

EU Funding For Environmental Projects

Target Group:
The egg processing industry



Business Support at Your Doorstep

*Anders Skeem
EU Information Officer
Fyns ErhvervsCenter - EU Center Fyn - TCM Denmark
Danmark in Europe - Enterprise Europe Network
+45 70211850 – ask@fec.dk*

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Preamble

The Egg Processing Industry

Production of liquid and dried egg products is an established industry worldwide. In Europe, about 25% of all eggs produced are processed into egg products, and this part is expected to increase to 40% before 2010. Within the EU, there are about 500-700 egg processing plants, together producing over 1 million tons of egg products per year.

There are some environmental problems related to the egg processing activity. An average egg processor breaks every day around 1 million eggs. This activity generates a big amount of waste in the form of eggshells and egg trays. Both the shells and the trays are often contaminated with faecal bacteria and represent an important risk of disease spreading. According to the EU Directive 1774/2002, laying down the rules for disposal of animal by-products non-destined for human consumption, eggshells are considered a category 3 by-product and are subject to certain requirements concerning the handling, leading to high disposal costs for the egg processors. Thereto comes that the egg processing industry is highly energy intensive with an important consumption of heat and electricity. Wastewater is another environmental problem in the egg processing industry. The wastewater from egg processing plants contains high levels of protein and fat. Often the wastewater is directly discharged to municipal wastewater treatment plants at important costs for the egg processors.

Source: Sanovo Environmental Solutions A/S

EU Financial Support Programmes for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)

The EU provides support to European small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This is available in different forms such as grants, loans and, in some cases, guarantees. Support is available either directly or through programmes managed at national or regional level, such as the EU's Structural Funds. SMEs can also benefit from a series of non-financial assistance measures in the form of programmes and business support services.

Most of the contents of this documents is taken from the publication "European Union Support Programmes for SMEs - An overview of the main funding opportunities available to European SMEs" published by the European Commission in February 2008.

1. Thematic Funding Opportunities

This funding is mostly thematic with specific objectives - environment, research, education - designed and implemented by various Departments of the European Commission. SMEs or other organisations can usually apply directly for the programmes, generally on condition that they present sustainable, value-added and trans-national projects. Depending on the programme, applicants can also include industrial groupings, business associations, business support providers and/or consultants.

Co-funding is the general rule: the support of the European Union usually consists of subsidies which only cover part of the costs of a project.

As a rule of thumb, EU programmes have one call for proposals per year. Within 6-9 months after the deadline, i.e. after external experts have evaluated the proposal, the applicant will receive a notification telling him or her if his/her proposal has been accepted for EU co-funding.

Basically 3 EU programmes within environment and energy exist

The following information is taken from the database "Grantfinder", UK.

1.1. Eco-Innovation

This programme supports the take-up of environmental technologies and eco-innovative activities. The funding takes form of co-investment in risk capital funds that provide equity, inter alia, for companies investing in eco-innovation. The programme supports projects fostering eco-innovation networks and clusters and public-private partnerships in eco-innovation, developing innovative business services, and facilitating or promoting eco-innovation.

The objectives is to promote new and integrated approaches to eco-innovation in fields such as environmental management and the environmentally friendly design of products, processes and services, taking into account their whole life cycle.

Calls for Proposals planned for 2008

Objectives:

To support projects concerned with the first application or market replication of eco-innovative techniques, products or practices of Community relevance, which have already been technically demonstrated with success but which, owing to residual risk, have not yet penetrated the market. Supporting such innovative eco-technologies should contribute to remove obstacles to the development and wide application of eco-innovation, create or enlarge markets for related products and improve the competitiveness of EU enterprises on world markets. The projects should also aim at reducing environmental impacts or improving the environmental performance of enterprises, in particular SMEs.



The Community financial contribution will be:

- 40% for a large enterprise
- 50% for a medium enterprise
- 60% for a small enterprise of the total eligible costs.

Project duration: max. 36 months.

Expected results:

- promoting new and integrated approaches to eco-innovation in fields as environmental management and the environmental friendly design of products, processes and services;
- removing obstacles to the wide application of eco-innovation;
- creating an enlargement market for eco-innovative products and services
- increasing innovation capacities of SMEs.

 		Call 2008
Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SME¹ ▪ Innovative, environmental-friendly projects in the area of materials recycling, sustainable buildings, food & drink industrial processes, green business & smart purchasing. ▪ Supports the first application and further market uptake of eco-inovative products and services in EU. 	
Förderfähige Länder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 27 EU Member States ▪ Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Croatia, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Israel ▪ Proposers from Turkey and Albania can participate in the Call for Proposals 2008 	
Deadline	11. September 2008.	
Funding	40% - 60% of eligible project costs will be supported	
Project Size	In total EUR 28 mill. Average project size: EUR 700.000 in co-financing. Project duration: Max. 3 years.	

More information: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/etap/ecoinnovation/index_en.htm


¹ Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME): Companies with less than 250 employees and a turnover of maximum 50 Mio. EUR or a balance sum of max. 43 Mio. EUR.

1.2. EU-Programme Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) 2007-2013

This programme covers actions to support the EU's various energy activities, focusing on energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and transport. These activity fields form vertical key actions called SAVE, ALTENER, and STEER. IEE forms one of the three main strands of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) for 2007 to 2013.

The Work Programme 2008 can be divided into:

- Energy Efficiency SAVE),
- Renewable Energy sources (ALTENER),
- Energy aspects in transport (STEER).

Intelligent Energy  Europe	
Priorities	The Work Programme 2008 can be divided into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Energy Efficiency SAVE), ▪ Renewable Energy sources (ALTENER), ▪ Energy aspects in transport (STEER).
Types of action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Projects in various areas such as capacity building, spreading of know-how, exchanges of experience, policy input, awareness raising, education and training.
Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 27 EU-Member States ▪ EEDA or EFTA countries (Island, Lichtenstein and Norway) ▪ Croatia
Consortium Size	At least 3 partner organisations from 3 different eligible countries.
Next Call	Early 2009
Budget	Budget usually between € 0.5 - 2.5 million (mainly staff costs).
Project Duration	Maximum funding period 3,5 years.

Intelligent Energy Europe Programme: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/index_en.html

1.3. EU-Programme LIFE+ (2007-2013)


With a budget of €2.143 billion (for the period 2007-2013), LIFE+ is a limited but focused funding instrument providing specific support for the development and implementation of Community environmental policy and legislation, in particular the objectives of the 6th EAP (Decision 1600/2002/EC) and resulting thematic strategies. It comprises three components:

- **LIFE+ Nature & Biodiversity**
- **LIFE+ Environment Policy & Governance**
- **LIFE+ Information & Communication**

At least 78% of LIFE+ will be for the co-financing of project action grants, of which at least 50% will be for nature and biodiversity projects. The European Commission will use the remaining sum for operational expenses.

Only expenditure in EU27 countries is eligible at present, although the future participation of certain third countries is possible if supplementary appropriations are received.

The Commission will organise the annual call for proposals and, with the help of external experts, will select, revise and monitor the projects and be responsible for making the appropriate payments. Member States will forward the project proposals to the Commission, may set national priorities and objectives (from 2008 onwards) and may prepare comments on proposals, in particular in relation to national annual priorities.

	
Call 2008	
Status and Location	Public and/or private bodies, in particular: national, regional and local authorities; specialised bodies foreseen in the EU legislation; international organisations and non-governmental organisations. -Location. EU Member States, EFTA states, candidate countries which have applied to become EU Members, and western Balkan countries included in the Stabilisation and Association process.
Deadline	Deadline for submission of proposals under 2008 Call: 21 November 2008.
Support	Up to: 50% for all projects (75% for proposals which target priority habitats/species of the Birds' and Habitats' Directives). There is no fixed minimum size for project budgets; as a guide, the average grant awarded to date has been over EUR 1 million.
Overall Budget	(2007-2013) Overall budget: EUR 2,143,409,000.

More information: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus.htm>

2. Financial Instruments

Note that these schemes do not provide direct funding to SMEs, but are usually processed through financial intermediaries such as banks, credit institutions or investment funds. They are intended to increase the volume of credit available to SMEs and to encourage these intermediaries to develop their SME lending capacity.

2.1. Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP)

Under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), €1130 million has been allocated for financial instruments for the period 2007-2013. These are organised under three schemes, which are managed on behalf of the European Commission by the European Investment Fund (EIF):

- a. The High Growth and Innovative SME Facility (GIF) aims to increase the supply of equity for innovative SMEs both in their early stages (GIF1) and in the expansion phase (GIF2). GIF shares risk and reward with private equity investors, providing important leverage for the supply of equity to innovative companies.
- b. The SME Guarantee Facility provides additional guarantees to guarantee schemes, in order to increase the supply of debt finance to SMEs. It concentrates on addressing market failures in four areas:
 - access to loans (or loan substitutes such as leasing) by SMEs with growth potential;
 - provision of microcredit;
 - access to equity or quasi-equity;
 - securitization
- c. A Capacity Building Scheme supports the capacity of financial intermediaries in some Member States.

More information: http://ec.europa.eu/cip/index_de.htm and <http://www.eif.org>

2.2. European Investment Fund (EIF) own Investments

The EIF's activity is based on two instruments:

- EIF's venture capital instruments consist of capital investments in venture capital funds and business incubators that support SMEs, particularly those that are newly created and technology-oriented.
- EIF's guarantee instruments consist of providing guarantees to financial institutions that cover credits to SMEs.

Further details: <http://www.eif.org>

2.3. Gate2Growth Initiative "Access to Finance"

This is a portal to network entrepreneurs, investors, service providers and thematic networks backed by the European Commission.

The prime objective of the G2G initiative is to support innovative entrepreneurs in Europe. G2G provides tools, infrastructure and support services directed to innovative entrepreneurs as well as to their supporters; in particular, it helps them to design a business plan. One of the main purposes of the G2G initiative is to establish contacts between investors and innovative entrepreneurs, through a database.

Further details: <http://www.gate2growth.com>

3. Enterprise Europe Network

The Enterprise Europe Network is the largest European business support and innovation network providing integrated high quality services for the benefit of SMEs. The network's mission is to provide integrated information, business co-operation, innovation and technology transfer services in support of small businesses and innovative SMEs.

One of the network's core activities is informing enterprises about EU matters and providing feedback from SMEs to the Commission to ensure that future legislation responds to SME needs. Network members have expertise in areas of specific interest to companies such as: public procurement, business co-operation, financing, innovation, technology transfer, market research and European legislation. Network members also help companies to apply for Commission projects and fulfill administrative formalities. They have direct access to the European Commission and are supported by dedicated staff in the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation in Brussels, assisting them in answering the most complex questions.

Information is also provided to companies through awareness-raising activities (participation in fairs, organisation of seminars, lectures, workshops...) and a range of publications offered in local languages (guides, newsletters, websites...).

The Enterprise Europe Network also supports innovation by providing brokerage services for technology and knowledge transfer. It also supports partnership-building activities between all kinds of innovation actors and it is engaged in disseminating information related to innovation issues and in exploiting research-based technologies.

Regardless of what stage of a business cycle a company is in or what level of familiarity it has with European affairs, the Enterprise Europe Network can help. It helps companies to take advantage of business opportunities and can expose them to European and international markets through its partners in more than 40 countries. The Enterprise Europe network has over 500 offices spread across Europe and in Third Countries. These include all EU Member States, Candidate Countries, Associated Countries to the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme, members of the European Economic Area, and European Neighbourhood Policy countries. etc

Further details: <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise-europe-network>

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*Anders Skeem, EU Information Officer
Fyns ErhvervsCenter - EU Center Fyn - TCM Denmark
Danmark in Europe - Enterprise Europe Network
+45 70211850 – ask@fec.dk*

