

Key 2 Circularity

Application Form Investment Vouchers

1. Introduction

The **Key 2 Circularity (K2C) project** aims to support manufacturing Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in their transition towards a circular economy by offering financial support for innovative projects that optimise resource use, extend product lifespans and improve recycling processes.

Initiatives must focus on the **crucial design phase**, targeting at least one of following objectives:

1. Increase resource efficiency by using fewer, existing, or bio-based materials;
2. Extend the use and lifespan of products and materials through designs that allow easy reuse, repair, or refurbishment;
3. Create clean material cycles that enable high-quality recycling.

Financial support is provided through a **K2C Investment Voucher**, covering **up to 50% of the project budget**. Subsidies range from **EUR 10.000 to EUR 40.000 (incl. VAT)**. Each SME can **only once** be approved for a voucher.

The maximum allowed lead time of the project is **9 months**.

To apply for funding through the K2C Investment Voucher, applicants must complete this **online application form**. Please also read the **Subsidy Regulation** to fully understand the eligibility criteria, funding conditions and obligations associated with the voucher. This will ensure your application aligns with the program's requirements and avoids potential delays or rejections.

To save your progress while completing the Application Form and return to it later, please click '**Save**'.

Please note that the application form must be completed in **English**.

The deadline for submitting the completed application form is Thursday, 12 February 2026 at 23h59.

No later than the **end of April 2026**, you will be notified regarding the approval or denial of your application.

While it is not mandatory, we strongly recommend that applicants contact **their regional K2C Project Partner** early in the process. This can help clarify any questions and ensure a smooth and timely submission.

Contact Details

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2. General information – Applicant

2.1 Company

- Company Name:
- VAT Number:
- Company Address:
 - Address Line 1:
 - Address Line 2:
 - City:
 - State / Province / Region:
 - Postal / Zip Code
 - Country:
- Website:
- Key activities:
- Company size < 250 employees: YES / NO
- Bank account details for grant disbursement (IBAN):

2.2 Contact Person:

- Name Contact Person:
- Function:
- Email:
- Phone Number:

3. Project information

3.1 Project Overview

- Project title:
- Brief summary of the project:

- **Primary Circularity Objective(s)** addressed (multiple answers possible):
 - Efficient use of raw materials (reduce, usage bio-based materials, ...)
 - Extended product lifetimes
 - Clean material cycles (for recycling)
 - At which **Technology Readiness Level (TRL)** does your project currently stand?
 - **TRL 5***: Relevant environment testing – Components tested in conditions similar to real-world use
 - **TRL 6**: Prototype demonstration – System or subsystem prototype tested in a relevant environment
 - **TRL 7**: System prototype in operational environment – Near-final version tested in real conditions
 - **TRL 8**: Actual system completed and qualified – Technology proven to work as intended
 - **TRL 9**: Full deployment – Technology is in use and fully operational
- *If TRL5:** explain how the funding will help the SME to grow the project to at least TRL6 (or higher).
- Please note that this project focusses on projects at TRL 6-9. Therefore, projects at TRL6 or above will always be given priority over those at TRL5 in the evaluation process*
- The project focusses on (multiple answers possible):
 - Investment in equipment
 - Investment in business development activities
 - Investment in training program(s)

3.2 Project Details

A. **Relevance & Circularity (max. 30 points)**

1. To what extent does your project advance the circular economy? *(max. 15 points)*
 Please structure your response around the three Primary Circularity Objectives. Explain how your project contributes to at least one of the following goals and contributes to a more sustainable, circular system:
 - a. Efficient use of raw materials
 - b. Extended product lifetimes
 - c. Clean and closed material cycles
2. What is the main innovation in your project? *(max. 10 points)*
 Describe the core innovation your project introduces for your company – whether it involves new materials, enhanced recyclability, increased product longevity, improved efficiency in processes or resource use etc. Explain how this innovation differs from or improves upon current market standards.
3. How will your project inspire or influence circular practices within the Meuse-Rhine Region? *(max. 5 points)*
 Explain how your solution can be scaled or replicated to benefit other companies and/or other actors within your value chain, such as suppliers. Consider whether it could serve as a pilot, demonstration or reference case for others. Mention any planned knowledge-sharing activities, (cross-border) partnerships or visibility efforts.

B. Technical Feasibility (max. 20 points)

1. Provide a concise overview of your project activities, including a timeline. (max. 10 points)

Briefly describe the main activities planned within your project, highlighting key milestones and deliverables. Include an indicative timeline that outlines when each phase or activity is expected to take place, from initiation to completion. Please note that the maximum allowed lead time is 9 months.

2. Explain the technical feasibility of your project. (max. 5 points)

The technical feasibility of the project refers to the practicality and reliability of implementing the proposed solution using existing or proven technologies. For example: has your solution been tested as a prototype, in a pilot project or been validated by a third-party? See TRL-levels above.

3. What are the main technical risks or challenges and how will you mitigate them? (max. 5 points)

Identify any potential risks or uncertainties that could affect the successful implementation of your project. These may include limitations in technology, integration issues, supply chain dependencies, operation constraints etc. Describe the strategies or safeguards you will put in place to manage these risks and ensure project continuity.

C. Environmental Impact (max. 20 points)

1. How does your project integrate sustainable design? (max. 10 points)

Explain how your project incorporates principles of sustainable design to reduce environmental impact and extended product value. Consider addressing following aspects (non-limitative list): repairability, ease of maintenance, ease of disassembly, material efficiency, modularity etc.)?

2. What is the expected environmental impact of your project and how will you measure this? (max. 10 points)

Provide the expected environmental impact (in numbers) and describe the methods you will use to evaluate the environmental benefits of your project. This may include metrics such as energy savings, waste reduction, CO₂-reduction, decreased use of raw materials, lower transport-related emissions etc. Please explain how you intend to measure or estimate these impacts – whether through calculations, monitoring tools or other relevant approaches.

D. Economic Feasibility (max. 20 points)

1. Provide a realistic & well-supported budget breakdown for your project. (max. 10 points)

Present a clear and structured overview of your project's budget using the table below as a template. Break down the expenses by category – such as equipment, business development activities or training program – and include a brief description and the estimated amount for each item.

If your project involves investment in machinery or training programs, please explain how these investments are justified in relation to the expected circular impact. To demonstrate that the expenses are reasonable and aligned with market standards, you may include supporting material such as quotations, benchmark data or references to similar projects.

Expense category	Expense description*	Expenses [€]	Explanation / supporting material
Investment in equipment			
Business development activities			
Training program(s)			

*For example: staff costs, external expertise & service cost, equipment expenditure etc.

2. What is your strategy for ensuring long-term financial sustainability of the project? (max. 10 points)

Describe how your project will remain economically viable beyond the initial funding period. Consider aspects such as revenue generation, cost-efficiency, partnerships, or integration into existing business models.

E. **Team capacity and social impact (max. 10 points)**

1. Describe the expertise of your team and project partners and explain how this enables them to operate new equipment, implement new business strategies or apply training outcomes at TRL 6-9. (max. 5 points)

Highlight relevant skills, experience and technical capabilities that demonstrate your team's readiness to implement and scale the project. Include examples of past work, certifications, or collaborations that support your ability to manage advanced technologies and integrate results effectively.

2. What is the social impact of your project (in terms of training, development of new skills, inclusion of people far from employment, etc.) and how will you implement and evaluate it? (max. 5 points)

Explain the methods you will use to implement these social components and outline how you plan to measure success – such as through KPIs, participant feedback, employment outcomes or certification rates.

4. Deliverables & reporting

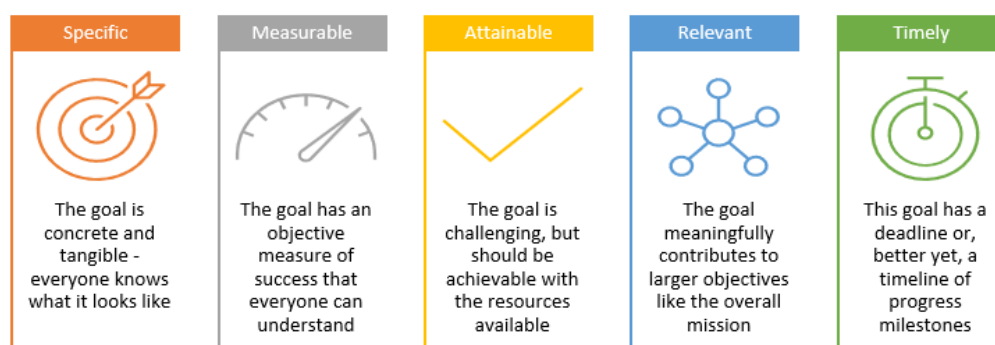
Deliverables must demonstrate progress or validation within **TRL 6-9**. Please indicate how each deliverable contributes to achieving or consolidating this level.

Note: for each successfully completed deliverable, the SME will receive a subsidy covering up to 50% of the proposed costs as outlined in the application. If not all deliverables are achieved, funding will be provided only for those that are completed. The total subsidy across all deliverables is capped at EUR 40.000. Therefore, we strongly recommend to identify **more than one deliverable**. (See also Subsidy Regulation – “4) Eligible costs”)

4.1 Deliverables

For each deliverable, please complete the following:

- **Deliverable #**
 - Description of the deliverable
Follow the SMART-principles (see visual below)



○ **Proof of deliverable:**

Deliverable Type	Verification Method	Explanation
Equipment purchase / investment	Photos or video of the installed equipment + site visit	Visual proof of purchase and commissioning, combined with an on-site visit by a K2C Project Partner.
Process optimization	Project report + on-site demonstration	Brief description of process changes, supported by an on-site check.
Training / capacity building	Certificates (if available) + attendance list	Upload training certificates (if available) and signed attendance list
Product redesign / prototype	Photos/videos of prototype + technical report	Provide visuals and documentation showing the redesigned product or prototype
Circularity improvement results	Before/after documentation + measurable KPIs	Demonstrate impact with clear metrics (e.g. resource savings, improved recyclability etc.)

To ensure a smooth process and reduce administrative burden for SMEs, the verification methods for voucher deliverables are pre-defined (see above). SMEs do not need to choose their own verification methods. These methods demonstrate how, at the end of the project, the completion of each deliverable can be validated.

For anticipated deliverables that fall outside the categories listed in the table above ("other"), please contact your regional K2C Project Partner.

- **Required budget (incl. VAT):**
- **Total subsidy for deliverable:** field is automatically calculated in online form
The subsidy covers 50% of the budget specified in this deliverable. Please note that this is an indicative estimate of the potential subsidy and remains subject to confirmation by the K2C consortium. Furthermore, the total subsidy across all deliverables cannot exceed EUR 40.000.

[+ Add additional deliverables if needed]

Total project expenses:

Total project subsidy (to be approved):

The subsidy covers 50% of the project expenses, with a maximum of EUR 40.000. Please note that this is an indicative estimate of the potential subsidy and remains subject to confirmation by the K2C consortium.

5. Declaration & signature

By signing this form, the undersigned declares:

- To be authorised to sign and submit this Application Form on behalf of their enterprise;
- To have truthfully filled in all information in this Application Form;
- To have taken note of and comply with the Subsidy Regulation current at the time of signing this Application Form;
- That the innovation project has not started before approval of the application;
- To be responsible and liable for the smooth running of the activities in this innovation project and for compliance with the associated conditions and obligations;
- Guarantee the own financial contribution and resources required to realise the defined deliverables;
- That none of the specified costs are funded by other EU or national funds, grants or programs;
- If requested, to cooperate in reports and research purposes, monitoring and evaluations with regard to Key2Circularity;
- If requested, to participate in publications and PR activities of Key2Circularity;
- To have taken note of and to comply with the EU SME definitions;
- To have taken note of and to comply with the De Minimis state aid regulations. I.e. to not have exceeded the De Minimis aid ceiling of €300.000 over the last three years. A self-declaration form, as provided in the template below, is attached to this online application by the applicant;
- Not to be in receivership or under liquidation.

Click [here](#) to download the **template** for the self-declaration form regarding De Minimis aid.

Upload self-declaration De Minimis aid

Signature:

Name:

Date:

This form must be submitted via the online portal before the application deadline (Thursday, 12 February 2026, 23h59).

