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SMESEC

Protecting Small and Medium-sized Enterprises digital technology through an innovative cyber-SECurity framework

SMESEC OPEN CALL FOR SYSTEM VALIDATION

Call identifier: **SMESEC-OC1**

Call title: **External Validation of the SMESEC Framework**

Language in which the proposal must be submitted: **English**

Date of publication: **1st March 2019**

Date of close of call: **15th May 2019 at 17:00CET**

Project website: **https://www.smesec.eu**

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1 Introduction to SMESEC

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) are an important driver for innovation and growth in the EU. At the same time, SMEs also stand to gain the most from innovative technologies that promise convenient deployment and economical operation of ICT. Taking into account cyber-security, SMEs do not always understand all the risks and business consequences for the development of technologies without the adequate level of protection against cyber-crime.

The European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) declares in the "Information Security and Privacy Standards for SMEs" study of 2016 that, despite rising concerns about information security risks, the level of SMEs information security and privacy standards adoption is relatively small.

The objective of the SMESEC project can be summarised in the following:

- High-quality cybersecurity solutions attractive to SMEs with a restricted budget
- Provide cybersecurity training and awareness for SMEs and all type of employees
- Test and validate our solution with four initial use cases and have an open call when the solution is more mature
- Ready to market solution

2 Objectives of the call

The objective of the open call is the validation of the SMESEC solution with SMEs outside the SMESEC consortium. The validation will provide feedback and insights to the project to produce a product that is closer to the market's needs with a high TRL (Technology Readiness Level). Moreover, through the open call, we will be able to demonstrate that SMESEC can cover security needs in existing solutions (products and services) provided by these SMEs in a range of market sectors, which can strengthen their operation using enhanced security features.

For the interested participants, the open call consists of 2 stages:

- First stage: collection of applications and selecting of participating third-parties. After the new partner selection, a hands-on workshop will be performed with the selected partners, guidance for using the SMESEC security framework provided, and instructions shared for reporting about the experience using the SMESEC evaluation procedures.
- Second stage: collection of the results of evaluating the SMESEC security framework by the selected open call partners. These collected results will be analysed to extract conclusions for evolving the SMESEC framework.

To achieve a broad validation of all the feature provide by the SMESEC Framework we have defined three different categories:

- **Category 1:** 1 Red Team will assess the security level of the involved SMEs before and after the deployment of the SMESEC Framework. The applicants will be evaluated based on the proved experience in assessing systems for cyber-threat, their cybersecurity expertise and overall IT experience.
- **Category 2a:** up to 5 SMEs that will incorporate SMESEC framework taking advantage of all the features provided by SMESEC, e.g. threat protection and response tools, security awareness and training, testing and recommendation tools. As we are seeking for a diverse set of SMEs for this category, all applicants will be placed into three categories (high, medium, low) based on the expertise on IT and the adoption level of ICT to their day-to-day operations. Then 2 applicants will be selected from the high category, 2 from the medium category, and 1 from the low category.
- **Category 2b:** up to 3 SMEs from providing cybersecurity solutions that will test the external integration API, incorporating their solutions to the solutions of the SMESEC framework. We seek experienced SMEs with a strong background in cybersecurity.
- **Category 3:** 1 SME association, community, or ecosystem to help increase awareness on SMEs cybersecurity issues by using and validating the SMESEC framework. As the project provides a comprehensive framework of tools for cybersecurity, we look for feedback from a community of SMEs in particular on the tools acceptance, on the overall approach chosen including usefulness and easiness to use the tools, etc. We look for applicants helping to organise collective actions and provide feedback about KPIs and SME practice improvements recommended by the SMESEC tools to improve our solutions. The applicants will be evaluated on the number of SMEs involved and on the potential impact of the SMESEC framework to increase SMEs' cybersecurity protection.

2.1 Funding schemes

Available funding per category:

- In category 1, a maximum **one** proposal will be funded with **€ 20.000,00 (excl. VAT)**
- In category 2a, a maximum of **five** proposals will be funded with **€ 15.000,00 (excl. VAT)**
- In category 2b, a maximum of **three** proposals will be funded with **€ 12.000,00 (excl. VAT)**
- In category 3, a maximum of **one** proposal will be funded with **€ 7.000,00 (excl. VAT)**

The financing of the SMEs will be performed in a single deposit, upon the delivery and acceptance of the evaluation report.

2.2 Application Procedure

Application process:

1. Sign Up / Login to get access to member page.
2. Read the entry requirements and application deadlines.
3. Download application form and supporting documents.
4. Fill in the form and all mandatory documents.
5. Submit completed documents to opencall-info@smesec.eu
7. Applications will be reviewed, and you will receive notification of acceptance between Mid-May 2019 and June 1st, 2019.
8. Do not forget to follow the project news!

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- LinkedIn

All SMEs are welcome to apply for the validation of the SMESEC framework. An evaluation committee comprised of external evaluators and selected experienced evaluators within the consortium will evaluate all proposals based on the feasibility to deploy and evaluate the SMESEC framework, the total number of employees, the IT expertise, the area of focus, the experience with software development and software validation of the SME. More information on the criteria and the evaluation procedure can be found in "Evaluation process" document.

2.3 Eligibility and Further Remarks

Eligibility requirements:

- Proposals will only be accepted from parties that are eligible for participation in EC H2020-projects [2]
- All applying parties must be compatible with the EU definition of SMEs [3] and must provide a signed 'Model Declaration Form' (application documents)
- All proposal must be submitted in the English language, strictly before the due date and through the SMESEC web portal by using specific proposal template (mandatory).
- Access to the proposal templates and application documents is available through the SMESEC website [1].
- Proposers' organisations can submit multiple proposals, but only one proposal per single organisation might be selected for funding in this Open Call.

All Selected SMEs must:

- Participate actively in all workshops: two physicals in a country of the EU and two virtual meetings via teleconferencing.
- For category 2 applicants must have enough IT expertise and suitable infrastructure to support the full (cat.2a) or partial (cat.2b) deployment and validation of the SMESEC framework.
- The consortium will provide full technical support for the deployment and detailed guidelines for the evaluation reporting for each category.
- Deliver a final report, using the respective report template that will be provided by SMESEC, either for security findings (cat.1), full validation (cat.2a), integration process (cat.2b), or provide feedback about KPIs and SME practice improvements (cat. 3) in due time and proper manner.
- Present their evaluation results to the consortium during the final physical workshop.

Questions:

- Participants may direct their questions to opencall-info@smesec.eu . These questions will be published and answered on the open call webpage on the SMESEC Open Call information page [4].

3 References

[1] SMESEC Project https://www.smesec.eu

[2] European Commission "Who is eligible for funding" https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/how-eu-funding-works/who-eligible-funding_en

[3] European Commission definition of SMEs https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en

[4] SMESEC Open Call information page http://www.smesec.eu/opencall.html