



The Horizon 2020 "SME Instrument" at a glance

Programme	Horizon 2020 – SME Instrument
Funding agency	European Commission – Directorate-General for Research and Innovation
Objective	Enabling small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) to pursue high-risk and high-potential innovation ideas, enter new markets and become European "growth champions". Support in 3 phases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1: Feasibility study (verifying technological as well as economic viability – optional) • Phase 2: Innovation project (e.g. testing, prototyping, scaling-up, design) • Phase 3: Commercialisation (indirect support measures and services – optional)
Themes	Pre-defined topics from the whole range of Horizon 2020 themes, e.g. validation of biomarkers / diagnostic devices or innovations for a low carbon energy system
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for proposals: Continuously open call with usually four cut-off dates per year • Proposal submission: Anytime – Funding decision after the next cut-off date • Project start: About 3 months (Phase 1) or 6 months (Phase 2) after cut-off date
Consortium	Typically a single SME applies for funding. Other partners, such as research providers or larger companies, can be involved as third parties, in general in a subcontracting relationship.
Duration	About 6 months for Phase 1 and 1-2 years for Phase 2
Funding rates	Lump-sum funding in Phase 1 and 70% funding in Phase 2 (100% in selected cases)
Total Funding	50,000 euro for Phase 1 / about 0.5-2.5 million euro in Phase 2 / no funding in Phase 3
Success criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for economic success and growth ("Impact") • Radical innovation in the field ("Excellence") • Capacity of the SME and its partners, sound work plan ("Implementation")
Success rate	New instrument in Horizon 2020. Expected success rates between 5 and 20% depending on the thematic area
Website	http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/sme-instrument

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