

Horizon 2020

The SME Instrument 2018-2020

Full-cycle business innovation



More information

The Vindsubsidies EU team is specialised in SME-Instrument projects. We have the right expertise, contacts and instruments to help you in developing a highly competitive funding proposal.

Our consultants have supported many clients in co-writing, project development, setting-up project consortia and submitting these applications.

A few examples of these projects are:

- » The development of full insight technology for poultry hatcheries that enables to real-time monitor and improve processes by measuring data related to biological processes.
- » A smart, data-driven solution for the management, processing and resales of returned e-commerce products, that maximizes recovery value for the e-retailer while minimizing 'waste' and CO2 emissions. The project's aim is to optimize the technology and prepare for European upscaling.

Although Europe is doing well internationally in terms of numbers of startups, too few of these actually succeed in scaling up and generating the highskilled jobs that Europe's future depends on. Therefore, the EU needs to help improve the conditions to enable the emergence and rapid scale-up of highly innovative enterprises.

For who?

You are a high-growth, highly innovative SME (and/or start-up) in a EU Member State or Horizon 2020 associated country) with European and/or global ambitions to grow, wishing to disrupt the established value networks and existing markets.

- You have a 'disruptive' innovation @ TRL6 level*, an ambition to grow at EU level, a demonstrated knowledge of your target market and a commercialisation plan.
- You wish to become 1 of the about 4000 SMEs in 2018-2020, selected to receive funding up to € 2,5 million, worldclass business support and mentorship.

*TRL6: System/subsystem model or prototyping demonstration in a relevant end-to-end environment. Engineering feasibility fully demonstrated in actual system application.

This instrument, supported by the European Innovation Council aims to address SMEs that have a radically, 'disruptive' new idea, underpinned by a business plan for rolling out marketable innovation solutions, and have the ambition to scale-up, with European and global impact.

Budget and timing 2018

Phase 1: € 48,218,906
Phase 2: € 431,520,154
You can apply at any time, there are 4 cutoff dates a year.
Next cut-off dates in 2018:
Phase 1: 8 Feb, 3 Mar, 5 Sep and 7 Nov
Phase 2: 10 Jan, 14 Mar, 23 May and 10 Oct

Contact

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3 lessons learned from previous calls:

1. Your innovation must meet user and customer needs, show their willingness to pay, and tackle societal, technological and business challenges in a sustainable way.
2. Only the most excellent and impactful ideas will receive support. It is crucial that you understand how your proposal will be assessed by evaluators.
3. Resubmitting your application pays off. There are no limits to the number of times a proposal can be resubmitted. A sound analysis of the evaluators' remarks and possible improvements to the initial proposal are crucial first steps to increase your chance of success. This has become even more relevant as the conditions of the program for the upcoming years have changed.

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How

The SME Instrument provides full-cycle business innovation support in 3 phases:

Phase 1

Feasibility Assessment; Idea to concept:

- The SME will carry out a feasibility study to verify the viability of the proposed disruptive innovation or concept.
- Project duration 6 month.
- Application: 10 pages.
- EU contribution € 50,000.

Phase 2

Commercialisation; Business acceleration.

- You will receive extensive support, training, mentorship and facilitating access to risk finance, next to additional support and networking opportunities by the Enterprise Europe Network.
- No additional direct funding.

Phase 3

Innovation project; Demonstration, Market Replication, R&D; Concept to Market-Maturity.

- The SME will further develop its proposal through innovation activities, such as demonstration, testing, piloting, scaling up, miniaturisation and design.
- It will also draft a more developed business plan.
- Proposal base is a business plan developed in phase 1 or otherwise.
- Project duration 1-2 years.
- Application: max. 30 pages.
- EU contribution € 0,5 - 2,5 million.

Eligible topics 2018-2020

The SME-Instrument is completely bottom-up and has no predefined topics, so entrepreneurs from all sectors of the economy can apply with their market-creating innovations.