

# The EEA Grants Programme will fund R&D projects worth one hundred million euros

The CDTI manages the EEA Grants Programme used to fund projects in renewable energies, energy efficiency, environmental and climate change-related fields. The first call for proposals ended on 4 October 2013 with close to 200 project applications and 97 approved projects. The second call for proposals began on 10 February and ends on 10 April 2014.

In order to implement this pilot experience, the CDTI manages 18.2 million euros from the European Economic Area (EEA) funds, provided by Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein within the EEA-Grants Programme. To be specific, these countries, known as the Donor Countries, have agreed, in conjunction with the CDTI, to use these funds to design a call for R&D projects that strengthen their bilateral relations with Spain, enabling participants to acquire a sustainable competitive edge through the development and application of technologies in the energy and environmental sectors.

## Results of the first call for proposals

The first call for proposals in the programme ended on 4 October 2013 with an excellent response from the Spanish business sector. In renewable energies, energy efficiency, climate change and environmental technologies-related fields, 185 proposals were submitted to develop business projects of an applied nature.

The total budget of the projects submitted amounted to 155.3 million euros.

As this program is partly funded by the Donor Countries, it is important to point out that of the 185 proposals submitted, 30.8% were linked to cooperation or collaboration with entities from one of the three Donor Countries: Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein. Fifty-five of these applications foresaw collaboration with Norwegian entities; five with Icelandic entities and one with entities from Liechtenstein.

The total budget for these applications in cooperation amounted to 59.9 million euros and the estimated amount for sub-contracts stood at 2 million euros.

Of the 185 projects submitted, 97 R&D projects were approved, which accounts for a success rate of over 50%. The total budget amounts to 77 million euros. Of the total, the CDTI has awarded loans for over 60 million euros through credits of which 11 million was provided by the Donor Countries.

these 97 approved projects, 42 are being developed in cooperation with entities from the Donor Countries. This high participation is due to the extensive collaboration in place between the CDTI, as the operator of the Environmental and Climate Change-Related Science and Technology Programme, and Innovation Norway, which acts as the programme partner for relations with the Donor Countries.

## Funds from the European Economic Area

EEA Grants are framed within the cohesion funds designated by the European Commission to offset economic and social disparities among European Union members. Their provision counterbalances the participation of Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein – which are not EU members – in several EC programmes with the same rights as Union members themselves.

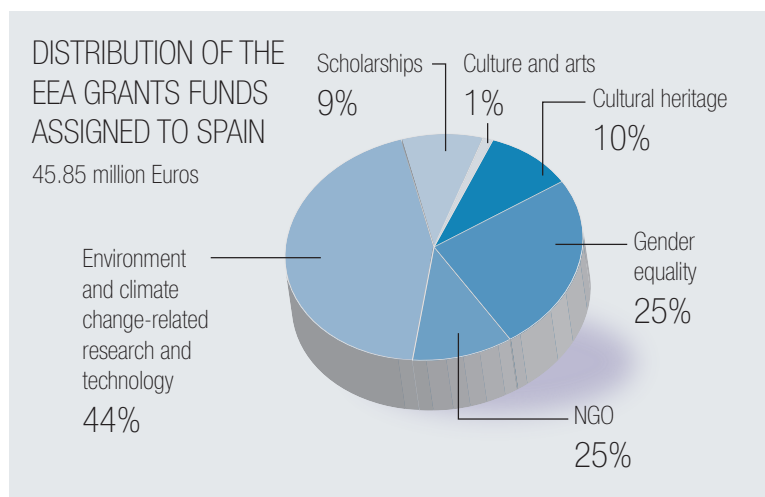
Altogether, Spain receives 45.85 million euros from the Donor Countries through EEA Grants for the period 2009-2014. The promotion of gender equality and educational mobility stand out from their main applications. Management of the main part, 18.2 million euros, is tasked to the CDTI to promote research, development and environmental technology, and for cooperation between research

organisations from Spain and from Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway.

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With respect to the definition of the Programme in our



## EEA GRANTS FUNDING CHARACTERISTICS

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- Calls for proposals with start and end date
- Projects can't start before submitting the application neither before its approval (incentive effect)
- R&D projects about renewable energies, energy efficiency, environment and climate change
- Applicants: Spanish companies (collaboration with entities from donor countries is positively valued)
- Budget: minimum 175,000 Euros – maximum 5 million Euros
- Evaluation takes place on a competitive basis. Double evaluation: CDTI + ANEP
- Funding: loans up to 85% of the eligible budget, with a non-reimbursable portion of 20% (applied over the 75%) and with an interest rate of one-year Euribor +0.1%. Repayment period of 10 years (first reimbursement after 2-3 years)
- Delivery of R&D reports for tax relief



Meeting between Spanish and Norwegian companies celebrated in October, 2012

country, the CDTI acts as a management body, charged with design and financial management according to applicable regulations. As for the Donor Countries, they are represented through Innovation Norway, an entity under the umbrella of the Norwegian Embassy, which renders advisory and networking services. Furthermore, as a national focal point and in order to ensure the fulfilment of objectives, the Ministry of Finance and Public Administrations oversees the financial mechanism, performing tasks that certify, audit and coordinate the implementation and monitoring of the Programme.

### A new partially reimbursable funding instrument

Due to the source of the funds, the call for proposals for EEA Grants features distinctive elements with respect to the CDTI's traditional R&D funding instruments.

The new instrument allocates the 18.2 million euros assigned to the non-reimbursable tranche and supplements this

amount with CDTI funds in the form of credits, at an interest rate of Euribor + 0.1%, so that, altogether, projects are funded for an approximate value of 100 million euros.

Reception of applications is organised in the form of calls for proposals, in other words with a start and end date, and no projects are accepted that are submitted past the deadline. The first of these calls for proposals ended on 4 October 2013 and the second will end on 10 April 2014. As for the applicants, they must always be Spanish companies.

During the assessment of the projects, priority is given to those that show effective collaboration with an entity in the Donor Countries. This effective collaboration may be with companies, with no fund exchange, for the undertaking of R&D activities and/or for the commercial exploitation of results; or via the subcontracting of entities from these countries for the undertaking of relevant tasks or collaboration.

The assessment, carried out on a com-

petitive basis, is performed by the CDTI using the documentation submitted. In order to guarantee the utmost transparency in the process, a second assessment is carried out by the National Assessment and Prospective Agency (ANEP).

Finally, when it comes to assessing impact, and as parameters for measuring the success of the Programme, the increase in the number of companies implementing R&D projects in energy and environmental sectors and knowledge transfer to these companies from research centres and universities will be used.

### Industrial days to strengthen relations with the Donor Countries

Since April 2012, the CDTI has held diverse industrial days in order to advertise the future call for proposals and to generate bilateral relations between potential Spanish participants in the EEA Grants Programme and the entities from Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein that have also shown an interest in the Programme. These activities have paid off



The Secretary General for Science, Technology and Innovation, María Luisa Poncela, and the Norwegian ambassador in Spain, Johan Christopher Vibe during the opening of the conference on February, 2014.

and resulted in high participation – over 30% of the proposals received in the first call are involved in collaborations with one of the Donor Countries.

The first of these days was held at the CDTI headquarters in April 2012 in collaboration with the Royal Norwegian Embassy and brought together over 200 Spanish and Norwegian participants.

Subsequently, in the month of October, a mission from Spanish industry went to Norway, which involved the participation of 70 organizations from both countries with the staging of diverse meetings in Bergen and Trondheim, this country's main industrial hubs in the energy and environmental sectors.

In April 2013, within the context of Bilbao Marine Energy Week and of the SINAVAL-ELITE Fair, a specific day was held to present the EEA Grants Programme to industry in the sector participating in the fair. The event, which was attended by over one hundred industries from the energy field, involved the participation of Innovation Norway – acting for the Donor Countries –, the CDTI – as

the Programme operator – and representatives from the main Spanish marine energy specialist platforms.

The most important of the days staged to disseminate this Programme took place on 17 and 18 February 2014 at the InterContinental Hotel in Madrid. Entitled “Promoting Bilateral Cooperation through the EEA Grants 2009-2014”, and organised with the collaboration of the Royal Norwegian Embassy, it gathered together over 300 representatives from energy and environmental field-related entities from Spain, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. This day was organised with the dual aim of presenting the results of the first call for proposals and of announcing the commencement of the second and final call for proposals of the Programme.

Noteworthy speakers included the Secretary General for Science, Technology and Innovation, María Luisa Poncela, and the Norwegian ambassador in Spain, Johan Christopher Vibe.

Both highlighted the important role played by the Financial Mechanism of

the European Economic Space (EEA-Grants) since it funds the development of technology projects in fields such as energy efficiency, renewable energies, climate change and environmental technologies, all of which are of great social interest. As for Elisa Robles, as the Director General of the CDTI, she announced the results of Spanish participation in the Programme's first call for proposals.

In addition to the above, diverse days were staged throughout 2013 to disseminate the first call for proposals and other days will continue to be organised while the programme is in progress, which will be targeted at both disseminating a new call for proposals in 2014 and at strengthening bilateral relations with the Donor Countries. ✕

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

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