

Call for expression of interest for setting up of a list of coaches for coaching activities in connection with the SME Instrument

1. Awarding authority

Executive Agency for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise (EASME)
Unit A.2 Horizon 2020: SMEs
COV2 12/073
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2. Registration procedure

The objective of this call for expressions of interest is to set up a list of external experts, hereafter called "business coach(es)".

Expressions of interest should be submitted using the EUsurvey tool by accessing the following URL:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/businesscoachesSMEI>

Inclusion on the list entails no obligation on the part of the contracting authority concerning the conclusion of contracts.

3. Full description of the fields covered by the call for expressions of interest

The business coaches will perform their tasks within the framework of the Horizon 2020 SME instrument.¹

The Horizon 2020 SME Instrument (hereinafter "the SME instrument") is a novel funding tool supporting SMEs with the ambition and potential to engage in innovation-driven growth on the European and global market. It is based on three phases. Phase 1 aims to cover the assessment of technical feasibility and market potential of new ideas, phase 2 aims to cover R&I activities with a particular focus on demonstration activities and market replication and phase 3 concerns support measures in view of helping SMEs toward commercialising their innovative products and services. The call for proposals was launched on 11 December 2013 (OJ C361).

The objectives of the Horizon 2020 SME Instrument are both short and long term:

- In the short term, enhance the commercial potential and impact of SME participation in H2020 by ensuring that the project is aligned with the company's innovation strategy;
- Empower senior management in participating firms to develop and successfully implement high growth strategies based on successful participation in H2020;
- In the long term, achieve tangible organizational change and leadership development, leaving a legacy such that the SME is better able to overcome the barriers to growth post-H2020 participation.

¹ COUNCIL DECISION 2013/743/EU of 3 December 2013 establishing the specific programme implementing Horizon 2020 - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), OJ L347, p. 997ff http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/legal_basis/sp/h2020-sp_en.pdf. See http://ec.europa.eu/easme/sme_en.htm for a general introduction.

The coaching support will focus on developing organizational capabilities to equip the beneficiaries with the necessary skills to ensure commercial growth based on the company's SME Instrument project. Participation in the offered coaching support is voluntary for SME Instrument participants.

The role of the business coaches is to provide business coaching and leadership development support to companies. A range of competencies will enable them to demonstrate their credibility to business. Some will have specific skills in certain areas.

Major Responsibilities:

- establish the client company's strategy, the hurdles preventing its development and together with the company to prepare a business growth plan with milestones and outcomes which satisfies all parties;
- agree a coaching work plan which addresses specific barriers to growth preventing the successful implementation of the SME instrument project;
- deliver a programme of structured face to face coaching to address barriers to growth and help implement the project and transform the company;
- deliver coaching on specific issues as necessary;
- comply with contractual requirements including targets, outputs and budgetary control;
- help build strategic partnerships with the help of EEN contacts;
- refer clients on to appropriate EEN support services/events and business support provided by other initiatives (i.e. for legal and IPR issues).

It is envisaged that business coaches will be assigned to participating companies by use of Key Account Management (KAM) established in regional Enterprise Europe Network (EEN)² consortia. The task description and the requested profile of the KAM are specified in Annex 4 of the document COS-WP2014-2-1.³

Successful beneficiaries of the call will be offered coaching and mentoring support during the first two phases of the SME instrument.

4. Information and documents to be provided

Interested parties should provide their full contact details, a link (URL) to a publicly available Curriculum Vita in English language, which is significant with respect to the specifications as described under point 3⁴ by using EUsurvey link described in point 2, and shall at least contain the following:

- area of expertise: indication of specialist field(s) and pre-defined additional field(s) of expertise;
- professional experience: current and past employment including title of position and years in the position;
- education and training: qualifications including title of qualification, subject or field, name of institution, country, and year awarded;

² URL of EEN: <http://een.ec.europa.eu/>.

³ For details see Call for Proposals COS-WP2014-2-1 "COSME Enterprise Europe Network 2015/2020", Annex 4: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/cosme/files/een-guide_en.pdf.

⁴ Where such an on-line CV is not available, the applicant may also submit a corresponding PDF version of a significant CV.

- languages spoken.

Furthermore, interested parties shall submit at least 3 references related to the criteria indicated under point 3. These references or testimonials shall be signed by the respective Chief Executive/Managing Director/Business Owner on headed notepaper (attachments). Further, they must mention the coach by name, and give specific details of the positive impact and outcomes that the coaching support has provided to the Chief Executive/Managing Director/Owner and the business.

5. General description of the procedure

Natural persons are invited to submit an expression of interest in accordance with the rules set out in this call.

The contracting authority will draw up a list of experts who meet the criteria set out in point 11.

Where a particular task relating to the field described in point 3 is to be performed by an external expert, the contracting authority will assign experts to the task on the basis of the skills, experience and knowledge necessary and in accordance with the principles of non-discrimination, equal treatment and absence of conflict of interests.

6. Protection of personal data

If processing your expression of interest involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as your name, address and CV), such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 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. Unless indicated otherwise, your reply to this call and any personal data requested are required for the purposes indicated above in point 3 and will be processed solely for those purposes by the contracting authority indicated in point 1, which is also acting as data controller. Details concerning the processing of your personal data are available on the privacy statement at: http://ec.europa.eu/dataprotectionofficer/privacystatement_publicprocurement_en.pdf.

Your personal data may be registered in the Early Warning System (EWS) only or both in the EWS and Central Exclusion Database (CED) by the Accounting Officer of the Commission, should you be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision 2008/969 of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (for more information see the Privacy Statement on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm),

or

- the Commission Regulation 2008/1302 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (for more information see the Privacy Statement on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm#BDCE)

7. Use of the list resulting from this call

The list resulting from this call will be used exclusively for the execution of the tasks within the fields described in point 3, with a maximum threshold of € 60 000 of total payments

(including both remunerations and reimbursements) and for a maximum of 120 working days per expert.

8. Place of delivery

The activities shall be delivered in the premises of the participating companies.

9. Expiry date of the list resulting from this call for expressions of interest

The list resulting from this call is valid for the duration of the multi-annual programme Horizon 2020. Interested parties may submit an application at any time prior to the last three months of validity of the list.

10. Exclusion criteria

Experts shall be excluded from participation if:

- a) they have a conflict of interest in connection with the contract, a conflict of interest could arise in particular as a result of economic interests, political or national affinities, family or emotional ties or any other relevant connection or shared interest;
- b) a business coach cannot at the same time be a Key Account Manager in the Enterprise Europe Network;
- c) 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;
- d) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of res judicata;
- e) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify including by decisions of the European Investment Bank and international organisations;
- f) they are not in compliance with their 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;
- g) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such an illegal activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;
- h) they are subject to an administrative penalty for being guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in a procurement procedure or failing to supply information, or being declared to be in serious breach of their obligation under a contract covered by the budget;

Before signing a contract experts shall provide a declaration on their honour stating that they are not in one of the situations of exclusion listed above. In case of doubt, they may be requested to provide supporting evidence of non-exclusion.

11. Selection criteria

Essential Experience and Qualifications:

- business coaches need to have a proven track record of at least 5 years in managing a broad range of business issues associated with high growth, proven experience in innovation management within SMEs, a successful track record in coaching senior management through the development of their company's vision and strategy;
- personal track record in coaching organisations and business leaders - coaches should demonstrate an existing successful track record as a coach;
- extensive network of contacts with expertise in a wide range of business functions;
- track record in managing a range of business issues associated with periods of high growth as outlined in point 3;
- proven experience in innovation management;
- evidence of having done similar coaching work previously (at least three references or testimonials from Chief Executive/Managing Director/Business Owner);
- qualifications (including membership of professional bodies).

Key Skills:

- empathy, integrity, credibility, diligence, independence and patience;
- capable of operating comfortably at senior management level;
- a natural commercial acumen supported by strong research, interrogative, analytical and diagnostic skills;
- accustomed to taking the initiative;
- able to offer constructive challenge;
- coaches should demonstrate a good understanding of many of the following business areas:
 - strategic planning;
 - leadership and organisational development (human resources);

- new product development, market development and internationalisation strategy;
- innovation management;
- IPR and IA;
- financial management and investor readiness;
- business improvement (processes and operational capability);

12. Conditions of remuneration and reimbursement of experts

Experts shall be remunerated at a fixed price of 450 euros/day worked. In addition, travel and subsistence expenses will be reimbursed under the conditions set out in the contract.

13. Ex-post transparency

A list of experts (name and subject of the tasks executed) who have concluded a contract following the procedure set out at point 5 shall be published on the website of the contracting authority.

If an expert has concluded a contract of more than €15 000, the name, the locality (region of origin), amount, and subject of the contract shall be published on the website of the contracting authority no later than 30 June of the year following contract award. The information shall be removed two years after the year of contract award.

14. Date of dispatch of call

15. Date of receipt by the Publications Office