



*Ministero degli Affari Esteri
e della Cooperazione Internazionale*

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
GENERAL DIRECTORATE FOR COUNTRY PROMOTION**

ITALIAN REPUBLIC

Call for Proposals for the institution of an Italian- Israeli Joint incubator
Submission by Monday, January 16th 2017

A. AREAS OF COOPERATION

Within the framework of the Agreement on Industrial, Scientific and Technological Research and Development Cooperation between Italy and Israel (hereinafter called the “Agreement”) the Directorate General for Country Promotion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (hereafter referred to as “MFAIC”) is providing financial support for an Italian-Israeli start-up Joint incubator project, established and carried out jointly by institutions from both countries. Italian and Israeli Universities, Research institutions or Scientific & Technological Parks are hereby invited to submit joint incubator proposals in the following areas:

1. ICT (ICT-related topics as in Horizon 2020 calls are eligible, e.g. a new generation of components and system, advanced computing and cloud computing, future Internet, content technologies and information management, robotics and autonomous systems, micro- and nano-electronic technologies, photonics, Internet of Things, Industry 4.0, etc)
2. Water technologies;
3. Sustainable agriculture.

B. MODE OF COOPERATION

The Joint incubator will have to enhance the cooperation among the two Countries’ Academic/Research institutes/Scientific & Technological Parks whose main activity is the advancement of cutting-edge scientific and technological knowledge, which possesses appropriate infrastructure and equipment, and employs researchers who, inter alia, publish articles related to their field of research in leading scientific journals and present their research at international symposia. In addition:

- In Israel, a research institution must be an accredited institution of higher education, according to the Council for Higher Education Law, 1958, or a public research institute with experience in the relevant fields.
- In Italy, a research institution must be a public or private University, a public or private Research Institute, acting under Italian law.

Both Israeli and Italian institutions will be represented by a Principal Coordinator, affiliated with the participating academic or research institution promoting the Laboratory.

Italian and Israeli industrial partners or other research institutions are encouraged to collaborate with the institutions sponsoring the Joint incubator, and can be associated with it by providing financing, personnel, equipment or facilities to the activities carried out.

Proposals for the Joint incubator project must fulfil all the requirements of this Call for proposals and the others rules set out in the “*Norme integrative per la creazione di incubatori congiunti - Anno 2017*” which are to be taken as part and parcel of the present Call.

The Joint incubator will operate for a minimum period of 3 years from its establishment. The extension of this period may be requested jointly by the Israeli and Italian Principal Coordinators to the MFAIC who – after consulting the Israeli authorities – will decide on the matter.

Proposals must contain a description of the facilities and premises involved in Joint incubator’s research activity, the instruments and tools put at disposal of researchers and a detailed description of the projected Joint incubator action for the three-year period.

In particular, the proposals must explain carefully the benefits and allowances that will be granted to the start-up hosted in the Joint incubator.

Is to be pointed out that many existing Italian laws and programs are directed to promote the development of innovative start-up (L. n. 221 – 17.12.2012, Startupvisa and Startup-Hub programs).

The Joint Laboratory main facility shall be located in Italy.

The Italian Principal Coordinator and the Italian research institution promoting the Joint incubator will both be accountable to the MFAIC for the execution of the activities and the financial reporting of the project.

The financing of the institution promoting the Joint incubator will be subject to all applicable Italian and European Union legislations.

C. FUNDING AND PROJECT DURATION

The MFAIC will provide the selected Joint incubator project with a maximum total funding up to 200.000 Euro for the first three - years phase, on the basis of the program and the budget plan submitted.

The budget plan will have to show the financing plan for the expenses of establishment, management and development of the Joint incubator. The financing plan must include the following items:

- direct financing of the Italian institution promoting the Joint incubator;

- direct financing of the Israeli institution promoting the Joint incubator;
- financing requested from the Italian institution to the MFAIC;
- financing from others institutions and companies.

Proposals of Joint incubator project will have to include a perspective of financial self-sustainability allowing the continuation of the Joint incubator's activities even after the end of the three year grant received from the Italian side.

New research institutions and private companies may join the Joint incubator management only after one year from its activation. Participation of institutes from third countries is allowed, provided the consent of the Israeli and Italian institutes promoting the Joint incubator, the MFAIC and the Israeli authorities.

If the Joint incubator generates profits from its activities for the participating institutions, the Italian Partners will have to repay gradually the grant to MFAIC, unless they are reinvested in the Joint incubator. The repayment of the grant must be made through royalties, according to applicable rules and procedures, as in Article 5 of the Agreement. No repayment is due if the patents obtained by the Joint incubator or the participating institutions through the Joint incubator's activities are not commercialized. However the fact that the Joint incubator has made profits will be considered positively during the phase of evaluation.

D. ELIGIBILITY

The Italian Principal Coordinator (Italian citizen or UE citizen resident in Italy) must be affiliated to a University or research institute acting under the Italian law.

The Italian Principal Coordinator must secure his commitment to the Joint incubator's activities for the entire three-year period. His/Her replacement shall be approved by the MFAIC and the Italian and Israeli partners of the Joint incubator.

Amendments to the Budget plans must be authorized by the competent institutions of the hosting country.

In Israel, proposals of Joint incubators which include experiments on animals, before experimentation starts application for approval must be submitted to the relevant Council for Animal Experiments. In Italy they will refer to the relevant Italian and EU laws.

Proposals for which funding is approved involving human beings, must submit a request to the relevant Helsinki Committee in Israel before the project starts. In Italy they will refer to the relevant Italian and EU law.

E. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

The Israeli and Italian participating research institutions shall enter into a "Cooperation Agreement", regarding Intellectual Property rights arising from the activity of the Joint Laboratory as well as all the relevant cooperation issues related to the project (technical and scientific cooperation, financing, personnel exchange, funding allocation) .

The project will not be eligible for funding if the signed "Cooperation Agreement" is not sent before the term set out in the letter by which the MFAIC will inform the Principal Coordinator of the Joint incubator selection.

F. SUBMISSION OF RESEARCH PROPOSALS

The Joint incubator project proposal shall be jointly submitted - in English - by the Italian and Israeli Principal Coordinators to the MFAIC. Both parties declare by underwriting the proposal that the project and its preliminary budget are agreed upon, including all the financing provisions related to the Joint incubator.

The Italian partner must send the Project Application by filling in the attached Application Form called Annex 1 to the email addresses detailed below duly signed by each of the two Principal Coordinators as well as by each of the legal representatives of the research Institution to which they belong.

The application must be sent by **Monday, January 16th 2017** exclusively by certified electronic mail to the following address: dgsp.unita-cst@cert.esteri.it.

The Italian applicants must send only the documents as listed in the *“Norme Integrative per la creazione di Incubatori congiunti - Anno 2017”*, according to the “Check List” (Annex A). If one of the necessary documents is not attached, the applicant will not be able to participate in the Call.

G. FUNDED EXPENSES

All budget items and expenditures must conform to the national rules relevant for each applicant.

Funding provided by this Call is intended to enhance the capacity of the applicants to help the start-up generation by the activity of the joint incubator. It will therefore be provided mainly to support and integrate the financial, technical and human resources mobilized for the creation of start-up in cooperation with the counterpart in the above-mentioned areas.

H. MUTUAL VISITS

Researchers allowed to benefit of the facilities of the Joint incubator are encouraged to spend an extended period of time visiting the counterparts' institutions associated to the Joint incubators. The visits must take place in Italy, in Israel and other countries associated to the project. Visits to countries not associated will not eligible for financing.

I. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The projects will be assessed according to the following evaluation criteria:

1. Conformity with the definition of the program research topics of this Call;
2. Scientific Qualification of the Principal Coordinator (one for each country per research project): The Principal Coordinator should have experience, appropriate expertise and ability to manage the collaboration and carry out the Joint incubator goals within the project's time frame;
3. Relevance of the research topics and innovation impact of the methodology adopted.
4. Clarity and quality of the research proposal itself – presentation of the topic, definition of objectives, presentation of methodology and detailed work plan, to be assessed also taking in account the financial impact of the project;
5. Ability to develop research and growth of the existing research centers and their capacity to access to further sources of funding.
6. Added value of the bilateral scientific cooperation

7. Involvement of young researchers;
8. Level of participation of Italian industrial companies in the research and innovation activities carried out in the Joint incubator, by the means of own researchers or own financial resources

The evaluation process will be operated by the MFAIC, taking into proper consideration the assessments expressed by the Israeli authorities about the quality of the project.

Proposals including the effective participation of *Business Angels*, financial institutions or *certified incubators* as defined by the Italian law will be favourably considered.

J. NOTIFICATION OF THE RESULTS

Project partners whose Joint incubator project has been selected by the Sub Joint Committee will be informed of the results by letters. In Italy, the list of selected projects will furthermore be published on the website of the MFAIC.

K. AWARDING PROCEDURE AND PAYMENT

The Joint incubator must be activated within 6 months from the formal acceptance of the grant.

After the selection of the Project, the MFAIC will inform the Academic or Research Institution of the Principal Coordinator about the amount and the conditions of the grant. Upon receipt of formal acceptance by the beneficiary, the MFAIC will issue a formal letter on the financing of the Project.

Both Principal Coordinators will submit a joint annual report and a final scientific and financial report to the MFAIC (in English with Italian translation).

The Italian Principal Coordinator shall submit to the MFAIC any other information or scientific and financial reports within 30 days from the formal request by the MFAIC.

Payments will be made by the MFAIC to the research institution of the Italian Principal Coordinator, according to the regulations and practices in force in Italy and the provisions referred above and in the "*Norme integrative per la creazione di incubatori congiunti. Anno 2017.*".

Payments will be made in three instalments: the first one within 3 months from the activation of the Joint incubator; the second upon request by the Italian partner when the first instalment has been completely spent; the third at the ending of the Joint incubator's activities within a maximum of 36 months from the activation or 60 months in case of extension.

M. INFORMATION

Additional information can be obtained from the following:

Ministero degli Affari Esteri
e della Cooperazione Internazionale
D.G.S.P. - Direzione Generale per la Promozione del
Sistema Paese –
Unità per la Cooperazione Scientifica e Tecnologica
Bilaterale e Multilaterale
P.le della Farnesina, 1
00135 Roma

certified electronic mail: dgsp.unita-cst@cert.esteri.it
(for official submission)

accordo.italiaisraele@esteri.it
(for general information)

scienza.telaviv@esteri.it
Scientific Attaché Office - Embassy of Italy in Israel
(for scientific information)