



CALL for support in startups` scouting in Central&Eastern Europe

1. Overview of EIT Food

EIT Food is Europe's leading food innovation initiative, working towards a more sustainable, healthy and trusted food system.

The initiative is made up of a consortium of key industry players, startups, research centres and universities from across Europe. It is one of nine Knowledge and Innovation Communities established by the European Institute for Innovation & Technology (EIT), an independent EU body set up in 2008 to drive innovation and entrepreneurship across Europe.

EIT Food's vision is to put Europe at the centre of a global revolution, leveraging technology, innovation and entrepreneurship to drive transformation towards a food system better serving society and planet. To deliver against this vision, EIT Food focuses its activities around three main missions:

Mission 1 – Healthier Lives through Food

Mission 2 – Net-Zero Food Systems

Mission 3 - A Fully Transparent, Resilient and Fair Food System

For more information about our company and regions please visit the following website: www.eitfood.eu.

2. About EIT Food Entrepreneurship

EIT Food regards Entrepreneurship as a key line of action fostering transformation of the Food System.

As such, it supports highly-skilled impact-driven agrifood tech researchers, entrepreneurs and startups to launch, accelerate and scale new food innovations and businesses across Europe.

EIT Food helps entrepreneurs boost their chances to make the greatest impact on the food system, whatever stage of development they are at (tech and market validation, fundraising, customer acquisition, commercial expansion, etc.).

To reach this goal, EIT Food leverages its strategic position as a unique Pan-European consortium bringing together the know-how, expertise, technological, commercial and financial firepower of fundamental R&D, public sector, large corporations and private investors.

By joining EIT Food, entrepreneurs and start-ups get to be part and grow the world's largest agrifood tech powerhouse and get to receive all the personalised support, facilitated access to resources, partners and funding opportunities they need to design and follow their own roadmap to becoming a major global player of the food system revolution.

EIT Food Entrepreneurship offer is structured around three main flagship programs ("**Programs**"), targeting entrepreneurial initiatives of different stages of maturity:

- **SeedBed, SB (incubate):** This program offers innovators, scientists and aspiring entrepreneurs exciting opportunities to learn valuable entrepreneurial skills. It provides access to a powerful pan-European agrifood network and equity-free funds to test and identify viable market solutions and a solid business model to launch and gain commercial success.

- **Fan Accelerator Network, FAN (accelerate):** This program targets entrepreneurs and registered startups who are looking to validate their technology towards market adoption. It provides access to Europe’s largest Agri-Food Tech partner network and top quality connections, as well as intensive guidance, support and structure in order to accelerate startup growth and achieve business-, investment- and market-readiness.
- **RisingFoodStars, RFS (scale):** This program empowers impact-driven aspiring scaleups to design and follow their own transformational journey to expand beyond their current market(s). This is facilitated by providing access to Europe’s largest agrifood network, as well as through unique opportunities for training and mentoring, access to funding and investment, visibility and corporate collaboration.

For more information about our Entrepreneurship activities visit the following website: <https://entrepreneurship.eitfood.eu/>.

3. Scope of work & remuneration

General objectives

The overall objective of the work is to support EIT Food to identify impactful European-based agrifood startups and teams with a scalable social or science-based technology (at lab proof of concept - TRL 4 min) (“**Company**”) for the cohort of 2024.

For the purpose of this Call EIT Food divides Central & Eastern Europe into 3 smaller scouting regions (“**Small Regions**”):

- Baltics: Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia
- Central Europe: Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania,
- Balkans: Slovenia, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Bulgaria, Montenegro, North Macedonia

LEAD – validated Company (as a minimum, startup/team name, contact name, email, phone number and country) provided by scouting agency meeting the criteria specified in Appendix 1 to the Call, not blacklisted by EIT Food, not already present in EIT Food’s Entrepreneurship masterlist.

In Baltics EIT Food expects delivery of min 30 LEADs.

In Central Europe EIT Food expects delivery of min 80 LEADs.

In Balkans EIT Food expects delivery of min 40 LEADs.

LEADs in Small Regions shall be scouted including diversity of geographies, where LEADs from one country does not constitute more than 50% of LEADs from specific Small Region.

EIT Food provides below a list of thematic focus areas for Companies scout to use for search as well as relevant startup characteristics in terms of growth stage, technology-focus etc. Based on the input provided, we expect a GDPR-conform masterlist of Companies including the following information:

- Email address of founder/CEO
- Full name of founder/CEO
- Name of startup/team
- Country of registration/origin
- Website URL
- LinkedIn profile of Company and co-founders, if applicable

Organization of work

Suggested process steps to get to the final numbers of LEADs presented above (scouting agencies responding to

this call are welcome to propose modifications based on their understanding of best practice):

- 1) Company`s contacts are proposed on a weekly basis and presented in the form of a masterlist. At all times during the scouting campaign should this masterlist of contacts, stating the basic details of the Company (as a minimum, startup/team name, contact name, email, phone number and country) be accessible to EIT Food.
- 2) EIT Food conducts weekly screening of masterlist. A number of Companies might be blacklisted, if already present in EIT Food`s own Entrepreneurship masterlist including all startup and team contacts that EIT Food has in its own CRM system «**Enterprenurship masterlist**», or if not deemed meeting the scouting criteria specified by EIT Food (Appendix 1). For the purpose of excluding Companies already known from the long-list, EIT Food will run a duplicate search on its CRM system.
- 3) At the end of the collaboration with the scouting agency, the number of « validated » LEADS (leads meeting the criteria specified in Appendix 1) should meet the targets defined in section 3.

Remuneration

Maximum budget per Small Region amounts to 6000€ net. Overall budget for this Call amounts to 18000 € net.

The remuneration is divided into 2 parts:

1. 50% of remuneration is paid upon signing the contract which covers delivery of 50% of LEADS.
2. The rest of the remuneration is paid once deadline for applications to Programs expires (preliminary deadline is set for mid of February 2024). The amount of rest of the remuneration is set proportionally by the number of LEADS validated by EIT Food above the delivery of LEADS covered in 1. part of the remuneration to the amount of set LEADS by the EIT Food per Small Region. To avoid doubts, the rest of the remuneration shall be paid upon delivery of more than 50% of set LEADS.

4. Proposal Process

4.1. Participation

The participation in this proposal procedure is open to all tenderers – we encourage especially freelancers and agencies to apply.

4.2. Submission of proposal

	Date
Publishing Call	24/11/2023
Deadline for submitting proposals	4/12/2023, 15:00 CET
Intended date of notification of results of the call	11/12/2023
Intended date of contract signature	15/12/2023
Intended date of starting work by agency	18/12/2023

Proposals must be emailed in English language and PDF format to the following addresses:

- Contact name: Pawel Ciach (Email: pawel.ciach@eitfood.eu)

The proposal shall contain:

- **A technical offer:** the description of services in conformity with the requirements specified in this document – taking into account the scope of work and deliverables
- **Working team, experience and knowledge:** The tenderer will have to provide a background of the persons proposed to deliver the work.
- **The financial offer** (the price for the services) is expressed as the total value of the overall service.

The proposal should not exceed 10 pages and should be concise and clear. The tenderer's proposal will be incorporated into any contract that results from this procedure. Tenderers are, therefore, cautioned not to make claims or statements that they are not prepared to commit to contractually.

The tenderer confirms that the individual submitting the natural or legal entity's proposal is duly authorized to bind its entity to the proposal as submitted.

Any incomplete proposal will be automatically deemed ineligible.

Terms of bidding

EIT Food is open for collaboration with 3 different agencies covering different Smaller Regions. However, agencies can apply for scouting to more than one Small Region.

The contract with the selected party/ies will be signed by EIT Food CLC NE sp. z o.o. with its office in Warsaw, Poland.

Working language between EIT Food and the contractor selected through this procedure will be English.

4.3. Validity of the proposals

Tenderers are bound by their proposals for 30 days after the deadline for submitting proposals or until they have been notified of non-award.

4.4. Costs for preparing proposals

No costs incurred by the tenderer in preparing and submitting the proposal are reimbursable. All such costs must be borne by the tenderer.

4.5. Evaluation of proposals

Selection criteria

All proposals will be evaluated considering the following criteria, related to the applicant's profile and experience:

1. The applicant has the necessary experience and expertise to deliver a project like this;
2. The applicant has the necessary capacity (working team) to deliver the project;
3. Methodology approach of project and proposed project implementation.
4. The proposed budget represents good value for money.

Each eligible applicant can receive a maximum of 100 points. Each selection criterion will be evaluated on a scale from 0 to 25:

- 0 – not satisfactory;
- 10 – satisfactory;
- 20 – good;
- 25 – very good.

The results of the proposal review (successful or unsuccessful) will be communicated in writing (via e-mail) to the successful and unsuccessful tenderers.

4.6. Appeals/complaints

Tenderers believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may file a complaint. Appeals should be addressed to EIT Food. The tenderers have 3 calendar days to file their complaints from the dispatch of the award notification e-mail. EIT Food will inform about the final decision within 3 calendar days.

4.7. Signature of contract

Within 5 days of receipt of the contract from EIT Food, the winning tenderer shall sign and date the contract and return it to EIT Food. Upon receipt, EIT Food shall countersign and return one signed copy of the contract to the winning tenderer.

Appendix 1. Overall Scouting criteria across programmes:

Scouting criteria common to Seedbed, FAN and RFS program are presented below:

- From a **purpose** point of view, target should be tech driven startups and teams (having a solution ready at lab proof of concept - TRL 4) operating in the agrifood space with a key contribution to the three EIT Food Missions mentioned in section 1:

Mission 1 – Healthier Lives through Food

Mission 2 – Net-Zero Food Systems

Mission 3 - A Fully Transparent, Resilient and Fair Food System

Some specific focus themes are given below. These are areas with a high potential to respond to the challenges associated to each of the above-mentioned missions. These should however be considered merely as references and are subject to modification (more detailed guidance will be given in actual Statement of Work):

- i. Achieving carbon positive farming & regenerative agriculture
 - a. Soil measurements
 - b. Biodiversity
 - c. Biofertilizers
 - d. Reduction of nitrate leaching, NPK Management.
 - e. Pesticides (biobased solutions, organic pesticides)

 - f. Water gels
 - g. Seeds
 - h. Alternative inputs
 - i. Water gels
 - j. Genomics on seeds
 - k. Carbon farming schemes
 - l. Bioestimulants
 - m. Animal Health (feed and monitoring)
 - n. Precision livestock farming (data applications, big data & AI)
 - o. Animal disease prevention + detection
 - p. Sustainable ingredients for feed
 - q. Crop resiliency (drought and pest)
 - r. No tillage sowing

- ii. Circular agrifood systems:
 - a. Novel ingredient extraction
 - b. Upcycling, extracting, valorising:
 - c. Biomass upcycling
 - d. Sidestream valorization
 - e. Food waste avoidance throughout the value chain (esp. unnecessary culling)
 - f. Upcycling to target healthier options or functionality
 - g. Upcycling of agricultural side-streams into higher value, functional or health food ingredients (e.g. conversion technologies) Non-wood-based fibers/paper solutions (derived from agricultural residues) and/or new technology approaches
 - h. CO2 conversion technologies & solutions

- iii. Scaling the alternative protein revolution:
 - a. Cellular Agriculture
 - b. Precision fermentation

- c. Mycellium
 - d. Novel extrusion processes
 - e. New agricultural science & technologies related to plant proteins (innovative plant based meat, dairy, seafood alternatives -better structured, better taste, not another consumer product!)
 - f. Plant proteins advanced crop extraction and processing technologies for superior application performance (taste, texture, sight, flavor, etc.)
 - g. Taste modification (reduction of off taste, texturization, etc)
- iv. Healthy food & food as medicine
- a. Gut microbiome
 - b. Nutraceuticals
 - c. Functional foods
 - d. Adaptogens
 - e. Natural sugar replacers
 - f. New fibers or proteins
 - g. Consumer food apps
 - h. New ingredients (that have price parity with sugar and salt, label simplification, higher functionality, clean label, extending shelf life and protecting foods and flavors)
 - i. Sustainable Fats & Lipids
 - j. Fermented protein (higher protein yields, EFSA approved proteins)
 - k. Sugar substitutes (alternative sweetener systems, soluble fibers) with good tolerance and safety
 - l. Food coloring (natural blues & reds)
 - m. Functional nutrition (elderly, sports and athletes, baby nutrition, hmo)
- v. Accelerating the tech revolution in agriculture
- a. New revenue streams for farmers
 - b. Automation & Robotics
 - c. Smart farming
 - d. Satellite/AI measurements
 - e. Irrigation tech
 - f. Remote sensors
 - g. Intelligent plant protection
 - h. Soil health and carbon monitoring
 - i. Pest and disease detection
 - j. Weed Control
 - k. Efficient use of resources (water, nitrogen)
 - l. Digital Farming
- vi. Food industry decarbonisation / sustainable manufacturing / biopackaging
- a. Novel CO2 reduction / decarbonisations technologies and solutions for industrial plants
 - b. Economical CO2 capture, utilization, storage and (microbial and enzymatic) conversion technologies - post-combustion CO2 capture and oxy-combustion technologies for existing fossil-based heat & power systems
 - c. Sustainable food packaging – compostable, biodegradable
 - i. Resistant to liquid products
 - ii. Not Loop or Reuse models

- vii. Food value chain innovations
 - a. Food preservation
 - b. Shelf-life extension
 - c. Coatings
 - d. Freshness tech/sensors
 - e. Retail tech
 - f. Tracking & tracing
- Focus on **B2B companies**, with a **robust innovation / technology component**
- Solutions should prove:
 - **Desirable** – count on a growing base of active early customers.
 - **Viable** – healthy business model which can make money at scale based on tested assumptions.
 - **Feasible** – working solutions that delivers on the Value Proposition.