

# Funding programme administered by the Vienna Business Agency

## Vienna Planet Fund

### Objectives

Vienna has adopted the goals of achieving climate neutrality by 2040 and becoming climate-resilient. These goals are as necessary as they will be challenging. In addition to political and regulatory measures, achieving these goals will require entrepreneurial developments and initiatives for implementation. The Vienna Planet Fund is intended to instigate and support the development and implementation of products, services and processes that contribute to attainment of these goals and are expected to have a positive and quantifiable climatic and social impact.

The programme is therefore geared in particular towards projects in the following areas designed to achieve the following climate and environmental objectives:

- Reducing emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases
- Improving resource and energy efficiency
- Increasing recyclability/promoting the transition to a circular economy
- Adapting to climate change
- Preventing and minimising environmental pollution
- Restoring and maintaining diversity

The scope of the projects' application and impact need not be restricted to Vienna alone. Instead, geographical scalability would be very welcome in the interests of comprehensive climate protection and in enhancing Vienna as a business location.

Furthermore, in order to maximise the programme's contribution to achievement of the city's goals, this funding programme also targets companies from abroad looking to implement projects in the aforementioned areas in Vienna and with Viennese support.

At the entrepreneurial level, a wide range of measures will be required to achieve the climate objectives. These include:

- Investments in machinery, plant, hardware and software that contribute to process and organisational improvements
- Research and development activities that lead to new products, services, business models and processes

This funding programme shares the general aims (economic effects, focus on innovation and social benefits) of the "Framework Guidelines 24+ on Monetary Economic Promotion of the Vienna Business Agency" ("Framework Guidelines" or "FG").

This programme also addresses the following focus topic listed in the preamble of the Framework Guidelines:

- Climate protection/environmental targets  
Regardless of the intended outcomes, applicants must clearly and plausibly demonstrate how the topic of climate protection is incorporated in the planning and implementation of their project. For the purposes of the objectives set out above, the submitted projects must contribute directly to climate protection.

## Target group

The programme is aimed at entrepreneurs from all economic sectors who are planning to implement a project in Vienna that corresponds to the objectives listed above. It explicitly aims to attract applications from companies looking to settle in Vienna, set up a long-term establishment in the city and implement the project from this Viennese establishment.

With regard to partnership-based funding applications, universities, technical colleges, associations, non-university research institutions and other legal entities (pursuant to Section 2 of the Framework Guidelines) from the social, research and education sector are also eligible for funding, subject to the condition that the lead partner is an existing enterprise or an enterprise being established in Vienna.

## Eligible projects

Projects are considered eligible if their implementation is likely to make a direct contribution to the achievement of climate targets. Applications must include a tangible representation of this contribution and quantify it in as much detail as possible. There are no restrictions regarding the economic sectors in which applicants must operate. Similarly, pursuant to the list of topics under “Objectives”, projects are eligible for funding regardless of whether they relate to investment, development or other entrepreneurial activities.

The projects should meet a minimum threshold of complexity, represent a reasonable, subjective innovation for the enterprise applying for funding and must not simply be investments to replace used or defective systems.

## Key information about the funding programme

The following table provides an overview of key information about the funding programme. This funding programme is subject to the Framework Guidelines. The table below lists sections from the Framework Guidelines that describe specific conditions or restrictions, along with other aspects relevant to this funding programme.

<p>Legal framework (FG Section 1)</p>	<p>The Framework Guidelines and this funding programme were noted at the sitting of the Vienna City Council of 18/10/2023 under eRecht reference 1171017-2023.</p> <p>The legal basis under EU law on state aid comprises: General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) Articles 22, 25, 28 and 29 De Minimis Regulation</p>																							
<p>Funding eligibility conditions (FG Section 2)</p>	<p>Eligible applicants: Small, medium-sized and large companies with an existing or planned establishment in Vienna.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="566 1635 1447 1912"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Number of employees</th> <th></th> <th>Annual turnover</th> <th></th> <th>Balance sheet total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Small enterprise</td> <td>&lt; 50</td> <td>and</td> <td>max. €10m</td> <td>or</td> <td>max. €10m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Medium-sized enterprise</td> <td>&lt; 250</td> <td>and</td> <td>max. €50m</td> <td>or</td> <td>max. €43m</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>							Number of employees		Annual turnover		Balance sheet total	Small enterprise	< 50	and	max. €10m	or	max. €10m	Medium-sized enterprise	< 250	and	max. €50m	or	max. €43m
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<p>Funding type (FG Section 3)</p>	<p>Funding awarded in the context of the Framework Guidelines is provided in the form of non-repayable grants.</p>						
<p>Project start, duration and extension; recognition period for expenses (FG Subsection 4.2)</p>	<p>The maximum project duration is 2 years. The project must not have begun before the application is submitted.</p> <p>The application must also be submitted prior to any orders being placed, deliveries being received, services rendered, invoices issued and/or payments made in relation to the project. When submitting the application, applicants must state the planned end date for the project. If funding is approved, the project must begin as promptly as possible. The recognition period for expenses can begin, at the earliest, on the date of submission of the application and end, at the latest, upon expiration of the maximum project duration (subject to possible extensions). The maximum recognition period for expenses runs from the planned project start date as stated in the application, or the altered start date if reported to and approved by the Vienna Business Agency, to the end of the project period (subject to possible extensions).</p> <p>The Vienna Business Agency can only approve extensions to the maximum project duration in the following cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the procurement of items to be included in the enterprise's fixed assets may be significantly delayed for objectively legitimate reasons (e.g. missing permits, unforeseen delays to delivery periods).</li> <li>• If the person responsible for project management at a small enterprise (in accordance with the definition of an SME) restricts or discontinues their activities in order to meet their caregiving responsibilities. Evidence of this must be provided. Extensions of up to one year may be granted. Caregiving responsibilities include, in particular, caring for children or other close relatives.</li> </ul>						
<p>Eligible costs (see Subsection 5.2)</p> <p>Only costs incurred after the application is submitted and</p>	<p>In particular, this includes the following costs, which must be directly attributable to the project:</p> <p><u>Personnel</u></p>						

<p>the project begins are eligible for funding.</p>	<p>Eligible personnel costs include costs for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Employees</li> <li>● Independent contractors</li> <li>● Shareholders or owners of small companies</li> </ul> <p>Hourly rates: See Annex 2 of the Framework Guidelines</p> <p><u>External services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consultancy and development</li> <li>● Licensing and patenting</li> <li>● Training and qualification measures</li> </ul> <p><u>Tangible and intangible investments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Plant, machinery, equipment and instruments</li> <li>● Licences and property rights</li> </ul> <p><u>Material expenses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consumables</li> </ul> <p><u>Construction-related measures</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Renovation work necessary for the installation of machinery and plant</li> </ul>
<p>Ineligible costs (see Subsection 5.3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Own work capitalised</li> <li>● Ongoing business expenses</li> <li>● Taxes, public fees and financing costs</li> <li>● Procurement of land and buildings</li> <li>● Invoices with net eligible costs below EUR 200</li> </ul>
<p>Overhead rate (see Subsection 5.4)</p>	<p>Funded personnel costs are awarded with an overhead rate of 20%. The overhead rate covers all overhead costs (e.g. rent for general spaces, operating costs, maintenance, office materials, administration, accounting/controlling, payroll accounting, IT). These costs may not be listed as direct costs.</p>
<p>Assessment basis/ minimum assessment threshold (see Subsection 6)</p>	<p>The sum of all recognised project costs serves as the assessment basis for the funding. Minimum assessment threshold: EUR 30,000</p>
<p>Maximum funding rate (see Subsection 7.1)</p>	<p>45%</p>
<p>Maximum funding amount (see Subsection 7.2)</p>	<p>EUR 250,000</p>
<p>Bonus (see Subsection 7.3)</p>	<p><u>Start-up bonus</u> The start-up bonus is exclusively available to founders and enterprises that were founded no more than one year prior to the date the application was submitted. The start-up bonus of EUR 5,000 is paid out either with the</p>

	<p>advance payment or with the final payment, subject to evidence of an eligible foundation date being provided. A maximum of one start-up bonus can be paid to each funded enterprise.</p> <p><u>Women's bonus</u> The women's bonus is EUR 10,000. This bonus is awarded to projects demonstrably led by a suitably qualified woman (as evidenced by their CV) employed by the enterprise (or, for partnership-based applications, by the lead partner) or, alternatively, by a suitably qualified female managing shareholder. It is paid with the final payment, subject to fulfilment of the requirements.</p>
<p>Funding application – General requirements (see Subsection 9.1.1)</p>	<p>Funding applications can only be submitted via the Vienna Business Agency website. Applicants must complete the online forms accurately and in full.</p> <p>The following documents must be attached to each application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Application confirmation</li> <li>● De minimis declaration</li> <li>● Most recent annual financial statement and/or cash-method accounting statement</li> </ul>
<p>Partnership-based funding applications (see Subsection 9.1.2)</p>	<p>Partnership-based applications are permitted.</p>
<p>Type of assessment and selection process (see Subsection 9.2.3)</p>	<p>The process operates on a competitive basis.</p> <p>The application questions and assessment criteria for this funding programme are available on the Vienna Business Agency website.</p>
<p>Progress report (see Subsection 9.5.1)</p>	<p>A progress report must be submitted every six months.</p>
<p>Final report, incl. final account (see Subsection 9.5.3)</p>	<p>A detailed final report – including a final account listing actual project costs – must be submitted online immediately after the funded project ends, at the latest within 3 months of the end of the project.</p>
<p>Advance payments (see Subsection 9.6.1)</p>	<p>The payment schedule includes an advance payment of max. 50% of the approved funding amount.</p>
<p>Final payment (see Subsection 9.6.3)</p>	<p>After the final report and final account have been submitted and examined, the funding will be recalculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred in the funded project and recognised as eligible.</p> <p>If the calculated funding a recipient is due falls below the maximum funding amount stated in the funding decision, the advance payment will be deducted from the calculated funding amount – not from the maximum funding amount.</p>

	A positive balance will be transferred to the funding recipient; a negative balance must be repaid within 14 days of request. In the event of repayment delays, interest of 9% p.a. will be applied to the sum due.
Funding payments for partnership-based applications (see Subsection 9.6.4)	<p>The total funding amount for all partners is paid to the authorised lead partner with discharging effect. The lead partner must transfer the shares of the funding amount due to the other project partners immediately, in accordance with the written disclosure submitted to the Vienna Business Agency.</p> <p>The final funding amount due to each project partner will be recalculated on the basis of the final calculation and is subject to the provisions of EU law on state aid as well as the provisions of the Framework Guidelines and this programme documentation. The total funding amount is limited to the maximum subsidy amount.</p>
Period of validity (see Subsection 14)	<p>The application period runs from 01/03/2023 until 28/02/2025.</p> <p>Application deadlines are announced on the Vienna Business Agency website.</p>