



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Call for Proposals

ENT6/CIP/07/C/N04S00

European Innovation Platform for Knowledge Intensive Services

CIP Work programme 2007

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1. CONTEXT

In the Communication “Putting Knowledge into practice “A broad based innovation strategy for the EU”¹ of 13 September 2006, the European Commission announced ‘a more pro-active approach in the creation and support of young innovative SMEs in the service sector’. The specific aim is to create more efficient links between research, entrepreneurship and finance, resulting in the creation of a *Pan-European Innovation Platform for start-ups in knowledge intensive services*.

This action is in line with objectives of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP)² and its specific Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP) established in support of enterprises, particularly SMEs, entrepreneurship, innovation and industrial competitiveness.

The present call for proposals has the objective to implement this action within the framework of the Europe INNOVA initiative as already stipulated in the EIP Work Programme 2007.

In this context, will be rejected any project directly or indirectly contrary to EU policy or against public health, human rights, citizen’s security, freedom of expression, etc.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE CALL

The overall objective of the European Innovation Platform for knowledge Intensive Services (KIS-Platform) is to foster technological as well as non-technological innovation (organisational innovation) in services, taking into account the dynamic interconnections between research, skills, entrepreneurship, finance and clusters. In order to maximise the potential impact, it will particularly address the needs and specificities of potential high growth ventures active in KIS, which represents the most challenging segment, but also the most rewarding one in terms of economic growth and value added. In this sense, it should be considered as a test-case for wider application in other areas.

The KIS-Platform is supposed to be implemented through a public private partnership, based on a sectoral networking approach (strand 1) complemented with horizontal support services (strand 2).

2.1. Specific objectives strand 1: Sectoral networks

The KIS-platform will be composed of up to 3 sectoral networks, offering pooled support to high growth ventures active in KIS. Each networking initiative is supposed to:

§ Assess the specific research and skills needs of potential high growth companies active in knowledge intensive services and help them in establishing links with relevant research and business partners;

¹ COM(2006) 502 final

² Decision No 1639/2006/EC of 24 October 2006

- § Design, test and validate improved support mechanisms to the benefit of KIS start-ups as well as young promising growth firms, based on existing good practices developed under PAXIS, Gate2Growth and Europe INNOVA;
- § Facilitate access to finance and networking with clusters for knowledge intensive service companies.

For the purpose of this call, emphasis should be put on fostering service innovations within a specific industrial sector, thus addressing the linkages between manufacturing and services. Applicants should justify in their proposal the sector that they have chosen to cover in view of its innovation potential. Examples are the promotion of KIS activities in highly innovative industry sectors, such as environmental technologies, new materials, biotechnology, satellite downstream applications and ICT or ICT based solutions.

2.2. Specific objectives strand 2: Horizontal support action

The sectoral networks will be complemented by 1 horizontal support action to ensure the establishment of an integrated *European Innovation Platform for Knowledge Intensive Services*. The horizontal support action is supposed to:

- § Establish and further promote a European repository of knowledge and good practices on technological and organisational/business model innovations in services;
- § Develop a guide on the facilitation of organisational innovation in services;
- § Establish a business community of minimum 100 young innovative service companies with high growth potential;
- § Organise annual European Venture Contests for young innovative service companies as well as a European innovation/service award;
- § Create a common communication platform, including communication and marketing tools supporting the specific activities.

3. TIMETABLE

Scheduled start-up date for the action: *January 2008*

Maximum duration of actions is: *36 months*

The period of eligibility of costs will start on the day the contract is signed by the last of the parties. If a beneficiary can demonstrate the need to start the action before the agreement is signed, expenditure may be authorised before the agreement is signed. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application.

4. FINANCING

The **maximum budget** allocated for the operation is: **€5.000.000**

The **maximum amount by project** is: €1.400.000 for strand 1 (sectoral networks) and 800.000 (horizontal action) for strand 2.

Indicative number of projects: maximum 3 sectoral networks will be selected and maximum 1 horizontal action

Community co-financing rate of eligible costs: the Community financial contribution for the innovation activities will be up to 75% for strand 1 and up to 95% for strand 2. The project management activities of both strands will be supported up to 100%.

Please note that one action may give rise to the award of only one grant from the Community budget to any one beneficiary.

The Commission reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicant. Grants will not be awarded for more than the amount requested.

The publication does not guarantee the availability of funds for the above action.

The Commission grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the beneficiary. Profit is defined as a surplus of receipts over costs. The amount of the grant will be reduced by the amount of any surplus.

4.1. Co-financing and joint and several responsibility

The beneficiary shall supply evidence of the co-financing provided, either by way of own resources, or in the form of financial transfers from third parties, or in kind. The Commission may accept co-financing in kind, if considered necessary or appropriate. In such cases the value of such contributions cannot cover all the necessary co-financing.

The applicants shall provide an explicit undertaking from each co-financing organisation to provide the amount of funding stated in the grant application for the operation (signed form E).

They shall agree upon appropriate arrangements between themselves for the proper performance of the action. In particular shall they agree on joint and several responsibility for any amount due to the Commission by anyone of them, limited to their level of responsibility by the special conditions of the grant agreement.

4.2. Contracting

Where implementation of the assisted actions requires the award of procurement contracts, beneficiaries of grants shall award the contract to the tender offering best value for money, that is to say, to the tender offering the best price-quality ratio in compliance with the principles of transparency and equal treatment. Where implementation of the assisted actions requires the award of a procurement contract with a value of more than EUR 60 000, the authorising officer responsible may require beneficiaries to abide by special rules based on rules contained in the Financial Regulation and determined with due regard for the value of the contracts concerned, the relative size of the Community contribution in relation to the total cost of the action and the risk. Such special rules shall be included in the grant decision or agreement.

In-house consultants will need to be categorised as contractors. Please refer to the guide for submission for further details on subcontracting.

Contracting does not limit the responsibilities of beneficiaries.

5. ELIGIBILITY

Applicants and applications must comply with the following conditions in order to be eligible:

- ⌚ Applicants must be legal entities established in an eligible country as defined in Article 4 of the CIP and section III of the Submission set;
- ⌚ Corporate bodies must be properly constituted and registered under the law;
- ⌚ Applications must be signed, dated and complete, using the submission requirements;
- ⌚ Applications must be received before the closing date mentioned;
- ⌚ Only applications for projects that are strictly non-profit-making and/or whose immediate objective is non-commercial shall be eligible;

Moreover, according to article 93 of the Financial Regulation (Council regulation N°1605/2002) mentioned below, candidates shall be excluded from participation in a grant procedure if:

- a. they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b. they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of res judicata;
- c. they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- d. they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e. they have been the subject of a judgement which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f. are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 96(1) of the Financial Regulations

By using the “Exclusion Form” (attached to the “Submission Set”), applicants shall declare on their honour that they are not in one of the situations listed above. The authorising officer responsible may however request the evidence described in the “Exclusion Form” above mentioned. In such case, applicants shall be bound to supply such proof, unless there is a material impossibility recognised by the authorising officer responsible.

- b In addition and according to article 94 of the Financial Regulation mentioned below, grants may not be awarded to candidates who, during the award procedure:
- g. are subject to a conflict of interest;
 - h. are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the contract procedure or fail to supply this information.
 - i. find themselves in one of the situations of exclusion referred to in point a to f for this call for proposals

Please note that, according to article 96 of the Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities and according to article 133 of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 – as last modified by Regulation 478/2007 of 23 April 2007, laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation, administrative and financial penalties may be imposed by the Commission on applicants who are excluded in relation to points a) to h) above mentioned.

Applicants may act individually or in consortium with partner organisations. All partners must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as those for applicants.

6. SELECTION

6.1. Applicants' financial capacity to complete the proposed action

For the financial capacity, applicants must show they have stable and sufficient sources of finance to ensure the continuity of their organisation throughout the action and to play a part in financing it. To that end, they will include in the proposal information on their annual accounts for the last two financial years (i.e. profit and loss accounts; balance sheet). In conformity with Article 176 of the Implementation Rules of the Financial Regulations, the verification of the financial capacity will not be applied to public bodies.

Where the proposed amount requested from the Commission exceeds €500.000 per partner organisation, a, audit report on those accounts must be provided before conclusion of the grant agreement. For applying consortia, the audit report is applicable to the level of individual organisation and not to the level of the consortium.

6.2. Applicants' technical capacity to complete the proposed action

Applicants must show that they have the professional and technical capacity to complete the operation and must demonstrate their capacity to manage a large-scale activity corresponding with the size of the action for which a grant is requested. In particular, the team responsible for the action must have adequate professional qualifications and experience. Applicants will therefore include in the proposal curriculum vitae of the main members of the team that will actually be performing the work and professional references and details of similar past projects.

Applicants must be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action, not acting as an intermediary. They must provide information about their capacity to carry

out the expected activities and demonstrate their experience in working with other parties in trans-national projects. The coordinator must demonstrate a strong management experience of international consortia of relevant size.

In addition, applicants must add a statement of the average annual manpower and the number of managerial staff of the beneficiary in the last three years and clearly indicate the proportion of the grant agreement which the applicants intend to subcontract.

7. AWARD

An evaluation of the quality of proposals, including the proposed budget, will be carried out in accordance with the following award criteria:

| | |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Relevance | /15 |
| 2. Visibility | /15 |
| 3. Impact | /30 |
| 4. Quality | /25 |
| 5. Budget and Cost-effectiveness | /15 |
| Maximum total score | /100 |

If a total score lower than 70 points or a score lower than 50% for any of the above five criteria is obtained, the proposal will not be evaluated further.

The complete selection and evaluation procedure is described in point IV of the submission set.

Please note that, in case of award, the beneficiary authorises the Commission, to publish the following information in any form and medium, including via the Internet:

- the beneficiary's name and the address,
- the subject and purpose of the grant,
- the amount granted and the proportion of the action's total cost covered by the funding.

8. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

The proposal must be drafted using the specific submission set available for this call. Please refer also to the guide for submission for explanatory details.

The submission set can be downloaded from Europa web site: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/funding/grants/themes_2007/calls_prop_2007.htm

The proposal must be placed inside 2 sealed envelopes. The inner envelope should be addressed to the department indicated below. If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across this tape. It should bear the following description:

*European Commission
Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General
Unit D.1 Innovation Policy Development*

Call for proposals
*CIP Programme 2007 – Action ENT6/CIP/07/C/N04S00
“European Innovation Platform for Knowledge Intensive Services”*

*Office address: Av. d’Auderghem 45 – 06/198
B-1049 Brussels – BELGIUM*

Not to be opened by the internal mail department

Please note that electronic submissions are not allowed for this call.

The grant application will be submitted:

- a) **Either by registered mail**, postmarked not later than 07/09/2007 to the address indicated below:

*European Commission
Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General
Unit D.1 Innovation Policy Development*

*CIP Programme 2007 – Action ENT6/CIP/07/C/N04S00
“European Innovation Platform for Knowledge Intensive Services”
Office address: Av. d’Auderghem 45 – 06/198
B-1049 Brussels – BELGIUM*

- b) **or sent by courier services**, no later than **07/09/2007** (date of deposit slip), to the address above.
- c) **or delivered by hand**, in person or by an authorised representative no later than 4 p.m. on **07/09/2007**, (date of acknowledgement of receipt by the Commission) *to the following address:*

*Service central de réception du courrier
Avenue du Bourget, 1
B-1140 Evere, Belgique*

How to reach avenue du Bourget 1:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/calls/hand_delivery.html

Please note, that for security reasons, hand deliveries (including private courier services) shall no longer be accepted in other Commission’s buildings. An acknowledgement of receipt shall be delivered by the “Service central de réception du courrier”.

Applicants shall observe precisely the above indications in order that proposals can reach their precise destination in due time.

Evidence of timely submission by post or courier service will be constituted by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-delivery, the signed and dated receipt will serve as evidence.

Reminder: Late delivery will lead to the applicant being excluded from the award procedure.

9. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The European Community has the task to promote equality between women and men and shall aim in all its activities to eliminate gender inequalities (articles 2 and 3 of the EC Treaty). In this context, women are particularly encouraged to be involved in proposal submission.

10. PERSONAL DATA

Your grant application will be processed by computer. All personal data (such as names, addresses, CVs, etc.) will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.³

Your replies to the questions in the submission set are necessary in order to assess your grant application and they will be processed solely for that purpose by the department responsible for the Community grant programme concerned. On request, you may be sent personal data and correct or complete them. For any question relating to these data, please contact the Commission department to which the application must be returned. Beneficiaries may lodge a complaint against the processing of their personal data with the European Data Protection Supervisor at any time.

11. ANNEX 1 SUBMISSION SET

The submission set and its annexes needed to prepare a proposal can be downloaded at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/funding/grants/themes_2007/calls_prop_2007.htm

³ Official Journal L 8, 12.1.2001.