1. Five EU Funding Programmes that SMEs should know about

**The SME Instrument**

- **Total programme budget**: €2.6 bn
- **What is it?**
  - Horizon 2020’s SME Instrument seeks to invest in and support Europe’s most innovative innovators.
- **How to apply?**
  - SMEs are recommended to apply for Phase 1, but may also apply direct for subsequent phases. To apply for the SME Instrument you need to produce a 10-page business plan, and continuously open call. Proposals should build on prior successful projects to establish a more sustainable European society.
- **Who qualifies?**
  - Applicants should establish high-growth, highly innovative SMEs with proven projects, preferably at technology demonstration level (TRL 5 or higher). If your company is based in an innovation hub, this may extend to later technology readiness level (TRL) 6 or more.
- **When to apply?**
  - The programme is open all year round. Applications close at 5pm Brussels time a few weeks before the Horizon 2020 deadline. The deadline is usually the last Tuesday of the month, but may change from year to year.

**The Fast Track to Innovation (FTI) Pilot**

- **Total programme budget**: €3 mio
- **How much?**
  - €200 mio
- **What is it?**
  - FTI is a bottom-up measure in Horizon 2020 to promote innovation. FTI is being piloted in Horizon 2020 during 2015 and 2016.
- **How to apply?**
  - Project proposals should involve close-to-market innovation preferably at technology demonstration level (TRL 6 or more). If your company is based in an innovation hub, this may extend to later technology readiness level (TRL). At least two of the participants must be from industry. Proposals should build on prior successful projects to establish a more sustainable European society.
- **Who qualifies?**
  - Applicants must involve consortia of at least 3 legal entities established in at least 2 EU Member States or Associated Countries. Applications must include at least one industry partner. SMEs and first-time industry participants are particularly encouraged to apply.
- **When to apply?**
  - Proposals can be submitted at any time during the two-year pilot. The next deadline is on: 31st October 2016. The programme is administered by EUREKA! and covers all technology areas.

2. Five EU Funding Programmes that SMEs should know about

**Eurostars**

- **Total programme budget**: €1,4 mio
- **How much?**
  - €1,4 mio
- **What is it?**
  - Eurostars is a transnational innovation programme supporting research-performing SMEs developing innovative products and services. The programme is administered by EURAXESS and covers all technology areas.
- **How to apply?**
  - Applications must be made via the Eurostars website http://www.eurostars-eureka.eu. Applications are welcomed from SME-led project consortia consisting of one or more independent legal entities from different EU Member States or Associated Countries. The goal is rapid commercialisation of results. There are usually two application submission deadlines every year. The next deadline is on: 30th May 2016 with cut-off dates for ranking of proposals. The programme is administered by EURAXESS and covers all technology areas.
- **Who qualifies?**
  - Applications are welcomed from SME-led project consortia consisting of at least four independent legal entities from different EU Member States or Associated Countries. The programme is administered by EURAXESS and covers all technology areas.
- **When to apply?**
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3. Five EU Funding Programmes that SMEs should know about

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Five EU Funding Programmes that SMEs should know about

4. InnoVFin - Large Projects (EIB)

The EIB also funds two dedicated initiatives for SMEs: InnoVFin - Large Projects and InnoVFin SME Venture Capital, that are managed at a local level through financial intermediaries (banks etc.). Applications for the InnoVFin Large Projects scheme are made directly to the European Investment Bank. Proposals can be submitted at any time.

How much?

Applications for the InnoVFin Large Projects scheme should be made directly to the European Investment Bank (EIB).

Total programme funding

Over all successful projects 2007-2013

24 bn €

How much?

A minimum of €25 million to maximum €300 million is available per project. The time horizon is normally 2-6 years. For very large projects, this may extend to 12 years.

When to apply?

Projects can be submitted at any time.

Who qualifies?

Applications are based on a EU Member State or EU Associated Country.

What is it?

Applications for the InnoVFin Large Projects scheme should be made directly to the European Investment Bank (EIB).

How to apply?

The InnoVFin - Large Projects aims to improve access to risk finance for SMEs, including demonstration projects, via long-term (up to 10 year) loans and guarantees. The EIB also funds two dedicated initiatives for SMEs - InnoVFin Large Projects and InnoVFin SME Venture Capital (EIB). The InnoVFin Large Projects scheme aims to provide access to risk finance (guaranteeing debt financing) to innovative SMEs over a few million Euros.

COSME

The EU Programme for Competitiveness of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (COSME) supports SMEs in accessing sensitive EU financial instruments to finance: it builds the business case.

The Loan Guarantee Facility that guarantees financial institutions to provide more loan and lease finance to SMEs (the average guaranteed loan is ~€ 65 000).

The Equity Facility for (the) companies that need capital in equity funds investing in growing SMEs up to €50 million.

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COSME seeks a portfolio of initiatives. One of its main areas of focus is to enable the establishment of long-term cross-border collaborative SMEs. COSME also funds the Business for Entrepreneurs Initiative - a cross-border exchange scheme for aspiring entrepreneurs to learn from experienced small business leaders and enhance their skills.

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