

**SUBJECT: Permanent Open Call for Proposals for the European Space Agency's Business Incubation Centre in the United Kingdom (ESA BIC UK)**

Dear Sir/Madam,

As part of its endeavour to encourage the transfer and commercialisation of space technologies, the European Space Agency<sup>1</sup> (the Agency) has begun a partnership with STFC Innovations Ltd (SIL) as the ESA Business Incubation Centre (ESA BIC) Manager in the United Kingdom. The purpose of an ESA BIC is to enable entrepreneurs to receive comprehensive commercial and technical assistance in order to set up their business using space technology for non-space industrial, scientific and commercial uses or developing products and services for the space sector.

The Agency has set up business incubators located in several ESA member states including at Harwell, Daresbury and Edinburgh in the United Kingdom.

SIL is entrusted by the Agency with the set-up, administration and implementation of this Call. SIL is the technology transfer office of one of Europe's largest multi-disciplinary scientific organisations, the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC), part of United Kingdom Research and Innovation.

SIL hereby invites you to submit a proposal for the above subject.

Yours faithfully,

Michael Norris  
Head of Business Incubation  
STFC

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<sup>1</sup> The European Space Agency is an intergovernmental organisation constituted of the following Member States: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Please find enclosed the following documents:

- I. Instruction for Business & Activity Proposals (BAP)
- II. Evaluation process and evaluation criteria
- III. ESA BIC UK Draft Incubation Contract
- IV. Local Incubator Agreements (ESA BIC UK Draft Rental Agreement)
- V. BAP Template Cover Letter, Requirements Checklist and Executive Summary
- VI. BAP Template Incubation Proposal
- VII. BAP Template Business Plan

Your attention is drawn to the following.

Nature and purpose of this Call for Proposals

1. The purpose of this Call for Proposals (Call) is to select projects and ideas for business incubation in the ESA BIC UK for a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 24 months.
2. ESA BIC UK offers to support projects and ideas for business incubation by providing funding, business and technical assistance as well as office accommodation and services<sup>2</sup>. The extent of the support provided is negotiated on a case-by-case basis. As a general rule the incentive funding granted to a project **is not for direct labour costs** and can only be spent in the United Kingdom. Exceptions have to be approved by SIL. The incentive will be a maximum of £41,500 covering costs incurred for the development of products, prototypes, software and IPR. Within this overall amount a maximum of £5,000 may be allocated to market research activities. In addition, SIL offers up to 40 expert hours of technical support for the duration of the contract plus 40 hours of ITAC (Innovation Technology Access Centre) support per year for the contract term.
3. This Call is of a permanent nature meaning that it has no closing date for the submission of proposals as long as the ESA BIC UK has not indicated otherwise.
4. Applications are only considered from legal entities in the United Kingdom and individuals resident with a permanent working permit in the United Kingdom. Individuals are required to demonstrate that, at the time of submission of their proposal to the Open Call, the process of establishment and registration of a legal entity has been initiated.

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<sup>2</sup> Please see cost schedule for office accommodation and services

5. Start-up companies, whether registered at Companies House or not, may apply for this Call.
6. In case of start-up companies who are registered, the company – represented by its authorised representative(s) – is considered to be the Applicant.
7. In case of legal entities who are not registered, the general partner is considered to be the Applicant and authorised to act on behalf of the entity.
8. In case the Applicant is an individual, (s)he shall be over eighteen years of age and of sound mind, and therefore able to enter into a binding agreement.
9. All the above categories are hereinafter referred to as “Applicant”.
10. This Call is not aimed at particular non-space sectors or domains but explicitly excludes activities promoting, or related to, alcohol, tobacco, religion, politics, intolerance, violence, firearms, pornography, obscenity, gambling or illegal drugs.

#### Requirements

11. Applicants are required to closely follow the instructions provided in this Call when producing and submitting their proposal (Section I Instructions for Business & Activity Proposals).
12. Only those Applicants that fulfil all formal requirements (Section V BAP Template Cover Letter, Requirements Checklist and Executive Summary) will be accepted for evaluation.
13. Applicants should carefully read the contractual documentation provided in section III ESA BIC UK Draft Incubation Contract. The application shall include a clear, explicit and unambiguous statement whereby the Applicant has read and accepts the terms and conditions contained in the contractual documentation. In exceptional cases where the Applicant wishes to propose modifications or amendments, the full text of such modifications or amendments shall be given and the reasons for the amendments requested shall be clearly explained as part of the proposal.

#### Procedure and planning

14. The evaluation of all proposals received shall take place in accordance with the

Agency's and SIL's rules, procedures and requirements (Section II Evaluation Process and Evaluation Criteria). All Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their evaluation.

15. The evaluation procedure is carried out in two phases. The first phase is managed locally by SIL. The second phase is managed by the Tender Evaluation Board (TEB), which decides the results of the evaluation.
16. The Tender Evaluation Board generally meets several times per year to evaluate the proposals received since the preceding deadline, unless otherwise required. Proposals will be accepted for the current evaluation round where they reach the ESA BIC UK within the current deadline, the date and time of which is published on [www.esa-bic.org.uk](http://www.esa-bic.org.uk).
17. The period between receipt of a proposal and contract placement is in principle no longer than 6 months.

#### Miscellaneous

18. The contents of the Applicant proposals shall be treated as confidential.
19. In spite of the efforts undertaken by SIL to ensure full confidentiality, the Applicant's idea may through the application to SIL (if not specifically protected for example by patent rights) fall into the public domain. Therefore we strongly recommend that the Applicant discuss the protection of her/his idea with a dedicated expert in this field prior to application to SIL.
20. As far as allowed by law, any title held by the Applicant to his/her idea shall remain vested in him/her. This application shall under no circumstances result in the acquisition of any title whatsoever to the idea<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> If the Agency or its Member States require the use of any Intellectual Property Rights owned by the Incubatee as described in Item 20 here above for the performance of the Agency's programmes, the Incubatee shall be invited to submit a proposal following a request for quotation issued by the Agency. If, for any reason, the Incubatee is not able to submit a proposal within the determined tendering period, or following evaluation, said proposal is not recommended in-line with the ESA Rules and Regulations, the Agency is automatically entitled to a worldwide, irrevocable, transferable, non-exclusive licence to use on "favourable conditions" (i.e. more favourable for the Licensee than market conditions but still allowing reasonable profit for the Licensor) such Intellectual Property Rights for non-commercial purposes within its Scientific Research and Research and Development programmes, with the right to grant sub-licenses. Notwithstanding the above provisions, shall the Incubatee provide the Agency with conclusive evidence that granting said licence would cause it to suffer economic hardship, the Agency's authorised representatives may jointly, on a case by case basis, waive this right.

21. No expenses incurred in any stage of the application procedure will be reimbursed to the Applicant by SIL, the Agency and/or any third party.
22. In no event shall this Call for Proposals be construed as imposing any obligation whatsoever upon SIL, the Agency and/or any third party to enter into negotiations with any Applicant or to enter into any other specific arrangement for business incubation in any of the ESA BICs and SIL's establishments.
23. SIL and the Agency are committed to ensuring equal opportunities and the elimination of discrimination of any type for all applications complying with the conditions and requirements set forth in this Call.

Any queries relevant to the submissions of proposals are to be addressed, in writing, to: [enquiries@esa-bic.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@esa-bic.org.uk) [clearly marked as a question].

Your complete proposal and all supporting documents are to be submitted, in electronic form (.pdf and .doc/.docx) to the following email address: [enquiries@esa-bic.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@esa-bic.org.uk).

In parallel, one set of signed paper originals is to be sent to:

Dr Sue O'Hare  
ESA BIC Operations Manager  
Science and Technology Facilities Council  
Atlas Building R27 room G27  
Harwell Campus  
Didcot  
OX11 0QX

Subject: ESA BIC UK – Open Call