

Based on articles 25, 27, and 28. of the Law on innovation work ("Službeni glasnik RS", no. 129/2021, – hereinafter: "the Law"), of the Republic of Serbia Government Conclusion number 022-11497/2019 from November 21 2019 and the Republic of Serbia Government Conclusion number 022-7365/2020 from September 24 2020 (hereinafter: "the Conclusion"), as well as the regulations of the Contract for the founding of the Science and Technology Park Niš Ltd. Niš,

Science and Technology Park Niš Ltd. announces a

### **PUBLIC CALL**

### **TO TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT COMPANIES**

### **- for membership in the Science and Technology Park Niš -**

Science and Technology Park Niš Ltd. (hereinafter: STP Niš) was founded via a partnership between the Government of the Republic of Serbia (on behalf of the RS Government Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development), the City of Niš, and the University in Niš, with the goal of:

- Providing infrastructural support for innovation works, which provides infrastructural and expert services to business societies, scientific research, and innovation organizations in order to connect them and apply new technologies, and create and place new products and services on the market as soon as possible, with the goal of rapid technological development of the country based on examples of good international practice in this field;
- Attracting innovative technology development companies (domestic and foreign) and creating conditions for their development through connections with scientific research and higher education organizations, with regard to the Law on innovation work regulations;
- Encouraging feedback for the development of scientific research organizations, primarily the University in Niš, through joint research with technology companies, with the goal of commercializing innovations created in the process of research and development;
- Creating conditions for the founding of a larger number of spinoff companies and their development by applying good practice from Serbia and the region;
- Creating conditions and ambience for the development of innovative startup companies,
- Having active and graduated students start and develop their own "businesses",



- Creating and developing new innovative products, services, and processes by applying advanced and innovative technologies with the potential for growth, employment, and export;
- Employing young educated staff, as well as creating conditions for the return of our experts from abroad.

## 1. Types of services

By this Public call, with the goal of putting the built Science and Technology Park in Niš complex into function (in accordance with the Law on confirming the financial contract between the Republic of Serbia and the European Investment Bank published in the RS Official gazette – International contracts, number 5/10, as well as obligations taken by the Republic of Serbia according to that contract) and creating conditions for developing innovations, STP Niš offers the following service package:

- Infrastructural services
  - Open and office business space with the use of common space (meeting hall, presentation hall, common rooms) etc.
- Consulting services
  - In the field of development and commercialization of innovations,
  - Consulting services in the field of management, marketing, finances, bookkeeping, commercial law, intellectual property protection, etc.
- Other services
  - Education and training through training programs,
  - Networking and promotion,
  - Access to equipment for applied scientific research,
  - Access to talents etc.

## 2. Right to participate

2.1. The **technology companies** dealing with developing new or improving existing products, processes, and services that have the right to participate in this Public call are:

- Micro-entities, small, and medium-sized businesses<sup>1</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> Based on article 6 of the Law on accounting ("Sl. glasnik RS", no. 62/2013 and 73/2019 – st. Law), **micro** are the legal entities that do not exceed: a) an average number of employees of 10, b) business income of 700.000 EUR converted to dinars, and c) an average value of business assets (calculated as an arithmetic mean value at the beginning and at the end of the business year) of 350.000 EUR converted to dinars; **small** are the legal entities that do not exceed: a) an average number of employees of 50, b) business income of 8.800.000 EUR converted to dinars, and c) an average value of business assets (calculated as an arithmetic mean value at the beginning and at the end of the business year) of 4.400.000 EUR converted to dinars; **medium** are the legal entities that do not exceed: a) an average number of employees of 250, b) business income of



- Large companies wanting to place their development divisions in STP Niš.

2.2. Domestic and foreign companies from the previous paragraph can participate in this Public call on the condition that:

- Their business suits the purpose of STP Niš (innovations, technology transfer, competition growth, increase in export, and creation of new workplaces);
- Their technical and logistic demands fit the infrastructural capabilities of STP Niš;
- They do business in accordance with the principles of social responsibility, gender equality, respecting people with disabilities, and environment protection;
- They are not subjected to legal proceedings of liquidation and bankruptcy, they have not been permanently or temporarily banned from doing their business, and that they have fulfilled all their obligations regarding taxes and contributions;
- They have been positively doing business for the last three years.
- The business entity needs to have their headquarters or a branch in Niš.

2.3. **Newly created companies** can also answer the public call, on the condition that they can prove:

- the existence of a team with significant entrepreneurial experience and business management skills, as well as references from realized investments / partnerships / first users / buyers of their innovative products / services, which places them in the group of companies whose development phase exceeds the incubation program implemented within STP Niš.

2.4. **Large foreign companies** that wish to place their development divisions in STP Niš will be obligated to register either a legal entity as its founder, a branch, or an agency for a foreign legal entity in Serbia, in accordance with current regulations in the field of commercial law and registration of business entities before the authorized register, before gaining the status of an STP Niš member, that is, before moving into STP Niš.

### 3. Manner of using services

3.1. The service package from article 1 of this Public call is put to use for a set time period of 3 (three) years with the possibility of extending the contract.

35.000.000 EUR converted to dinars, and c) an average value of business assets (calculated as an arithmetic mean value at the beginning and at the end of the business year) of 17.500.000 EUR converted to dinars; **large** are the legal entities that exceed both of the criteria stated with the small and medium businesses.



3.2. The price of a part of the membership which relates to the use of business space during the first three calendar years (until 12.31.2022.) will be 7 Euros per m<sup>2</sup> per month excluding tax for unfurnished, or 10 Euros per m<sup>2</sup> excluding tax for a furnished part of the business space.

Aside from the part for using business space, the membership fee will also encompass a part of the real overhead costs calculated proportionally to the business space surface area<sup>2</sup> and a part of the real costs for electricity consumption and heating/cooling. Payments are made in dinar equivalent according to the middle exchange rate of the National Bank of Serbia on the first day of the invoice month.

The price for the years after this will be determined according to market trends, although the price cannot be increased by more than 10% yearly.

3.3. Of the total available building capacity dedicated to technology development companies, which is 3.409 m<sup>2</sup> arranged across the I, II, and III floor of the building, this public call makes 60% available.

The committee formed by STP Niš for evaluating applications can, in the case of a large number of exceptionally high quality applications by technology development companies, make up to 80% of the available space available.

If need be, STP Niš can also make a part of the space intended for technology development companies on the first floor, with the surface area of 524 m<sup>2</sup>, available in part or in full to startup companies under the conditions defined for this group of members.

The space intended for technology development companies is structured as follows:

- The 1<sup>st</sup> floor has up to 524 m<sup>2</sup> of furnished dedicated space in total (if need be, this space can be dedicated to the development of startup companies);
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor has around 1764 m<sup>2</sup> of unfurnished dedicated space in total;
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor has around 1121 m<sup>2</sup> of unfurnished dedicated space in total.

The business space is going to be filled successively in accordance with the existing spaces of the complex and technical capacities, and the maximum surface area a member can take is 1150 m<sup>2</sup> of office space. The maximum available space per employee at the end of the Contract period is limited to a maximum of 10 m<sup>2</sup> of office space per employee.

<sup>2</sup> Overhead costs include maintenance costs, common and utility costs, security costs, cleaning costs, and the like.



3.4. A part of the expert services – consulting and other, from article 1 of this Public call, will be included in the part of the membership fee for STP Niš members regarding the use of business space, while the price for other expert services will be determined in accordance with the stated needs of companies.

#### 4. Virtual membership

Potential users of STP Niš services interested in the access to infrastructural and expert services provided by STP Niš without using business space can become STP Niš members by submitting the application at the public call.

The virtual membership service package price is 50 Euros per month converted to dinars according to the middle exchange rate of the National Bank of Serbia for micro-entities and small-sized businesses, 100 Euros per month for middle-sized businesses, and 250 Euros per month for large business entities, with the obligation of payment on the first day of the invoice month.

#### 5. Participation right

Evaluation of the applications received will be performed in accordance with the following **groups of criteria**.

5.1. Technological profile – Excerpt from the Smart Specialization Strategy of the Republic of Serbia and the Strategy for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2025.

Businesses active in the fields defined in Smart Specialization Strategy Serbia (4S) and the Strategy for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2025 (Strategy) have priority during the selection. By directing resources towards the fields that have the largest competition and innovation potential, 4S helps domestic economy use its potentials more efficiently and better position itself on global markets and international value chains. By developing innovations, science, and technologies in the identified priority fields, 4S creates prerequisites for a sustainable growth of the Republic of Serbia, while supporting the structural diversification of Serbian economy at the same time.

The general vision of Smart Specialization Strategy Serbia is: Serbia creates innovations – a smart and creative Republic of Serbia highly competitive in the world and recognized for its innovations based on knowledge, partnerships in the domestic ecosystem, and creativity of individuals in the fields of:

- Sustainable high-tech production of high added value food for the future



- Sophisticated software solutions for the global market and
- Intersector grounded industrial innovations.

Final priority fields of Smart Specialization Strategy Serbia are the following:

1. Food for the future:
  - I. High tech agriculture,
  - II. Products with added value,
  - III. Sustainable food production chain;
2. Information and communication technologies:
  - I. Development of tailor-made software,
  - II. Development of one's own products;
3. Machines and production processes of the future:
  - I. Machines for general and specific purposes,
  - II. Information in service of smart control-industry 4.0,
  - III. Smart components and tools;
4. Creative industries:
  - I. Creative audio-visual production,
  - II. Video games and interactive media,
  - III. Smart containers.

4S points out that the Region of Southern and Eastern Serbia is the poorest region of the Republic of Serbia with the lowest average net income and the highest unemployment rate. The region is characterized by strong agriculture, textile, and rubber industry with a good scientific basis in electrical engineering.

The general goal of the Strategy is the use of artificial intelligence for the functions of economic growth, employment, and better quality of life. Particular goals of the Strategy are: 1. Education development directed towards the needs of modern society and economy conditioned by the advancement of artificial intelligence, 2. Development of science and innovations in the field of artificial intelligence and their application, 3. Development of an economy based on artificial intelligence (where it is a key competence and where it is used in different branches of industry), 4. Improvement of assumptions for the development of artificial intelligence and public sector services by applying artificial intelligence, 5. Ethical and safe application of artificial intelligence.



In accordance with the Strategy for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2025, companies and teams doing business in the field of artificial intelligence and contributing to its realization, primarily for particular goals 2 and 3, will have priority during the selection.

Particular goal 2 of the Strategy is the Development of science and innovations in the field of artificial intelligence and its applications. The field of artificial intelligence is in the development phase when problems in the industrial practice whose solving requires a scientific research approach are often faced. The result of that is a significant part of the research being transferred into industry, but also that the industry needs universities and institutes more and more, because scientific research personnel is still primarily developed in an academic surrounding.

Particular goal 3 of the Strategy is the Development of the economy based on artificial intelligence. One of the main issues in supporting the development of business entities in the field of artificial intelligence is the balance between supporting the development of startup and small companies and attracting investments from large companies. Companies dealing with artificial intelligence that work in Serbia are rarely each other's competition on the market when it comes to products, but they are competing on the job market where they fight for the same talented experts. Thus, it is important that the measures in this goal's scope do not create unjust advantages for certain companies on the job market. Human resources in the field of artificial intelligence are a key factor of economy development in that field. Aside from developing human resources through education and participation in scientific research, they also develop through their careers. That is why, aside from the company's involvement in macroeconomic indicators like gross national product and export, it is important to take the influence on the competency of experts who pass through the company into account as well.

5.1.1. Business societies from article 2 of this call have the right to participate, and companies active in the fields defined as priority in Strategy for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2025 will take priority (more details in 5.1):

5.1.2. Business societies will be graded based on how compatible their field of work is with the sectors in the call, as well as based on the technological intensity of the company (high-tech, middle-tech, low-tech).

## 5.2. Innovation

Innovation will be measured according to the degree of development and commercialization of new products, processes, and services, based on previous references of the company, the suggested team, as well as according to existing and planned connections and cooperation of the business society with the scientific research sector.



### 5.3. Export potential

This Public call will give priority to companies who are oriented towards export and foreign markets. Companies will be given points based on whether they are dominantly oriented towards the domestic market with export potential, as well as whether they are already doing exports with the goal of further expanding the market which they will prove via documentation submitted for the call.

### 5.4. Job creation potential

Companies will be graded based on the number of jobs created, especially jobs with faculty degrees, where the priority in selection will be given to those who can create new jobs, especially over 20 high-tech jobs in the next three years.

### 5.5. Predicted income growth

The existing and projected income growth of companies will be evaluated, especially compared to the income growth from the development of new innovative products and service.

## 6. Necessary documents

### 6.1. Application via the form defined in this Public call.

### 6.2. Other documents:

The application must contain: a filled-in form, regular yearly financial reports for the previous three years, references from companies for developing new/improved products, processes and services, and biographies of key team members, as well as a statement on accepting the terms of the call.

STP Niš retains the right to request additional clarification of submitted documents.

In the case of newly founded companies, the application must contain: a filled-in form (introduction and parts 4 and 5), references (information on realized investments/partnerships/first users/buyers), and biographies, as well as a statement on accepting the terms of the call.

6.3. All information stated in the forms and documents submitted for the Public call will be treated as top secret, aside from publicly available information.

6.4. None of the incomplete and belated applications will be considered; that is, they will be considered in the next term.



6.5. The selected member is obligated to sign the Proposed Contract within 15 days of receiving it; otherwise, it will be assumed that they gave up on applying.

## 7. Manner of submitting applications and deadlines for carrying out the Public call

### 7.1. Manner of submitting applications

Applications for participating in the Public call are submitted both electronically and in writing. The electronic application is submitted via the email address [javnipoziv@ntp.rs](mailto:javnipoziv@ntp.rs). All information regarding the application can be found on the internet address [www.ntp.rs](http://www.ntp.rs), where one can also download the application forms, both electronic and in writing. Interested parties can submit questions regarding the public call to the email address [info@ntp.rs](mailto:info@ntp.rs).

Written applications are submitted right before signing the Contract with STP Niš at the latest. Written applications can also be sent in a properly sealed envelope, registered to the address: Science and Technology Park Niš, Aleksandar Medvedev Street 66, 18115 Niš, with the note "Application for the Public call for technology development companies for STP Niš membership".

### 7.2. Public call duration

The public call for receiving residents defined by this Public call is always open since the day of publishing. Decisions on received applications will be made until the capacity is filled. The date for the first decisions about received applications is defined in point 7.3, and following decisions will be made when necessary, at least once per quarter, mostly once a month.

If the candidate who meets all the conditions for signing the Contract gives up on applying, or does not conclude the Contract in due time, the capacities will be filled by the next candidate on the ranking list.

### 7.3. Deadline for delivering program applications

The call was announced on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020. The first cut and evaluation of the received applications will be done on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020, and the second on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020. After finishing the first and second cut, should the intended capacities not be filled, the call remains open, and the cut and evaluation of applications will be organized at least once per quarter, and mostly once a month, until the capacities are full. The application and attached documents are to be sent via the email address [javnipoziv@ntp.rs](mailto:javnipoziv@ntp.rs), and at the address of STP – Aleksandar Medvedev Street 66, 18115 Niš, with the note "Application for the Public call for technology development companies for STP Niš membership".



#### 7.4. Special notes

Having the Republic of Serbia Government Decree on measures during the state of emergency number 110-2515/2020 from 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in mind, the deadlines defined by this Public call will be adjusted according to the activities and recommendations of the Serbian Government depending on the epidemiological situation.

In accordance with everything mentioned, applicants can inspect the STP Niš business space, which is the subject of this call, depending on technical capabilities, with an agreement by announcing it via the email address [info@ntp.rs](mailto:info@ntp.rs).

### 8. Assessment process

8.1. Assessment of the applications received will be conducted by an expert Committee appointed by STP Niš.

The decision on the final results will be posted on the official STP Niš website. The scheduled legal deadline for complaints about the Decision of STP Niš is 8 days since posting the call results. The complaint is to be sent to STP Niš at the address:

- Science and Technology Park Niš, Aleksandar Medvedev Street 66, 18115 Niš, with the note "Complaint about the Public call for technology development companies for STP Niš membership results".

You can get information and send questions about the Public call by sending an inquiry to the address [info@ntp.rs](mailto:info@ntp.rs).

8.2. In the process of assessing received applications, the expert Committee will adhere to the following criteria:

- When grading, there will be an interview with the candidates,
- Administrative suitability,
- Compliance of the program with set goals,
- The value of the final product/service/company level,
- Ranking according to the grading criteria.

Grading criteria	No. of points



1. Technological profile	20
Companies and entrepreneurs from chapter II of this call have the right to participate, and companies active in the fields defined by Smart Specialization Strategy Serbia take priority during selection (chapter 5)	10
Companies and entrepreneurs will be graded based on how compatible their field of work is with the sectors favored in the call, as well as based on the technological intensity of the company (high-tech, middle-tech, low-tech).	10
2. Innovation	30
Innovation will be measured according to the degree of development and commercialization of new products, processes, and services, based on previous references of the suggested team's company.	20
Existing and planned connections and cooperation of the company / entrepreneur with the scientific research sector will be specially analyzed.	10
3. Export potential	20
This Public call will give priority to companies / entrepreneurs who are oriented towards export and foreign markets. Companies will be given points based on whether they are dominantly oriented towards the domestic market with export potential, as well as whether they are already doing exports with the goal of further expanding the market which they will prove via documentation submitted for the call.	
4. Job creation potential and Team capacity	20
Companies and entrepreneurs will be graded based on the number of jobs created, especially jobs with faculty degrees, where the priority in selection will be given to those who can create new jobs, especially over 20 high-tech jobs in the next three years.	10
Capability and experience of the team for realizing a project.	10
5. Predicted income growth	10



The existing and projected income growth of companies and entrepreneurs will be evaluated, especially compared to the income growth from the development of new innovative products and services.