



# **2<sup>nd</sup> SESA Call for Entrepreneurs 2023 “Replication & Scale-up Call”**

## **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**



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## The SESA Project

**Smart Energy Solutions for Africa (SESA)** is a Research and Innovation Project funded by the European Commission under the Horizon2020 programme and coordinated by the ICLEI European Secretariat (a non-profit entity based in Brussels). SESA was launched in October 2021 with a duration of 48 months and is being implemented in nine African countries: Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Tanzania. The SESA project is developing and testing sustainable energy solutions as well as promising business models to accelerate the green transition and the achievement of energy access goals in Africa.

SESA's main objective is to support a diversity of affordable solutions that deliver access to reliable, efficient and sustainable energy services for all, creating business opportunities that can directly contribute to development. Selected innovations within the three areas of focus: **(1) access to energy, (2) productive use of energy and (3) circular economy** will be developed and initially tested in a modular demonstration case in Kenya and based on initial learnings, various aspects of the tested innovations will be validated in four countries: Ghana, South Africa, Malawi and Morocco. The learnings from these validation countries will strengthen the overall replicability of the technologies as well as business concepts. To initiate the replication process, four additional countries (Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda and Tanzania) will be supported to adopt the technologies with the most replication potential.

The uptake of new solutions and business models requires close cooperation between local start-ups, innovative entrepreneurs, industry, city administrations and research and academic institutions. **Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)** can play a key role in this process and thus, we are looking for Expressions of Interests (EOI) by suitable enterprises and innovators that are interested in offering their services & products to explore the replication and scale-up of selected technologies (see below) and promising business models as part of the SESA project.

## SESA Replication & Scale-up Call

The SESA Replication and Scale-up Call is built on the experience gained in the demonstration actions and aims to select suitable enterprises who are willing to explore the replication and scale-up of selected technologies and business models developed and tested within the SESA project. In below table, you can find the prioritised technology domains as well as the focus regions (where applicable) per country. Focus countries for this call are Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda and Tanzania.\*

The SESA project will make available between EUR 50,000 to EUR 100,000 per selected enterprise for the design, implementation, and evaluation of submitted replication projects via service agreements. Entities are welcome to form consortiums to apply for the call. However, if selected, the service agreement will be signed with the lead partner only. Interested enterprises should be operationally active in the selected countries and should submit project proposals outlining how they plan to boost the replication and scale-up of below technologies. Feasibility assessments exploring the replication potential of sustainable energy solutions in very remote communities such as in the case of Namibia are also eligible.

In this context, the areas prioritised under this call will be as follows:

Country	Technology domains
<b>Namibia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar irrigation technologies for rural communities</li> <li>• Solar Mini-Grids for rural communities</li> <li>• Waste-to-Energy Solutions (Biogas) for rural communities to improve clean cooking as well as access to energy</li> <li>• Solar Cold Chain Technologies for rural communities</li> <li>• Productive Use of Energy (PUE) appliances for rural communities</li> </ul>
<b>Nigeria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar irrigation technologies for rural communities</li> <li>• Waste-to-Energy Solutions (Biogas) for rural communities to improve clean cooking as well as access to energy</li> </ul>
<b>Rwanda</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar irrigation technologies for rural communities</li> <li>• Improved cook stoves (e.g. Waste-to-Energy Solutions) for rural communities</li> <li>• Solar Mini-Grids including second life EV batteries for rural communities</li> </ul>
<b>Tanzania</b> Mwanza, Kigoma, Iringa, Ruvuma , Dar es Salaam and/or Dodoma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar irrigation technologies for rural communities</li> <li>• Solar Cold Chain Technologies for both peri-urban and rural communities</li> <li>• Productive Use of Energy (PUE) appliances for rural communities</li> </ul>

## Eligibility criteria

Certain minimum criteria need to be met and only those applications which meet the below minimum criteria will be considered.

- Your enterprise must be registered and operationally active in Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda or Tanzania\*;
- Your enterprise must have officially been in operation for at least three years;
- Your enterprise must have generated revenues and provide financial statements including income statement and balance sheets for the last two years (2022 and 2021);

- There are no pending litigations against your enterprise or members of its management team;
- Proof of previously similar work done in country

**Women-led and women-owned businesses are particularly encouraged to apply.**

**\*Please note:** The SESA Call for Entrepreneurs 2023 will focus on SMEs operationally active in Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda and Tanzania as first priority. However, this does not preclude applications from SMEs registered and operative in other African countries as long as the technological requirements are met.

## Required (Mandatory) Documents

Applications must include all the below-mentioned requirements and must be submitted electronically via email to [opencall@siemens-stiftung.org](mailto:opencall@siemens-stiftung.org) before the deadline of 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2023.

**Kindly note that for Namibia the deadline has been extended until Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 2023.**

List of mandatory documents:

- Application Form;
- Certificate of incorporation/association and registration certificate;
- Financial statements for the last two years (including income statements and balance sheets for 2022 and 2021);
- Pictures and technical specifications of your product/service(s).

## How to apply?

Participants are requested to carefully read and follow the instructions:

1. Review the **Eligibility Criteria** to make sure your social enterprise is eligible
2. Review the **Required (Mandatory) Documents** to make sure you can provide all documents with your application
3. Fill in the **Application Form** with as much detail as possible
4. Submit your complete application (including the Application Form and all relevant documents) via e-mail to **opencall@siemens-stiftung.org**

Applying takes time and dedication and we would like to make sure that you succeed, hence we have provided a quick check-list for your consideration:

- **Be on time:** Make sure you submit your proposal electronically via email before the deadline. If you submit the form correctly, the system will send you an automatic confirmation of your submission. Get in touch with Elisabeth Biber at Siemens Stiftung if this was not the case. Proposals submitted by any other means will not be evaluated.

- **Language:** English is the official language of the SESA project. All proposals must be in English in all their mandatory parts in order to be eligible. Submissions done in any other language will not be evaluated. English is also the only official language during the whole length of the SESA Incubator Programme.
- **Every question deserves your attention:** All mandatory sections of your proposal must be filled in. Make sure that the data provided is true and complete. This is crucial for us to properly assess your proposal.
- **It is your proposal:** Your project should be based on your original work. Going forward, any foreseen developments must be free from third-party rights and if not, these third-party rights must be clearly stated.
- **Documentation format:** Any document requested in any of the phases must be submitted electronically in PDF format without restrictions for printing.

**Please note:** It is strongly recommended to not wait till the last moment of submission. Failure of the proposal to arrive in time for any reason, including communications delays, or network issues is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance and will automatically lead to rejection of the submission. The time of receipt of the proposal as recorded by the submission system will be definitive.

## Multiple submission

Only one proposal will be accepted per applicant. In the case of a multiple submission, the first one received (timestamp of the system) will enter into the evaluation process, the rest being declared as non-eligible. You should receive an automatic response notification that your application has been received.

## Conflict of interest

Applicants shall not have any actual or/and potential conflict of interest with the SESA selection process and during the whole project. **Applicants cannot be SESA Consortium partners or affiliated entities nor their employees or co-operators under a contractual agreement.** All cases of conflict of interest will be assessed case by case.

## Evaluation Process

The evaluation process of the 2<sup>nd</sup> SESA Call for Entrepreneurs 2023 will follow the below steps:

1. **Proposals reception:** via [opencall@siemens-stiftung.org](mailto:opencall@siemens-stiftung.org)
2. **Eligibility filter:** Eligibility check will verify (i) the existence of a legal entity in an eligible country and financial statements of two subsequent years, (ii) the uniqueness of the proposal & innovation element, and (iii) the alignment with specified technologies and replication potential.

**3. Evaluation:** The eligible proposals will then be given to an internal SESA jury who will select the shortlisted candidates.

The proposal will be assessed through the following weighted criteria:

- 1) Innovation & Impact (25%)
- 2) Business Robustness & Market Potential (20%)
- 3) Expertise & Excellence of the Team (20%)
- 4) Implementation Plan & Value for Money (30%)

**4. Online Pitch-Session and consensus meeting:** SESA evaluators will gather in an online meeting to talk with the top shortlisted candidates. During this teleconference, applicants will give a pitch of their business, followed by a Q&A session. This will be an opportunity for evaluators to cover any doubts that they may have about the written application as well as about the commitment and engagement of applicants towards participating in the SESA project. The evaluators will share, compare and revise (if necessary) their scores aiming to have a consensus about the respective proposal.

**5. Final ranking:** At the end of the evaluation process, the proposals will be ranked. The criteria for the ranking of the proposals will be semi-automatic following the rules below:

- ✓ Rule 1: The proposals will be ranked based on their overall score.
- ✓ Rule 2: In case following Rule 1 there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to proposals from women-led businesses and female founders.
- ✓ Rule 3: In case following Rule 2 there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to proposals that have higher score on the implementation & value for money section.

**6. Selection:** The proposals with higher scores, independently of the targeted topic/challenge, will be selected until reaching the available total amount of the SESA funding provided by the European Commission. The independent experts will score each award criterion on a scale from 0 to 4:

- **0 = Proposal fails** to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
- **1 = Poor:** criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
- **2 = Good:** proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
- **3 = Very good:** proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
- **4 = Excellent:** proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion.

**Please note:** The SESA Consortium is not obliged to select the highest scoring proposal where it has grounds for objecting to the participant if, for example, commercial competition issues or strategic issues to balance technologies between the different platforms available in SESA, becomes apparent during the evaluation process. In this case, the choice may pass to the next ranked proposal.

**9. Communication of Results:** Every applicant will receive e-mail notification of the status of their application.

## Service Agreements

Each applicant shall submit a detailed proposal for the offered services including clear milestones as part of the application form and a budget justifying the costs and resources in relation to the project proposal. Kindly note that the quotation is including VAT if your company does not have a VAT exemption. Checking the consistency between these costs and the expected work of the project will be part of the evaluation.

Once a finalist has been selected, a service agreement will be signed with Siemens Stiftung on behalf of the SESA Consortium. Payments will be made in three installments, starting with an upfront payment after signature of the agreement and receipt of an invoice. Two additional payments will be made according to a staged payment plan based on the successful completion of specified deliverables after invoicing as per service agreement.

## Complaints Mechanism

If, at any stage of the evaluation process, the applicant considers that a mistake has been made or that the evaluators have acted unfairly or have failed to comply with the rules of this 2<sup>nd</sup> SESA Call for Entrepreneurs 2023, and that her/his interests have been prejudiced as a result, the following complaints mechanism is available. A complaint should be drawn up in English and submitted by email to: [opencall@siemens-stiftung.org](mailto:opencall@siemens-stiftung.org).

Any complaint made should include:

- Contact details;
- Subject of the complaint;
- Information and evidence regarding the alleged breach.

**Please note:** This procedure is concerned only with the evaluation and/or eligibility checking process. The SESA Team will not call into question the scientific or technical judgement of appropriately qualified experts. A re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the final decision on whether to fund it or not. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on other criteria.

## SESA Incubator Programme

All SMEs selected will be invited to join the SESA Incubator Programme run by the project partner *Smart Innovation Norway (SIN)*. In a Kick-Off Meeting, after the selection, your company together with Smart Innovation Norway will evaluate the specific needs of your business and develop an individualised strategy to support you in one of four main topics:

- Business Planning & Monitoring
- Organisational Development & Financial Transparency
- Marketing & Sales
- Fundraising

Each company will have a dedicated mentor (local and/or international, as per need) who shall provide regular support in the above-mentioned topics during a limited period. Additionally, technical and business expertise from SESA partners will also be offered to the companies on individual basis.

## Data protection

Your personal data will be processed in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Federal Data Protection Act (Bundesdatenschutzgesetz, BDSG) and other relevant data protection regulations.

We process your data, some of which may be personal, solely for the purpose of carrying out the selection process within the framework of the SESA project. Please read the data protection regulations on the SESA website carefully before submitting your application. By submitting your application, you have given us consent to process personal data. You can revoke consent at any time with effect for the future.

## Contact

For further enquiries do not hesitate to contact Ms Elisabeth Biber at [Elisabeth.Biber@Siemens-Stiftung.org](mailto:Elisabeth.Biber@Siemens-Stiftung.org).