

OPEN CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Activities to support SME awareness raising, representation in the standardisation process and uptake of standards

Deadline for tenders: 20 April 2023 midnight CET

Please send your proposal to: president@sbs-sme.eu

The funding of the selected proposals is contingent on the approval of the budget and signature of a grant agreement with EISMEA and EFTA as well as on the decision of the governing bodies of SBS.

A. Background

Small Business Standards (SBS) aims at representing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the standardisation process, motivating them to get involved and raising their awareness about standardisation.

In this framework, SBS is launching an open call for proposals for activities that support the above-mentioned objectives. The proposed activities may support the SME awareness, representation, and uptake of standards in any sector relevant to SMEs. The selected activities will need to be carried out and will be funded under the SBS Work Programme 2024. The call will be co-funded by the European Union and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

Under this call, SBS aims at funding **between 5 and 10 activities** for an **estimated overall budget of around EUR 100,000** (VAT included).

The call is open to both SBS and non-SBS members.

B. Activities eligible for funding

Activities eligible for funding include the organisation of events (online or physical), the development of publications (e.g. guides to support the implementation of specific standards by SMEs, studies) or any other activity that could contribute to improving the representation of European SMEs in standardisation, the SME uptake of standards or their awareness about the importance of standardisation in one or several sectors. Proposers are also encouraged to consider possible activities of relevance for SMEs that also support or are related to the strategic priorities identified by the [2023 Annual Union Work Programme for European Standardisation](#) published by the European Commission.

The proposed activities must be well justified from the European SME perspective. It is the responsibility of the applicant to substantiate the relevance to SMEs in the proposal. Only activities aiming at benefiting SMEs based in the EU and EFTA countries are eligible for funding. The duration of the activities cannot exceed 12 months and should take place between January and December 2024.

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Requests for funding of European experts for the participation in Technical Committees of European and International standards organisations are **not eligible** under this call. A different call will be launched by SBS over the summer for the funding of experts to represent SMEs in standardisation work at European and international level.

Organisations may submit one or several proposals for different activities.

C. **Eligibility and selection criteria**

C.1 **Eligibility criteria**

Applying organisations shall be based in an EU or EFTA member state and **demonstrate the SME background** and representativeness of their membership **and the SME and standardisation relevance** of the proposed activities.

Entities replying to this call **may be but DO NOT NEED TO BE a member of SBS.**

The selected entity shall commit to **co-finance 11% of the total cost** of the proposed action by paying SBS in advance the relevant amount.

C.2 **Evaluation criteria**

The activities proposed will be evaluated and prioritised according to the following criteria:

- The expected **short- and long-term impact** for SMEs is also in relation to the requested financial contribution (**35 points- threshold 25/35**). At least one clear indicator should be defined by the proposer to measure short- or long-term impact of the activity. When evaluating the impact, the relation between the impact and the number of resources requested will be considered.
- Proven **relevance of the activities in relation to SMEs and the SBS objectives (25 points- threshold 20/25)**
- **Relevance** of the proposed activity **in relation to EC priorities (20 points- threshold 15/20)**
- The **description and planning of the proposed activity including** the allocation of resources foreseen (**20 points- threshold 15/20**)

Proposals will have to reach a **minimum threshold of 75 points** to be considered for funding. The different proposals that reach the above-mentioned threshold will be ranked based on the points obtained according to the above-mentioned criteria. If an organisation submits a proposal for more than one activity, **each proposed activity will be evaluated and ranked separately.**

D. Content and submission of proposals

D.1 Content

Proposals shall include:

- A description of how the entity meets the eligibility criteria regarding the SME representativeness and relevance;
- An indication of the commitment to co-fund 11% of the total costs of the proposed activity.
- **For each individual activity proposed:**
 - o A description of the proposed activity and an action plan for carrying it out including allocation of resources
 - o A description of the relevance of the proposed activity to SMEs and in relation to the SBS objectives (i.e. improved awareness, uptake of standards and representation of SMEs in standardisation)
 - o A description of the relevance of the activity in relation to the EU objectives and more specifically whether it is related to any of the strategic priorities identified in by the Commission in its 2023 Annual Work Programme on Standardisation
 - o A description of the potential short- and long-term impact for SMEs **including at least one indicator to measure this impact**
 - o A budget for the proposed activity including details on the needed resources (e.g. man-days, travel and other direct costs).

If an organisation intends to request funding for more than one activity it may submit a single application. However, in the application, **the description, justification from the SME point of view, relation to SBS and EC objectives, impact and budget for each of the activities should be clearly differentiated since each proposed activity will be evaluated separately.**

D.2 Submission of tenders

Tenders must be sent by e-mail (president@sbs-sme.eu) by **20 April 2023 at midnight (CET)** at the latest. Tenders will not be accepted after this deadline.

E. Contract and co-funding

SBS will fund one or several proposed activities for an **estimated overall budget of around EUR 100,000** (VAT included). It is expected to be able to cover between 5 and 10 activities with this budget. The allocation of the budget is subject to the approval of the SBS governing bodies as well as the conclusion of an annual Action Grant with EISMEA and EFTA. SBS may decide not to use in full the available budget if the received proposals are not evaluated positively and reach the minimum threshold.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome by email in May. The organisations proposing the selected activities shall commit to **co-finance 11% of the total cost** of the action by paying SBS the relevant

amount. Following the payment of the co-funding, they will be offered a contract for carrying out the selected activity(ies). The activity (ies) will need to take place between January and December 2024.

F. Data protection

The invitation to tender involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CVs). Such data will be processed according to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data (GDPR). Any personal data will be processed solely for evaluation purposes under this call for tender.

The information provided by applicants to SBS is necessary to process the application which, if successful, may lead to the signature of a contract. Applicants will have to declare that they have taken note of our Privacy Policy. By applying you agree with our use of your personal information as described in our Privacy Policy available [here](#).

G. Further information

SBS reserves the right to contact the applying organisations directly if further information or clarification is required.

For any questions or further information, please contact the SBS Secretariat (info@sbs-sme.eu) / Tel +32 2 285 07 27).

This call is also available on the [SBS website](#).