



## **Call for Expressions of Interest**

### **Establishment of an ESA Business Incubator (ESA BIC) in Ireland– ("SpaceInc Ireland")**

#### **General Guidelines**

**Closing Date: 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015**

## 1 Background

Ireland has been a member of the European Space Agency (ESA) since its foundation in 1975. In recent years there has been a significant number of Irish companies entering the space market and the associated downstream services market with the support of ESA

Irish industry is benefitting from Ireland's ESA membership through supporting in-company product development and qualification for the space market, building linkages into European aerospace system integrators and commercial spin-out of space technologies into non-space markets.

An opportunity has arisen to develop an ESA Business Incubation Centre (BIC) in Ireland to provide an important element of Ireland's ESA strategy in further broadening the Irish industrial base in ESA programmes and in leveraging both State and ESA investment in 3<sup>rd</sup> level research. The additional benefit to be offered to Irish industry by an ESA BIC would include:

- Provide access to knowledge resources within ESA, including knowledge of technical standards, system specifications as well as highly specific market knowledge of the space sector, including linkages to space system integrators.
- Provide access to finance to start-up companies.
- Allow firms exploit the profile and enhanced credibility of being associated with ESA and "space".

It is therefore proposed to establish an ESA BIC, to support start-up companies intending to address the commercial space market<sup>1</sup> or the commercial downstream<sup>2</sup> market, including the spin-out of space technologies into non-space markets.

Expressions of Interest are being sought from entities in Ireland to manage the delivery of ESA BIC services in Ireland under contract to ESA. These services include;

- Provision of incubation space to co-located incubatees
- Provision of access to start-up finance through existing start up funding measures,
- Provision of access to business start up and development knowledge and resources
- Facilitating access to knowledge and technical resources within ESA and wider European space community.
- Managing the development of interactions with other key players in the space community.
- Provision of access to complementary technical resources and facilities as may be required by the start up companies, including Technology centres and other research facilities

Recognising that such companies may establish in any part of Ireland, it is envisaged that the selected ESA BIC Ireland management entity would offer ESA BIC support services to a range of start-up companies, including companies that are located outside of the host incubator.

The Selected entity will be required to appoint an ESA BIC centre Manager, subject to acceptance by both EI and ESA.

---

<sup>1</sup> Space market includes commercial launcher and satellite market as associated ground segment.

<sup>2</sup> Downstream refers to end-user equipment, services and applications that utilise a variety of space systems such as satellite communications, Earth observation satellites and navigation satellite systems.

## 2 Call Objective

The objective of the Call for Expressions of interest is to select an entity that will be nominated by the Irish Delegation to ESA to respond to an Invitation to Tender to be issued by ESA, subject to normal ESA BIC tender procedures.

## 3 Tasks to be performed by the Selected Entity

The Entity to be selected by ESA to operate the ESABIC in Ireland will be required to perform a range of tasks including;

**Task 1** Support the Establishment of an ESA BIC in Ireland

**Task 2** Support the promotion and positioning of the ESA BIC in Ireland

**Task 3:** Manage activities related to the identification and selection of ESA BIC incubatees

**Task 3:** Support start up companies during the incubation phase and managing the relationship with key stakeholders at national level and international level, as relevant to the incubatees' business model (including; ESA technical experts, space sector industry and research players, investment community, Enterprise Ireland as well as with national Technology Centres and research facilities).

**Task 4:** Manage financial incentives with relevant financial partners in Ireland in line with the relevant partners' processes and policies.

**Task 5:** Administer the cash incentives from ESA to incubatees in line with the relevant funding bodies policies and processes<sup>3</sup>

**Task 6:** Manage, coordinate and report on programme activities within the ESA-BIC.

## 4 Funding Model to be applied to the ESA BIC in Ireland

It is envisaged that ESA and EI will provide financial contribution to the entity selected to manage the ESA BIC in Ireland. The ESA support will be for an initial period of 3 years, extendable to 5 years, subject to a joint ESA / EI review, with the following provisional funding model.

Activity	ESA Contribution to Financing	EI Support	ESA BIC Hosting entity
ESA BIC Ireland Manager	50% of cost, up to a maximum of €40k/year	50% of cost up to a maximum of €40k / year	Additional associated costs
Financial incentive to Incubatees	Up to €25k per incubatee, subject to normal ESA evaluation	Up to €25k per incubatee, subject to normal EI evaluation	
Technical Support to Incubatees	"In Kind" contribution		"In kind" contribution to match ESA in kind contribution

<sup>3 3</sup> Any EI component of the incentive scheme will be administered by EI

## 5 Application Process

Organisations wishing to be considered for evaluation are requested to complete the relevant Expression of Interest form and return it to [esabic@enterprise-ireland.com](mailto:esabic@enterprise-ireland.com) by the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

The form will be used as the basis for evaluation and selection of candidates to be nominated to ESA. The nominated organisation will then be subject to ESA tendering process

## 6 Evaluation process

The expressions of interest will be reviewed by a panel of reviewers comprising; representatives from the Irish Delegation to ESA, ESA Executive and representatives from EI High Potential Start up team and Research and Innovation Division

The following ranking system will be used;

1 =	The response fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.
2 =	Very poor. The criterion is addressed in a cursory and unsatisfactory manner.
3 =	Poor. There are serious inherent weaknesses in relation to the criterion in question.
4 =	Good. While the response addresses some of the points, there are other weaknesses that require further development.
5 =	Very good. The response addresses the criterion well, although certain minor improvements are possible.
6 =	Excellent. The response successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question.

The constituent response rankings are weighted and will be combined to give an overall ranking for each of the sections.

## 7 Criteria to be used in preselecting a candidate entity to operate the ESA BIC in Ireland

In submitting an Expression of Interest, key requirements to be addressed include: These will form the key selection criteria and are expanded on in the Expression of Interest Form

	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Minimum Ranking</b>
1	Availability of pre-existing infrastructure and facilities to host and support the BIC function,	4
2	Track record in hosting or operating a business incubator, including start ups related to the space sector / downstream services sector	4
3	Technical Facilities and Support	-
4	Experience of working in the Space domain	-
5	Approach to Provision of ESA Incubator Support including provision of matching funding contribution.	-
6	Self Sustainability of the ESA BIC	-