Call for expression of interest to participate in "EIT Food RIS Public Sector Representatives Activity Line (PSRAL)", 2023

> **EIT Food is looking for 5 scientific organisations that would participate in EIT Food RIS Public Sector Representatives Activity Line project.**
>   **Application deadline:** *14 March 2023, 11 am CET.*
>   **Application template:** *see Annex.*
>   **Applications are invited from countries:** *Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine.*
> *Further details about EIT Food can be found at: www.eitfood.eu. More information about the EIT Food RIS PSRAL educational programs coordinated by University of Warsaw are available at:*
> *- EIT Food InfraBooster (formally known as EIT Food RIS Research Infrastructure Network): https://www.eitfood.eu/education/courses/ris-research-infrastructure-network,*
> *- EIT Food Government Executive Academy: https://gea.eitfood.eu &*
> *https://www.eitfood.eu/education/courses/ris-government-executive-academy.*

1. Background information

1.1. EIT Food

EIT Food is one of the largest and most impactful food-related initiatives worldwide. As part 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 members have a strong belief that the food sector needs to be transformed and that this can only be achieved by reconnecting partners within the food sector and by giving the consumer a more central role.

1.2. EIT Food RIS Public Sector Representatives Activity Line (PSRAL)

EIT Food RIS Public Sector Representatives Activity Line ("EIT Food RIS PSRAL", "Project" or "Activity") delivers capacity building and professional education to representatives of public sector in countries of EIT Regional Innovation Scheme in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe. It provides insights into new agri-food technologies, mission-oriented innovation policies for food system and best practices in leveraging publicly funded research infrastructures for industrially oriented R&D and

entreneurship. PSRAL consists of two interlinked educational programs. **EIT Food InfraBooster** promotes effective use of publicly funded research infrastructures owned by universities or research institutes and relevant for R&D efforts of private sector agri-food companies and startups. **EIT Food Government Executive Academy** encourages policy makers from national and regional authorities to enhance innovative policies in accordance with agri-food trends, best practices and opportunities for international collaboration.

Further details about EIT Food can be found at: www.eitfood.eu. More information about the EIT Food RIS PSRAL educational programs coordinated by University of Warsaw are available at:

• EIT Food InfraBooster: https://www.eitfood.eu/education/courses/ris-research-infrastructure-network,

• EIT Food Government Executive Academy: https://gea.eitfood.eu & https://www.eitfood.eu/education/courses/ris-government-executive-academy.

Multimedia introduction to the present call: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxSkoco4H5M

1.3. Expected outcomes for the economy and the society

The Activity enables public sectors in RIS countries to drive the societal and economic transformation towards sustainable, circular economies and modernized food systems, ready to face the international competition. EIT Food InfraBooster will maximize the effective use of research infrastructures, established thanks to public funding and create cross-border and in-country connections between science and industry to promote the existing infrastructures for industrial R&D and entrepreneurship. EIT Food Government Executive Academy will ensure that regional and national policies take into account agri-food related societal challenges, acknowledging the potential of innovative technologies, addressing new regulatory challenges and encouraging developments of local agri-food innovations. This will further lead to new job creation, increased competitiveness of industrial companies and improvements in scientific excellence of local research organisations.

The Activity will strengthen the innovative potential of RIS countries by developing capacities of public sector representatives and transferring knowledge related to agri-food technologies and innovation policies, supporting the development of Smart Specialisation Strategies and mission-oriented policies that address societal challenges. It will reduce the knowledge gap between policy markers in RIS and non-RIS countries, promoting the innovation agenda of EIT Food among ministries, regulators, funding agencies and other public sector organisations. In particular, these outcomes will be achieved through the delivery of EIT Food InfraBooster and EIT Food Government Executive Academy, in particular: educational activities aimed at promoting the effective use of publicly funded research infrastructures for agri-food sector. The Activity will also establish direct synergies between EIT Food activities and other EU-funded support programs in RIS countries.

2. Tasks implemented by Project Participants

2.1. Rationale for this call

Selected activities of "EIT Food RIS Public Sector Representatives Activity Line" will be implemented with the support of dedicated local Project Participants. The present call is launched by University of Warsaw to identify potential Project Participants (scientific organisations) from RIS countries. In 2023, the Project Participants will benefit from Project funding to carry out their tasks based on Horizon Europe rules. The Project Participants will have a precisely defined workplan, linked to the timeline of Project activities. Project Participants are recruited in 2023 through this call, open to scientific organizations from RIS countries. The selected Project Participants will contribute to the development and organisation of educational activities for public sector representatives. They will leverage experiences in effective management of publicly funded research infrastructures for agri-food sector in RIS countries.

Project Participants will be selected to match specific needs of the educational programs, incl. delivery of educational modules and mentoring of participants, and start Activity involvement in 2023 with precisely defined roles in the programs and budgets corresponding to the tasks. Following the performance evaluation by the end of 2023, the roles and budgets can be further extended for 2024-2025 editions of the programs, or new Project Participants could be recruited through another open call for 2024-2025.

2.2. Work package 1: EIT Food InfraBooster

EIT Food InfraBooster will help universities and research institutes from RIS countries leverage their publicly funded research infrastructures for agri-food sector. It aims to boost the use of research infrastructures for industrially oriented research, contract R&D, entrepreneurial activities of startups/spin-offs and cross-border collaboration. InfraBooster will leverage previous experiences of EIT Food RIS RIN (Research Infrastructure Network). It will be delivered as multi-stage modular education program, including: online modules (synchronous, using interactive techniques and teamwork), mentoring for participant teams, project assignments and optional in-person sessions that enhance the opportunities for networking and participant interactions. InfraBooster modules will target selected audiences from public scientific organizations in RIS countries: (a) infrastructure managers, technology brokers and research officers overseeing the investments, R&D management and exploitation approaches at universities and research institutes; (b) scientists and technicians working with specialist research infrastructures for agri-food sector and adjacent fields that might be commercially relevant for agri-food companies (such as health and environmental sciences). InfraBooster will strive to comply with the future EIT label for professional and executive education, once the detailed requirements are communicated. Each stage and module of the program will be focused on delivering specific learning outcomes, verified through competence assessment by means of formal project assignments. InfraBooster will be delivered in 3 annual cycles, 2023-2025.

2.3. Work package 2: EIT Food Government Executive Academy

EIT Food Government Executive Academy (GEA) will help public sector organizations from RIS countries strengthen their regional/national innovation policies related to agri-food, in particular: explore the potential of publicly funded research infrastructures for agri-food sector and liaise with universities, research institutes and companies to enhance the use of infrastructures to promote regional development and innovation. GEA will leverage previous experiences of EIT Food GEA program, delivered by University of Warsaw 2018-2022. It will offer synergies with EIT Food InfraBooster, targeting the following audiences from public sector organizations in RIS countries: (a) national/regional authorities such as ministries, funding agencies and regulatory bodies overseeing Research & Innovation policies and R&I funding; (b) top-level management of universities and research institutes. GEA will be delivered as modular education program, including: online modules (synchronous, using interactive techniques and teamwork), mentoring for participant teams, project assignments and optional in-person sessions that enhance the opportunities for networking and participant interactions. GEA will strive to comply with the future EIT label for professional and executive education, once the detailed requirements are communicated. The program will be focused on delivering specific learning outcomes, verified through competence assessment by means of formal project assignments. GEA will be delivered in 3 annual cycles, 2023-2025.

2.4. Detailed tasks of the participant

Project Participants (scientific organizations) from RIS countries will be selected to support the delivery of EIT Food InfraBooster and EIT Food Government Executive Academy by means of teaching, mentoring and communication activities.

Project Participants will be invited to contribute the following expertise:
a) lessons learned in effective management of agri-food research infrastructures at universities or research institutes;
b) successful experiences in technology transfer and science-industry collaboration, taking into account limitations imposed by regulatory frameworks of RIS countries and funding modalities of EU structural funds/ESIF;
c) domain knowledge related to infrastructures used for R&D projects in specific segments of the food system.

Furthermore, they will be expected to have a wide network of contacts with public sector organizations in RIS countries (national government – ministries, agencies - and regional authorities), as well as scientific organizations owning agri-food research infrastructures (universities and public research institutes), as the network will need to be leveraged for communication activities (scouting for potential applicants to the educational programs).

Detailed tasks of the Project Participants:
- Responsibility for delivery of selected teaching segments/parts of educational modules of EIT Food InfraBooster and EIT Food Government Executive Academy (based on relevant

experiences and domain knowledge, and using the guidance provided by the University of Warsaw as Activity leader);

- Support and mentoring of EIT Food InfraBooster teams – scientists, technicians and infrastructure managers from scientific institutions, owning specialist agri-food research infrastructures for which potential commercial uses will be explored (incl. rental, contract research or other collaboration opportunities with specific types of agri-food companies);
- Communication activities/scouting for potential applicants to educational programs, leveraging a wide network of contacts with public sector organizations in own country and potentially also other RIS countries (national governments – ministries, agencies; regional authorities), as well as scientific organizations owning agri-food research infrastructures (universities and public research institutes);
- Participation in recruitment, selection and evaluation processes of applicants and individual participants of the educational programs;
- Preparation of inputs into Project documentation and reporting, including the following deliverables: "Communication and Dissemination Report" (report on communication and dissemination activities, carried out to recruit participants, promote the Activity and disseminate its results), "Report on EIT Food InfraBooster" (report documenting the EIT Food InfraBooster, including selection procedures, composition of participant cohort and delivery of educational modules) and "Report on EIT Food Government Executive Academy" (report documenting the EIT Food Government Executive Academy 2023, including selection procedures, composition of participant cohort and delivery of educational modules).
- Communicating with local media to ensure at least 2 publications in the local language (newspapers, thematic magazines or specialist Internet portals) describing the Project, published each year, consistent with EIT Food visual identity standards and Project reporting requirements.

Each Project Participant will prepare inputs into communication and dissemination plan, covering local activities in its own country. Project Participants will maintain dialogue with media, briefing journalists about the InfraBooster and Government Executive Academy activities, preparing news releases and presenting good practices of leveraging publicly funded research infrastructures for agri-food sector. This outreach is expected to contribute to popular publications, presenting the Project and its outcomes. Project will also be promoted on websites of Project Participants and EIT Food, and posts will be shared via social media.

2.5. 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 RIS countries and involves beneficiaries from various RIS regions. 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. Explicit requirements for **diversity in implementing teams** is formulated in this call for Project Participants. Promotion of the educational programs among potential applicants will aim to maximize diversity, in

particular with respect to geographies, gender and type of involved public sector organizations. Strives to maximize diversity will be explicitly included among recruitment and selection criteria.

2.6. Additional requirements: financial sustainability

The Activity is primarily focused on deepening the dialogue between EIT Food and public sector organizations from EIT RIS countries, and thus has limited options for monetization/revenue generation. It aims to enhance the understanding of the needs and funding opportunities in the European food system among public sector representatives. It's an important societal and political impact that goes beyond mere education but helps establish political momentum, bring EIT Food closer to governments of RIS countries, including ministries and funding agencies, and pave ways for future joint initiatives, co-funding or NEFA-type activities. Participation of public sector representatives in GEA and InfraBooster is expected to act as "door-opener" that enables EIT Food/CLCs/Hubs to justify the needs for joint investments to address certain food-related challenges in specific RIS countries, increase the credibility of EIT Food initiatives and demonstrate how the KIC delivers tangible value to stakeholders in EIT RIS countries. Funding allocated per each country as part of the GEA/InfraBooster will be limited, but the network of contacts can be leveraged by EIT Food in other parts of the portfolio and beneficiaries of EIT Food RIS PSRAL educational activities can be a very important target audience for EIT Food with respect to NEFA/potential co-funding for other KIC activities coming from RIS regions. The Activity aims to deepen the public sector outreach in EIT RIS countries, while monetization/profit-making will not be among the primary objectives. At the same time, PSRAL has potential to induce contributions towards future financial sustainability of EIT Food, especially by supporting numerous stakeholders from RIS countries in defining their research infrastructure commercialization approaches in EIT Food InfraBooster program, supporting their exploitation efforts and 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 beneficiary organizations and will be explicitly addressed in the future exploitation planning, especially as InfraBooster educational program will directly stimulate follow-up investments (from non-EIT sources) needed to successfully exploit the publicly funded agri-food research infrastructures, and thus strengthens EIT Food RIS Strategy. Constructive inputs into future financial sustainability planning in 2023 will be considered in the performance evaluation of Project Participants.

3. Financial conditions

Budget will be distributed among Project Participants by EIT Food based on the funding granted by the EIT, under Horizon Europe rules. Project participants incur costs in accordance with the financial modalities of the framework program and prepare financial report by the end of the financial year/Project. More details: in Horizon Europe model grant agreement. Project Participants selected in this call will be added to the Project workplan/budget and use EIT Food Plaza platform for reporting with the platform fee payment of 3 000 EUR. Project Participants will also need to comply with detailed registration requirements and fiduciary requirements typical for beneficiaries of Horizon Europe

funding. Project Participants will also need to comply with detailed registration requirements and fiduciary requirements typical for beneficiaries of Horizon Europe funding.

3.1. Budget of scientific organization (2023):

- Personnel costs: 8,000€, ~0.25 FTE
- Travel and subsistence: 2,000€
- Indirect costs @25%: 2,500€
- **Total budget of scientific organization: 12,500€**

3.2. Excerpts from the Project proposal – cost justifications

Personnel costs: All Project Participants apply their standard personnel remuneration practices, allocating time of their employees to this Project. The personnel includes researchers/experts, developing the educational modules and delivering them in multiple teaching formats and organizing the programs.

Travel and subsistence: Implementation of the Activity and educational programs will require travel of Project personnel from Project Participants to ensure co-ordination of efforts carried out by geographically dispersed RIS stakeholders and consistency of approaches implemented in RIS countries from different parts of Europe, with travel budgets reserved for each Project Participant. Planned trips include: Project co-ordination meeting and meetings with Project Participants/beneficiaries. Furthermore, travel will include dissemination activities at agri-food events, EIT Food events, regional trade-shows and international events targeting innovation policy makers from RIS countries. Travel costs will be incurred in accordance with travel policies of Project Participants and national regulations, with a view to ensuring cost efficiency by using economy class/low-cost airfares/2nd class railway travel and minimizing expenses through selection of optimal travel options.

4. Selection process

Interested and eligible organisations are invited to **submit their applications by 14 March 2023, 11 am CET**, using the attached **"EIT Food RIS PSRAL Application Form"**. **Please send the electronic version of application, based on the attached template,** to: pnawrocki@wz.uw.edu.pl. Incomplete applications or applications submitted by ineligible organisations will be rejected. Complete applications will be evaluated by experts using standardized selection criteria. EIT Food reserves the rights to contact the applicant organisations by e-mail or phone asking for additional explanations or supporting documents, and to schedule selection interviews with the short-listed organisations. All applications will be evaluated using transparent selection criteria, and all applicants will receive concise feedback, sent to an e-mail account indicated in the application.

4.1. Eligibility criteria

All proposals will be evaluated taking into account the following **eligibility criteria**, related to the applicants and their operations.

Eligible **scientific organisations** need to meet the following criteria:

1. Operating as higher education institute or public research institute;
2. Operating in a country targeted by the call (confirmed by office address): Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey or Ukraine;
3. Owning commercially relevant research infrastructures for agri-food sector in one of the EIT Food innovation areas (see research infrastructures definition at: https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/our-digital-future/european-research-infrastructures_en), including targeted nutrition, sustainable aquaculture, sustainable agriculture, alternative proteins, digital transformation and traceability, and circular food systems.
4. Possessing knowledge, skills, and resources needed to carry out the tasks (including: previous experiences in using research infrastructure for R&D projects in specific segments of the food system, science-industry collaboration, effective management of agri-food research infrastructures).

Eligibility criteria 1-4 will be evaluated on a 0-1 scale: 0 – not satisfactory; 1 – satisfactory.

Please note that the Project Participants are expected to join a Project funded by Horizon Europe framework programme. Prior to signing the project agreement, the Project Participants will undergo registration and fiduciary checks applicable to all beneficiaries by the European Commission or the EIT, and be required to comply with operational standards of EIT/EIT Food, including the use of EIT Food Plaza platform for progress and cost reporting.

Project Participants are not obliged to become partners of EIT Food. However, organizations interested in further benefits of the network are encouraged to visit:

EIT Food partnership model: https://www.eitfood.eu/eit-food-partnerships.

4.2. Evaluation criteria

Applications that meet all of the eligibility criteria (1-4) will be further evaluated, based on the following selection criteria:

1. Excellence: Involvement of identified experts (educators/mentors) who possess excellent skills, knowledge and prior experiences related to management/commercial exploitation of research infrastructures in fields such as: technology and innovation management, infrastructure commercialization, technology transfer, business development, support for spinoff and startup companies and have prior experiences in delivering training or mentoring in fields relevant to commercial exploitation of research infrastructures;

Consumer Engagement Labs
InfraBooster
@ University of Warsaw

EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs
EIT Food RIS Public Sector Representatives Activity Line
  o   RIS InfraBooster
  o   RIS Government Executive Academy

Page 8

2. Commercial potential: Relevant experiences in leveraging own research infrastructures for R&D projects in science-industry collaboration, related to specific segments of the food system;
3. Impact: institutional assets, strengths and potential of the scientific organisation related to agri-food research infrastructures that ensure successful outreach to stakeholders within the regional innovation system, including: strong track record of collaboration with agri-food companies, being part of a national/European agri-food network/cluster, demonstrated collaboration with public sector organisations on national and regional levels, and scientific organisations owning agri-food research infrastructures in RIS countries;
4. Geographical diversity: no more than one scientific organisation will be selected in each targeted country in 2023; Project Participants will be selected both from the central-eastern and southern European countries;
5. Gender diversity: balanced representation of female and male team members at scientific organization.

Criteria 1-5 will be evaluated on a 0-10 scale: 0 –not satisfactory; 5 – partially met; 10 – satisfactory. The application can receive max. 50 points for criteria 1-5. The highest ranked applications that also meet all of the eligibility criteria (1-4) will be selected. In 2023, up to 5 scientific organizations will be selected as Project Participants.

Additional documents

- For further information about innovation areas and possible societal challenges and impacts that could be addressed by the InfraBooster and Government Executive Academy programs, please consult the following documents:
- EIT Food 6 Innovation Areas: https://www.eitfood.eu/six-focus-areas
- EIT Food Strategic Innovation Agenda: https://www.eitfood.eu/files/EIT_Food_Strategic_Agenda_2021-2027_2022-08-09-105519_eqpx.pdf
- Description of EIT Food Government Executive Academy: https://gea.eitfood.eu & https://www.eitfood.eu/education/courses/ris-government-executive-academy
- Description of EIT Food InfraBooster/ Research Infrastructure Network: https://www.eitfood.eu/education/courses/ris-research-infrastructure-network

For further information concerning the funding modalities of Horizon Europe and EIT Food, please consult the following documents:

- Horizon Europe General Model Grant Agreement: https://www.eitfood.eu/files/General-Model-Grant-Agreement-EIC-Accelerator-Contract-Horizon-Europe-HORIZON-Euratom-Research-and-Training-Programme-EURATOM.pdf
- Countries covered by EIT Food Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS): https://www.eitfood.eu/regional-innovation-scheme
- EIT Food Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): https://www.eitfood.eu/files/EIT-KPIs_Final.pdf
- EIT Food Intellectual Property Policy: https://www.eitfood.eu/files/EIT-Food-IP-Policy-V.Plaza-21052021.pdf

EIT Food RIS PSRAL Application Form

EIT Food RIS Public Sector Representatives Activity Line (PSRAL) Application Form **- <u>scientific organisation</u> (higher education or public research institute)**	
1. Country	
2. Name of the applicant organisation	
3. Legal form	
4. Office address (street, city, country)	
5. Website address	
6. Contact person	
7. Position	
8. E-mail	
9. Phone	
10. Name(s) of your agri-food research infrastructures	
11. Website link(s) describing your agri-food research infrastructures	
12. Please describe your organisation's relevant commercial experiences in leveraging research infrastructures for R&D projects in specific segments of the food system for science-industry collaboration and justify, why they are meaningful for the Project.	
13. Please provide details of 2-4 experts (educators/mentors) who will be involved in the activities (please provide name, gender and short profile, indicating relevant experiences related to management/commercial exploitation of research infrastructures such as: technology and innovation management, infrastructure commercialization, technology transfer, business development).	
Expert 1:	

Expert 2:
Expert 3:
Expert 4:
14. Please list and describe up to five key institutional assets, strengths and potential of your organisation, ensuring successful Project implementation, in particular: documented experiences in collaboration with specific groups of stakeholders in the national and regional innovation system, which will be relevant for the successful implementation of the Project.

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 in participation agreement. I give consent to processing the application by EIT Food, its Co-Location Centres, University of Warsaw and external experts involved in the evaluation process, and am willing to cooperate to provide further information or documents confirming the facts presented above.

If selected, I declare the willingness to promptly proceed to become a participant of the EIT Food Activity. I am aware of the scope of services that should be provided and confirm having familiarized myself with the contents of the call, published online by EIT Food.

Date, place ………………………………………………………………

Name of the person submitting the application ………………………………………………………………

Organisation submitting the application ………………………………………………………………