



MITA INNOVATION HUB

startAPP 2.0
using earth observation and
geo-spatial data

2015

MIH2015/003




mita
INNOVATION HUB

ACCELERATING
YOUR IDEAS



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introduction to the call

The MITA Innovation Hub (MIH) is offering two grants of €15,000 each for a proof-of-concept based on the development of two innovatively designed apps.

The MIH is a publicly funded innovation centre based in SmartCity Malta. Through this call we wish to give Startups another opportunity to research, develop and create their own marketable Intellectual Property, while solving a particular “pain point” or latent need in public administration or wider civil society through creative and experimental approaches.

The call covers a proof-of-concept using known technologies and publicly available data to create new business applications. To demonstrate feasibility of the proposed solution, Startups will need to engage in some market research, experimental adaptation and integration work using public data made available by various entities. The call also falls within a wider framework designed to test and pilot open innovation approaches while stimulating further ideation, entrepreneurship and business transformation among Startups.

Startups must propose what they believe is a viable solution to the problems affecting the identified thematic area. The value of the ideas proposed must be validated by market research aimed to test a hypothesis that citizens or businesses will use such a proposed solution.

The Startups eventually selected to receive the grant will experience transformation of their idea into a tangible prototype for testing in a real life scenario. While doing so they will enjoy the benefits of ongoing interaction with a reputable organisation appointed by the European Space Agency to assist in the transformation and interpretation of the data. Depending on the technologies chosen to support the proof-of-concept, the MIH will also liaise with any multinational partner interested in providing technical mentorship or resources of relevance to the project.

If you are passionate about making a lasting impact in a new market niche, and learning from the experience, this competitive call applies to you!

eligibility criteria

1. The call is designed for tech Startups at an early stage of growth or in business for less than five (5) years. Startups that have not yet formalised into a business undertaking are expected to do so if selected for funding. Startups that are already formalised as a business undertaking must not exceed a headcount of nine (9).
2. Each Startup must avail itself of a team composed of a minimum of three named members with complementary technical, design and business skills of relevance to the project and the chosen thematic area. One team member will be assigned the role of a Project Coordinator having the responsibilities highlighted in Appendix A of the Letter of Award.
3. All team members must adopt an open mindset and entrepreneurial vision, be ready to learn and experiment, and possess a propensity towards agile approaches in software development and prototyping.
4. Employees of MITA and the Malta Council for Science & Technology (MCST) are not eligible to apply for this call.

If selected for funding, the Startup will be required to sign a Letter of Award and related terms and conditions, published together with this call.



thematic area

open call using geo-spatial information

Pain Point or Latent Need

In today's digital world concepts such as Big Data and open data are becoming increasingly prominent. A case in point is the large amounts of data provided through the European [Copernicus](#) programme, which provides free and open data benefiting the environment and security, from satellites and in-situ sources. Apart from this, Europe also invests in satnav programmes: [Galileo](#) and [EGNOS](#) (the latter is already operational).

In addition to such Earth Observation (EO) data, and any other EO-derived datasets, a large number of local geo-spatial datasets are made available by various Maltese public entities, among them the Government of Malta [geo-portal](#) that facilitates the sharing of spatial datasets concerning the Maltese islands.

Currently, little use or re-use of these datasets, in combination with others, is made for commercial applications of tangible value to citizens and businesses in Malta. Among the problems cited are the notion that geo-spatial information is a niche requiring specialised skills not easily found, the insufficient demand for such data, or even an underestimation of the potential and benefits of applying geo-spatial data to new uses. A close look at the EURISY [list of good practices](#) will immediately reveal that there are ample possibilities for innovative applications that can be created using satellite data in combination with other datasets of a localised nature.

Solution

Solutions proposed should consist of an app that uses one or more datasets sourced from the above mentioned information sources in combination with any others.

In their proposal, Startups must substantiate why they have chosen that solution, why they believe that it can address a pain point or latent need for citizens or businesses, and how they have validated it. The proposal must then include high level details about how they intend designing, developing, testing and deploying their prototype, and how, after

concluding the proof-of-concept, their prototype can be used and commercialised, ideally internationally.

Available Data

In support of this call the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) and Eurisy have made available a Starter Pack that gives a preview of what EO and geospatial datasets can be used, together with links to various data sources. Note that this preview is only a small sample of what is actually available!

The Starter Pack guideline document can be downloaded from the following URL, under the 'Starter Pack' tab:

<http://www.malta-app-challenge.com/>

Here you will also find the direct links to relevant data sources within the Copernicus, Galileo, EGNOS and Malta Spatial Data Infrastructure websites.

project timeline

- Call Publication 12th November 2015
- Information & networking event[†] 26th November 2015
- Design Thinking session 1^{†‡} 9th December 2015
- User needs scoping session^{*†‡} 16th December 2015
- Design Thinking session 2^{*†‡} 17th December 2015
- Design Thinking session 3^{*†‡} 8th January 2016
- Hands-on training with ESA toolbox^{*†} 12th January 2016
- Proposal submission 8th February 2016
- Evaluation 15th to 26th February 2016
- Pitching your ideas^{*} 26th February 2016
- Project kick-off^{*} 7th March 2016
- Training Seminars/Workshops^{†‡} 14th March – 8th April 2016
- Demonstration of prototype^{*} 24th June 2016
- Submission of Project Final Report^{*} 25th July 2016

* Timelines subject to change.

† Details about the venue will be communicated through our website.

‡ Sessions to be held during the evening.

award

Each selected Startup will be awarded €15,000 as a pre-seed investment for each project, together with €7,000 in pro bono services as defined in the Letter of Award.

how to apply

Applicants should submit a proposal through the Submission page of the MIH website by 8th February 2016 at 1200hrs CET.

The proposal should be written in English and must not exceed 10 pages, excluding any cover, administration and content pages, figures, references and supporting annexes. Body text should use a font size not smaller than 11. Figures, tables and other images should be

embedded in one document in .doc, .docx, .odf or .pdf format. If deemed necessary the document may contain external links to additional material such as videos, prototypes, wireframes, etc. but the Startup must ensure that the links are available at all times until the selection process is concluded.

judging criteria

All submissions will be judged on the basis of principles of transparency and of equal treatment. This will be carried out by MITA with the assistance of one member representing the European Space Agency, and one external evaluator. Further details can be found in Annex 1. The appointed judges shall sign a Declaration of Impartiality and Confidentiality.

The call does not contemplate any right of appeal regarding grading and selection of the proposal. Hence, the decision of the judging panel is final.

pitching your proposal

In addition to a written proposal, each team will be expected to pitch their proposed idea and concept to the panel of judges. The pitch should not last more than five minutes followed by a five-minute question-and-answer session. The judges will use the pitch to confirm or review the scores attained by each proposal. Teams should therefore view this as an opportunity to convince the panel about the value and strength of their proposal. Applicants from overseas will be allowed to pitch remotely via teleconferencing tools as long as the pitch is delivered live. This should clearly be stated in the proposal.

what MIH will provide

- Physical work space available on a 24x7 basis
- Coordination of access to the appointed representative of the European Space Agency and any interested MIH technology partners

- Project coordination of day-to-day MIH organised activities and related support services from project kickoff to organisation of the launch and demonstration of the project outcomes
- Access to data made available by the European Space Agency and by the Government of Malta geo-portal
- Leveraging MITA's media presence, reputation and endorsement
- Assistance to Startups in formalising their business undertaking
- A Just-In-Time formative programme through workshops and seminars

state aid

The MIH Call for Startups operates under the *de minimis* State Aid regime, which sets out that a single undertaking cannot receive more than €200,000 in aid over any three fiscal years through schemes operating under this regime. Applicants should therefore ensure they are eligible for the requested grant under State Aid rules before submitting an application. Refer to the state aid declaration in Appendix C of the Letter of Award published with this call.

The total value of state aid provided through this call is €22,000 per Startup.

just-in-time formative programme

The MIH will provide approximately 30 hours of just-in-time formative training programme as part of the call. The training will consist of:

- a) Three (3) sessions of Design Thinking workshops. These will be available to anybody interested to participate in the call, and are aimed to help prospective teams better shape and validate their ideas and submit a proposal of higher quality. Participation in these workshops is not mandatory but highly recommended.
- b) Seven (7) seminars aimed to boost the knowledge of the Startup members. Topics covered will include guidelines on incorporation, marketing, intellectual property, Startup funding, using a lean canvas and other related aspects. These seminars are mandatory for all members of the Startups winning the calls.

annex 1 - judging criteria

All submissions will be judged on the basis of principles of transparency and of equal treatment. This will be carried out by MITA with the assistance of one member representing the European Space Agency, and one external evaluator. The following four sets of criteria will be applied to each submitted proposal.

- A. Relevance – the extent by which the identified pain points or latent needs can be addressed by the proposed solution in the stipulated timeframe;
- B. Main features – the anticipated functionalities and data usage that will address the identified pain points and justify the benefits; innovativeness of the features will be a key criterion;
- C. User experience – a visual anticipation of the proposed look and feel of the App which should be human-centred in its design; this should include, for example, a wireframe or design snippets of the proposed main features;
- D. Market validation – the extent by which the proposed solution has been successfully validated, including any assumptions or hypothesis. The validation must be backed through evidence such as surveys, interviews, case studies and other research relevant to the local market;

The proposals will be ranked according to the score achieved for each judging criterion. The proposal with the highest score will be selected for funding. Proposals that fail to attain one or more of the threshold scores (see below) will not be selected for funding.

For each award criteria a score from 0 to 5 will be assigned:

0 - the proposal does not meet the relevant criterion or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.

1 - Very poor: The criterion is inadequately addressed, or includes serious weaknesses

2 - Not satisfactory: Although the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there still are significant weaknesses.

3 - Good: The proposal addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be needed.

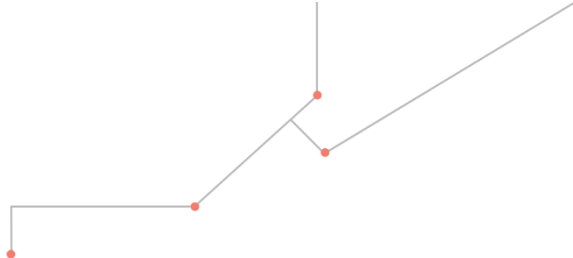
4 - Very Good: The proposal meets the criterion very well, but certain improvements are still possible.

5 - Excellent: The proposal successfully meets all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

The respective thresholds for the award criteria are:

Criterion	Threshold
A	3
B	3
C	3
D	3

Based on the scores of the individual award criteria, a total score will be calculated for each proposal. Each Startup submitting an entry shall be given a report showing the outcome of the evaluation.



MITA INNOVATION HUB

SmartCity Malta
SCM01 Unit 506
Ricasoli SCM1001

mitainnovationhub.gov.mt

+356 2180 6759
innovationhub.mita@gov.mt

