

Call for expression of interest to organise the EIT Food Startup Awareness Event

EIT Food is looking for three organisations, each based in one of the below-mentioned countries, to organise the EIT Food Startup Awareness Event for the local agrifood ecosystem in September-November 2021.

The organisations invited to apply for this call should be based in one of the following countries: Cyprus, Malta, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia and Ukraine. One organisation will be selected from applicants representing Cyprus or Malta, and two from the following countries: Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia and Ukraine.

Application deadline: 23 August 2021, 23:59 CEST.

Application template: see Annex.

Further details about EIT Food can be found at: www.eitfood.eu, and the principles of the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme are described at: <https://eit.europa.eu/activities/outreach/eit-regional-innovation-scheme-ris>. With respect to the present call, ***EIT Food will not provide new information that has not already been included in this call document, but can assist the potential applicants by explaining the contents of this document (please contact RIS@eitfood.eu).***

1) Background information: EIT Food

EIT Food is one of the largest and most impactful food-related initiatives worldwide. As a Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), EIT Food connects partners from leading businesses, universities and research centres across Europe. It is a people-centric and resource-smart transformer of the European food system, driving consumer confidence and improved global health.

EIT Food's vision is to put Europe at the centre of a global revolution in food innovation and production, and its value in society. EIT Food will engage consumers in the change process, improve nutrition and make the food system more resource-efficient, secure, transparent and trusted. EIT Food has six strategic objectives:

- *Overcome low consumer trust:* support Europeans in the transition towards a smart food system that is inclusive and trusted;
- *Create consumer valued food for healthier nutrition:* enable individuals to make informed and affordable personal nutrition choices;
- *Build a consumer-centric connected food system:* develop a digital food supply network with consumers and industry as equal partners;
- *Enhance sustainability:* develop solutions to transform the traditional 'produce-use-dispose' model into a circular bio-economy;
- *Educate to engage, innovate and advance:* Provide 'food system' skills for more than 10,000 students, entrepreneurs and professionals through advanced training programmes;

- *Catalyse food entrepreneurship and innovation*: foster innovation at all stages of business creation.

EIT Food boosts the skills and entrepreneurial spirit in the sector and unlocks the potential of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which in turn will accelerate innovation, create jobs, benefit businesses and increase Europe's competitiveness.

2021 is a transition year for EIT Food - the move to Horizon Europe of the new financial framework 2021-2027 will bring changes to how the KIC operates. In particular, this is manifested through the stronger portfolio management by introducing six Focus Areas, linked with EIT Food's Strategic Objectives that will shape the EIT Food portfolio in 2021 and onwards. These Focus Areas are:

- **Alternative Proteins**: developing new/alternative protein sources through efficient and sustainable production and processing methods to yield high quality, safe, healthy, and sustainable products or ingredients for food and feed.
- **Sustainable Agriculture**: helping increase crop and livestock productivity in a sustainable way to reduce the impact of food production on the environment and meet the growing food demand due to population growth.
- **Targeted Nutrition**: adapting what we eat to traits such as age, gender, genetic make-up, microbiome features and disease state, and considering parameters such as lifestyle, allergies, food intolerances to promote, maintain or regain general wellness during every life-stage.
- **Sustainable Aquaculture**: activities to drive the transition to sustainable practices in the farming of animals (including crustaceans, finfish and molluscs) and plants (including seaweeds and freshwater macrophytes) in both inland (freshwater) and coastal (brackish water, seawater) areas.
- **Digital Traceability**: improving the safety, efficiency and sustainability of food and increase consumer trust, as well as contributing towards the digital transformation of the food system.
- **Circular Food systems**: facilitating a shift from the current linear model (make, use, dispose of) to a circular food system, implying the reuse of resources, reduction and (re)-utilisation of side and waste streams to prevent food loss and waste and to allow nutrient recycling and reduction in GHG emissions as well as water and land use

EIT Food has defined a Competency Framework of eight priority areas to develop talent in the food system:

- 1) **Entrepreneurship**. The ability to recognise, develop and act on entrepreneurial opportunities in a range of organisation settings, and to play an effective role in new venture formation and growth.
- 2) **Problem-solving**. The ability to analyse and understand the problem space, generate new ideas, assess their validity, and co-create solutions.
- 3) **Critical thinking**. The ability to assess facts and evidence to drive decision-making, including constructive questioning of the status quo.
- 4) **Leadership**. The ability to be an effective leader, and to mobilise resources efficiently to accomplish a goal based on responsible management practice.
- 5) **Communication**. The ability to drive interpersonal communication, and translate complex ideas for different audiences.

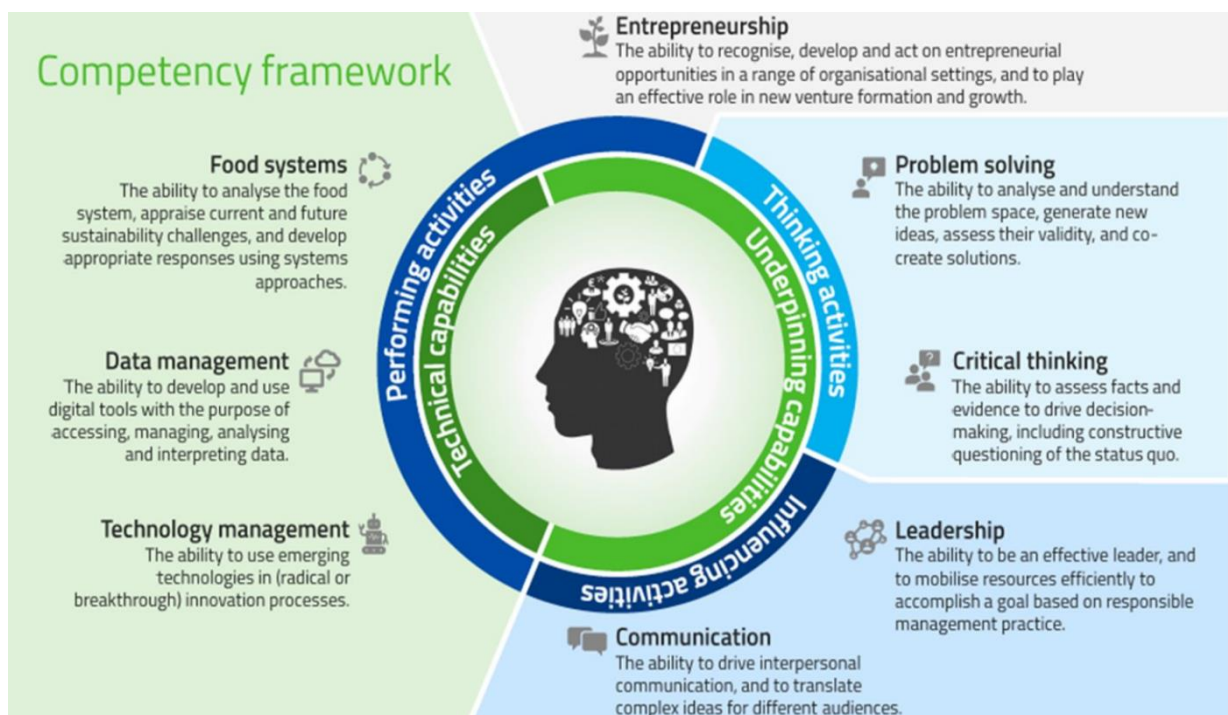
6) Technology management. The ability to use emerging technologies in (radical or breakthrough) innovation processes.

7) Data management. The ability to develop and use digital tools with the purpose of accessing, managing, analysing and interpreting data.

8) Food systems. The ability to analyse the food system, appraise current and future sustainability challenges, and develop appropriate responses using system approaches.

EIT Food’s educational activities, workshops and training for students, startups and other stakeholders shall support the development of at least two priority areas.

Figure 1. Competency framework



The pan-European EIT Food is headquartered in Belgium, and its partnership brings together changemakers in all relevant sectors and fields. EIT Food is well-positioned to achieve the maximum impact on the challenges outlined above. The highly committed partnership will conceive, develop, evaluate and adopt new market-oriented approaches to innovation. It is structured around five Co-Location Centres (CLCs), established in Warsaw (with partners from Central-Eastern Europe and Nordic countries), Reading (with partners from the UK, Ireland and Iceland), Madrid (with partners from Spain, Italy and Israel), Leuven (with partners from Belgium, France and Switzerland) and Freising (with partners from Germany and the Netherlands).

2) Background information: EIT Food Startup Awareness Event

The present call is launched by EIT Food to select 3 organisations that would become organisers of the Startup Awareness Events. Each organiser will organise one event in their country. Countries eligible for the call are the following: Cyprus, Malta, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia and Ukraine.

The main goal of the events will be to introduce EIT Food programs and activities to the local agrifood and innovation ecosystem and scout for potential participants of EIT Food entrepreneurship programs.

The events will also aim to bring together the members of the local agrifood ecosystem and initiate the discussion about the current state and challenges of the ecosystem in relation to innovation and entrepreneurship.

The selection process is implemented as an open call managed by EIT Food, Co-Location Centres North-East and South, using clear and transparent selection criteria.

2.1. Event format and requirements

The proposed format of the event should consist of 2 parts:

- 1) A training program for entrepreneurial talents and/or early-stage agrifood startups. The organizer will scout innovative agrifood companies and invite them for a piece of training on a chosen topic (e.g. business modelling, sales, pitching, marketing, customer discovery, global agrifood trends, local support opportunities, etc.) run by invited local and foreign speakers (min. 6 hours). The workshop for entrepreneurial talents and/or early-stage agrifood startups shall refer to EIT Food Competency Framework and help to develop at least two of eight priority areas (please see Figure 1) EIT Food will offer the organiser access to its trainers and speakers;
- 2) A networking event for the members of the local agrifood and innovation ecosystem (startups, investors, food companies, universities and research centres, Ministries, Innovation Agencies, companies from the agri-food sector, clusters, farmer associations, etc.). The event will serve as a platform to discuss the current challenges in the local food system and present the EIT Food activities to the invited audience (min. 3 hours/180 minutes) and include Introduction to EIT Food and its activities prepared in collaboration with EIT Food's representatives.

Both parts of the events should be organised in September-November, 2021.

The chosen organiser should also be able to conduct both parts of the event online, in case the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic will make it impossible to organise the event in a physical format. The details on formats and timeline are going to be decided based on proposals from applicant organisations.

The applicants are welcome to introduce more detailed information to the proposed format of events to better realise the purpose of the event in target countries. The selected organisation will work closely with EIT Food on customising the format and schedule of the event to the peculiarities of the local agrifood and startup ecosystem.

2.2. Event budget

The selected organisation will sign a subcontracting agreement with EIT Food's Co-Location Centre North-East or Co-Location Centre South with gross funding of up to 10,000€ (per event) to cover the eligible costs of the Startup Awareness Event.

When applying for the call, interested organisations should submit an agenda proposal aligned with the event format requirements and a short budget proposal listing the costs associated with event planning and organisation.

3) Applications to organise the EIT Food Startup Awareness Event

EIT Food invites organisations from 5 countries to submit their proposals to become an organiser of the EIT Food Startup Awareness Event.

3.1. Countries or regions targeted by the call

Each application should concern one of the following countries:

- 1) Cyprus,
- 2) Malta,
- 3) Montenegro,
- 4) Republic of North Macedonia,
- 5) Ukraine.

Each applicant can prepare only one application (for one country).

3.2. Eligible organisations

- Legal persons¹ (such as companies, incubators or accelerators, innovation centres, higher education institutes, research institutes, non-governmental organisations);
- Operating in a country/region targeted by the call;
- Able to sign a subcontracting agreement with EIT Food's Co-Location Centre North-East or Co-Location Centre South and act as a subcontractor in a project funded based on Horizon Europe/EIT modalities;
- Recognised as important players in the local innovation ecosystems with a strong regional outreach,
- Experienced in entrepreneurship support;
- Capable of organising local events and workshops;
- Experienced in the organisation of events/workshops remotely using online tools will be considered as an advantage;
- Able to organise the EIT Food Startup Awareness Event in the respected timeframe September-November 2021.

3.3. Benefits for organisations selected as EIT Food Startup Awareness Event organisers

Three candidates chosen by EIT Food to organise the event will be offered the following benefits:

- Ability to benefit from the association with EIT Food and the EIT community (as subcontractors in EIT Food activities);
- Subcontracting agreement with EIT Food's Co-Location Centre North-East or Co-Location Centre South with gross funding of up to 10,000€ (per event) to cover the eligible costs of the EIT Food Startup Awareness Event's planning and organisation;
- Expertise and organisational support of EIT Food and Co-Location Centre North-East and Co-Location Centre South in organising and implementing the event.

¹ Consortia are not eligible in this call.

Organising the EIT Food Startup Awareness Event shall be considered an opportunity to become associated with EIT Food, establish relations with its community and become better embedded in the EIT Food activities. The selected organisation will also benefit from the increased visibility in their local innovation ecosystems, strengthening their position on the regional and national levels.

3.4. Selection process

Interested and eligible organisations are invited to **submit their applications in English by 23:59 CEST on 23 August 2021**, using the “**EIT Food Startup Awareness Event – Application Form**”. **Please send the electronic version of the application, based on the form provided below, to: RIS@eitfood.eu**.

Incomplete applications or applications submitted by ineligible organisations will be automatically rejected. Complete applications received by EIT Food will be evaluated by a committee including representatives of EIT Food using selection criteria presented in point 3.5.

EIT Food reserves the right to designate the subcontractors only if the submitted applications ensure the excellence and value for money, and to relaunch the call if the present selection process would not yield satisfactory results. EIT Food reserves the right to contact the applicant organisations by e-mail or phone asking for additional explanations or supporting documents, and to schedule selection interviews with short-listed organisations. All applications will be evaluated using transparent selection criteria and the results of the call will be published by EIT Food on its website. The selected organisations will be required to sign subcontracting agreements with EIT Food’s Co-Location Centre North-East (Warsaw) or Co-Location Centre South (Bilbao). If for some reasons on the part of chosen organization the subcontracting agreement is not signed in a month after the announcement of the call results, EIT Food may select another applicant based on the ranking lists without launching additional call.

3.5. Selection criteria

All proposals will be evaluated taking into account the following criteria, related to the applicant organisational capacity and EIT Food Startup Awareness Event requirements:

1. Experience in training and supporting innovative startups (examples of the most relevant workshops/training from 2016-2020 that were provided by the applicant organisation to entrepreneurs and startups from the region, including a short description of these activities, key outcomes and impact);
2. Experience in the organisation of events in the agrifood area concerning innovation/entrepreneurship/foodtech/policy or consumer dialogue (examples of the most relevant events/projects in the field of agrifood that were organised by applicant organisation in 2016-2020 including a short description of these activities, type of an engagement in the project, project partners, key outcome, etc.);
3. Role in the ecosystem (familiarity with the agrifood industry in the target country; existing contacts and projects with relevant local stakeholders; existing pipeline of early stage innovative startups);
4. Approach to the organisation of EIT Food Startup Awareness Event (proposed event format (offline and online), specific topics, speakers and how they correspond to the purpose of the event outlined by EIT Food;
5. Cost of service planned by applicant.

Criteria 1-4 will be evaluated on a 0-15 scale: 0 – not satisfactory; 5 – satisfactory; 10 – good and 15 points – very good. The application can receive max. 60 points for criteria 1-4.

In criterion 5, the application with the lowest price will receive 40 points while other applications will receive proportionally lower numbers.

3.6. EIT Food Startup Awareness Event – Application Form

Please fill in the application form, ensuring that **all fields** are completed. Please submit the application in electronic format **both as PDF and editable MS Word files** by 23:59 CEST on 23 August 2021 to: RIS@eitfood.eu. Applications incomplete or sent after the deadline will be rejected. Please do not provide further supporting documents and capture all relevant information in this form.

1. What country are you applying from (<u>underline one</u>)?		
1) Cyprus 2) Malta 3) Montenegro 4) Republic of North Macedonia 5) Ukraine		
2. Name of the applicant organisation in English		
3. Name of the applicant organisation in local language		
4. Legal form		
5. Office address (street, city, country)		
6. Website address		
7. Type of organisation (<u>underline one</u>)		
business enterprise	higher education institute	public research organisation
knowledge transfer intermediary (incl. industry association, innovation cluster, technology park, entrepreneurship support organisation)		
other (please specify)		
8. Name of contact person		
9. Position		
10. E-mail		
11. Phone		
12. Year of establishment of your organisation		
13. Total number of employees		
14. Please list social media channels currently used by your organisation (with web addresses):		
Facebook		
Twitter		
LinkedIn		
YouTube		
Other (please specify)		
15. Please provide a brief description of your organisation and its main activities:		

<p>16. Please provide examples of the most relevant workshops/trainings from 2016-2020 that were provided by your organisation to startups from your region, including short description of these activities, key outcomes and impact <i>[Experience in training and supporting innovative startups:</i></p>
<p>17. Please provide examples of the most relevant events/projects in the field of agrifood that were organized by your organisation in 2016-2020 including short description of these activities, type of your engagement in the project, project partners and key outcomes <i>[Experience in the organization of events in the field of agrifood dedicated to innovation/entrepreneurship/foodtech]:</i></p>
<p>18. Please present familiarity with the agrifood industry in the target country; existing contacts and projects with relevant local stakeholders; existing pipeline of early stage innovative startups <i>[Role in the ecosystem]:</i></p>
<p>19. Please propose the agenda of two parts of the event (startup training and networking event), including the subjects and preliminary speakers (please take into account the guidelines provided by EIT Food on page 2) <i>[Approach to the organization of EIT Food Startup Awareness Event]:</i></p>
<p>20. Please describe the tools and format you would use if you had to organise both parts of the event online <i>[Approach to the organization of EIT Food Startup Awareness Event]:</i></p>
<p>20. Please propose the event budget (in EUR), taking into account the guidelines provided by EIT Food (page 2) <i>[Cost of service planned by applicant]:</i></p>
<p>21. Would you like to add any other information relevant to this call and application?</p>

By submitting this application form, I confirm that the information provided above correctly represents the scope of activities and plans of my organisation. I understand that the information provided in this form may be used to define obligations and performance targets of EIT Food Hub in subcontracting agreement. I give consent to processing the application by EIT Food, its Co-Location Centres and external experts involved in the evaluation process. I am willing to cooperate and provide further information or documents confirming the facts presented above. If selected by EIT Food, I declare the willingness to act as the organiser of the EIT Food Startup Awareness Event in 2021, based on conditions described in the “Call for expression of interest to organise the EIT Food Startup Awareness Event”.

Date, place

Name of the person submitting the application

Position

Organisation submitting the application