

Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021

Innovation, Research, Education and Competitiveness Programme in Croatia

(“Business Development and Innovation Croatia”)

Pre-announcement

2nd Call for Proposals

Background and general information

Business Development and Innovation Croatia is a Programme financed by the Norway Grants and managed by Innovation Norway, with the aim to increase the competitiveness, value creation and sustainable growth of Croatian enterprises.

Croatian enterprises can apply for a grant to finance part of a project to bring more innovation in products, services and processes. Note that this is neither a research programme, nor an energy programme. It is a business development Programme that will finance business growth and scale-up of activities.

This Programme does not have a fixed grant rate. The financial contribution will be determined on a case-by-case basis, taking all relevant factors into account. Innovation Norway will use the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) as the legal basis for calculating eligible costs and grant rates <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0651&from=EN>

As a general rule, a small or medium-size enterprise in Croatia could get approximately 50 per cent grant out of the total approved project budget for an investment project. The grant amount could be in the range of Euro 50,000 to Euro 1,5 mill., depending on company size and project type. Large companies can also apply but they will get a lower grant rate.

Status of 1st Call for Proposals

By the deadline of 17 November 2020, 55 applications were received. The assessment and selection process has been finalised. A list of approved projects has been published on the official Programme web-site.

Pre-announcement 2nd Call for Proposals

A second Call for Proposals will be announced in October 2021 with a deadline for submission of applications approx. 3 months later. The available budget for the 2nd Call will be approx. Euro 12 mill. The Call will be published on the official Programme web-site (see below). The two focus areas of the Programme and the second Call are: Green Industry Innovation and Blue Growth.

In the 2nd Call for Proposals, we are in particularly encouraging projects within:

- Greening of the manufacturing and production industries. Support can be given to investments in more green technologies to increase the production capacity, diversify products or services, or contribute to a fundamental change in the production process to make it more environmentally friendly.
- Blue Growth can support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sector in general. Sea, ocean, rivers, lakes and islands represent resources for innovation and economic growth. Example of projects could be innovative marine/maritime equipment, green shipping technology, ship repair, maritime and marine safety. Development of new products from living organisms in the sea is another innovative example.

Project partnership opportunity

This Programme represents a unique partnership opportunity – a gateway to new expertise and modern technology from project partners in the Donor State (Norway). Project cooperation offers many benefits, both immediate and in the long term. Companies, clusters, NGOs, institutions etc. from the Donor State could be project partners, for the individual Croatian company.

Please note that the project partnership model is not as you might be used to from EU programs like Horizon2020. In the Business Development and Innovation Croatia Programme the main focus is to develop the Applicant enterprise from Croatia. They need to be the main beneficiary of the project results.

Partners should be actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of the project. The contribution from a partner should be necessary to achieve a successful project result and it must be requested by the Applicant. However, the contribution needs to be tailor-made for the project, and not something that can be bought “off the shelf” from several suppliers/consultants.

- Ex. in an investment project:

Sharing of best practises and contribute with expertise/competence/know-how, from similar company/activity in Norway. This is usually a small part of the project, and the Applicant/the Croatian company must be willing to co-finance this additional cost, which they most probably will, if they see it as an added value to the project.

- Ex. in an R&D project:

A) The partner could contribute with contractual research (sell and invoice their services) to the Croatian Applicant. The Croatian Applicant must cover the co-financing for this additional cost.

B) The partner could develop a product/solution together with the Croatian Applicant. In this case, they share the project result/IPR, and in such case the partner have to cover the co-financing of their cost from their own funds. However, it is very important that the Croatian company still is the project owner and the main beneficiary of the project result.

Programme web-site:

For more information related to the upcoming Call, the procedures and the Programme in general, please visit the official Programme website www.innovasjon Norge.no/Croatiainnovation

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