



Success Stories

Public funds available in Wallonia

For several years, Adding Business Value (ABV) has been advising an international biotechnology corporation that has two sites in development areas in Wallonia. Three divisions each had an investment project of € 10 to 12 million for which they felt a usual* grant of 15 or 16% could be obtained. This would correspond to a total non-refundable cash grant of around € 5 million.

Working with their engineers and site management, we included these three projects into a five year program of eight investment projects totaling € 50 million. In 2001, we obtained a grant of close to 20% which was twice as much as originally counted on.

Since that time, other projects have started and we managed to obtain a similar size grant in 2003: 21% for an investment of € 25 million. A new file is pending and we strive to obtain 18% on an investment of about € 30 million.

The most important criterion for Walloon region grants is investment impact on new job creation (accounts for a 50% assessment weight). Other criteria relate to the type of new investments: industry sector, innovation of process or products, environmental impact and investment risk. Our close relationship with and good understanding of the company have allowed us to maximize all criteria and to obtain the highest grants.

In 2002, the Walloon region awarded the same group an aid of 21% for its new € 26 million European research center in Wallonia.

To conclude, we will also be filing a request for an interest-free loan for 50% of three research investments (two on products, one on production process) totaling € 2.5 million. These kinds of loans typically are up for reimbursement after seven to ten years. The value for the Walloon region lies in the local development of state-of-the-art know-how and in the long term economic knock-on effects in the region.

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* Average level of grants for companies that are not SMEs yet located in Walloon 'areas of development'.