

# **THE FIFTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME**

The Fifth Framework Programme comprises all Community activities in the field of research, technological development and demonstration (RTD) for the period 1998 to 2002.

Special attention is given to the promotion of innovation and encouragement of participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

## **SME Specific Measures** **Exploratory Awards** **&** **Cooperative Research (CRAFT)**

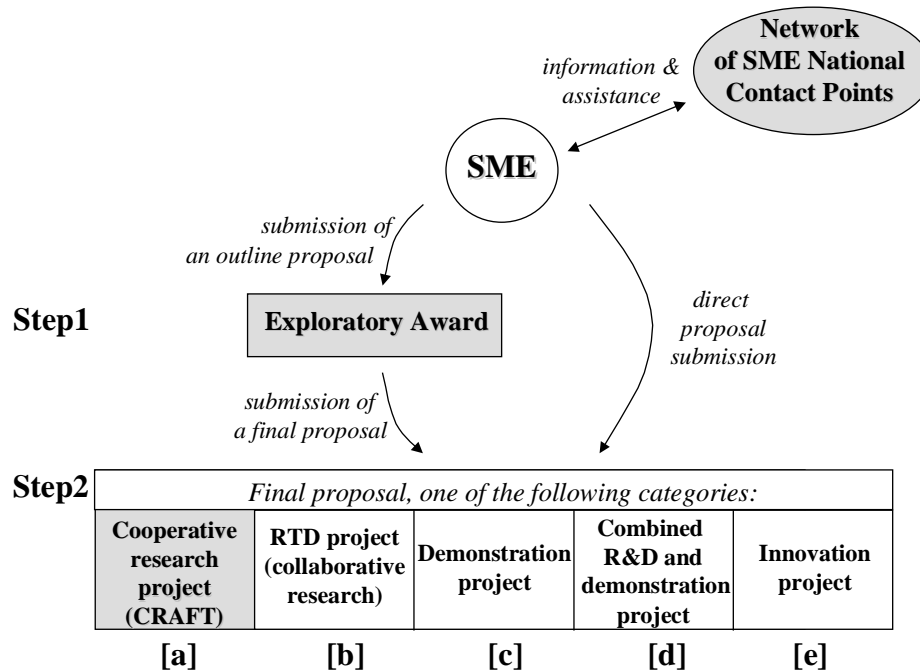
### **Information brochure**

#### **Included:**

- Exploratory Awards (Step 1)
- Cooperative Research (CRAFT)
- Evaluation Guidelines
- Expression of Interest service
- Glossary
- NACE codes for business activities
- Network of SME National Contact Points
- Participation of Organisations from Non-EU Countries

**Edition March 1999**

# The SME Specific Measures : the scheme



The SME Specific Measures (Exploratory Awards and CRAFT) are actions developed:

- to make it easier for the SMEs to take part in research & technological development programmes of the European Union;
- to promote research & technological development by SMEs and for SMEs;
- to solve specific technical problems for SMEs and encourage them to develop transnational partnerships.



**Open call – Proposals can be submitted at any time<sup>1</sup>**

## Are you an *eligible* SME (Small or Medium-sized Enterprise) which may submit a proposal ?

An *eligible* SME (Small or Medium-sized Enterprise) is an enterprise which:<sup>2</sup>

- has fewer than 250 employees,
  - has either,
    - an annual turnover not exceeding 40 million euro, or
    - an annual balance-sheet total not exceeding 27 million euro,
  - conforms to the criteria of independence,
- and in addition:*
- is not a research centre, research institute, contract research organisation or consultant,
  - is registered and operating in one of the Member States or in a State associated to the Fifth Framework Programme.

<sup>1</sup> See inside for interim cut-off dates and final deadlines.

<sup>2</sup> Further explanation of the criteria listed can be found in the “Glossary” page included in this information brochure.

Proposals can be submitted in two phases. The submission of an outline proposal may give rise to an Exploratory Award (Step 1) to help cover the costs of preparing a final proposal (Step 2).

The Exploratory Award proposal is optional (i.e. participants can directly submit final proposals).

The types of project proposals which can be prepared with an Exploratory Award are:

- [a] **Cooperative Research projects** enable groups of SMEs with similar technical problems and inadequate R&D means of their own to engage third parties (RTD Performers) to carry out most of the research on their behalf. The relevant conditions and application forms are provided in the booklet “Cooperative Research (CRAFT)” which is included in this information brochure.
- [b] **RTD projects (collaborative research)** allow organisations to carry out their own RTD and hence acquire new knowledge to develop or improve products, process or services and/or to meet the needs of Community policies.
- [c] **Demonstration projects** are intended for organisations to prove at realistic scale, the viability of new technologies having mostly completed the research phase, but which still face technical and economical risks and thus cannot be commercialised directly.
- [d] **Combined R&D and Demonstration projects** entail a combination of the above elements of both RTD projects and demonstration projects.
- [e] **Innovation projects** are combined R&D and Demonstration projects specific to the programme « Promotion of Innovation and Encouragement of SME participation ». They will cover the adoption of technologies not stemming from the thematic programmes and provide funding opportunities for transnational technology transfer. Innovation projects will be clustered to stimulate mutual learning, highlight methodological aspects and analyse the economic, social and organisational aspects of innovation.

The Exploratory Award is intended to enable SMEs to play a leading or major role in whichever type of project is selected.

Whereas Cooperative Research projects are designed according to the needs of the SMEs, RTD projects (collaborative research), demonstration projects, combined R&D and demonstration, and innovation projects are open to all types of organisations. For these types of projects the relevant conditions and application forms are provided in their respective “Guide to Proposers”.

## How to find partners

If you require help in finding partners, you can use one of the following tools:

- In each participating country, the **SME Network**<sup>3</sup> comprises of a number of organisations which provide information, advice and assistance to SMEs.
- You can submit an **Expression of Interest (EOI)** form to indicate that you are looking for additional partners. The registration in the EOI database can be done by a member of the CRAFT network, by mailing the EOI form included in this information brochure or by on-line submission via the SME website (<http://www.cordis.lu/sme>). The EOI database is publicly accessible. You can also consult this database to browse through the EOIs which have already been registered by other SMEs.

## How to write a proposal

You must use the application forms enclosed to prepare your proposal, paying close attention to the notes and instructions provided. You may use photocopies of the forms if the quality is good.

Alternatively, you can download the forms from the SME website (<http://www.cordis.lu/sme>), or prepare your proposal with the help of the software tool "Pro Tool" (Proposal Preparation Tool). "Pro Tool" and the instructions on how to use it are available free-of-charge from the website <http://www.cordis.lu/fp5>.

The proposal should be clear, concise and composed of the following parts:

Financial and administrative forms (Part A)

Proposal description (Part B)

You should fill in the forms by computer (if downloaded electronically) or by typewriter in block capitals (if in paper form). **Please note that one set of the forms sent to the European Commission must have original signatures.**

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<sup>3</sup> See the page "Network of SME National Contact Points" included in this information brochure.

# HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

The SME Coordinator (*see Glossary*) has to submit one original and five copies of the proposal directly to the Commission, either by mail or in person. Proposals may also be submitted electronically via ProTool, which can be downloaded free-of-charge from the website <http://www.cordis.lu/fp5>. This tool provides on-line help facilities, and provides instructions for entering and submitting the required information electronically<sup>4</sup>.

Proposals may be submitted in any official language of the European Union. However, it is advisable to supply at least a summary in English. This will facilitate the assessment of proposals.

## Cut-off dates and final deadlines

Proposals can be submitted at any time after the publication of the open call in the EC Official Journal. They will be evaluated by batch at regular intervals. An indicative timetable of cut-off dates for submission is given in the table below.<sup>5</sup>

Cut-off date <sup>5</sup>	Exploratory Awards	Cooperative Research
14 April 1999	✓	
15 September 1999	✓	✓
12 January 2000	✓	✓
26 April 2000	✓	✓
13 September 2000	✓	✓
17 January 2001	✓	✓
18 April 2001	✓	✓
19 September 2001		✓
16 January 2002		✓
17 April 2002		✓

The final deadline (i.e. last cut-off date) depends on the type of project : Exploratory Award (Step 1) or Cooperative Research (CRAFT).

Please note that the deadlines for RTD (collaborative research), demonstration, combined R&D and demonstration, and innovation projects are dependent on the underlying specific programme and/or key action<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, Exploratory Awards proposals should be submitted in time to allow a Step 2 submission within the deadline of the thematic programme and/or key action. This is the responsibility of the SME Coordinators.



**No Exploratory Award proposal will be evaluated if submitted later than nine months before the closing of the relevant call for a Step 2 project.**

<sup>4</sup> Do not send proposals by fax (not even to announce proposals that are in the mail) or by diskette. They will not be considered.

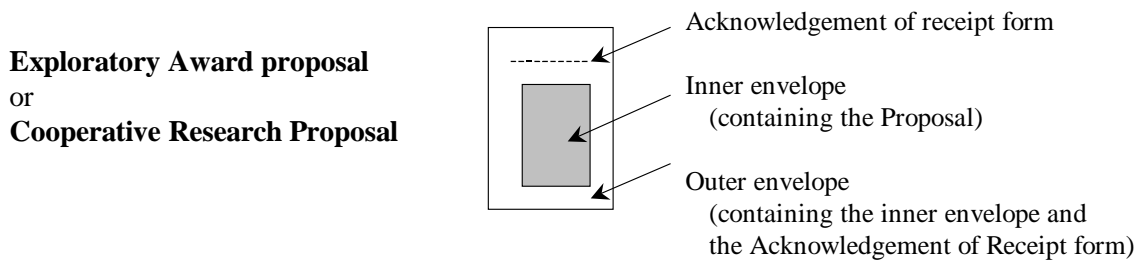
<sup>5</sup> Please note that these dates and addresses are subject to change. Contact your SME National Contact Point in order to verify the relevant cut-off date/address.

<sup>6</sup> The exact deadlines for the specific programmes and/or key actions are provided in the information documents of the respective programmes.

- For interim cut-off dates, it is the responsibility of the SME Coordinator to ensure that proposals are received by the Commission by 17H00 at the latest on the relevant cut-off date independent of the method of delivery.
- For the final deadline however, it is the responsibility of the SME Coordinator to ensure that proposals are sent to the Commission by 17H00 at the latest on the relevant final deadline.
  - Proposals sent by mail will be accepted up to 10 calendar days after this deadline if postmarked before the deadline.
  - Proposals submitted electronically require a validation file, which must be received before the deadline. The proposal file must be received electronically within 48 hours after the deadline.
  - Proposals sent otherwise (e.g. by express courier service or delivered in person) must arrive by the deadline.

## Delivery of a proposal by mail or in person

The SME Coordinator should ensure that the assembled proposal is delivered in a single parcel. Parcels should be double wrapped and clearly marked on both packages:



The inner package should have the word "**confidential**" written on it.

The address for submitting proposals by mail is<sup>5</sup>:

**Until 31<sup>st</sup> July 1999 :**

SME and Innovation Unit  
European Commission  
Directorate General for Science, Research and Development  
Rue de la Loi, 200  
1049 Brussels, Belgium

**As of 1<sup>st</sup> August 1999 :**

European Commission  
The Research Proposal Office (ORBN 8)  
Rue de la Loi, 200  
1049 Brussels, Belgium

Proposals to be sent by express courier service or to be delivered in person should use the following address:

**Until 31<sup>st</sup> July 1999 :**

SME and Innovation Unit  
European Commission  
Directorate General for Science, Research and Development  
Square de Meeûs, 8  
1050 Brussels, Belgium

**As of 1<sup>st</sup> August 1999 :**

European Commission  
The Research Proposal Office  
Square Frère Orban, 8  
1000 Brussels, Belgium

## Electronic delivery of a proposal

More details on the electronic delivery are available on the website <http://www.cordis.lu/fp5>.

# Acknowledgement of receipt

Your proposal should include the official "Acknowledgement of Receipt" form (to be put in the outer package when delivery is by mail or in person). On this form you must put your organisation's name and fax number, the title of the proposal and, if possible, the research area under which the proposal is submitted. This will ensure that the acknowledgement form is returned to you, normally within three weeks after delivery of the proposal.



**In case the receipt of your proposal has not been acknowledged within three weeks after submission, you should contact the SME helpdesk.**

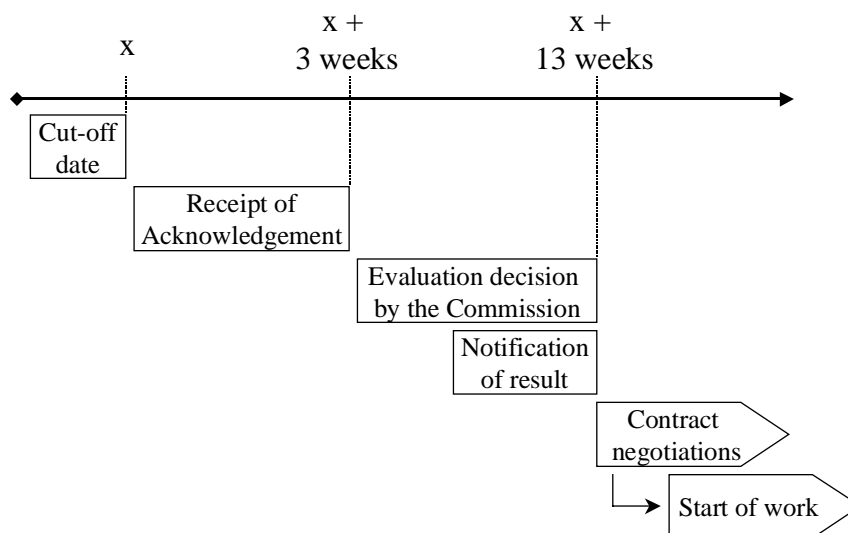
Before the Acknowledgement of Receipt form is returned, the Commission's staff will note the date of receipt of your proposal and assign it a unique reference number which will be used in all subsequent correspondence relating to the proposal.

## EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF PROPOSALS

The Commission will ensure a confidential, fair and equitable evaluation of proposals. This evaluation will have due regard to the criteria set out in the enclosed "Evaluation Guidelines for the SME Specific Measures", and will be carried out under the responsibility and coordination of the Commission, assisted by external independent experts chosen by the Commission. All proposals compete for selection on equal terms whether or not they were prepared via an Exploratory Award.

## TIME TABLE

The SME Coordinator will be notified of the outcome of the evaluation, normally within 13 weeks after the cut-off date. If the proposal is selected for funding, contract negotiations will follow after which the research work will start.



## Network of SME National Contact Points (NCPs)

The SME Network in each participating country comprises of a number of organisations (called SME National Contact Points) which provide information, advice and assistance to SMEs. The list of SME National Contact Points is given in the separate page "Network of SME National Contact Points" included in this information brochure.

## SME Help-desk

Information concerning the SME specific measures can be obtained from the SME help-desk of the SME and Innovation unit of the European Commission:

SME Help-desk  
European Commission  
Directorate General for Science, Research and Development (DG XII)  
Rue de la Loi, 200  
B-1049 Brussels  
Telephone: (32-2)295.71.75  
Telefax: (32-2)295.71.10  
E-mail: [sme@dg12.cec.be](mailto:sme@dg12.cec.be)  
Website: <http://www.cordis.lu/sme>

The SME website will also be used to announce any last-minute information and updates concerning changes of address or deadlines, and should be checked periodically for this reason. Additional information and support documents can be consulted at this website (e.g. guidelines on how to write a proposal, electronic submission facility, summary of the scope and objectives of the thematic programmes, evaluation manual, guidelines on a consortium agreement, interactive tool for building a CRAFT project, model contract for CRAFT projects).

## CORDIS

The Community Research and Development Information Service (CORDIS) consists of an on-line service providing information on all Community research programmes, RTD projects and RTD partners.

CORDIS Help-desk  
BP 2373  
L-1023 Luxembourg  
Telephone: (352)441012-2240  
Telefax: (352)441012-2248  
E-mail: [helpdesk@cordis.lu](mailto:helpdesk@cordis.lu)  
Website: <http://www.cordis.lu>