# **Croatia – Switzerland Cooperation in the Framework of Eurostars**

Croatia and Switzerland are members of the EUREKA initiative and support R&D cooperation with partners from both countries through different EUREKA instruments. The present announcement highlights the opportunities and the participation rules in the framework of EUREKA’s Eurostars programme.

Eurostars supports international innovative R&D projects led by research and development- performing small- and medium-sized enterprises (R&D-performing SMEs). With its bottom-up approach, Eurostars supports the development of rapidly marketable innovative products, processes and services that help improve the daily lives of people around the world. Eurostars has been carefully developed to meet the specific needs of SMEs. It promotes international cooperation, enabling small businesses to combine and share expertise and benefit from working beyond national borders. Eurostars is a joint programme between EUREKA and the European Commission, co-funded from the national budgets of 36 Eurostars participating and Partner Countries and by the European Union through Horizon 2020. In the 2014-2020 period it has a total public budget of €1.14 billion.

The Eurostars application, evaluation and impact assessment are managed centrally by the EUREKA Secretariat. Consortia submit their applications via the online platform [www.eurostars-eureka.eu](http://www.eurostars-eureka.eu) and if successful, they receive their funding contract within 7 months after submission. The funding contracts are issued and managed nationally by the corresponding funding bodies.

In EUREKA’s Eurostars programme Croatia participates as a member to Eurostars with fewer projects but within the cooperation of Switzerland’s contribution to the enlarged EU, approximately million Euro has been spoken to support Croatia’s efforts in Eurostars. This money will allow for more projects to be supported within one call and also be implemented to enable support measures like coaching or business-to-business meetings to promote future cooperations.

**Qualifications for participating in Eurostars**

* The project leader is an R&D-performing SME,
* The project contains at least two legal entities that are independent of one another and are hosted by at least two different Eurostars countries; i.e. Croatia and Switzerland,
* The budget (excluding subcontracting) of the R&D-performing SME(s) located in Eurostars countries is equal to at least 50.00% of the total project budget,
* No single entity or country is responsible for more than 75.00 % of the project budget,
* The project duration is 36.0 months or fewer and market introduction is within 24.0 months of the project’s completion,
* The project meets the EUREKA criteria and must have a civilian purpose,
* None of the participating organisations are in the process of being declared bankrupt or have convictions for fraudulent behaviour, other financial irregularities or illegal business practices.

**Evaluation criteria**

* The consortia should consist of a market oriented mix of R&D performing SME and other SMEs. Each country funds other partners according to country rules (check with country NPC).

The consortia should demonstrate:

* Complementary technological excellence and qualification of the partners,
* Sustainability of the partnership and intensity of the collaboration between the partners,
* Management ability to successfully carry out the project and implement the results,
* Mutual advancement of R&D through the transfer of knowledge and expertise,
* Added value for the participants from all involved countries in a balanced way.

The **innovation content** of a project should go beyond the international state of the art. The project shall aim to achieve substantial progress in a technology or a service. The main objectives in terms of performance or cost to become competitive shall be presented in a specific way.

The project shall target **markets** on a European scale and the participating companies shall aim to establish a new value chain or get access to existing value chains.

## **Financing Rules and contacts**

The Funding rules and contacts at the national funding bodies in Croatia and Switzerland, responsible for Eurostars, are summarized in the following table.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | SME | Larger company1(250≤FTE2≤500) | Universities and R&D institutions |
| Funding in % of eligible costs | HR: max. 70% | HR: 0% | HR: 0%3 |
| CH: 50% | CH: 25% | CH: 50% |
| Max. financial support | HR: max. 200.000 € per project, all HR partners combined |
| CH: max. 500.000 € per project, all CH partners combined |
| Contact Croatia | **HAMAG-BICRO**  **Croatian agency for SMEs, Innovation and Investment**Ksaver 20810000 Zagreb, CroatiaMr. Vedran DidaraTel: +385 1 235 2628Fax: +385 1 488 1009vedran.didara@hamagbicro.hreurostars@hamagbicro.hr |
| Contact Switzerland | **State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI****Einsteinstrasse 2****3000 Bern 14** [www.sbfi.admin.ch/eurostars](http://www.sbfi.admin.ch/eurostars)Ms. Colette John-GrantTel: +41 58 464 91 43colette.john@sbfi.admin.ch |

*Table 2: Eurostars funding rules and contacts in Croatia and Switzerland.
1 large companies according to EU definitions have ≥ 250 FTE and > 500 FTE respectively
2 FTE: Full-Time Equivalent (employees)
3 Universities and R&D institutions in HR are only funded if subcontracted to an SME.*