

SME - Instrument

Overview

European funding programme dedicated to established, high growth, highly innovative, for-profit SMEs seizing European and global business opportunities. Addressing specific challenges within the “Industrial leadership” and “Societal challenges” sections of Horizon 2020

Programme duration: 2014 - 2020
Funded by the European Commission (Horizon 2020)

Goal

Enhancing profitability and growth performance of SMEs by combining and transferring new and existing knowledge into innovative, disruptive and competitive solutions

The SME instrument consists of three phases. Participants can apply to phase 1 or directly to phase 2.

Phase 1

Consists of a feasibility study (one workpackage) in order to verify the technological/practical as well as economic viability of an innovation idea/concept with considerable novelty to the industry sector in which it is presented. The activities are - among others - risk assessment, market study, user involvement, Intellectual Property (IP) management.

The proposal contains an initial business plan based on the proposed idea/concept and outlines the specifications of a more elaborated business plan.

Phase 2

Innovation projects, demonstrating high potential in terms of company competitiveness and growth underpinned by a strategic business plan.

Activities are focused on demonstration, testing, prototyping, piloting, scaling-up, miniaturisation, design, market replication and the like aiming to bring an innovation idea (product, process, service etc.) to industrial readiness and maturity for market introduction, but may also include some research. For technological innovation, Technology Readiness Levels of 6 or above are envisaged.

Attention on: IP protection and ownership; convincing measures to ensure the possibility of commercial exploitation; specification for the outcome of the project and criteria for success; explanation of how the results of the supported project are to be commercialised and of what kind of impact on the company is expected.

Phase 3

No funding but support to increase the economic impact of the funding provided by the SME Instrument phase 1&2. Support regarding access to markets, access to finance, opportunities for partnering, networking and training.

Eligibility

Single for-profit SME or consortium of for-profit SMEs legally established in the EU-28 or in a country associated to Horizon 2020.

Project Partners

Other partners, such as research providers or larger companies, can be involved as third parties, usually in a subcontracting relationship.

Financial Support

Phase 1: Funding in form of a lump sum of 50'000 Euros (Reimbursement rate 70% thus total costs 71'429 Euros).

Phase 2: Requested EU contribution between 0.5 and 2.5 mio Euros (Exeptions in Healthcare topics). Reimbursement rate 70%.

Time Frame

Submission: 4 cut-off dates per year

Phase 1: 15 Feb 2017/03 May 2017/06 Sep 2017/08 Nov 2017

Phase 2: 18 Jan 2017/06 Apr 2017/01 Jun 2017/18 Oct 2017

What else to consider

Time to grant agreement: Phase 1, 1 month; Phase 2, 4 month

Duration: Phase1, 6 month; Phase 2, 12 – 24 month

- If a proposal has been accepted for funding, and for the duration of the project concerned, it is not possible to submit a further proposal.
- Start-ups are not excluded. However, the SME Instrument is not designed to be a company creation vehicle, but to support the growth of companies with innovative ideas with European or global commercialisation potential. Evaluation is paying attention to the company potential in terms of growth, namely to the team behind the SME.
- The page limit for phase 1 is 10, the page limit for phase 2 is 30.
- Evaluation: To determine the ranking, the score for the criterion 'impact' will be given a weight of 1.5.
- Very competitive, read the [topic description](#) carefully !
- Have a look at the funded projects and try to be as disruptive as possible!

Phase 1 (pdf)

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/doc/call/h2020/smeinst-01-2016-2017/1742601-list_of_beneficiaries_-_sme_instrument_phase_1_\(october_2016_update\).en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/doc/call/h2020/smeinst-01-2016-2017/1742601-list_of_beneficiaries_-_sme_instrument_phase_1_(october_2016_update).en.pdf)

Phase 2 (pdf)

<https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/doc/call/h2020/smeinst-13-2016-2017/1727611-sme-instrument-phase2-beneficiaries-june.en.pdf>

SME Instrument data hub

<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/news/new-sme-instrument-data-hub-goes-live>

Further Details

Euresearch
Gerhard Gass
National Contact Point (NCP) for SMEs
Effingerstrasse 19, 3008 Bern
Tel. +41 31 380 60 15
gerhard.gass@euresearch.ch

Executive Agency for SMEs EASME
<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/horizons-2020-sme-instrument>