



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

MEMO

Brussels, 16 December 2013

€15 million up for grabs to support ICT entrepreneurship and web startups in first round of Horizon 2020 funding

The EU has just launched the first round of applications for its new 7 year research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020. Over €15m is available to transform entrepreneurial culture, give students the confidence, knowhow and support to set up their own businesses and to help promising web startups launch in Europe and go global.

Of that €15 million, €5 million is available to help develop and promote ICT entrepreneurship, in particular to high school and university students, and to overcome the fear of failure that prevents people from following through on a bright business idea. The call for funding is particularly targeted at accelerators, incubators, hubs and clusters and other actors of the entrepreneurship community.

Funding is available for projects focussed on people in their teens and early twenties such as a competition across at least 10 EU countries to find the best business idea, and for ICT Entrepreneurship Summer Academies to inspire and nurture the next generation of digital entrepreneurs. The Commission also wants to support ICT entrepreneurship labs to bring students, entrepreneurs, designers, universities and professors together in experimental spaces to foster innovation driven entrepreneurship. Finally, the Commission hopes to support a pan-EU campaign to change the culture of risk taking in Europe, by identifying role models who share how they have "tried and failed" and "tried and succeeded".

Neelie Kroes, Vice-President of the European Commission, said: *I have seen many great innovative start-ups around Europe, from Barcelona to Berlin, from Stratford to Sofia: and they need our help. We need to build a thriving web and app economy which embraces and accelerates the digital revolution. We need to support the entrepreneurs who will launch innovative online businesses which will change the world, and create jobs for our young people, and this Horizon 2020 funding will go a long way to help.*

The remaining €10 million is earmarked to support those who have already taken the entrepreneurial leap and established their own startup. The call is focussed on entrepreneurs who use web and mobile technologies as the main part of their business model. Services which can qualify for support are those provided by accelerators, co-working spaces, investors, crowd-funding platforms, tech blogs and other players from the start-up ecosystem. This is a part of the Commission's [Startup Europe](#) initiative and one way to make Europe an exciting and rewarding place for web entrepreneurs to be.

Under this call, the Commission will support two kinds of initiative:

- projects which develop new services for entrepreneurs in Europe connecting existing local web entrepreneurship ecosystems and hubs, complemented with other relevant activities; and
- activities to increase the impact, accessibility and reach of the online support platforms and the new services which they offer, as well as their link into other relevant initiatives, notably the Start-Up Europe Initiative.

Both calls opened on 11th December and applicants have until 23 April 2014 to send their proposals to the EU. Potential applicants will get tips and advice at seminars in January: 16 January for web entrepreneurs and startups, and 24 January for ICT innovation and entrepreneurship support

Background

The framework conditions of the Europe ICT innovation ecosystem should offer the best conditions for innovators to transform their ideas to the market and thus sustain growth and jobs. With the support of Horizon 2020, the Commission aims to encourage ICT entrepreneurship in Europe and provide high-growth potential entrepreneurs with appropriate incentives and recognition for growing businesses in and out of Europe. The main focus will be on entrepreneurs to be more adaptable, creative and to reinforce their leadership in global competition.

By using innovative technologies and platforms, web entrepreneurs build products and create services which improve and enrich our professional and private lives on a daily basis. Startup Europe is a Digital Agenda initiative supported by Vice President Neelie Kroes to promote ICT and web entrepreneurship in Europe and to help the companies flourish in Europe.

It includes six activities: The [Accelerator Assembly](#), the [European Crowdfunding Network](#), The [Web Investors Forum](#), the [Leaders Club](#), the [Startup Europe Partnership](#) and improving Web Skills via MOOCS (being launched in 2014)

In addition, a [Private Partnership Agreement on the Future Internet](#) has been launched to help with funding and mentoring web entrepreneurs that use the technologies developed in previous projects.

The text of this call and related presentations are available on [the Digital Agenda website](#).

Useful links

[Call for proposals in ICT entrepreneurship and innovation](#)

[Call for proposals for startups and web entrepreneurship](#) and a [pre-proposal check](#) process to receive advice from the Commission before formally submitting an application

<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/entrepreneurship-innovation> ICT Entrepreneurship and Innovation

[Startup Europe](#)

[@ICTinnovEU](#)

[@StartUpEU](#) #StartUpEurope

[@EU_H2020](#) #H2020

[Neelie Kroes](#)

Contacts :

[Ryan Heath](#) (+32 2 296 17 16), Twitter: [@RyanHeathEU](#);