

## **Our advice!**

Carefully think through your project idea. Make a thorough assessment of your target clients, their pain point(s) you are addressing with your innovation, (niche) market(s) and your competition. Only a convincing proposal will open you doors to access the SME Instrument dedicated funding. At the same time you must be realistic and credible in your presentation of your product / service and the business model you are introducing. Your proposal must represent a market-creating innovation that will improve productivity and international competitiveness and generate new jobs and result in improved life quality.

## **Important facts**

- for-profit SMEs, including young companies and start-ups, from any sector
- must be established in an EU Member State or a Horizon 2020 associated country
- there are no set topics à full bottom-up approach
- negative impacts on climate and the environment should be avoided
- an SME is not allowed to be involved in multiple SME Instrument applications and/or projects under implementation at the same time
- if you have completed a Phase 1 project and intend to submit a Phase 2 proposal, you should include the final report as an annex to your Phase 2 proposal
- the applicant and/or the consortium must have sufficient operational capacity to carry out the project

## **NEW:**

During the evaluation procedure for SME Instrument Phase 2, if your proposal reached the threshold, you will be invited to a jury interview, where you will hold a pitch in front of a panel (business people, investors, and experts in the relevant industry) and answer their questions about the proposed solution. In the interview panel the initial evaluators will not be included. Starting with the proposal that received the highest Overall Consensus Score and in descending sequential order, proposals are passed to step 2 until the cumulated amount of EU funding requested in the proposals is as close as possible to twice the available budget.

Very short time frame from submission to evaluation results

Selection of up to 3 (from a list of 15) key words of outmost importance in regard to the assignment of evaluators and the interview panel (Phase 2).