Welsh European Funding Office
Swyddfa Cyllid Ewropeaidd Cymru

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

SCoRE Cymru

Supporting **Co**llaborative **R**esearch and innovation in **E**urope

GUIDANCE & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (Version 3)

SCoRE Cymru provides grants in order to stimulate participation by **Wales-based organisations** in European collaborative research and innovation programmes and in particular the European Union's **Horizon 2020** programme.

What do we fund?

Travel
The main travel and accommodation costs involved in:

- identifying and building consortia,
- negotiation of contracts.

Proposal Development
The cost of subcontracted expertise for:

- writing and/or developing evidence for funding proposals,
- negotiation and conclusion of consortium agreements and/or contracts.

What level of grant support is available?

Category	Maximum grant[1]	Max grant rate[1]
Travel		
Small to Medium Enterprise (SME)	£1,000	100%
Higher Education Institute (HEI)	£1,000	50%
HEI attending with a Welsh SME partner	£1,000	75%
Other organisation[2] attending with a Welsh SME or Welsh HEI partner	£1,000	50%
Proposal development		
Co-ordinating partner, first application[3]	£10,000	75%
Co-ordinating partner, not first application	£10,000	50%
Not co-ordinating partner, first application	£5,000	75%
Not co-ordinating partner and not first application	£5,000	50%
For a Phase 1 SME Instrument bid	£5,000	75%
For negotiations and consortium agreement	£5,000	50%

1) The amount of grant and grant rate will be assessed on a case by case basis on factors such as the likelihood of a successful outcome, the potential return on the investment and any identified risks. Grant rates may be higher in exceptional circumstances.
2) For example, a large company or public sector organisation. Third sector organisations will receive either the SME or large company rate, based on the EU SME definition (see p7 below).

N.B. Eligible costs must be incurred on or after the date when an application is approved. Please contact the Horizon 2020 Unit before incurring any costs.

3) An organisation's first application for European collaborative research and innovation funding or the SME Instrument.

Who can apply?

The grant is available to all Wales-based organisations that have an interest in European collaborative research and innovation but has a focus on SMEs and HEIs with potential to apply for Horizon 2020.

Other UK and Welsh Government schemes may be more appropriate for visiting trade exhibitions, applying for Technology Strategy Board funding or carrying out technology feasibility studies – contact 03000 6 03000 for more information.

Priority will be given to applications from within the sectors/domains below, although any proposal that offers a significant return on investment will be considered.

The Welsh Government's business support is focused on 9 sectors:

- ICT,
- Energy and environment,
- Advanced materials and manufacturing,
- Creative industries,
- Life sciences,
- Financial and professional services,
- Construction,
- Food and Farming, and
- Tourism.

Science for Wales and Innovation Wales identify four domains in which Wales has existing research and innovation strengths and where strong economic opportunities exist:

- Life sciences and health,
- Low carbon, energy and environment,
- Advanced engineering and materials, and
- ICT and the digital economy.

What are the eligible costs?

Travel

Travel and accommodation costs incurred in identifying and building consortia and/or negotiation of contracts to facilitate applications for European collaborative research and innovation funding such as Horizon 2020. Other aims may be considered on a case by case basis. Costs may include:

- Budget flight, rail, ferry etc,
- Budget hotel accommodation including breakfast where inclusive,
- In-country travel (bus/train/taxi),

- Travel to the UK airport,
- Public transport (at cost), private car mileage (at 45p/mile)
- Airport parking,
- Event participation fees.

The means of travel must offer value for money when compared with other options.

Food/subsistence costs are not eligible other than breakfast if included in the hotel room price.

Travel to UK destinations is eligible when in terms of purpose, origin and nature of attendees, cost and distance it is similar to the overseas travel supported by this scheme.

Travel to destinations outside the EU may be allowed if the visit targets a funding call involving third country participants or if the travel is otherwise eligible and there is evidence that no EU options for achieving the same objectives are available. Unless there is specific justification, only one person from each organisation will be supported but related applications from different organisations may be considered.

A breach of the £1,000 limit may be considered in exceptional circumstances where to apply the limit would compromise the objectives of the support.

Other costs related to the travel may be considered on a case by case basis, for example room hire for a consortium meeting.

See also General Eligibility section below.

Proposal Development

Costs may include:

- Subcontracted expertise in writing and/or developing evidence for relevant funding proposals. This may include expertise on impact or market penetration of the proposed research.
- Subcontracted expertise to enable effective negotiations and conclusion of consortium agreements and/or contracts.
- Travel costs for subcontractors.

Initial scoping of funding options is not eligible as National Contact Points and other organisations will be able to help identify a relevant call and partners. Contact the Horizon 2020 Unit for further information.

General feasibility studies that do not target a specific call with specific partners (if required for the call) may find more appropriate support through other Welsh Government schemes or the Technology Strategy Board.
http://business.wales.gov.uk/finance-funding-support/business-finance

If the chosen consultant has already committed to work on the proposal then the application is unlikely to be eligible for grant support. If the chosen consultant plans

to be part of the consortium for the proposal then WEFO may consider reducing the level of grant.

For contracts over £4,999.99, three quotes from different consultants are required. The criteria for choosing the winning contractor may include quality as well as price; we will require a brief report to demonstrate that the choice of contractor was fair and open.

Only 1 quote is required if the contract is under £5k, but evidence of the contractor's expertise may be required.

General eligibility

- Eligible costs must be incurred on or after the date when an application is approved by the Welsh Government, unless you have received written confirmation to the contrary from the Horizon 2020 Unit. Incurred costs are commitments to pay, such as flight and hotel bookings which cannot be reclaimed in full upon cancellation.
- Budget travel companies and budget hotels should be used. We would expect hotel costs to be within the HMRC benchmark rates and are likely to cap eligible expenditure when rates are higher. http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/employers/emp-income-scale-rates.htm
- Daily subsistence expenses and/or corporate entertainment are not eligible except for breakfast when included in the hotel price.
- VAT is not an eligible cost, do not include Value Added Tax (VAT) except where the applicant cannot recover VAT.
- Costs that cannot be shown to be specific to a proposal or potential proposal are ineligible, e.g. regular travel costs, general trade activity or ongoing/retained specialist expertise.
- You will need to confirm that you do not have an alternative source of funding.

What are the assessment criteria?

WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit will assess all applications, seeking advice from within the Welsh Government as appropriate. The assessment includes a basic financial viability check on businesses. The Unit may also seek external technical advice where required, for example from National Contact Points or the Technology Strategy Board, but will inform applicants if that is the case.

Your application will be judged against the following criteria.

All Applications

- How well the applicant has demonstrated that it is a Welsh-based organisation with the potential in the Welsh location to participate in a relevant proposal.
- That the anticipated eligible costs are clearly specified and are reasonable.
- That the requested grant rate is allowable and reasonable.

- The scale of the expected return on investment for Wales, e.g. if the European proposal is successful, what level of funding is likely to be awarded to the applicant and any other Welsh partners.
- The importance of the sector or area of research/innovation to Wales.
- That the applicant is financially viable.
- Compliance with State Aid law and procurement rules, where applicable.

For Travel

- The strength of the justification for the journey, e.g. which call/theme is being targeted and why.
- The relevance of the experience and qualifications of those travelling.
- The relevance of the planned event(s)/meeting(s) including the other attendees.

For Proposal Development

- That a specific thematic area and an associated call deadline for submitting proposals have been identified.
- The strength of the evidence that the project proposal has been adequately scoped, including contact with National Contact Points, budget, partners' commitment and the timescale.
- That there is sufficient time before the associated call deadline for an eligible proposal to be developed.

WEFO as part of the Welsh Government will make the final decision on applications, claims, payments and all other matters relating to SCoRE Cymru.

How soon will I receive a response to my application?

We will contact you shortly after receipt and encourage you to speak with us before applying. Wherever possible applications should be submitted at least 2 weeks before eligible costs are likely to be incurred. We aim to process valid applications in less than 2 weeks but if applications are not received by us within a reasonable timescale or are significantly incomplete, then they may be rejected.

If successful you will receive an offer letter. Applications may be approved with qualifications.

How do I claim the grant?

For Travel

Payment will be made upon prompt submission of:
- Proof of expenditure (original receipts, etc) of all eligible costs including mileage declaration if applicable.
- A completed travel report form (which will be provided with your offer letter) detailing the activity and outcomes.
- A completed claim form.

- An invoice on your organisation's headed paper, stating the amount of funding requested from the Welsh Government.

For Proposal Development

Payment will be made upon prompt submission of:

- Proof of expenditure (original paid invoices, receipts, etc) of all eligible costs.
- A completed claim form.
- An invoice on your organisation's headed paper, stating the amount of funding requested from the Welsh Government.

and one of the following as appropriate

- A copy of the complete proposal as submitted to the European Commission (EC) along with a receipt from the EC proving filing of the proposal before the call deadline.
- A copy of the signed consortium agreement or EC contract.

The Welsh Government will retain 10% of the claimed amount or £500 (whichever is greater) until it is in receipt of a copy of the relevant EC Evaluation Summary Report.

What if my aims are not achieved?

Claims for expenditure incurred in developing proposals that are not submitted to the EC or miss the relevant call deadline, or travel that does not achieve the expected purpose, will be considered but the Welsh Government reserves the right to withhold payment if the reasons given are not acceptable.

Will I have to keep records of my expenditure?

The WEFO Horizon 2020 Unit will advise on document retention requirements but in general, invoices, timesheets, receipts and other records relating to eligible expenditure must be kept for 5 years from the date of any award resulting from this application.

Documents relating to "de minimis" aid must be kept for 3 years in order to comply with competition law. Documents relating to awards under the General Block Exemption Regulation must be kept for 10 years.

All information must be made available to the Welsh Government and the European Commission, their successors or their appointed agents on request for audit purposes.

Will information about my application be passed to anyone else?

Under Freedom of Information legislation the Welsh Government may be required to disclose the amount of SCoRE Cymru grant awarded and the name of the recipient. The Welsh Government's current code of practice states that all recorded information provided by third parties will be considered for disclosure if it is requested. http://wales.gov.uk/publications/accessinfo/?lang=en .

In assessing your application, the Horizon 2020 Unit may seek advice on its merits from within the Welsh Government. The Unit may also seek external technical advice where required but will inform applicants if that is the case.

The Welsh Government will want to use a text agreed with you for publicity purposes concerning the success of any application and/or any subsequent success you may have in accessing European research/innovation funding.

Do State Aid rules apply to the grant?

Applicants will need to consider the State Aid rules when applying for grant.

For non-commercial activity carried out by Higher Education Institutions the grant is unlikely to count as State Aid.

For SMEs up to 50% of consultancy costs are covered under the General Block Exemption Regulation. All other elements would count towards their *de minimis* allowance.

For non-SMEs all of the grant will count towards their *de minimis* allowance.

There are some restrictions on how a company's *de minimis* allowance can be used, including an upper limit of €200,000 of public support in a 3 year fiscal period.

What is the definition of an SME (small or medium sized enterprise)?

The European Commission considers a company to be an SME where they:

- have fewer than 250 employees;
- have an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million or annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million; and,
- are independent*

*Independent enterprise is where no more than 25% of the capital or voting rights are owned by one or more enterprises which fall outside the SME definition. This threshold may be exceeded when an enterprise is held by a public investment corporation, venture capital company or other institutional investors provided they exercise no control.

How do I apply?

In the first instance please contact WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit (at Horizon2020@wales.gsi.gov.uk or via the WEFO Helpline on 0845 010 3355) to discuss your proposal.

You will need to complete an application form.

If you have no previous experience of European collaborative research and innovation it will be worth seeking advice first. There are a range of organisations in

Wales, the UK and Europe who can provide advice and guidance. Contact the Horizon 2020 Unit or visit the WEFO website at http://wefo.wales.gov.uk