**OPEN CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

**Activities to support SME awareness raising, representation in the standardisation process and uptake of standards**

**Deadline for tenders: 30 September 2021 midnight CET**

Please send your proposal to: [president@sbs-sme.eu](mailto:president@sbs-sme.eu)

**The funding of the selected proposals is contingent on the signature of a Framework Partnership agreement and annual Action Grant with the European Commission as well as the approval of the 2022 Work Programme and budget and the decision of the governing bodies of SBS**

**A. Background**

Small Business Standards (SBS) aims at representing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the standardisation process, motivate them to get involved and raise their awareness about standardisation.

In this framework, SBS is launching an open call for proposals for activities that would support the above-mentioned objectives. The proposed activities may support the SME awareness, representation, and uptake of standards in any sector relevant for SMEs. The selected activities will need to be carried out and will be funded under the SBS Work Programme 2022. The call will be co-funded by the European Commission and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

**The call is open to both SBS and non-SBS members**.

**B. Activities eligible for funding**

Activities eligible for funding include the organisation of events (online or physical), the development of publications (e.g. Guides to support the implementation by SMEs of specific standards, studies) or any other activity that could contribute to improving the representation of European SMEs in standardisation, the SME uptake of standards or awareness about the importance of standardisation in one or several sectors.

The proposed activities must be well justified from the European SME perspective. It is the responsibility of the applicant to substantiate the relevance for SMEs in the proposal. Only activities aiming at benefiting SMEs based in the EU and EFTA countries are eligible for funding. The duration of the activities cannot exceed 12 months and should take place between January and December 2022.

Requests for funding of European experts for the participation in Technical Committees of European and International standards organisations are **not eligible** under this call. A different call has been launched by SBS for the [funding of experts to represent SMEs in standardisation work at European and international level.](https://www.sbs-sme.eu/news/call-experts-represent-smes-standardisation-published)

Activities already covered in the SBS calls for tender for the representation of SMEs in the [ICT and lift sectors](https://sbs-sme.eu/news/call-tender-representation-ict-and-lift-smes-european-standardisation-process) are also **not** eligible to be funded under this call. Nevertheless, it is possible to request funding for **additional activities** in these two sectors other than those specified in the above-mentioned calls.

Organisations may submit one or several proposals for different activities.

**C. Eligibility and selection criteria**

Applying organisations shall be based in an EU or EFTA member state and demonstrate the SME representativeness of their membership. **Entities** replying to this call **may be but** **DO NOT NEED TO BE a member of SBS**.

The selected entity shall commit to co-finance 11% of the total cost of the proposed action by paying SBS in advance the relevant amount.

The selection of the activities to be funded will be based on the following criteria:

* The technical and professional capacity of the organisation to carry out the proposed activity and its SME background (25 points)
* The description and planning of the proposed activity including the allocation of resources (25 points)
* Relevance of proposed activities for SMEs and in relation to SBS and EU objectives (25 points)
* Expected impact for SMEs also in relation to the requested financial contribution (25 points)

The different proposals will be ranked based on the points obtained on the above-mentioned criteria. If an organisation submits a proposal for more than one activity, each proposed activity will be evaluated and ranked separately.

**D. Content and submission of proposals**

**D.1 Content**

Proposals shall include:

* A description of how the entity meets the SME representativeness criterion and the technical and professional capacity needed to carry out the proposed activity (ies)
* A description of the proposed activity and an action plan for carrying it out
* A description of the relevance of proposed activities for SMEs and relation to the SBS (i.e. improved awareness, uptake of standards and representation of SMEs in standardisation) and EU objectives
* A description of the potential impact for SMEs including at least one indicator to measure this impact
* A budget for the proposed activity including details on the needed resources (e.g. mandays, travel and other direct costs).

If an organisation intends to request funding for more than one activity it may submit a single application. However, in the application, the description, justification from the point of SMEs, impact and budget for each of the activities should be clearly differentiated since each proposed activity will be evaluated separately.

**D.2 Submission of tenders**

Tenders must be sent by e-mail ([president@sbs-sme.eu](mailto:president@sbs-sme.eu)) by **30 September 2021 at midnight (CET)** at the latest. Tenders will not be accepted after this deadline.

**E. Contract and co-funding**

SBS will fund one or several proposed activities for an estimated overall budget of around €81,000 (VAT excluded). The allocation of the budget is subject to the approval of the SBS governing bodies as well as the conclusion of a Framework Partnership Agreement and annual Action Grant with the European Commission and EFTA. SBS may decide not to use in full the available budget if the received proposals are not evaluated positively and reach a minimum threshold.

Proposers will be notified of the outcome by email. The organisations proposing the selected activities shall commit to co-finance 11% of the total cost of the action by paying SBS the relevant amount. Following the payment of the co-funding, they will be offered a contract for carrying out the selected activity(ies). The activity (ies) will need to take place between January and December 2022.

**F. Data protection**

The invitation to tender involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CVs). Such data will be processed according to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data (GDPR). Any personal data will be processed solely for evaluation purposes under the call for tender.

The information provided by applicants to SBS is necessary to process the application which, if successful, may lead to the signature of a contract. Applicants will have to declare that they have taken note of our Privacy Policy. By applying you agree with our use of your personal information as described in our Privacy Policy available [here](https://www.sbs-sme.eu/cookie-and-privacy-policy).

**G. Further information**

SBS reserves the right to contact the applying organisations directly if further information is required.

For any questions or further information, please contact the SBS Secretariat ([president@sbs-sme.eu](mailto:president@sbs-sme.eu)) / Tel +32 2 285 07 27).

This call is also available on the [SBS website](https://sbs-sme.eu/news/open-call-proposals-activities-supporting-sme-awareness-representation-or-uptake-standards-any).