



# Strengthening Efficiency and Competitiveness in the European Knowledge Economies (SEEK)

Call for Project Proposals for the 2012 Funding Period

## *Background*

Following two successful rounds of funding under the research programme “Strengthening Efficiency and Competitiveness in the European Knowledge Economies (SEEK)”, the Centre for European Economic Research (ZEW) is now accepting project proposals for the third funding period.

The EU’s strategy Europe 2020 for sustainable growth aims at making the EU a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. It puts smart growth at the heart of its blueprint for competitiveness, suggesting that our economies need to develop on the basis of knowledge and innovations. This shift of priorities poses a significant challenge both to policy makers and economists. The focus of the SEEK programme is to enhance the design of economic policy by asking for the underlying policy rationales, the design and mix of the appropriate policy instruments and their effectiveness and efficiency.

## *Topics to be Funded*

The overarching goal of the SEEK programme is to improve our understanding of how policy measures should be best conceived in order to promote innovation, human capital formation, IT adoption, and the responsible stewardship of natural resources, with the ultimate objective of supporting European productivity and competitiveness. The second, complementary aim is to promote international cooperation between researchers in all economic disciplines.

The programme welcomes proposals for applied economic research that address the following subjects:

### **Generation of Knowledge and Innovations**

Example research topics: Formal and informal processes of human capital formation; investments in intangible capital such as R&D&I and information technologies (incentives, complementarities, institutions); the organisation of R&D&I; the efficiency of knowledge markets; determinants of the direction of technological change (e.g. environmental innovations); economic policy requirements and decision-making processes, including budgetary decisions and voters’ preferences on future investments; the financing of human capital formation; R&D&I in the public and private sector.

### **Diffusion and Adoption of Knowledge and Innovations**

Example research topics: Efficient mechanisms for the adoption of new technologies and innovations; incentives for the diffusion of new technologies and their impacts (ICT, energy & green technologies); education, learning processes, knowledge diffusion, and network externalities; innovation financing and adoption; the formation of expectations on new markets and products.

### **The Use of Knowledge by Entrepreneurs and Industries**

Example research topics: Knowledge as a production factor and complementary investments; efficient use of internal and external resources; IT-based knowledge management; governance mechanisms for efficient knowledge use; firm-level organisational change; knowledge-based industries; intersectoral knowledge flows.



### **Impact of a Knowledge-Based Economy**

Example research topics: Innovations, technology shocks and their implications for economic growth; income and wealth distribution; changes in employee activities and skill requirements; the employment consequences of innovation, skill-biased technological change, and internationalisation processes; the impact of financial innovation on the real economy; the effects of new technologies on social interactions.

### **The Challenges Posed by a Knowledge-Based Economy for Economic Policy**

Example research topics: Strengthening R&D&I and intellectual property rights; tax incentives for intangible capital investments; strategies to meet skill requirements; regulation, innovation, and financial sector stability; strategies to improve knowledge production efficiency in the public sector; R&D&I policies in Europe's multi-level governance system.

### *Eligibility and Review Criteria*

Project teams are to be composed of ZEW researchers and one or more international researchers. For the research fields of the ZEW and the contact persons, please see <http://www.zew.de/research>. Research proposals must be prepared and submitted by all project partners. Proposals will be ranked by a scientific board composed of distinguished international scholars. The main criteria in assessing the proposals are scientific quality, the originality of the proposal, and strength of the scientific cooperation, including the international exchange of researchers. The final decision will be made by the ZEW.

### *Project Funding and Duration*

For each project, a budget of up to 200,000 euros may be requested for a 12 to 18 months project period. The respective share of funding borne by the ZEW and the cooperating partner is generally open to negotiation.

### *Proposal Submission*

Please submit your proposal to Stephan Reichert ([seek@zew.de](mailto:seek@zew.de)). PDFs are preferred. For the submission guidelines, please see: [www.seek.zew.eu](http://www.seek.zew.eu).

### *Proposal Guidelines*

Available at: [www.seek.zew.eu](http://www.seek.zew.eu)

### *Key Dates*

Deadline for submission: 30 January 2012

Completion of proposal review: 15 March 2012

Decision notification: March 2012

Project start: 1 April 2012

### *Scientific Board*

Daron Acemoglu (MIT), Bronwyn Hall (University of California, Berkeley), Kai Konrad (MPI München), Josh Lerner (Harvard Business School), Steve Machin (University College London), Pierre Mohnen (UNU-MERIT, Maastricht), Fabrizio Zilibotti (University of Zurich), Wolfgang Franz (ZEW), Georg Licht (ZEW)