

Calls for proposals for indirect RTD actions under the specific programme for research, technological development and demonstration: 'Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area'

(2003/C 307/08)

1. In accordance with Decision No 1513/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 27 June 2002, concerning the sixth framework programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities contributing to the creation of the European Research Area and to innovation (2002 to 2006) ⁽¹⁾, the Council adopted on 30 September 2002 the specific programme for research, technological development and demonstration: 'Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area' (2002-2006) ⁽²⁾ (referred to as 'the specific programme').

In accordance with Article 5(1) of the specific programme, the Commission of the European Communities (referred to as 'the Commission') has adopted on 9 December 2002 a work programme ⁽³⁾ (referred to as 'the work programme') setting out in greater detail the objectives and scientific and technological priorities of the specific programme, and the timetable for implementation.

In accordance with Article 9(1) of the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 16 December 2002, concerning the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in, and for the dissemination of research results for, the implementation of the European Community Sixth Framework Programme (2002 to 2006) ⁽⁴⁾ (referred to as 'the rules for participation'), proposals for indirect RTD actions should be submitted under the terms of calls for proposals.

2. The present calls for proposals for indirect RTD actions (referred to as 'the calls') comprise the present general part and the specific conditions that are described in the annexes. The annexes indicate in particular, the date of closure for the submission of proposals for indirect RTD actions, an indicative date for the completion of the evaluations, the indicative budget, the instruments and the areas concerned, the evaluation criteria for the evaluation of proposals for indirect RTD actions, the minimum number of participants, and any applicable restrictions.

3. Natural or legal persons fulfilling the conditions stated in the rules for participation and that do not fall under any of the exclusion cases in the rules for participation or in Article 114(2) of the Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities ⁽⁵⁾ (referred to as 'the proposers') are invited to submit to the Commission proposals for indirect RTD actions subject to the conditions in the rules for participation and in the call concerned being fulfilled.

The conditions of participation of the proposers will be verified within the framework of the negotiation of the indirect RTD action. Before that however, proposers will have signed a declaration stating that they do not fall under any of the cases given by Article 93(1) of the Financial Regulation. They will also have given the Commission the information listed in Article 173(2) of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002, of 23 December 2002, laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities ⁽⁶⁾.

The European Community has adopted an equal opportunities policy and, on this basis, women are particularly encouraged to either submit proposals for indirect RTD actions or participate in the submission of proposals for indirect RTD actions.

4. The Commission makes available to proposers guides for proposers relating to the calls which contain information on the preparation and the submission of a proposal for an indirect RTD action. These guides, as well as the work programme and other information relating to the calls, can be obtained from the Commission via the following addresses:

European Commission
The FP6 Information Desk
Directorate General RTD
B-1049 Brussels
Internet address: www.cordis.lu/fp6

5. Proposals for indirect RTD actions are submitted preferably in electronic format, via the electronic proposal submission system (EPSS).

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 232, 29.8.2002, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 294, 29.10.2002, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ Commission Decision C(2002) 4789, as modified by C(2003) 577, C(2003) 955, C(2003) 1952, C(2003) 3543, C(2003) 3555 and C(2003) 4609, all decisions unpublished.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ L 355, 30.12.2002, p. 23.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1.

⁽⁶⁾ OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p. 1.

Within this context, proposals for indirect RTD actions may be prepared off-line or on-line and submitted on-line. Those prepared with the EPSS off-line version could, as an alternative, be submitted either on CD-ROM or diskette (a paper copy of the proposal for an indirect RTD action must in either case be attached).

The EPSS software tool (for off-line or on-line usage) is available via the Cordis website www.cordis.lu

Proposals for indirect RTD actions may also be prepared and submitted using the forms in the guide for proposers (referred to as 'on paper').

6. Proposals for indirect RTD actions submitted on CD-ROM, diskette, or paper by post must be received by the Commission at the following address, and labelled as follows:

'FP6 — Research Proposals'
(Call identifier: ...)
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels

For deliveries by hand or by representatives (including by private courier services⁽⁷⁾), the delivery should be to the following address, and labelled as follows:

'FP6 — Research Proposals'
(Call identifier: ...)
European Commission
Rue de Genève, 1
B-1140 Brussels

Proposals for indirect RTD actions may be submitted on-line via the Cordis website www.cordis.lu

Proposals for indirect RTD actions submitted either on CD-ROM or on diskette which are incomplete⁽⁸⁾, illegible⁽⁹⁾ or contain viruses will be excluded if a complete corresponding paper version, in the same envelope, has not been supplied.

Proposals for indirect RTD actions that are submitted on-line and which are incomplete⁽¹⁰⁾, illegible⁽¹¹⁾ or contain viruses will be excluded.

Proposals for indirect RTD actions that are submitted on paper and which are incomplete⁽¹²⁾ will be excluded.

Proposals for indirect RTD actions submitted by email⁽¹³⁾ or by fax will be excluded.

7. Proposals for indirect RTD actions have to reach the Commission at the latest on the closure date and at the time specified in the call concerned. Proposals for indirect RTD actions arriving after this date and time will be excluded.

Proposals for indirect RTD actions not satisfying the conditions relating to the minimum number of participants indicated in the call concerned will be excluded.

This also applies regarding any additional eligibility criteria given in the work programme.

8. In the case of successive submissions of the same proposal for an indirect RTD action, the Commission will examine the last version received before the closure date and time specified in the call concerned.

Where the same proposal for an indirect RTD action is submitted on paper and in electronic format (CD-ROM, diskette, on-line), the Commission will only examine the text submitted under the electronic formats.

9. If foreseen in the relevant call, proposals for indirect RTD actions could be taken up in the framework of a future evaluation.
10. In all correspondence relating to a call (eg, when requesting information, or submitting a proposal for an indirect RTD action), proposers are invited to cite the relevant call identifier.

⁽⁷⁾ Users of courier services that ask for the recipient's telephone number should give the following number: (32-2) 295 58 75 (Mr. J.-C. Debouvère).

⁽⁸⁾ All proposals for indirect RTD actions must contain two parts: the forms (Part A) and the content (Part B).

⁽⁹⁾ Proposals for indirect RTD actions should be submitted in PDF ('portable document format', version 3 or higher with embedded fonts) or RTF ('rich text format').

⁽¹⁰⁾ See footnote 8.

⁽¹¹⁾ See footnote 9.

⁽¹²⁾ See footnote 8.

⁽¹³⁾ This does not include proposals for indirect RTD actions that have been submitted on-line.

ANNEX 1

1. **Specific programme:** Integrating and strengthening the foundations of the European Research Area.
2. **Thematic priority/Domain:** Horizontal research activities involving SMEs.
3. **Call title:** Cooperative research projects.
4. **Call identifier:** FP6-2003-SME-1.
5. **Date of publication:** 17 December 2003.
6. **Closure dates:** 21 October 2004 at 17:00 (Brussels local time).
7. **Total indicative budget:** 75 million EUR.
8. **Area and instruments**

Area	Instrument
Any subject across the whole field of science and technology covered by Article 163 of the EC Treaty	Specific research project for SMEs (Cooperative research project)

9. **Minimum number of participants** ⁽¹⁾

Instrument	Minimum number
Specific research project for SMEs (Cooperative research project)	5 independent legal entities from 3 different MS or AS, with at least 2 MS or ACC

10. **Restriction to participation**

- At least 3 participants must be independent SMEs ⁽²⁾ established in at least 2 MS or AS, with at least 1 MS or ACC. Research centres, research institutes, contract research organisations and consultancy firms are excluded.
- At least 2 participants, must be RTD performers (having the capacity to carry out research at the request of the SMEs), independent from any other participant and must be established in 2 MS or AS, with at least 1 MS or ACC.
- Other legal entities, such as enterprises or end-users that have a particular interest in solving specific problems or needs of the SMEs involved, may participate in the project, though not in a dominant role. These enterprises and end-users must be independent from the SME participants and the RTD performers.

11. **Consortium agreement:** Participants in RTD actions resulting from this call are required to conclude a consortium agreement before the start of the project.

12. **Evaluation procedure**

- the evaluation shall follow a single stage procedure.
- proposals will not be evaluated anonymously.

13. **Evaluation criteria:** see Annex B of the work programme for the applicable criteria (including their individual weights and thresholds and the overall threshold) per instrument.

14. **Indicative evaluation and selection delays**

- evaluation results: estimated to be available within 3 months after the closure date
- contract signature: it is estimated that the first contracts related to this call will come into force 8 months after the closure date.

⁽¹⁾ MS = Member States of the EU; AS (incl. ACC) = Associated States; ACC = Associated candidate countries.

Any legal entity established in a Member State or Associated State and which is made up of the requested number of participants may be the sole participant in an indirect action.

⁽²⁾ Article 2.17 of the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in, and for the dissemination of research results for the implementation of the European Community sixth framework programme 2002-2006 (OJ L 355, 30.12.2002, p. 23) refers, for this definition, to the Commission Recommendation 96/280/EC (OJ L 107, 30.4.1996, p. 4).

ANNEX 2

1. **Specific programme:** Integrating and strengthening the foundations of the European Research Area.
2. **Thematic priority/Domain:** Horizontal research activities involving SMEs.
3. **Call title**
 - a) Collective research projects.
 - b) Specific support actions.
4. **Call identifier**
 - a) FP6-2003-SME-2.
 - b) FP6-2003-SME-3.
5. **Date of publication:** 17 December 2003.
6. **Closure date:** 6 April 2004 (first stage collective research and specific support actions), at 17:00 (Brussels local time).
7. **Total indicative budget**

Instrument	EUR millions
Collective research	41
SSA	2

8. **Area and instruments**

Area	Instrument
Any subject across the whole field of science and technology covered by Article 163 of the EC Treaty	Specific research project for SMEs (Collective research project) and SSA

9. **Minimum number of participants ⁽¹⁾**

Instrument	Minimum number
Specific research project for SMEs (Collective research project)	5 legal entities, of which 3 must be independent, from 3 different MS or AS, with at least 2 MS or ACC
SSA	3 independent legal entities from 3 different MS or AS, with at least 2 MS or ACC

10. **Restriction to participation**(a) *Collective research*

- At least 1 participant must be a European Industrial Association/Grouping ⁽²⁾ established in a MS or an AS. This Association/Grouping must be made up of a minimum of 2 independent legal entities established in 2 MS or AS, with at least 1 MS or ACC.

⁽¹⁾ MS = Member States of the EU; AS (incl. ACC) = Associated States; ACC = Associated candidate countries.

Any legal entity established in a Member State or Associated State and which is made up of the requested number of participants may be the sole participant in an indirect action.

⁽²⁾ An enterprise grouping as defined in Article 2.11 of the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in, and for the dissemination of research results for the implementation of the European Community sixth framework programme 2002-2006 (OJ L 355, 30.12.2002, p. 23).

Instead of this European Industrial Association/Grouping, there may be at least 2 independent Industrial Association/Groupings established in 2 MS or AS, with at least 1 MS or ACC.

- At least 2 participants, must be RTD performers (having the capacity to carry out research at the request of the Association(s)/Grouping(s)), independent from any other participant and must be established in 2 MS or AS with at least 1 MS or ACC.
- At least 2 participants must be SMEs ⁽³⁾ established in 2 MS or AS, with at least 1 MS or ACC. Research centres, research institutes, contract research organisations and consultancy firms are excluded.

(b) *Specific support actions*

None.

11. Consortium agreement

- Participants in collective research projects resulting from this call are required to conclude a consortium agreement before the start of the project.
- Participants in SSA resulting from this call are not required to conclude a consortium agreement.

12. Evaluation procedure

- The evaluation of collective research proposals shall follow a two stage procedure, as described in the guidelines adopted by the Commission. For the first stage, an outline proposal providing the essential aspects of the proposed project shall be submitted. For proposals, which successfully pass the first stage, coordinators shall be requested to provide a full proposal. The closure date for that second submission will be detailed in the request (indicative closure date: mid September 2004).
- The evaluation of SSA shall follow a single stage procedure.
- Proposals will not be evaluated anonymously.

13. Evaluation criteria: see Annex B of the work programme for the applicable criteria for collective research and for SSA (including their individual thresholds and the overall threshold) per instrument.

Outline proposals will consist of the required administrative information plus a scientific and technical description of maximum 8 pages. The evaluation of outline proposals (stage 1) will be based on a reduced set of criteria namely 'relevance to the objectives of Collective Research', 'S&T excellence' and 'potential impact'. The threshold for proposals to be invited to submit a stage 2 proposal is 11 out of 15 (see Annex B).

The evaluation of proposals in the second stage will be based on a full set of criteria (see Annex B).

The evaluation of SSA proposals will use the standard criteria (see Annex B).

14. Indicative evaluation and selection delays

- collective research (first stage) and SSA evaluation results: estimated to be available within 3 months after the closure date. Successful proposers after the first stage collective research evaluation will be asked to submit a stage 2 proposal with a deadline around mid-September 2004.
- contract signature:
 - for collective research it is estimated that the first contracts related to this call will come into force 12 months after the first stage closure date,
 - for SSA it is estimated that the first contracts related to this call will come into force 6 months after the closure date.

⁽³⁾ Article 2.17 of the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in, and for the dissemination of research results for the implementation of the European Community sixth framework programme 2002-2006 (OJ L 355, 30.12.2002, p. 23) refers, for this definition, to Commission Recommendation 96/280/EC (OJ L 107, 30.4.1996, p. 4).