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## **THE SMARTX ACCELERATOR PROGRAMME COMPLETES FIRST FUNDING CALL European Smart Textiles Accelerator aims to fund up to 40 smart textile innovators by 2022**

PARIS, MARCH 23, 2020 -- SmartX Europe, short for the European Smart Textiles Accelerator, has closed its first call for funding. The call was met with a high level of interest and enthusiasm from the textile and technology industries and resulted in 35 eligible project proposals.

This 3-year programme will support up to 40 smart textile projects with a remarkable total budget of €2.4 million (€60,000 per project) and one-year of free coaching to help startups and small-to-midsize enterprises (SMEs) monitor the development of their innovation and get the contacts they need. SmartX has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, under grant agreement No. 824825.

The eligible proposals came from 54 SME applicants in 15 different EU and H2020-associated countries, with Germany, Italy and Sweden in the lead. 22 projects were submitted by single SMEs and the remaining 13 by SME partnerships. Most address the protection or consumer health markets, while the rest are divided among sports, medical and industrial applications.

During the call, a rigorous eligibility process was implemented based on several criteria: the location in the Horizon 2020 eligible area, presence of textile and electronic components in the innovation project, and intended target markets.

The selection process involving 12 experts on the SmartX Selection Committee will take place in the coming weeks. Selection criteria will include the business growth potential of the SMEs and start-ups, technical and operational excellence in addition to innovation capacity, smart textiles market acceleration potential, and manufacturing value chain impact.

The first funded projects are expected to start in May 2020. The second call for Expressions of Interest will open at the same time.

“The world market for smart textiles and textile wearables has now entered a rapid growth phase. It should reach \$3 billion by 2024.” says Lutz Walter, Secretary General of Textile ETP, The European Technology Platform for the Future of Textiles and Clothing, one of SmartX partners and the programme coordinator. “With a growth rate which is 80 times faster than the whole textile market, smart textiles are now acknowledged as a top priority by European textile industry and by EU research authorities.”

## About SmartX

SmartX, the European Smart Textiles Accelerator, is an acceleration platform for innovative smart textile projects, driven by a cluster of thirteen European partners from the textile and technology industries. The 3-year programme will help support up to 40 individual projects with a total budget of €2.4 million. SmartX has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, under grant agreement No. 824825.

SmartX intends to boost smart textiles innovation to develop an end-to-end smart textiles manufacturing value chain in Europe and help drive promising prototypes faster to market. The underlying long-term objective of the programme is to build a professional and sustainable community, bringing together previously dispersed SMEs and fostering greater interaction and collaboration within the European smart textile industry.

More information can be found in this video and on the SmartX website.

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