ICT-32-2017 - Startup Europe for Growth and Innovation Radar

Leveraging the Startup Europe and Innovation Radar initiatives, actions within this topic should on the one hand help established startups and prospective tech entrepreneurs to achieve market success and, on the other, raise broader awareness of high potential innovators in Europe with specific targeted actions for maturing innovation excellence in EU-funded ICT projects. Actions should support the expansion of startups on a pan-European and international level. They should stimulate further tech entrepreneurship and the creation of new high growth businesses and jobs, seeking maximum synergies through European innovation ecosystems. Innovators targeted by the Innovation Radar include startups, SMEs, spinoffs and research teams. Innovators identified, promoted and supported by the Innovation Radar are expected to enriching and benefitting from, the Startup Europe ecosystem.

a. Innovation actions

Proposers should cover one or both of the following themes:

- Reinforcing ICT ecosystems for high growth tech startups by interconnecting and creating new synergies between 3-4 different Startup hubs across Europe per project. Activities should focus on scaling-up of companies by connecting, across different entrepreneurial ecosystems, key relevant stakeholders such as tech entrepreneurs, mentors, corporates, customers, artists, designers, media, investors and local authorities. Cross-border actions can include, strategic partnerships among the players from local startups hubs across Europe; actions to help startups to find skilled employees throughout the connected hubs; access to the right combination of finance; helping startups to have access to procurement opportunities; and provide information to allow startups to grow across borders.

- Facilitating financing and improving the liquidity for European investments in fast growing ICT startups and scaleups, increasing their chances for a successful exit. Activities should support networking for corporates, help EU and international investors to gather and improve knowledge of opportunities for investing in digital sectors as well as stimulating financing through European stock markets, preparing companies for investment, enlarging the pool of investors and analysts with deeper understanding of market trends and business models in digital sectors.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of around EUR 1.5 million would allow this area to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Minimum one action will be selected for each of the themes described.

b. Coordination and Support actions

These actions shall primarily be targeted towards technologies developed in EU funded ICT projects (from Framework Programme 7, Competitiveness and Innovation Programme and Horizon 2020).

- In the framework of DG Connect's "Innovation Radar" initiative, offering tailored support to innovators in order to turn their research results into marketable products and, preparing such innovators for success in the market place. Support services will help EU-funded innovators with promising innovations and prepare for market introduction or technology transfer. Actions to champion and provide recognition to best-in-class ICT innovators and innovations from ICT specific programmes e.g. through organisation of recognition prizes, quality labelling, facilitating participation in relevant and impactful events, meeting corporate or institutional investors, procurers, potential customers or partners.
Establishing a European wide network of nodes supporting primarily the needs of EU framework programme innovators in delivering pre-seed workshops for market-oriented researchers; practitioner-led, customer and user-centred, hands-on courses based on proven, state of the art methodologies for the development of business models for growth (e.g. customer discovery, lean startup, business model canvas, minimum viable product). Such courses are to be tailored to researchers, innovators and ICT based high-tech startups and should include interaction with prospective customers and users and where relevant taking into account market and regulatory conditions.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of around 1 million would allow this area to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Minimum one action will be selected for each of the themes described.

In Europe too many promising high tech start-ups or innovative SMEs do not manage to grow and scale up at pan-European or international level. The tendency is that they either remain within a restricted national market or, if they manage to emerge, are often bought while they are still too small, thus failing to become full actors on the international scene and to create a sound ecosystem around their success. Beyond this, turning research results with high innovation potential into viable products and services, bringing them to the market at European or even global level remains a big challenge.

Proposals should address the following and provide appropriate metrics for measuring success with respect to a defined baseline:

**a. Innovation actions**

- Connecting tech start-up hubs and their companies (startups, scaleups) to the larger European business ecosystem seeking maximum synergies in terms of number of concrete collaborations between relevant players within existing ecosystems and networks;
- Increased access to customers, new products or services on the market, increase in turnover, better access to qualified employees, access to the right combination of finance and prospects for scaling up across borders and new job opportunities;
- Stimulate European investments in digital sectors through creating increased mutual understanding between investor communities and in particular tech startups and scaleups;
- Demonstrate sustainability of proposed actions beyond the life of the project;
- Where appropriate, seeking synergies with ESIF funds or ESIF supported actions to improve the synergies between H2020 and ESIF.

**b. Coordination and Support actions**

- Increase the number of digital technology based spin-offs and startups or successfully transferred technology from EU funded projects;
- Enable a significant number of companies based on ICT technologies to reach investment maturity and market introduction readiness;
- Enable innovators from EU funded projects to be part of the relevant EU networks created by Startup Europe;
- Where appropriate, seeking synergies with ESIF funds or ESIF supported actions in order to improve the synergies between H2020 and ESIF.