

Research for the Benefit of SMEs

- **Call identifier:** FP7-SME-2012
- **Date of publication:** 20 July 2011 at 17.00.00, Brussels local time
- **Deadline:** 6 December 2011 at 17.00.00, Brussels local time¹
- **Indicative budget:** EUR 219.7 million²

Activity/ Area	Indicative budget (EUR million)
2.1 Research for SMEs FP7-SME-2012-1	150.00
2.2 Research for SME Associations FP7-SME-2012-2	49.70
2.3 Demonstration Activity FP7-SME-2012-3	20.00

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 Under the condition that the draft budget for 2012 is adopted without modifications by the budgetary authority.

Activity/ Area	Topics called	Funding Scheme
2.1 Research for SMEs (SME.2012.1)	The call is open to all research fields ³	Research for the benefit of specific groups (in particular SMEs) - BSG
2.2 Research for SME Associations (SME.2012.2)	The call is open to all research fields	Research for the benefit of specific groups (in particular SMEs) - BSG
2.3 Demonstration Activity (SME.2012.3)	The call is open to all research fields	Collaborative projects - CP

- **Eligibility conditions**

- The general eligibility criteria are set out in Annex 2 to this work programme and 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.

- Only information provided in part A of the proposal will be used to determine whether the proposal is eligible with respect to budget thresholds and/or minimum number of eligible participants.
- The following additional eligibility criteria apply in this call for **Activity 2.1 Research for SMEs**:
 - At least 3 participants must be SMEs independent of each other established in at least 3 MS or AC.
 - At least 2 participants must be RTD performers⁴ independent of any other participant.

³ 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 7th Framework Programme.

⁴ 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".

- If there are any other enterprises and end-users participants, 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 any other participant.
 - At least 2 participants must be SMEs (other enterprises or end-users) established in 2 MS or AC.
- The following additional eligibility criteria apply in this call for the **Activity 2.3 Demonstration Activity**:
- At least 2 participants must be SMEs independent of each other established in at least 2 MS or AC. These 2 SMEs must be/have been participants together in a successful 'Research for SMEs' project that has finished or is in its last year of operation by the submission deadline date or members together of the 'other enterprises or end-users' in a 'Research for SME Associations' project in the FP7 Capacities Programme. In addition to this minimum consortium requirement, the participation of SMEs that have not taken part in the former research project is possible.
 - The coordinator of the project must be an SME.
 - At least 75% of the declared costs shall be carried out by the SME(s).
- **Evaluation procedure:**
 - The evaluation will follow a single stage procedure.
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- The evaluation criteria and scoring scheme are set out in Annex 2 to the work programme.
- 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).
- 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 EPSS.

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).

- 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 impact and, when these scores are equal, according to the scores for the criterion scientific and technological excellence (ref. guide for applicants).
- A reserve list of proposals 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 completed 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 Capacities work programme.
- **Flat rates to cover subsistence costs:** In accordance with Annex 3 to 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 at the following website: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/find-doc_en.html under 'Guidance documents/Flat rates for daily allowances'.