

**TERMS of REFERENCE**

**CALL for PROPOSALS**

22 February 2017

## 1. Introduction

FREED (Funding Resources for Innovation in Energy Enterprise Development) is a three-year project funded under Interreg's Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme.

The project, which is led by the University of Oulu in Finland, is a collaborative partnership involving private investment firms, R&D institutions, colleges of education and public bodies from Ireland, Norway, Scotland, Northern Ireland, England and, Germany.

## 2. Aim of the Project

The Project will provide SME's in the program area with the support network required to introduce and develop energy innovations which would otherwise be unavailable to them.

A five step process FREED will:

- Carry out a needs analysis of the types of energy innovations required in the partner region (**completed, see the infograph below**)
- Initiate a tender process to generate the necessary technology innovations (**current**)
- Partner R&D institutions with SME's from the region
- Develop business plans to assist the SME's in delivering the innovation in the region
- Provide a financing service that utilises private investment funds to aid the development of the innovations



### 3. Thematic & Regional priorities

To deliver its aim, the FREED Project has identified four thematic priorities that are common among the NPA regions. These priorities are:

1. *Intelligent grid (IoT) proposals/solutions*
2. *Energy storage proposals/solutions*
3. *Smart and efficient buildings and environment proposals/solutions*
4. *Renewable energies solutions.*



The current call for proposals is open to innovations in all thematic priorities. Transnational partnerships are invited to submit their project application under one of those. Since the themes are common to all areas, please take a look at the individual calls to find out, which priorities are targeted in each call and in each region.

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#### **4. Who can apply?**

The programme targets all or parts of four participating NPA regions (Finland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Norway). Whilst, the FREED project is targeted at assisting SMEs, a wide range of bodies are entitled to take part in project submissions including national, regional and local authorities, universities, R&D agencies, non-profit organisations as well as private partners, including profit-making partners (e.g. SMEs). Offers outside the NPA area are also welcome.

#### **5. Funding available**

Over the lifetime of the FREED Project, together €180,000 of ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) will be allocated to the most qualitative and innovative projects. These calls are 25 000–30 000 € each.

#### **6. Submission of applications**

This call for proposals is organised according to a two-step procedure.

Step 1 – Applicants have to submit an application providing an outline of the proposed project. The application goes beyond a mere expression of interest, i.e. applicants need to present a comprehensive picture of the project's intended change and result. This picture is the solid basis of the further development of the project.

Step 2 – Applicants who succeeded in step 1 of the call will be invited for a presentation and panel interview which includes all the details on the project, including the project work plan.

Project proposals, both within step 1 and 2 of the call, must be submitted in English language.

#### **7. Project selection**

All project proposals are assessed against Eligibility and Quality assessment criteria. The decision on step 1 project applications will be taken by the Monitoring Committee (MC), which is made up of representatives from all project partners within the FREED project.

The applicants will be notified about the decision after this meeting.

## **8. Deadline for submission**

Project proposals for step 1 of this call must be submitted at the latest by Wednesday 15th of March 2017, 16.00 pm GMT.

In case of approval at step 1, the applicants must be prepared to give a presentation/interview (step 2) on Monday 27th or Tuesday 28th of March 2017.