IoT-NGIN
Next Generation IoT as part of Next Generation Internet

Annex 7:
Frequently Asked Questions
August 2021

H2020 957246: IoT-NGIN (Next Generation IoT as part of Next Generation Internet)
Annex 7: IoT-NGIN Open Call #1 Frequently Asked Questions

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The IoT-NGIN Consortium is the following:

IoT-NGIN Consortium			
Participant Number	**Participant organisation name**	**Short name**	**Country**
1	Capgemini Technology Services	CAP	France
2	Atos Spain S.A.	ATOS	Spain
3	ERICSSON GmbH	EDD	Germany
4	ABB Oy	ABB	Finland
5	INTRASOFT International S.A.	INTRA	Luxemburg
6	Engineering-Ingegneria Informatica SPA	ENG	Italy
7	Bosch Sistemas de Frenado S.L.U.	BOSCH	Spain
8	ASM Terni SpA	ASM	Italy
9	Forum Virium Helsinki	FVH	Finland
10	Optimum Technologies Pilroforikis S.A.	OPT	Greece
11	eBOS Technologies Ltd	EBOS	Cyprus
12	Privanova SAS	PRI	France
13	Synelixis Solutions S.A.	SYN	Greece
14	CUMUCORE Oy	CMC	Finland
15	Emotion s.r.l.	EMOT	Italy
16	AALTO-Korkeakoulusaatio	AALTO	Finland
17	i2CAT Foundation	I2CAT	Spain
18	Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule Aachen	RWTH	Germany
19	Sorbonne Université	SU	France

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The IoT-NGIN project, co-funded from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 957246, foresees as an eligible activity the provision of financial support to third parties, as a mean to achieve its own objectives.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AGV	Automated Guided Vehicles
AGLV	Automated Guided Land Vehicles
AR	Augmented Reality
AWU	Annual Work Unit
CET	Central European Time
DLT	Distributed Ledger Technology
DT	Digital Twin
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
KPI	Key performance Indicator
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
M2M	Machine to Machine
MCM	Machine Cloud Machine
ML	Machine Learning
NGI	Next Generation Internet
RTD	Research and Technological Development
SME	Small and Medium-sized enterprises (including start-ups)
TRL	Technology Readiness Level
VAT	Value Added Tax

1 Introduction

The objective of this Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is to provide to the IoT-NGIN Open Call #1 potential applicants with answers and complementary information to some of the possible questions that may arise when preparing a proposal.

Although this document provides summary information to the listed questions, applicants are advised to consult all annexes for detailed information.

This FAQ document is a living document and may be regularly updated with questions and answers that emerge while the open call is running.

2 General and eligibility questions

2.1 When does the open call launch?

The IoT-NGIN Open Call #1 is announced on 1st September 2021 and is open for applications from 1st of October 2021 till 30th of December 2021 at 17:00 CEST (Brussels time).

2.2 Can a University or a Research Centre apply to the open call?

No. The open call is limited to technological SMEs. The applicants of IoT-NGIN Open Call #1 should be IoT devices manufacturers, embedded software and FPGA/soft core SMEs.

2.3 Can a proposal be submitted by a consortium?

No. All proposals must be submitted by a single SME. Any proposal with more than one entity will not be eligible.

2.4 Can a start-up apply for the open call?

A start-up may apply for the open call given that a) it has been established at least one year before the submission of the application, b) it is able to provide accurate Annual turnover and positive Balance Sheets of at least one closed financial year and c) comply with the financial capacity assessment criterion.

2.5 Is Financial Stability mandatory?

Yes. Any entity SME or start-up should sign and submit the Annex 5: SME Financial Stability Declaration properly completed and signed, showcasing the start-up's financial stability and capacity. Moreover, any entity SME or start-up should provide positive Annual turnover and Balance Sheets of at least one closed financial year, proving their Financial stability and capacity and pass any financial check required by the European Commission, including Financial capacity assessment[1]

2.6 The foreseen costs of my proposal is over €150.000. I am eligible?

The funding rate for the IoT-NGIN Open Call #1 is 100% and applicants may submit a proposal with a total cost of €150.000

2.7 Is the funding provided as lump sum?

No. The selected applicants will become full members of the IoT-NGIN consortium. As such will have all benefits and obligations of all existing members of the IoT-NGIN consortium. Just for example they need to keep accurate records and global timesheets of all participants and all costs in the project, claim funding only for the depreciation value of their equipment, participate in the project meetings, etc. Please read carefully the H2020 Annotated Model Grant Agreement[2]. Please also note that IoT-NGIN has not responsibility in case of updates by the European Commission.

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[1] Please refer to https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/grants/applying-for-funding/register-an-organisation/financial-capacity-check_en.htm

[2] https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf

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2.8 Is there any equity on IoT-NGIN funding?

No. The funds to the new consortium member come directly from the funds of the European Project IoT-NGIN, which is funded itself by the Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology, and remain therefore, property of the EU until the payment of the balance, whose management rights have been transferred to the IoT-NGIN project coordinator via European Commission Grant Agreement Number 957246.

An amount of 5% of the maximum grant amount is retained by the European Commission from the pre-financing payment and transferred into the 'Guarantee Fund'. This amount will be released when the payment of the balance is made by the European Commission.

2.9 I represent an SME/start-up, which does not have a valid VAT number or PIC number. Can I submit a proposal?

The European Commission Participant Identification Code (PIC) is quite easily issued[3] and it is mandatory for submitting a proposal. For administrative issues, the VAT is mandatory for inclusion of a new partner in the IoT-NGIN consortium.

2.10 I had issues with my internet connection and was not able to submit my proposal by the deadline. Can I submit after the 30 December 2021?

No. The deadline for proposals is 30 December 2021 at 17:00 CEST (Brussels time). No extensions will be granted for any reason, unless a significant problem is identified related to the F6S platform that is unrelated to the applicant. If you experience problems with the F6S platform, report your problem to support@f6s.com. It is highly recommended that you submit your proposal well before 30 December 2021.

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[3] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/participant-register

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3 Submission and Evaluation

3.1 How do I submit a proposal?

To submit a proposal, you must be registered on F6S (www.f6s.com) and then complete the relevant on-line form accompanied with all required Annexes.

3.2 I am not very fluent in English. Can I submit the proposal in another official European Union Language?

No. For transparency reasons all proposals must be written in the English language. Yet, the language capacity is not an evaluation criterion, given that the proposal is readable, and the experts are able to clearly understand the content of the proposal

3.3 I have many innovative ideas in IoT. Can I submit multiple proposals?

No. Each applicant may submit only one (1) proposal. Multiple submissions is a disqualify factor. In case an entity submits more than one proposal, all proposals that they have submitted will be automatically excluded from the evaluation process. Moreover, it is considered as Conflict of Interest and the relevant proposals will be automatically considered not eligible, in case an individual participates, controls, submits or is associated in any way with more than one proposals. Please check thoroughly the eligibility criteria of Annex 2: "Guide for Applicants" Chapter 3.

3.4 What documentation should I include and submit with my proposal?

All documentation must be included as part of the proposal that must be submitted using the IoT-NGIN – Open Call #1 F6S page.

It is mandatory to correctly complete and upload

(1) a signed version of Annex 4. IoT-NGIN Open Call #1 Declaration of Honour

(2) a signed version of Annex 5. IoT-NGIN Open Call #1 SME Financial Stability.

(3) A well completed version of Annex 3.1 IoT-NGIN Open Call #1 Proposal Supplement. Please respect the formatting rules and page limit as identified in the template.

All annexes must be uploaded in PDF format.

3.5 What are the different evaluation criteria?

All proposals will be evaluated against four criteria, namely:

- Criterion 1: Concept and Innovation
- Criterion 2: Technology
- Criterion 3: Impact
- Criterion 4: Applicant Entity/Team

Please refer to Annex 2: "Guide for Applicants" Chapter 4 for more details.

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3.6 I have an idea on IoT technology that is not related to IoT-NGIN. How will my proposal be evaluated?

The IoT-NGIN has a quite broad scope. Yet, it is open to further innovative ideas and technologies on the IoT domain given that a) it is feasible to implement, integrate, test and validate that idea within the IoT-NGIN project lifetime, b) whatever is implemented within the IoT-NGIN is provided as Open Source and c) there are no security, dual use or ethical issues associated with the proposal.

3.7 My proposal scored maximum points (10) on three criterion and four points on another. Is this sufficient to be awarded?

No. The threshold for each criterion is six (6), while the overall score threshold will be twenty-six (26). That means if a proposal receives less than 6 in one criterion or less than 26 overall score it is automatically rejected.

3.8 I believe there was an error in the evaluation of my proposal. Can I request for a re-evaluation?

Yes. You can request for a re-evaluation on items solely related to the evaluation or eligibility verification process. In such a case, the applicant must prepare a specific request and the evaluation committee will re-evaluate the proposal. A re-evaluation will only be implemented if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the final decision of the proposal. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed on another criterion. Please refer to Annex 2: "Guide for Applicants" Chapter 4.2.6 for more details.

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4 Project Execution

4.1 I received notification that my proposal was awarded. Do I automatically start implementing my sub-project?

No. Additional steps are required before starting the project execution. After applicants are notified of being awarded, the IoT-NGIN coordinator will contact the selected applicants to review and finalize the technical, financial and legal requirements of the application.

Then IoT-NGIN coordinator will inform the European Commission and get the permission to start an amendment of the IoT-NGIN Grant Agreement. In this amendment, the selected applicants will be introduced as full members of the IoT-NGIN consortium.

It is expected that the Grant Agreement Amendment phase may take several days to conclude, after which the awarded applicant can start the implementation of the proposed tasks. In case the agreement is not concluded during the defined period due to applicant responsibility, the proposal may be rejected and the next applicant in the reserve list may be invited to sign an agreement.

4.2 Do I have any obligations during the project execution?

The newly selected applicants will become full beneficiaries of the IoT-NGIN project. They will sign the IoT-NGIN Consortium Agreement and the IoT-NGIN Grant Agreement Amendment and get all benefits and responsibilities of current IoT-NGIN consortium members. A non-exhaustive list of benefits and obligations include:

- The applicants selected from the Open Call will be added as beneficiaries to the EU portal

- All new technological components will be added in the relevant WP2-WP5, will be integrated with IoT-NGIN developments in WP6 and tested in IoT-NGIN pilots at WP7.

- All new technological components will be offered as Open Source (HW/SW) and will be utilized by the partners that will be invited via IoT-NGIN Open Call #2 to validate IoT-NGIN Technology.

- All impact creation and dissemination/standardization activities of the new beneficiaries will be included in the relevant Tasks (WP8).

- New project beneficiaries will participate in IoT-NGIN activities, including consortium/WP meetings and phone calls, pilot and dissemination activities, reviews from the EC.

From an administrative point of view, the beneficiary shall keep accurate global timesheets for all personnel involved in the project according to H2020 rules. Moreover, shall keep all project deliverables and all documents relating to the activity for up to five years from the end of the project. These shall be made available to the EC where requested during any audit under the grant agreement.

Please also read carefully the obligations between the new partners and the EC[4]

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[4] https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/index_en.htm

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4.3 Do I have any obligations after the project execution?

The EC may at any time during the implementation of the IoT-NGIN project and up to 5 (five) years after the end of the IoT-NGIN project, arrange for financial audits to be carried out, by external auditors, or by the EC services themselves including the European Anti-Fraud office (OLAF). The audit procedure shall be deemed to be initiated on the date of receipt of the relevant letter sent by the EC. Such audits may cover financial, systemic and other aspects (such as accounting and management principles) relating to the proper execution of the grant agreement. They shall be carried out on a confidential basis.

The beneficiary shall make available directly to the EC all detailed information and data that may be requested by the EC or any representative authorised by it, with a view to verifying that the grant agreement is properly managed and performed in accordance with its provisions and that costs have been charged in compliance with it. This information and data must be precise, complete and effective.

Please refer to Annex 2: "Guide for Applicants" section 5 for more detailed list of applicant responsibilities