



PROMOS

Internationalization
and territorial marketing

Ready2Go Call for Applicants

Ready2Go

*Supporting SME Internationalization – Increasing EU
SME's Readiness to Internationalise in Target Markets
(EASME/COSME/2015/028)*

Call for Applicants

Consortium led by PROMOS – Milan Chamber of Commerce



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1. Foreword

This call is developed within the project “Ready2Go” (EASME/COSME/2015/028), launched by the European Commission (EC) and the European Agency for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (EASME). This initiative is a pilot project aimed to support European SMEs to internationalise and become active in five target Third-Country markets.

The project is carried out by an international consortium led by Promos - Special Agency for International Activities of the Milan Chamber of Commerce and composed by:

1. Promos, Special Agency for International Activities of the Milan Chamber of Commerce – ITALY (leader)
2. Eurochambres – Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry
3. Formaper, Special Agency for Training of the Milan Chamber of Commerce – ITALY
4. Innovhub SSI – Special Agency of the Milan Chamber of Commerce – ITALY
5. Birmingham Chamber of Commerce – UK
6. Croatian Chamber of Economy – CROATIA
7. Dublin Chamber of Commerce – IRELAND
8. Estonian Chamber of Commerce – ESTONIA
9. Polish Chamber of Commerce – POLAND
10. Chambre de Commerce et d’Industrie Auvergne Rhône-Alpes– FRANCE
11. Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia – SERBIA
12. Chamber of Spain – SPAIN

The Consortium will operate in close collaboration with the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN).

The project lasts 27 months, from October 2016 to December 2018.



2. Objectives and purpose of the call of applicants

This call for applicants aims at selecting **80 healthy and dynamic Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)**, able to compete in foreign markets and with a clear growth-potential but with a limited experience in foreign markets.

The project will focus on **five extra-EU Target Markets**:

1. **Cameroon**
2. **Canada**
3. **Chile**
4. **India**
5. **USA**

Nevertheless, one of the above mentioned Countries can be replaced by **Argentina** or **Egypt**, according to the number of interested companies. Therefore, the final list of Countries will be re-confirmed to selected participants.¹

Each company can participate to activities in **maximum 2 Countries**. Per each Country the group of participants will be composed by around 20-30 companies.

The participating SMEs should be active in one of the following **target sectors**:

- Agro-Food
- Biotechnologies
- Chemicals
- Crafts (i.e. ceramics, jewellery, decorations, haute gamme tailors, pottery, etc...)
- Creative industries (i.e. film, radio, television, publishing, digital media, music, performing arts, art, advertising, photography, design, gaming, digital animation)
- Environment
- Healthcare and pharmaceuticals
- ICT
- Intelligent Energy (i.e. renewable energy, energy efficiency, etc...)
- Key Enabling Technologies (i.e. nanotechnology, micro-and nanoelectronics, advanced materials, industrial biotechnology, advanced manufacturing systems and photonics)
- Materials (i.e. composites, ceramics, coatings, metals, plastics, polymers, bio-based materials)
- Nano and micro-technologies
- Retail and services
- Sustainable construction
- Textile and fashion

¹ In the case that one of the preferred Countries of the selected participants is not confirmed, selected companies can have the possibility to choose another one among the confirmed Countries, according to availability.



- Wood and furniture

Nevertheless, other promising sectors will be considered during the evaluation process, according to the opportunities offered by the target Third Countries, such as green technologies, aeronautics and aerospace, industry 4.0 and machinery.

3. Eligible entities

In order to be eligible to participate in the present invitation, the companies should fulfill all the following requirements:

- be a Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise (SME) according to the definition of the EU recommendation 2003/361;
- be established in a EU Member State or in a COSME Participating Country (Albania, Armenia, Bosnia Herzegovina, FYROM, Iceland, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey);
- be active in one of the target sectors of the program (see above, art. 2);
- be active, not in liquidation or bankruptcy and not have been subject of bankruptcy proceedings or in the pre-settlement procedure;
- not be in receipt of an outstanding recovery order following a European Commission decision declaring the aid received illegal and incompatible with the common market;
- fulfill obligations related to payment of tax liabilities and liabilities for pension and health insurance in accordance with the legal provisions in the applicant's Country;
- comply with the rules concerning accidents at work and occupational diseases, safety in the workplaces, the collective labor agreements and regulations relating to environmental protection, in accordance with the legal provisions in the applicant's Country;
- not be part of a large group;
- operate in a productive sector. Consultancy firms and professional services providers are not included.

The working language of the project is English. Beneficiaries must be proficient in English language for the purposes of the project.



4. Opportunities

Participation to the activities is **free of charge**; however, participants need to cover their travel expenses. A **partial travel reimbursement** is also provided as follows:

- for each collective training taking place in Europe, a reimbursement up to € 900,00 per trip per company (only 1 person), covering travel and hotel costs, is provided;
- for each brokerage event taking place outside Europe, a reimbursement up to € 750,00 per trip per company, covering up to the 50% of travel expenses, is provided. All other costs (hotel, subsistence, local transportation, etc...) will be borne by the selected SMEs.

The project will offer beneficiaries the opportunities to participate in the following activities:

- Tailored **Individual Training** and Coaching Program to develop an **Internationalisation Business Plan**;
- **Collective Trainings** focused on five selected extra-EU Countries;
- Participation in maximum **two out of five Brokerage B2B Events** in the five selected extra-EU Countries, including a **distance matchmaking phase**.

4.1 Training Programme

Firstly, SMEs will take part in a **training programme** consisting of two phases: an individual and a collective one.

- a) the **individual training and coaching** will be delivered indicatively between June and August 2017 and it will be aimed at getting participants acquainted with internationalization-related issues in order to be able to properly draft an **Internationalisation Business Plan (IBP)** within the project.
The precise content of the training will be defined on the basis of the outputs of the needs assessment carried out for each company. The training will be delivered at company's premises (max 3 days) and then on-distance;
- b) from July to October 2017, five **collective trainings** will be organized in five European cities to be selected according to the origin of selected SMEs. Each training will last around two days. This training is aimed at enabling participants to get the necessary tools to understand the general features of the Target Markets and to learn how to successfully market a product in the Target Countries. Each participating company will take part to the training related to the Countries they are selected for. Hence, selected companies will participate in maximum two out of five collective trainings.



4.2 Matchmaking Activities

The **matchmaking activities** are aimed to support companies in identifying the best counterparts in the Target Market(s) and in developing fruitful business partnerships and/or technical cooperation.

The matchmaking activities will be structured in two main steps:

- a) the **distance matchmaking** consists of virtual meetings taking place from 6 to 3 months before each brokerage event. The goal of the virtual meetings is to reach advanced negotiations between the participating companies and the counterparts in the Target Markets. The distance matchmaking will be performed through an online matching platform.
- b) five **brokerage events** will take place in the five Target Markets, indicatively from November 2017 to July 2018. The brokerage events will be aimed to foster fruitful business talks and negotiations among companies, through the organization of B2B Meetings sessions with selected counterparts. Each company can participate to max 2 brokerage events, but is obliged to participate in at least one.

6. How to apply and deadline for submission of applications

Interested companies must submit their application on the following www.b2match.eu/ready2go no later than **17 March, 2017**.

For the purposes of the selection, applicants must:

- fill in a mandatory online application form
- submit a self-declaration signed by the legal representative stating that they are fulfilling all the eligibility criteria

For the same score, the order of the arrival of the applications can be also considered. In case of double applications the date of the last submission will be considered.



7. Criteria, methods and evaluation procedures

The selection process consists of two evaluation steps and will be supervised by an **Evaluation Committee** formally appointed by Promos as leader of the Consortium.

The **first step** consists of the evaluation of the companies profiles according to the following criteria:

1. motivation to the participation
2. reasons of interest for the Target Markets
3. opportunities for the sectors and product/services in the Target Markets
4. international experience
5. foreign language skills
6. participation in a cluster

This step will result in **200 pre-selected companies** with a balanced representation of

- geographical provenience
- traditional and innovative sectors
- size of the companies (i.e. balance between micro, small and medium)
- life-cycle of the companies (i.e. balance between start-up/scale-up and mature companies).

At this stage, formal checks on completeness, accuracy and validity of their self-declarations can be made, in order to check the compliance with the eligibility criteria. For this purpose, the 200 pre-selected SMEs will be asked to submit evidences related to the eligibility criteria, within 5 days from the communication of the results of the pre-selection.

The **second step of the evaluation** will be performed through a **questionnaire** and an **interview**. Following elements will be considered:

- organization;
- innovation management capacity and competitive advantages;
- general marketing strategy;
- internationalization readiness and capacity to enter Third Countries markets;
- feasibility analysis on the company products/services with regard to the Target Market;
- financial viability.

During this process, each company will be guided by the Consortium staff in discussing the content of the questionnaire with the aim of verifying the coherence of the answers provided.

Through the full evaluation process, **80 winning companies** will be selected to participate in the program.



8. Communication of Results

The selection results will be officially published at www.b2match.eu/ready2go and in Promos website within 31 May, 2017.

In addition, every winning company will also receive a communication via mail.

9. Responsible for the procedure

Responsible for the procedure is Dr. Federico Maria Bega, Head of Strategic Areas Department of Promos.

10. Audits

The selected SMEs are required to provide the Consortium all the information and documents required.

The Consortium will carry out formal checks on the completeness, accuracy and validity of the declarations on a sample basis, among those 200 pre-selected companies.

The selected companies are required to promptly notify any cessation of activities and any other event occurred after the application delivery relating to the requirements stated in art. 3, which could lead to the loss of any of the requirements for admission to the planned activities of the Call for Applicants.

11. Liability

Each candidate is responsible for the completeness, clarity and accuracy of the data and information contained in the documents and materials prepared as part of the participation to this Call for Applicants. The Consortium is not responsible for such content, or for any inaccuracies, omissions or violations of the rights of other people.



12. Obligations of the Beneficiaries

After the selection has been completed, the 80 winning companies must sign a **formal agreement** with the Consortium leader (Promos) by 3 days from the date of publication of the results.

Beneficiaries undertake to:

- notify any change occurred after the application delivery relating to the requirements stated in art. 3;
- provide information for the training needs assessment and analysis;
- actively participate to all individual training activities and draft the Internationalisation Business Plan;
- participate to the collective training related to the Country of interest they are selected for ;
- participate to all matchmaking activities and to the brokerage events (max 2) they are selected for;
- deliver the satisfaction questionnaires at any stage of the project;
- disclose information on the results of the matchmaking activities;
- provide prompt information about the status of negotiations.

13. Withdrawals, Revocation and Sanctions

Each winning SME can renounce without any charge to the participation in the program, giving a written notice by 3 days from the date of publication of the results.

In case of loss of any eligibility requirement as listed in art.3, the beneficiary is excluded from the project (*revocation*) and sanctions are imposed.

Sanctions are also imposed in case of breach of the obligations listed in art. 11 and withdrawal after 3 days from the date of publication of results.

In both conditions, the leader of the Consortium shall impose the reimbursement of any expense occurred or any expense the Consortium is already committed to undertake.

In both conditions, the leader of the Consortium may impose liquidated damages considering the seriousness of consequences that would arise from loss of eligibility requirements and non-fulfilment of the obligations listed in art. 11 and how they affect the execution of the project.



14. Privacy, data protection and transparency

Under Article 13 of the Legislative Decree no. 196/2003, the Italian "Code for the Protection of Personal Data" (hereinafter the "Code"), Promos informs that the personal data (hereinafter the "Personal Data") provided by each Applicant, will be processed by Promos, for the purposes related to this the Project.

For these purposes, Personal Data may also be communicated to third parties entitled by Promos. Personal Data may also be processed by Promos and disclosed to third parties appointed by Promos for informational purposes, promotional and direct marketing by sending commercial communications as a result of the consensus.

The processing of Personal Data, therefore, carried out through electronic and/or automated or equivalent, will be based on principles of fairness, legality, transparency and will take place with appropriate procedures to ensure the security and confidentiality.

Compared to such Personal Information, the interested party may exercise the rights under the Article 7 of the Code by writing to the email address privacypromos@mi.camcom.it or submitting questions in Via Meravigli 9/b - 20123 Milano. Holder of the data provided is PROMOS - Special Agency of the Chamber of Commerce of Milan - based in Milan in Via Meravigli 9/b (headquarters Via Meravigli, 7 - Milan).

15. Information request and communications

Information about the Project can be found on the official website of the project (www.b2match.eu/ready2go), Promos's website (www.promos-milano.it) and the other partners of Consortium' websites.

For any information about the project please send an email to ready2go@mi.camcom.it.



SELF-DECLARATION OF FULFILLMENT OF THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The undersigned (*name and surname*),
 born on the (*dd/mm/yyyy*), in (*City and Country*),
 nationality....., ID/Passport Number.....,
 as legal representative of (*name of the company*),
 based in (*City, Country*),
 address (*postal code, street, number*),
 VAT number

aware of the consequences of making false statements, falsehood of acts and use of false facts,
 punishable by Italian law according to art. 76 D.P.R. n. 445/2000 and art. 496 of the Criminal Code,

declares

that the represented company:

- is a Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise (SME) according to the definition of the EU recommendation 2003/361;
- is established in a EU Member State or in a COSME Participating Country (Albania, Armenia, Bosnia Herzegovina, FYROM, Iceland, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey);
- is active in one of the target sectors of the program “Ready2Go” (EASME/COSME/2015/028);
- is active, not in liquidation or bankruptcy and not have been subject of bankruptcy proceedings or in the pre-settlement procedure;



- is not in receipt of an outstanding recovery order following a European Commission decision declaring the aid received illegal and incompatible with the common market;
- fulfills obligations related to payment of tax liabilities and liabilities for pension and health insurance in accordance with the legal provisions in the Country where the company is established;
- complies with the rules concerning accidents at work and occupational diseases, safety in the workplaces, the collective labor agreements and regulations relating to environmental protection, in accordance with the legal provisions in the Country where the company is established;
- is not part of a large group;
- operates in a productive sector and is not a consultancy firm or a professional services provider.

The undersigned undertakes to notify any change regarding the above-mentioned conditions, which have occurred after the signing of this declaration.

Place and date

Signature of the legal representative

.....

.....

(company stamp)