EU grants for SMEs and ICT clusters in Romania

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding programme</th>
<th>• European Grants – Operational Programme Competitiveness - Priority Axis 2 - Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for a competitive digital economy</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme operator</td>
<td>• Ministry for Informational Society (through OIPSI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specific objective</td>
<td>• Contribution growth for the ICT sector’s economic competitiveness</td>
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Eligible beneficiaries

- SMEs operating in Romania:
  - focused on ICT field (individual)
  - within ICT centred clusters
- SME Consortia (SMEs partnerships) within ICT centred clusters
- The grants are available for **beneficiaries** that are deploying their activities within the following **domains (NACE sections)**:
  - 2611 Manufacturing electronic subassemblies (modules)
  - 2612 Manufacturing other electronic components
  - 2630 Manufacturing communication equipments
  - 6201 Custom software development activities
  - 6202 IT&C consultancy activities
  - 6203 Calculation management activities
  - 7211 Research-development in biotechnology
  - 7219 Research-development in natural sciences and engineering
- **The Applicant must demonstrate the novelty degree of the ICT products/services created within the project**, nationally/ internationally and the applicability area of the products/ services (within the regional development area or outside of that).

Eligible projects

- Developing a range of ICT products/services with applicability within the rest of the Romanian economy for the vertical integration of ICT solutions;
- Strategic innovation projects with direct impact on development of the whole ICT industry nationally or internationally;
- Projects that ensure the transition from outsourcing to innovation-based development, collaboration between/ within ICT clusters with the aim of obtaining innovative products;

Project eligibility criteria

1. **Project funded:**
   a. May concern about the development of a innovative ITC range of products/ services/ applications with applicability in the rest of Romanian economy for vertical integration of ICT solutions
   
   And/or
   b. It can be an innovative strategic project with development above the entire ICT industry at national or international level impact

2. **It contains at least one of the following activities:**
   a. Investment in tangible and intangible assets necessary for the development of product / service / ICT application
   b. industrial research or experimental development
   c. innovation for SMEs
   d. process and organizational innovation

3. The de minimis aid requested is related to the realization of the activities listed in the subparagraph 2.

4. **It is implemented on the Romanian territory**

5. The purpose and objective of the project are in accordance with the specific objectives of the POC action

6. The project will ensure the resulted/ developed product integration and it will present how the beneficiary will integrate the product in the industry which it is addressed

7. The project will ensure the standards of security and confidentiality of information, processing of personal data.

8. The project complies with national and EU rules on equality, sustainable development, procurement regulations, information and publicity

Eligible activities

- Activities related to investments in tangible and intangible assets
- Activities related to industrial research or experimental development
- Activities related to innovation for SMEs
- Activities related to process and organizational innovation

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The following categories are eligible for funding under the de minimis scheme:

- Information and publicity, including promotion of project results activities
- Consulting services/approvals/agreements/authorizations
- Training/Special training
- Interim/final project audit
- Internal Project Management
- Payment of subscriptions and contributions necessary for project implementation

For the **State Aid Scheme**:

- **Purchase of tangible assets:**
  - IT hardware and other associated devices,
  - Data center set-up for installing ICT equipment etc.
- **Purchase of intangible assets:**
  - Software applications,
  - licenses,
  - database configuration and implementation,
  - Electronic signature solutions etc.
- **Industrial research and experimental development:**
  - personnel expenses,
  - Expenses regarding instruments/equipments associated with the research etc.
- **SMEs innovation:**
  - obtaining/validating/protecting patents,
  - Expenses for the deployments of highly qualified personnel etc.
- **Process and organizational innovation:**
  - personnel expenses,
  - expenses with the contractual research,
  - expenses with equipments/instruments/consumables etc;

For the **De Minimis Scheme**:

- Information and advertising;
- Consultancy services, licensees, letters of advice;
- Specific professional training/development;
- Intermediary/final project audit;
- Internal project management;
- Payment of subscriptions and contributions necessary for project implementation
- Market research to identify niche opportunities for the innovative product/service.

**Eligible expenses**

**Non-eligible expenses**

- Recoverable VAT and VAT related to non-eligible expenses
- Any other duties, except those provided as eligible
- Interest receivable, excluding those relating to grants awarded
- Acquisition of second-hand equipment
- Fines, penalties and respective costs
- Costs related to investment operating
- The amounts resulted from foreign exchange differences
- Costs related to amortization
- Contributions in kind
- Leasing expenses
- Costs related to investment objectives operating
- Costs related to decommissioning or developing of nuclear power plants
- Purchase of infrastructure, undeveloped land, built land and real estate
- Costs related to investment aimed to greenhouse gases emission reduction
- Costs related to manufacturing, processing and marketing of tobacco and tobacco products
- Costs related to investments in airport infrastructure

**Project's achievement indicators**

- The implementation results in at least one innovative ICT application/product/service and the way it is integrated/marketed in the respective sector.

**Allocated budget**

- **EUR 59,700,000**
### Funding conditions (intensity & volume)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding conditions</th>
<th>State Aid Scheme</th>
<th>De Minimis Scheme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intensity</td>
<td>Between 25% and 70% depending on:</td>
<td>100% out of de minimis expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Region (implemented project)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Type of activity (developed in the project)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Type of beneficiary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>Maximum: EUR 730,000</td>
<td>Maximum: EUR 200,000</td>
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### Implementation period
- Maximum 36 months

### Type of call
- Call submission type: **on term**
- Call release date: **October 1, 2015**
- Call end date: **December 23, 2015**

### Funding programme structure
The programme specific expenses will be funded by a mix of funding schemes:
- **State aid** scheme (all eligible expenses exclusive of the ones eligible under **de minimis** scheme)
- **De minimis** scheme (specific list of expenses provided below)

### Application file
- Formal documents necessary for the application:
  - declarations,
  - certificates,
  - decisions/ internal papers,
  - Financial information etc.
- **Business plan**
- **Feasibility study** – only for the strategic innovative projects;
- **Gantt diagram** associated to the activities’ action plan for the implementation of the project;
- Documents regarding proof of the project’s implementation location unless these are not to be found in the confirmation of company papers;
- **Certificate or any other document issued by the Cluster Management Entity that proves the membership to that cluster** (if appropriate)
- **The cluster statute**, showing that it is centered on ICT (if appropriate)

### Other information relevant
- There will not be funded projects that provide exclusive activities under the De minimis scheme.
- In strategic projects, are eligible partnerships which are incorporating SMEs form different IT clusters or in the same cluster and implements the project development in several regions of Romania.

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**Disclaimer**: The information presented above is based on the programme Guidelines presented on the website of the Romanian Ministry of European Funds, our liability being limited to that.

- To get a preliminary check of the eligibility of your project, please provide us with some relevant information in our online questionnaire and we will contact you shortly.
- For any further details, do not hesitate to contact us.

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