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Horizon 2020 – The EU Research and Innovation programme for 2014-2020

With a budget of nearly €80 billion over seven years (2014-2020), Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU research and innovation programme yet, and one of the biggest worldwide. It received a strong increase in funding – a nearly 30% jump in real terms over its predecessor the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7).

Horizon 2020 is articulated around three pillars:

- Supporting excellent science: the aim of this pillar is to strengthen the EU's position in science by boosting top-level research in Europe;
- Strengthening industrial leadership: this includes major investment in key technologies, greater access to capital and support for SMEs;
- Addressing societal challenges: this pillar aims to address major concerns shared by Europeans citizens such as climate change, developing sustainable transport and mobility, making renewable energy more affordable, ensuring food safety and security or coping with the challenge of an ageing population.

Health in Horizon 2020

The **Health Societal Challenge** ([Link](#)) has earmarked a budget of €7.4 billion which will be invested to support:

- **Collaborative research projects** where several research teams join forces to address a specific research challenge;
- **SMEs through a dedicated SME instrument** where a single SME can receive up to €5 million to further develop its research and development pipeline;
- **The Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI 2)**, Europe's largest public-private initiative aiming to speed up the development of better and safer medicines for patients, which will fund projects where large pharmaceutical companies join forces with SMEs and research organisations ([Link](#));
- **The European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP 2)**, a partnership between Europe and Sub-saharan African countries to respond to the global health crisis caused by the three main poverty-related diseases: HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria ([Link](#));

- **The Active and Assisted Living (AAL 2)**, which aims to enhance the quality of life of older people and strengthen the industrial base in Europe through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT); [Link](#);
- Horizon 2020 also supports start-ups, midcaps and large company loans through the **InnovFin** financial instruments ([Link](#)).

SME support in Horizon 2020

Earmarked with about € 3 billion in funding over the period 2014-2020, the **SME Instrument** ([Link](#)) helps high-potential SMEs to develop ground-breaking innovative ideas for products, services or processes that are ready to face global market competition. Available to SMEs only, this new instrument has opened a new highway to innovation through phased, progressive and complimentary support:

Phase 1: Feasibility assessment (optional phase): **€50,000 and 6 months duration** for exploring and assessing the technical feasibility and commercial potential of a breakthrough innovation that a company wants to exploit and commercialize;

Phase 2: Innovation project: Up to €5 million for performing activities which include clinical trial, prototyping, miniaturisation, scaling-up, design, performance verification, testing, demonstration, development of pilot lines, and validation for market replication;

Phase 3: Commercialisation: No funding. Specific activities will be offered to SMEs with the aim to support the investment readiness, linking with private investors and customers through brokerage activities, assistance in applying to **InnovFin** financial instruments, and a range of other innovation support activities and services offered via the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN).

Learn more: <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/>

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