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Open Call for Proposals for Activities to be executed in 2023-2025

Regenerative Agriculture training for Agronomists

EIT Food
2024-15-02

NOTE:

A completed bid template should not exceed 30 pages.

Font: Calibri light Size : 11

This template should be bundled with the Excel budget template.

All documents should be completed and exported to PDF before submission.

Official submissions must be via email to clcsouth@eitfood.eu

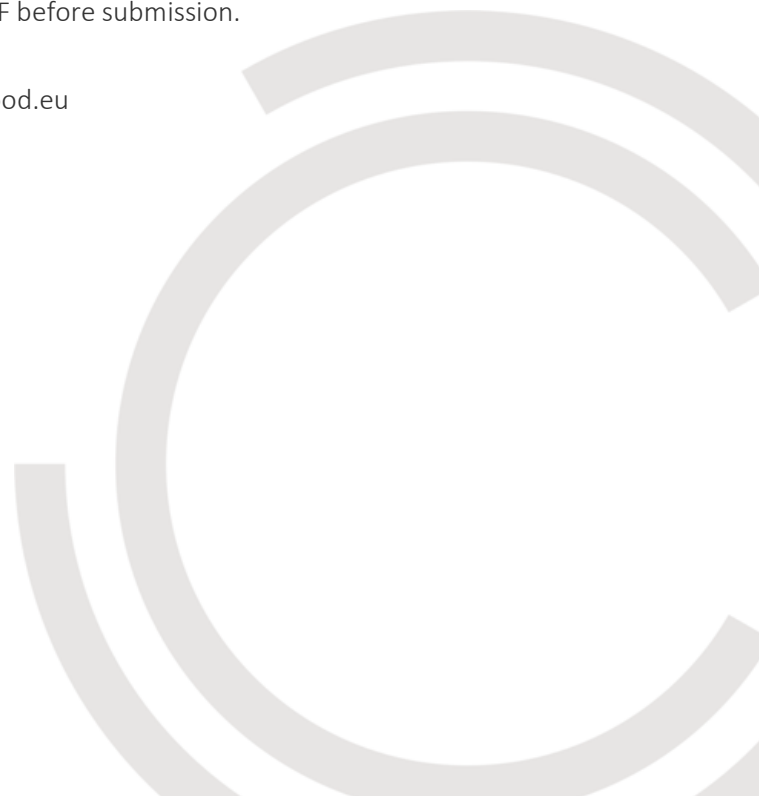


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1. Overview of EIT Food

1.1 About EIT Food

EIT Food is a Knowledge and Innovation Community supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), an EU body created to find solutions to pressing global challenges. EIT is an integral part of the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation under Horizon Europe.

EIT Food is Europe's leading food innovation initiative, working to create a world where everybody can access and enjoy sustainable, safe and healthy food, with trust and fairness from farm to fork. Our mission is to transform how food is produced and valued by European society, solving the biggest innovation challenges through trusted industry, education and research partners working with informed and engaged citizens.

This is achieved through our 6 strategic objectives:

- Overcome low consumer trust;
- Create consumer-valued food for healthier nutrition;
- Build a consumer-centric connected food system;
- Enhance sustainability through resource stewardship;
- Educate to engage, innovate and advance;
- Catalyse food entrepreneurship and innovation.

To accelerate the transition to a healthier, more sustainable food system EIT Food is a membership-based organisation to create an ecosystem of industrial, academic and SME partners, including startups, working across the entire food system, to provide funding in support of the development and operation of dedicated programmes. These programmes are organised in support of the Knowledge Triangle, implemented at EIT Food across its Education, Innovation, Business Creation and Public Engagement Functional Areas.

EIT Food is an international not-for-profit organisation under Belgian law operating in the abovementioned fields.

For more information about our organisation please visit the following website: www.eitfood.eu.

1.2 About EIT Food Regenerative Agriculture programme

Since 2020, EIT Food has been putting big efforts on promoting, supporting and leading in Europe a scheme of transition to a more sustainable agriculture model. The EIT Food programme Regenerative Agriculture has become a European reference in the field and has permitted our positioning as central actors and promoters of the change.

It is aimed to impact at a global level and contribute to a more resilient and fair food system. The Regenerative Agriculture programme further advances EIT Food's overarching objective of making Europe's food systems more sustainable, healthy and trusted.

According to the IPCC, emissions from land use, largely agriculture, forestry and land clearing, make up some 22% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, 29% if we include gas emissions along the entire food chain (fertiliser, transport, processing, and sale). Given that poor land use is one of the primary causes of climate change we believe that the regenerating Europe's farmlands will play a key role in reversing the effects of global warming especially in Southern European RIS countries.

To date, EIT Food regenerative agriculture programme has built capability to transition amongst +1200 farmers, given direct support to +100 farmers to transition practices for 3 years, developed knowledge products to make widely available contents for farmers via written materials, videos and online courses to strengthen the on-site programmes. EIT Food is also working with large corporates and other stakeholders to scale the uptake of regenerative agriculture.

There are several shortcomings to wide scale of regenerative agriculture, being one of them the lack of specialized experts to support farmers in designing and implementing an effective and minimum risk transition journey.

For this reason, EIT Food seeks to increase advisory capability to facilitate EU wide available expertise that will be needed in the next years.

1.3 Filling the gap of expertise available to support transition in Regenerative Agriculture

While the programme grows and more farmers, cooperatives and companies request this support and expertise, we realized there is an important shortcoming in the availability of professionals able to deliver the training and the expertise needed to advise on the transition. In order to cover this gap, we aim at making available a programme to increase the number of agronomists with the right expertise to scale this massive transition.

With this call, we seek to develop a state-of-the-art, premium training education aimed at professionals active in the field of agronomical advise to farmers, cooperatives and companies able to support their transition from conventional to regenerative agriculture. We are attracting, developing and empowering talent to lead this transformation as a key element to achieve a net zero food system.

We want a new community of agronomic experts to care about soil health, biodiversity, ecosystem services, holistic management and carbon capture in agriculture production to help transform the impact on the ecosystem and environment while ensuring better living conditions for farmers. This means equipping agronomic experts with knowledge, – helping them develop their understanding of agronomic challenges and learn new skills.

To skill and equip agronomist we consider options from short-term interventions such as Summer Schools, to longer term interventions like dedicated Masters programmes, allowing for flexibility to different types of professionals, agronomic needs and geographical areas and markets. We put creating positive societal impact (social and/or environmental) at the core, with practical applicability the hallmark of this training.

2. Scope of work – Regenerative agriculture training programme for agronomists

2.1 General Objectives

The purpose of this Call is to select an academic organization, or a group of organizations lead by an academic partner, who will provide a high-quality hands-on training programme to train agronomical advisors in regenerative agriculture state-of-the-art issues and knowledge.

The training programme, delivery approach, modules, contents must incorporate and consider specific aspects of the field. Furthermore, these trainings need to be of the highest standard, be based on the latest insights in regenerative agriculture, science driven and fitting within EIT Food's framework for quality assurance in teaching and learning (EIT Food's Competency Framework to be downloaded here: <https://learning.eitfood.eu/home/competency-framework-brochure/>).

2.2 Overarching philosophy

What will set this new programme apart from other comparable programmes will be its strong and strict adherence to the principles to the-state-of-the-art in knowledge and practices, consideration of context specific issues and not a minor practical vs. theoretical approach. These must be consistently applied and made explicit to the participants.

Expectations:

1. Participants will be expert and committed learners. They will be moved by the need of transforming the sector and should have taken prior steps in this direction in their professional practice.
2. Participants come to the programme with appropriate levels of experience and expertise. It is this relevant expertise and experience that will enable the teams to succeed on this programme and beyond. They might have been involved in agronomic advice for sustainable agriculture, ecological agriculture practices or certification schemes.
3. The participants have achieved the motivation and drive to learn. Lifelong learning and evidence of this will sustain the teams as it is expected they will require continuous learning and update in new practices, application in a variety of crops and landscapes and monitor technologies to improve their practice.
4. After the training, participants will be able to engage in regenerative agriculture advise activities on their own, strongly based on their previous expertise and knowledge in related areas.
5. EIT Food will seek to involve these participants in its regenerative agriculture activities, and it is willing to open its knowledge and resources to complement the learning journey. For instance, providing learning sites (farms), direct engagement with stakeholders and support to engage participants with potential clients with expert advisors.

These 5 key elements need to be embedded in the proposals submitted by applicants to this call.

2.3 The learning framework

The Learning Framework should be drawn from knowledge, experience and state-of-the art approach on regenerative agriculture and related fields and expertise. The course should encompass thinking across sustainable agriculture, conservation agriculture, agro-ecology, climate smart agriculture, net zero in food production, carbon farming, technology use, and integrated management practices.

The contents and module shall explicitly include:

- Soil science
- Regenerative farming techniques
- Holistic management
- Crop science and application
- Sustainable farm managementScientific data management and analysis
- Global agriculture challenges and food systems

The Training methods considered should provide participants a variety of teaching approaches including, but not limited to:

- lectures, tutorials, off-line and online activities and video-linked or podcast virtual classes
- seminars and debates
- farms' visits
- practical on-site or lab classes

The method of teaching may vary from according to contents and outcomes. Please note that the proposed approach must accommodate different learning styles, and where relevant should demonstrate clear innovations in teaching and learning.

Learning outcomes expected could include some of these below:

- Assessment of the impact of different farming methods.
- The ability to analyse, build, and manage soil.
- Ability to identify problems and contribute to their solutions in defined scientific and agricultural settings.
- Application of theoretical and technical knowledge and skills within defined contexts in the field of science and agriculture.
- Identify state-of-the art solutions to use new data-driven farming techniques and tools.
- Incorporation of ethical and sustainable values and practices within defined scientific and agricultural contexts.
- Combining an understanding of plant sciences with a holistic perspective towards crop management
- Awareness of diverse cultural perspectives within defined scientific and agricultural contexts.
- Understanding supply chain challenges for the different stakeholders to promote and implement transition.
- Impact of EU policies that aim to help move the industry towards a sustainable agriculture.

Assessment methods might include:

- Practical assessments with both livestock and crops
- Examinations - both multiple choice and essay questions
- Presentations - both individually and in small groups
- Essays and technical reports
- Case studies
- Action planning

- On-the job support with expert agronomists
- Dissertation

The proposed learning framework and methodology shall be aligned with EIT Food's Competency Framework for educational activities: <https://learning.eitfood.eu/home/competency-framework-brochure/>

2.4 Detailed Scope of Work

The selected Contributor(s) will design and deliver the totality of contents and modules. The proposal should consider and include the work carried out in regenerative agriculture and its expertise. EIT Food will contribute if needed with the provision of site farms to visit, monitoring methodologies and its own knowledge in the field. EIT Food will review and validate the work carried out to design, articulate and deliver the programme.

Design and delivery of the programme

The selected organization will design and deliver the training according to its knowledge, expertise, context consideration. The contributors will be designing the trainings in close collaboration with the EIT Food regenerative agriculture team in line with EIT Food's framework for quality assurance in teaching and learning, as well as EIT Food Programme Manager of Regenerative Agriculture and the EIT Food Education team.

Regenerative Agriculture training for advisors should provide top-notch and valuable contents and learning outcomes, as well as innovative ways of teaching. Yet at the same time, we need to consider that a large part of the participants are full-time employees. For this reason, asynchronous and synchronous type of activities are allowed to be considered, while providing enough "on-the-farm" experience, for this last part, the organization proposal might include collaboration with experts and sites from other locations.

Given the agroecological differences in Europe, the course could be designed and implemented considering a specific region / area if this leads to an optimal result for participants and learning outcomes.

Participants are expected to join from different geographical areas and nationalities. This should be considered in the proposal. We also expect proposals to consider principles of diversity and inclusion in all modules.

The selected Contributor(s) should propose a plan for effectively reach out to and enrol students / participants across the European geography. EIT Food will also support in the promotion of the courses through its communication channels.

2.5 Mandatory requirements

Accreditation

All proposed courses or programmes **must** be accredited by the EIT Labelled system of EIT Food. The accreditation process follows the ISO17024 standard, and requires the completion of information relating to course design, quality assurance, target market and operations.

The accreditation can be completed in parallel with the design and delivery of the programme, and can be applied retroactively provided the information is complete and no substantive discrepancies exist between the submitted documentation and the actual delivery of the course.

Infrastructure

EIT Food Education offers the following services and infrastructure to support programmes and courses in its course catalogue. The proposed courses must use these services to be included in EIT Food’s course catalogue:

- **Dedicated marketing** function specialised in the postgraduate and professional education market, with its own communication channels on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, with over 12 000 followers. Please note that these channels are complementary to and supportive of the main strategy to reach target audiences;
- **Student Information System and application portal** to ensure data can be processed in compliance with GDPR. Please note that for reporting purposes learner data must include certain demographic information that EIT Food must be allowed to access. As such it is strongly recommended that proposals use the available systems;
- The Canvas **Learning Management System** which may be used for courses or programmes developed in collaboration with EIT Food. Please note that proposers must grant EIT Food non-exclusive access rights to the course materials to be able to publish on Canvas;
- **A payment gateway** for any programmes or courses offered on a fee basis;
- A growing **alumni community** which now is supported by an active Alumni Board. Learners in the Students and Professionals categories are automatically eligible to join the community, and post-course activities should include a mobilisation of the FoodHive alumni platform.

3. Budget and financial return mechanisms, roles and responsibilities

3.1 Budget and profit sharing mechanisms with EIT Food

The indicative budget to deliver programme as outlined in this Call is of 225 000 euros maximum for the work needed to deliver the first training programme in 2024-2025.

The funding for running consecutive editions will be reduced for the programmes delivered in 2025 and 2026 as a result of a) setting up costs already incurred, b) expectations the programme generates revenues from participants.

EIT Funding for 2024 course	150.000 euros
EIT Funding for 2025	75.000 euros
EIT Funding for 2026	No EIT Food funding is considered necessary for continued running in the geographies where the programme was established. For replication in other geographies, further funding may be made available subject to performance
Revenue sharing / profit agreement from 2026*	To be proposed by the applicant according to the expected revenue generation

* EIT Food expects that the programme will continue to be delivered in subsequent years without additional EIT funding, and that any revenues will be shared with EIT Food. The applicant is required to propose a budget based on realistic projections of:

- Participants
- Market adapted fees
- Revenue and profit generation of the programme
- Proposed revenue / profit sharing scheme once the EIT funding is no longer necessary to make the programme viable.

Success sharing mechanisms for the period beyond project funding can take different forms:

- **Fee-based income.** All EIT Food Education programmes for professionals and students are in principle offered on a fee-basis at market competitive rates. This should at least cover the costs of delivery of the course or programme;
- **Revenue/profit sharing.** Third party training providers will be offering EIT Labelled courses either through EIT Food infrastructure or their own platforms for which revenue/profit sharing schemes will be set-up. Terms are to be negotiated for the sharing mechanism.
- **Sponsorship.** Programmes and courses developed for the Youth and Citizen markets may be sponsored or co-funded by for example industry. Co-funding may be offered as in-kind contributions.

3.2 Contributors

This Call is open to EIT Food partners and external contributors. You don't have to be an existing partner or member of EIT Food to apply for funding but, by becoming one, you'll gain access to a valuable source of expertise and potential collaborators to work with.

Responsibilities:

- The awarded organization is the ultimate responsible for designing the training, attracting participants, delivering the training and complete assessment to prove participation and learnings to achieve EIT Food certification of participants.
- EIT Food will provide the agreed funding, provide advise and expertise as explained in 1. and 2. And engage in promotion to attract participants.

3.2 KPIs to be achieved

For each edition of the course, an ambitious number of successful participants are expected. Only participants who successfully finished the programme and complete and pass the assessment methods proposed by the organiser can be counted as successful participants.

Participants in the course are expected to contribute to the financing of the course in the long term. Therefore a students' fee might be required.

Once the course is up and running, the organisation is expected to contribute to EIT Food's financial sustainability, by means of revenue sharing from students' fees. Other mechanisms can be proposed by the organisation in the proposal.

4. Proposal Process and Timeline

Application

Application period	Up to May 15th, 17.00 pm CET
Proposal selection	May 30th, 2024
Program design and articulation	1 st July, 2024
Sales period – Students enrolment*	Flexible
Course start*	Flexible
*This is subject to variation and to be agreed with the awarded organization / consortium	

All applications must be emailed in **English** to the following address within the deadline mentioned below:

Contact name: for the attention of Amparo de San José

E-mail: clcsouth@eitfood.eu

Subject line: Application – Regenerative Agriculture Training for Expert Advisors

4.1 Request for additional information and clarification

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: Melissa Comellas, Regenerative Agriculture Project Manager

E-mail: melissa.comellas@eitfood.eu

EIT Food has no obligation to provide clarification.

4.2 Costs for preparing proposals

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

4.3 Evaluation of proposals

The quality of each proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the below mentioned award criteria. The award criteria will be examined in accordance with the requested service indicated.

The results of the award procedure will be communicated in writing (via e-mail).

Applications will be evaluated using the following evaluation categories:

1. Competences and thought leadership in teaching and learning in the agronomic field (15%)
2. Experiences in delivering programmes for professional development (15%);
3. Teaching team and experts proposed (15%);
4. Novelty and attractiveness of the proposal (20%);
5. Worlplan proposed to deliver the programme (15%);
6. Vision for business development and financial sustainability of the programme in the long-term (20%)

Above criteria will be evaluated on a 0 – 15 scale: 0 – not satisfactory; 5 – satisfactory; 10 – good and 15 points – very good. The application can receive a maximum of 90 points.

Each application will be reviewed by at least 3 different reviewers. Average scoring will be considered.

5. Application contents

Proposals must not exceed 30 pages in total, below you will find the areas the proposal should address and indication of extension, - other information can be included by the organization.

Activity title	Provide a name and acronym of your Activity.
Task Leader	Please indicate which organisation and person will be the Task Leader of the programme; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain in detail the role of the leading partner; • if it is an external organisation, indicate whether it is a business partner (yes/no), as well as confirm whether this organisation is ready to become an EIT Food partner, should the proposal be accepted for funding.
List all other consortium members	For each consortium member: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain in detail the role of each member; • if it is an external organisation, indicate whether it is a business partner (yes/no), as well as confirm whether this organisation is ready to become an EIT Food partner, should the proposal be accepted for funding.
Course overview	Please provide a synopsis (no more than one page) of the key elements of the programme
Description of the programme & Excellence of the programme (max. 20 pages)	Clearly outline how will your programme structure look like (describe modules, learning objectives, learning outcomes, alignment with Competency Framework); please also describe the rigour/robustness of programme, including an assessment strategy for the learners. <p>*<u>Learning objective</u>: what is/are the expected goal(s) used to structure the content of the Activity</p> <p>*<u>Learning outcome</u>: what the learner will be able to do as a result of participating in the educational Activity</p>
Course materials	Detail whether the course materials already exist. If existing or partially, indicate which percentage of the materials is already available or needs

	adaptation from existing ones. In case the materials have been developed in collaboration with or by a 3 rd party, please ensure and demonstrate ownership or transfer of IP and copyright, if applicable.
Activity plan	Please provide a plan for the overall activity including milestones and deliverables to ensure successful execution of the programme. As well as a Gant chart to complement the key phases of the work to be carried out to achieve a successful programme.
Programme differential (max 0.5 page)	Please well describe what will make the programme unique.
Specific Target Group (max 0.5 page)	Define the group(s) targeted by this Activity; per individual target group (e.g. bachelor students; master's students; PhDs; researchers; professionals), please provide a well described benefit any key tangible takeaways for them.
Entry qualifications	Please indicate entry qualifications for your target group(s).
Competencies to be developed/enhanced (max 0.5 page)	Please define the planned competences to develop or enhanced, using the eight competence groupings as listed in Annex 1: EIT Food Education Competency Framework . Any educational programme should offer development of competences from at least two groupings. It is important to identify the extent to which the activity strengthens the competitiveness and growth.
KPI target (min. 5 years plan)	EIT Food expects a minimum of 20 successful participants for 2024; evolution on numbers over a 5 years period to be provided by the applying entity.
Communication and Dissemination Plan (max 1 page)	Please clearly describe the communication and dissemination plan for the programme.
Risk Management	Define a well outlined risks that your proposal may have to deal with by giving further explanation regarding the corresponding measures taken to mitigate them.
Diversity dimension (max 0.5 page)	Outline how will you carry out the programme taking into consideration the diversity dimensions (gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, etc.) in the activity content (e.g. recruitment of activity participants) as well as in the team composition, incl. the managerial level.
Financial Sustainability (max 1 page)	EIT Food expects the delivery of this course will contribute to its financial sustainability in the mid to long term. The applying organisation shall explain the mechanisms to be followed, whether this is a revenue sharing mechanism (from students' fees) or other means. Please clearly describe the financial sustainability plan of your proposal. Nominate a consortium individual/partner who will be responsible to work with EIT Food to design and agree the progress towards financial sustainability of the programme. Seed budget section for EIT Food expectations, any deviations will need solid justification.
EIT Labelling	Is the consortium committed to produce the relevant paperwork for EIT Labelling?
Outlook beyond project funding. How are you planning to scale up the	Please describe an outlook of how the results of the activity will be further exploited after the end of the activity (if any).

<p>programme in 2023-2025? (max 0.5 page)</p>	
<p>Activity budget</p>	<p>Please use the attached EIT Food budget template. Please complete it for 2024 to 2026, please add that as well (it can be amended as needed).</p> <p>Costs: Enter the estimated total cost (the expected budget necessary required for the Activity for the indicated years). This should include all relevant cost items, e.g. personnel, direct costs, indirect costs, travel costs (if needed), and sub-contracting costs.</p> <p>Personnel justification: Enter a breakdown of FTE costs per skill level, e.g. Chairman, Professor, PhD, Research Associate, project mgr, senior business developer; lab assistant, etc. For each, state the average rate, e.g. [project mgr: x FTE at average rate of y p.a.]. Do not provide detail that allows to link cost with individual persons.</p> <p>Sub-contracting Justification: free text, max 1/2 page per subcontracting item. If participation of specific subcontractors ex-ante selected are needed, please justify the selection.</p> <p>Travel and subsistence: If any costs of travel and subsistence are expected to design, articulate and deliver the programme please provide detail.</p> <p>Cost of other goods and service: free text to explain the costs incurred to design, articulate and deliver the programme.</p>

6. Submission

All parts must be fully completed with a clear information provided. The provider can use word, power point or pdf formats.

The deadline for the submission of full applications is 15th May 2024, at 17:00 CET. All applications must be emailed in English to the following addresses within the deadline mentioned above:

- o Subject line: Regenerative Agriculture University Programme for Agronomists
- o E-mail: clcsouth@eitfood.eu
- o Contact name: for the attention of Amparo de San José

The consortia need to complete it detailing the consortium set-up, description of the project idea and its impact as well as providing a detailed budget. In addition, a clear budget proposal must also be submitted.