Call for bids to become host of Big Science Business Forum 2024

On 4-7 October 2022, the second edition of the Big Science Business Forum (BSBF2022, http://www.bsbf2022.org) will be held in Granada, Spain. BSBF2022 will be the second edition of the single one-stop-shop for European companies and other stakeholders to learn about Europe’s Big Science organisations’ future investments and procurements worth 37 billion euros. We plan on over 1000 people participating from over 500 businesses and organisations and more than 200 exhibitors. BSBF2022 will feature over 120 speakers and presentations and a broad media penetration with international media representatives.

BSBF2022 rides on the success of the first edition of the Big Science Business Forum (http://www.bsbf2018.org) which in February 2018 was celebrated in Copenhagen, Denmark. The feedback from the first edition was overwhelmingly positive with 93% of respondents answering that BSBF2018 allowed them to identify potential customers, suppliers or partners, 95% of the respondents in the evaluation being either satisfied or very satisfied with BSBF2018, and 98% of the respondents wanting to participate in a future edition of BSBF. BSBF2022 hopes to meet these expectations and contribute to mature the concept and prospects of the Big Science market.

BSBF2022 is hosted by the Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI, E.P.E), the Spanish innovation agency belonging to the Ministry of Science and Innovation. The congress is organised in a partnership with the following European Big Science organisations: European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), The European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL), European Space Agency (ESA), European Southern Observatory (ESO), The European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF), European Spallation Source (ESS), European X-Ray Free-Electron Laser (European XFEL), Facility for Antiproton and Proton Research in Europe (FAIR), Fusion for Energy (F4E), Institut Laue-Langevin (ILL) and Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO).

Based on the success of BSBF2018 and the expectations of success for BSBF2022, the Big Science organisations of BSBF have now decided to call for bids from interested parties to become the host of the Big Science Business Forum 2024 (BSBF2024) to be held in 2024.

Eligibility

Countries, regions or cities; or local, regional or national consortia in Europe are invited to submit bids to become host.

Bid requirements

The bid should include, at a minimum, the following listed elements:
1. Description of programme

The bid must include a description of the following elements that will constitute the cornerstones of BSBF2024, allowing a mix of methods for establishing dialogue B2C (business to organisation) as well as B2B (business to business):

- Plenary sessions, including high-level level speeches from authorities and DGs of the organisations, and topics of common and general interest.
- Industry-tracked parallel sessions where the upcoming procurements, investments and industrial engagement actions are presented by the Big Science organisations. These parallel sessions are thematically organised technology-wise, trying to avoid sessions which focus on one specific Big Science organisation.
- Exhibition space, allowing both the Big Science organisations, national ILO’s and private companies to exhibit.
- 1-1 meetings, in order to establish B2B and B2C partnerships or strengthen existing ones.

The bid must also include:

- Proposals for a social programme and opportunities for satellite meetings/events and site-visits (to relevant Research Infrastructure);
- Proposed scope, duration and exact timing;
- Considerations regarding strategies for promotion to potential participants and potentially a media strategy;
- A list of substantiated success criteria for BSBF2024 that are both realistic and ambitious and against which the performance can be measured against.
- An analysis of the dates of other events, such as conferences, Big Science organisation committees or other international meetings. The date for BSBF2024 must be set accordingly in order to avoid potential date clashes with these major events.
- In addition, the bidder has the flexibility to propose thematic or national flavours to the event, always taking into account the fact that that BSBF2024 will be a mainly European event with a mainly European-wide audience.

2. Location and venue

The bid must describe the location and demonstrate that the location can accommodate such an event, including:

- Accessibility from all over Europe by air, rail and road
- Hotel facilities in a variety of price ranges
- Proposed conference facilities and venues and their fit to the programme
- Potential link to a big science infrastructure
- Other relevant informed deemed appropriate by the bidder
3. Organisation

The bid must be supported by a strong national or local organisation (e.g. government agency, ILO or region), and must be backed by key national bodies (government, ministry, agency) in the area, if the national body is not the proposed host. The bid must indicate which of these organisations will take the lead. A solid organising capability must be demonstrated in the bid.

The International Organising Committee (IOC), with the future host as chair, will be the main strategic decision making body regarding BSBF2024.

4. Budget and business plan

The financing and resourcing of BSBF2024 rests on three basic sources (with the host invited to identify further sources):

- The selected host’s contribution both in terms of human resources and financial resources to partially cover conference expenditure;
- The Big Science organisations contribution in terms human resources and coverage of travel and accommodation costs for their own staff;
- Income from BSBF2024 in terms of registration and exhibition fees and sponsorships.

The bid must comprise a budget and a business plan, showing the level of local, regional, national funding sources. The bid must demonstrate that the proposed host allocates the required human resources (in-kind) and cash contribution (incl. outlay).

It is stressed that BSBF2024 must be organised as a non-profit event.

5. Letter of support from relevant authority

The bid must include documentation from the DG/CEO of the relevant authority(ies) wishing to host BSBF2024, including a confirmation that the proposed host will provide the needed outlay for expenses, commit both sufficient human and financial resources and that the host will carry the full economic liability of BSBF2024 for any shortfalls.

Deadline

Bids should be sent with the heading “Bid to host BSBF2024” to bsbf2022@cdti.es no later than 31 May 2022 at 12:00 CET.

Evaluation process and criteria

The Big Science organisations will evaluate the expressions of interest on the basis of the following criteria:
1. The quality and content of the proposed programme and its fit to the overall vision and purpose of BSBF2024, including the proposed success criteria;
2. The suitability of the proposed dates, location and venue(s), including a potential connection to a big science infrastructure;
3. The strength and solidity of the proposed host and the local organisation;
4. The soundness of the budget and financial plan, including the resources made available.

Bidders may be asked for additional information to support the bid, and possibly be invited for interviews in a short notice (at their own expense, although probably via videoconference), after which bidders will be informed on the final decision in June 2022.

BSBF2022 in Granada will include, during the closing plenary session, a passing of the torch ceremony to the organiser of the 2024 edition.

The CDTI, E.P.E. will serve as the role of secretariat to the Big Science organisations until the next host is identified. Hence, it is not involved in the decision-making process.

Further information

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On request, the Spanish host of BSBF2022 will make available other information about the upcoming second edition of the congress.
Annex 1: Purpose and background

Big Science organisations rely on industrial suppliers for the construction, maintenance, operation and upgrading of their facilities. This role is typically exercised via public procurements and purchasing, and involves scientific and high-tech technologies and products but also more conventional deliverables. Although Big Science organisations have largely different scientific objectives, it was noted that the characteristics of companies actively engaging with them are very similar. This results in large overlaps between the supply chains of different Big Science organisations. It is within this framework that Big Science turns into big business and the so-called Big Science market emerges.

However, the Big Science market is fragmented by different and often time consuming procurement procedures, technical standards and quality controls, which create market entry challenges for businesses and suppliers. The consequence is that especially many small-and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), who would otherwise be good business partners for multiple Big Science organisations due to their flexibility and lighter structure, often find the market too difficult to penetrate.

Thus, the vision behind BSBF is to provide an important stepping stone towards establishing a stronger, more transparent and efficient Big Science market in Europe, minimising entry barriers/costs for industrial suppliers and therefore maximising the competition to secure cost effectiveness and the positive impact of Big Science spending on European industrial competitiveness. BSBF aspires to be Europe’s one-stop-shop on the Big Science market and an important contribution to the sustainability of Big Science facilities, for the benefit of both Big Science and businesses.

Thus Big Science Organisations that primarily have an interest in addressing the European industry as end users of the facility are not targeted. The focus of BSBF is industrial supplies to Big Science – not industrial use of Big Science.