

*circular economy*

# OPEN CALL

FOR ADOPTERS

## Guide for Applicants

Circularity Adopters 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call

(1<sup>st</sup> edition 2020)

Open date for proposals: August 3rd, 2020

Deadline: October 30th, 2020 at 17:00 CET (Brussels Local Time)



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## List of names (abbreviations) used in the document

**C-Voucher** - Circularize Value Chains across European Regional Innovation Strategies – is financed by the European Commission within Horizon 2020 Programme (Grant Agreement no 777773), and offers financial and mentoring support to 66 European SMEs transitioning from linear to circular business models. C-Voucher is organizing 4 Open Calls within its timeframe (of those, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call for Adopters will be alive between August 3<sup>rd</sup> and October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020). More information at: <https://C-Voucher.com/>

**Circularity programme (CP)** - the CP have supported the transformation of 12 SMEs towards circular economic business models. Through 9 months acceleration with design thinking, technology and business support. Anchored in 6 Regions, with DiR consultant as main point of contact. The objective is planning and implementing their Circularity solutions.

**Circularity Solution (CS)** - CS can be different things: A digital solution enabling a textile company to manage leasing of their products; or engineering a facility that not only treats wastewater but catalyses local bio economy leverage; or developing an intelligent reusable food container for urban food service.

Though very different, the shared traits of all solutions are:

- They have a strong technical component - either digital, engineering or hybrid technologies
- They support and are anchored in circular business models
- They represent relevant concepts that can inspire and guide other companies

**Adopter SMEs** – a European SME applying in C-Voucher’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call for Adopters, addressing an industrial challenge in one of 5 prioritized domains: Manufacturing, Textile, Blue Growth, Agri-Food or Health.

**Manufacturing** – The branch of manufacture and trade based on the fabrication, processing, or preparation of products from raw materials and commodities. This includes all foods, chemicals, textiles, machines, and equipment. This includes all refined metals and minerals derived from extracted ores. This includes all lumber, wood, and pulp products<sup>1</sup>.

**Textile** – SMEs engaged in the preparation of fibbers and subsequent manufacturing of yarn, thread, braids, twine, and cordage; in manufacturing broad woven fabrics, narrow woven fabrics, knit fabrics, and carpets and rugs from yarn; in dyeing and finishing fibber, yarn, fabrics, and knit apparel; in coating, waterproofing, or otherwise treating fabrics; in the integrated manufacture of knit apparel and other finished articles from yarn; and in the manufacture of felt goods, lace goods, nonwoven fabrics, and miscellaneous textiles.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Standard Industrial classification

<sup>2</sup> Standard Industrial Classification

**Blue growth** – includes all SMEs working in marine and maritime sectors as whole, aquaculture, coastal tourism, blue biotechnology, ocean energy and seabed mining<sup>3</sup>. For the purpose of C-Voucher, we will also consider companies with services and products related with fresh water within the scope of this domain.

**Agri-food** – The Agri-food SMEs includes both the products obtained from the agrarian and fisheries sector for final consumption (Agriculture, livestock, forestry and fishing) and the products manufactured by the food industry (Food and Beverages)<sup>4</sup>.

**Health** – SMEs involved in products and services related to health and medical care are represented in the healthcare sector and further categorized under six main industries. These industries include pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, equipment, distribution, facilities, and managed health care<sup>5</sup>.

**Value Chains Replication Programme** - Adopter SMEs will be invited to Circularity Value Replication Programme (3 months long) that offer them a fixed amount of €15K and the professional services provided by DiRs and business and funding experts, to define their own roadmap to incorporate the Circularity Solution in their processes (Business Case)<sup>6</sup>.

**Designer (Designer-in-Residence, DiR)** - dedicated design expert working 1-on-1 with an Adopter SME. The DiR is responsible for the co-analysis of the SMEs' needs and requirements in the context of the transition from linear to circular value chain.

**Sub-grant Agreement** - legal contract signed between FundingBox Accelerator (as C-Voucher Coordinator, responsible for the organization of the open calls and management of the support for participants) and the SMEs selected to enter the Circularity Value Chains Replication Programme. The contract includes detailed information about the rules of the grant, obligations and applicable legal requirements. More information can be found in Section 4 of this Guide (Sub-Grant Agreement Setup Process) and in the template of the Agreement is available [here](#).

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<sup>3</sup>[https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/blue\\_growth\\_en#:~:text=Blue%20growth%20is%20the%20long,potential%20for%20innovation%20and%20growth](https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/blue_growth_en#:~:text=Blue%20growth%20is%20the%20long,potential%20for%20innovation%20and%20growth).

<sup>4</sup> <http://www3.uah.es/scs/index.php/research-areas/sample-page/food-industry/>

<sup>5</sup> [https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/606/2015/02/SectorOverview\\_HC\\_Spring2014.pdf](https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/606/2015/02/SectorOverview_HC_Spring2014.pdf)

## 1. Overview and summary of the Open Call

This document summarizes the main features of the Second Adopters Open Call under the C-Voucher project, that will be alive from **August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 with a deadline on October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 17:00 CET (Brussels Local Time)**.

With this call, C-Voucher, a European project financed by the European Commission, is looking for 24 end-user SMEs (called Adopters SMEs from now on) from prioritized sectors (Manufacturing, Textile, Blue Growth, Agro-Food and Health) willing to approach the transition towards the circular economy business models. Projects bringing cross-sectoral and cross-border potential will be prioritized and are highly encouraged.

The Adopter SMEs selected to be enrolled in the 3-month programme will be creating Business Cases, allowing them to structure the business model changes and disruption of their current value chains.

The C-Voucher consortium is led by FundingBox Accelerator (FBA) and is composed of 12 partners from 6 European countries (Denmark, Romania, France, Poland, Spain, and Sweden).



## 1.1. What are the prioritized sectors and target applicants?



SMEs end-users from Manufacturing, Blue Growth, Health, Textile and Agri-Food, aiming at getting inspiration from the Circularity Solutions developed within the C-Voucher project or circular building blocks (business models) are welcomed to apply.

This open call is not targeting technology or solutions providers (this are considered Technology Disruptors in the frame of C-Voucher) but companies which are willing to incorporate a technology to circularize their own business.

Even if recently established companies might be eligible to apply for this open call, they are expected to have an appropriate knowledge and experience of the domain and value chain they are part of and they should have income generation.

Those companies which have already taken their first steps to the transformation to circular economy can also be considered within the scope of this open call.

## 1.2. What areas will be prioritized?

C-Voucher is looking for companies willing to approach circular economy transformations in their current linear value chains by taking 1 of the following paths (both equally accepted):

1. Incorporating one of current Circular Solutions developed within C-Voucher: in case that the Applicant's business profile and circular potential is aligned with one of the SMEs under previous or ongoing acceleration Circularity Programmes, the proposal should be inspired by these cases (please see the Circular Solutions section at <https://call-for-adopters.fundingbox.com/>). However, the replication of a successfully developed circular solution into/by other SMEs should be understood as an "inspirational" process. These circular solutions should serve as references for replication and could/should be adapted to the business profile of the adopter SME (belonging to the same sector or other eligible sectors) and to the problem that this SME is facing. Indeed, in order to protect Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) from previous participants, no direct link is guaranteed to be established between the Circular SME owner of the solution and the Adopter SME.

Or

2. If the Applicant’s case goes beyond the already developed Circular Solutions: Adopting one or more of the building blocks for circular economy below and creating a new business perspective based on them:



- Industrial Symbiosis: There are two concepts of industrial symbiosis: (1). a classic concept of material resource flows and (2). a digital-age concept based on knowledge flows across networks.
- Material resource efficiency. It’s the process of reducing a number of material resources needed to produce one unit of a product or service, or simply put as “doing more with less”.
- Renewable energy and energy efficiency. It’s reduction of fossil fuels consumption and curbing GHG emissions (almost 41% of final energy in 2013 was consumed by EU construction sector only). Energy- efficiency measures (i.e. retrofitting) could save up to 75% of energy consumption.
- Biological products. Modern agriculture, mostly dependent on pesticides and fertilizers, came at a price to the environment and to the quality of agricultural products. Annual consumer food waste in the EU reached 47 million tons in 2016, most of which could be avoided.
- Product life cycle extension. The idea is to design products in a way for them to serve longer, repair them, reuse and recycle. Some of the products, from umbrellas to power tools, have been available on the market for several decades. Other newly developed products are progressively following even stricter design constraints.
- Performance economy. It’s “selling goods as services through rent, lease and share business models”, or providing products as services (Stahel, 2016). According to the concept of the performance economy<sup>7</sup>, the number of manufactured units of products will decrease, but the revenue for each unit produced will increase.
- Sharing economy. It entails the “peer-to-peer-based activity of obtaining, giving, or sharing the access to goods and services”. Obviously, people have shared/exchanged products for thousands of years but today’s exchange can take place via the internet on a far larger scale, extending the geographical constraints.
- Platform economy - It’s facilitating information exchange and direct interactions between buyers and sellers on a global scale. It’s not impacting the CE per se, but

<sup>7</sup> This concept is similar to the ‘functional economy’, defined as “the sale of use rather than ownership” (EESC, 2016)



enables CE building blocks (e.g. performance and sharing economies) and offers a bottom-up market approach of B2B, B2C and C2C trade/exchange.

### 1.3. What challenges should be addressed by the projects?

The major challenge within the circular economy approach is answering the question: how to make the operations more resource efficient. This area should be clearly addressed in the applications.

C-Voucher provides a supporting document: catalogue of sector-specific challenges that can be addressed by the Applicants (detailed report on the findings can be found at <https://call-for-adopters.fundingbox.com/>, Section: Guides and Documents).

The catalogue is an inspiration and Applicants are allowed to submit the proposals addressing other actual, current challenges they face in business operations.

A few exemplary challenges - identified by C-Voucher so far, are listed below with respect to given industry areas:

- Blue Growth: lack of alternatives to batteries used for energy storage in buoys, high use of plastic in buoys production, high environmental impact of the maritime industry.
- Textile: issues with the processes of fabric material sorting (lack of automatic solutions), difficulties with estimating the quality of collected used textiles, access to materials (fabric), lack of recycling solutions for fabrics.
- Health: lack of proper handling methods for unused pharmaceuticals (resulting from overproduction, stored in warehouses) and unusable pharmaceuticals (damaged packaging), difficulties in recycling of medical waste.
- Manufacturing: difficulties in recycling mixed materials, access to bio-plastics suitable for manufacturing, lack of solutions for selective disposal and sorting of products, low quality of recycled materials.
- Agri-food: issues with storage and maintenance of by-products (e.g. spent grains), insufficient solutions for waste decomposition, high levels of algae waste production in the European coastal areas.

### 1.4. What happens after the proposals are submitted?

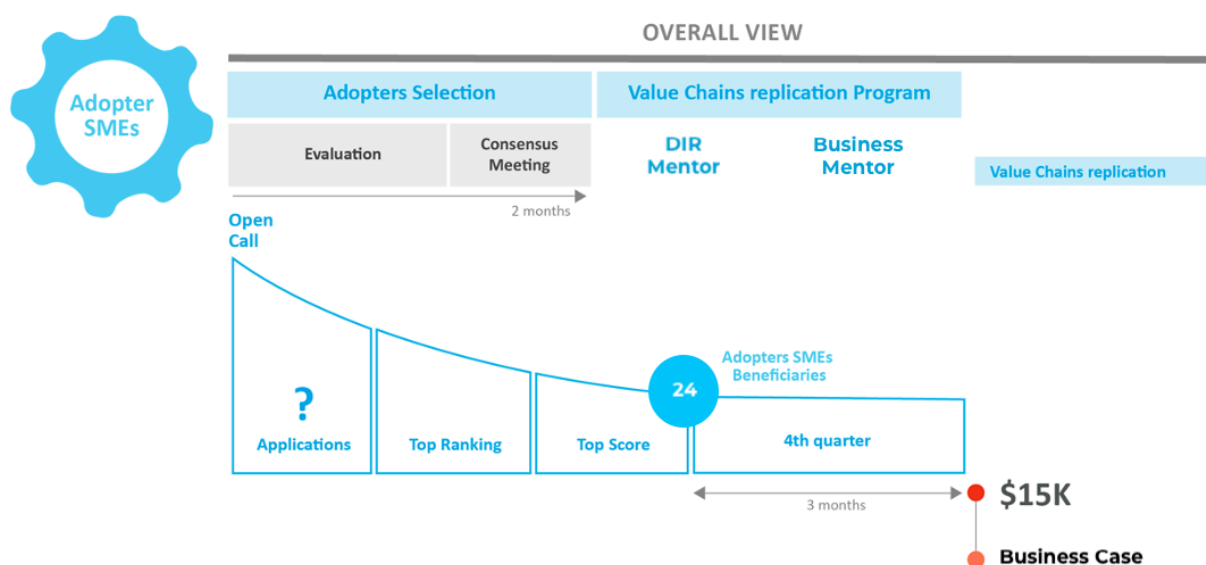
Immediately after the submission **deadline (October 30th, 2020 at 17:00 Brussels Local Time)** is over, the evaluation process begins (as described in detail in Section 4 of this Guide). Experts will evaluate proposals submitted through the online system and score them adequately to the quality of the content presented. The goal of the process is to select 24 SMEs end-user with the highest scores which will be awarded the invitations to the Circularity Value Replication Programme. The

programme will offer a fixed amount of €15.000,00 equity free (so called lump sum) for Circular Business Case creation.

If the number of Eligible proposals is more than 100, a pre-scoring system will be used as described in GfA section 5.2.

### 1.5. What will the Adopter SMEs get from the Circularity Value Replication Programme?

The Circularity Value Replication Programme offer them a fixed amount of €15K in the form of the lump sum (to cover the costs of participation in the programme), the professional services provided by DiRs, to define their own Business Case, allowing potential incorporation of the new circular business models in their companies and the support of Business mentor specialized in public and private funding.



### 1.6. What will the Adopter SMEs have to deliver to successfully go through the Circularity Value Replication Programme?

Each Beneficiary will have to comply with the rules set out in the Sub-Grant Agreement. This document will be a legal basis for the financial support provided by C-Voucher partners to the Adopter SMEs.

The Adopter SMEs will be obliged to participate in the mandatory activities planned such as attendance to all meetings specially designed for them: kick off, intermediary assessment, pitching presentation and submission of the draft and final Circular Business Case within the timeframe of the Programme (3 months) for C-Voucher’s validation prior to the money transfer.

## 2. Eligibility criteria

All Applicants will have to abide to all general requirements described in Sections from 2.1 to 2.10 of this Guide for Applicants in order to be considered eligible for Circularity Value Chain Replication Programme.

### 2.1. Types of Beneficiaries

European SMEs [legal person] legally established in an eligible country as defined in section 2.2.

A SME will be considered as such if it complies with the Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC ([http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en)). As a summary, the criteria which define a SME are:

- Headcount in Annual Work Unit (AWU) less than 250;
- Annual turnover less or equal to €50 million OR annual balance sheet total less or equal to €43 million.

Please note that the figures of partner and linked enterprises should also be considered as stated in the SME user guide. Startups are included in this category if they are incorporated (for detailed information check EU recommendation: [http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en))

### 2.2. Eligible countries

Only SMEs legally established in any of the eligible countries (hereafter collectively identified as the 'Eligible Countries') will be eligible for the Value Chain Replication Programme. The eligible countries include the members of [the European Union](#)<sup>8</sup> and H2020 [Associated Countries](#)<sup>9</sup>.

### 2.3. Types of activities

SMEs active in Health, Blue Growth, Textile, Agri-Food and Manufacturing domains (prioritized sectors), aiming at getting inspiration from the Circularity Solutions developed within C-Voucher or introducing a new, circular business model (based on a circular building block), allowing them to transform their current lineal value chains in circular ones are encouraged to apply.

Circularity Solutions are presented on the call's website at:

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<sup>8</sup> [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries_en). Applicants should note that based on the Withdrawal Agreement, concluded between the EU and UK, which entered into force on 1 February 2020, the transition period has started. During this period the United Kingdom remains a full member of H2020 until 31 December 2020. This means that until the end of 2020 UK entities can receive financial support for their project within the Horizon 2020 programme. Further funding within the H2020 scheme will be possible only if the EU and UK reach an appropriate agreement. If no agreement is reached the UK Government will continue to fund UK entities participation in H2020 in many cases, but this funding is not guaranteed. Therefore UK entities must take into account the risk of not being able to obtain further funding for their participation in the project after 31 December 2020.

<sup>9</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants\\_manual/hi/3cpart/h2020-hi-list-ac\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/3cpart/h2020-hi-list-ac_en.pdf)

<https://call-for-adopters.fundingbox.com/>

The circular business models (building blocks) include the following (more details in Section 1.2):

- Industrial Symbiosis
- Material Resource Efficiency
- RES & Energy Efficiency
- Biological Product
- Product Life Cycle Extension
- Performance economy
- Sharing Economy
- Platform Economy

## 2.4. English language

English is the official language for C-Voucher Open Calls. Proposals must be in English in all its mandatory parts in order to be eligible. If video is submitted with the proposal, English should be used as spoken language, or at least the video must be properly subtitled in English. If any of the parts of the proposal are in any other language, the entire proposal will be rejected.

English is also the only official language during the whole length of the circularity programme. This means that any requested deliverables will be admitted only if submitted in English.

## 2.5. Multiple submissions

Only one proposal per applicant can be submitted to C-Voucher in this open call. Applicants will be asked to confirm that they are not submitting any other proposal to this same Open Call in the Honour Declaration to be accepted before submitting the Application Form. If more than one proposal per applicant is identified by the C-Voucher team, only the first proposal which has been submitted in order of time, will be evaluated.

## 2.6. Submission system

Only proposals submitted through the Open Call submission tool at <https://call-for-adopters.fundingbox.com/> within the Call duration will be accepted. Proposals submitted by any other means, will not be evaluated.

Only the documentation included in the application form and in the attachments to the form will be considered by Evaluators. The attachments can be in the following formats: PDF, PNG, JPG, AVI, mp4, etc. Please note that additional information to support the proposal from the attachments

will not be scored by evaluators. It is the Applicant's responsibility to include all the necessary information in the form.

Data provided should be actual, true and complete and should allow the assessment of the proposal.

## 2.7. Deadline

Only proposals submitted before the deadline will be accepted. After the call closure no additions or changes to received proposals will be taken into account.

**The deadline for this call is October 30, 2020 at 17:00 (Brussels Local Time)**

## 2.8. Absence of conflict of interest

Applicants shall not have any actual or/and potential conflict of interest with the C-Voucher partners (see the full list here <https://c-voucher.com/>). C-Voucher consortium members, their employees and affiliated entities cannot submit applications under this Open Call.

Beneficiaries need to declare their lack of any conflict of interest<sup>10</sup> with C-Voucher partners. This will prevent any situation where the impartial and objective nature of the awarding action is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interest')<sup>11</sup>. Applicants who cannot declare this will not be awarded.

All cases of conflict of interest will be assessed case by case. If you have doubts about the Conflict of Interest please consult with C-Voucher helpdesk.

## 2.9. Other

Each applicant confirms:

- Applicant is not under liquidation or is not an enterprise under difficulty accordingly to the [Commission Regulation No 651/2014, art. 2.18,](#)
- Applicant's Project is based on their original works and going forward any foreseen developments are free from third party rights, or they are clearly stated.
- Applicant is not excluded from the possibility of obtaining EU funding under the provisions of both national and EU law, or by a decision of both national or EU authority.
- Applicant confirmed all statements embodied in the Informed Consent Form, included in this document as [Annex 1.](#)

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<sup>10</sup> Declaration of Honour section in application form

<sup>11</sup> in particular joint management or shares or decision-makers or whose employees also work in C-Voucher partners organization

- The Project is not excluded under the provisions of [article 19 of Regulation \(EU\) No 1291/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013](#) (ethics).

## 2.10. Funding limits

Maximum amount of funding that any beneficiary can receive from C-Voucher throughout all its open calls is € 60,000.

Companies who has already been supported by C-Voucher are only allowed to take part in a different C-Voucher call with a different project or idea up to this funding cap (e.g. a company being supported to the 1st Adopters Open Call and receiving a lump sum of €15,000 can still apply for the second, but a company being supported to the 2nd Circularity Call and receiving a total grant -including vouchers- of €60,000 is not allowed to apply to any other call).

In any case, double funding of any activities is forbidden and acceleration programmes must not overlap in time.

## 3. Financial support and payment conditions

### 3.1. Different types of activities that qualify for financial support

The successful Applicants, after being informed about enrolment into the Value Chain Replication Programme for Adopters in C-Voucher will be working towards the creation of the Circular Business Cases.

These plans will allow envisioning the adoption of circularity building blocks in the companies with the support off a dedicated Designer-in-Residence and Business mentor.

In order to achieve the final goal of the programme – the creation of Business Cases the Beneficiaries can perform the following activities that will be qualifying for financial support:

- researching circular economy business models, concepts, approaches and tools,
- creative works/analysis regarding the adopting the Circularity Solutions – developed within C-Voucher by Circularity SMEs – analysing and detailing the solutions and simulating the adoption at the beneficiaries' business domains,
- elaboration works on the Business Cases (alone or together/as guided by a dedicated Designer-in-Residence),
- creating the final versions of the Business Cases,
- analysing potential next steps in the transformation from linear to circular business models.

### 3.2. Types of costs that can be covered by C-Voucher support

The support provided by C-Voucher project under Value Chain Replication Programme is a €15.000,00 lump sum therefore all costs bore during the preparation of the Business Case, within the Programme duration, aiming at its completion, indispensable for the its creation and final submission are eligible.

### 3.3. Criteria and rules for giving financial support

The financial support will be delivered after the Business Case is submitted in its final version and it is successfully validated by C-Voucher Mentoring Committee<sup>12</sup>.

The successful validation will be confirmed by Mentoring Committee in the final report and only then the money will be transferred to Beneficiaries account.

### 3.4. Services offered under the Value Chain Replication Programme for Adopters

The Value Chain Replication Programme (up to 3 months in total length) offers the following services:

- mentoring services through sessions with a dedicated Designer-in-Residence (an expert supporting the creative phase of the Business Case development).
- support services from business mentors and public and private funding experts in identifying further funding through coaching sessions.

## 4. Preparation and Submission of the proposals

Proposals have to be submitted through the C-Voucher microsite: <https://call-for-adopters.fundingbox.com/>

Applications submitted by any other means will not be considered for funding.

All Applicants will be asked to acknowledge the Informed consent form – in order to submit the full application.

The proposals – submitted through the online platform – will include the following sections:

- Legal and contact information
- Project Description
- (Scored) EXCELLENCE

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<sup>12</sup> Mentoring Committee is a C-Voucher internal body composed by: Vejle Community (VK – as the Committee's leader), Blumorpho (private funding experts) and FundingBox Accelerator + Econet consultants (public funding experts).

- (Scored) IMPACT
- (Scored) IMPLEMENTATION
- (Scored) OTHER (TRANSVERSAL) CRITERIA
- Statistical section (optional)
- Declaration of honour – confirmation of the exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interest to be accepted by the Applicants.
- Processing of personal data – information clause

Additional material, which hasn't been included and specifically requested in the online application form, will not be considered for the evaluation of the proposals. Data not included in the proposal will not be taken into account. The C-Voucher consortium makes its best effort to keep all provided data confidential, however, for the avoidance of doubt, the Applicant is solely responsible to indicate its confidential information as such.

**The Applicants are strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the proposal.** Failure of the proposal to arrive in time for any reason, including extenuating circumstances, will result in rejection of the proposal. The Applicants are solely responsible for verification of the completeness of the form. Data not included in the form will not be taken into account during assessment regardless of the reason for not being included.

## 5. Summary of the evaluation process

The evaluation flow is as follows:

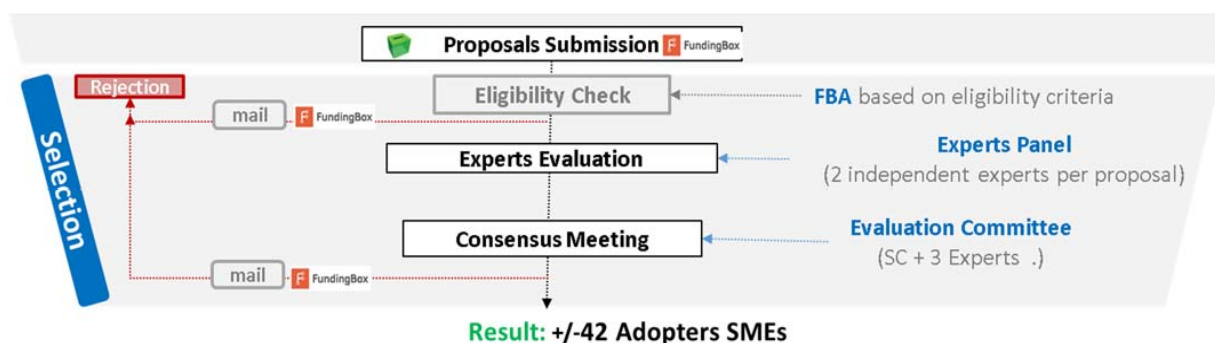


Figure SEQ Figure \\* ARABIC 1 C-voucher Evaluation flow (two OC)

In 2019, C-Voucher selected 18 companies (Adopters) to enter the programme. In 2020, through the 2<sup>nd</sup> open call, another 24 will be admitted. In total, it is planned to support 42 Adopter SMEs.



## 5.1. Eligibility Check

In order to be eligible for evaluation, applications will be checked for compliance with the ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA listed in Section 2 (MANDATORY):

- Type of Activity
- Type of Beneficiary. The SME status is checked after the selection, and before signing the SGA.
- English-language. English is the official language for the open calls.
- Submission system. Be submitted through the Open Call management tool at <https://call-for-adopters.fundingbox.com/>
- Deadline. Applications must be submitted before the closing time and date of the call.
- Absence of conflict of interest. Applicants shall not have any potential conflict of interest with the 'C-Voucher' selection process. All cases of potential conflict of interest will be assessed case by case.
- Eligible countries: Only SMEs legally established in any of the eligible countries.
- Multiple submissions: Only the first proposal which has been submitted in order of time, will be evaluated.
- Funding limits: Companies that received grant in another C-Voucher open call can participate in this call, however the maximum amount of financing that can be received the selected SME in total is €60,000.

As a result, the 'Eligible Applications List' will be produced.

## 5.2. Pre-scoring (optional)

The pre-scoring system will be used only in the case that the number of Eligible Proposals is over 100; if this is the case, the eligible proposals will then be automatically scored by the FundingBox Platform according to the following criteria:

- Innovation Component
- Impact
- Scalability.
- Team Expertise

For each item different options and scores will be defined. Each applicant will select the option that best describes the characteristics of its project in relation to each question. In total, a proposal can get up to 20 points.

The “Filtered List of Applicants” proposed for experts’ evaluation will consist of up to 100 of the top-ranked applications.

Communication to participants: Specific communication will be sent to the applicants eliminated from the process after the pre-scoring. An individual communication will be sent to all participants passing the pre-scoring with specifics on pre-scoring results.

### 5.3. Experts evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated by 2 (two) independent and confidential experts with wide expertise in Circular Economy (DiRs, industry experts, etc.). The experts will be selected from the ‘[Experts Panel](#)’, accordingly with the specific characteristics of the project.

The eligible proposal will be then checked by 2 experts against following parameters:

1. Fit of core business in prioritized Domains [YES/NON-criteria].
2. C-Voucher Circularity Solutions or circular building blocks to be adopted [YES/NON-Criteria, specifying the Solution].
3. Business maturity (in terms of knowledge of the sector and the value chain).
4. Fit of the proposal with the development strategy of the company.
5. Expected impact of the Circularity Solutions in its business and value chain.
6. Organizational capacity to implement it.

Those proposals which are not fulfilling parameters 1 and 2 as per the evaluator’s unanimous assessment will be excluded from subsequent evaluation phases and the assessment of the evaluators for the rest of parameters will be considered during the Consensus Meeting.

In addition, each evaluator will rank the application assigning a score from 0 to 5 for each criterion (points 4 - 6 above and sections EXCELLENCE, IMPACT, IMPLEMENTATION below) and produce an Individual Evaluation Report.

The proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

(1). EXCELLENCE will evaluate:

- **Ambition.** The applicants have to demonstrate to what extent their proposal is going beyond current State of the Art, contributing to development of the new cross-sectoral circularity value chains (e.g. reshaping a part of their current linear model by interacting with technology providers - Disruptors - from different sectors and/or countries). Appropriate consideration of cross-border approaches and involvement of stakeholder and value chain actors’ will be taken into account.
- **Innovation:** applicants should provide information about the level of innovation elements in the process of resources optimization within their market and about the degree of

differentiation that this proposal will bring with respect to current linear models applied in their sector. Applicants should also describe their needs to become a resource-efficient business

(2). IMPACT will analyse:

- Market and Environmental impact: The applicants have to indicate whether the new/improved service/process has a market and environmental potential (e.g. because it solves a specific problem in their value chain related to i.e. waste generation and, at the same time, generates additional/alternative business connections). They should prove if they will enter a new market thanks to their circularity potential and what is their current position on the market.
- Replicability: The applicants have to demonstrate the level of replicability of the new/improved service/process meaning by that it is not addressed to solve a specific problem, but able to be commercialised to solve a structural problem in a specific sector/value chain/etc.

(3). IMPLEMENTATION will consider:

- Team: Applicants' team for the project should be composed of 3-5 members, including also the strategic managers (i.e. CEO, technology director, product expert, logistics expert,).
- Strategy level. The company will have to explain the fit with their development strategy and the business model to be implemented in their circularity project.
- Resources. Applicants are requested to explain about the relevance of C-Voucher support components for their idea. One important aspect is that applicants make clear that they can develop their Business Case with the C-Voucher support, but they will also be asked about their willingness to go ahead with their idea in any case.

The experts score each award criterion on a scale from 0 to 5 (half point scores may be given).

- 0 = Proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information
- 1 = Poor: criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses
- 2 = Fair: proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses
- 3 = Good: proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present
- 4 = Very good: proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present
- 5 = Excellent: proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

The default threshold for individual criteria is 3 out of 5. The default overall threshold, applying to the sum of the three individual scores, is 10. And, the criterion Impact is given a weight of 1.5 to determine the final ranking.

Bias in scoring and the role of a 3rd evaluator:

When is a third evaluator assigned?

When the difference between the score of the two initial evaluators shows a significant discrepancy in two or more of the main criteria (Excellence, Impact and Implementation) OR in the total score per evaluator (average of all criteria, the impact has a weight of 1.5).

What is a significant discrepancy?

There is a significant discrepancy when scores of main criteria (Excellence, Impact and Implementation) by different evaluators show 3 or more points of difference or when the total score per evaluator shows 10 or more points of difference between them.

Transversal criteria such as 'Municipalities involvement in the implementation' 'Environment and low carbon economy contribution', 'Equal Opportunities (gender balance)' and 'Social Impact' will be also considered by evaluators when scoring the proposals. Transversal criteria will be scored from 0 to 2 and added to the total final score.

The result of this phase is a shortlist of SMEs that will be presented for validation/final selection during the Consensus Meeting.

Ties will be solved using the following criteria, in order:

- Impact score and
- Implementation score.

A 'Ranking List' will be elaborated and participants included in that list will pass to the next phase.

#### 5.4. Consensus Meeting

The 'Evaluation Committee' will decide by consensus and based on the ranking gotten as result of the Experts Evaluation, the best proposals to be invited to the Value Replication Programme. A 'Provisional List of finalists' (24 SMEs) will be produced as result of the Consensus Meeting.

#### 5.5. Schedule

The table below presents the indicative dates in which each of the evaluation phases will end and the number of expected applicants that would go through to the next phase.

Evaluation Phases	Name	Time	Approximate Dates	Appts to the next phase (indicative)
Phase 1	Eligibility + pre-scoring	3 days	03/11/2020	Up to 100
Phase 2	Expert Evaluation	4 weeks	02/12/2020	40
Phase 3	Consensus Meeting	1 day	04/12/2020	24
	Finalist Communication	1 day	08/12/2020	24
SGA preparation	Legal Check	2 weeks	23/12/2020	24
	SGA Signature	2 weeks	05/01/2021	24

Table 1 C-Voucher 2<sup>nd</sup> Adopters Open Call schedule

The schedule is based on estimations according to the expected number of proposals received and the actual timing of the consecutive phases may vary.

## 5.6. Sub Grant Agreement Setup Process: Legal Check

To sign a Sub Grant Agreement with the C-Voucher Consortium, the Applicants will be checked against the fulfilment of the legal requirements. The Applicants included in the ‘Provisional List of Finalists’ will have to provide all documentation required to prove their compliance with the Eligibility Criteria described in Section 2.

More specifically, the following documentation will have to be provided:

Information of the status of the beneficiaries:

- SMEs check list. Following a simplified version of the European Commission list. In the event that a participant declares being non-autonomous: the balance sheet and profit and loss account (with annexes) for the last period for upstream and downstream organizations.
- Financial information. It includes the headcount (AWU), balance, profit & loss accounts of the latest closed financial year and the relation, upstream and downstream, of any linked or partner company.
- Legal existence. Company Register, Official Journal or similar, showing the name of the organisation, the legal address and registration number and, if applicable, a copy of a document proving VAT registration (in case the VAT number does not show on the registration extract or its equivalent).
- In cases where either the number of employees or the ownership is not clearly identified: any other supporting documents which demonstrate headcount and ownership such as payroll details, annual reports, national regional, association records, etc.

- Bank identification form.

Confirmation of the following aspects included in the Honour declaration accepted by proposed beneficiaries before submitting the Application Form

Beneficiaries will not take part in another Acceleration Programme while participating in the Value Chain Replication Programme of C-Voucher.

The documentation will have to be provided within deadlines communicated when enlisted in the 'Provisional List of beneficiaries. In case the requested information is not provided in time without clear and reasonable justification, this will directly end the 'Sub-grant Agreement' setup process and projects inside the 'Reserve List' will substitute the failing applicants inside the 'Provisional List of beneficiaries' in order of ranking. Once all these formalities are covered the Consortium (represented by its coordinator FBA) will sign the 'C-Voucher Sub-grant Agreement' with the final beneficiaries. The applicants who sign the SGA will be declared beneficiaries of the 2<sup>nd</sup> C-Voucher Open Call for Adopters.

## 6. Applicants Communication Flow

### 6.1. General communication procedure

The applicants will receive the communications after each step of the evaluation process indicating if they passed to the next phase or not. A communication will be sent to applicants eliminated, including the reasons for the exclusion.

### 6.2. Appeal Procedure

If, at any stage of the evaluation process, the applicant considers that a mistake has been made or that the evaluators have acted unfairly or have failed to comply with the rules of C- Voucher Open Call for Adopters, and that her/his interests have been prejudiced as a result, the following appeal procedures are available.

A complaint should be drawn up in English and submitted by email to: [C-Voucher.helpdesk@fundingbox.com](mailto:C-Voucher.helpdesk@fundingbox.com)

Any complaint made should include:

- Contact details (including postal and e-mail address).
- The subject of the complaint.
- Information and evidence regarding the alleged breach.

Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

Complaints should also be made within five (calendar) days since the evaluation results are presented to the applicants.

As a general rule, the C-Voucher Team will investigate the complaints with a view to arriving at a decision to issue a formal notice or to close the case within no more than seven days from the date of reception of the complaint, provided that all required information has been submitted by the complainant. Where this time limit is exceeded, the C-Voucher Team will inform the complainant by email.

## 7. Obligations of Beneficiaries

Each selected Applicant will sign the 'C-Voucher Sub-Grant Agreement' with the C-Voucher consortium. The funds awarded under the Sub-Grant Agreement are provided directly from the funds of the European Project C-Voucher, and are therefore owned by the European Commission: management of the C-Voucher funds has been transferred to the project partners in C-Voucher via the European Commission Grant Agreement Number 777773.

The 'C-Voucher Sub-Grant Agreement' will include the set of obligations that the beneficiaries have towards the European Commission. It is the task of the beneficiaries to satisfy these obligations and of the C-Voucher consortium partners to inform the beneficiaries about them.

The lump sum will be paid once the 'Business Case' has been completed and validated by the 'Mentoring Committee'.

## 8. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

### 8.1. IPR ownership of the sub-granted projects

The ownership of all IPR created by the beneficiaries, via the C-Voucher funding, will remain with the beneficiaries. Results are owned by the party that generates them. SGA will introduce provisions concerning joint ownership of the results of the sub-granted projects.

### 8.2. Communication obligations

There are no IPR obligations toward the European Commission (EC). Yet, any communication or publication by the beneficiaries related to supported project shall clearly indicate that the project has received funding from the European Union and C-Voucher, therefore displaying the EU logo on all printed and digital material, including websites and press releases. Moreover, beneficiaries will agree that certain information regarding the projects selected for funding, can be used by C-Voucher consortium for communication purposes.

## 9. Support for the Applicants

For more information about the C-Voucher Open Call, please check the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section included at <https://call-for-adopters.fundingbox.com/>

For further information about the Call, in case of any doubts regarding the eligibility rules, the information to be provided in the application form, or if you encountered technical issues or problems with the online submission tool of applications, please contact the Technical Helpdesk email: [c-voucher.helpdesk@fundingbox.com](mailto:c-voucher.helpdesk@fundingbox.com)

When contacting the Technical Helpdesk, please include the following information in your email message:

- your username, telephone number and your email address,
- details of the specific problem (error messages you encountered, bugs descriptions, i.e. if a dropdown list isn't working, etc.),
- screenshots of the problem.

## 10. Applicable law

Any matters not covered by this Guide for Applicants will be governed by Polish law, in particular the provisions of the Polish Civil Code and the law of the European Union.



## Annex 1. Informed consent form

The statements below will be included prior to submission of the online application form.

Declaration of honour on exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interest:

As a representative of the Legal person submitting this proposal, I declare:

a) that the Legal person, that I represent:

1. Is not bankrupt or being wound up, nor having its affairs administered by the courts or has entered into an arrangement with creditors or has suspended business activities or is the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
2. has not been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
3. has not been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify including by decisions of the European Investment Bank and international organisations;
4. complies with its obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which it is established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
5. no persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over it have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity, where such illegal activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;
6. is not subject to an administrative penalty for being guilty of misrepresenting the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in a grant award procedure or another procurement procedure or failing to supply this information, or having been declared to be in serious breach of its obligations under contracts or grants covered by the Union's budget;
7. is not subject to a conflict of interest defined in Section 2.9 of GfA;
8. is not affiliated to any of the C-Voucher consortium partners;
9. is not submitting any other proposal to this same Open Call (2<sup>nd</sup> C-Voucher Open Call);
10. has not made false declarations in supplying the information required, as a condition of participation in the Open Call or does not fail to supply this information.

- b) that the natural persons with power of representation, decision-making or control over the above-mentioned legal entity are not in the situations referred to in 2 and 5 above;
- c) that the Legal person, that I represent:
- is committed to participate in the above-mentioned project;
  - has stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain its activity throughout its participation in the above-mentioned project and to provide any necessary counterpart funding;
  - has or will have the necessary resources as and when needed to carry out its involvement in the above-mentioned project.
- d) on top of that I confirm that:
- I have read and understood the information provided in the Open Call package of documents (Guide for Applicants and FAQ).
  - I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project and my participation via [C-Voucher.helpdesk@fundingbox.com](mailto:C-Voucher.helpdesk@fundingbox.com)
  - I voluntarily agree to participate in the C-Voucher project.
  - I understand that I can withdraw my application at any time without giving reasons and that I will not be penalized for withdrawing nor will I be questioned on why I have withdrawn.
  - I undertake to inform the C-Voucher Team, immediately, if after the date of submission until the end of the evaluation process, any of the exclusion of conflict of interest causes will arise.
- e) I voluntarily agree to be registered at C-Voucher Community at <https://spaces.fundingbox.com/c/C-Voucher> and I understand that I can delete my profile from the above-mentioned Community by informing the C-Voucher Team via [C-Voucher.helpdesk@fundingbox.com](mailto:C-Voucher.helpdesk@fundingbox.com)

## Annex 2. Processing of Personal Data

### CONTROLLER'S IDENTITY AND CONTACT DETAILS

The data controller is FundingBox Accelerator sp. z o.o. (Al. Jerozolimskie 136, 02-305 Warsaw, Poland).

In all matters regarding personal data, you can contact us using the following email address: [privacy@fundingbox.com](mailto:privacy@fundingbox.com).

### PURPOSES, LEGAL BASIS AND PROCESSING PERIOD

The purpose of processing	Legal basis for processing	Period
To run an Open Call and collect data necessary to evaluate applications submitted in the Open Call	The legal basis for processing is the indispensability to implement the legitimate interest of the data controller, consisting in fulfilling the obligations laid down in the Grant Agreement (Article 6 paragraph 1 point f) GDPR in this respect.	6 years from the end of the year in which the Project ended.
To realize the Project goals described in the Grant Agreement (communication, reporting, collaborating with other project partners)	The legal basis for processing is indispensability to implement the legitimate interest of the data controller, consisting in effectively participating in the project and fulfilling the obligations laid down in the Grant Agreement (Article 6 paragraph 1 point f) GDPR in this respect.	6 years from the end of the year in which the Project ended
In order to consider potential complaints	The legal basis for processing is indispensability to implement the legitimate interest of the data controller fulfilling the obligations laid down in the Grant Agreement (Article 6 paragraph 1 point f) GDPR in this respect.	6 years from the end of the year in which the Project ended
In order to possibly establish and enforce claims or defend against them	The legal basis of the processing is the legitimate interest of the data controller consisting in the protection of its rights (Article 6 paragraph 1 point f) GDPR in this respect.	6 years from the end of the year in which the Project ended

### DATA RECEIVERS

Data controller will transfer personal data only to trusted recipients such as entities belonging to the FundingBox's capital group, evaluators, IT service providers, accountants, law firms, postal and courier companies (who process personal data on the controller's behalf).

To realize the Project data can be transferred also to Project Partners (complete list of the project partners is available at the email address: [privacy@fundingbox.com](mailto:privacy@fundingbox.com)), European Commission and other affiliated entities.

### RIGHTS OF DATA SUBJECT

Due to the fact that we process your personal data, you have the right to:

- 1) request access to your personal data,
- 2) demand the rectification of their personal data,
- 3) request to remove or limit the processing of your personal data,
- 4) data portability with respect to the personal data that you have provided to the controller
- 5) complain with the supervisory authority (The President of the Personal Data Protection Office, Warsaw, Poland).

You also have a right to object to processing of your personal data (according to the Article 21 of GDPR).

### INFORMATION ABOUT VOLUNTARY OR OBLIGATORY DATA PROVISION

Providing data is voluntary, although it is necessary to participate in the Open Call. Without providing your data, it is not possible to contact you and evaluate the application.