

ConnectEO

Request for Expressions of Interest for SMEs 2021



The ConnectEO project aims to enhance Earth Observation (EO) SMEs' innovation capacity and assist them in their internationalisation efforts in the Australian and Chilean markets. ConnectEO will promote European EO SMEs in two target markets, Australia and Chile and organise trade missions to those markets for eligible SMEs while supporting up to 20 SMEs economically and logistically to participate in these trade missions.

The project is structured in 2 eligibility phases for participant SMEs: a request for expressions of interest and a subsequent call for trade mission participants. This Request for Expressions of Interest asks European companies interested in participating in the project to express their needs and interests to help us tailor support services.

Which opportunities do Australia and Chile have to offer?

Australia's economy is based on services, mining, agriculture, education and tourism, which all represent potential EO target markets. A huge coastline, the strong coastal tourism and offshore mining sectors make marine services an attractive market. The strong agriculture sector, representing 14% of total goods and services exports and employing 3%¹ of the workforce make this an attractive sector for service provision.

Our studies showed that Australia can offer opportunities in the maritime sector (infrastructure & shipping, defence & security, biodiversity & environment protection, renewable energies), the agriculture sector (crops, livestock) and other sectors.

Chile has ideal natural characteristics to open doors to the international market. The country has an economy based on mining, agriculture and manufacture, with fishing also a major industry, which all represent potential EO target markets.

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https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp2021/Quick_Guides/EmployIndustry



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Our studies showed that Chile can offer opportunities in the maritime sector (fisheries, biodiversity conservation, defence & security, renewable energies), the agriculture sector (crops, livestock) and other sectors.

For more information, please visit our [Australia](#) and [Chile](#) dedicated pages on our website.

ConnectEO Project Structure

The project is structured in 2 eligibility phases for participant SMEs:

- 1) Request for Expression of Interest (E.O.I.) and;
- 2) Competitive call for SMEs to participate in the trade missions.

1st Phase: Expression of Interest (E.O.I.)

The ConnectEO E.O.I. represents the first opportunity for European SMEs to express their interest in benefiting from a range of support activities such as: capacity building webinars, relevant background information (i.e. market overview/trends and cultural aspects), IPR strategies, networking, contacts, and participate in trade missions to both Chile and to Australia.

The objective of the E.O.I. is to provide the ConnectEO consortium with a list of SMEs interested in the Chilean and Australian markets and to identify support needs required by these SMEs to successfully navigate these new territories. This information will be used in the organisation of the ‘back office’ supporting services and the subsequent call for SME participation in trade missions.

Furthermore, members of the consortium members (EARSC, CTA, PMBA) and companies in Australia and Chile will be invited to advertise their services on our [catalogue of service providers](#).

The E.O.I will be **launched on February 15th 2021 and will close on March 31st 2021.** Applications may be submitted at any time during this time. Evaluation will take place in April 2021.

Eligibility

- To be an SME according to the European Commission definition²
- To have activity related to EO in the relevant downstream sector: agriculture, maritime and marine.
- To develop data products/services with possible application in preferably agriculture, maritime, but potentially in other sectors (such as forestry and mining)

² https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/sme-definition_en



Ready to apply? Candidates interested to apply are invited to **submit an E.O.I. application here:** <https://fr.surveymonkey.com/r/FSVKVS2>. Interested parties should provide the SME's full contact details and list the specific fields that interest them.

2nd Phase: Call for SMEs to participate in trade missions

Following the first phase evaluation, SMEs will be selected to participate in this second phase. This call for SMEs to participate in trade missions will invite selected SMEs to submit their application to participate in the trade missions. Overall, this call will allow the ConnectEO consortium to evaluate the eligibility of SMEs, based on their motivation and business plan. SMEs will benefit from predetermined funding available through the ConnectEO project to support participation in the trade missions. More detailed information on the trade missions will be available on the [project website](#) when the Call for trade mission will be launched.

Note that due to the Covid-19 sanitary situation, trade missions are subject to confirmation.

Timeframe for request for E.O.I. and Call for SMEs

Milestone	Date
Launch of EOI	February 15
Close of EOI	March 31
Screening of applications	April
Launch of SME Call for Trade missions	June
Close of SME Call	September 30
Evaluation	October
SME selection and publication	November
Preparation of SMEs	November onwards
Start Trade Missions	January 2022 onwards

Dates are indicative of the Trade missions due to the current sanitary situation of Covid-19.

***Disclaimer:** The content of this call for SMEs represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility; it cannot be considered to reflect the views of the European Commission and/or the Executive Agency for Small and Medium- sized Enterprises (EASME) or any other body of the European Union. The European Commission and the Agency do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.*