



EU4Business



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ANNOUNCEMENT

Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Program (STEP) – Business Development Support for innovative technology oriented Start-ups and companies

The "Support to SME Development in Armenia" (SMEDA) project, which is co-funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by GIZ PSD SC Regional Programme, in cooperation with Enterprise Incubator Foundation (EIF), announces the Science and Technology Entrepreneurship (STEP) programme. SMEDA is part of the EU4Business and EU4Innovation Initiatives.

The STEP programme is aiming at igniting the spark of entrepreneurship and advancing innovative technology-based ideas to the market. The overall objective of the programme is to help start-up teams, innovators, scientists, engineers, researchers, and entrepreneurs move their products to the market, create new ventures, and promote innovation and entrepreneurship in Armenia.

Competition is open to **start-up teams**, consisting of two or more participants who are willing to develop an idea with high technology based in the field of Engineering, CleanTech, Biotech, etc., in Armenia. All applicants, including all members of the applying team must be citizens or permanent residents of Armenia and residing in Armenia at the time of submission of application.

Applying companies, registered in Armenia can apply with their innovative idea for the grant, if they are **registered no more than 1 year** at the time of starting the grant project.

Companies registered more than 1 year, have the possibility to **spin-off a team** with its new product or service idea and **develop the project in its newly registered company**.

Activities covered by the grant are:

- Prototype Development
- Pilot Application
- Market Testing
- Production
- Product Launch and Market Penetration
- Business Development

GRANT AMOUNT & CO-FINANCING REQUIREMENTS

Grant amount per initiative is 15.000 EUR. There will be up to 10 grants provided in 2017- 2018 for up to 15.000 Euro each, with maximum 12-month project duration. In total, there will be 2 grant cycles announced. Each project will be required to have a 5% co-financing to match the grant amount.

SELF-EVALUATION OF THE APPLICANTS

It is mandatory that all applicants self-classify the level of development of the products/services within their projects in the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) and indicate the envisaged level of development after 12-month grant period.

Technology Readiness Level	Description
TRL 1.	basic principles observed
TRL 2.	technology concept formulated
TRL 3.	experimental proof of concept
TRL 4.	technology validated in lab
TRL 5.	technology validated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
TRL 6.	technology demonstrated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
TRL 7.	system prototype demonstration in operational environment
TRL 8.	system complete and qualified
TRL 9.	actual system proven in operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies; or in space)

The applicants should scan his project regarding potential challenges regarding IP infringements and necessity of protection of intellectual property rights and indicate this in the application.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- **Startup Teams**, comprised of two or more people with relevant expertise to implement the project.
- **Applying companies, registered in Armenia can apply** with their innovative idea for the grant, if they are **registered no more than 1 year** at the time of starting the grant project.
- The competition aims at supporting high-technology driven projects. Therefore, the proposals should not focus on the development of web applications and platforms, such as e-commerce, and other e-service platforms, solutions for business process automation, mobile applications and services.
- **All applicants must submit self-statement letter on providing of the necessary co-financing** of the grant funds in cash, if awarded the grant, to be eligible for proposal evaluation.
- Projects with a focus on developing products or services for military use are not eligible. This also incorporates dual use technologies if the targeted customers are military or security forces.

If awarded the grant, all the teams will be required to register a legal entity and need to sign a self statement on that.

PRE-SCREENING - ELIGIBILITY CHECK

Applicants are able to hand in their applications package for screening for compliance with Eligibility Criteria and to determine whether all the necessary documents are included in accordance with the requirements of the Application Package, as described below till February 5th 2017. Applicants will be informed of any Incomplete Applications and missing documents or other key element within 3 days of notice from EIF.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

Eligible Expenditures under all grants include hardware, software, project related staff salaries, certifications, marketing, other valid expenses identified in the budget as directly related to execution of the project. The indirect cost of the project should not exceed 7% of the project budget and should be agreed by EIF on their relevance for the aim of the grants.

APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation within the IMG program is done in 2 stages.

After the 1st stage of evaluation, approximately 20% of applicants will be shortlisted for the next stage. After an intensive mentorship with the shortlisted applicants, the 2nd stage of evaluation will take place during the venture forum in a pitching session.

The Evaluation of the candidates will be done based on the following main criteria:

- Capability of the Team
- Product/service and Commercial Potential
- Understanding of Market and Customer Need
- Risks and opportunities
- Feasibility of the Implementation Plan
- Financial Projections

Application Packages must be submitted in English to the EIF office by the following e-mail address: info@eif.am, CC: mari.barseghyan@eif.am.

The Applicants need to indicate in the subject line the grant program they are applying to (e.g. "Application to STEP program").

Scanned copies of original documents will be acceptable. Original documents will be required upon necessity. **Deadline for application submission is February 17, 2017.**

All the applications received after the deadline will NOT be considered. For all interested candidates, orientation sessions will be organized to provide more information on application process and answer all the questions.

In case of any questions, please free to contact us:

by sending an e-mail info@eif.am to or calling to +37410 219797.

APPLICATION PACKAGE

- Completely filled-in Application Form
- Annex I - Project Budget
- Annex II - Declaration on providing the co-financing funds to meet matching contribution of Grantee
- Annex III - CVs of the project team members demonstrating competency and any experience relevant to execution on the proposed project
- Annex IV – Declaration on registering a company after being awarded the grant.