

Una manera de hacer Europa



BUENAS PRÁCTICAS

Actuaciones Cofinanciadas

The funding lines for 2016 allocated to finance R+D projects by SMEs in rural areas of the Community of Castilla y León, personified here by the subsidies granted to the companies Piedras Naturales de Castilla, S.L. and Comercial Valdivieco, S.L.
Instituto para la Competitividad Empresarial de Castilla y León

Programa Operativo de Castilla y León

Año 2018

Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional

Good Practice presented by the Instituto para la Competitividad Empresarial de Castilla y León, consisting of the funding lines for 2016 allocated to finance R+D projects by SMEs in rural areas of the Community of Castilla y León, personified here by the subsidies granted to the companies Piedras Naturales de Castilla, S.L. and Comercial Valdivieco, S.L.

The purpose of the funding that led to this example of good practices was to finance experimental industrial research and development projects, conducted by Castilla y León enterprises, for the creation or technological improvement of specific production processes and/or products.

The application scope of this funding is all of Castilla y León, however the Good Practice presented here came from projects by SMEs located in rural areas of Castilla y León. A rural area is defined as municipalities with populations of less than 10.000, or of less than 3.000 if located less than 30 kilometers from the province's capital.

In the 2016 call, a total of 68 projects in rural zones received funding, a total amount of €3.600.000, of which € 1.800.000 were from the ERDF.

Regarding the impact of the funding, we highlight the associated investment of €8.300.000 and the impact it made on increased R+D spending in Castilla y León.

This is in addition to the overall impact on employment in an area that is particularly affected by depopulation. Estimates are that the projects saved a total of 1.622 jobs, and are expected to create 112 new jobs.

Of the funding granted in rural areas, we highlight the Good Practices of two recipient companies, Piedras Naturales de Castilla, S.L. and Comercial Valdivieco, S.L.

Piedras Naturales de Castilla, S.L. is a fourth generation family-owned company, dedicated to quarrying. Its economic activity is the extraction, processing and sale of sandstone. Its location is Quintanar de la Sierra (Burgos), a municipality of 1.690 inhabitants.

The project presented here was to conduct a study of the basic properties of sandstone, in order to understand the stone's natural evolution and verify its evolution following accelerated ageing treatments that simulate weathering impacts, fatigue and wear, that it will undergo during its useful life in different types of materials.

Comercial Valdivieco, S.L. manufactures, assembles and installs metal structures made of carbon steel, stainless steel and aluminum. The company is in Mayorga, population 1.590, which is a municipality of Tierra de Campos county, in the province of Valladolid.

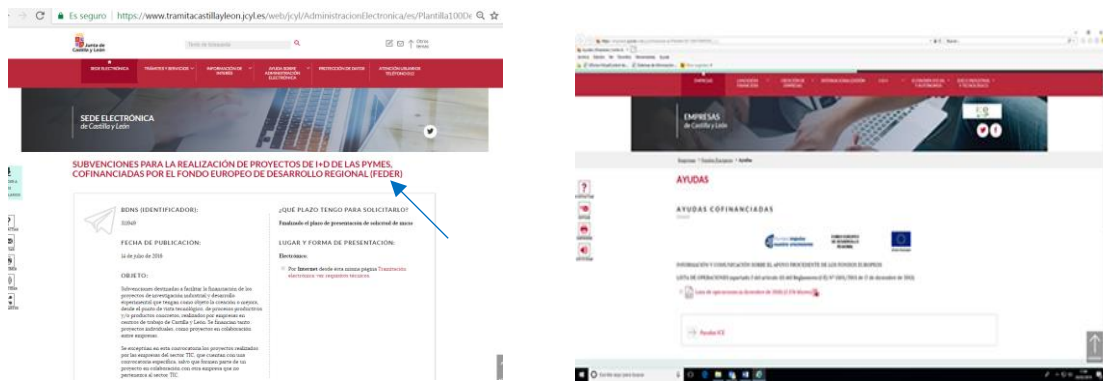
Its project consists of the design and implementation of a modular aerobic/anaerobic waste water treatment system, for which two sludge treatment systems will be designed. The first is based on moving bed bio-film reactor (MBBR) technology, in which moving plastic carriers provide a surface where biofilm grows. The plastic carriers are mixed in the tank by either aeration systems (aerobic reactors) or by mechanic systems (anaerobic reactors). The second system uses solid suspension waste filtration membranes. The membranes filter and separate suspended solids and biodegrading microorganisms from the water treated. This will serve to meet 100% of the needs of any type of sludge treatment installation.

These actions are considered good practices because they meet the following criteria:

1. The operation was duly disseminated and communicated to beneficiaries, potential beneficiaries and to the general public.

Social media, and the web page of the funds manager, Institute for Competitive Business Practices Castilla y León (ICE), were used to inform potential beneficiaries of the European funding opportunities, and ensure that the information reached the largest number possible of potential beneficiaries. In compliance with its regulatory obligations, the Institute also informed citizens and the media of the results obtained.

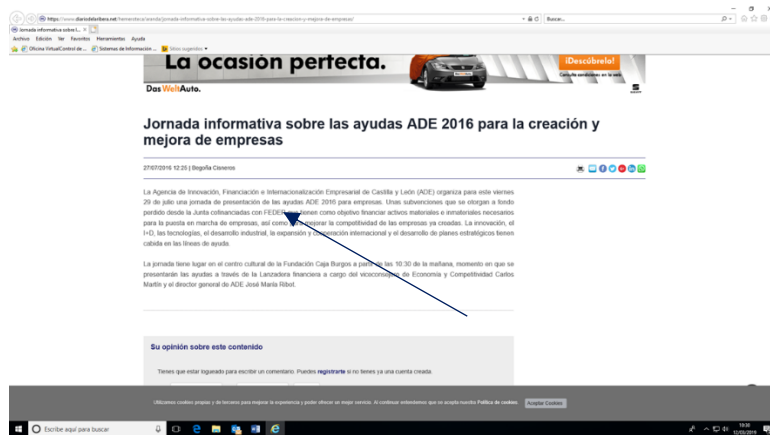
[https://empresas.jcyl.es/web/jcyl/Empresas/es/Plantilla100/1284715318822/ / /](https://empresas.jcyl.es/web/jcyl/Empresas/es/Plantilla100/1284715318822/)



In addition to the above, e-mail news bulletins were sent to over 11.500 potential beneficiaries.

Other dissemination actions included presentations of the aid in all provinces of the Autonomous Community, **including the province of Burgos**:

<https://www.diariodelaribera.net/hemeroteca/aranda/jornada-informativa-sobre-las-ayudas-ade-2016-para-la-creacion-y-mejora-de-empresas/>



TWITTER and FACEBOOK were used to inform of European co-funding.

Competitividad Empresarial - JCYL (FB)

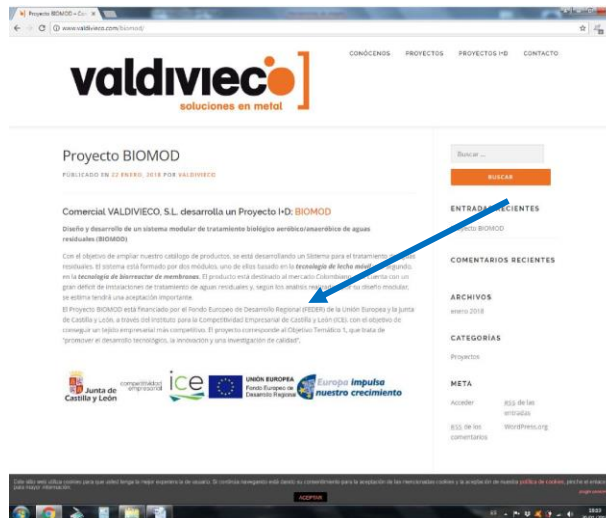
9 de mayo a las 13:00 ·

Financiamos los proyectos de I+D de las empresas de Castilla y León. Descubre el Instrumento Financiero de Garantías para Proyectos de I+D que te ofrecemos con IBERAVAL. Cofinanciado con FEDER. <https://empresas.jcyl.es/.../es/Plantilla.../1284716350023/> / / /



Both of the companies, Comercial Valdivieco, S.L, and Piedras Naturales de Castilla, S.L, posted news on their websites and installed posters and signs at company entrances.

<http://www.valdivieco.com/biomod/>



2. The action incorporates innovative elements.

The project of the company Comercial Valdivieco consists of the design and implementation of a waste water treatment system, a research project commensurate with the company's policy of seeking new activities, sectors and markets. The objective was to design a prototype of a small-scale waste water treatment plant, comprised of parts that can be disassembled, transported and reassembled for equally efficient operation at another site. With this type of smaller, more manageable and more economic plant, the company is poised to reach and serve a broader spectrum of national and international customers. It is a marketable product, a waste water treatment solution for hard-to-access remote areas, and for depopulated rural areas.

Piedras Naturales de Castilla, S.L. focused its project on research into the physical properties of natural stone, and did ageing simulations to test performance in cold climates. The purpose of the research was to obtain natural stone products for use in attractive, weather resistant outdoor building siding, and safe non-skid pavements, that were applicable in Spain and in the colder climates of other countries.

3. Adequacy of results obtained to objectives established

The R+D projects of both companies are for consolidation and growth through innovation. Their development projects are geared to company diversification and quality improvement. This will lead to higher competitiveness and greater international projection (the focus for the goods and/or services arising from this project), and will further lead to the consolidation and/or growth of direct and indirect employment.

The aid that Comercial Valdivieco, S.L. received for its project enabled the company to open new business lines and enter new markets, particularly foreign markets. This, enabled it to grow its business in rural areas where this type of SME plays a fundamental role by providing employment, which encourages the youth of rural populations to remain. It further improves the company's competitiveness and market positioning in high potential developing nations; all factors that will mean progress toward the company's future internationalization and the consolidation/growth of direct and indirect employment.

The R+D innovation project of Piedras Naturales de Castilla, S.L. sought and found ways to improve the aesthetics, durability and safety of its products. Its efforts led to technological advances in the field, by identifying a way to make to better quality products, fully compliant with current quality standards for ornamental stone. Thanks to this, the company has ensured its medium term survival, which enables it to keep on at least 20 direct employees, in a depopulated disadvantaged area of Spain.

4. Contribution to the resolution of a problem or regional weakness.

The funding of these projects contributes to solving weaknesses in our region, such as the low internationalization of Castilla y León companies, and low investment in Research and Development, areas in which we are far below European Union objectives. This funding will go to strengthen the Research Development and innovation system by increasing the number of companies that create new products/processes and services, and by increasing private sector investment efforts in the actions that accompany the public aid.

It will help also help to remedy the pressing problem of rural area depopulation in Castilla y León: the consolidation and growth of companies located in rural areas, with the subsequent consolidation and/or growth in direct and indirect employment, will help persuade qualified young people to remain in these rural areas.

Regarding the Piedras Naturales de Castilla, S.L. project, its target markets for the materials and/or products resulting from the project are northern Europe, Canada and the United States, which will propitiate the company's internationalization, and by extension, the internationalization of this sector of the Castilla y León economy.

Due to the local nature of the raw material, natural stone, that the company uses in its production process, revaluation this local raw material is expected. The project will also bring positive carry-over effects for other local enterprises companies serving contiguous markets. The above will

help retain the resident population of this rural area, which, like all rural areas in Castilla y León, is highly affected by depopulation.

The project of Comercial Valdivieco, S.L. has enabled the company to develop new products that open new lines of business, and open it up to international markets, particularly in Latin America.

Both of these projects are good examples of individual company investment, collaboration with technology centers and/or cutting-edge technology enterprises, aimed at improving the technological infrastructure of our region.

5. High degree of coverage of the target population

Both operations contribute to greater entrepreneurial competitiveness and to improving the companies' employees' working conditions, since the investment co-financing means lower costs for the companies, that can be used to provide better working conditions for employees and incentivizes the companies to undertake other innovation projects that recognize the value of research for business.

Further, the investment made to develop these innovative products serves to foster improvements to pre-existing products offered on the national and international markets that these export oriented companies seek to serve, due to which the end consumers of their products will also benefit from this type of investment.

The prototype developed during the Comercial Valdivieco project has been installed at the Mayorga de Campos municipal waste water treatment facility. Thus, the result of this technological development project is now serving one rural area target population, and has the potential to benefit many more.

The results of the project by Piedras Naturales de Castilla, S.L, will also reach the potential beneficiaries, the local population and surrounding counties of this rural area. It will further lead to the revaluation of one of the area's raw materials, natural stone.

6. Consideration of the horizontal criteria of equal opportunity, non-discrimination, social responsibility and environmental sustainability

Regarding the principle of equal opportunity, the call under which these two companies submitted their application for funds takes into account equal opportunity and non-discrimination due to gender, and values job creation for women, for youth up to 30 years of age, and for disabled persons, valuing integration in the labor force of disabled individuals.

The project presented by the company Comercial Valdivieco, S.L. contributes to environmental improvement, since projects of this type are closely tied to environmental sustainability, lower waste generation and better waste management.

The project by Piedras Naturales de Castilla, S.L. involves plans to optimize the use of non-renewable natural resources, in this case, natural stone. This to be achieved through more precise stone cutting methods and tools, among these finer diamond wire and cutting discs. Quarrying cutting waste will also be recovered and reused, which benefits environmental conservation.

7. Synergies with other public policies or instruments

Due to their location, these projects complement other rural development programs underway in Castilla y León, whose purpose is to stabilize, integrate and increase rural population. Examples of programs underway are the Castilla y León Rural Development Program 2014-2020, and Agenda for the Population of Castilla y León 2010-2020.

Both projects are part of the framework targets and objectives set out in the 2017-2020 Castilla y León Master Plan on Industrial Development, which describes the general terms and guidelines to promote reindustrialization in Castilla y León, in accordance with commitments assumed under the 3rd Framework Agreement on Competition and Industrial Innovation 2014-2020.

The subsidy granted to the two companies selected for Good Practice are fully aligned with Spain's General State Administration policy on support to R+D projects, as set out in the

framework agreement signed between the Instituto para la Competitividad Empresarial de Castilla y León and Spain's Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI), that establishes which SME proposals for R+D programs will receive support from either institution.

Una manera de hacer Europa



BUENAS PRÁCTICAS

Actuaciones Cofinanciadas

Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional