

EXDCI – 2

Call for Spin-off Initiatives: Guide for Applicants

**Deadline for proposal submission:
06 September 2019, 17h00 CET**

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General information on EXDCI-2 and this open call on Spin-off Initiatives (SPI)

Despite large varieties of tools supporting innovation, today's EU funded R&I project are yet not enough exploited for pushing novel technologies into SMEs and startups.

We therefore suggest to complement the existing mechanisms with the implementation of a **co-development approach starting during the lifetime of the R&I project** that would mitigate the financial risk and allow projects to (re)focus part of their resources into the elaboration of a market driven development.

This Spin-off initiative (SPI) starts within the lifetime of an R&I project and survives its end. The spin-off would gather a subset of the project partners strongly engaged in the economic assessment – and potentially later on – the productization and commercialization of a high potential technical R&I outcome (“gem”¹). **The spin off thus benefits from already established partnerships within the active project consortium and engages via the spin-off into a market focused assessment for a co-development effort.** The expected outcome is a business plan for potential products derived from the gem. The Spin off gathers all necessary stakeholders for a first step in assessing the potential of the gem in a market driven process.

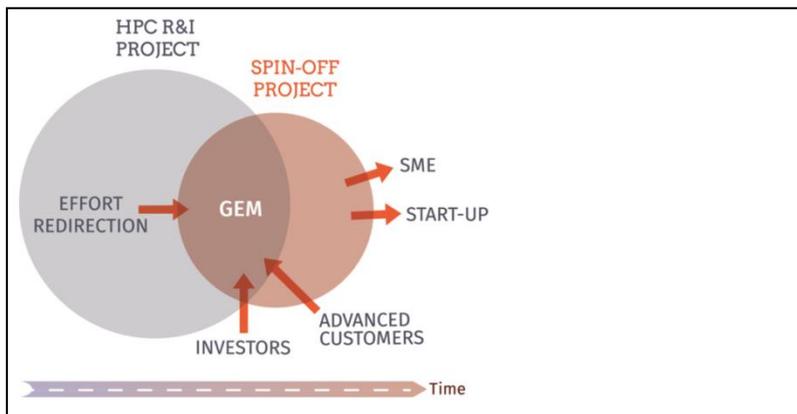


Figure 1: Timeline of the project spin-off

To assert the validity and potential of such Spin off initiatives (SPI), we conduct a Proof-of-Concept in the frame of EXDCI2, based on gems identified within H2020 funded, HPC related projects R&I projects. Via this call for proposals, one proposal shall be selected and awarded up to 65 000 € for a business-oriented assessment of its gem.

Further information on EXDCI-2

- WWW: <https://exdci.eu/>
- Coordinator: Dr. Serge Bogaerts, PRACE Managing Director, S.Bogaerts@staff.prace-ri.eu



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no 800957.

¹ gem: A precious or semiprecious stone used in jewelry as a decoration.

Guide for Applicants

This Guide for Applicants describes the call for Spin-off Initiatives (SPI). The call will be open for proposal submission from 24 June 2019 until 06 September 2019, 17h00 CET.

The guide contains all proposal requirements and the instructions on how to prepare and submit the proposal to this call. The submitted proposals must abide all requirements described in order to be considered eligible for being funded in the frame of this call.

In this call, a total financial support of up to 65 000 € will be provided to one proposal.

1. Requirement for eligible proposals

a. Types of activities qualifying for financial support

The expected outcome is a business plan for potential products based on the gem. The SPI gathers all stakeholders for a first assessment of the potential of the gem in a market driven process.

The gem and its potential, derived product shall be strongly related to HPC (High Performance Computing). The gem shall be part of the foreground of a H2020 funded project, which is still running (at the time of the closing of this call) or has ended not more than 20 months ago. In order to fully exploit the synergies within the consortium of the R&I project, we would expect the project partners of the R&I project – even if they are not partners of the SPI – to contribute to its efforts.

b. The consortium of the SPI

Financial support will be provided to legal entities only.

The SPI consortium must consist of at least two and at most four partner organizations. The partners shall designate their coordinator, which shall act as intermediate between the SPI consortium and EXDCI-2. The role of coordinator shall preferably be taken over by an SME. The main factors defining an enterprise as an SME are (i) staff headcount and (ii) either turnover or balance sheet total, as specified in the table below.

At least one of the SPI partners must be involved in the R&I project, that has developed the gem.

No criteria apply on the geographical distribution of the SPI consortium partners, but multinational consortia will be prioritized. Preferably, a SME should be part of the consortium.

Company category	Staff headcount	Turnover	or	Balance sheet total
Medium-sized	< 250	≤ € 50 m		≤ € 43 m
Small	< 50	≤ € 10 m		≤ € 10 m
Micro	< 10	≤ € 2 m		≤ € 2 m

Table 1: SME definition

The partners of the SPI consortium have to ensure at latest at the starting date of the SPI all IP issues that may hinder the development or the exploitation of the gem and related products are settled.

c. Duration, start and end date of the SPI

The project duration is 4-6 **months**. It shall start at the first day of the following month after entry into force of the funding agreement. **The project has to end by 30 June 2020 at the latest.**

2. Financial support and eligible costs

a. Requested financial support

The SPI will apply for financial support by submitting one joint proposal describing the gem and their strategy to assess the potential of the gem, as well as an estimation of the related costs. The total financial support requested for the spin-off project shall not exceed €65,000.

b. Cost categories eligible for reimbursement

The project coordinator will be provided funding via the EXDCI-2 project, with up to at most 65,000 Euro. This may cover personnel cost for technician and administrative manpower needed to implement the SPI activity. This may also include necessary travel costs for mutual visits or SPI related presentations or demonstrations organized during the project life time, as well as necessary equipment for the SPI.

c. Reimbursement of costs

The financial support will reimburse 100% of the eligible SPI-related costs up to 65,000 €. The coordinator will receive and handle all payments on behalf of the SPI consortium. The total financial support to be paid out depends on the actual extent to which the SPI is properly implemented and completed according to the proposal and to several key performance indicators (KPI), which are specified in the funding agreement.

3. Preparation of the SPI proposal

a. Language

Proposals must be prepared and submitted in English. Proposals written in any other language will be rejected.

b. Contents of the proposal

The following items of the proposal must be completed (see also the SPI proposal template):

Administrative data:

Administrative data will be collected on the consortium partners' contact details, the SPI key data, and the statement on the SPI announcement.

Description of the SPI:

The description of the SPI must have a **maximum length of 5 pages** and covers the following parts, which also serve as the primary proposal evaluation criteria:

- **Impact (maximum length: 1,5 pages)** Description of the gem and of potential, derived products and their added value. The description should be technically credible and the added value numbered by comparison to existing technologies
- **Soundness of concept (maximum length: 1,5 pages)** Description of the overall strategy to assess the commercial value of the productized gem; describe how IPR will be settled that may hinder the development or the exploitation of the gem and related products (shall be settled by start of the spin-off project)
- **Work plan (maximum length: 1 page)** Brief description of the activities that will be conducted (objectives, timing)
- **Quality of the consortium (maximum length: 0,5 page)** Brief description of the partners and how the partners contribute potentially in a later state to the productising/commercialisation of the

gem, as well as the interaction /support planned from the R&I project (of which the spin-off stems).

- **Justification of Resources (maximum length: 0,5 page)** Justification of planned use of resources regarding personnel cost, travel, etc. At most 10% of the SPI budget shall be allocated for development efforts of the gem. Costs must be stated in EURO (€).

Ethical issues:

Research activities in Horizon 2020, and hence in this call, shall respect fundamental ethical principles, particularly those outlined in “The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity”.

Personal data must be protected and processed in compliance with the applicable EU and national law on data protection (including authorisations or notification requirements), under Regulation No 45/2001 for the purposes of implementing, managing and monitoring the spin off or protecting the financial interests of the EU (including checks, reviews, audits and investigations). This regulation is from the European Parliament and the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJ L 8, 12.01.2001, p. 1).

Ethical issues might refer to research with respect to e.g. humans, protection and processing of personal data, animals, environmental protection, and safety, etc. If any ethical issues apply to the spin off initiative prior to its starting date, they must be addressed in the proposal. If any ethical issues arise during the spin off run time, they must be immediately communicated to EXDCI by sending an email to: office@etp4hpc.eu.

IPR issues:

The SPI consortium has to make sure that latest at the starting date of the SPI, all IP issues that may hinder the development or the exploitation of the gem and related products have been settled. All SPI consortium members shall provide before the start of the SPI a signed declaration thereof.

4. Submission of a SPI proposal

Proposals must be submitted via e-mail to maike@office.etp4hpc.eu. **The proposal must use the submission template and must be sent as pdf file.** Proposals submitted by any other means will not be considered eligible for financial support.

For any proposal submitted the SPI coordinator acts as the main contact between the SPI consortium and EXDCI-2 It. It is the responsibility of the SPI’s coordinator to ensure the timely submission of proposals.

Shortly after proposal submission deadline, the SPI coordinator will receive an acknowledgement of receipt sent to his e-mail address. This acknowledgement of receipt does not imply that the proposal has been accepted as eligible for evaluation.

5. Proposal evaluation and selection

a. Overview of the evaluation and selection procedure

The evaluation will happen in 4 phases:

Phase 1: General eligibility check

A proposal will be considered eligible for evaluation if it meets the following conditions:

- (i) the proposal template has been completed as required,
- (ii) the proposal was submitted by the closing date as stated in the call text, and
- (iii) the eligibility criteria set out in in this document are met.

Proposals that do not fulfil all conditions will not be considered for evaluation.

Phase 2: External evaluation

All proposals eligible for evaluation will be assessed by member of the SPI Selection Committee and scored against the following criteria:

- Impact of the project
- Soundness of the project (including work plan)
- Quality of the consortium
- Justification on resources

The members of the SPI Selection Committee will produce a ranking of the proposals. For each criterion, every external evaluator will provide a score based on the following scale:

Score	Description	Justification
0	Fail	The proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.
1	Poor	The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
2	Fair	While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses.
3	Good	The proposal addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be necessary.
4	Very good	The proposal addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.
5	Excellent	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

The SPI Selection Committee members will be instructed to reject any additional materials not explicitly requested in the online proposal template.

In case of ties, the following secondary ordering criteria shall apply:

- Project involving an SME or a mid-cap that can potentially in a later stage put on the market the innovation developed during the SPI project
- Higher score on “impact”
- Higher score on “soundness of concept”
- Project involving a multinational SPI consortium

Phase 3: consensus phase

The members of the SPI Selection Committee will discuss the ranked list of the Selection Committee members and produce the final ranking and select the first proposal of this ranking for funding.

Phase 4: Formal decision

Formal decision of the financial support is subject to signing the SPI funding agreement. In case the consortium refuses to sign the funding agreement or the declaration on IPR (Annex ...), the proposal will be excluded from financial support. Instead, the next proposal, taken from the final ranking will replace the excluded proposal.

b. Communication after the evaluation

Applicants will be informed on the results after the evaluation has been completed and the final decisions have been made. Applicants of proposals rejected will receive an email including the reasons for rejection.

c. Absence of conflict of interest

The external evaluation experts that will judge a proposal will be independent from any partner of the proposal. They must perform their work impartially and shall not have any conflict of interest in relation to the proposal for assessment

6. Support to applicants

Results will remain the SPI partners' intellectual property. The European Commission's Helpdesk on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) assists organisations participating in EU-funded projects on any IPR issues. The partners may contact this IPR Helpdesk at: <http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org>

For further information and questions on the call, the eligibility rules, the evaluation or the information provided in the online proposal template please send an email to: maike@office.etp4hpc.eu

7. Tentative time schedule of the call

An estimated time schedule is included in the table below:

Phase		Date
Call publication date		24 June 2019
Open call closing date		06 September 2019
Evaluation	General eligibility check	06 September 2019
	Review and formal decision	15 October 2019
Agreement signature		30 November 2019
Potential start date of the SPI		01 January 2020

8. Members of the Selection Committee

- Avi Mendelson (Technion, Eurolab4HPC)
- Rainer Leupers (RWTH Aachen, Tetramax)
- Lee Margetts (PRACE IAC)
- Manuel Arezna (Appentra, founder of a SW company)
- Ulrich Krackhardt (EXTOLL, founder of a HW company)
- Andreas Olmes (High-Tech Gründerfonds)
- Ingolf Staerk (Fujitsu, ETP4HPC SB)
- Cecilia Soriano (CIMNE)
- Avi Mendelson (Technion, Eurolab4HPC)

For EXDCI-2 are involved :

- Hugo Falter, ParTec (Task leader),
- Maïke Gilliot, ETP4HPC (co-leader and main contact)
- Pere Puigdomenech, HPCNow! ,
- Francois Bodin (Scientific Director of EXDCI2)