

More funding available for SMEs under the call for proposals in Food, Agriculture, Fisheries and Biotechnology Research

Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) get increased support under Food Agriculture, Fisheries and Biotechnology Theme (call FP7-KBBE-2011-5) that was published on 20 July 2010 (www.cordis.europa.eu).

From the total €240.27 million budget in this call, around 15% will be allocated to SMEs.

How? Through an increase in the number of topics with mandatory SME participation - more than half - where a considerable percentage (between 10 to 50%) of the total EU funding must be obligatorily allocated to SMEs in the consortia. Furthermore, SMEs can also participate and gain additional funding via other research topics that do not specifically target them.

Call FP7-KBBE-2011-5 will attribute funding to three main areas of research:

- Sustainable production and management of biological resources from land, forest and aquatic environment
- Fork to farm: Food (including seafood), health and well being
- Life sciences, biotechnology and biochemistry for sustainable non-food products and processes

The deadline for submitting proposals for the call is 25 January 2011.

If an SME participates, it gains the possibility to have 75% of the total costs of research covered by EU funding and to have up to 100% of the total costs of management and training also covered.

With these changes, the Commission sends a clear signal that it is counting on SMEs as key actors in bringing about changes in these crucial areas of economic and social development. With new funding, SMEs can build new capacities, learn and gain up-to-date knowledge, find new business partners and explore new markets at European and global level. Higher profit and improved company image are essential for successful and competitive enterprises.

Information and support:

- Attend the 13 September Info Day and brokerage event on call FP7-KBBE-2011-5 that will take place in Brussels in the Charlemagne building. The programme and registration forms are accessible at http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/kbbe/home_en.html
- Information and professional advice for participation can be obtained locally in Member States from the National Contact Points (NCPs): http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ncp_en.html
- More practical information on SME policies and programmes can be found under the SME portal: http://ec.europa.eu/research/sme-techweb/index_en.cfm and at the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) http://www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm
- Improved access to finance loans from the European Investment bank is available for private investors through the Risk-Sharing Finance facility (RSFF- http://ec.europa.eu/invest-in-research/funding/funding02_en.htm)

SMEs can also sign up for **the Directorate's SME mailing list** and get regular updated information on funding opportunities and general EU policy and strategy (rtd-kbbe-stakeholders@ec.europa.eu)