

Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the UK are set to benefit from the decision by the Technology Strategy Board to invest £3 million over the next 3 years through the new Eurostars programme.

The Eurostars programme is a EUREKA Network initiative, created with the purpose to provide funding for market-oriented research and development by SMEs. In proposing Eurostars the EUREKA network seeks to overcome one of the barriers to the implementation of high-quality SME-led transnational R&D projects, the lack of guaranteed public-sector funding.

To qualify for Eurostars funding a project must involve at least two organisations from two different participating countries. Any type of organisation (small and medium-sized enterprise, large company, university, research centre) can participate in the Eurostars project consortium. The main partner must be an R&D-performing small and medium-sized enterprise.

Definition of an SME

Companies with less than 250 workers and a turnover of less than 50 million euro annually as SMEs. Companies with a balance sheet total of more than 43 million euro do not qualify as SMEs.

Who is Eligible in the UK?

There are different eligibility criteria in different EU Eurostars member states. In the UK, Eurostars is for high growth SMEs, defined as those companies that can show they deploy 10% of their staff or turnover to R&D. Additional rules for micro companies (under 10 employees) apply.

UK Academics, educational institutes and large companies are not eligible for funding under Eurostars.

What funding support is available?

Funding rates for UK participants is 50% of eligible costs for each Eurostars project. For a comprehensive list of eligible and ineligible expenditure see contact below.

When is the closing date?

November 21st 2008. 17.00 Brussels time.

How do I apply?

Eurostars has a single application process, submitted using the form on the Eurostars web site.

How do I get paid?

Once a project receives the go-ahead, Eurostars funding is implemented locally to provide a single payment combining both national and central EU funding.

What to do next?

Further information is available on the EUREKA Eurostars website. www.eurostars-eureka.eu

If you have any questions or require further information contact

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Information available

- Further general information on Eurostars.
- Guidance for applicants
- Eligible expenditure
- Eurostars FAQs

www.eurostars-eureka.eu

Technology Strategy Board

Driving Innovation



The Eurostars Programme



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Eurostars Programme?

The Eurostars Programme is a European innovation programme managed by EUREKA. Its purpose is to provide funding for market-oriented research and development specifically with the active participation of R&D-performing small and medium-sized enterprises.

Who are the Eurostars member countries?

Currently 27 countries are actively participating in the Eurostars Programme through the EUREKA network of national offices. These countries are: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK.

Can additional countries join the Eurostars Programme?

Each EUREKA member country is eligible to join to the Eurostars Programme according to decision of national EUREKA authorities.

What is the EU definition of an SME?

According to the European Commission's definition whether a company qualifies as an SME is determined by the factors headcount and turnover or balance sheet total. The Commission counts companies with less than 250 workers and a turnover of less than 50 million euro annually as SMEs. Companies with a balance sheet total of more than 43 million euro do not qualify as SMEs.

What is the definition of a Eurostars R&D-performing SME?

In the Eurostars programme a research-performing SME dedicates at least 10% of its turnover or full-time equivalent to research activities.

Where can I download the Eurostars project application form?

The Eurostars project application form is available on the Eurostars website (www.eurostars-eureka.eu) by clicking on 'Application for Eurostars'.

Where can I find information on the cut-off dates of the calls?

Information on the cut-off dates of the calls is available on the Eurostars website (www.eurostars-eureka.eu) by clicking 'When will the Eurostars Programme be launched?'

What are the main differences between a Eurostars project and a EUREKA project?

The Eurostars project must be led by a research-performing SME from a Eurostars member country.

Who can be part of an eligible Eurostars consortium?

Any type of organisation (small and medium-sized enterprise, large company, university, research centre) can participate in the Eurostars project consortium. The main partner must be R&D-performing small and medium-sized enterprise.

Which project proposals are eligible for Eurostars funding?

Criteria to be checked at project level are the following:

- Eurostars project proposals without any thematic restriction must meet the following eligibility criteria:
- The leading R&D-performing SME is based in a Eurostars member country.
- The project proposal fulfils the EUREKA criteria.
- The R&D-performing SME(s) and other SME(s) fulfil(s) the European Union definition.
- Maximum project duration is 3 years or less.
- Market introduction is foreseen within 2 years after the project has ended.
- R&D-performing SME(s) are undertaking at least 50% of the total R&D-related project costs.
- A well balanced partnership whereby no partner or country is performing more than 75% of the total project cost.
- All participants are legal entities.

If all eligibility criteria are met, the Eurostars project proposal will be evaluated.

Who can I contact to find out more about the application process?

The EUREKA National Project Coordinator (NPC) in each Eurostars member country will guide you through the straightforward application process. Contact details for all NPCs are provided at www.eureka.be/contacts

Which documents are required when submitting an application?

Required documents for making an application under Eurostars Programme include:

- Project application form (in English).
- A certified copy of every participant's annual financial report for the last operating year. If no financial reports can be submitted – for example for a start-up company – a business plan could be accepted. These documents may be in the national language.
- A draft consortium agreement.

Who can help me in filling in a project application?

EUREKA National Project Coordinator (NPC) in each Eurostars member country can address your specific questions either by telephone or e-mail. The NPC should provide assistance in preparing your application. Contact details for all NPCs are provided at www.eureka.be/contacts

Is it possible to submit the Eurostars application by post?

This is not possible. The project application must be submitted electronically only to the EUREKA Secretariat in Brussels.

Can I re-submit the application if it is rejected in a previous call?

If the application is rejected due to a project's lack of quality it is not possible to submit the same application again. If the application was not accepted due to lack of Eurostars financing, the project can be submitted in next call for proposals.

Who will assess Eurostars project proposals?

The Eurostars project proposals will be assessed by two technical experts commissioned by the EUREKA Secretariat. The expert report will consist in an analysis and an assessment of the project management, the partnership, the technological innovation envisaged and the economic impact of the project.

How will the technical experts be selected and what is their profile?

Technical experts will be selected from the database of the Commission according to project technological area.

Who will evaluate Eurostars project proposals?

The Independent Evaluation Panel (IEP) will evaluate and rank project proposals. The IEP consists of the Chairman and six IEP members. Both Chairman and members are selected according to a list of candidates nominated by Eurostars member countries. To safeguard confidentiality, the Chairman and members will be required to sign a non-disclosure integrity agreement.

What are the criteria used for the evaluation of project application?

Three evaluation criteria will be used

- Basic assessment
- Technology and innovation
- Market and competitiveness

Basic assessment relates to the partnership and partners, and project structure. It deals with the project plan and the capabilities of partners in relation to their tasks in the project. Technology and innovation relates to the requirement that the project must involve a high technological advance. Market and competitiveness relates to the market targeted, the profitability of the project results and the competitive advantages for the partners involved.

Who provides funding for Eurostars projects?

Eurostars projects will be funded primarily through national research schemes. The amount of funding and costs eligible for funding will therefore vary between member countries.

How does Eurostars monitor ongoing projects?

The EUREKA Secretariat will be responsible for monitoring the progress of Eurostars projects. Every six months, the main participants will be required to report (in English) on project progress.

Who owns project results?

The project consortium owns the project results according to the assignment of the project consortium agreement.

Are the project results made public by the Eurostars Programme?

The Eurostars Programme, which is managed by the EUREKA Secretariat in Brussels, reserves the right to use any project as a case study or success story to publicise the Eurostars Programme. Publicity material will be agreed with consortia members before release.