



Guidelines for Applicants

EraSME 12th Call for Proposals

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1 Background and Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide interested parties with information about participation in the EraSME 12th Call for proposals. It is targeted at international research, technology, development and innovation (RTDI) projects between small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and research and technology organisations (RTO).

The main objective of the EraSME program is to strengthen the competitive capacity of SMEs by:

- increasing collaboration between SMEs from different countries,
- increasing cooperation between SMEs and RTOs,
- increasing the cooperative and competitive capability of SMEs to work in international R&D networks,
- helping them to develop new products, processes or technical services that exceed the existing state of the art and have good market opportunities by lowering the economical risks.

EraSME is a follow-up initiative of an ERA-NET by ministries and funding agencies.

An overview of regions/countries participating in the 12th EraSME Call can be found on the website of EraSME available under www.era-sme.net.

Participants from the participating countries/regions can be funded according to the rules of the respective regional/national funding programme. Participants from other countries/regions are welcome to participate, although they will have to organise the financing for their part themselves.

2 Basic Requirements

In addition to the basic EraSME requirements national or regional rules may apply. They are described in the Programme Portraits on the website of EraSME available under www.era-sme.net. Please check the Programme Portraits relevant for your project and get in contact with your local agency!

2.1 Requirements for Projects

Projects must be innovative and must aim to develop new or to significantly improve existing **products, processes or technical services** that in their parameters exceed the existing state of the art.

Projects must have significant technical risks.

The outcome of the project must be concrete and demonstrate real market potential.

The project can not, only in a reduced form or only with significant delay be carried out without public funding.

General conditions for projects are:

- at least a total of 2 SMEs from 2 different countries/regions (i.e. at least 1 SME per country/region),
- participation of RTOs is possible but not mandatory,
- balanced participation of the partners in the project,
- clear participation of all participating SMEs in the economic results of the project,
- every participant has a defined role in the project (subproject) that contains research and development tasks with significant technical risks, that can be delimited from the other subprojects (no redundancy) and is necessary for the project success,
- at least 50% of the work in the complete project has to be performed by companies,
- regional / national rules will prevail, see overview of funding schemes for details.

To exemplify, some regional/national rules are listed here:

- **Attention!** Requirement for proposals with **Austrian consortia partners**: Minimum configuration is a consortium with **a total of 4 companies** (thereof 3 SME, according to the definition of the EC) from 2 different countries/regions (i.e. at least 1 SME per country/region respectively a total of 4 companies in all participating countries/regions). Consortia which do not conform to the mentioned criteria can not be considered for funding.
- In Germany also companies with up to 500 employees (in sum of all affiliated companies) with no regard to turnover or balance sheet total are eligible.
- RTOs can participate if at least one SME from their country / region is part of the consortium and may be funded directly or treated as subcontractors.
- Other partners (large companies, other SMEs, RTOs, etc.) from other countries which do not take part in this call or partners from the participating countries / regions that can not be funded in the respective national / regional programs may be part of the project consortium if their contribution is essential to reach the project goals. However, funding will not normally be available for them.
- Parts of the work may be outsourced to subcontractors.

2.2 Project Duration

The duration of projects can be between 12 and 36 months (according to national rules, please see the overview of funding schemes).

3 Time Schedule EraSME 12th Call

December 01, 2012 Joint call announcement – opening of the call

Documents available on the EraSME website: www.era-sme.net

Continuously Proposal Submission

Call Deadline **March 28, 2013, noon (Strict deadline, proposals will not be accepted one minute after 12!)**

April 26, 2013 Communication of the results of the eligibility check (e-mail to project coordinator), indicating if the project application does not fulfil the minimum requirements and will not be evaluated
Only non-eligible projects are addressed, so if you do not receive an email before May 01, 2013 your project is eligible and will be evaluated

July 05, 2013 Communication of funding decisions (e-mail to coordinator).
Consortium Agreement negotiation between the participating partners and funding negotiations can start (or continue), according to the respective regional / national rules

May 01, 2013 Opening 13th call

4 Application Procedure

4.1 Project Proposal

4.1.1 Proposal Submission – European Level

Application Form

The project application must be signed by each partner and submitted electronically by the project coordinator before the deadline of the 12th Call on March 28, 2013, noon. Technical details related to the submission process will be published on the website www.era-sme.net in due time before the call deadline. The template “Application Form” available on the website must be used including the following sections:

1. General information
2. Project Outline
3. Project Coordinator including signature
4. Partner(s) including signature(s)

The application language for this part is English, except for pure Austrian-German consortia, where all Documents are also accepted in German.

In addition to the project application the coordinator must submit a draft Consortium Agreement (not signed!) in PDF format electronically.

4.1.2 Proposal Submission – National / Regional Level

At the same time national / regional forms have to be sent to the national / regional funding agencies.

An overview of the funding schemes and contact details of funding agencies is available on the website: www.era-sme.net.

4.2 Eligibility Criteria

- Proposal must be signed by all partners and submitted electronically.
- Fulfilment of the formal criteria regarding the proposal:
 - written in English (exceptions possible, see www.era-sme.net and ask your local agency)
 - project description according to the template for EraSME application available on the website,
 - draft Consortium Agreement (not signed)
 - national / regional requirements for participation fulfilled (please see overview of funding schemes, Programme Portraits and **please contact your local agency**).
 - duration of the project between 12 and 36 months.

4.3 Evaluation

A proposal will be evaluated by the respective funding agencies involved following the respective national / regional evaluation criteria as well as common evaluation criteria. A project will be funded when all involved funding agencies achieve a positive evaluation result. The results of the evaluation will be provided to the project coordinator.

4.4 Agreements and Contracts

4.4.1 Consortium Agreement

A Consortium Agreement between all the project partners is mandatory. It will regulate, inter alia, the following:

- identity of the partners,
- IPR ownership, IPR use and exploitation of the results,
- subcontracting to third parties,
- contributions of each partner to the project,
- confidentiality,
- publications,
- duty for every partner to participate in a final report on the overall project, which will be signed by all partners in the consortium.

The Consortium Agreement should be signed after the funding decision has been communicated and before the contract is signed with the Funding Agencies. An example of a Consortium Agreement is available for download under www.era-sme.net.

If the example agreement is used it has to be carefully adapted to the project. It is recommended to formulate an own Consortium Agreement covering all of the above mentioned issues. Please contact your respective national / regional agency.

4.4.2 Funding Agreement

Matters related to funding will be determined following the respective national / regional agencies rules. Signature of the Consortium Agreement is a prerequisite for funding.

5 Funding Procedures

Funding will be provided to each partner by his corresponding national / regional funding agency according to the respective rules (please see Programme Portraits and Overview).

5.1 Project Reporting and Monitoring

Projects will be monitored according to the rules of the respective country / region. Hence, technical as well as financial reporting according to national / regional rules will be required. Arrangements will be made during the funding negotiation process.

The project coordinator will be required, in addition, to deliver a final report on the overall project, which will be signed by all partners in the consortium.

6 Contact with regional/national Funding Agencies

For additional information and support, it is strongly recommended to contact the respective regional / national agencies. Please refer to the list of regional / national contacts on the website: www.era-sme.net.

7 Definitions

Consortium Agreement: A contract between all project partners regulating the terms of their cooperation, including the handling of IPR and the dissemination plan

Funding agencies: Agencies which manage the relevant funding program(s) in the respective country/region

Funding agreement: Agreement between the funding agency and the funded project partner(s) in the respective country/region

IPR: Intellectual property rights

Project coordinator: One of the project partners. The coordinator submits the proposal, leads the project and reports on progress

Project partners: All the participants/partners involved in a project consortium

Proposal: A project description plus annexes (Letters of Intent of all project partners; draft Consortium Agreement) submitted by the project coordinator

RTDI: Research, Technology, Development and Innovation

RTO: Research and Technology Organisation. An organisation which conducts research or development as a main activity, e.g. university, higher education institute, research institute, technology centre, etc

SME: See the definition of the European Commission dated January 1, 2005:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/sme_definition/index_en.htm

An overview of the definition is given in the following table:

Headcount (Full time equivalents)	Turnover (€)	or	Balance sheet total (€)
< 250	<= 50 million		<= 43 million

Transnational project: A project that includes partners from at least two countries.