



Question and Answers

SBIR DM "Design and innovate with locally available materials for economic and environmental impact in Egypt, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda"

Version 3, 18 February 2022

This document contains the questions and answers from the information meeting and which were received by e-mail.

SBIR Questions:

	Questions:	Answers:
1.	What is the exact reason for choosing these specific countries?	The selected countries are important countries for programmes of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in each of the 10 countries an embassy of the Netherlands is active. However, in the phase of expression of interests, they are not yet involved.
2.	Do agricultural innovations fit in Theme 2?	Not necessarily, but if it concerns for example the use of agricultural waste streams and contributes to one of the themes, it might fit.
3.	Applying local residual flows from the agricultural sector, does that fit in this SBIR call?	Yes, this might fit if you can indicate that the / innovation can be applied in one of the three themes: built environment, public space of hospitals and health centres.
4.	Can we also add collection and sorting of waste to the proposal?	Your project idea should fit the scope of one of the 3 themes and you should emphasize the possible impact of your innovation. If adding collection and sorting of waste contributes to the goal of our call, feel free to include this to explain your business case. Or if it increases the possibilities of scaling up in the future you can include this as well.
5.	Concerning theme 3: is it mandatory to make the products from local materials?	We aim for innovations made by local materials. You are expected to (re-)use local materials for at least the major part of your innovation.
6.	And would developing a medical product from local waste residues suffice as well?	Yes, medical products from waste residues do fit theme 3. Note: we are not looking for medicines from local materials, these are excluded from this call.
7.	I see some potential overlap as well between theme 1 and 2, how those applications would be handled?	This is not a problem and we are aware of this, so feel free to indicate that your innovation fits more than one theme. There is no double funding if your project covers 2 themes!
8.	I understand the need for a business case for a local entrepreneur. How do you envisage this local company's relation with the Dutch innovator and its innovation? in terms of IP, formal relationship, revenue share etc.	At SBIR we don't prescribe your way of collaborating as long as you can demonstrate local impact and (economic) sustainability. The latter implies that you need to involve an entrepreneur who has a stake in a successful business case. We do assess the feasibility of your business case and your project should be in line with the scope of this call. It's up to you how to do this, so feel free to partner up with anyone in a way that suits your business in order to achieve our goal.



9.	Is there a wish from RVO that we cooperate with Orange Corners?	More than welcome! Not a requirement though.
10.	What are Orange Corners	The Orange Corners are local incubators who have local networks. The Orange Corners are funded by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They work closely together with the Dutch embassies and local partners in each programme country. In 8 countries of this call there are Orange Corner activities. The experience in other SBIR calls is that the networks of OCs can be helpful to find partners in the local ecosystem. More information https://www.orangecorners.com, for contacts check through sbir@rvo.nl.
11.	Do I need to write the proposal in English or Dutch?	Preferably English. All additional info can be found on https://www.rvo.nl/subsidie-en-financieringswijzer/sbir/sbir-oproep-ontwerp-innovaties-van-lokale-materialen-voor-de-bouw-publieke-ruimte-en
12.	I would like to share the call with our partners. The info page on RVO is only in Dutch, so it seems?	Yes, the page on RVO.nl is in Dutch, but the call is mostly in English, except for the procedural part.
13.	Is there a format/form for the proposal for stage 1?	This information can be found on: https://mijn.rvo.nl/sbir-innovatie-in-opdracht
14.	Is there any limit of project applications per team? or could we apply to more than one theme with different projects in parallel?	No there is no limit. Keep in mind that you need enough resources (capacity and finances) to handle more projects at the same time.
15.	Where can I find the call on TenderNed?	www.tenderned.nl/tenderned-tap/aankondigingen/249652
16.	With the online expression of interest form you cannot add files. I understand submission for phase 1 is also an online form. Does that allow to add files?	The expression of interest form does not allow you to add files. For phase 1, you can add files and must at least add your project plan (according to the format provided).
17.	Do you need eHerkenning to send in a bid for phase 1?	No
18.	How do new energy products like bio-pyrolysis oil for cookstoves fit in?	We are not looking for just bio oil itself, you have to make clear how you see the broader idea of local impact than just innovating on the oil, because fuel would not fit within any of the themes. If you for example decide to develop the oil locally and/or (re-)use local materials and/or involve the local community/environment, it could fit the SBIR scope. Also, it should be scalable and eventually integrated locally.
19.	In the scope of theme 1 and 2 integrated water and energy supply and storage systems are specifically mentioned in the	It is optional to take the integrated water and energy supply and storage into account.



	description. Is this optional or a condition?	
20.	May medical products have to comply with the ISO13485 standards, which makes it very expensive and complex to introduce innovations in Africa. Are there ways to develop medical devices without/postponed ISO standards?	The target country has legislation for the import, production and application of medical devices. Any innovation should comply with this. If you submit a bid for phase 1, and you are not sure yet if your innovation meets the required standards for your market, please describe how you want to research the standards.
21.	What is considered a new innovation in the target country?	Projects are considered innovative if the project needs R&D work to become a successful market-ready product/service in the chosen country. In the call it is described as the following: "The innovation can be a design or product and is new to the target country. This also includes making existing design and products in another country suitable for the target country in an innovative way. Obviously, this still requires R&D and there is a reasonable chance that it is not technically or economically feasible." If a project can be copy-pasted to another country, this is not innovative.
22.	Does the innovation have to be in stadium 0 (TRL1) or can de innovation be further developed to fit within the SBIR?	An innovation can be further than just the start, TRL1 for SBIR. However, it is important that there is still R&D necessary to realise your innovation. In the call it is described as the following: "The innovation can be a design or product and is new to the target country. This also includes making existing design and products in another country suitable for the target country in an innovative way. Obviously, this still requires R&D and there is a reasonable chance that it is not technically or economically feasible."
23.	What kind of proof do you want to see for the market potential? Launching customers or just a pre-existing supply gap? Or other evidence?	For the expression of interest, we do not need prove as yet. But for the next phase we need information like any business plan: you need to show that people are willing to pay for your innovation and it can be transformed into a viable business model.
24.	Is it possible that we support a local based organization with a new/innovative product/solution including a business model, without making it a business model for the Dutch partner?	In general for us, it is the impact of your project locally that matters. For us it doesn't matter how you decide to collaborate, as long it can be transformed into a viable business model that contributes to one the themes and is sustainable in the long term.
25.	Are there any requirements for the cooperation with the local partner? E.g. local partner's available knowledge, staff, financial strength, previous innovation steps, etc.?	There are no specific requirements. For the EoI we would like to know if you already have partners. If you do not have any local partners yet, we would like to know how you are going to find them in phase 1.



		In a bid for phase 2, it's up to you to convince the committee that the consortium is capable of pulling the innovation off and eventually turn it in viable business.
26.	Is it allowed to explore one idea in more than one of the selected countries?	No. The project should focus on one specific country. It could be a scaling strategy to eventually implement your innovation in other countries after your project is finished within the SBIR.
27.	Can WBSO also be used?	Yes, the WBSO tax incentive can be used in parallel.
28.	What was the most successful SBIR project so far and what made it so successful. Was it success by design of sheer luck?	Protix, company in Bergen op Zoom. It was a small scale insect farm, starting up, now they are active worldwide.
29.	Is it possible for the feasibility phase to include action-based research (including prototyping on the ground?)	Yes, definitely. Anything that can speed up your innovation process is funded and supports your findings during the feasibility phase.
30.	How many people should the Dutch applicant have on the payroll, track record?	We don't have specific requirements for this topic as long as you are able to present a suitable idea at this stage. As stated before, the partners should be capable of achieving the desired objectives and convince us of this.
31.	Is the call limited to small businesses for the Netherlands?	No, SBIR is open for all businesses registered in the EU.
32.	Are the information sessions recorded?	No, they are not. The presentation will always be shared with the attendees. If you have any questions left, please contact us by email: SBIR@rvo.nl or the contact form: https://www.rvo.nl/contactformulier-sbir-oproep-ontwerp-innovaties-van-lokale-materialen-voor-de-bouw-publieke-ruimte-wssl
33.	What were the main reasons of the rejecting of the 15 proposals?	We have reviewed all proposals that where send in in time. We excluded proposals that did not fit the scope of one of the 3 themes or did not require research and development. All rejected proposals received feedback by email. Some EoI were handed in too late and were not reviewed.
34.	Do you have an evaluation grid specifying the specific criteria and the scoring principles?	No we don't have a grid as such. The committee assesses all proposals on the basis of the 3 criteria (impact, technical feasibility, economical perspective). In the call, you can see what the relevant points of interest are per criteria. You should be able to explain how your innovation contributes to these criteria.
35.	What is the link between the 6 chapters and 3 evaluation criteria.	The project plan consist of 6 chapters in which a participant can elaborate on their idea. In the chapters you provide information about the innovation, the consortium and company, economic perspective, how you want to execute your plan and the budget. The information in these chapters will be taken into account to assess the plan on the 3 criteria.
36.	Please confirm 30 bids will be selected for phase 1.	We have the budget to contract 30 bids, this is a maximum. We may contract less than 30 bids if there are not enough projects above the minimum threshold.
37.	Will the assessment committee ask direct questions from us?	No, in this SBIR we don't ask the project leader to be present in the committee meeting. However, if there are



		some unclarities during the discussion of the projects, we might call for clarification. So the project leader should be on standby. During the committee meeting of phase 2, project leaders will get a chance to pitch their project and have a Q&A with the committee.
38.	Does a refugee camp qualify as built environment?	Yes, refugee camps qualify as a build environment.
39.	Do slums qualify as build environment?	Yes, slums qualify as a build environment.
40.	Can market research be part of phase 1?	Yes, you can explore the market with the budget of phase 1. In this case, this is called commercial feasibility research.
41.	One of the (big) problems with innovation is that it is so new that those who have to pass judgement, evaluate do not understand or do not have sufficient knowledge to deal with the proposition. How do we know that we are being passed by because the evaluator(s) are not up to the task	We have established an experienced committee that has in-depth (business) knowledge on these topics, so we assure you that this won't be an issue. Please, make sure you explain your innovation well, so it is clear what the technical starting point is. But also look at the economic perspective, so your develop a product that customers want and want to pay for.
42.	Are we given the opportunity to explain things to the valuers?	No, so we strongly advice to be concise and clear in your project plan, so that your proposal convinces the committee.
43.	Are countries prioritised?	No
44.	How strict is the 6 months' timeline? We have to work around the rainy season for parts of the feasibility phase.	Very strict, the deadline to hand in the feasibility report is 29 September 2022. This applies to all participants. In this case it is important to demonstrate with the available information, despite possible knowledge gaps, that the innovation is feasible within the duration of the SBIR
45.	Could we have a call after the information meeting of 17th of February to specify more your demands so we can make a winning bid?	The information meeting is there to explain the process, and demands, so everyone knows what the conditions are to have a bid that fits. For now you can read the call carefully, the guidelines (handleiding voor ondernemers), the Q&A and check out the formats for phase 1. If you still have questions after that, feel free to contact us.
46.	We have received feedback on proposal. Is it possible to have separate meeting with RVO to discuss this feedback further?	Yes, however, we strongly recommend spending some time on understanding the scope of the call (and your theme). If you still have questions after that, feel free to contact us.
47.	Is it possible to adapt a project plan for multiple country markets?	Yes, but we rather see that a feasibility study is focused on one country and use the other countries as a scaling strategy after finishing the project.
48.	Are you able to change your country when submitting the proposal from your originally submitted EOI?	Yes, but please be clear why you made that decision and the project still needs to fit within the requirements of the call.
49.	€50.000 is the maximum budget for the bid, is there also a minimum amount?	No, there is not. Your budget should be in line with your planned study and it is up to you to make a solid plan with the right budget.



50.	Can we include travel and accommodation costs in budget? is there fixed rates ?	Yes, you can include these costs. Within the SBIR, there are no fixed rates. You have to make a truthful indication about these costs.
51.	In the webform we are asked if we have a cooperation with other parties (e.g. project partners). If we hire external input from parties like WUR / Fraunhofer I would not call that project partners. Agree?	Yes, they are not seen as a local partner, although they can be partner in your process (e.g. as a partner to assess commercial/technical feasibility).
52.	If total cost is higher than 50.000, should we make that transparent and how we will cover these extra costs ?	In the SBIR project plan you provide us with your costs in the provided budget format. You are asked to indicate what the hypothetical bid budget would be if you would transfer all (IP) rights of the research. The price of your bid should be conform the market, but keep in mind that the intellectual property (IP) stays at your company. The extra costs are at your own expense. The experience is that SBIR participants will make more costs by investing more hours eg.
53.	Is there a max day rate for the budget ?	No, however the daily rates used should be conform the market.
54.	Is the assessment purely based on quality (scoring based on the 3 criteria) or is there a preference to have projects in all eligible countries?	No, we assess your proposal on impact, technical feasibility and economical perspective regardless which country.
55.	Is there a specific reason why the bid contract lies with the EU partner when the innovation and implementation is actually not in EU and there is a strong emphasis on 'local context'?	The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a specific desire and interest to both stimulate local entrepreneurship and use Dutch entrepreneurship for challenges in developing countries and to be solved in co-creation with local partners. SBIR fits as an instrument to address both desires. The SBIR instrument is an exemption of the public procurement, because it only entails research and development. In this system it is only allowed to fund companies located in the EU.
56.	Normally a business plan addresses markets, prospective sales etc. Should that be part of the business plan which we have to come up with?	You can download the format of the business plan phase 2 to see what should be in it. For phase 1, we don't expect you to have a solid business plan yet, just an indication who can be the (public) client and who can and wants to buy the innovation. At the end of phase 1, the business case must become more clear. The business plan after phase 2 can also be used to attract investors, which is more relevant in and after phase 2.
57.	With travel - do you find it feasible to let the local party carry out Phase 1 works with the leading party (Dutch) doing the work on distance?	It is up to you to convince the committee that the local party is up to the task and the collaboration and communication with the local partner is good enough to do so.
58.	Is there a more detailed description of who partners can be/cannot be?	No, we cannot tell you with whom you should work, it is your project. There are some requirements for the partnering companies however and they are described in paragraph 10.1 of the guidelines (handleiding voor ondernemers).



59.	it is mandatory (or at least recommended) to include Dutch industry partners in the team.	It is not mandatory or recommended to include Dutch partners. It's up to you to convince the committee that the consortium is capable of pulling the innovation off and eventually turn it in viable business In the call it is mentioned in 4.2 that it is important to that the local context into account and to find/work together with locals partners. Taking the local context into account is scored within the criterium impact.
60.	What happens when there are similar projects from different countries?	The projects will be scored individually and on their own merits.
61.	In the SBIR webform I have to choose which annex I want to upload. Which Annex should I choose?	For this phase 1, you online have to choose Annex A: Project plan phase 1. If you have an intermediary, you should also hand in Annex D to sign for the authorization.