

PROGRAMME TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Objectives of the initiative

The main goal of the **BIND SME Connection** pilot programme is to take advantage of the knowledge generated in the BIND 4.0 Programme. In particular, the objective is to use the knowledge and experience from relationships between Start-ups and partner companies to generate new collaboration opportunities between SMEs and Start-ups based on a model of sectoral challenges.

Through this model, the aim is to identify shared needs/opportunities among the participating SMEs that can be transmitted in the form of a challenge to the Start-ups. This challenge is materialised through the joint execution of pilot projects aimed at testing technological solutions that can be scaled up at a later date.

For the **Start-ups**, the ultimate objective is to facilitate their access to the market and to financing through connections with Industry 4.0 SMEs associated with the Cluster Dynamising Organisations (ODCs) Acicae, Aclima, ACE, and Uptek (AFM).

For the **SMEs**, the programme can act as a fast track to incorporating new technologies and innovative solutions, improving their competitive position and increasing entrepreneurship, while promoting a collaborative work philosophy among the Cluster Dynamising Organisations (ODCs).

2. Acceptance of the terms and conditions

The following terms and conditions set out the BIND SME Connection **participation rules**. Participation in the initiative implies **acceptance of these terms and conditions** and any decision that the SPRI and/or the Coordination and Evaluation Committee may take regarding the initiative without exceptions or conditions.

3. Terms and definitions:

For the purposes of this initiative, the following definitions apply:

- **"SPRI":** SPRI-BASQUE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, a public body under private law attached to the Department of Economic Development, Sustainability, and Environment.
- **Cluster Dynamising Organisation (ODC):** A business association that brings together different interrelated companies that work and/or compete in the same industrial and geographical area, which helps to strategically improve competitiveness through collaboration.
- **Coordination and Evaluation Committee:** A working group made up of members from both the SPRI and the ODCs. The main function of the committee will be to organise the initiative, coordinate the different agents involved, and monitor the activities. 4 committees will be created, one for each ODC taking part in the initiative.
- **Start-up:** Newly created company seeking a scalable business model by developing innovative products and/or services aimed at a target market.
- **SME:** Company with less than 250 employees associated to one of the ODCs participating in the initiative and with products and processes based on the application of 4.0 technologies.
- **Workshop:** Workshop or participatory working session where the participants in the initiative develop different collaborative actions to obtain common results.
- **Pitch:** Joint session between SMEs and Start-ups where participants present their proposals and exhibit an idea or a business in a defined time and space.

- **Matching:** In this phase, the Evaluation and Coordination Team and the SMEs work together, with the support of an expert, to analyse and select the Start-up proposals that best fit with the proposed challenges and specific details. This selection will be the starting point to developing possible business relationships with the aim of signing a project.

4. Characteristics of candidate Start-ups

BIND SME Connection is mainly focused around the following Start-up profiles:

- Start-ups that develop new technologies applied to the industrial sector and related services that have already completed their technological development process, and that are in a position to finalise the configuration of their service/product. That is, Start-ups that have a product or service that can be seen, tested, proven, or is even already available on the market.
- Start-ups that are no more than 8 years old, that propose the use of new technologies to improve industrial processes, and that need to accelerate their business development.

The process of identifying candidate Start-ups will include:

- Start-ups participating in previous editions of BIND 4.0 that have already developed collaborative projects with partner companies of the BIND 4.0 programme.
- Start-ups present in the network of public incubators in the Basque Country (BIC Araba, BIC Bizkaia, and BIC Gipuzkoa).
- Start-ups associated with the ODCs participating in the initiative.

5. Characteristics of the participating SMEs

- SMEs associated with the ODCs participating in the initiative.
- SMEs linked to the BIND 4.0 verticals: Smart Industry, Clean and Sustainable Energy, Health Tech, and Food Tech.
- SMEs with at least one activity centre in the Basque Country.
- SMEs with a workforce of less than 250 employees.
- SMEs with an interest and commitment to work with the Start-ups and that can provide resources that imply sufficient dedication and involvement in the different initiative activities.

6. Commitments of participating Start-ups and SMEs

Participating SMEs and Start-ups will commit to:

- Accept and comply with the terms and conditions of the initiative.
- Attend and actively participate in the dynamics proposed in the initiative and comply with the defined tasks and work. (Refer to the methodology document)
- Have the dedication required to develop the project once a collaboration contract between the SME and the Start-up has been signed.

7. Relationship between the initiative and the SME

Each participating SME must appoint a contact person for official communications with the SPRI/ODC. The contact person must be over 18 years of age and must be available to manage communications arising from the initiative.

Repeated negative assessments of the attitude of any participating SME by the Coordination and Evaluation Committee may lead to their expulsion from the initiative, without receiving compensation from the SPRI. Negative attitudes are all those related to not meeting the obligations established in the work plan.

8. Confidentiality policy

The content of the applications submitted by the Start-ups to BIND 4.0 SME Connection, the contents of the different phases of the initiative, and the information provided by the SMEs will be confidential and restricted, and will be treated as such by the initiative's promoters.

9. Protection of personal data

In accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (hereinafter, GDPR) and other applicable regulations on the protection of personal data, you are informed that the data provided will be processed for the purpose of managing the application. The legal basis for processing the personal data is to carry out public functions in compliance with the purpose set out in SPRI's by-laws as the Basque Business Development Agency.

This information may be transferred to collaborating companies, Public Entities with competencies in the matter, and SPRI Group companies (refer to <http://www.spri.eus/es/quienessomos/sociedades-del-grupo-spri>)

All interested parties can exercise their rights under data protection regulations before the SPRI by writing to lopd@spri.eus. They may also contact the entity's Data Protection Officer at dpd@spri.eus.

For further information and details on the Protection of Personal Data, refer to the Privacy Policy at www.spri.eus/privacidad.

Note that the corresponding supervisory authority regarding data protection is the Basque Data Protection Agency ([<http://www.avpd.euskadi.eus>]) www.avpd.euskadi.eus.

10. Table of Contents

All SMEs and Start-ups participating in the initiative shall ensure that the work and content provided voluntarily (including abstracts and presentations) do not infringe the rights of any kind corresponding to third parties, and that all the authorisations required to participate in this initiative have been obtained. They must not be offensive or denigrating, incite violence or racism, violate fundamental rights or public freedoms recognised by current legislation (including laws for the protection of children and youths), constitute or imply an intrusion into the personal or family privacy of individuals, infringe the right to honour or the secrecy of third-party communications, or be contrary to any current legislation.

Furthermore, the projects submitted must ensure non-sexist language and images are used.

In addition, each participating Start-up and SME authorises the promoting entities to use their name and image in publicity materials related to the initiative, in any medium or format, without receiving any financial compensation.

11. Work plan, time line, and project milestones

Operational aspects

- The initiative will have an **estimated duration of 6 months** with regards to the support provided by the ODCs and the SPRI project team.
- The initiative will be **carried out mainly in Spanish**, although the materials generated will appear in both Basque and English.
- In some cases, the SME-Start-up relationship may only be conducted in English due to the international origin of the participating Start-ups.
- SMEs wishing to be involved in the initiative must actively take part in the activities aimed at identifying and characterising challenges that can be communicated to potential participating Start-ups.

Main phases and milestones

PHASE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	MILESTONE
0 - Awareness raising and presentation of the initiative	Week 1 - 2 (September)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint workshop to present the initiative and highlight the benefits of working with Start-ups. 	W1-Public presentation of the initiative
1 - Identification, characterisation, and presentation of challenges	Week 2 - 9 (September - October)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questionnaires sent to SMEs to identify common needs across each ODC. The Coordination and Evaluation Committee evaluates the preliminary results. Workshops with SMEs to define priority challenges. Characterisation of priority challenges. 	<p>W2, W3 - Questionnaires sent and received, and preliminary identification of SME needs for each ODC.</p> <p>W4, W5 and W6 - Workshops to identify common challenges for each ODC.</p> <p>W7, W8 - Definition of sectoral challenges.</p>
2 - Start-up Scouting	Week 9 – 12 (October - November)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start-ups aligned with the challenges posed by the SMEs are identified. SMEs present to the Start-ups and compare challenges. Communication with candidates and recruitment. 	<p>W9 - Initial identification of start-ups.</p> <p>W12 - Public presentation of the challenges and call for applications launched.</p>
3 - Matching	Week 12 - 20 (November - January + 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start-up proposals reception, evaluation, and selection. Joint SME-Start-up presentation and networking sessions. Support in selecting the proposals. 	<p>W12 - Proposals reception.</p> <p>W17 - Proposal submission deadline.</p> <p>W19 - Evaluation and selection of start-up proposals.</p> <p>W20 - Joint SME-Start-up sessions.</p>

PHASE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	MILESTONE
4 - Project organisation and development	<p>Week 20 + maximum of 1 year</p> <p>(January + 1 - December + 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search for collaborations and joint SME-Start-up projects launched. 	W21 - Projects launched.
5 - Communication of results	<p>10 - 12 months after end of matching phase</p> <p>(December + 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dissemination of the results of projects within the framework of the initiative. 	

The dates specified are merely indicative and may be subject to change. The final dates and deadlines will be published on the www.bind40.com website.

12. Start-up selection process and project development agreement

The Start-up selection process will be carried out in two phases:

- Scouting phase: Candidate Start-ups preselected by the Coordination and Evaluation Committee and invited to attend the public presentations of the SME challenges.
- Matching phase: Sessions to present Start-up proposals to the SMEs. The SMEs shall be responsible for prioritising and selecting the Start-ups with which to explore possible collaborations.

These will culminate in a third project organisation and development phase. The main aspects of these phases are shown below:

Scouting Phase

The Coordination and Evaluation Team will analyse the challenges proposed by the SMEs and make a short-list of Start-ups from the Start-up pool described in point 4 of this document “4. Characteristics of candidate Start-ups”.

Once the Start-ups likely to match the challenges posed by each ODC are identified, they will be invited by the Coordination and Evaluation Committee to participate in the public presentations of the SME challenges; in these sessions, the Start-ups will have the opportunity to raise doubts with the SME managers.

A “virtual web space” will be set up on the BIND 4.0 initiative website where the challenges identified by the SMEs are published. This web space will also be used to receive the Start-up proposals.

Matching Phase

The Coordination and Evaluation Team will analyse the proposals once they have been received. This evaluation will consider how the proposal adapts to the challenges published, the technical capacity described by the Start-up to respond to the challenge posed, the innovative component of the proposed solution, and the capacities and experience of the work team proposed by the Start-up. The evaluation shall be based on a total of 70 points distributed as follows:

Evaluation criteria	Maximum score
Value proposition	30
Level of innovation of the proposed solution	10
Impact of the proposed solution on the SME and on the market	10
Advantages of the proposed solution over market alternatives	10
Promoter team	20
Training and professional skills of the promoter team	10
Experience and knowledge of the sector to which the application applies	10
Adaptation to the challenges posed	20
Compliance with the technical requirements of the challenge posed	10
Scalability of the proposed solution to SMEs with similar needs	10

These criteria will help the Coordination and Evaluation Team to preselect the best proposals, which will advance to the pitch sessions (joint SME-Start-up presentation and networking sessions).

The Start-ups will present their solutions to the challenges posed in the pitch sessions. These sessions will serve as a starting point for a business relationship aimed at signing a project.

Project organisation and development Phase

SPRI will facilitate contact between the SMEs and the Start-ups that have been selected. This does not mean that the SPRI acquires any obligation or incurs any responsibility in terms of the commercial relations that may be established between them after this contact is made.

The associated SMEs that have found a technological solution with the capacity to respond to the challenges posed will sign, where appropriate, a contract with the Start-ups directly, and will notify the ODCs of the main general aspects of the agreements reached. The SPRI/ODC will not have any role or participation whatsoever in the future development of the projects.

The scope, objectives, duration, and economic conditions under which the joint project will be developed will be freely defined and agreed by both parties, without the participation of the SPRI.

The content of the contract will only bind the signing parties, i.e. the SME and the Start-up, as a private agreement that establishes rights and obligations between them.

Therefore, compliance with the obligations assumed by the parties (SME and Start-up) will be the sole responsibility of the party responsible for such obligation. Specifically, payment of the price agreed by the parties (SME and Start-up) will be made by the participating SME, with the SPRI/ODC being expressly exonerated from any related responsibility or obligation (both with regard to payment of the price and any of the obligations agreed by the parties - SME and Start-up).

13. Communications

All notifications relating to the initiative, including the challenges and the call for Start-up applications, will be published on the website www.bind40.com. They will also be published on each of the ODC websites relating to the associated companies.

Participating Start-ups will receive all communications issued by the SPRI/ODC via email to the contact person identified in the registration process.

14. Legal aspects

The participants, formally waiving any other jurisdiction that may correspond to them, expressly submit themselves to the Courts and Tribunals of Bilbao to resolve any conflict, disagreement, question, or claim that may arise directly or indirectly in relation to the interpretation or development of this initiative.