



VIDA

value-added innovation
in food chains

Final evaluation and award of Validation Voucher

VIDA – D4.6. Version 2.0 / June 2020



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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, 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 chAins 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. The Validation Voucher is one of three different funding schemes to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) seeking new resource-efficient solutions.

The Validation Voucher (VV) scheme provides 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.

Fields of activities that could be funded with the ValidationVouchers:

- 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

The call for VV proposals was open from February 1st, 2019 09.00 hrs CET until January 3rd, 2020 at 17:00 CET or until the budget is exhausted. This report summarizes the procedures of the call and the results for all proposals handed in until until January 3rd, 2020. Results of the first half of the call (2nd cut-off date 31st May) were reported in D4.6 “Interim evaluation and award of Validation projects”. The available funding of VIDA ended at January 3rd, 2020 at 17:00 CET.

2. Application

2.1. Who could apply?

The Validation Voucher scheme addressed 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 had to be performed by (or on behalf of) VIDA partners, the SME and independent research organizations. As such, in this voucher scheme, the applicant always had to cooperate with a service provider. VIDA partners supported the determination of the service providers. The technology or product to be tested needed to be in a TRL* between 5 – 8. The TRL level had to be reached and proved before starting the project

*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)

2.2. Main requirements for applicants

1. Applicants had to declare their SME status in accordance with the SME definition of the European Union
2. Applicants needed 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 had to declare their financial stability.
4. Applicants had to be a member of a VIDA cluster or had to be headquartered in a VIDA territorial scope (ref Annex 1, [VIDA Terms and Conditions Version 2.0](#)).

Further information on the conditions and submission, could be found in the [Guide for applicants Version 2.0](#) and [VIDA Terms and Conditions Version 2.0](#).

3. Available Fund and Timeline

The applicants could 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 Version 2.0](#)). The total planned budget for the VIDA Validation Vouchers was € 250.000. Applicants were 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 Version 2.0'.

The Validation Voucher scheme was available from February 1st, 2019 09.00 hrs CET until January 3rd, 2020 at 17:00 CET.

The cut-off dates for the assessment were the following:

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

4. Assessment and Evaluation

4.1. Validation Voucher (VV) Evaluation

The evaluation process started with the assessment of the eligibility of the applicant, according to the criteria set out in main requirements. Validation Voucher proposals were evaluated by the Application Review Panel consisting of neutral VIDA Partners. Within the open call, there are set four cut-off dates for the evaluation of the proposals which were published on [VIDA website](#) and [Clou5](#).

After succeeding the main requirements, the application was reviewed by three members of the Application Review Panel. The scoring system set for the VV voucher is shown in table 2. These points were based on the answers written in each submitted application form.

To be considered for funding, joint actions had to pass a threshold of 60% of the maximum score. To ensure consistent minimum quality for all award criteria, each sub-criterion needed to score at least half of the points available for that criterion.

The applications were assessed as soon as possible upon submission, in any case within 8 weeks from the cut-off date. The applicant received an email about the outcome of the assessment. The successful applicant needed 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 Version 2.0](#).

4.2. VIDA VV – evaluation procedure on CLOU5

The evaluation procedure was managed on CLOU5. The following procedure of evaluation on CLOU5 was proposed with respect to the following targets:

- Easy handling for evaluators
- One procedure fits all applications
- Manageable workload for “VIDA evaluation coordinator”
- Manageable number of “groups” on CLOU5.
- All relevant information per application in one place
- Transparent process, still keeping the privacy for a single evaluation

4.2.1. Step 1: Open up a group “VV evaluation” on CLOU5 per VV application

- A group was opened and the Application Review Panel were invited (members of VIDA partners that are selected for evaluation).

4.2.2. Step 2: Eligibility check

- Information to Regional partners (sponsors) on not eligible applications was sent, reasons for ineligibility were provided.
- Regional partners (sponsors) informed the main applicants & provided follow up support.

4.2.3. Step 3: Access to applications

- The applications were uploaded in VV evaluation group:
 - Each proposal got a file that included the VV proposal and the evaluation template.
 - An overview of applications in an excel file was uploaded at VIDA group.

4.2.4. Step 4: Select evaluators & start evaluation

- Evaluators for the applications were selected.
- Selected VIDA evaluators were informed on the applications to be evaluated (an evaluation phase ending date was created in the calendar)
- Evaluators started evaluation: they downloaded the evaluation template, evaluated the VV (related to the evaluator) and uploaded the filled in evaluation template on Clou5.

4.2.5. Step 5: Analysis of evaluation & ranking

- The evaluations per application were analyzed a feedback to evaluators was given
- Ranking on CLOU5 in the excel file “VV application overview”, see table 1.

Table 1 Analysis of the scoring of the reviewed proposals for the final outcome

Type of application	Avg. Score	Conditions and actions	Outcome
Case A	>75	max deviation 15 points	Passed and funded
Case B	60 - 74	reviewing needed	Evaluators discussion needed to certify quality (outcome: definition as Case A or Case D)
Case C	0 - 80	reviewing needed: one evaluator fails the proposal	Evaluators discussion needed for further explanation (outcome: definition as Case A or Case D)
Case D	<60	failing (review and comment)	Evaluators comments and feedback for applicant (template attached)

4.2.6. Step 6: Decision & action

- For A projects: info and contract to the applicant and to regional sponsor were sent.
- For B projects: sponsors had to found a decision about funding.
 - o discussed and funded = see A projects
 - o discussed, no funding = see C projects
- For C projects: same procedure as for B projects.
- For D projects: the applicant and the regional sponsor were informed about the rejection, advise for alternative programmes or improving was given.

4.2.7. Step 7: Monitoring & follow-up

- A list with funded projects was uploaded on CLOU5 VIDA group (updates on later stage)
- Support to funded applicants was proved (support to the beneficiaries like answering questions, remember the data of report, etc.)
- Support to not-funded applicants was given (alternatives or re-shaping, etc.)

4.2.8. Table 2 Scoring system for the Validation Vouchers

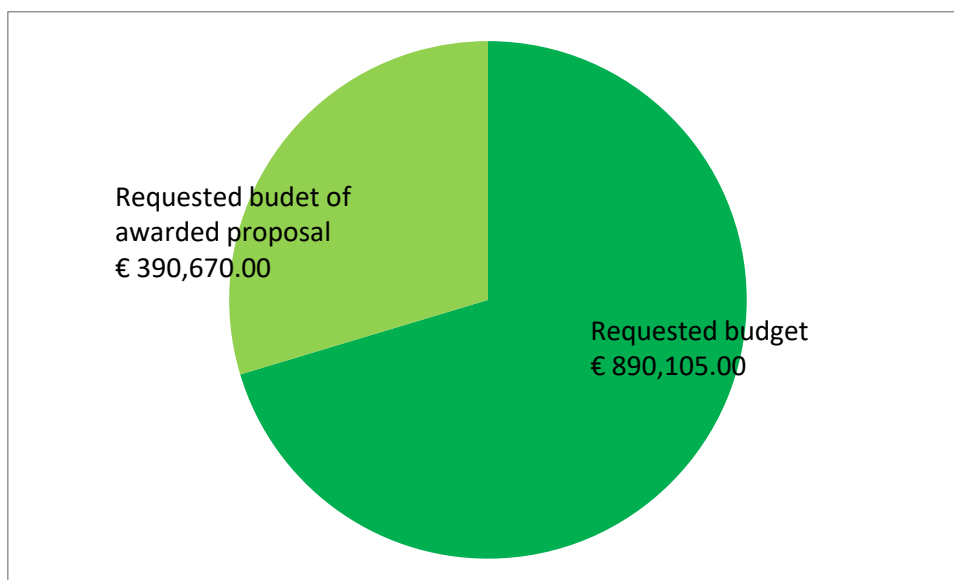
Application Section Number	Description	Question	Weighting	Max.score	Max. Weighted score
1. Technical excellence, feasibility and viability (SME and service supplier)					
1.1 TRL Level	The technology for which you are requesting support must be at a TRL level of 6 or higher	To what extent does the technology meet the TRL level?	2	5	10
1.2 Test Scope	Please submit a test scope, which sets out clear objectives and timescales.	To what extent has the applicant written the aims, requirements and outcomes of the proposal clear?	2	5	10
1.3 Test Outline	Please provide a summary of your test in the selected research organization, pointing out the main key performance indicators and success criteria.	To what extent does the applicant have a clear understanding of the data they currently hold and the testing requirements to advance the technology within TRL 6 – 8?	2	5	10
1.4 Health and Safety Concerns	What are the specific H&S concerns and considerations?	To what extent does the applicant provide adequate documentation to demonstrate H&S compliance?	2	5	10
1.5 Risk	Please describe key risks associated with this test and how they will be managed and mitigated.	To what extent has the applicant identified risks and mitigations for risk within the assessments?	2	5	10
2. Innovation					
2.1 Innovativeness of the envisaged solution in the target sector (VIDA scope)	Please provide details on the innovative elements of your project.	To what extent does the applicant demonstrate that the technology is innovative and relevant in the frame of the VIDA scope (Food, water, energy, KET)?	5	5	25
2.2 Innovativeness from a value chain perspective	Please specify what makes this technology different from the BAT and what benefit could provide to the food value chain.	To what extent does the applicant demonstrate that the technology would be a milestone for the food-value chain?	5	5	25

5. Awarded Validation Projects

38 Validation Voucher proposals, with a total budget request of € 890,105.00 was handed in until the January 3rd, 2020. The budget for VIDA Validation Vouchers, was initially planned € 250.000. As so many excellent proposals with an average score above threshold were handed in, and there was remaining financial support budget, the VIDA consortium discussed and agreed to use the remaining budget to fund 6 more excellent Validation Voucher.

Finally 16 projects with a requested budget amount of € 390,670.00* were granted after an intensive and successful evaluation process carried out with the support of all VIDA consortium members.

Total budget overview of Validation Projects



Topics and scopes of the granted proposals:

- The next-generation plant-based meat analogues
- Efficient drying system as an innovation enabler of high-value biorefineries
- Optimization of water treatment systems using IoT
- Microbiological treatment for fish farming effluents and hydroponic horticulture
- Wrapping films used in the food industry
- Protein source from fungal biomass
- From waste to high-quality fertilizers

*The budget is reviewed as part of the contractual process, deviations between the requested and the approved budget may therefore occur.

- Nanobubble generator for greenhouse applications
- Efficient grain drying system
- Efficient biorefinery for residual streams
- More traceability due to environmental impact in the food value chain
- Transforming brewers spent yeast (BSY)
- Efficient technology for Beta-Aspartyl Dipeptides production
- Efficient cooling system for refrigerated transport of chilled and frozen food
- Valuable compounds from residual stream
- Environmentally friendly water purification system

6. Overview of the awarded validation vouchers

VV	
NO. Funded Proposals	16
NO. Funded SME	16
NO. Cross-Border collaboration	1
NO. Involved Female of grated proposals	19
Requested budget of awarded proposals	€ 390,670.00

One granted project is cross-border with the lead partner and the knowledge provider coming from 2 different countries, namely Denmark and United Kingdom.



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