

Innovation vouchers

Programme guide

OBJECTIVE

This financial aid is provided within a framework of measures implemented to stimulate the economy of the Brussels Capital Region.

The Innovation vouchers are intended to finance ad hoc studies, supporting innovative projects which will be conducted in authorised research centres to benefit small and medium-sized companies in Brussels.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Innovation vouchers are granted on the basis of **Commission Regulation (EC) No 1407/2013** of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to **de minimis** aid.

This Regulation ensures that the total sum of de minimis aid granted to a single beneficiary does not exceed €200,000 over a 3-year period.

This ceiling applies irrespective of the form and objective of the de minimis aid or the (regional or national) subsidising entities.

The beneficiary should note that it **must provide** (to the Region) **complete information on other de minimis aid that it would have potentially received over the course of the 3 previous years**. To do this, the beneficiary must complete the sworn statement annexed in the application form.

More information on de minimis aid [is available here](#).

The conventional R&D aid granted by Innoviris is not affected by this ceiling.

The rules governing Innovation voucher grants are included in the Ordinance of 27 July 2017 aiming to promote research, development, and innovation by granting aids allocated for economic purposes for the benefit of companies and research organisations equated with companies.

ELIGIBLE COMPANIES

The initiative is directed at **small and medium-sized companies** wishing to receive financial aid for completion of a one-off study without necessarily having the personnel or facilities required to conduct it.

Altogether, 3 parties are involved in the Innovation Vouchers initiative:

- 1) Innoviris: Brussels Institute for Research and Innovation that acts as a subsidising authority under the hierarchy of the Ministry of Scientific Research of the Brussels Capital Region
- 2) The Sponsor: the small or medium-sized company that has at least one place of business in the Brussels Capital Region and that submits the aid request. Calculating the size of the company is done in accordance with [Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises](#).
- 3) The Service provider: the recognised research centre

These 3 parties must be identified during submission of the application.

AMOUNT OF FUNDING

This financial aid is limited to €10,000 per calendar year per company and covers a maximum of 75% of the costs excl. VAT related to the study as described in the application. The balance and VAT are at the expense of the Sponsor. Eligible costs are as follows:

- Personnel costs expressed in ½ working days for an engineer (or similar) or a technician, this sum including salaries of personnel, current expenditures inherent to its activity and general operating expenses. These prices are fixed at a flat rate by mutual agreement between Innoviris and the service provider.
- Exceptional operating expenses, provided they are accepted by Innoviris. User fees (lump sum) and operating expenses of certain infrastructures or equipment are included in this category.
- The cost of the instruments and equipment, to the extent and for the duration used for the project, provided they are accepted by Innoviris. When these instruments and this equipment are not used throughout their lifespan in the frame of the project, only the depreciation costs corresponding to the duration of the project, calculated in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, are deemed to be admissible.
- Possible subcontracting costs, provided they are accepted by Innoviris.

The costs of subcontracting and possible exceptional expenses must be provided as quantified estimates in supporting documents.

The financial aid that can be received covers a variable period with a maximum of 15 months. All activities must be exercised during a period covered by the recognition of the service provider.

ELIGIBLE SERVICES

Eligible services are listed below:

Exploration phase

- Tests, calculations and preliminary analyses

Design phase

- IP: analysis of the Freedom to Operate or eligibility for patent
- Implementation of all or some specifications regarding the design and/or adaptation of innovative products, processes and services
- Validation of an innovative process, product or service (development of specific control methods, optimisation and validation of test protocols, implementation of analyses and reviews, etc.)
- Creation of "proof of concept"

Pre-manufacturing phase

- State of the art selection, best suited to specifications (standard of product components, standard of production and manufacturing)
- Production of basic prototypes for the purpose of demonstrations
- Completion of evaluation studies of the new products' life cycle and the impact of innovative processes, products and services
- Support for preparing industrialisation: drafting of specifications, in particular with a view to the design of production flow sheets and the technical installation diagram
- Validation of production costs and estimation of an innovative product's margin

PROCEDURE

In order for an application to be admissible, it must be submitted before the start of the activities.

The application form, provided by Innoviris, shall be completed jointly by the sponsor and the service provider. The application is submitted electronically to Innoviris (funding-request@innoviris.brussels, CC to dlittre@innoviris.brussels). For optimal processing of the application, the message subject line should follow this model:

'[INNOVATION VOUCHERS] [Name of Provider] Application form - NAME OF COMPANY'. E.g.:

'[INNOVATION VOUCHERS] [Centre XYZ] Application form – Company Ltd. '.

A copy of the collaboration agreement between the sponsor and service provider should also be attached to this message. This agreement addresses, among other things, questions about the intellectual property of the results.

If a copy of the model agreement has already been sent at the time of submission of the request for approval, it is not necessary to send another copy unless there have been modifications.

The application shall not be considered admissible unless the form is submitted duly completed and accompanied by the required *de minimis* declaration and a copy of the collaboration agreement. It is evaluated against different criteria, such as matching activities and budget, innovative nature, valorisation prospects or the potential impact of this valorisation on the Region. This analysis will be carried out at Innoviris within 8 working days from the date of reception of the application.

At the end of the study, the service provider must provide Innoviris with the control sheet containing a summary of the results obtained, their critical analysis and the report which is to be sent to the company.

Sponsors may also be required to reveal to Innoviris the results of studies commissioned by them.

PAYMENT OF SUBSIDY

The subsidy payment will be made in one instalment, following reception and confirmation by Innoviris of the control sheet, the report sent to the company, a copy of the invoice issued by the provider to the sponsor, and a debt obligation note issued by the sponsor.

INFORMATION AND FORMS

Any additional information can be obtained through:

Innoviris, Brussels Institute for Research and Innovation
Damien Littré
Chaussée de Charleroi 110
1060 Brussels
Tel: 02/600 50 71 - E-mail: dlittré@innoviris.brussels

The form and regulations are available on the website innoviris.brussels