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Request for EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs Implementing Participants Guidelines

IMP-RIS-2325-19153-02

EIT FOOD

Leuven, Belgium

December 2024

[Eitfood.eu](https://eitfood.eu)

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Call Fact Sheet

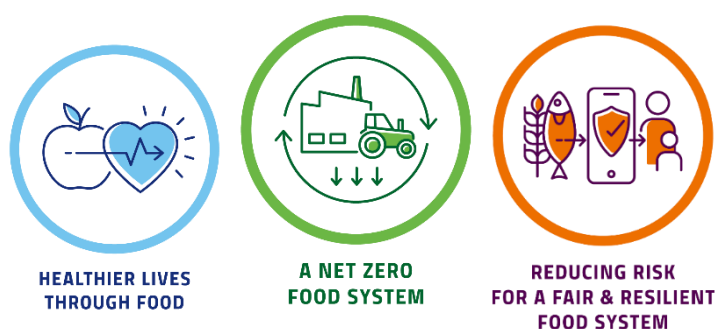
Title of Call	Request for EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs Implementing Participants
Objective and Scope	Selection of project participant for 2025
Call Deadline	4 February 2025, 11:00 am CET
Available Funding	31 250 EUR per each of 6 consortia selected (in total: 187 500 EUR)
Project Duration	March – December 2025
How to apply	LINK
Contact Information	Magdalena Zatorska magdalena.zatorska@uw.edu.pl

1. Introduction

EIT Food is the world's largest food innovation community, creating connections right across the food system. Supported by the European Union (EU), we invest in projects, organizations and individuals which share our goals for a healthy and sustainable food system.

We have built a unique not-for-profit business to carry out transformative programmes in skills, education, entrepreneurship, start-up investment and communications. We deliver these programmes in partnership with our members to create a culture and build a community which sees the long-term value in the food innovation we fund.

Our Missions



EIT Food's Missions respond to major societal challenges within the food system. The alignment of our chosen challenges towards United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and EU policy is detailed in our main funding [strategy document](#) agreed with EIT (European Institute of Innovation & Technology). For more about our Missions-led approach please visit [our website](#).

EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs is one of the largest food co-creation initiatives in Europe. In 2019-2024, the co-creation processes involved 130 consumer panels and 55 companies from 17 European countries, who worked together to design, develop and introduce to the market over 30 innovative food products. Consumer Engagement Labs are **co-creation processes** involving **consumers and producers**, based on innovative methodology developed by University of Warsaw. Each Labs

process engages a relatively coherent group of consumers, who jointly go through a multi-stage interactive process of ideation to develop proposals for new products that better address their specific needs. Unlike typical sensory panels and consumer surveys, the Labs do not involve testing of sample products but creation of innovative, yet non-existing combinations of product features and benefits. This is enabled by an interactive Labs format, creativity-stimulating techniques and opportunities to redesign food products without the need to master specialist vocabulary or possess detailed knowledge concerning ingredients or manufacturing processes. In 2025-2026, the methodology will be applied to **societal challenges**, linked to **targeted nutrition** and **protein diversification**. Labs will be implemented by **local consortia consisting of two jointly applying participants (scientific organizations and companies)**, selected in a call for participants and supported by experts from University of Warsaw. The activity will strengthen the dialogue between consumers and companies. The Labs make local players in the food system more aware of specific needs of selected consumer segments, establish trust-based dialogue, offer the consumers an opportunity to voice concerns and propose new solutions that better address their needs as well as motivate local companies to develop dedicated products. The activity impacts will also be linked to the **reduction of adult obesity and food-related non-communicable diseases** through its focus on **targeted nutrition** and **protein diversification**. New products co-created with consumers will spur the wave of innovations in the market, showcasing the market potential and encouraging companies to consider the specific needs of selected groups of consumers.

The activity continues the successful format of Consumer Engagement Labs, using the innovative co-creation methodology tested, modified and refined in 2019-2024. The Labs make local food system actors more aware of specific needs of selected consumer groups, establishing trust-based dialogue, offering the consumers an opportunity to propose new products that better address their needs. The Labs encourage local companies to introduce to the market new food products and stimulate cooperation between startups, academics and food companies. The methodology relies on insights from anthropology and psychology of creative processes, and food-related behaviours. The sessions are interactive and engaging, enabling non-expert consumers to modify features of their preferred foods, to reconceptualize approaches to dietary needs and to develop non-existing combinations of features and benefits. The activity puts strong emphasis on dissemination and exploitation of project results, and enhances the understanding of needs of consumers among food producers in various countries, encouraged to develop dedicated products.

2. Adding Implementing Participants to EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs

2.1. Description of Activities

This EIT Food Request for Implementing Participants has the objective of recruiting participants to join an existing consortium tasked with implementing EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs.

Participants are recruited in this call to join the project and implement consumer co-creation processes in Q1-2'2025 that will result in design and development of new food products that will be introduced to the market in 2025-2026. Applications are sought from **local consortia, consisting of two participants: a scientific organization and a food company**, jointly applying to implement the

local co-creation process of Consumer Engagement Labs in their country and assume the respective roles in orchestrating the local co-creation workshops (**work package 1 – scientific organizations**) and development of new products based on ideas co-created with consumers (**work package 2 – food companies**).

EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs aim to **support up to six consortia in 2025**, delivering 1 co-creation process per consortium.

Work package 1: Consumer co-creation (participants: scientific organizations)

Co-creation sessions with consumers will be implemented in the targeted countries, based on Consumer Engagement Labs methodology developed by University of Warsaw. Each creative process will be orchestrated by **a local scientific organization** with the participation of **a local food company**, aiming to address a **specific, identified societal challenge** that could be addressed by the development of **new food products**. Each challenge will be defined by local activity partners in their application to join the project. Challenges might refer e.g. to specific health/nutrition problems experienced by consumers, needs of vulnerable consumer groups that are currently overlooked by companies or desires to enhance the use of healthy ingredients. Selection of challenges addressed by Labs processes will be evidence-based, rooted in scientific or market research, and aligned with **impact pathways prioritized by EIT Food**. Consumer Engagement Labs methodology has been validated as universally applicable in multiple creative contexts and offers opportunities for co-creation of various food product categories or food packaging through the engagement of diverse consumer audiences. Target: 6 parallel Labs processes organized in 2025. Labs will use local languages and will be implemented by local participant organizations, receiving training and mentoring from University of Warsaw. Each local Labs process will engage approximately 4 groups of consumers, selected based on specific criteria, consistent with the methodological guidance. The process will be led by expert facilitators from the local scientific organization and involve multiple creative meetings with consumers, culminating in the generation of new product proposals, presentations by consumer teams and evaluation of proposals. The food company will analyse, select and refine the most promising product idea as the basis for new product development. Within each targeted country, communication and dissemination activities will be implemented by participants, who will act as important communication channels with local stakeholders, including scientific, industrial, governmental and non-governmental organizations. The local level dissemination activities will leverage guidelines and templates for online and print communication, social media and press relations to outline benefits of the activity and visual identity standards. Good practices of consumer engagement will be promoted, alongside recommended approaches to consumers and food product development. Participants will ensure outreach to industrial stakeholders through the attendance of thematic agri-food events, presentations of project results at EIT Food events (including events organized by EIT Food Hubs), selected regional trade shows and events targeting citizens.

Work package 2: New product development (participants: food companies)

Local food companies participate in selected steps of consumer co-creation sessions organized by the local scientific partner responsible for each Labs process. Afterwards, they carry out proposal screening looking for commercially feasible product concepts, analysing and expanding proposals put forward by consumers. The selected, commercially feasible products will undergo further in-house R&D/product development efforts to reach higher technology readiness levels and be tested on the market. **Each company-participant will be expected to introduce one new product on the market and leverage consumer insights from co-creation processes to improve/enhance one existing product or its packaging.** This shall be confirmed by new/enhanced product **sales of at least 10k EUR**

within a year following the co-creation sessions in a given country. Target: 6 parallel Labs processes organized in 2025 (total of 6 companies). Companies will be supported with guidance, mentoring, competitive product benchmarking, collaboration with retail networks and consumer insights to increase the likelihood of market success of these new products. Participant companies will also engage in communication and dissemination activities within the targeted countries, leveraging communication guidelines and templates, ensuring compliance with visual identity standards.

Consumer Engagement Labs are expected to yield the following **outcomes**:

- Establishing dialogue with **consumer groups overlooked by food industry**, who will be empowered as change agents, communicate their needs with companies and outline ideas for new products;
- Proposals for **new product concepts** generated in the Labs will spur frugal innovations, developed and tested by local companies;
- Stimulating the innovative capacity by the involvement of scientific organizations and food producers;
- Diffusion of novel methodology for consumer insights and generation of **innovative food and beverage concepts** among universities and companies, allowing them to build capacity, adapt the approaches also to other consumer segments and thus strengthen the trust of consumers in food-related innovations;
- Support to local organizations, including funding, know-how sharing, mentoring throughout the process of new product commercialization and establishing cross-country partnerships of producers and retailers working to meet the demands of food consumers;
- Focusing the attention of stakeholders on the importance and characteristics of consumers;
- Encouraging future innovations better addressing selected segments of the market, in particular in the fields of **targeted nutrition** and **protein diversification**.

The ultimate objective measured by Key Performance Indicators is the successful market introduction of new food products, leveraging consumer insights that result from the co-creation processes. Each local consortium, consisting of two participants – a scientific organization and a food company – is required to select a commercially viable new product idea, preparing the commercial exploitation plan in 2025, introduce the product to the market and document sales of at least 10k€ in 2026.

Additional information about EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs is available on the project website at: <https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/ris-consumer-engagement-labs>. Examples of products created by EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs in 2019-2022 – detailed factsheets/product leaflets describing challenges addressed by each product are available on project website: <https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/ris-consumer-engagement-labs>. Videos presenting selected aspects of the Labs methodology and results are available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@eitfood-uw>, including a multimedia introduction to the present call: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4tHef4FKg8>. You can also find additional updates about the project at the LinkedIn page of the activity leader, the Centre for Socially Responsible Innovations, Faculty of Management, University of Warsaw: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/86798236/>

2.2. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

All **EIT Food funded** projects should achieve relevant Core Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

For the EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs, the main KPIs are:

Code	KPI	KPI Definition
EITHE02	Innovations launched on the market	<p>[EITHE02.1] Number of all innovations introduced on the market during the KAVA duration or within 3 years after completion. Innovations include new or significantly improved products (goods or services) sold.</p> <p>[EITHE02.4] Number of innovations introduced on the market during the KAVA duration or within 3 years after completion with a sales revenue of at least 10 000 EUR documented. NB: Innovations introduced on the market must be directly linked with the KAVA and reported in the year when they reached the first revenue (but not later than three years after completion of the KAVA).</p> <p>[EITHE02.2-EITRIS] – EIT RIS # products or processes (asper EITHE02.1 definition) launched on the market by organisations from the EIT RIS countries</p>

Please note: At the end of the funding period, EIT Food requires specific structured data and documentation to verify the achievement of KPIs. Grantees must report their KPI achievements through the grant management tool and ensure that all required structured data and supporting evidence is submitted in accordance with the guidelines provided (see [EIT Food KPI Guidance Document](#) for details).

3. Description of Role & Profile

3.1 Role

Detailed tasks of the participant – **scientific organization**:

1. Responsibility for the organization and delivery of sessions with 4 consumer teams in the country of operations in 2025, using the methodology developed and shared by University of Warsaw and involving at least 2 expert facilitators (1 per 2 consumer teams);
2. Ensuring involvement of the other member of the consortium (food producer) in selected Labs sessions;
3. Selection of consumers-participants of the Labs session to ensuring the participation of at least 20 consumers matching the selection criteria;
4. Communication with consumers-participants of the Labs session in the local language;
5. Ensuring the signatures of attendance lists and legal consent forms by consumers-participants of the Labs compliant with GDPR, organizational procedures for personal data protection and EIT reporting requirements;
6. Organization of the Labs sessions for 4 teams of around 5 consumers each, altogether 20 consumers, in 2025 (sessions include online meetings of ~2 hours for each team, distributed over a period of several weeks) including: logistics of the online workshop (using video conferencing software, with workshop scripts, facilitator guidelines, templates and materials provided by University of Warsaw in English, requiring translation into local language);
7. Facilitation of the Labs session based on guidance provided by University of Warsaw, using the standard workshop scripts, templates and materials and offering technical support for participants to enable their active participation (including a technical orientation preceding the Labs sessions);
8. Preparation of the documentation of Labs sessions and results;
9. Involvement in the process of selecting the most technically viable and commercially feasible new product concept co-created by consumers;
10. Communicating with media (newspapers, industry or thematic magazines, specialist Internet portals) to ensure at least 1 publication in the local language describing the project, the Labs and their outcomes, published in 2025, consistent with EIT Food visual identity standards and project reporting requirements (each consortium partner is obliged to ensure 1 publication, 2 publications in total per consortium);
11. Submitting the required inputs into project deliverables (project reporting) including details on organization of the Labs, data on participants, descriptions of the creative process, summaries of results and lessons learned. Detailed instructions and templates will be provided by University of Warsaw;
12. Participation in the final debriefing session (online) with University of Warsaw to discuss the project experiences and lessons learned.

Detailed tasks of the participant – **food company**:

1. Participation in selected sessions of Consumer Engagement Labs to present the company and work alongside consumers on new product proposals;
2. Offering tokens of gratitude for ~20 consumers participating in the Labs session (e.g. shopping vouchers, sets of food products), with a view to incentivize the participation of consumers (please note that the access to these incentives should not require consumers to enrol into loyalty programs, share personal data or install dedicated software applications);
3. Planning for commercial exploitation of results of the Labs by screening for commercially feasible product concepts;
4. Selection of one new food product concept co-created by consumers participating in the Labs session that will be commercialized, with the commitment to introduce the product on the market, following the branding/visual identity guidelines defined by EIT/EIT Food (the development and marketing of the product will not be funded by this project and is the responsibility of the subcontractor);
5. Submitting “Report on the new product concept selected for commercialization” (providing details of 1 new product concept selected for market introduction and commercialization plans) in 2025 – detailed instructions and report templates are provided by the University of Warsaw;
6. Participation in the debriefing session with the team from the University of Warsaw to discuss the project experiences and lessons learned;
7. Introducing to the market 1 new food product based on “Report on the new product concept selected for commercialization” in 2025-2026, with documented sales results of at least 10k€ by 2026;
8. Communicating with media (newspapers, industry or thematic magazines, specialist Internet portals) to ensure at least 1 publication in the local language describing the project, the Labs and their outcomes, published in 2025, consistent with EIT Food visual identity standards and project reporting requirements (each consortium partner is obliged to ensure 1 publication, 2 publications in total per consortium);
9. Participation in the debriefing session with the team from University of Warsaw to discuss the project experiences and lessons learned.

Product proposals co-created by consumers as part of Consumer Engagement Labs will be followed up by subsequent design, development, market testing and commercialization activities by companies. **Each participant-food company is required to introduce to the market one new product, designed as the outcome of the Labs/consumer co-creation process in 2025-2026 and document product sales of at least 10k€ by 2026.** Each Labs process implemented by a local consortium is directly linked to EIT Key Performance Indicators EITHE 02.4: innovations introduced on the market with sales revenues of at least 10k€. **Failure to introduce a new product on the market in 2025-2026 or lack of evidence of 10k€+ sales revenues in 2026 might render all costs incurred by local participants in the affected country ineligible or result in proportional reduction of funding for the local participants.**

Additional requirements: communication and dissemination

Each participant will prepare inputs into communication and dissemination plan, covering local activities in its own country. Participants will maintain dialogue with media, briefing journalists about the Lab process, preparing news releases and presenting good practices of consumer engagement. This outreach is expected to contribute to popular publications, presenting the project. Project will also be promoted on websites of participants and EIT Food, and posts will be shared via social media. Dissemination of results of the Labs process is also planned, involving outreach to relevant stakeholders (including government/regulators) and publication of consumer co-created concepts. Good practice descriptions will serve as a blueprint for EIT Food partners and stakeholders.

Additional requirements: diversity dimension

Diversity will be ensured in the composition of project team on multiple levels. The activity is implemented by international participants from multiple countries. Project teams will strive to ensure **gender balance** in the overall team composition and within sub-teams delegated to the project by individual consortium partners. Consumers participating in the Labs will also be selected in a manner maximizing diversity, especially as this aspect will strengthen the validity of Labs outcomes. Activity contents will thus promote diversity in ethnicity (with consumers from multiple countries), gender (avoiding lack of balance in the shares of women and men participating in Labs), social status (incl. education, family status/size) and economic status (incl. purchasing power). These aspects were included among consumer selection criteria used to maximize diversity in each group of participants. Participants will use guidance and training to support the above-described diversity aspects in selection of consumers and implementation of the Labs methodology.

Additional requirements: financial sustainability

The activity is primarily focused on empowering consumers and increasing the degree of consumer sovereignty through open and constructive dialogue between food producers and consumers, increasing the importance of consumer wishes and co-created proposals for new products. Creative processes of Consumer Engagement Labs will be focused on addressing specific inefficiencies of the food market, such as: overlooked but vulnerable groups of consumers, distorted nutritional habits, limited commercial interests in healthy and sustainable food options. The activities will involve local food producers with sales levels relatively lower than multinational food companies, but will help them better understand and serve the needs of consumers. Funding allocated per each company/country-level Labs process will be complemented by private funding for product design and development, and the activity is expected to create a momentum to transform the food sector and set good examples for other companies in the targeted RIS countries. The activity aims to deepen the public engagement, make the consumer voice heard and respected, and address important societal challenges, while monetization/profit-making will not be among the primary objectives. At the same time, Consumer Engagement Labs have potential to induce contributions towards future financial sustainability of EIT Food, by involving food companies, supporting their new product development efforts, inspiring future project proposals that could be submitted in the innovation pillar, business creation pillar or other activities. Pathways for financial sustainability will be discussed with the participating companies and will be explicitly addressed in the future exploitation planning, especially as the Labs process directly stimulates follow-up investments (from private sources) needed to develop and introduce to market new products, proposed by consumers, and thus strengthens EIT Food regional outreach.

4. Funding

4.1 Funding overview

The total budget for this call is 187 500 EUR.

Implementing participant recipients will receive a subgrant to fund their cost. This is cascade funding:

- Participation in the KAVA is from March 2025-December 2025
- Maximum funding for that period per participant-scientific organization is: 18,750€
- Maximum funding for that period per participant-food company is: 12,500€

There is a 6 million EUR limit per participants from Member States of the European Union (EU) and from [Horizon Europe Associate Countries](#) for the 3-year business plan. Legal entities from non- Horizon Europe Associate countries can participate in consortia but are limited to funding of 60 000 over 3 years. This KAVA is implemented under GA 01101912. In those limits are included all the EIT Funding awarded to an organization across all the activities and prizes for the 3-year grant agreement.

The Subgrant is based on actual costs and value for money. All costs, need to comply with Horizon Europe regulations regarding the eligibility of expenses. Please refer to Article 6 of the [Model Grant Agreement](#) and the [Annotated Model Grant Agreement](#).

4.2 Indicative budgets

Participants will confirm in their applications how their detailed budget is split into specific cost categories (either by accepting the proposed, indicative budgets listed below, or by suggesting another distribution of the costs divided into costs of personnel, travel and purchases).

Indicative budget of scientific organization: 18,750€

- Personnel costs: 10,000€, ~0.4 FTE
- Travel and subsistence: 1,000€
- Cost of other goods, works and services: 4,000€
- Indirect costs @ 25%: 3,750€

Indicative budget of food company: 12,500€

- Personnel costs: 5,000€, ~0.2 FTE
- Travel and subsistence: 1,000€
- Cost of other goods, works and services: 4,000€
- Indirect costs @ 25%: 2,500€

Cost justifications (definition of eligible expenses that can be reported in each category, in accordance with the project work plan):

- **Personnel costs:** All participants apply their standard personnel remuneration practices, allocating time of their employees to this project. The personnel include researchers involved in the implementation of the CEL methodology, supporting the organization of consumer

engagement and corporate dialogue as well as performing tasks related to exploitation and dissemination of results.

- **Travel and subsistence:** Implementation of the Labs and commercialization of new products will require travel of project personnel from participant organizations. Planned trips include: consortium meetings, visits to support the organization of consumer engagement sessions and meetings with companies to support the new product development. Furthermore, travel will include dissemination activities at events. Travel costs will be incurred in accordance with travel policies of partners and national regulations, with a view to ensure cost efficiency by using economy class/low-cost airfares/2nd class railway travel and minimizing expenses through selection of optimal travel options.
- **Costs of other goods, works and services:** Activity participants will incur expenses related to: organization of consumer co-creation processes (incl. consumer recruitment fees, logistics and organization of workshops, facilitation of creative processes), goods and services linked to new product development and product testing, as well as dissemination activities including online communication, open access publishing fees, preparation and printing of materials, media relations and industrial outreach at agri-food events, trade-shows and EIT Food events. Purchases of goods and services will follow value-for-money principles and comply with organizational procurement standards.

Expenditures or cost categories not corresponding to the above-listed cost justifications will not be considered eligible for EIT funding in this activity.

5. Application Preparation, Submission & Evaluation

5.1 Timeline

Application Open	3 January 2025
Application Close	4 February 2025, 11:00 am CET
Evaluation	4 February – 14 February 2025
Communication of evaluation results to selected participants	14 February 2025
Standstill period, Onboarding, Validation and Contracting	16 March 2025
Indicative start of project implementation	17 March 2025

The standstill period is a set time after funding selection for appeals, final administrative checks, and compliance in the award process. The project cannot start before this period. The standstill period of 30 days applies to this call.

5.2 Who can apply?

Funding for this Request for Implementing Participants is available to organizations from Member States of the European Union (EU) and from [Horizon Europe Associate Countries](#) that are [covered by the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme \(RIS\)](#):

- **EU Member States:** Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia
- **Horizon Europe Associated Countries:** Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, Ukraine
- **Outermost Regions:** Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion, Martinique, Mayotte and Saint-Martin (France), the Azores and Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain)

5.3 Application Submission

Applications must be submitted via Salesforce ([LINK](#)) no later than the call deadline.

6. Eligibility, Evaluation and Selection Process

6.1 Eligibility

Please read Annex 1 carefully, in addition to the following eligibility criteria:

Organization Eligibility	Each implementing participant must:
All participants	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be a legally incorporated entity in one of the EU or Horizon Europe eligible countries listed above for a minimum of 3 years. 2. Operate in a country covered by the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS). 3. Provide a PIC Number: https://www.eitfood.eu/files/PIC-Guidance.pdf 4. Comply with requests for documents during due diligence/validation. 5. For participants-scientific organizations: operate as higher education institute or research institute. 6. For participants-food companies: be a food producer - company manufacturing food products (NACE2 code: C10), focused on food products for end consumers. 7. For participants that participated in previous editions of EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs (2019-2023): the product co-created by consumers has been successfully developed and introduced to the market, with product sales reporting submitted to the activity leader latest on the day of submitting the application.
Application Eligibility	Eligible applications must:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be complete, with all mandatory supporting documents uploaded. 2. Be submitted jointly by two applicants from the same country – a scientific organization and a food company. 3. Be submitted on time via Salesforce (add link), in English.

Equal opportunity: The call is open to all applicants, including those without an existing partnership agreement with EIT Food. All members of the KIC Partnership (as defined in the Partnership Agreement) shall have equal opportunity to participate in this funding opportunity.

6.2 Evaluation Process

All submitted applications will undergo an eligibility check and evaluation to determine their feasibility and suitability for funding.

During the eligibility check, if EIT Food identifies obvious or technical errors in a proposal, applicant will have the opportunity to correct or resubmit their proposal within three (3) calendar days following the call submission deadline. Such errors may include system malfunctions, typos, or missing supporting documents.

The correction window is intended to ensure that these issues do not unduly affect the evaluation of otherwise eligible proposals. Please note that this opportunity is strictly limited to rectifying technical errors and does not permit substantive modifications to the proposal content.

The evaluation will be conducted by at least 2 external evaluators and 1 internal evaluator.

6.2.1. Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria and weighting will be used in the assessment:

Category	Description	Score
<i>Demonstrable fit for the role</i> 30%	Evidence that the applicant scientific organization has the hands-on experience for the role as described above, possessing the relevant knowledge, skills, resources and experiences needed to carry out the tasks – organize and facilitate new food co-creation processes with the involvement of consumers and producer company (including previous experiences in delivering workshops with consumers, focus group interviews, participatory workshops or co-creation processes, based on qualitative research methods).	0-5
<i>Impact</i> 30%	Societal, economic and environmental impacts related to the specific societal challenge indicated in the application that would be addressed by the applicants through the proposed co-creation process in their country (including specific consumer segments such as vulnerable groups, nutritional needs overlooked by food producers, societal benefits resulting from the design and commercialisation of new products addressing the challenge/target consumer segment). Importantly, this criterion also includes the likelihood of developing a successful consumer-driven food innovation in the selected food product category, consumer segment and societal challenge (potential to leverage insights and creativity of non-expert consumers during co-creation sessions to proposed significantly new food products that might be developed and introduced to the market by the participating company).	0-5
<i>Market prospects</i> 40%	Market prospects of the selected product category (including: estimated size of the market, demonstrated consumer demand, intensity of existing competition and potential to develop	0-5

	innovative solutions that would be attractive for consumers), combined with commercial potential of the participant-food company (including: its existing revenues, successful product marketing activities, access to retail channels, breadth of the existing portfolio of food products, as well as fit between the selected product type and experiences of the company).	
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Each evaluation sub-criterion will be scored from 1 to 5 using the following scoring system.

The quality threshold for selection is a total weighted score of 3.5. The top highest-scoring applications will be selected.

Score		Description
1	Poor	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses
2	Fair	Application broadly addresses the criterion but there are significant weaknesses
3	Good	Application addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present
4	Very good	Application addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present
5	Excellent	Application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

All applicants will be alerted in writing to the outcome of their proposal.

The recipients of EIT Funding must take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action and, where applicable, in line with the gender equality plan. They must aim, to the extent possible, for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level.

6.3 Appeal on Evaluation Results

Applicants can submit an appeal within 5 days of result receipt, if:

- The evaluation of their proposal has not been carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in this document.

For more details, please read [EIT Food Redress Mechanism](#).

7. Administrative Items

7.1 Onboarding

Entities that have never been part of projects funded by the EIT Food and that do not have a PIC validated by the Research Executive Agency (REA) of the European Commission will be subject to a PIC validation process managed by the EIT Community Onboarding Service. All validated entities will proceed with the signature of legal agreements with EIT Food.

As part of the onboarding process, selected entities must:

- Sign and submit the Declaration of Size.
- Sign and submit the Financial Information Form.
- Register on EIT Food grants management platform.

Additionally, EIT Food reserves the right to request to the EIT Community Onboarding Service a Financial Assessment Capacity to check the financial capacity of any entity of a selected proposal. In such case, EIT Food may require:

- an enhanced financial responsibility regime, i.e. joint and several liability for all subgrantees or joint and several liabilities of Affiliated Entities if any
- prefinancing paid in instalments (multiple/additional prefinancing)
- (one or more) prefinancing guarantees

or

- propose no prefinancing or
- request that the entity be replaced or, if needed, might reject the entire proposal

In other words, if the assessment results are not satisfactory, the EIT Food might reject the participation of this entity and will then check whether the proposal is still eligible.

For further information on the project implementation, please read the [EIT Food Activity Implementation Guidelines for Participants](#).

7.2. Legal Documents to be signed

Selected applicants will receive a second communication with instructions regarding the completion of the following documents, as well as agreeing to EIT Food's conflict of interest policy.

To be signed between the participant and EIT Food:

- A. **Framework Agreement**
- B. **Kava Contract**

It is highly recommended that this document be signed by all members of the consortium:

Consortium Agreement. It is suggested to consider using the [DESCA](#) model as a framework for the consortium agreement.

Any other legal agreements to make this grant eligible.

7.3 Payment Schedule

EIT Food will transfer funding in instalments. A proportion of the Activity budget will be prefinanced, with subsequent payments being linked to the completion of deliverables and accountable KPIs. The majority of the grant will be transferred at the end of the Activity, once eligible costs have been determined and following the completion of final Activity reporting and the fulfilment of all obligations specified in the Project Agreement.

Please note: the amount and timing of funding is dependent on the dispersal of funds to EIT Food from the EIT.

7.4 Monitoring

The project will be monitored and may be audited. All Activities selected for funding undergo continuous monitoring by EIT Food to ensure effective progress and implementation in accordance with the Project Agreement.

EIT Food will request regular reporting of actual costs incurred with the subgrant, as well as regular reporting of KPIs and Deliverables, together with the supporting documentation. The monitoring process may result in an amendment to the Activity workplan and/or budget, however the Financial Return Mechanism Agreement cannot be re-negotiated following the approval of the Activity.

In the case of under-performance, significant delay of implementation, misconduct, misalignment with the project specifications in the grant management system or any other reason jeopardizing the timely implementation of the Activity identified during the monitoring process, EIT Food reserves the right to discontinue or restructure the funding of the Activity at any point during the Activity duration.

7.5 Support

In case the applicants require additional information or clarifications, these should be addressed to the person indicated below. All communication between EIT Food and applicants is only possible in writing, all requests will be done and answered by e-mail only. All questions should be sent prior to application deadline.

Contact name: Magdalena Zatorska, University of Warsaw – magdalena.zatorska@uw.edu.pl.

ANNEX 1 – Eligibility

Please Note:

1. Failing any of the above call specific criteria will make your application ineligible. If an applicant is ineligible, the participant will be informed.

2. [According to EU policies and measures](#), Russian entities will not be authorised to participate in any new grant under the EU Research and Innovation programmes. This ban applies not only to their potential participation as beneficiaries, but to their potential participation in any kind of role: beneficiaries, linked third parties/affiliated entities, subcontractors, in-kind contributors, international partners/associated partners, and third parties receiving financial support. Find the full statement from the European Commission [here](#).

3. Pursuant to Article 2 (2) of the [Decision 2022/2506](#) of 15 December 2022 on measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary *where the Commission implements the Union budget in direct or indirect management pursuant to of Article 62(1) points (a) and (c), of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, no legal commitments shall be entered into with any public interest trust established on the basis of the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity maintained by such a public interest trust*. This prohibition applies to financial support to third parties (sub-grants and prizes), hence the proposal of any entity or group of entities where a Participant is included in the list of public interest trusts shall be considered as not eligible.

4. Applicants will be deemed ineligible if:

a. bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, where its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business Activities are suspended, or where it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national laws or regulations;

b. it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the organisation is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the applicable law;

c. it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the organisation is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the organisation belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes a wrongful intent or gross negligence;

d. is found to be attempting to influence the decision-making process of the call during the process;

e. attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon its undue advantages in the call process;

f. it has been established by a final judgment that the organisation is guilty of fraud, corruption or money laundering.