bias and demonstrating sound judgement
− Clear report with executive summaries and annexed supportive data
ANNEX 5 – TEMPLATE FOR GRAPHIC REQUIREMENTS