

Call title: SME Initiative on Digital Content and Languages

- Call identifier: FP7-ICT-2011-SME-DCL
- Date of publication¹: 1 February 2011
- First stage (short proposals) deadline: 28 April 2011, at 17:00.00 Brussels local time
- Second stage (full proposals) deadline²: 28 September 2011, at 17:00.00 Brussels local time
- Indicative budget³: EUR 35 million⁴

See indicative budget breakdown in section 5 of the ICT work programme.

- Topics called:

Challenge	Objectives	Funding schemes
Challenge 4: Technologies for Digital Content and Languages	4.1 SME initiative on Digital Content and Languages	STREP, CSA

- Eligibility conditions:

The general eligibility criteria are set out in Annex 2 of this work programme, and in the guide for applicants. Please note that the completeness criterion also includes that Part B of the proposal shall be readable, accessible and printable.

Only information provided in Part A of the proposal will be used to determine whether the proposal is eligible with respect to budget thresholds and/or minimum number of eligible participants.

The minimum number of participating entities required, for all funding schemes, is set out in the Rules for Participation. See Appendix 1 of the ICT work programme for further details on the minimum number of participants.

In addition to the eligibility criteria set out in Annex 2, STREP proposals (short and full) submitted to this call are subject to the following additional eligibility criteria:

1. The consortium must contain at least **two SMEs** (this will be declared in Part A of the proposal).⁵
2. The project duration shall not exceed **24 months** and the maximum EU funding requested must not exceed **EUR 2.000.000**.
3. A minimum of **30% of the funding** requested in the proposal must be allocated to SME partners and maintained in the negotiated EU grant if the proposal is selected for funding.

¹ The Director-General responsible for the call may publish it up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date of publication.

² The Director-General responsible may delay this deadline by up to two months

³ The budget for this call is indicative. The final budget awarded to actions implemented through calls for proposals may vary:

- The final budget of the call may vary by up to 10% of the total value of the indicated budget for each call; and
- Any repartition of the call budget may also vary by up to 10% of the total value of the indicated budget for the call

⁴ Under the condition that the draft budget for 2011 is adopted without modification by the budgetary authority

⁵ The official definition of SMEs can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/sme-definition/index_en.htm.

Short proposals (both STREP and CSA) are subject to the following additional eligibility criteria:

4. The length of Part B should not exceed **five A4 pages**, excluding a title page.
5. Part B should be fully **anonymous**, meaning that none of the participants or contact points should be explicitly mentioned, or any of the authors be otherwise identifiable. Background references and a list of publications are also excluded.

- Evaluation procedure:

A two-stage submission and evaluation procedure will be followed:

- proposals (both STREP and CSA) have to be submitted in two stages: first a *short*, strictly anonymous, proposal of maximum five pages (excluding a title page) is submitted describing the **rationale, main innovations and outputs, and expected impact** of the proposed work;
- *short* proposals shall be submitted by the deadline for the first stage; they will be evaluated anonymously;
- the coordinators of all *short* proposals having reached or exceeded all the evaluation thresholds, will be invited to submit a *full* proposal of a maximum of 50 pages;
- *full* proposals shall be submitted by the deadline for the second stage; they will be evaluated non-anonymously.

Proposal submission must be made by means of the European Commission's Electronic Proposal Submission Service (EPSS) on or before the published deadlines. Applicants must ensure that proposals conform to the page limits and layout given in the Guide for Applicants, and in the proposal Part B template available through the EPSS.

Proposals submitted under this call will be evaluated according to three criteria - Scientific/Technological Excellence, Implementation and Impact. For each criterion marks from 0 to 5 will be given, with the possibility of half-point scores.

	1. Scientific and/or technological excellence (relevant to the topics addressed by the call) (Award)	2. Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management (Selection)	3. The potential impact through the development, dissemination and use of project results (Award)
short STREP proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soundness of concept and quality of objectives. • Progress beyond the state-of-the-art • Quality and effectiveness of the S/T methodology and associated work plan 	<i>(not applicable to short STREP)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution, at the European [and/or international] level, to the expected impacts listed in the work programme under relevant topic/activity • Appropriateness of measures for the dissemination and/or exploitation of project results, and management of intellectual property
	Threshold: 3.5/5		Threshold: 4/5

full STREP proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soundness of concept and quality of objectives • Progress beyond the state-of-the-art • Quality and effectiveness of the S/T methodology and associated work plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriateness of the management structure and procedures. • Quality and relevant experience of the individual participants • Quality of the consortium as a whole (including complementarity, balance) • Appropriateness of the allocation and justification of the resources to be committed (budget, staff, equipment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution, at the European [and/or international] level, to the expected impacts listed in the work programme under relevant topic/activity • Appropriateness of measures for the dissemination and/or exploitation of project results, and management of intellectual property
	Threshold: 3.5/5	Threshold: 3/5	Threshold: 4/5
short CSA proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and effectiveness of the coordination and/or support mechanisms and associated work plan 	<i>(not applicable to short CSA)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriateness of measures for spreading excellence, exploiting results, and disseminating knowledge, through engagement with stakeholders and the public at large
Full CSA proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and effectiveness of the coordination and/or support mechanisms and associated work plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of the consortium as a whole (including complementarity, balance) • Appropriateness of the allocation and justification of the resources to be committed (staff, equipment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriateness of measures for spreading excellence, exploiting results, and disseminating knowledge, through engagement with stakeholders and the public at large
	Threshold: 3.5/5	Threshold: 3/5	Threshold: 4/5

Thresholds are set for each criterion, as indicated in the tables above. In addition, an **overall threshold of 11/15** is also set for *full proposals*, both STREP and CSA. A proposal failing to achieve any of these threshold scores will be rejected.

- Particular requirements for prioritisation of proposals with the same score⁶:

The procedure for prioritising proposals which have been awarded the same score (ex aequo) within a ranked list is described below. It will be applied successively for every group of ex aequo proposals requiring prioritisation, starting with the highest scored group, and continuing in descending order:

- (i) Proposals that address topics not otherwise covered by more highly-rated proposals, will be considered to have the highest priority.

⁶ For this call, the procedure detailed below replaces the procedure foreseen in Annex 2 for the handling of tied scores.

(ii) These proposals will themselves be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the criterion impact. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on the scores for the criterion scientific and/or technological excellence. If necessary, any further prioritisation will be based on other appropriate characteristics, to be decided by the panel, related to the contribution of the proposal to the European Research Area and/or general objectives mentioned in the work programme.

(iii) The method described in (ii) will then be applied to the remaining ex aequo in the group.

- Indicative evaluation and contractual timetable: It is expected that the grant agreement negotiations for the shortlisted proposals will start as of January/February 2012.
- Consortia agreements: Participants in all actions resulting from this call are required to conclude a consortium agreement.
- The forms of grant which will be offered are specified in Annex 3 to the Cooperation work programme.

Grant agreements of projects financed under this Call for Proposals under Objective 4.1 will include the Special Clause 39 on the Open Access Pilot in FP7^{*Error! Bookmark not defined.*}⁶