



Horizon 2020 Awards Application Guide: State Aid



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Opening date - 26.10.2020

Closing Date - 16.11.2020

Horizon 2020 Unit

Malta Council for Science & Technology

1. Introduction

The Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) is pleased to announce the ***Horizon 2020 Awards***. The awards will reward the Maltese beneficiaries for having participated in research and innovation projects within the Horizon 2020 framework programme.

These awards recognise and celebrate outstanding projects that through their results have transcended benefits to the scientific research community, policy makers and society as a whole. Moreover, the awards aim at demonstrating the socio-economic benefits of EU investment in R&I and to encourage more participation in the EU funded R&I programmes.

2. General Information

Award Prize per Application - €5,000

Opening Date - 26/10/2020

Deadline - 16/11/2020 at 12.00.

3. Eligibility Criteria

The applicant must be an undertaking that carries out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU and is registered as one (1) of the following:

- **Legal Entities:** All Maltese registered legal entities which are beneficiaries and are in the possession of a signed grant agreement with budget allocation of their **Horizon 2020 project/s**. Entities can only apply with one project per award category. In the case where one project has multiple Maltese beneficiaries, a mutual agreement between the Maltese beneficiaries should be reached before the submission of the application. Only one Maltese entity representing the other entities can apply for an award category.



- **Researchers:** Individuals may apply to the award category allocated for the researchers. The researcher should work or should have been working with a Maltese Entity which is in possession of a signed grant agreement with their budget allocation of the Horizon 2020 project/s. The researcher/s must be or must have been performing the research in Malta.

4. Award Categories and Value

The **Horizon 2020 Awards** will provide the winners with visibility within the research community. There are 8 award categories for Maltese Legal Entities and one award category for individual Researchers. The award prize for each category is €5,000.

The Award Categories for **legal entities** are as follows:

1. *Best Impact for Health, Security or Smart Mobility Award*
2. *The Blue Award*
3. *The Green Award*
4. *The Climate Award*
5. *Gender, Culture, Equality or Citizen Science Award*
6. *Best Innovative SME Award*
7. *Best Promotion of STEM Award*
8. *Best Technological Innovation Award*

The Award Category for **researchers** is:

1. *Most Active Researcher Award*

5. Award Categories:

For Legal Entities

1) Best Impact for Health, Security or Smart Mobility Award

This award will be given to the entity whose project resulted in the best societal impact. The project must demonstrate how its results have bettered various societal aspects, including health, security or smart mobility.

2) The Blue Award

This award will be given to the entity whose project resulted in the greatest environmental impact and benefit. The project must demonstrate how its results have bettered the environmental aspects of either marine, aquaculture or water management.

3) The Green Award

This award will be given to the entity whose project resulted in the greatest environmental impact and benefit. The project must demonstrate how its results have bettered the environmental aspects, sustainable agriculture, circular economy, and waste management.

4) The Climate Award

This award will be given to the entity whose project led to with a positive climate impact. The project has to demonstrate how its results have bettered Climate aspects including the reduction of greenhouse gases, climate adaptation measures or renewable energy applications.

5) Gender, Culture, Equality, Open Science or Citizen Science Award

This award will be given to the entity with the best approach to gender, culture, equality, open science or citizen science issues within their research. The project must demonstrate how its implementation and/or research has contributed to gender, culture, equality or open science or citizen science dimensions.



6) *Best Innovative SME Award*

This award will be given to the private entity for the project with the best innovation and market potential. The project must demonstrate how it developed an innovation with high potential to break into new markets.

7) *Best Promotion of STEM Award*

This award will be given to the entity for the project with the best promotion of STEM. The project must demonstrate how it promoted STEM including raising awareness, encouraging citizens to engage in educational and science activities.

8) *Award for Technological Innovation*

This award will be given to the entity for the project with the best technological innovation. The project must demonstrate innovation either in the improvement of an existing product or process, submission of patent applications and/or other intellectual property, and the inventive nature of the technology.

For Researchers

9) *Most Active Researcher Award*

This award will be given to the principal researcher with a proven track record of activities within H2020 research projects. The research conducted by the principal investigator should be advanced and of state of the art quality.

6. Evaluation Criteria for Award Categories

Legal Entities

The following evaluation criteria will be applied to the Awards 1 to 5.

- A. The project will be evaluated on its impact. Impact may be measured according to results, after-project life, or scientific & research value. (70% weighting).*
- B. The project will be evaluated on how results have been up taken by end users (policy makers, society, other communities) and/or creating new standards (30% weighting).*

The following evaluation criteria will be applied to the Award 6.

- A. The project will be evaluated on the innovation and market potential of the idea (70% weighting).*
- B. Measurable output from the project may include patent applications or granted patents, exploitation of research results or spin off creations must be demonstrated (30% weighting).*

The following evaluation criteria will be applied to the Award 7.

- A. The project will be evaluated on effectiveness of outreach to the end users through its activities and implementation in promotion of STEM (70% weighting).*
- B. Use of innovative methods of outreach and creative approach in relation to promotion must be demonstrated (30% weighting).*

The following evaluation criteria will be applied to the Award 8.

- A. The project will be evaluated on technological innovation and disruptiveness compared to current technologies. This includes improvement of an existing product or process, submission of patent applications and/or other intellectual property (70% weighting).*
- B. The project has to demonstrate how the R&D can be applied either to the local, European or global dimension (30% weighting).*



For Researchers

The following evaluation criteria will be applied to the Award 9.

- A. The researcher will be evaluated on the number of listed funded projects that he/she was involved in over the years (50% weighting).*
- B. The researcher will be evaluated on the inventive and breakthrough nature of research carried out in the project/s. A list of published papers in line with science investigated in the Horizon 2020 project/s should be provided (50% weighting).*

7. Submissions

Applicants need to submit their completed and signed application form to MCST before the closing of **Horizon 2020 Awards** on the **16/11/2020 at 12.00 CET**. Late applications will not be considered.

Application form, evaluation results and/or a copy of the Grant Agreement title page (showing MT entity name) are to be sent in digital format to email: **horizonawards@gov.mt**.

8. State Aid

This scheme is being implemented in line with Commission Regulation (EU) No. 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid (OJ L 352/1, 24.12.2013), as amended by Commission Regulation (EU) 2020/972 of 2 July 2020 amending Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 as regards its prolongation and amending Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as regards its prolongation and relevant adjustments (OJ L 215/3, 7.7.2020), hereinafter referred to as the de minimis Regulation.

The total amount of de minimis aid granted to a single undertaking shall not exceed the amount of €200,000 over any period of three consecutive fiscal years. The total amount of de minimis aid granted to a single undertaking performing road freight transport for hire or reward shall not exceed €100,000 over any period of three fiscal years. This period covers the fiscal year concerned as well as the previous two fiscal years. ‘Fiscal year’ means the fiscal year as used for tax purposes by the undertaking concerned.

This aggregate maximum threshold applies in principle to all economic sectors with the exception of the agriculture and fisheries sectors for which different thresholds and criteria apply.

The term ‘single undertaking’ shall have the following meaning as established in the de minimis Regulation:

- Single Undertaking includes all enterprises having at least one of the following relationships with each other:
 - a) One enterprise has a majority of the shareholders’ or members’ voting rights in another enterprise;
 - b) One enterprise has the right to appoint or remove a majority of the members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another enterprise;
 - c) One enterprise has the right to exercise a dominant influence on another enterprise pursuant to a contract entered into with that enterprise or to a provision in its memorandum or articles of association;
 - d) One enterprise, which is a shareholder in or member of another enterprise, controls alone, pursuant to an agreement with other shareholders in or members of that enterprise, a majority of shareholders’ or members’ voting rights in that enterprise.

Enterprises having any of the relationships referred to in points (a) to (d) above through one or more other enterprises shall be considered to be a single undertaking.

This maximum threshold would include all State aid granted under this aid scheme and any other State aid measure granted under the de minimis rule including that received from any entity other than the Malta Council for Science and Technology. Any de minimis aid received in excess of the established threshold will have to be recovered, with interest, from the undertaking receiving the aid.

The de minimis declaration form must be filled in and submitted together with the application form.

Assistance approved under this aid scheme is NOT:

- i. Aid granted to undertakings active in the fishery and aquaculture sector, as covered by Council Regulation (EC) No. 104/2000.
- ii. Aid granted to undertakings active in the primary production of agricultural products.
- iii. Aid granted to undertakings active in the sector of processing and marketing of agricultural products, in the following cases:
 - a. Where the amount of the aid is fixed based on the price or quantity of such products purchased from primary producers or put on the market by the undertakings concerned.
 - b. Where the aid is conditional on being partly or entirely passed on to primary producers.
- iv. Aid to export-related activities towards third countries or Member States, namely aid directly linked to the quantities exported, to the establishment and operation of a distribution network or to other current expenditure linked to the export activity.
- v. Aid contingent upon the use of domestic over imported goods.
- vi. Aid for the acquisition of road freight transport vehicles granted to undertakings performing road freight transport for hire or reward.

Where an undertaking is active in the sectors referred to in points (i), (ii) and (iii) above as well as in other sectors falling within the scope of the de minimis Regulation, the Council will ensure a separation of the activities or distinction of costs. Only those sectors eligible for assistance under the de minimis Regulation will be assisted. Activities in the sectors excluded from the scope of the de minimis Regulation will not benefit from assistance under this aid scheme.

In terms of Article 5 of the de minimis Regulation, de minimis aid granted under this initiative may be cumulated with de minimis aid granted in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) No 360/2012 up to the ceiling laid down in that Regulation. It may be cumulated with de minimis aid granted in accordance with other de minimis regulations up to the relevant ceiling fixed in terms of the de minimis Regulation.

De Minimis aid which is not granted for or attributable to specific eligible costs may be cumulated with other State aid granted under a block exemption regulation or a decision adopted by the Commission.



9. Submission of Application, Eligibility and Evaluations

1. *Applicants must send their application form and supporting documentation by **16th November 2020 12:00 (CET)**.*
2. *Entities can only apply with one project per award category. Entities submitting multiple applications will have their first application considered while their additional application/s will be considered void and ineligible.*
3. *Applications will be collected and scored by an evaluation board according to the evaluation criteria as per section 6.*
4. *Applications will need to pass the eligibility check before being assigned to the evaluation board.*
5. *Shortlisted applicants will be invited to the award ceremony event. The winners per category will be announced in the event.*
6. *One electronic application which is signed, stamped and dated shall be submitted by email only to horizonawards@gov.mt to the Malta Council for Science and technology by the deadline.*
7. **LATE APPLICATION WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

10. Communication

Any queries on the scheme, application form and submission process should be sent by email to horizonawards@gov.mt.