

Green'er Innovation Fund

## Call for projects 2026

### A circular alternative to the silo tire

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<b>Support</b>	75.000 to 125.000 euro
<b>Who can apply</b>	Companies, knowledge institutions and mixed consortia in Belgium
<b>Theme</b>	Circular product development, recycled rubber, agricultural sector
<b>Deadline</b>	12.08.2026
<b>Contact person</b>	Lander Desmedt, <a href="mailto:desmedt.l@mandate.kbs-frb.be">desmedt.l@mandate.kbs-frb.be</a>

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### Context

On livestock farms across Belgium, there is a problem that no one sees but everyone knows: rows of worn-out car tires next to the barn, used to keep tarpaulins covering grass and maize silage in place. Not because it is the best solution, but because it is the most common and cheapest. Alternatives such as roll-up covers exist, but they are expensive and require additional infrastructure.

These silo tires are end-of-life vehicle tires used beyond their intended lifespan. They are not accepted at standard recycling centers and fall outside regular collection systems. As a result, tires remain on farms for years—sometimes decades. In remote areas, unused stacks also attract other waste, forcing farmers to deal with illegal dumping. This creates additional burdens and costs.

The environmental and health risks are real and documented. Silo tires collect rainwater and become breeding grounds for insects such as the tiger mosquito. They leach harmful substances into the surrounding soil and spread micro-rubber and microplastics. Due to widespread use, cattle may unintentionally ingest rubber particles and steel wires from worn-out tires while grazing, leading to injuries and stomach damage. In addition, the tires are heavy, difficult to handle, and hard to clean.

Farmers are often aware of these issues. However, they continue to use tires because the available alternatives are expensive and less flexible. Resistance to change is not unwillingness—it is a rational choice in the absence of an affordable and workable alternative.

Green'er aims to bring that alternative to market.

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## Theme of the call

Green'er is looking for one multidisciplinary team to develop a **circular product to replace the silo tire, made from recycled tire materials**. This is not a call for studies or reports—it is a call for makers.

The new product must convince farmers automatically—not through communication or regulation, but because it is simply better. Design thinking is central: the farmer is an active partner in the design process from day one.

The product must outperform the silo tire on all relevant dimensions:

- **Functional:** sufficient weight and resistance to secure a silage cover, even under wind and rain.
  - **Health and environment:** no leaching of harmful substances, no microplastics, no stagnant water, no attraction of insects.
  - **Ease of use:** lighter or easier to handle than a full tire, stackable or compact for storage, easy to clean.
  - **Circularity:** made from recycled tire materials, with a clear processing route at end-of-life. The end-of-waste status must be explicitly developed so the product can legally exit the waste phase.
  - **Adoption:** affordable and familiar in use. Green'er is actively exploring partnerships with the tire industry to offer the product free of charge or at a strongly reduced cost to farmers.
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## Development trajectory

The selected project will follow a stage-gated process based on the Cooper Stage-Gate model. Funding is released per phase after a positive evaluation by the Steering Committee.

### **Stage 1: Scoping** (*indicative budget: 10-15%*)

In-depth problem analysis, exploration of material streams, definition of the user context and a first solution direction.  
Deliverable: a substantiated scoping report with a go/no-go recommendation.

### **Stage 2: Concept development** (*indicative budget: 20-25%*)

Development of concrete product concepts, including initial material testing, user research with farmers, and a first business case outline.  
Deliverable: validated concepts with justification and a project plan for Stage 3.

### **Stage 3: Prototyping and development** (*indicative budget: 30-35%*)

Building and iterating a functional prototype, tested in real agricultural conditions with structured user feedback.  
Deliverable: functional prototype with documented test results and validation plan for Stage 4.

### **Stage 4: Testing and validation** (*indicative budget: 25-30%*)

Extensive field testing with a fixed group of farmers. Validation of technical performance, user acceptance and commercial feasibility. Preparation for market launch and follow-up funding.  
Deliverable: validated product with a documented pathway to scale.

The total duration is 12 to 18 months.

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## Eligibility and selection criteria

### Eligibility criteria

- The application file is complete and submitted on time.
- The application is submitted in English.
- The project takes place in Belgium.
- The team has complementary expertise in at least two relevant domains.

- At least one active livestock farmer or sector organization is involved from the start.
- The trajectory results in a testable prototype, not a concept note or study.
- The team commits to active participation in all stage-gate evaluations.

### Selection criteria

- **Technical and circular ambition:** the extent to which the product represents a demonstrable step forward compared to the silo tire.
  - **Design-driven approach:** the extent to which design thinking and the farmer as end user are central, including attention to adoption.
  - **Feasibility of the prototype:** credibility of the trajectory and a realistic assessment of materials, process and timing.
  - **Team quality:** complementarity and relevant experience of the partners involved.
  - **Scalability:** potential for broader application in the sector and beyond.
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## Financial support

Green'er awards funding to **one project, ranging from €75,000 to €125,000**. The funding is released in phases based on stage evaluations and covers all project-related development costs. Co-funding is not required.

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## Who is this call aimed at?

Companies, research institutions and mixed consortia based in Belgium, with expertise in materials development, product development, industrial design or the agricultural context.

### Not eligible:

- Projects without involvement of an active farmer or sector organization.
  - Projects focusing solely on research without a prototype as deliverable.
  - Projects outside the theme of recycled tire materials for the agricultural sector.
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## Jury and governance

An independent jury evaluates the submitted applications and advises the Green'er Board. The Steering Committee makes the final decision. The Fund & Community Manager actively supports the selected team throughout the entire trajectory.

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## Planning

<b>Launch of the call</b>	03.06.2026
<b>Submission deadline</b>	12.08.2026
<b>Selection interviews</b>	25.09.2026 (upon invitation, for shortlisted applicants)
<b>Announcement of the results</b>	06.10.2026
<b>Start of the trajectory</b>	October-November 2026

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## Contact

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*Green'er is an innovation fund for the circular rubber and tire sector, managed by the King Baudouin Foundation (Brederodestraat 21, 1000 Brussels).*