

GENERAL TIPS

- ❖ **Writing to investors:** when preparing your proposal, think of the evaluator as if he/ **she was an investor**. Ensure that the proposal includes all the details presented in your company's investor presentation.
- ❖ **Form and Content:** Bear in mind that form matters: take the time to **review and polish the language**. You can change the appearance of the proposal, as long as you maintain the font size, margins and numbering of chapters and sections. **DO NOT REDUCE FONT SIZE!** Let the evaluator have a good time reading your proposal. Increase the spacing between letters makes the proposal easier to read, and seem less dense.
- ❖ **Telling a story:** make sure the proposal is written as a continuous coherent story, rather than as a collection of parts. Remember that **the evaluator is a human being** and it's better for you when your proposal is easier to read. Make the story interesting for the reader.
- ❖ **Using links:** you can include links to web-pages that demonstrate different aspects of the project; however, this **isn't a gateway to buy additional space for text**. The proposal must have all the information needed, while the links are 'bonuses'. Do not assume the evaluator will click these links, since they sometimes **prefer printing the proposal and reading the hard-copy**.



- ❖ **The WOW effect:** the project abstract should **be a short pitch of your company:** Problem – Solution – Competitive Advantage. **Catch the evaluator's eye**, and make her/him want to read the rest of the proposal. Write the abstract and choose the keywords last. It should NOT be the usual scientific abstract, but rather it should sell your project and should be understandable to the generalist.
- ❖ **Visuals:** a picture is worth a thousand words. **Use pictures and graphics** instead of lengthy textual explanations, where possible and where they increase the comprehension.
- ❖ **A good proposal is to the point:** written in an easy to read manner, without repetitions and most importantly **help the evaluator answer the questions he has.** You do not have to reach the maximum number of pages by force, so don't repeat yourself or provide redundant information and 'hot air'. Also, there is no need to repeat the essence of the project in the beginning of each section, as it might be tedious for the reader.



CONTENT

- ❖ **The Company and not only the project:** note that the evaluator is looking for an excellent company. Focus not only on the project but also on the company – its history, its strategy, its future and its ability to scale-up. Describe how the project fits into the company's overall development plan and strategy.
- ❖ **Business over technology:** the commercial part of the proposal is more important than the technological part. It's important to show that your product is innovative, but it's more important to show its commercial value. Put an emphasis on describing your competitors and on explaining your competitive
- ❖ **European dimension:** make sure to clearly show how your proposal is relevant to Europe. Analyse the market in Europe, detail how your product is relevant to Europe, and discuss European goals and regulations if relevant.
- ❖ **As many eyes as possible:** before submitting, let other people read your proposal and comment. Try to choose people who are not from your field, to make sure the proposal can be easily understood by a "layman".
- ❖ **Completeness:** do not forget to answer every single question, even if you think you don't really understand what the template means and/or do not think that the particular question is important. Not answering a question could cost you half a point which might be the difference between being selected for funding and not.





✦ **For re-submissions:** evaluators do not know that you re-submitted unless you mention it. They are instructed to ignore any reference to previous submissions. Nonetheless, if you choose to mention that this is a re-submission, make sure to write what were the weak spots of the last submission and what you did in order to improve it. In any case, evaluators will not receive a copy of the first submission or the results of the previous evaluation.

- ✦ **For those who won Phase 1 and are now submitting for phase 2:** You have to upload your final report together with the Phase 2 proposal. The evaluators will receive this copy of your final report. Make sure to describe your development since winning phase 1 and why now phase 2 is your next step. Make sure the final report for phase 1 and the proposal for phase 2 are in correlation. Do not repeat steps that were already taken.
- ✦ Essential tips for SME Instrument application by the Executive agency for SMEs (EASME).