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Call title: Building a performing ecosystem for SME innovation support
[H2020-YYYY-CALL IDENTIFIER]

Both in the Europe and the US the net increase in jobs the economy can be attributed to small, innovative companies. So, SMEs' innovation activities are in public interest and in order to overcome market failures specific to SME the public supports SME innovation with grants, subsidised loans and services. However SMEs receiving innovation support often remain dissatisfied with the services they receive; while at the same time the public expects a higher return from the support provided to SME innovation activities. While major new drivers, like online collaboration or reverse innovation, for SME innovation are hardly recognised by the public support provided, established support services assist mainly clearly defined technical projects within single enterprises. Public support pays much less attention to the creation of favourable ecosystem for SME innovation in which public enterprises, direct and indirect customers, end-users, suppliers and enterprises with complementary skills are encouraged to collaborate for radical innovation that may not yet be described and formulated as project.

The topics below, which are addressed by calls for proposals and tenders, are elements of a broader action to develop the ecosystem of innovation support to SMEs in Europe. Where appropriate a highly specialised support service may be established at European level to complement existing national and regional services. Generally the actions are designed to provide opportunities to member states and regions to enhance their services through collaboration, peer-learning and uptake of new approaches. The Enterprise Europe Network present in all European regions and co-financed by them and the Member States is expected to play an important role for catalysing such development processes.

1 - "Cluster animated projects for new industrial value chains"

Specific challenge:

To boost Europe's industrial competitiveness and to create growth and jobs, SMEs must be provided with better support to fully exploit their innovation potential in an international business environment with increasingly interlinked industrial value chains. While SMEs are key source of innovation thanks to their ability to quickly and efficiently bringing new ideas to the market, many of them face size-related problems for accessing crucial competences and lack market power and necessary resources to implement radically different business solutions on a large scale.

SMEs thus need help to generate, take up and better capitalise on all forms of knowledge, creativity, craftsmanship and innovation – including for the application of existing cross-cutting or emerging technologies, ICT, eco innovation, new business models, service

innovation and design. In order to increase the levels of innovation in SMEs, collaborations across borders and cutting across different sectors and value chains should therefore be encouraged. The aim is to use the transformative power of innovation in SMEs to shape new cross-sectoral industrial value chains that can develop emerging industries and boost the reindustrialisation of Europe through the development of internationally competitive goods and services. These value chains would integrate various types of SMEs and encourage eco-innovative solutions and green entrepreneurship, as well as actively support the implementation of resource efficiency of their enterprises and stimulate overall progress towards a resource-efficient, circular economy.

Scope:

New innovation activities of SMEs shall be promoted through facilitating cross-border and cross-sectoral collaboration and entrepreneurship across different regions and value chains. As SMEs usually have limited access and power to manage and change these value chains, cluster organisations and other intermediary organisations representing groups of SMEs shall be invited to act as catalysts of change and systems integrators to animate these innovation activities with SMEs having mutually reinforcing competences, in view of creating new industrial value chains that foster the development of emerging industries in Europe. In this respect, a systemic approach needs to be followed to build linkages between different sectors and to bundle resources that combine different tools and instruments.

To this end, the proposals shall foresee that the SME intermediaries set up collaboration and networking activities for SMEs and create a favourable "open space" for cross-sectoral fertilisation and value chain innovation to take place. The objective for each proposal should be, first, to identify and validate ideas for innovation projects driven by SMEs from different sectors and countries through this collaboration space. This shall bring together SMEs, knowledge institutions and business support organisations from different sectors to search for and explore radically new, business solutions and to facilitate cooperation beyond sectoral silos and existing value chains. This may include the creation of fora or the reinforcement of existing regional platforms, roundtables, workshops, matchmaking events, peer reviews, expert assistance, business panels, creativity competitions and similar methods. These innovation projects shall not merely aim to support product or service innovation in isolation but to promote value chain innovation that combines competences from different sectors and value chains to spark innovation in related group of SMEs.

Each proposal shall then, secondly, foresee to channel different targeted entrepreneurial and innovation support measures directly to SMEs for the further support for the development, integration and demonstration of the resulting innovation projects in an integrated manner, e.g. by combining support for matchmaking, mentoring, coaching, innovation and technical assistance voucher schemes, intellectual property and innovation management support, knowledge transfer and technology integration, training and mobility activities, supporting

the innovative use of ICT and e-skills in SMEs, service incubation or SME internationalisation as well as assisting enterprises to connect with research and innovation partners across different Member States or associated countries.

Expected impact:

This action will contribute to support industrial leadership in Europe by shaping new globally competitive value chains in strategic areas that integrate innovative solutions in SMES along and across existing value chains. Each proposal shall help to identify and validate a minimum of 25 ideas for concrete innovation projects driven by SMEs from different sectors and countries through the set-up of an open collaboration space, e.g. by peer reviews, panels and similar methods. Through these 25 value chains innovation projects, each proposal is expected to reach out and support overall at least 125 enterprises in their innovation activities, of which at least 100 shall be SMEs. At least 75% of the total proposed budget shall thus be allocated to support innovation in SMEs directly.

Thereby, this action promises a high impact due to its integrated approach that combines different support tools and that makes use of cluster organisations and other SME intermediaries to reach out and focus upon groups of SMEs related to dynamic growth areas, rather than supporting isolated projects or SMEs. The coordinated approach in supporting innovation in SMEs is geared towards the combination and creation of new industrial value chains that have the potential to accelerate the development of emerging industries in Europe, which will boost industrial competitiveness and underpin future economic growth and jobs, and to stimulate progress towards a resource-efficient, circular economy.

The activities will further complement support for innovation in SMEs, which may be provided by national or regional authorities under the Cohesion funds. They will contribute in particular to smart specialisation strategies by capitalising upon regional competences for the development of new industrial value chains and emerging industries. Synergies with Cohesion Policy funds that may further support large-scale demonstration projects will also be actively encouraged, notably through the engaged SME intermediaries.

Form of funding: Collaborative Project (70%) – Two stage

The conditions related to this topic are provided along with the general conditions for this call .[Link to end of the description of the call]

2 – European IPR helpdesk

Specific Challenge:

Small firms and research organisations, face a challenge to adequately manage, diffuse and valorise Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) due to limited knowledge and resources. These challenges can be dealt with at regional and national level by general purpose research and business support. However, cross-border commercial or research activities may require a pan-European approach.

The European IPR Helpdesk should provide support in the management, diffusion and/or valorisation of technologies and other intellectual assets and in bringing technologies to the market. The activities may take the form of: 1. initial advice 2. improving capacity 3. running a user friendly source of information in their efforts to adapt, develop or use new technologies.

The actions of the European IPR helpdesk should be co-ordinated with those of other IPR helpdesks and IPR support measures.

The services offered by this helpdesk should follow closely the recommendations stemming from a Commission document prepared as a follow-up of the external evaluation of the Helpdesk. These documents will be published latest in December 2013 (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/industrial-policy/intellectual-property-rights/index_en.htm).

The helpdesk should use non-technical language and should follow the target group's demand for initial IPR services as established e.g. through analysis of helpline requests, or feedback from trainings and from co-operating business services organizations.

Scope:

The target group would include EU small firms or research organisations that create intangible assets, but do not have the resources to manage IP efficiently. The actions of the helpdesk may include: 1. initial IPR advice, 2. on the spot trainings and webinars tailored to the target group's needs, 3. User-friendly website and 4. promotion of the helpdesk to the target group.

To reach the target group the helpdesk should develop relationships with various business, innovation or research support organisations.

All intellectual property rights and other intellectual assets' protection means should be taken into account.

All intellectual property rights pertinent to the materials, trainings, website and other actions developed by the helpdesk will be owned by the European Commission and will be shared

with other EC funded IPR support measures.

Depending on the demand of the target group the activities may be provided in the most demanded EU languages. English versions are essential.

Expected impact:

Improve knowledge and capacity of the target group to access, diffuse and use IPR more efficiently. Help intermediaries and other relevant organisations to provide initial guidance to the target group. Update and complement the set of self-help materials and guides for the target group on IPR in commercial, technology transfer and/or research cross-border activities. This would require co-ordination with other IPR support funded by the European Commission. The activities of the current helpdesk (www.iprhelpdesk.eu) may serve as a source of inspiration.

It is expected that the future helpdesk builds on top of previous initiatives and reaches better the target group, both in quantity and quality. The helpdesk should be ready to adjust the quantity of advice, training, materials and promotion to the demand and to better reach the target group. In particular, the development should follow the recommendations of the document related to the evaluation of the helpdesk to be published by end 2013.

Form of funding:

Coordination and Support Action – Single stage [Pending the recommendations of an evaluation of the current IPR helpdesk the action might be implemented by a call for tender]

Duration: 48months

The conditions related to this topic are provided along with the general conditions for this call. [Link to end of the description of the call]

3 – IPorta 2 - Increasing the quality of IP advisory services to SMEs

Specific challenge:

Managing Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) is a difficult task, especially for Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SME) or individual inventors. Such enterprises or individuals frequently do not have the knowledge or human resources to effectively use and manage IPR. Such entities would be able to better use their intellectual capital if: 1. they had more knowledge and guidance on how to better use professional legal consultants; 2. the professional consultants were better prepared to deal with SME specific challenges 3. cross-border information about IPR issues would be easily available on the internet and 4. the National Intellectual Property Offices (NIPOs) would provide better IPR services to SMEs.

The applicant needs to provide a mechanism to link and assist NIPOs to design and provide better services to SMEs. To reach the broadest target group the applicants should conceive a

mechanism to involve as many National IP offices as possible from the eligible ones (EU Member States and Horizon2020 participating countries) and at least 25 of them. The involvement may consist of including the NIPOs in the consortium as beneficiaries or by re-granting of proportionate parts of the grant to NIPOs. Other forms of effective and measureable involvement of NIPOs are possible.

As appropriate, the activities should be provided jointly with business support service providers, without duplicating their current activities. This measure should also contribute to improve and expand their intellectual asset services in conjunctions with NIPOs.

Scope:

The activities should include the organisation of exchange of experience between National IP Offices on how to help SMEs or individual inventors and how to offer services to this target group. The initial pilot implementation of new services by NIPOs can be included as well as the update of the analysis of current SME needs for IPR support services.

The focus of the service should be on individual inventors and SMEs that are start-ups, innovators, invest in quality or are expanding internationally (within or outside of the EU). The support developed and provided should be in a business minded language and be provided in a user-friendly way. All intellectual property rights and other intellectual assets protection means should be covered by the services.

The activities should not duplicate the services provided by the business services providers (e.g. the Enterprise Europe Network, private consultancy) and the different IPR Helpdesks.

The future beneficiary consortium should take care of the joint website www.innovaccess.eu

All intellectual property rights to the materials created should be granted free of charge to the commission and the National IP Offices for further use, re-use and unrestricted modifications. The project leader will co-operate and exchange materials with other DG Enterprise and Industry IPR projects: IPR helpdesks and the transatlantic portal.

Expected impact:

Upgraded or new services and trainings for the target group will be provided by the national IP offices to be implemented either by the NIPOs themselves or by the business support providers (effective use should be measured – at least 1 action per year per country). Upgraded or new services and trainings should be provided according to the needs of local SMEs. Where needed professional legal attorneys should be trained to tailor their advice and to build IPR strategies matching the needs and resources of SMEs. The common website (innovaccess) should be maintained, kept up to date (max. 1 month delay, preferably real time between a national office website and the common one) and developed

along the needs of SMEs.

The entity proposing the action should show how they would involve the National IP Offices in a credible way and how they will ensure the effective involvement of these offices. The action should propose a credible commitment of at least 25 National IP Offices among the eligible ones.

Form of funding: Collaborative Project (70%) – Two stage

The conditions related to this topic are provided along with the general conditions for this call. [Link to end of the description of the call]

4 – A European Label for innovation voucher programmes to support spin-in of technology

Specific Challenge:

Innovation voucher programmes are well established support instruments for SMEs in many countries and regions in Europe. While there is diversity in details in the application innovation voucher schemes can be characterised as small, lump-sum grants (typically below 10.000€) that support SME to contract universities, R&D service providers or private consultants to either conduct small innovation projects or to explore the feasibility of larger cooperative ones. Oriented towards establishing an initial contact between knowledge institutions and SMEs innovation vouchers have proven a successful instrument to support the spin-in of technology and knowledge into SMEs' business practice.

In the 'Riga-Declaration'¹ managers of innovation voucher programmes in the Member States have given recommendations for exploiting the full potential of innovation voucher programmes. Amongst other, the potential role of the European level, is described as follows:

"5. Innovation vouchers schemes should be implemented at local, regional and national level, thus fully taking into account the subsidiarity principle. The European level is encouraged to develop with national and regional entities a voluntary collaboration and brokerage framework for innovation voucher programmes that aims at making excellent knowledge, skills and innovation support services from both public and private service providers across Europe more effectively accessible for SMEs."

The proposed action aims at establishing such a voluntary cooperation framework with the objective to achieve among participating schemes an automatic recognition of foreign

¹ See for example http://www.innovation.lv/ino2/publications/Riga_declaration.pdf

European service providers at equal conditions to the national ones.

Scope:

The proposed activities will assist the development of a European label for innovation voucher programmes that treat foreign European service providers equally to national ones. The label shall provide participating managing entities of innovation voucher programmes services to enhance the quality of delivery and to manage higher risks associated to international opening of the schemes. Financial incentives, for example co-funding a limited number of initial transnational cooperation projects with knowledge institutions, might be provided.

Expected impact:

In two regions with a strong science, technology and consulting base (Baden- Württemberg and Bavaria) in which the voucher scheme allows already for international cooperation up to 5% of vouchers are used internationally. It can be expected that transnational use would be highest in smaller Member States with a limited market of commercial knowledge based consultancy. In particular in these countries opening of voucher schemes by a generally recognised label for a 'European Voucher' would increase the range and quality of services available to SMEs. It would furthermore enhance the opportunities of excellent researchers to transfer their knowledge transnationally and accelerate the spin-in of technologies and knowledge.

Form of funding: **Coordination and Support Action – Two stage**

The conditions related to this topic are provided along with the general conditions for this call. [Link to end of the description of the call]

5 – Peer learning of innovation agencies

Specific challenge:

Innovation support agencies, i.e. the regional and national agencies that design and / or implement innovation support programmes for SMEs are important intermediaries for SME innovation. Focus, design and delivery mechanism of innovation support programmes determine to large extent the economic impact that can be created for society and satisfaction of the beneficiaries. Therefore since long 'policy learning' among innovation agencies was supported by European programmes for interregional cooperation and for Research and Innovation. However, the transfer of good practices in SME innovation support', the enhancement of existing and the establishment of new innovation support

programmes for SME remains slow with the SME users of the programmes still often dissatisfied with the services received.

The PRO-INNO Europe 'INNO-Partnering Forum' (IPF, 2009-2012) has made some significant contributions to formulating the requirements for a permanent learning mechanism for SME innovation support agencies (see synthesis report of the IPF project): Learning activities have to be based on clear methodologies and they have to be demand driven, launched at the moment agencies themselves recognise the need to revise programme formats. Furthermore peer learning activities shall benefit from a secretariat or an animation structure that assures horizontal flow of information among interested agencies. In a collaborative exercise the IPF has developed two important methodologies in this respect: A quality management systems implemented through a peer review system based on the EFQM methodology and a 'twinning+' methodology that combines elements of traditional peer reviews and twinning in small learning groups of interested agencies.

It is the objective of this action to make available to national and regional innovation agencies these two methodologies as elements a of a permanent peer learning environment and to give incentives to the agencies to engage more frequently in peer learning activities.

Scope:

The proposed activities will provide incentives in the form of small lump sum grants to national and regional innovation agencies for engaging in peer learning on all topics relevant for design and delivery of innovation support programmes for SMEs. While peer learning is open for all relevant topics only the 'Twinning+' methodology as well as the quality management scheme for innovation agencies based on EFQM are recognised as learning methods.

Expected impact:

The activities support should significantly increase the number of innovation agencies engaged in peer learning and shall accelerate the learning the process. Lump sum support shall be available at any time to be mobilized when need and opportunity for policy learning in agencies arises.

Form of funding: CSA (?) lump sums (15.000 / 50.000€)

6 - Capitalising the full potential of online-collaboration for SME innovation support – Development of a qualification profile and training courses for an 'online collaboration assistant'

Specific challenge:

Identifying suitable partners for innovation activities is recognised as a major barrier to SME innovation. Innovation support services are addressing this challenge traditionally by two interventions that are often combined: (a) The provision of networking space for personal meetings either as one-off meeting ('brokerage events') or as more stable networks ('clusters') often with a limited geographic reach; and (b) the definition of 'cooperation profiles' ('technology offers', 'partner search profile' etc.) that are distributed through networks of intermediaries. To a different degree the intermediaries become active in establishing the partnership ('brokerage'). Social media and other web-based services challenge these existing approaches and ask for their revision.

The personal contact in networks is limited in its potential to reach out to many potential partners but it allows displaying all competences and skills. Exactly the opposite is the case in the distribution of 'cooperation profiles': They reach everybody but only describe a fraction of cooperation possibilities.

The British '_connect' platform is the first publicly financed innovation platform on the web that creates a protected space for the companies to display their competences, interest and skills, to reach out to a large number of peers, to make them personal contacts and to engage them in initial cooperation. '_connect' and other web platforms have the potential to overcome the structural limitations described above.

However, it becomes evident that only a small number of enterprises has already the skills to draw full benefits from the opportunities. They successfully establish contacts on the platform – which effectively eliminates the 'brokerage unction' that is so far provided by many intermediaries – but they are unable to maintain the group contacts or to draw on their on their skills in the preparation of innovation projects. In that respect they would benefit from the support of a new type of intermediary that assists to build-up skills in online collaboration during the early phases of innovation projects: An "online collaboration assistant".

Although the development of collaboration space on the web has been fast no qualification profile for 'online collaboration assistants' has been described, nor has the staff in innovation agencies the skills to assist their clients to establish collaborations on web platforms.

To address the described gaps the action shall develop a qualification profile and training courses for an ‘online collaboration assistant’ in SME innovation agencies independently from a particular collaboration or social media platform.

Scope:

The proposed activities shall develop a qualification profile and training courses for ‘online collaboration assistants’ primarily for staff in SME innovation agencies. In a consultative process a qualification profile shall be developed, translated into a curriculum and into training modules that should be usable in the internal training programs of innovation agencies.

The nature of the topic – online collaboration – might suggest that the training modules are established as web-based self- or collaborative learning modules that are supported by case studies in the form of videos.

Qualification profiles and training modules shall be formulated independent from particular collaboration or social media platforms.

The Qualification profiles and training modules shall be published under a creative commons license.

Expected impact:

The qualification profile and training material shall be made available to SME innovation support agencies in order to enhance the efficiency of service provision for example in – but not limited to – the context of the Enterprise Europe Network.

Impact is expected from reorienting resources in public innovation support from information and brokerage functions – which can to a large extent be automated – to higher value added functions like the identification of opportunities and the animation of project development.

Form of funding: Coordination and Support Action (100%) – single stage

The conditions related to this topic are provided along with the general conditions for this call.[Link to end of the description of the call]

7 - Broadening the perception of 'Innovation in SMEs' – Case studies, awareness and training material for support service providers produced under a 'Creative Commons License'

Specific challenge:

The Oslo Manual (source), the OECD reference material on measuring innovation, recognizes the role of innovation activities beyond R&D. These include, amongst others, the recognition of new product concept and production technology through interaction with suppliers and clients but also re-organisation of management. Studies, for example published by the IMP³rove Academy (source), show that companies with a broader understanding of innovation ('hybrid-innovators') that don't restrict their innovation activities to product and process innovation are more likely becoming growth champions in their sector.

Despite this evidence of the usefulness of a broader understanding of innovation, the vast majority of public innovation funding for SMEs is still provided to co-finance R&D. Even in the SMEs themselves the concept of innovation is often overly focused on product and technological innovation while strategic changes in market presence (the 'sales') and in the internal organisation are not regarded as part of the company's innovation strategy. Where companies have developed a holistic concept of innovation, including for example workplace innovation, this is frequently not recognised and supported by SME agencies.

The objective of the call is to contribute to broadening the understanding of the SME innovation in public support agencies and in SMEs' management. To that end case studies, awareness and training materials for the providers of SME support services shall be developed.

Scope:

The proposed activities shall aim at developing awareness and training material that can be used by SME themselves and by public and private innovation support service providers to broaden their understanding of innovation. The materials, in any type of format – like print, audio, video, serious game - shall be created under a 'Creative Commons' license allowing for the local adaptations.

Expected impact:

The materials developed are expected to be used by public and private innovation support providers (for example those in the Enterprise Europe Network or the community of consultants on the IMP³rove platform) during the provision of services to SMEs. This shall broaden the understanding of innovation in the companies themselves and shall establish the basis of for holistic innovation strategies that take due account of the all dimensions of innovation.

Equally, agencies in charge of designing and / or delivering innovation support programs shall benefit from the material for training their staff and in the design of new SME innovation support actions.

Form of funding: Collaborative project 100% - single stage

HORIZON 2020 – WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2015

Part III – Innovation in SME

A – Calls for proposals

CONDITIONS FOR THIS CALL

Publication date: YEAR 1
Deadline(s): Several deadlines over the 2 years

Topic 1	Q1 2015			
Topic 2, 3, 4	Q2 2014			
Topic 5	Continuously open from 01/05/2014			
Topic 6, 7	Q1 2015			

Indicative budget: [\[Link to the relevant option on "margin of manoeuvre"\]](#)

Option 1: Indicative budget : EUR XXX.XX million from the [Insert year e.g. 2014 or 2015, in some cases both years could be mentioned] budget

Option 2: Overall indicative budget: EUR XXX.XX million from the [Insert year e.g. 2014 or 2015, in some cases both years could be mentioned] budget
 And table as below. In formation given according to the ranking lists, no budget in the description of the topics

	2014 EUR million	2015 EUR million	
Topic 1,	EUR XXX.XX	EUR XXX.XX	Two stage
Topic 2, 3, 4	EUR 9.0		All two stage except action 2
Topic 5	0.5	1.0	
Topic 6, 7			

Eligibility conditions:

Topic 1	<p>1. To be eligible cluster organisations or other groups of SMEs must demonstrate that they have an own legal entity and "represent" a particular group of SMEs, which must be an already established relation through formal or informal membership and through business support services being provided. It is an asset of applicants if the participating cluster organisations and other SME intermediaries have registered themselves at the European Cluster Collaboration Platform and if they demonstrate their capacity to implement European partnerships in a strategic manner.</p> <p>2. Eligible costs include the setting up of open European cross-sectoral collaboration platforms that stimulate value chain innovation driven by SMEs, the carrying out of competition and matchmaking events and the validation process of ideas by expert peer review for the identification of</p>
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HORIZON 2020 – WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2015

Part III – Innovation in SME

A – Calls for proposals

	<p>SME innovation projects to be supported.</p> <p>3. At least 75% of the total proposed budget shall be allocated to third party enterprises, mainly SMEs. A maximum of €60,000 can be passed on to any third party (according to article 210 of the Rules of Application).</p> <p>4. Cross-sectoral projects for new value chains supported by the project shall involve at least SME from two of participating or associated countries.</p> <p>For other aspects the standard eligibility conditions apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard eligibility conditions] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.</p>
Topic 2	<p>The standard eligibility conditions apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard eligibility conditions] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.</p>
Topic 3	<p>The standard eligibility conditions apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard eligibility conditions] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.</p> <p>Specific eligibility condition :</p> <p>Only national patent offices or entities entrusted by national or regional governments to provide services similar to those of patent / trademark offices are eligible to apply</p>
Topic 4	<p>The standard eligibility conditions apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard eligibility conditions] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.</p> <p>Specific eligibility condition : Only entities entrusted by national or regional governments to develop and / or implement innovation voucher programmes for SMEs are eligible to apply</p>
Topic 5	<p>The standard eligibility conditions apply to this topic. [Link to the annex of the standard eligibility conditions for SME instrument]</p> <p>Specific eligibility condition: Only entities entrusted by national or regional governments to develop and / or implement innovation support programmes for SMEs are eligible to apply.</p>
Topic 6, 7	<p>The standard eligibility conditions apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard eligibility conditions] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.</p>

HORIZON 2020 – WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2015

Part III – Innovation in SME

A – Calls for proposals

Evaluation criteria:

Topic 1	The standard evaluation criteria apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard evaluation criteria] under Annex X before the preparation of your application. TBD specific evaluation criterion
Topic 2	The standard evaluation criteria apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard evaluation criteria] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.
Topic 3	The standard evaluation criteria apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard evaluation criteria] under Annex X before the preparation of your application. Specific evaluation criteria: - number of involved NIPOs and effectiveness of the involvement - initially proposed services to be developed to the target group and to a relevant part of the legal profession - mechanism to maintain and develop the joint website
Topic 4	The standard evaluation criteria apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard evaluation criteria] under Annex X before the preparation of your application. Specific evaluation criteria: - number of involved Innovation voucher programmes - ambition of acceptance of the private – foreign service providers as excellence criterion
Topic 5	TBD specific evaluation criterion apply for the small lump sum grants
Topic 6, 7	The standard evaluation criteria apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard evaluation criteria] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.

Evaluation procedure: [\[Link to the annex on standard evaluation procedure\]](#)

- Proposal page limits and layout: *[as appropriate]*

Topic 1	NN pages
Topic 2 to 4	
Topic 5	Specific guidance for application will be made available
Topic 6, 7	NN pages

HORIZON 2020 – WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2015

Part III – Innovation in SME

A – Calls for proposals

- Indicative timetable for evaluation and grant agreement²:

	Information on the outcome of the evaluation (<i>single or first stage</i>)	Information on the outcome of the evaluation (<i>second stage</i>)	Indicative date for the signing of grant agreements	
Topic 1	15/05/2015 <i>Maximum 6 months after the deadline</i>	30/09/2015	31/12/2015	
Topic 2	30/09/2014		31/12/2014	
Topic 3	30/05/2014	31/10/2014	31/12/2014	
Topic 4	30/05/2014 <i>Maximum 6 months after the deadline</i>	31/10/2014	31/12/2014 <i>Maximum 9 months after the deadline</i>	
Topic 5	Continuous latest 4 weeks after filing of complete proposal		Continuous latest 12 weeks after filing of complete proposal	
Topic 6, 7	31/07/2015		31/10/2015	

[Standard sentence on climate change and/or sustainable development *[to be added as necessary]*

² Should the call publication postponed, the dates in this table should be adjusted accordingly.

Other actions not topic of a call for proposal

Building a performing ecosystem for SME innovation support

1- Establishing services “Enhancing the innovation management capacity of SMEs” in the Enterprise Europe Network and providing ‘key account management’ for the beneficiaries of the SME instrument

Lack of innovation management capacity is recognised as an important barrier to creating economic impact (competitiveness, growth and jobs) from innovation activities in SMEs. But, services enhancing the innovation management capacity are not available to SMEs in many European regions as a result of a lack of offers, an unaffordable price or poor quality. To enhance the quality of innovation management support services to SMEs and introduce the service offers in many regions where they are so far absent, the European Union has launched the “IMP³rove – European Innovation Management Platform” that provides an assessment tool and trainings for interested consultants. The IMP³rove assessment enjoys a high international reputation and several regional and national support programs in Europe reference the tool.

The Enterprise Europe Network is an EU established network of public, public-private and private providers of support services to SMEs. In 2013 the network includes more than 600 partner organisations organised in around 100 regional and national consortia. A large number of members in the network provide already a range of innovation support services.

In order to enhance economic impact from SMEs’ innovation projects supported in Horizon 2020 coaching services to the beneficiaries are an essential part of the SME instrument. The scope of the action is to establish and provide the above mentioned services in the current Enterprise Europe Network in the year 2014 and as part of the Enterprise Europe Network (2015-21). To that end the action is broken down into 3 sub-actions that are individually described below:

1. Establishing and providing the services in 2014 in the Enterprise Europe Network (2008-14)
2. Providing the services in 2015/16 via the call for the Enterprise Europe Network (2015-21)
3. Adapting and maintaining the IMP³rove Assessment tools to support service provision by the Network

Expected impact:

Direct impact from the three combined sub-actions will be a significantly enhanced growth and profitability of SMEs receiving the services against control group. Impact will be significant on beneficiaries of Horizon2020 project support as well as on those only being supported by the targeted new service.

Indirect impact is expected from the introduction of high quality innovation management capacity assessment and support services in all regions across Europe. In an increasing number of regions the initial introduction in the context of the described action will lead to integration of the toolbox in regional innovation support.

I. Service provision in 2014

In 2014, still under the established network configuration, 2000 SMEs across Europe shall receive a 7-day service package that includes an innovation management performance assessment and gap analysis based on the IMP³rove methodology (estimated 3 working days) and 4 days of targeted consulting to address recognized gaps. For beneficiaries of the Horizon2020 SME instrument the latter 4 days shall be used to identify suitable coaches that could address barriers to growth on the basis of jointly agreed ‘coaching plan’. Within the 7-day assignment SMEs benefitting from Horizon2020 project support should furthermore be assisted in managing their project with the EU.

For the year 2014 [2000] ‘service package assignments’ shall be distributed primarily proportionally to the population of the region served to the coordinators of the regional / national Enterprise Europe Network consortium. Network partners that can successfully demonstrate that their staff has the necessary skills to undertake assessments of innovation management capacity based on the IMP³rove methodology shall be reimbursed the staff costs for the duration of the assignments based on scale of unit costs (daily rates).

Form of funding: Grant to named beneficiaries – the coordinators of the 2008-14 Enterprise Europe network projects – based on scale of unit costs.

Timeframe: Q1/2014

Estimated total budget for the sub-action: €5.04mio (excludes indirect costs)

List of beneficiaries (in Annex)

Beneficiary	Region covered, inhabitants (mio)	Number of assignments
Wirtschaftskammer	Austria, 8.44	27

Österreich, Wien		
Agence Bruxelloise d'Entreprise, Bruxelles	Brussels Region, 1.3	4
[...]		

II. Service provision in 2015/16

2015/16 will be the first phase of operation of a renewed Enterprise Europe Network. The legal base for the COSME programme foresees that the Enterprise Europe Network could be used to deliver actions addressing SMEs from other EU programmes under the condition that these programmes provide the necessary additional funding. The Enterprise Europe Network for the period 2015-21 will be established through an open call for proposals to be published in late 2013 in the COSME programme.

This open call will include the provision of services to enhance innovation management capacity of SMEs, in particular to the beneficiaries of the SME instrument as described above, as a separate section of the call. The call will ask applying consortia to carefully consider the positioning of the project and its services in the regional ecosystem of SME support in order to minimize market distorting effects. Applying consortia will be encouraged to seek cooperation with private service providers in the region whenever possible.

For the years 2015/16 annually [4000] SMEs across Europe shall receive service packages enhancing their innovation management capacity. The distribution among European regions shall follow the key used for allocation of funds available for the operation of the Enterprise Europe Network.

Form of funding: [Other] – CSA 100%.

Timeframe: Call published under COSME Q1/2014

Estimated total budget for the sub-action: €20.2mio (Excludes indirect costs)

III. Adapting and maintaining the IMP³rove Assessment tools to support service provision by the Network

Service provision for ‘Enhancing innovation management capacity of SMEs’ depends on the availability of a high quality comprehensive assessment tool in line with the standards for ‘innovation management consulting’ that are currently under development. The IMP³rove platform had initially been developed for the European Union. Since late 2012 the EU is supporting the launch phase of the not-for-profit IMP³rove Academy by covering the costs of administrative structures, the protection of the IP against infringements, marketing and assuring the technical availability of the assessment platform.

Utilising the IMP³rove platform for the delivery of the services described above will require some essential adaptations to the database, to the user interfaces and to the business processes. Furthermore costs for the verification of quality of data, that normally covered by the copyright fee charged to SMEs or its consultant, should be covered for the cases above by the EU that has an interest to enhance the economic impact from the supported innovation activities under the SME instrument. To cover the described additional investment and specific operational costs the IMP³rove – European Innovation Management Academy shall receive a grant covering the years 2014-16. (Maximum amount 1.3mio)

Form of funding: Grant to named beneficiary – 100%

Timeframe: Q1/2014

Estimated total budget for the sub-action: €1.3mio

Beneficiary: IMP³rove – European Innovation Management Academy, Kaistrasse 16A, 40221 Düsseldorf, Germany

2 – Capturing innovation impulses from emerging economies – Developing SME service packages for innovation agencies

During the next decades growth of the world economy will be concentrated in emerging economies with a, compared to European standards, small but steeply rising purchasing power of individuals. An increasing number of multinational companies orient their product and service innovation activities towards the needs of clients in emerging economies and identify

new business opportunities for such product even in mature markets. Govindarajan³ documented many such cases and called this strategic process ‘reverse innovation’.

The objective of action is to develop tools and methods for European innovation and SME internationalisation support agencies to provide better services to their clients that allow them to capture the potential of reverse innovation.

The proposed activities shall develop a toolbox and methodologies that can be provided to agencies in the Member States to support SMEs in capturing the potential of reverse innovation. Tools and methodologies may include, but are not limited to, case studies (in print, audio or video) for awareness and analysis, methodological guides to capture consumer preferences in emerging economies, guides to cooperation with local science, technology and innovation agents, tools to support the enterprise in identifying gaps and building-up internal capacities for reverse innovation and others. The tools and methodologies shall be developed for the European Union under a service contract. The Union will make them available to agencies of participating countries in a non-discriminatory manner.

Form of funding: public procurement (competitive dialogue) max. 2mio

Timeframe: Q3/2014

Estimated maximum budget: €1.5mio

3 – Capabilities for Design-Driven Innovation in European SMEs

Design is a key driver in creating new products and services that are attractive to customers, and can make a business stand out among the competition. However, the lack of design management skills is a significant barrier to the wider adoption and integration of design into Europe’s businesses. As stated in the Innovation Union Flagship Initiative, although some European countries are world leaders in design, others lack a robust design infrastructure and design capability. This systemic gap has largely gone unnoticed but must now be tackled.

The broader scope of this action relates to promoting the use of new sources of innovation to support competitiveness of European SMEs.

Companies need investment in design management skills but there is a lack of specialised design-based training and mentoring programmes for SMEs, and of design-led innovation incubators. Making such support services available more widely will improve business’s ability to use design as a driver for innovation. This calls for improvement in the design

³ Govindarajan (2012): Reverse Innovation – Create far from home, win everywhere , Harvard Business Review Press

innovation competencies of business-development organisations, incubators and other intermediaries in all EU Member States.

The objective of this action is to create capacity to deliver support for design-driven innovation for businesses throughout Europe. A special emphasis is put on addressing regions lagging behind in applying design-driven innovation and on supporting green design.

Expected activities include:

- Workshops, training, peer-learning and other actions to improve the capabilities for design-driven innovation among business development organisations, incubators and other intermediaries.
- Development of support material for the intermediary organisations, including business associations, for their work with the SMEs as well as training material for SMEs.
- Demonstration of concrete cases, to business development organisations and managers of support schemes, where design has played an instrumental role in creating new value and promoting productivity.

Organising these actions can be supported by the European Design Innovation Platform, the creation of which is planned in the EIP work programme for 2013.

Form of funding: public procurement

Timeframe: Q1/2015

Estimated maximum budget: €2.0mio

Assisting SMEs to connect to research and innovation partners

[H2020-YYYY-CALL IDENTIFIER]

Scene-setter: SME face particular barriers in their innovation activities. Besides a scarcity of financial means, the lack of capacities and skills to manage innovation processes, to manage IP and to liaise with capable innovation partners have been identified as the major internal bottlenecks to innovation in SMEs. To address these SMEs need easy access to networks and new knowledge as well as external assistance, ~~which is provided occasionally on the European, but mainly on national and regional level.~~ Creating European-level opportunities for networking and mobilization of resources will be key as innovation moves away from a sequential logic towards a networked-based approach extending over borders.

~~‘Support to SME innovation’ is an area in which the European level is a peer to Member States actions and plays an animating and moderating role to enhance the quality of national and regional programmes. Furthermore t~~

The European level provides fora and platforms to explore new forms of innovation in SMEs, to foster European and international exchange and cooperation among SMEs and of SMEs with other research and innovation actors as well as to promote knowledge and technology transfer enhancing the competitiveness of enterprises and the market uptake of innovations while exploiting the full innovation potential of the Internal Market.

~~SMEs often remain unsatisfied with the innovation services they receive, despite the considerable investments done. The public expects a high return from the support provided to SME innovation activities. Enhancing the innovation capacity of SMEs by raising the quality of the support services provided to them is the key to successfully addressing the challenges described above. It will also support SMEs in better exploiting the opportunities provided by Horizon 2020 and as a result will accelerate the economic impact of the provided support.~~

Call title: Assisting SMEs to connect to research and innovation partners

1 – Professionalization of open innovation management in SMEs

Specific Challenge: Current research on open innovation in SMEs has not yet revealed the extent and creativity of SMEs in designing and implementing open innovation strategies. The lessons learned from open innovation in large firms are not readily transferable to the context of SMEs. Managing and organizing open innovation in SMEs is quite specific. In addition open innovation tends to alter the strategic orientation of the company. Open innovation in large firms does not affect its strategic objectives. In the case of SMEs it usually is a result of a comprehensive overhaul of the firm's strategy and objectives. If implemented correctly, the benefits for any company – in particular an SME – can be very important, for instance in the fields of technology transfer, capital raising, resource optimization or networking (Vanhaverbeke et al., 2012). An urgent need exists, therefore, to study how collaboration and/ or open innovation is managed and organized in SMEs.

Open innovation can be an important lever for growth for any company. It is important to investigate its development and implement efficient initiatives that will allow SMEs to tap into open innovation practices. Open innovation is implemented in many local initiatives, awareness of these initiatives should be expanded and the services supporting them professionalized. From the policy point of view triggering factors and policy measures (if any) should be identified. This should lead to the development of guidelines that are in line with the imperative of open innovation.

Scope: The duration of the action will be 3 years. It will consist of the following elements:

- **Collection and analysis of information and data** on the application of open innovation in SMEs, taking into account different situations in Member States and in specific market segments. Identification of case-study examples and analysis of how these practices are organized and managed, both in high-tech and low-tech industries. Publication and further dissemination of an annual report on the use of open innovation in key European economic sectors of most relevance to SMEs.

- **EU-wide diffusion of success stories of SMEs using open innovation** – Most open innovation support practices are organized locally. Although they are accessible to managers of the smallest companies the scale is too small to invest significantly in developing content and guidelines. This action will promote Europe-wide case-study examples that illustrate highly successful entrepreneurs who have been transforming their business through a network of partners. It will also illustrate how managing such a network is an increasingly important lever in gaining competitive advantage and how open innovation can become key both for creation and appropriating value.

- Development of practical management tools to support and explain the identified case studies. The management modules should focus on (1) Strategy dimension, (2) Entrepreneurship skills, (3) Resource needs, (4) Tools to build trust and control and manage risk in a collaborative partnership. This will provide managers of small companies with hands-on guidelines on how to innovate and set-up innovation networks. The aim should be to raise awareness of open innovation in SMEs by identifying best practice examples that will help the professionalization of open innovation management Europe-wide. The action should provide recommendations on how SME-specific open-innovation information beyond the scope of the present activity can best be made available.

- Identification of policy conditions to make open innovation a reality in SMEs. The erosion of the closed innovation system has also resulted in a larger role for SMEs in the industrial innovation system. Stock-taking of existing open innovation support schemes available throughout Europe. Development of public policy guidelines that are in line with the open innovation paradigm, i.e. education and human capital development, transition of funding models towards open innovation systems, competition policy, industrial policy.

Expected impact: Because of a lack of required internal resources, SMEs often collaborate with external partners to innovate successfully. Open innovation allows SMEs to sidestep the commoditization pressure and price competition successfully by developing new and more profitable businesses through network opportunities. The project will professionalize open innovation management in SMEs by creating an online platform to disseminate best practice examples in the business community and complementing the cases with training modules highlighting specific open innovation aspects.

Form of funding: Coordination and Support Action (100%) – One stage

2 - Measuring open innovation inputs and outcomes in SMEs

Specific Challenge: Innovation becomes increasingly global and it occurs largely in global networks. From a policymaker's point of view this requires the development of internationally comparable indicators to better understand the concept of open innovation and its implications for innovation policy. R&D-intensive firms are increasingly reluctant to increase R&D spending, but rather seek to rationalize the process by bringing in new partners or spinning out research projects. Traditional innovation measures fail to spot these tendencies. Currently available open innovation data is also insufficient to support business operations. There is little hard evidence, based on large-scale databases, about research projects or other innovation activities where open innovation may play a crucial role. At the same time financial and management reporting need to catch up with the logic of open innovation. Clearly, from the points of view of a policymaker and an entrepreneur, detailed

and comprehensive data would allow drawing conclusions why open innovation is productive in particular circumstances and not in other.

Scope: The duration of the action will be 2 years. It will comprise the following elements:

- **Stocktaking of available open innovation indicators, indices and methodologies** (in particular those developed by the European Commission, OECD or private data). Assessment of their relevance and effectiveness for use as measures of innovation activities and innovation performance in SMEs, taking into consideration intensity and quality of collaboration.

- **Development of quantitative tools to present evidence and impact of open-innovation in SMEs.** – Open innovation studies have so far been dominated by qualitative research approaches, drawing heavily on in-depth interviews and case-studies. Participation is needed to assess whether open innovation is relevant for large business populations.

- **Development and testing of open innovation indicators to act as management support tools within an SME.** The developed quantitative tools should help management to make decision about the timing when to establish or end partnerships. Companies should be supported not only in partnering, but also in determining when, for how long and in which sequence partners should be drawn into the projects.

Expected impact: The project will develop methodologies to gather, measure and analyse data on open innovation. Subsequently the project will carry out practical testing of the tools to describe the importance and characteristics of open innovation across countries/ industrial sectors/ firm size and then develop recommendations for their further use.

Form of funding: Coordination and Support Action (100%) – Single stage

3 – Community-building and competence development for SME instrument coaching

Specific challenge: A key objective of Horizon 2020 (H2020) is to improve SME support mechanisms to increase the impact of SME participation in H2020. In the case of the dedicated SME instrument this will be achieved through a dedicated coaching service delivered during the company's participation in the SME instrument. The purpose of coaching will be to empower senior management teams of SME instrument participants to develop and successfully implement high growth strategies based on successful participation in the dedicated H2020 instrument. Coaching will be geared towards:

- Enhancing the commercial potential and impact of SME participation in the

dedicated H2020 instrument by ensuring that the project is aligned with and developed as an integral part of the company's innovation strategy,

- Achieving tangible organizational change and improved results,
- Improving the skill's levels of managers, leaving a legacy such that the SME is better able to overcome the barriers to growth post-H2020 participation. The coaching service will be delivered in cooperation with the Enterprise Europe Network (ARES(2013) 22842), which will act as a broker between SME participants and coaches. Coaches will be selected from a Europe-wide coaching pool.

The objective of the action is to create the conditions for a comprehensive and consistent delivery of the coaching service. In order to support peer-to-peer learning coaches and expand the regionally-based perspective of the coaches they should have the opportunity to exchange ideas and experience with each other to grow the competencies within the coaching network. This will also ensure consistent service delivery. A central facility (Europe-wide) should be set-up to gather the experiences and data accumulated through the coaching engagement. It should also act as a single reference pool and knowledge resource to assist the coaches in the service delivery.

Scope: The action will have a duration of 2 years and it will not involve actual SME coaching. It will consist of:

- Awareness raising regarding the recruitment opportunities for SME instrument coaching,
- Creation of information materials, set-up of dissemination events, creation of on-line training modules for coaches regarding SME support in Horizon 2020 and the implementation of SME instrument in particular,
- Community building, networking, exchange of practical coaching experiences within the H2020 coaching community,
- Setting up and animation of a virtual coaching platform to connect the coaches to enable them to share experiences, key learning points from coaching engagements and help identify relevant specialist coaches,
- Organization of coaching meetings to share best practice examples among coaches, in particular in societal challenge areas where coaching methodologies and challenges faced by the coaches will tend to be similar,
- Set up a monitoring and benchmarking scheme to ensure consistent coaching service delivery.
- Analysis and monitoring of the outcomes of coaching support in Horizon 2020.

Expected impact: The creation of dedicated platform will support the delivery of the coaching service in Horizon 2020. The platform will facilitate peer-to-peer learning among the coaching community and will ensure the international dimension for coaching, which will tend to be regionally based. The platform should be expected to grow as Horizon 2020

HORIZON 2020 – WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2015

Part III – Innovation in SME

A – Calls for proposals

unfolds and the number of participating companies and coaching engagements increases.

Form of funding: Coordinating and Support Action (100%) – Single stage

The conditions related to this topic are provided along with the general conditions for this call. [Link to end of the description of the call]

CONDITIONS FOR THIS CALL

Publication date: 2014, 2015

Deadline(s): 2014, 2015

Topic 1, 2	01.01.2015			
Topic 3	01.01.2014			

Indicative budget: [\[Link to the relevant option on "margin of manoeuvre"\]](#)

Indicative budget: EUR XXX.XX million from the 2014 budget

	2014 EUR million	2015 EUR million	
Topic 1			
Topic 2			
Topic 3			

HORIZON 2020 – WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2015

Part III – Innovation in SME

A – Calls for proposals

Eligibility conditions:

Topic 1	The standard eligibility conditions apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard eligibility conditions] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.
Topic 2	The standard eligibility conditions apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard eligibility conditions] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.
Topic 3	The standard eligibility conditions apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard eligibility conditions] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.
	Tttttttt specific eligibility condition

HORIZON 2020 – WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2015

Part III – Innovation in SME

A – Calls for proposals

Evaluation criteria:

Topic 1	The standard evaluation criteria apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard evaluation criteria] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.
Topic 2	The standard evaluation criteria apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard evaluation criteria] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.
Topic 3	The standard evaluation criteria apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard evaluation criteria] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.

Evaluation procedure: [\[Link to the annex on standard evaluation procedure\]](#)

- Indicative timetable for evaluation and grant agreement⁴:

	Information on the outcome of the evaluation (<i>single or first stage</i>)	Information on the outcome of the evaluation (<i>second stage</i>)	Indicative date for the signing of grant agreements	
Topic 1,2	01/06/15	-	01/09/15	
Topic 3	01/06/14	-	01/09/14	

⁴ Should the call publication be postponed, the dates in this table should be adjusted accordingly.

Other actions - Assisting SMEs to connect to research and innovation partners

1 – Internationalization of innovation in SMEs

The nature of innovation, increasingly involving complex and multifaceted activities, stimulates specialisation in and internationalisation of the key innovation processes of companies, including outsourcing and off-shoring of R&I activities. Enterprises no longer want to exploit only knowledge developed at home in foreign markets, but seek to source new ideas and technologies worldwide and to tap into knowledge generation and the pool of scientists and qualified workers in third countries.

To capture the growth opportunities notably in developing countries and emerging economies, enterprises innovate specifically for these markets building on local expertise and inventiveness. Seizing an opportunity in third countries can, at the same time, result in a remarkable business success also in the home market and globally. This development is mainly driven by large enterprises and especially multinational firms, but not exclusively. More and more young, fast-growing SMEs are established with an international business concept ("Born Globals") that rely on an international innovation network. However, there is generally very little known about SMEs in global research and innovation processes and relatively few SMEs are internationalised at all. Many opportunities remain untapped.

An international conference in 2014 will launch a debate and collect evidence on how European SMEs are involved in international R&I. It shall bring together all relevant stakeholders to discuss how SMEs can benefit from the dynamics and opportunities of international R&I activities and networks and how they can be supported to engage in globalised innovation processes. SMEs shall be encouraged to internationalise research and innovation activities creating radical innovations by collaborating with partners from different economic, scientific and socio-cultural backgrounds. A win-win situation for both sides should be brought about ensuring for European companies that their knowledge assets are further developed in a way that safeguards their economic interests and promotes their growth.

Form of funding: Public Procurement – Framework Contract

Timeframe: Q1 2014

Indicative budget: