



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Call for Proposals

ENT/CIP/09/C/N01S003

**Europe INNOVA Sustainability of Novel
European Innovation Support Tools:
Development and testing of better
services in support of Innovation
Management II**

Grant Programme 2009

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1. CONTEXT

The Commission launched the IMP³rove (Development and testing of better services in support of Innovation Management – IMP³rove) project under the Europe INNOVA initiative in 2005. The IMP³rove project identified and analysed a number of national and regional approaches to assist enterprises in their efforts to manage innovation processes¹ and developed and tested a modular online assessment tool and related services.

As the main output, IMP³rove has developed and established a European standard on benchmarking of innovation management performance (IMP³rove Assessment)², complemented with the “Root/Cause Analyses” tool, which analyses the underlying reasons for the achieved level of performance. Both the “IMP³rove Assessment” tool as well as the “Root/Cause Analyses” is based on in-depth consulting processes defined to ensure tangible results for SMEs receiving the consulting services. Furthermore, the IMP³rove network of innovation management services providers has gathered more than 300 innovation management consultants and intermediaries, which have benefited from training in innovation management and in the IMP³rove approach. In the framework of the 2008 Work Programme of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP)³ and its specific Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP), the Commission agreed to support the establishment of a new pillar under Europe INNOVA aiming at the “Promotion of Novel Tools and Service Concepts for Innovation Support”. The objective of this new activity is to support the further use of the most promising tools and instruments developed under Europe INNOVA. Taking into account the large investments made into the development of the IMP³rove tools and their great potential impact, it has been decided to support the further deployment of these tools under the new Europe INNOVA pillar. To this end, this call for proposal is being launched.

The call is primarily addressed to innovation support providers having the experience in rendering services in innovation management and regular contacts with SMEs, with a good EU geographic coverage, i.e. ability to reach SMEs in at least all 27 EU Member States. The selected beneficiary will ensure the further maintenance and enhancement of the IMP³rove online platform and related services. The current IMP³rove lead contractor will be requested to facilitate the full access to and transfer of the existing conceptual and technical documentation related to the IMP³rove project to the winning proposer.

The call is in line with the objectives of the CIP-EIP established in support of enterprises, particularly SMEs, entrepreneurship, innovation and industrial competitiveness. The call for proposals is based on CIP articles 13 and 14(c) and has the objective to implement this measure within the framework of the Europe INNOVA initiative as stipulated in the EIP work programme for 2009.

¹ “European Innovation Management Landscape”, Europe INNOVA paper N°2

² CWA 15899 "Standardization of an Innovation Capability Rating for SMEs"

³ Decision No 1639/2006/EC of 24 October 2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE CALL

The main objectives of this call for proposals are to secure the further maintenance and development of the IMP³rove platform and related services and to promote their widest possible use by public innovation support providers and private innovation management consultancies. This should result in improving the quality of innovation management consulting in Europe and lower the consultancy costs for innovative SMEs, which risks otherwise to be considered as too high for this type of support.

The beneficiary should put an effective structure in place that will ensure further maintenance and development of the IMP³rove on-line platform on a self sustainable basis. Furthermore, the beneficiary should establish a strong network of intermediaries, consultants, financial actors and policy makers willing to promote and practically implement a holistic approach to innovation management based on the tools developed and offered by the project.

A desirable outcome of the project would be that the Enterprise Europe Network would use the resulting innovation management tools as an integral part of their services. Other stakeholders, such as financial actors and innovation agencies, should also benefit from these tools, as they should be made publicly available and actively promoted. At the same time, a large number of innovative enterprises should benefit from better services and widely accepted self-assessment tools, providing them with the possibility of benchmarking their innovation management performance.

3. ACTIVITIES TO BE PERFORMED

The **activities** to be performed can be grouped into mandatory and optional activities.

Mandatory activities include:

- Ø **Activity 1: Management of the IMP³rove online platform and related services.** The core element of the IMP³rove approach, the IMP³rove online platform, should be further maintained and enhanced to ensure that it can be considered as state-of-the-art solution for the coming years. The tool should be offered in form of an on-line platform that is easily accessible and user-friendly.

The beneficiary should ensure that the platform is hosted by a high quality services provider to guarantee the availability and user-friendliness of the platform. This should include putting in place adequate procedures to ensure seamless updates of the online platform. The beneficiary could also consider: improving the design of the user interface, implementing additional features in the software as necessary for the certification and other new services to be developed and as necessary as new user groups may emerge, adapting the software to new and additional processes and more customised services for SMEs, innovation management consultants, financial actors policy makers that have to be supported by the software, developing a help desk to respond to technical and content related

queries from the networked partners⁴ and SMEs, creating a chat room for SMEs to share experience when developing measures for improvement and implementing these measures etc. Hosting and translation services should be considered as mandatory to maintain the IMP³rove platform.

The self-assessment tools, the “IM³rove Assessment” and the “Root/Cause Analysis” should be made available free of charge to service providers and enterprises in order to support the development and practical provision of affordable consultancy services for SMEs on innovation management. However, the direct support services to SMEs should remain outside the scope of this project and shall not be financially supported.

- Ø **Activity 2: Management of the IMP³rove associated partners' network.** IMP³rove has already generated a truly pan-European network of IMP³rove experts, national coordinators, financial actors etc. The beneficiary should undertake actions to broaden this network with the view to including, amongst others, large size intermediaries, such as the Enterprise Europe Network, as well as additional financial actors, innovation agencies, universities and business schools and other interested stakeholders.

To that end, the beneficiary should ensure a continuous and active management of the IMP³rove network in order to keep all partners informed about the development of IMP³rove, but also to better link the partners among each other thus creating motivation and momentum for the dissemination of IMP³rove as a common European approach. The beneficiary could consider: ensuring a regular update of the partners on the development of IMP³rove, organising national and regional conferences on innovation management to increase the level of proficiency within the IMP³rove network, enabling online knowledge sharing among SMEs who benefited from IMP³rove, etc. Training courses and certification schemes as described in Activities 3 and 4 could be an important mean to broaden the network.

Finally, the beneficiary could also seek to link IMP³rove with other national or European support programmes in order to be established as an integral part of these initiatives. In addition, s(he) could establish a cooperation with established innovation support providers such as regional and national innovation agencies or cluster organisation, in order to further support the proliferation of the network by, for example, implementing jointly an innovation voucher scheme. Furthermore, (s)he should be prepared to present and demonstrate the results of the project at the relevant European events.

- Ø **Activity 3: Establishment of the European Innovation Management Academy (train-the-trainer courses on innovation management).** The European Innovation Management Academy would assume the overall coordination of training activities. Its main objective will be to facilitate the development of the innovation management capabilities in consultancies working with SMEs, by providing training on the application of the IMP³rove approach and

⁴ An associated network partner is an organization which has been registered and accredited for the purposes of delivering innovation management services related to the tools available at the IMP³rove on-line platform

on innovation management in general. To this end, the beneficiary should build on the content and curriculum of training courses that have been developed and tested during the IMP³rove project: training on “Introduction to Innovation Management” and training on “Applying the IMP³rove Approach”. In addition, the beneficiary could consider developing and testing in-depth training courses on specific modules such as innovation strategy, innovation organization and culture, innovation life cycle management and innovation enablers (human resource development tools, project management, knowledge management, IT to support innovation processes, innovation controlling, etc) and/or any other training modules that (s)he deems well suited to the objectives of this task.

The main target audience for the above training courses should be organizations willing to implement and promote the IMP³rove approach such as the Enterprise Europe Network, innovation agencies and other public service providers and private innovation management consultants who have a proven track record in the field. In addition, the training on the use of the IMP³rove approach could also be offered to business schools and universities interested in including IMP³rove in their curricula.

- Ø **Activity 4: Development of certification schemes for innovation management consultants and small and medium enterprises (SMEs).** In order to help European SMEs to increase their added value on the world market, the beneficiary should develop and implement a common certificate for SMEs as the main target group, preferably based on a European standard. In addition, in the framework of the European Innovation Management Academy, (s)he will set up and implement a certification scheme for trained consultants and intermediaries rendering services to the SMEs in the area of innovation management..

Both certification schemes should incorporate at the least a definition of the objectives for certification, such as the innovation management at SMEs and innovation management consulting process of consultants, a definition of the minimum standard for certification of innovation management and innovation management consulting and a definition of the certification procedures as well as a definition of the certification bodies for the various certification procedures.

The certification schemes should be developed and tested in cooperation with leading innovation management service providers and with internationally acknowledged certification bodies. Other relevant organisations to be involved in this regard may include professional associations, large companies, etc.

- Ø **Activity 5: Maintenance and the update of the IMP³rove database and analyses.** As the IMP³rove database is already the largest and most up-to-date benchmarking database on innovation management at SMEs in Europe, it represents a true asset and should be further developed and maintained.

The database should keep its European scale and improve the coverage of the SMEs community. This should result in more representative benchmarking samples throughout different industry groups as defined by the scope of the IMP³rove project. The resulting database should be robust enough to enable the beneficiary and other researchers to perform statistically significant analyses.

The beneficiary should deliver up to three analysis of the database. A first analysis should be on the characteristics of high growth enterprises in knowledge intensive

sectors (KIS) with respect to innovation management, preferably including IP and design management. The beneficiary is invited to propose other subjects for analysis in the proposal. In any case, other topics of analysis shall be decided by in consultation with the Commission services during the period of the grant.

- ∅ **Activity 6: Conceptualisation of a self sustainability strategy.** Under this task, the beneficiary should develop a strategy to ensure the further maintenance and development of the IMP³rove on-line platform on a self-sustainable basis. To this end, feedback from potential users and external stakeholders should be sought, resulting in a realistic exit strategy that takes into account business's needs and offers a mature solution for the continued provision of services. Particular attention should be paid to the generation of a revenue stream based on the provision of innovation management support services that does no longer depend on the availability of public support.

The self-sustainability strategy should build upon the outcome of the CEN Workshop Agreement 35/2007 that set the IMP³rove Assessment as a European pre-standard in the area of “improvement for growth” and build on the current efforts to standardise the innovation management consulting approach and other IMP³rove components. It should also build upon the certification schemes to be developed under Activity 4.

This work should be undertaken in close cooperation with the action on “Promotion of Novel Tools and Service Concepts for Innovation Support”.

In addition to the mandatory activities, it is expected that beneficiary will undertake one or several **optional activities** relevant to the innovation management area, and objectives of the call. Such activities could include:

- ∅ Organisation of **Innovation Management Roundtables**. In order to increase the understanding of SMEs and national and regional policy makers of the impact of innovation management on the economic situation in their country or region, the beneficiary could organise innovation management roundtables where SMEs, regional development agencies, innovation agencies, chambers of commerce, clusters representatives and others will learn and exchange experiences on innovation management and its role in enabling company growth. So as to reach the maximum number of policy makers, the beneficiary could establish a close relationship with the INNO Partnering Forum, liaising national and regional innovation agencies and other organisations in charge of developing and implementing innovation programmes
- ∅ .Monitoring and analysing of new developments and **trends in Design management**, being this an important and growing aspect of innovation management.
- ∅ Monitoring and analysing of new developments and **trends in Intellectual Property management**, which constitutes an important aspect of innovation management.

Other optional activities may be undertaken by the beneficiary, as long as it is demonstrated how they could contribute to the main objective of increasing innovation management performance of SMEs and improving the quality of innovation management consulting in Europe.

4. TIMETABLE

Scheduled start-up date for the action: 1st December 2009

Maximum duration of actions is: 24 month

However, if after the signing of the agreement and the start of the project it becomes impossible for the beneficiary, for fully justified reasons beyond his control, to complete the project within the scheduled period, an extension to the eligibility period may be granted.

The intention is to inform applicants of the outcome of the award procedure no later than the month of November 2009.

The period of eligibility of costs will start on the day the contract is signed by the last of the parties. If a beneficiary can demonstrate the need to start the action before the agreement is signed, expenditure may be authorised before the agreement is signed. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application.

5. FINANCING

The **maximum budget** allocated for the operation is: 2.000.000 €

Community co-financing rate of eligible costs: 65 %

The indicative number of projects is 1.

The grant may not finance the entire costs of the action.

- Please note that one action may give rise to the award of only one grant from the Community budget to any one beneficiary.
- The Commission reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicant. Grants will not be awarded for more than the amount requested.
- The publication (on the Internet site and/or in the Official Journal) does not guarantee the availability of funds for the above action.
- The Commission grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the beneficiary. Profit is defined as a surplus of receipts over costs. The amount of the grant will be reduced by the amount of any surplus.

5.1. Co-financing and joint and several responsibility

The beneficiary shall supply evidence of the co-financing provided, either by way of own resources, or in the form of financial transfers from third parties, or in kind. The Commission may accept co-financing in kind, if considered necessary or appropriate. In such cases the value of such contributions cannot cover all the necessary co-financing.

The applicants shall provide an explicit undertaking from each co-financing organisation to provide the amount of funding stated in the grant application for the operation (signed form C).

They shall agree upon appropriate arrangements between themselves for the proper performance of the action. In particular shall they agree on joint and several responsibility for any amount due to the Commission by anyone of them; an optional article of special conditions (article I.10 of the grant agreement for an action with multiple beneficiaries) may limit their level of responsibility but its use is subject to an assessment of the financial risks to be carried out by the Commission.

The grant agreement shall be signed by each participating co-beneficiary unless a power of attorney is conferred to the appointed co-ordinator (Form A/4 of the submission set).

5.2. Subcontracting

Subcontracting does not limit the responsibilities of beneficiaries.

Only a limited part of the project may be subcontracted up to the 40% of the eligible costs.

Where implementation of the assisted actions requires the award of procurement contracts, beneficiaries of grants shall award the contract to the tender offering best value for money, that is to say, to the tender offering the best price-quality ratio, while taking care to avoid any conflict of interests.

Where implementation of the assisted actions requires the award of a procurement contract with a value of more than EUR 60,000, the Commission may require beneficiaries to abide by special rules stipulated in the Title V of the Financial Regulation in addition to those referred to in the previous paragraph.

Please refer to the guide for submission (page 10) for further details on subcontracting.

5.3. Payment arrangements

The draft grant agreements attached to the “Submission set” (**form E**) specify the payment arrangements.

6. ELIGIBILITY

Applicants may act individually or in consortium with partner organisations. In the submission set, you will find two different types of grant agreement for reference.

Partners of applicants must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as those for applicants; the applicant will be the lead organisation and, in case of selection, the contracting party (the “Beneficiary”).

The transnational nature of the project must be demonstrated by submitting form A/4 to the submission set duly filled in and signed from the partner organisations in order to confirm their participation (original signatures required).

6.1. Geographical eligibility

Applications from legal entities established in one of the following countries are eligible:

- EU Member States

- EFTA and EEA countries: Switzerland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway
- Candidate countries: Croatia, FYROM, Turkey
- Countries which have signed an accession agreement to the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP)⁵.

The Commission may select proposals from applicants in EFTA/EEA countries or candidate countries, provided that, on the date of selection, agreements have been signed setting out the arrangements for the participation of those countries in the programme established by the Decision referred to under point 1 of this call.

Applications must include an independent body with a proven track record in certification from countries listed above. The leading organisation (co-ordinator) must be established in the European Union or in countries that participate in the CIP-EIP programme.

6.2. Legal status eligibility

Applications must be submitted by a legal person.

6.3. Exclusion criteria

By using the “Exclusion Criteria Form” (form D attached to the “Submission Set) Applicants shall declare on their honour that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation. In completing this form the applicant:

- states whether or not he/she/the company is in one or more of the situations described in the form; and
- undertakes to submit to the Commission any additional document relating to the exclusion criteria that the Commission may see fit to request.

Where the proposal is submitted by more than one applicant, each applicant must provide the form.

Please note that, according to articles 96 and 114 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities and according to article 134b of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002⁶ laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities⁷, administrative and financial penalties may be imposed by the Commission on applicants who are excluded in relation to points a) to h) of the form in question.

⁵ See <http://ec.europa.eu/cip/thirdcountries.htm> for an up-to-date list

⁶ As amended by Commission Regulation 1261/2005 of 20 July 2005, Commission Regulation 1248/2006 of 7 August 2006 and Commission Regulation 478/2007 of 23 April 2007

⁷ As amended by Council Regulation 1995/2006 of 13 December 2006

6.4. Eligible proposals

Applications must comply with the following conditions in order to be eligible for a grant:

- Application must be signed, dated and complete, using the standard submission set;
- Application must be submitted before the closing date mentioned below;
- Only projects that are strictly non-profit-making and/or whose immediate objective is non-commercial shall be eligible.

In this context, will be rejected any project directly or indirectly contrary to EU policy or against public health, human rights, citizen's security or freedom of expression.

7. SELECTION

7.1. Applicants' financial capacity to complete the proposed action

Applicants must show they have stable and sufficient sources of funding to ensure the continuity of their organisation throughout the project and, if necessary, to play a part in financing it.

To this end applicants must fill in and sign form A/3 for the lead organisation, and form A/4 for partner organisations, if applicable. The legal entity form and financial identification form are also to be duly filled in and signed and annexed to the aforementioned forms.

For ease of reference, the applicants are further requested to fill in the financial statement form A/5 of the submission set. This form only applies to private organisations. Public organisations are only requested to indicate their annual revenue/resources in forms A/3 and A/4.

Applicants must include in their grant application form their annual accounts (i.e. profit and loss account; balance sheet) for the last financial year.

Alternatively, a guarantee equivalent to all or part of the grant being sought may be provided in order to show the financial capacity.

The verification of financial capacity shall not apply to natural persons in receipt of scholarships nor to public bodies, nor to the international organisations referred to in Article 43 of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 2342/2002.

For actions where the cost to be financed exceeds EUR 500 000 and for operating grants of over EUR 100 000, the application shall be accompanied by an external audit report produced by an approved auditor. This report shall certify the accounts for the last year available and give an assessment of the financial viability of the applicant.

The authorising officer responsible may, depending on his analysis of management risks, waive that obligation for grants for public bodies, secondary and higher education establishments, the international organisations referred to in Article 43 of the Commission

Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 2342/2002, and beneficiaries who have accepted joint and several liability in the case of agreements with a number of beneficiaries.

This obligation does not apply to public bodies, secondary or higher education establishments, international organisations under public law, or beneficiaries with joint and several liability in the case of agreements involving several liability beneficiaries.

The obligation to provide the supporting documents serving as proof of financial capacity does not apply to applications for grants with a Community co-financing rate of less than 25,000€(this threshold refers to the total of grants received by a single beneficiary during one financial year). However, the applicants in question shall submit a declaration on honour for the purpose of proving the financial and technical capacity.

7.2. Applicants' technical capacity to complete the proposed action

Applicants must show they have the operational (technical and management) capacity to complete the operation to be supported and must demonstrate their capacity to manage scale activity corresponding to the size of the project for which the grant is requested. In particular, the team responsible for the project/operation must have adequate professional qualifications and experience.

The applicants must include with their grant application form a curriculum vitae of the staff that will actually be performing the work involved and professional references and details of past similar projects. For ease of reference, the curriculum vitae should preferably be submitted in the Europass format which can be found on the following page:

http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/preview.action?locale_id=1

Applicants must be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the project, not acting as an intermediary.

8. AWARD

An evaluation of the quality of proposals, including the proposed budget, will be carried out in accordance with the following award criteria:

1. Relevance	20
2. Visibility	15
3. Impact	20
4. Quality	25
5. Budget and Cost-effectiveness	20
Maximum total score	/100

If a total score lower than 60% points or a score lower than 50% for any of the above five criteria is obtained, the proposal will not be evaluated further.

The complete selection and evaluation procedure is described in point III of the guide for submission appended to the standard Submission set.

Please note that, in case of award, the beneficiary authorises the Commission, to publish the following information in any form and medium, including via the Internet:

- the beneficiary's name and the address,
- the subject and purpose of the grant,
- the amount granted and the proportion of the action's total cost covered by the funding.

9. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

9.1. Preparing the proposal

The proposal must be drafted in one of the official languages of the European Union, using the specific submission set available for this call. Please refer also to the **guide for submission** for explanatory details.

The submission set can be:

- Downloaded from Europa web site: <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/funding/index.htm>
- Or obtained at the following address:

European Commission
Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General
Grant Programme 2009
Call for proposals No ENT/CIP/09/C/N01S003
Title - Sustainability of Novel European Innovation Support Tools:
Development and testing of better services in support of Innovation
Management II
Contact: Mrs Marija Popovic
Office address: **ENTR/06/140**
B-1049 Brussels – BELGIUM
Fax: (+32-2)-298.10.18;
e-mail: “**entr europe-innova-improveII@ec.europa.eu**”

The proposal must be submitted, **in triplicate and placed** inside **two** sealed envelopes. Both envelopes should be addressed to the department indicated above. It should bear the following description: ‘**Call for proposals No ENT/CIP/09/C/N01S003** and the following note: ‘**Not to be opened by the internal mail department**’. If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across this tape.

9.2. Sending the proposal

Please note that electronic submissions are not allowed for this call.

Proposals must be submitted, on paper

- a) Either **by registered mail**, postmarked no later than **31/08/2009**, to the address indicated above.
- b) or **by courier services**, no later than **31/08/2009**, to the address indicated above,
- c) or **delivered by hand**, i.e. by delivery in person or by an authorised representative no later than 4 p.m. on **31.08.2009**, to the following address:

European Commission
Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General
Grant Programme 2009 – Call for proposals n° **ENT CIP/09/C/N01S003** –
Europe INNOVA Sustainability of Novel European Innovation Support
Tools: **Development and testing of better services in support of
Innovation Management II**

Directorate, Innovation Policy
Unit D2
BREY 06/140
Service central de réception du courrier
Avenue de Bourget, 1
B-1140 Bruxelles, Belgique

How to reach rue de Bourget 3:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/calls/hand_delivery.html

Please note, that for security reasons, hand deliveries (including private courier services) are not accepted in other Commission's buildings. An acknowledgement of receipt shall be delivered by the "Service central de réception du courrier".

Evidence of timely submission by post or courier service will be constituted by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-delivery, the signed and dated receipt will serve as evidence.

Applicants shall observe precisely the above indications in order that proposals can reach their precise destination in due time.

10. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The European Community has the task to promote equality between women and men and shall aim in all its activities to eliminate gender inequalities (articles 2 and 3 of the EC Treaty). In this context, women are particularly encouraged to be involved in proposal submission.

11. PERSONAL DATA

Your grant application will be processed by computer. All personal data (such as names, addresses, CVs, etc.) will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 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.⁸

Your replies to the questions in the submission set are necessary in order to assess your grant application and they will be processed solely for that purpose by the department responsible for the Community grant programme concerned. On request, you may be sent personal data and correct or complete them. For any question relating to these data, please contact the Commission department to which the application must be returned. Beneficiaries may lodge a complaint against the processing of their personal data with the European Data Protection Supervisor at any time.

12. ANNEX 1 SUBMISSION SET

13. ANNEX 2 GUIDE FOR SUBMISSION

⁸ Official Journal L 8, 12.1.2001.