

Wide range of opportunities - NRDI Office to encourage innovative businesses at the EU Funds 2017 conference

Sustainability, marketable ideas, own innovation funds, long-term budget planning. These are the pillars on which domestic businesses should build their applications for RDI funds, primarily because from 2020 the focus will shift from the current abundance of domestic sources to EU funds that can be won in international competition – said Zsolt Monszpart, Vice President for Innovation and General Affairs of the NRDI Office to Portfolio.hu at the EU Funds 2017 thematic conference. To make this trend clear to stakeholders, the NRDI Office invited to the conference the heads of some of the domestic businesses which successfully applied for funding under the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme. They gave an account of their experience at a round table discussion, explaining how their funded H2020 projects boosted their business and interconnected them to the global market.

In the 2014–2020 programming period Hungary has access to a total budget of HUF 750 billion (EUR 2.5 billion) for research, development and innovation projects. Funding decisions have already been made in respect of HUF 340 billion (EUR 1.1 billion) and further HUF 300 billion will be awarded later on this year. In cooperation with Portfolio.hu, the NRDI Office organised two thematic debates at the conference primarily to promote the effective, proper, sustainable and transparent application practices of innovative businesses and to provide them with useful advice. In the panel discussion titled *“When there is an abundance of sources – Experiences inside and outside”*, Zsolt Monszpart shared his experience on the application activities and success rates of innovative businesses, best practices and typical shortcomings of applicants while running for EU funds.

At the conference Szonja Csuzdi, Head of Department of International Affairs of the NRDI Office presented the system and opportunities of direct EU funds and then joined the panel discussion titled *“Horizon 2020 winners’ experiences and the role of the NRDI Office”* where she exchanged views with the representatives of Hungarian businesses awarded in the Horizon 2020 Programme, on the forward-looking and professional application practices, and on how the winning businesses contributed to enhancing Hungary’s economic competitiveness.

The discussion was attended by Csaba Mészáros, president and owner of the Evopro Holding, Dr Márton Beck, CFO of Femtonics and Dr Pál Varga, Telecommunications Division Director at AITIA International. They emphasised the positive experience gained during the application process under the H2020 Programme which opened up new perspectives for them. They all confirmed that besides the grant received it proved also very useful that they had to seek consortium partners to submit their applications, so they joined forces with foreign businesses. This connected them to the international market and through the foreign partners they met innovative technologies which otherwise would have been out of their reach. In addition, the cooperative attitude further strengthened the team spirit and open-mindedness within their companies. The company leaders also stressed: it is essential for innovative domestic businesses to diversify their application activities, that is, in addition to EU funds they should also look for and exploit all possible sources available in the market – this is a key requirement for sustainable operation.

Network of National Contact Points at the NRDI Office

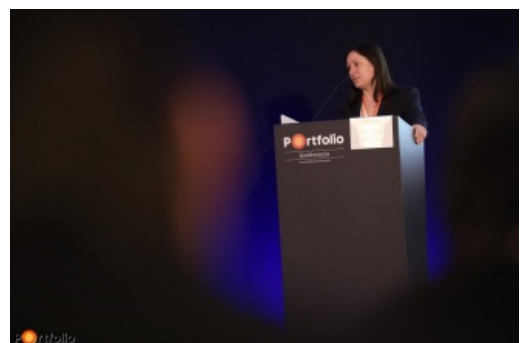
By autumn 2016, more than 437 applicant organisations received direct EU funding worth more than EUR 105 million for developing highly innovative, globally marketable products or services under the Horizon 2020 Programme – the RDI framework programme of the European Union between 2014 and 2020 – promoted by the NRDI Office as a professional contributor. To apply for these direct EU funds, applicants need to find their way through an extensive system of financial and legal rules. This is where [National Contact Points \(NCP\)](#) coordinated by the NRDI Office offers professional assistance to Hungarian applicants.

The NRDI Office’s calendar for H2020 programmes in 2017

In connection with Horizon 2020 calls, this year the NRDI Office organises more than 20 thematic information days and consultation events to facilitate the participation and success rate of domestic stakeholders in the competition for EU funds. At these events the experts of the NRDI Office provide information and practical advice, and they are also ready to answer questions arising throughout the application process. They also encourage sharing experience of others gained from previous applications, which are all useful and essential for a successful application in the competition for directly accessible European funds.



Zsolt Monszpart, Vice President for Innovation and General Affairs of the NRDI Office



Szonja Csuzdi, Head of Department of International Affairs of the NRDI Office



Horizon 2020 winners' experiences and the role of the NRDI Office

Source: portfolio.hu