

Common Call Competition - I KNOW Project

Interregional Key Networking for Open innovation empowerment

INTERREG V-A Italia-Malta - PO FESR 2014-2020

The company Arkimede S.r.l., and the University of Malta through this common call for proposals, aim at launching a *call for ideas*, which is included within the “I KNOW” Interregional Key Networking for Open innovation empowerment project, in order to identify entrepreneurial solutions originating from Sicily, Malta or in combination, committed to improving sustainability and environmental performance and the quality of health and life.

The candidates, who will have their projects and ideas selected, will have the chance to take part in a supervised incubation period and be mentored by experienced advisers and entrepreneurs.

The main goal of the call is to allow the selected participants to go from the detailed developing of their idea to its realization, implementing knowledge sharing and best practice exchange. Opportunities for networking will encourage the contestants to exchange views with other realities and find new starting points in order to successfully pursue their own business idea.

This document describes the selection process and the guidelines that the participants must follow, under penalty of being excluded from the selection and not being allowed to participate.

Art. 1 Subject matter and names

I KNOW - Interregional Key Networking for Open innovation empowerment, in this document also referred to as “I KNOW Project”, it is a project of interregional cooperation V-A Italia- Malta, financed by the Fondo Europeo di Sviluppo Regionale (European Fund for Regional Development), which partner agreement includes the Parco Scientifico e Tecnologico della Sicilia (lead partner), the University of Messina, the Kore University of Enna, the University of Malta, and Arkimede srl. The aim of this Common Call Competition - which is hereinafter also referred to as “call for ideas” - is to identify, select, reward, and promote innovative entrepreneurial solutions, which are digital or not, causing an approach deeply oriented toward **the improvement of sustainability and environmental performance, and the quality of health and life. The proposed product/service models shall be innovative and potentially disruptive** according to the aforementioned topics, and being particularly suitable to be reproduced, scaled and internationalized.

The call for proposals includes, but is not limited to, product/service about: renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable mobility, smart environment, waste treatment, food waste, green building, smart building, biotechnology, bioinformatics, medical devices, digital healthcare, assistive technologies, circular economy, social inclusion.

The company Arkimede srl is both the coordinator and the promoter of the **call for ideas**, hereinafter referred to as “the Promoter”. The University of Malta, hereinafter referred to as “the Associate Promoter”, is responsible for all aspects of the MedFest event (see bullet 9 of Art. 8) including the selection of **four Maltese companies to pitch at the event alongside four Sicilian companies selected by The Promoter**.

Art. 2 Addressees, participation requirements and conditions for eligibility

The following subjects can submit the application to participate in this Call for proposals:

- informal groups gathering a minimum of 3 people who have come of age, and including two third of the whole being resident in Sicily or Malta;
- Startups having their registered office in Sicily or Malta or having at least a local business unit located in Sicily or Malta;
- SME established since less than 60 months having their registered address in Sicily or Malta or having at least a local business unit located in Sicily or Malta.

The informal Groups that will send the request to participate accept implicitly that, in case they will be chosen, they will have to establish a legal entity having the legal status of a company within 30 days as of the beginning of the incubation path, electing legal address for service in Sicily or Malta, or, alternatively, establishing at least a local business unit in Sicily or Malta. Lack of establishing a legal entity having the legal status of a company will cause that the selected Informal Group will be immediately excluded from the following stages of the path hereof.

Exceptions to the aforementioned provision, relating to the deadline for establishing a legal entity having the legal status of a company, could be agreed with the Promoter and the Associate Promoter if necessary.

The project ideas must be aligned with the objectives and priorities presented in this Call for proposals stating clearly the expected results. Furthermore, the following advices must be observed:

- the documents must be filled in Sicily in the Italian or the English language and, in Malta, in the English language. Please note that **all pitches at the MedFest event will be delivered in English;**
- handwritten proposals shall **not** be accepted.

Art. 3 Admission reserve

The candidates are admitted to this Call for proposals, reserving the right to verify the admission requirements. In case of lack of these requirements, as well as in case of non-compliance with the peremptory terms stated in this Call for proposals, will be arranged at any time, even after being admitted to the Call for proposals, the exclusion from the program.

Art. 4 Applications submission: terms and procedures

The final peremptory deadline to submit the applications is scheduled for **11.59 PM of 30/09/2019**. The Promoter reserves the right to modify, if necessary, the applications submitting procedures and defer the deadline to present the applications, giving prompt notice of the change on the website **www.i-knowproject.eu** dedicated to the project.

There are only two ways allowed for submitting the business idea:

1. to complete the online application form available at <http://www.i-knowproject.eu/call-competition> in every part, within the specified due date. During such procedure will be mandatory to specify if the team/startup is applying for the incubation process in Sicily or in Malta;
2. to send an e-mail, accompanied by the required documents specified hereafter in this call for proposals, within the specified due date, to either of the following email addresses: for applications from **Sicily, callcompetition@i-knowproject.eu**, for applications from **Malta, info@takeoff.org.mt** . The subject required for the e-mail is: **“Common Call Competition – I KNOW PROJECT”** followed by the name of applying team/startup. The hour and date specified by the provider receiving the e-mail shall be considered FINAL.

Art. 4.1 Application sent via email

The documents to be attached to the application e-mail shall have a dimension equal to maximum 10 MB (attachments having bigger size shall not be accepted). Should be necessary to send attachments having larger file size, it is possible to use one of the following sharing platforms - Google Drive, Dropbox - and specify the relating link in the application e-mail. The candidates

acknowledge that neither the Promoter nor the Associate Promoter shall be deemed directly or indirectly liable for any delay and/or inability to deliver the e-mail through the provider. Likewise, the Promoter nor the Associate Promoter shall not be deemed directly or indirectly liable for any issues relating to examination and download of the attachments, whatever the means the participants chose to send the application.

In the application form must be included, under your own responsibility and being aware of the consequences, even criminal penalties, arising from false statements, last but not least, being excluded from the participation to the Call for proposals:

In case of application submitted by a **Startup or a SME**:

- Name and Business registration number;
- Legal representative data and details;
- Registered office and any local business unit;
- Startup/SME field of activity;
- Chamber of Commerce report (**applicants for Sicily only**);

In case of application submitted by Informal Groups, provide information for **each single participant**:

- Name, surname, and ID tax code (Italian Codice Fiscale, Maltese ID number);
- Date and place of birth;
- Residence (official real address) and domicile (service address);
- Short curriculum vitae (one page only);
- Statement of commitment to establish a legal entity having the legal status of a company if selected.

Furthermore, **Informal Groups, Startups and SMEs** must supply:

- **A completed Application Form**
- **Cash Flow**

Art. 4.2 Information reliability

Anytime, either the Promoter or the Associate Promoter has the power to verify the information submitted by the candidates to confirm they are true, and this can occur even after the selection phase is executed and possible further phases of this Call for proposals are established.

Art. 5 Evaluation Committee

The received applications will be examined by an Evaluation Committee as selected by the “I-

Know” project partners (one member each partner), made up of experts, that will select at least n. ten ideas/projects among those short-listed, 5 for Sicily and 5 for Malta. The selection shall be based on the criteria stated in the following Article and at the Committee sole and exclusive discretion.

In a second step, during the supervised incubation, **four projects will be selected from Malta and four from Sicily to present at the MedFest event.**

Art. 6 Evaluation Criteria

The projects regularly received and deemed admissible shall be evaluated according to the following criteria based upon “The 25 Questions that Every Business Plan Must Answer” which is provided in Presentation 5.6 of the I-KNOW series of formation seminars (see Appendix 1).

Issues taken into account include:

- quality and coherence. It concerns clear and complete documents and their coherence with the Call for proposals and the areas of interest;
- innovativeness. It concerns the originality of the business activity and the developed technologies.
- feasibility. It concerns technical and scientific feasibility, scalability, and replicability.
- social and environmental sustainability. It concerns the positive effect the project has on society, environment or both.
- technical and management skills. It concerns skills, training, experiences, tech- scientific knowledge of the team. entrepreneurial and management skills, organizational structure, networking ability;
- team commitment. It concerns the commitment and engagement, as well as the spendable time, agreed by the business partners to the goals.

Art. 7 Equity participation by Arkimede S.r.l.

In order to support the projects and ideas that are found more interesting, the Promoter after the ending of the phases stated in this Call for proposals, could propose to the participating subjects, at its own sole and exclusive discretion, an *equity financing* for the submitted project/idea equal to an amount of € 5,000.00 against a 5% of the company shares, according to the terms that shall be agreed between the parties. For the avoidance of doubt, and in order to avoid misinterpretation of the content, the aforementioned provision represents an optional proposal that could be freely accepted or refused by the receiving subjects.

Art. 8 Business Incubation path and schedule

The selected projects shall be entitled to obtain an incubation path lasting up to 14 months starting as of the phase n. 4 according to the time schedule provided below, carried out at the business incubator (i) Innesta (Messina) or Università degli Studi di Enna “Kore” for Sicilian businesses, and having a value equal to € 10,000.00 or (ii) TAKEOFF for Maltese businesses.

The **incubation process**, according to the progress status of the idea, will lead the startup to validate quickly the designed product/service in relation to the reference market, it will go along with them to potentially create an MVP (*Minimum Viable Product*) and identify the best go-to-market strategies so that it can best prepare itself to effectively meet national and international investors.

1	Publication of Call	09/08/2019
2	Last deadline to submit applications	30/09/2019
3	Publication of the shortlisted applicants	October 2019
For the selected teams only		
4	Signing the agreement and start of the incubation phase	October 2019
5	Defining the business idea	October 2019
6a	Entrepreneurial masterclass – Sicily	October 2019
6b	Entrepreneurial masterclass - Malta	November 2019
7	Business model and team organization	November 2019
8	Pitch-deck review and identification of potential investors	December 2019
9	Pitch competition MedFest Malta	14/12/2019
For Italian ideas that received external funding		
10	Accompanying path to business	15/12/2019 – 30/06/2020
	Chance to receive a grant equal to € 5,000.00 in exchange for a part (approximately of 5%) for the equity of the financed idea	Only for the ideas that receive a financing support between January and June 2020

Each selected team shall be provided with:

- a space where it could work as a team;
- a workshop on methods to validate the business idea;
- supported by qualified experienced mentors;
- meetings with companies having experience in the fields similar to those stated in the Call;
- a network of people and experts to exchange ideas and opinions.

The shortlisted teams, as highlighted in the time schedule, will have the chance to take part in a **Masterclass expected to take place at the end of October in Sicily and in November in Malta**, where they will be prepared to effectively present their idea to the investors. The Masterclass is an essential step of our path, it will give the chance to exchange point of views with an expert in the field of investing, and it will allow the selected teams to exchange opinions among them. There will be one Masterclass in Malta and one in Sicily and both will be delivered by the same expert in order to ensure consistency.

The teams successfully completing the proposed path could present their business idea during the pitch competition that will take place in **Malta at MedFest**.

The Promoter, if necessary, reserves the right to modify the aforementioned phases and the time schedule of the program, giving suitable and prompt notice of the amendments on the website www.i-knowproject.eu.

Art. 9 Guarantees and indemnities

The participants to the initiative I-KNOW guarantees that the sent content:

- Do not include illegal, forbidden or adverse material in respect to whatever stated in this Call for proposals.
- Do not include any material violating any rights, roles or claims of third parties (with reference to the Law in the matter of copyright and industrial property and other applicable laws or regulations)
- They can be freely and lawfully used according to the statements provided for in this Call for proposals, as the participants are entitled to use them or as they acquire their availability from all the subjects entitled to them, taking care of fulfilling and/or being in compliance with the rights, also economic rights, due to the authors of the content and/or

the works from which such contents arise and/or are excerpts or other subjects entitled to this right or due to the use of the rights herein included according to the law.

Those participating subjects to the project I-KNOW declare that they are aware of the liabilities, including the criminal responsibilities, they could incur in case of false content of the delivered projects and/or in case of false statements relating to the requirements of the projects, in order to take part in the initiative ruled by this Call for proposals. It is the duty of the applicant to ensure that the intellectual property being presented is sufficiently protected and/or not prejudiced by entry into this competition. Each applicant shall hold harmless Arkimede S.r.l. and its partners from any claims relating to the applicant's participation in this competition.

Art. 10 Privacy and Confidentiality

All information collected by Arkimede S.r.l. and the University of Malta, and shared with its partners in this project, shall only be used for the purposes of reviewing the application. Data supplied by applicants shall not be provided to third parties outside of the project.

Art. 11 Intellectual property and Duty of confidentiality

The material and intellectual property of the submitted information, together with the applications sent by the participants, are the property of the respective owners, being the Promoter entitled to use these information only according to the purposes of the initiative I-Know, by way of example and not limited to, activities relating to publication and notification. All the participants to the initiative undertake to keep confidential the acquired information in relation to the initiative.

Art. 12 Acceptance of the regulations of the Call

Taking part in the initiative implies the full and unconditional acceptance of this Call and its annexes, which were read, understood, and accepted by the candidates, as they declare.

Art. 13 Clarifying Requests

All the interested parties requiring clarifications, information and/or further details about the Call and the terms of application should send an email to the address callcompetition@i-knowproject.eu or info@takeoff.org.mt by no later than noon of 25/09/19.

Art. 14 Liability Disclaimer

The Promoter does not take on any liability about wrong, inaccurate, incomplete, illegible, damaged, lost, delayed, wrongly addressed or intercepted requests (even delivered through sealed envelope at the specified office) or about registration of participants that, due to any reasons, have not arrived or electronic communications, or any other kind of communication, that have been delayed or any other technical issues linked to the sending or uploading of the content relating to this initiative.

Appendix 1

25 Questions for applicant assessment

1 Management

1. Does the management team have the technical knowledge to undertake the business plan?
2. Does the management team (and its advisers) have the experience to carry out the plan?
3. Has the current team any functional gaps and are there plans in place to fill those gaps?
4. Will the management team implement appropriate systems to monitor and control the business?
5. Can the management team articulate its plan?

2 Intellectual property

1. Does the business own, or have the right (*e.g.* a license) to sell, its proposed products/services?
2. Have appropriate steps been taken to formally protect intellectual property (*e.g.* patents)?
3. Does the business understand how to protect its know-how and are appropriate steps in place?
4. Does the business need key suppliers or partners?
5. Is there a prospect of new IP being developed?

3 Business Opportunity

1. Has the business done appropriate market research to identify its potential customers and their needs?
2. Does the business understand its product/service in terms of benefits rather than features?
3. Has the business identified its competitors and analyzed how its products/services compare with theirs?
4. Is the planned route to market appropriate?
5. Is the market potential projection realistic?

4 Funding and Cash Flow

1. Has the business identified all of its costs and the level of funding it will need in its cash flow forecast?
2. If seeking debt finance, does the business have the ability to make repayments?
3. If seeking investment, does the opportunity meet the needs of investors (growth, exit strategy *etc*)?
4. How sensitive is the cash flow to reduced sales?
5. Is there an appropriate shareholder agreement (companies) or partnership agreement in place?

5 External Environment

1. Have obvious **Threats** (SWOT) been identified and steps taken to minimize impact?
2. What might be the impact of any **Political** change?
3. What might be the impact of any **Economic** change?
4. What might be the impact of any **Social** change?
5. What might be the impact of **Technological** change?

The scores to be allocated for each of the 25 questions will be as follows: 0 Absent or negative, 1 Poor, 2 Needs work, 3 Satisfactory and 4 Proficient. Thus each application has a potential score of 0 up to a maximum of 100.