1. **GRO/SME/20/B/06-CREATING LINKS FOR THE FACILITATION OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT OF INNOVATION**

***Type of applicants targeted***

Private and/or public entities involved in promoting innovation and/or supporting SMEs and/or Start-ups and/or supplying innovation solutions.

***Description of the activities***

***Total*** ***amount*** of ***the*** ***action***: EUR 1,500,000

***Rate of co-financing:*** 90%.

***Description of activities:***

This action aims at further demonstrating the relevance and effectiveness of the cooperation model between various stakeholders supporting through public procurement the promotion of innovation and the support to economic operators, in particular SMEs and Start-ups. It is a second experimentation of this cooperation model under the COSME programme.

It proposes to bring together potential public buyers, suppliers of innovation (with a special focus on SMEs and start-ups), and potential investors and researchers, with a view to determine projects suitable for public procurement of innovation.

***The purpose will be to:***

- Determine the emerging needs of the public sector (i.e. large buyers) in strategically selected technologies.

- Provide network with stakeholders, such as scientists and other suppliers of knowledge (e.g. start-ups) in strategic fields.

- Provide for the engagement of funding partners: public funds (such as Union funding opportunities), private fundsand large enterprises willing to provide funding at various stages of commercialization of innovation.

- Allow for the brokering funding opportunities, technological and business aspects between all stakeholders.

Programme funding would include the following activities: - A Facilitator for networking activities and stakeholders management; - Logistics, including travelling costs of participants - the proof of concepts of selected projects - Stakeholders' costs relating to the participation in the process (the cost of procurement of the relevant goods or services is excluded from this funding).

The facilitator would engage with large buyers and/or aggregators of public procurement to identify a small number of needs (problems). Subsequently, the facilitator would engage the "sources of innovation" (i.e. start-ups, innovative SMEs) through its network and ask them to provide solutions for the identified need. A small number of those solutions would receive funding to develop their competitive ideas that the enterprises could pitch to the buyers for potential procurement at a later stage. The action would involve parties coming potentially from any Union Member State (and participating countries). There is also a clear focus on the promotion of SMEs and start-up companies, who could become involved through projects to provide innovation through this programme.

***Expected results of the action:***

The Facilitator would broker a small number of public procurements of innovative products or services and demonstrate the effectiveness of this model of cooperation. The output of the projects should allow further analysis of experience and future optimisation of the process and better inclusion of SMEs and start-ups. The results would also be useful for further development of the business model of operation for such Facilitators. The Facilitator will not be procuring the actual goods or services.

***Implementation***

Implemented by EASME.

***Additional information***

***Specific objective:***

Ease access to procurement markets.

Create a business-friendly environment by reducing the administrative burden on SMEs (improving conditions for businesses).

***Indicative implementation timetable:***

Launch of the call: Q1 – 2020.

Award: Q3 – 2020.

Signature of the agreement: Q1 – 2021.

Duration: 36 months

***Qualitative and quantitative indicators for the action:***

- Number of public buyers engaging in the network;

- Number of private sellers engaging in the network;

- Number of established contacts / relationships between public buyers and SMEs/start-ups;

- Number of identified innovative products or services suitable to meet the identified needs of the public buyers;

- Number of good practices identified and recommendations formulated in view of a simplification of the PPI;

- Number of identified possible additional funding opportunities for innovative products or services.