

# Eurostars for SME

## Am I a Eurostar?

- ✓ I am an **R&D performing SME**
- ✓ I want to **gain access to new markets**
- ✓ I want to **cooperate internationally**
- ✓ I plan to **develop an innovative new product, process or service**
- ✓ I want my **product to be rapidly commercialised**



Eurostars is a joint programme between more than 30 EUREKA member countries and the European Union

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## A PROGRAMME TAILOR-MADE FOR SMEs



72%

R&D performing  
SMEs & SMEs

## EUROSTARS SME PROFILE



64% R&D performing SMEs



83% SMEs have less than  
50 employees



40% SMEs workforce is  
dedicated to R&D activities

## A TYPICAL EUROSTARS PROJECT IS...



3-4 participants



2-3 countries



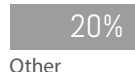
29 months  
average duration



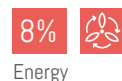
14 M€  
average project cost

## IN FIGURES

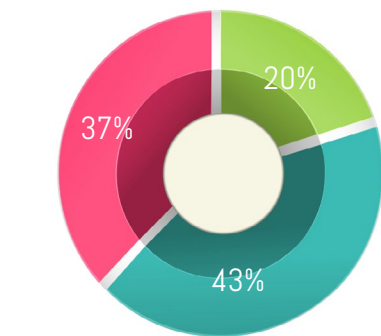
## TECHNOLOGICAL AREAS PROJECTS SUBMITTED






## MARKET AREAS PROJECT SUBMITTED



## NATURE OF A EUROSTARS PROJECT CONSORTIUM



-  SMEs only
-  SMEs with university /research centre
-  SMEs with others (larger companies, etc.)

# EUROSTARS IN A NUTSHELL

Eurostars is a joint programme supporting R&D performing small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). It is co-funded from the national budgets of 34 Eurostars countries and by the European Union through Horizon 2020<sup>1</sup>. Participating countries earmark funds for their participants following national funding rules and procedures.

Eurostars has been carefully developed to meet the specific needs of SMEs. With its bottom-up approach, it stimulates international collaborative research and innovation projects that will be rapidly commercialised. A Eurostars project must have a civilian purpose and be aimed at the development of a new product, process or service.

Eurostars is an ideal first step in international cooperation, enabling small businesses to realise the many benefits of working beyond national frontiers. Participation in a Eurostars project can become a passport to growth, further innovation, an opening to new global markets and even greater business success.

There are several European programmes designed to help SMEs in their R&D activities. Eurostars has been running successfully since 2007. It is the first European funding and support programme to be specifically dedicated to support the niche market of research-performing SMEs in their innovative R&D projects. Eurostars has an average of two application submission deadlines annually. It is simple to apply, and organisations can obtain funds for precisely the R&D projects that fit into business plans.

This publication contains answers to questions frequently asked by applicants during the application process. We hope it will help you find all the answers you need and help convince you to apply for Eurostars funding for your innovative project.

<sup>1</sup> Under Horizon 2020, the Eurostars Programme is referred as Eurostars-2.

# 34

## EUROSTARS COUNTRIES



Austria	France	Lithuania	Slovak Republic
Bulgaria	Germany	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Belgium	Greece	Malta	South Korea
Croatia	Hungary	The Netherlands	Spain
Cyprus	Iceland	Norway	Sweden
Czech Republic	Ireland	Poland	Switzerland
Denmark	Israel	Portugal	Turkey
Estonia	Italy	Romania	United Kingdom
Finland	Latvia		



## 1.148 billion

Eurostars total budget 2014-2020



## 75%

EUROSTARS COUNTRIES CONTRIBUTION



## 25%

EU CONTRIBUTION

# 1. ELIGIBILITY



1

## Who can apply?

Research-performing SMEs can apply for funding under Eurostars. Other SMEs, research institutes, universities and large enterprises may also participate but the project leader must be an R&D-performing SME from a Eurostars country.

2

## What is the Eurostars definition of an R&D-performing SME?

To qualify as an R&D-performing SME, an organisation must first comply with the EU definition of an SME<sup>1</sup>. In addition, it must also meet the thresholds for dedicated R&D FTEs<sup>2</sup> or turnover, as defined by EUREKA:

SME Headcount (where X is the number of FTE)	Minimum number of FTEs dedicated to R&D	or	Minimum % of FTEs dedicated to R&D	or	Minimum % of Turnover dedicated to R&D
$0 < X \leq 100$	5.0	or	10.00%	or	10.00%
$100 < X < 250$	10.0	or	10.00%	or	10.00%

whichever is fewer

This and all other eligibility criteria are described in detail in the Guidelines for Eligibility: <http://bit.ly/RPFYaY>

3

## Are there any limitations on the number of participants in the consortium?

The consortium must include at least two partners independent from each other and established in at least two different Eurostars countries. Organisations from any other country may participate (as a third country), but only if two Eurostars countries are already in the project. Subcontractors are not considered as project partners.

<sup>1</sup> "SME" stands for small and medium-sized enterprises – as defined in EU law: EU recommendation 2003/361. The main factors determining whether a company is an SME are: Economic activity, number of employees and either turnover or balance sheet total. To qualify as an SME, an organisation must conform to the EC definition of an SME. (<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/sme-definition/>)

<sup>2</sup> FTE (Full Time Equivalent) is a measure of worker involvement. One person working full-time is equal to 1.0 FTE. One person working for 50% of the time is equal to 0.5 FTE. EU documentation refers to Annual Work Units or AWU. AWU and FTE are equal and interchangeable.

4

## Are there any limitations in a Eurostars consortium?

The work has to be done in-house by R&D performing SMEs, meaning that the budget (excluding subcontracting) of the R&D performing SME(s) located in a Eurostars country(s) has to be equal to at least 50% of the total project budget.

5

## What is the maximum budget of the project?

There is no budget restriction for a Eurostars project. But the budget must be realistic and in line with the activities proposed. Funding limits exist in participating countries.

The project must be spread across different international partners, meaning that no single participant can be responsible for more than 75% of the total project budget. Equally, the participant(s) from a given country cannot be responsible for more than 75% of the total project budget.

6

## How can I find potential partners for my Eurostars application?

Contact your EUREKA National Project Coordinator (NPC) for assistance in this matter. A list of NPC contacts is found on the last page of this brochure. Local Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) offices can also support you in your partner search.

7

## Are there limitations on the technological areas or market fields?

Eurostars is open to all projects in all technology areas and market fields, but projects must have a civilian purpose. Business knows best, so Eurostars is 'bottom-up' – the SME running the project defines its nature.

8

## Which costs are eligible for funding?

Each participating country funds its own participants following national funding rules and procedures. The eligible costs vary between Eurostars countries. Your NPC can explain the costs that are eligible in your country.

9

## How long can a project last?

The project must be completed in 36 months or less.

**Note:** when preparing your Eurostars project, market introduction of the project results should be within 24 months of the completion of the project.

"Eurostars was a good introduction to public funding. The simplicity of the programme and its flexibility made it stand out from other options."

Jan Reichelt, Mendeley – Eurostars MAKIN'IT

# 2. APPLICATION & SUBMISSION



1

## What is the first step?

Always contact your NPC first. S/He can help you understand national funding rules and procedures. Your NPC can give you straightforward and comprehensive advice and assistance with the preparation of your application.

2

## Where can I find out more about Eurostars and the application process?

All information about the programme, including the application process, and more can be found in the Eurostars website: [www.eurostars-eureka.eu](http://www.eurostars-eureka.eu). The 'Guidelines for Applicants' document explains in detail all aspects of applying. These guidelines are updated regularly, so please ensure that you have the latest version! To access the application form and other information, you will need to register online on the official Eurostars website.

3

## What kind of information should be included in the project application?

An application must contain the online application form and financial annexes for each participant. You have the option of including one additional annex. It is important that each participant contact the relevant NPC to find out whether additional documentation at national level is needed.

4

## How to submit the Eurostars application?

Applications must be made using the online application form, accessed through the secure section of the Eurostars website. Applications can only be submitted using the online tool. Application forms and other documents submitted via any other means will be automatically rejected.

5

## When can I submit my application?

Eurostars has an average of two application submission deadlines annually. Check the website for more information.

6

## What kind of support can I get for the preparation of the application?

You and your project partners are strongly advised to contact your NPCs who are able to provide you with up-to-date information. NPCs will provide you with an understanding of the national funding rules and procedures as well as clear advice and assistance with the preparation of your application. Some participating countries also cover certain expenses for consultants who can help you in preparing the project documentation.

7

## Can I change my Eurostars application once it has been submitted?

Once submitted the application cannot be edited. Applications cannot be changed after the submission deadline.

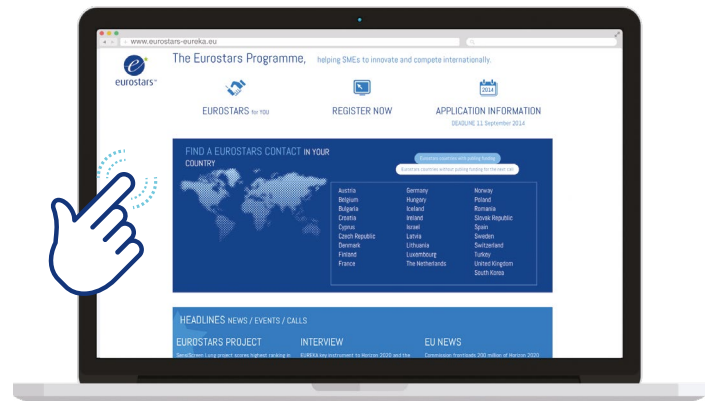
8

## Can I submit more than one project proposal at the same time?

Yes, provided that you have the ability to work on more than one project simultaneously should they be approved. Be aware that you will have to demonstrate your financial capacity to participate in any project you submit.

**"It was very important for us to have a national contact point to help us deal with questions at the beginning of the project as well as throughout the development procedure."**

**Admir Abdurahmanovic**, Primekey solutions AB - Eurostars 4759 CESECORE



The 'Guidelines for Applicants' can be found on the Eurostars website [www.eurostars-eureka.eu](http://www.eurostars-eureka.eu)

# 3. EVALUATION



1

## What happens after I submit a Eurostars application?

After the application submission deadline, a centralised evaluation process starts, managed by the EUREKA Secretariat (ESE). All eligibility criteria must be met before the two-step evaluation process starts. At the same time, at national level, participating countries are responsible for the assessment of the financial viability of a project participant to finance the activities declared in the Eurostars Application Form according to applicable national regulations.

## QUESTIONS REGARDING REGARDING ELIGIBILITY CHECK:

2

### How are the eligibility criteria assessed?

Eurostars applications must meet all eligibility criteria in order to be considered for evaluation. If a criterion cannot be definitely answered, ineligibility will be conferred. A description of the eligibility criteria and assessment method is provided in Guidelines for Eligibility.

3

### When will I be informed if my Eurostars application is complete and eligible?

Eligible applications will receive confirmation that they have passed the eligibility check and are under evaluation. Equally, unsuccessful applications will be informed of their ineligibility. We aim to inform applicants within 4 weeks of the submission deadline.

## QUESTIONS REGARDING EVALUATION PROCEDURES:

4

### Who evaluates Eurostars applications?

Eurostars applications undergo a two-step evaluation process:

- **Step one:** remote assessment of each application by three independent experts, matched to applications according to their technological expertise, familiarity with the market applications and SME experience.
- **Step two:** the results of assessments are used by the Independent Evaluation Panel (IEP) to evaluate and rank all eligible applications.



5

## How is confidentiality ensured in the evaluation phase?

Experts and IEP members are required to sign confidentiality agreements with the ESE. Applicants have the opportunity to list those who should not be involved in the evaluation of their project.

6

## Who is the Independent Evaluation Panel (IEP)?

The IEP evaluates and ranks applications. It is led by a chairperson and includes internationally recognised experts in their field. IEP members are selected according to the profile of applications and the technical requirements at the time. They cover a variety of professional sectors and working profiles.

7

## When will I be informed of the evaluation results and whether my Eurostars application is approved for funding?

Eurostars has a very fast evaluation process. Applicants are kept informed on the progress of their application through the various phases below:

- **Approximately 4 weeks after the submission deadline**, applicants are informed on the eligibility of their application.
- **Approximately 14 weeks after the submission deadline**, a ranking list is endorsed by the Eurostars High Level Group (HLG). Applicants are informed by official email whether their application is above or below the quality threshold and if it is being considered for funding.
- **Approximately 19 weeks after the submission deadline**, an official letter informs applicants that are ranked above the quality threshold of the availability of funding.

8

## How long does the approval process take (from submission of the proposal to the approval of the project)?

Within 4 months of the application submission deadline, the EUREKA Secretariat announces the list of projects that have been earmarked for funding. Projects approved for funding earn the right to be officially recognised as a Eurostars project.

"Eurostars helped Mendelej to stay ahead of its competitors by developing strategic technologies faster than any of them."

Jan Reichelt, Mendelej - Eurostars MAKIN'IT

# 4. FUNDING



1

## How are participants funded once an application is approved?

Eurostars adopts a decentralised funding procedure. As such, participants do not receive funding directly from the EUREKA Secretariat or the EU. All funding to participants in approved projects is managed by their respective funding body, according to national funding rules and procedures.

2

## What are my obligations once my project is approved for funding?

All participants must contact their NPC in order to set up the national registration for funding.

The main participant must provide a copy of the final consortium agreement, signed by all consortium members, to their respective national funding bodies (NFBs) and the EUREKA Secretariat within 12 weeks of the funding results. Any promise of funding or support is dependent on an agreement being properly completed and on the fact that the descriptions and clauses within it are consistent with the application that has been evaluated. It is expected that the broad ideas and themes in the application form (particularly those concerning existing IPR, access rights, exploitation, IPR division and profit sharing) are carried forward into the final consortium agreement.

3

## Who owns the project results?

Eurostars does not lay claim to any of the results of the project. The participants own the project results and any subsequently generated intellectual property. The distribution of project results, outcomes and IPR between individual partners should be well described in the consortium agreement.

**"If we had not received funding from the Eurostars Programme we would not be where we are today. Eurostars has given us the chance to go through all the stages of prototyping"**

**Are Borgesen, Tidal Sails - Eurostars Q-SAIL**

4

## What is time-to-contract in Eurostars?

Time to contract is defined as the time between the application submission deadline and the signing of the funding contract. The complete process, from submission deadline to finalisation of the funding contract can be achieved within four to seven months.

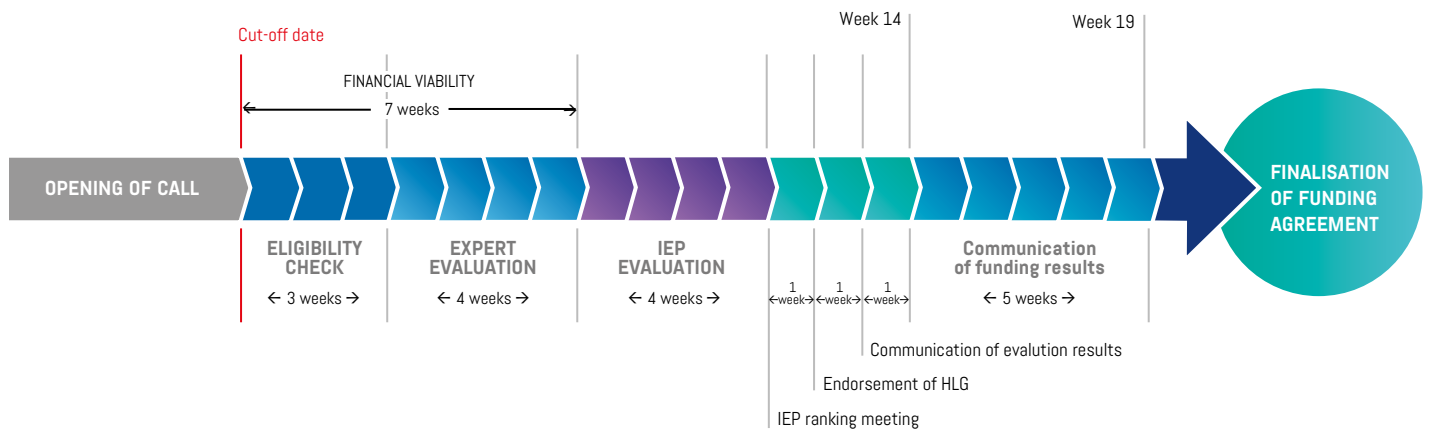
5

## How is an approved Eurostars project monitored?

Eurostars projects are monitored at national and European level. At European level, the monitoring of the projects is done by the EUREKA Secretariat. At national level, the monitoring depends on the member country. You should contact your NPC for further information. More details can be found in the Guidelines for Participants.

The guidelines are available at: <http://bit.ly/1i6Scng>

### EUROSTARS EVALUATION PROCESS



### SEVEN STEPS ON THE ROAD TO EUROSTARS

- 1 Your organisation defines a project and finds partners
- 2 Contact your NPC who will guide you through the application process, guidelines and funding opportunities
- 3 Submit your application through the Eurostars' website: [www.eurostars-eureka.eu](http://www.eurostars-eureka.eu)
- 4 After four months your application will be evaluated
- 5 If your project has been approved, contact your NPC to obtain national funding
- 6 Finalise consortium agreement with your Eurostars partners

7

**START**



## 5. WHERE CAN I FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

<b>AUSTRIA</b>	<b>Mr Olaf Hartmann</b> FFG tel: +43 5 77 55 4902 olaf.hartmann@ffg.at	<b>BELGIUM</b>	<b>Mr Kristof Vlaeminck</b> DWTI tel: +32 (0)2 238 37 42 Kristof.VLAEMINCK@stis.belspo.be	<b>BULGARIA</b>	<b>Ms Bogdana Vatashka-Anavi</b> BSMEPA tel: +359 882 94 97 17 b.vatashka@sme.government.bg	<b>CROATIA</b>	<b>Mr Vedran Didara</b> BICRO tel: +385 1 23 52 628 vedran.didara@bicro.hr	<b>CYPRUS</b>	<b>Mr Marinos Portokallides</b> RPF tel: +357 22 205 052 mportokallides@research.org.cy
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EUREKA is an intergovernmental organisation for market-driven industrial R&D. It is a decentralised network facilitating the coordination of national funding on innovation aiming to boost the productivity & competitiveness of European industries. Following a bottom-up approach with projects being in any technological area with a civilian purpose, EUREKA has been the driving force of innovation in Europe for over 25 years.