

## Loans and Guarantees

# PILSEN BUSINESS VOUCHERS

## DETAILS

**COUNTRY:** Poland

**REGION:** Śląskie

**TITLE:** Smarth Path

**PERIOD:** October 2023 - ongoing

**Link:** <https://www.parp.gov.pl/component/grants/grants/sciezka-smart>

## GOALS, RECIPIENTS, BENEFICIARIES

Impact grants for the development and reinforcement of the R&D and innovativeness capacity of SMEs; applied to the introduction of product or process innovations (at least at the national level) and the digitalization and transformation of enterprises in driving development, as well as the internationalization of enterprises and staff growth.

- **Target organizations:** SMEs operating within sectors of the regional smart specialization

The support programme is managed and implemented by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP). No intermediaries are employed.

- **The source of the funding:** European Funds for Modern Economy (Fundusze Europejskie dla Nowoczesnej Gospodarki - FENG)
- **The total amount invested in the support scheme:** 2 112 000 000,00 zł (ca € 491 mln)
- **The geographical coverage:** Poland

## ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Support in the SMART Path can be provided for existing SMEs for the implementation of projects covering:

- conducting research and development work,
- implementing R&D results,
- expanding research infrastructure,
- digital or green transformation of the enterprise,
- and internationalisation of the enterprise and improving staff competences.

There are 7 modules in the programme:

- R&D
- Implementation of the innovation
- R&D infrastructure
- Digitisation
- Greening the company
- Competencies
- Internationalisation.

The project must include at least one of the modules: R&D or implementation of innovation. The remaining modules are optional. The implementation of the modules may be linked to each other or may be implemented independently.

- Eligible cost categories:
- Project staff
- External services (subcontracting)
- Depreciation of apparatus and equipment and buildings
- Property
- Intangible assets
- Supplies (other than fixed assets)
- External services (operating costs)
- Indirect costs (general).

### Obligatory modules (minimum one)

R&D

The implementation of  
the innovation

### Optional modules

R&D infrastructure

Greening the companies

Digitisation

Competencies

Internationalisation

## SUPPORT

Level of co-financing: from 15% to 80% depending on the type of expenditure, the size of the enterprise and the location of the project

Minimum value of eligible costs PLN 3 million (ca. € 0.7 mln) for an implementation of one mandatory module (in case of 2 planned modules, the applicant chooses the module to be financed).

Maximum value of requested aid PLN 50 million

VAT tax is a qualified cost with some exceptions.

IN the R&D module maximum support rates are:

- 70% for long-term assets
- 50% for the advisory and/or consulting services, incl. the services supporting the innovativeness
- 100% for the expenditure for the contract guarantee for the Applicant.

The support can be divided to tranches to lift the financial burden from the beneficiary SME.

## PROCEDURE

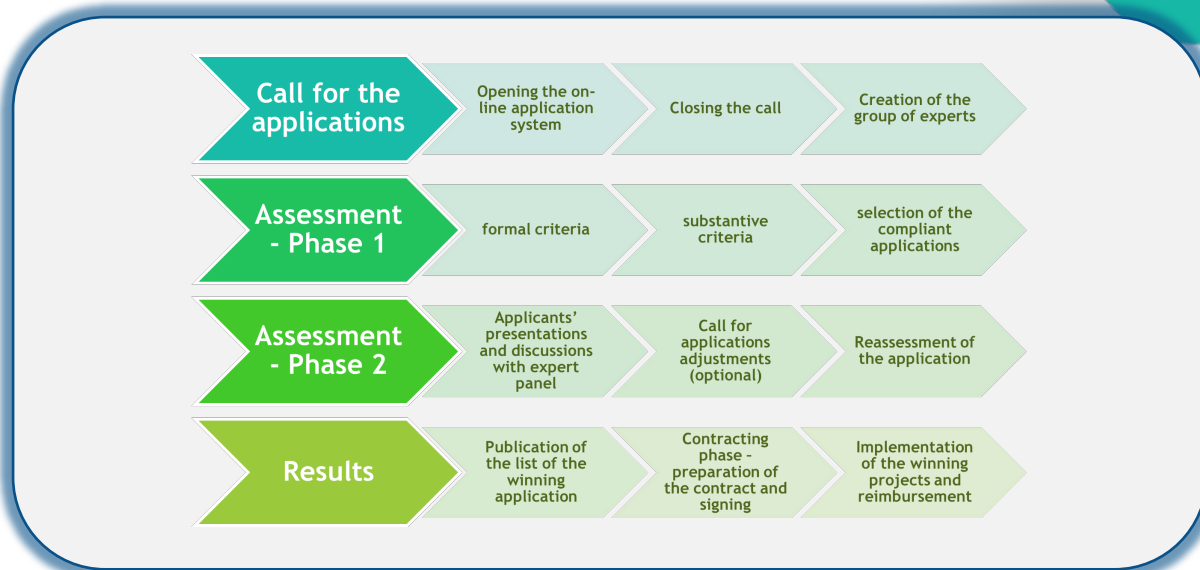
The implementing body (PARP) opens a call for applications. Applicants register in the LSI system created by PARP and fill the application online.

The submitted applications are assessed in 2 phases by various criteria.

The phase 1 is the assessment of the written application for the compliance with the mandatory formal criteria (incl. the status of SME, location, formal conditions, compliance etc.) and scores for the substantive criteria incl. innovativeness. The list of the applications is created by the number of points scored.

The phase 2 is the presentation of the project by the Applicants to the Expert Panel. After the discussion with the Panel Experts, the Applicant may be asked to introduce some adjustments to the Application within 21 days after receiving the call.

The approved applicants sign the contract with PARP. Based on the contract and the implementation of the plan from the application, the support will be granted in the form of the reimbursement of the real expenses. The applicants are obliged to the detailed reporting of the costs carried.



## Status / Results:

The first call for applications was carried in **October 2023**.

- 201 applications were chosen for the financing for the total amount of 1 417 400 831,22 zł (ca. € 330 000 000). Total number of submitted applications: 2641.

The second call was open on **24th June 2024** and closes **24th October 2024**.

## Remarks:

The scheme is easily replicable in various sectors and various sizes of regions. For the target SME groups of the high number of applicants, it should be highly recommended to establish subregions and local or regional operators as an intermediary level.

## CONTACTS

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