



VIDA
value-added innovation
in food chains

Guide for applicants

Validation Voucher

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the European Union

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1 Introduction

Climate change and the growth of the global population are both having a massive impact on food, fresh water and energy resources. Food production and processing use large amounts of water and energy and thus face many challenges regarding consumption, measurement, management, quality control and treatment within the different process steps.

Consequently, resource efficiency, i.e. the efficient use of raw materials, water and energy are part of the sustainability strategies of all companies in the agrifood value chains. Key enabling technologies (KET ¹, i.e. microtechnology, nanotechnology, industrial biotechnology, advanced materials, photonics, and advanced manufacturing technologies) provide diverse potentials to tackle the challenges of minimizing resource consumption.

VIDA – Value added Innovation in food chAins² aims to accelerate the implementation of new solutions in the food sector which improve the usage of water and energy with the ambition to reduce losses and consumption. VIDA has three different funding schemes to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) seeking new resource efficient solutions.

The **Validation Voucher** (VV) scheme provides in-kind and/or financial support to SME in the food, water, energy or KET-sector to get technology validated to strengthen their pitch and to convince the prospective users of the technology. The following text guides through the process of applying for funding. Reference is made to the 'VIDA Terms and Conditions'.

1.1 VIDA partners

 <p>Centre of Expertise Water Technology www.cew.nl</p>	 <p>Food-Processing Initiative www.foodprocessing.de</p>
 <p>Water Alliance www.wateralliance.nl</p>	 <p>Lombardy Energy Cleantech Cluster www.energycluster.it</p>
 <p>Aragon Food Cluster www.aragonalimentacion.com</p>	 <p>Nanoprogress z.s.p.o. www.nanoprogress.eu</p>
 <p>ZINNAE www.zinnae.org</p>	 <p>Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação http://www.spi.pt</p>
 <p>BalticNet-PlasmaTec www.balticnet-plasmatec.org</p>	 <p>CLEAN (CLN) www.cleancluster.dk</p>

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/policy/key-enabling-technologies_en

² VIDA project has received funding from the European Union's H2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement n° 777795. The consortium is organized by 10 cluster management organizations from 7 European countries.

1.2 Contact partner (Coordinator)

The details of the VIDA coordinator are:

CEW | Tom Vereijken | Oostergoweg 9, 8911 MA Leeuwarden, Netherlands

Email: info@vidaproject.eu | Phone: +31 58 210 09 19

For further information the VIDA partners can also be contacted (see annex 1).

2 Scope of the Validation Voucher

The Validation Voucher scheme is meant to offer SMEs from the **food, water, energy and KET value chains external, third party validation of their technology or product**. VIDA encourages to accelerate implementation of new processes and business solutions and facilitate cooperation and technology transfer.

Fields of activities that can be funded with the Validation Vouchers:

- Testing functional specification of novel technology solutions
- Validation of quantitative performance levels of novel products
- Validation of water and energy usage
- Validation of qualitative performance levels like removal rates or conversion rates

3 Available Funding Scheme

The applicants can apply for a grant of € 10.000 to max. € 25.000 worth in services covering 100% of the eligible expenses (ref. 'VIDA Terms and Conditions'). The total reserved budget for the VIDA Validation Vouchers is € 250.000.

Applicants are entitled to apply and benefit from more than one VIDA voucher scheme, reaching a total max. funding of € 60.000 per SME, provided that the VIDA projects are executed in line with the '[VIDA Terms and Conditions](#)'.

4 Eligible Activities

This voucher is granting in kind and financial support to small and medium sized enterprises, to get customized validation of their performance claims and targets, executed by third parties (the 'service provider'). The objective of the technology or product must be related to improve the use of water and energy, preferably with the help of KET.

Validation Vouchers can also provide background knowledge needed for other voucher applications, for instance the 'VIDA Demonstration Voucher' (DV). Please refer to the VIDA website for more information (www.vidaproject.eu).

5 Application

5.1 Who can apply?

The Validation Voucher scheme addresses **small and medium-sized enterprises in the food, water, energy and KET supply chain** aiming to demonstrate the performance of their technology or product by external validation.

The validation can be performed by (or on behalf of) VIDA partners, the SME and independent research organizations. As such, in this voucher scheme, the applicant will always cooperate with a service provider. [VIDA partners](#) will support the determination of the service providers. The technology or product to be tested needs to be in a TRL* above 5.

**Note: where the text refers to a TRL (technology readiness level), unless otherwise specified the following definitions apply:*

TRL 1 *basic principles observed*

TRL 2 *technology concept formulated*

TRL 3 *experimental proof of concept*

TRL 4 *technology validated in lab*

TRL 5 *technology validated in relevant environment (industrially when KET)*

TRL 6 *technology demonstrated in (industrially when KET) relevant environment*

TRL 7 *system prototype demonstration in operational environment*

TRL 8 *system complete and qualified*

TRL 9 *actual system proven in operational environment (KET: competitive manufacturing)*

5.2 Main requirements for applicants

1. Applicants must declare their SME status in accordance with the SME definition of the European Union³
2. Applicants need to be active in one of the following sectors:
 - a. food production chain,
 - b. water technology supply chain
 - c. energy technology supply chain
 - d. KET supply chain
3. Applicants must declare their financial stability.
4. Applicants must be a member of a VIDA cluster **or** be headquartered in a VIDA territorial scope (see [annex 1](#)).

³ http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en

5.3 Role of service providers

Service providers can be companies, research institutes, universities, consultants etc. related to the [scope of the Validation Voucher](#).

Service providers must be able to demonstrate:

- capabilities and expertise of carrying out the service
- related experiences

Service providers operating in the frame of Validation Vouchers are not restricted to the overall maximum funding threshold and thus can consult in multiple joint VV projects with distinct beneficiaries. Service providers can be partners of the VIDA consortium (see [VIDA Partners](#)).

5.4 Evaluation criteria

In addition to the above-mentioned [main requirements](#) the following award criteria are rated:

1. Technical excellence, feasibility and viability (proposal and service supplier)
 - 1.1. TRL Level: higher TRL levels receive higher awards
 - 1.2. Test Scope: well-defined test scopes receive higher awards
 - 1.3. Test Outline: a clear approach to move the technology to higher TRL levels receive higher awards
 - 1.4. Health and Safety Concerns: adequate and complete documentation to comply with health and safety regulation receive higher awards
 - 1.5. Risk: the methodology for addressing risks identified in the action
2. Innovation
 - 2.1. Innovativeness of the envisaged solution in the target sector: the applicant provides evidence to show the technology is an advancement compared to the best available technology.
 - 2.2. Innovativeness from a value chain perspective: the applicant provides compelling evidence that the technology has potential as a disruptor in the food chain.

To be considered for funding, joint actions must pass a threshold of 60% of the maximum score. To ensure a consistent minimum quality for all award criteria, each sub-criterion needs to score at least half of the points available for that criterion. Reference is made to the 'VIDA Terms and Conditions', in which the applied evaluation criteria are detailed.

5.5 Gender Equality

VIDA seeks a gender balance. Therefore, applicants are invited to take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action. They must aim for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including supervisory and managerial levels, to the extent possible.

5.6 How to apply?

5.6.1 Submission

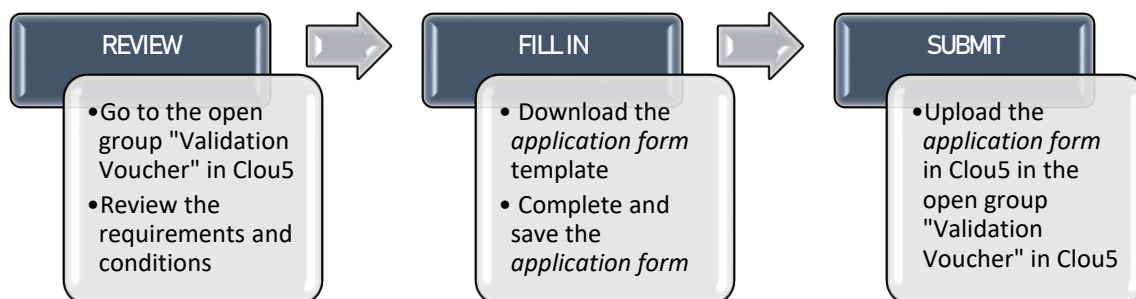


Figure 1 Application scheme

For the review of the procedure and submission of applications for the VV, the applicants can access the open group called "Validation Voucher" via different online sources (i.e. VIDA website <https://vidaproject.eu>, Clou5 <https://clou5.net> VIDA-partner websites, etc.). The desired information can then be selected and reviewed (*guide for applications, application form, terms and conditions*).

To upload the *application form* (pdf file) the applicants can follow a link in the pdf file to submit the *application form*. The uploaded pdf document will be stored on a safe server (compliant to German law), to which only the relevant VIDA Partners will have access.

5.6.2 Assessment and timeline

Submitted applications will be assessed by the Application Review Panel consisting of three neutral VIDA Partners. The evaluation process starts with the assessment of the eligibility of the applicant, according to the criteria set out in the present document (see [Eligible activities](#) and [Main requirements for applicants](#)).

The Validation Voucher scheme will be available from **February 1st, 2019 09.00 hrs CET until January 3rd, 2020 at 17:00 CET**, or until the budget is exhausted. This period might be extended, in case the budget is not exhausted within the call period above. Validation Voucher applications will be evaluated by the Application Review Panel. The cut-off dates for the assessment are the following:

- Cut-off date 1: February 28th, 2019
- Cut-off date 2: May 31st, 2019
- Cut-off date 3: September 30th, 2019
- Cut-off date 4: January 3rd, 2020

The assessment period takes max. 8 weeks starting from the application date. The applicant will receive an email about the outcome of the assessment. The applicant will need to sign a formal contract with the VIDA coordinator (Grant Agreement). The validity of the voucher is 6 months starting from the contract date. Remuneration is further explained in the 'VIDA Terms and Conditions'.

6 Monitoring activities

Within 30 days upon project end: An online **Validation Report** (technical and financial) should be provided by the service provider to the project coordinator.

The forms and templates for this report will be available on Clou5 for download and submission. The following documents are required:

- A short technical and financial report (max. 2 pages) of the granted validation including the justification of expenses.
- A final questionnaire evaluating the performance of the present funding scheme and the specification of SME involved in the reported action.

Note: The applicant must inform the [VIDA coordinator](#) immediately about occurring problems, which may compromise the success of the project.

7 Disclaimer

Purpose: This guide is explaining the VIDA Validation Voucher for information purposes only. No rights can be claimed on the basis of this document. This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission.

Mistakes or inconsistencies: The VIDA Consortium is not responsible for any mistakes or misinterpretations that this text may cause. In the case of inconsistencies, the VIDA Executive Board will determine the steps to be taken, in cooperation with the applicant concerned.

Modification of the VV Guide for Applicants: The VIDA partners, represented by the coordinator are entitled to modify this VV Guide for Applicants (including re-opening/closing dates of the calls, in case of non-granting of funds and/or early depletion of the available funds, or as they see fit) at any time without notice. The current VV Guide for Applicants will be provided on the website: www.vidaproject.eu, always mentioning the version number.

Terms and Conditions: The most recent 'VIDA Terms and Conditions' of the VIDA voucher scheme apply and prevails. These Terms and Conditions can be found on the VIDA website: www.vidaproject.eu or on Clou5: <https://goo.gl/6qrD75>.

Consequential Damages: In no event shall either party be liable to the other or any of its affiliates for any consequential, incidental, indirect, special, punitive or exemplary damages (including, without limitation, lost profits, business or goodwill) suffered or incurred by such other party or its affiliates in connection with this voucher scheme, even if advised of the possibility of such damages.

Annex 1: VIDA clusters and regions

To be eligible for VIDA vouchers the applicant must be:

- member of a VIDA cluster
- or**
- be headquartered in a VIDA territorial scope

For cluster membership information please contact your preferred VIDA cluster.

VIDA clusters

- Clúster para el uso eficiente del agua (www.zinnae.org)
- Clúster Aragonés de Alimentación (www.aragonalimentacion.com)
- BalticNet-PlasmaTec e.V. (www.balticnet-plasmatec.org)
- Food-Processing Initiative e.V. (www.foodprocessing.de)
- Watercampus Leeuwarden (CEW or Wateralliance: www.cew.nl / www.wateralliance.nl)
- Clean cluster (www.cleancluster.dk)
- Lombardy Energy Cleantech Cluster (www.energycluster.it)
- Nanoprogess cluster (www.nanoprogess.eu)

VIDA Territorial scope

- Spain (Aragón region)
- Germany (all regions)
- Denmark (all regions)
- Portugal (all regions)
- Czech Republic (all regions)
- Italy (Lombardy region)
- The Netherlands (all regions)



clúster aragonés de
alimentación



FOOD-PROCESSING
INITIATIVE

