



# EIT Food Entrepreneurship – Terms & Conditions

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EIT Food – Making Food Innovation Happen

Knowledge & Innovation Centre on Food,  
part of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

<http://www.eitfood.eu>



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# 1. EIT Food

## 1.1 EIT Food

EIT Food IVZW is an international non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of Belgium, having its registered address at Philipssite 5, Ubicenter A bus 34, 3001 Leuven, Belgium, registered at the Crossroads bank for Enterprises with number 0672.423.992, Register of Legal Entities Leuven (hereinafter referred to as ‘EIT Food’).

EIT Food is a pan-European partnership designed to empower innovators and entrepreneurs to develop world-class solutions to food challenges, accelerate innovation, create jobs and increase Europe’s competitiveness. As one of the largest food-related initiatives worldwide, EIT Food wants Europe to lead a global revolution in food innovation and production, improve nutrition and making food systems more resource-efficient, secure, transparent and trusted.

EIT Food is one of the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KIC) of the EIT (European Institute of Innovation and Technology) and funded by the European Commission. It unites more than 60 partners along the Food value chain – academic and research institutions as well as industry– from more than 20 European countries. Its five Innovation Hubs across Europe (also called Co-location Centres - CLCs) aim at fostering innovation across the regional ecosystems of industry, research institutions and universities.



## 1.2 Objectives of EIT Food

EIT Food aims to boost the skills and entrepreneurial spirit in the sector and unlock the potential of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) who will accelerate innovation, create jobs, benefit businesses, and increase Europe's competitiveness. EIT Food has six strategic objectives:

### Overcome low consumer trust

EIT Food supports European citizens in the transition towards a smart food system that is inclusive and reassuring.

### Create consumer valued food for healthier nutrition

EIT Food enables individuals to make informed and affordable personal nutrition choices.

### Build a consumer-centric connected food system

EIT Food develops a digital food supply network with consumers and industry as equal partners.

### Enhance sustainability through resource stewardship

EIT Food develops solutions to transform the traditional 'produce-use-dispose' model into a circular bio-economy.

### Educate to engage, innovate and advance

EIT Food provides 'food system' skills for more than 10,000 students, entrepreneurs and professionals through advanced training programmes.

### Catalyse food entrepreneurship and innovation

EIT Food fosters innovation at all stages of business creation.



# 2. Seedbed Incubator

## Project Name: Seedbed Incubator 2.1 Scope of the Programme

The Seedbed Incubator is a 6-month market discovery programme that trains and incubates entrepreneurial teams developing cutting-edge disruptive technologies with applications in the agrifood sector. The aim of the programme is to transform innovative ideas into market-validated business propositions.

The Seedbed Incubator Programme is delivered by top EU Universities, Research and Innovation Organisations, and Entrepreneurship programme specialists who provide their expertise in startup training and technology commercialisation. The programme is focused on entrepreneurial academics, aspiring entrepreneurs and newly formed startups, typically younger than 12 months, with business propositions that could transform the food system and are underpinned by science and technology. During the programme, Seedbed participants are provided with access to expert training and personalised business support to identify their core business assumptions, to develop a commercial roadmap that's validated with stakeholders in the agrifood sector. Additionally, participants are provided with financial support to speak to at least 100 customers and users to test the market need and refine product ideas. There's also potential for follow-on support to spin out or startup a new company, or fund pilot feasibility tests with identified partners via EIT Food's Impact Fund.

This document sets out the further details and the terms and conditions with regards to the sub-granting budget of up to €10,000 to deliver the tasks associated with participating in the EIT Food Seedbed Incubator Programme and travel to Seedbed events.

## 2.2 Funding

The EIT Food Seedbed teams that complete the four-day online virtual Bootcamp and are subsequently selected for the market discovery phase of the programme (up to 40 teams), will be allocated a sub-granting budget of up to €10,000. The EIT Food Seedbed teams that complete the four-day online virtual Bootcamp and are subsequently selected for the market discovery phase of the programme (up to 40 teams) will be allocated a sub-granting budget of up to €10,000 in phased milestone payments. This budget is allocated to deliver against the tasks associated with participating in the EIT Food Seedbed Incubator Programme market discovery phase. The tasks include attendance at training sessions, activities associated with the market discovery milestones, and completing EIT Food Seedbed reporting requirements and programme surveys. Part of this budget is €1,000 that will be granted for travelling to in-person Seedbed events, like



Seedbed’s Kick-off in Bilbao, Spain and the final Seedbed event (location TBD). All specific funding conditions will be described in the consent form and financial arrangements signed by the team members.

## 2.3 Expected timeline

The following table outlines the expected timeline for the EIT Food Seedbed Programme. These dates may change but the EIT Food Seedbed Programme Coordinator will notify you if there are any changes to this expected timeline.

Application opens	December 18, 2023
Application closes	February 19, 2024
Outcome notification for Stage I (expected date)	1 <sup>st</sup> week of April 2024
Start of Stage I - Online four-day bootcamps	May 13-30, 2024
2 <sup>nd</sup> round of selection for shortlisted startups	1 <sup>st</sup> week of June 2024
Award letter, Subgrant Agreement, Participant Consent Form and relevant programme agreements signed	June 2024
Seedbed Kick-off & start of Market Discovery Journey (approximately)	July 2024
Seedbed Final Event	November 2024

## 2.4. Eligibility

### 2.4.1 General considerations

Our EIT Food Entrepreneurship programmes (i.e. Seedbed Incubator, EIT Food Accelerator Network and RisingFoodStars) are complementary, each focusing on a different stage of company with a different offer. Therefore, a participant cannot be part of more than one programme per calendar year. Consulting services companies without novel technology, products or IP, and one-person ventures are not eligible.



Ventures owned by EIT Food employees or members of EIT Food government bodies and ventures in which EIT Food employees or members of EIT Food government bodies have an interest, are also excluded. EIT Food includes all CLCs of EIT Food and all government bodies.

## 2.4.2 Eligibility criteria

To be considered eligible for the programme, applicants must:

- Have a science-based innovative agritech or foodtech product/solution (at lab proof of concept - TRL 4 minimum) that can positively impact the European agrifood ecosystem;
- Requiring support for validating your market;
- Be a resident, citizen or legal entity based in the EU and its member states or EU associated countries (i.e. Iceland, Norway, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Israel, Moldova, Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Tunisia, Georgia Armenia);
- Note that Swiss-based companies are eligible. However, eligibility to receive funding will be determined based on the Swiss's eligibility status for EU funding at that time;
- For Swiss-based startups: not having received more than €60,000 in EIT Food financial support (subgrants or prizes) per calendar year and per applicant;
- Submit a fully completed application in English before the deadline;
- Not involved in another EIT Food Business Creation programme (i.e. Seedbed and EIT Food Accelerator Network);
- Be committed to the programme for at least 8 hours a week – we expect active, consistent engagement in the programme;
- Accept these Programme Terms and Conditions;
- None of the Exclusion Criteria must apply to the applicant, as outlined in article 2.4.3.

Only applications meeting the eligibility criteria will be evaluated by reviewers.

## 2.4.3 Exclusion criteria

Applicants may be excluded if they (or the recipients):

- are subject to an administrative sanction (i.e. exclusion or financial penalty);
- are in one of the following situations (exceptions and conditions may apply following the applicable laws):
- bankrupt, being wound up, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, having their affairs administered by a liquidator or by the courts, entered into an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar





proceedings or procedures under national law (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)

- declared in breach of social security or tax obligations by a final judgment or decision (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts) found guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the person or entity belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes wrongful intent or gross negligence by a final judgment or decision (including where a natural or legal person who is a member of the administrative, management, or supervisory body of the person or who has powers of representation, decision or contract with regard to that person or a natural person who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment is in this situation)
- convicted of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including where a natural or legal person who is a member of the administrative, management, or supervisory body of the person or who has powers of representation, decision or contract with regard to that person or a natural person who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment is in this situation)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under a legal commitment financed by the EU or Euratom budget (including where a natural or legal person who is a member of the administrative, management, or supervisory body of the person or who has powers of representation, decision or contract with regard to that person or a natural person who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment is in this situation)
- found guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 (including where a natural or legal person who is a member of the administrative, management, or supervisory body of the person or who has powers of representation, decision or contract with regard to that person or a natural person who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment is in this situation)
- It has been established by a final judgement or final administrative decision that the person or entity has created an entity in a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or any other legal obligations in the jurisdiction of its registered office, central administration or principal place of business or it has been established by a final judgement or final administrative decision that an entity has been created with the intent for doing so (including where a natural or legal person who is a member of the administrative, management, or supervisory body of the person or who has powers of representation, decision or contract with regard to that



person or a natural person who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment is in this situation);

- have misrepresented information required for participating in the EIT Food funding scheme or fail to submit such information;
- were involved in the preparation of the any documentation regarding this call or are involved in the evaluation process of this call and this entails a breach of the principle of equality of treatment, including a distortion of competition (that cannot be remedied otherwise);
- if EIT Food is required to do so following the applicable laws and regulations or directions from the EIT;
- the participant no longer complies with these terms and conditions.

## 2.5 Application and Evaluation Process

### 2.5.1 Application

Interested applicants must apply on the Seedbed Incubator website (<https://www.eitfood.eu/entrepreneurship/launch-seedbed-incubator>). EIT Food will screen the applications to ensure all applicants meet the stated eligibility criteria and they are sent to the programme which is relevant to their startup needs.

This is a completely open call. We welcome applications from all EU Member States and associated countries and encourage diversity.

The programme language is English so all submission material must be submitted in English.

Incomplete applications may be considered inadmissible if essential elements are missing.

### 2.5.2 Outline of the programme

The EIT Food Seedbed Incubator Programme takes place in three key phases:

1. Training and coaching at a 4 –day online bootcamp for up to 60 shortlisted applicants;
2. Market Discovery Journey for 40 finalists, with online entrepreneurship courses on CANVAS learning platform (throughout the programme);
3. Seedbed Kick-off Event & Final Seedbed Event.

A Project Team's place on the Seedbed Programme is subject to successful completion, evaluation and approval of its action plan following the online training programme.



Date	Seedbed Incubator	Description
April 2024	Outcome Notification	Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application. Successful applicants (up to 60 teams) will be invited to the 4-day online bootcamp.
<b>Phase 1: Four-Day Online Bootcamp</b>		
May 2024	Training & Final Selection Process	<p>Successful teams will be invited to attend an online 4-day Bootcamp. The Bootcamp will train and support entrepreneurial teams on (1) Strategyzer’s Lean methodology to define clear value propositions and winning business models; and (2) digital testing and market discovery methodologies to gather rapid and accurate market feedback on the likely success of their business idea. A key output of the 4-day online Bootcamp will be for teams to finalise and submit their business model canvas (BMC), market discovery action plan and participation in a final pitch session. All teams will receive training and coaching support in preparing these documents and pitching.</p> <p>A Seedbed panel will complete an appraisal of the quality of the team’s engagement and performance at the Bootcamp, including an evaluation of their BMC, action plan, and pitch. The top 40 highest-ranking teams will be recommended to proceed to Phase 2 of the Seedbed Programme and be offered up to €10,000 in phased milestone payments, for Market Discovery activities. All teams will be notified on the outcome of this selection process beginning of June. Award criteria are outlined below.</p>
<b>Phase 2: Market Discovery Journey</b>		
June – November 2024	Market Discovery Journey	Following the Bootcamp, successful teams selected for phase 2, Market Discovery, will have access to €10,000 equity-free funding, in phased milestone payments, to speak to potential customers, stakeholders, and end-users to better understand the market needs. The Market Discovery phase will take place across 5 months. During this time, Seedbed teams are required to access remote and/or face-to-face coaching and business training from their assigned Seedbed Coach and Business Experts. Additionally, participants will be offered access to online training modules on the CANVAS platform, with clinics and workshops offered for 1:1 support by top-quality trainers on key entrepreneurial topics. Some of the activities above are mandatory and all Seedbed participants are expected to participate. Teams will be provided with a full detailed timeline for participation upfront.

Phase 3: Presenting your Seedbed Journey and Planning Next Steps		
November 2024	Seedbed Showcase Part 1	The EIT Food Seedbed programme will hold a final in-person event to conclude the programme. The 40 Seedbed Teams will be expected to attend the event and present their Seedbed journey and learnings to a panel of experts. The panel will offer advice on next steps for commercialisation as well as the appropriate course of action in terms of follow on support from EIT Food.

Throughout the time on the Seedbed Programme, teams are required to update their Business Action Plans which will be used to monitor team activity monthly. This should be kept up to date and detail activities, learnings, outcomes, and actions to be carried out as a result of engaging with the market. Seedbed Business Coaches will use this document to assess if satisfactory progress is being made against key milestones.

### 2.5.3 Selection

#### Evaluation criteria for Phase 1 participation:

The online applications will be scored by a panel of judges according to the eligibility and evaluation criteria. Ineligible applications will not be evaluated further.

Evaluation criteria will be focused on the following aspects of the applicants' proposal: technology/IP and its uniqueness, market potential and USP and the team composition.

Depending on the quality of the applications, up to 60 high-scoring applicants will be offered a place in one of the 4-day online Bootcamp. The three Bootcamps will take place in May 2024.

#### Award criteria for Phase 2 participation:

Participation in Phase 2 (Market Discovery) is subject to successful completion, evaluation and approval of its business model canvas, action plan and pitch following the 4-day online Bootcamp. Out of 60 teams, the top 40 will be awarded a place in Phase 2 (Market Discovery) of the EIT Food Seedbed Incubator Programme.

A Seedbed panel will score the teams following the Bootcamp according to the following award criteria:

- The team actively engaged and completed all aspects of the trainings and bootcamp training, submission of business model canvas and market discovery plan and budget, and final pitch



- The team are coachable, open minded and have shown the skills and qualities necessary to engage with potential stakeholders, customers and users and learn from the market discovery phase. The team has taken the training and advice from the delivery team and business coaches into consideration to evolve their business model canvas
- The team's technology / intellectual property is solving a clearly articulated problem, has a clear USP and is sufficiently developed to warrant exploring commercial opportunities
- The team has articulated a unique value proposition and have identified a number of assumptions which underpin them to evaluate with the market
- The team have a basic business model in place that can be validated as part of the programme

At EIT Food we are committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all European citizens and citizens of associated countries. EIT Food firmly believes that equality is key to a more sustainable, healthy and trustworthy food system and we encourage applications from those currently underrepresented in the startup ecosystem.

## 2.6 Project Reporting

Participants may be asked at a later stage for further documents (e.g. legal entity validation, bank account validation, ethics review, declaration of honour on exclusion grounds, reporting in the context of a subgrant agreement etc.). Moreover, startups supported by the Programme agree to participate in the Programme evaluation the end of the Programme. Moreover, they agree to participate in the Programme impact survey and to provide additional information (such as company financial data and information on investment capital raised) for up to three additional years after the end of the Programme. Finally, participants in the Programme shall allow and support any checks, reviews, audits and investigations by EIT Food, EIT and/or any other competent EU body deemed necessary.

## 2.7 Payment arrangements and agreements to be signed

The successful Seedbed teams, awarded a place in the Market Discovery Phase of the programme, will be allocated a sub-granting budget of up to €10,000, in phased milestone payments. This budget is allocated to deliver the tasks associated with participating in the EIT Food Seedbed Incubator Programme. These tasks will be outlined in the Market Discovery Action plan, signed off by both the team and the Seedbed Coach.

Once selected, EIT Food and each team/participant sign a subgrant agreement outlining the conditions of the financial support provided. This subgrant agreement ensures compliance with the funding to EU and Horizon Europe guidelines. The funding received through the subgrant is



to be spent on eligible innovation activities spanning no further than 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024. Thus, all the funding provided is to be spent in 2024.

Calendar of the payments and further payment conditions will be discussed with the participant and will be set out in full in the Subgrant Agreement. Payments shall be made to the bank account indicated by Participant in the Agreement.

The awardees shall be responsible for all possible taxes, wire transfers and other possible costs related to the payments.

## 2.8 Other

### 2.8.1 IP rights and confidentiality

The applications submitted are handled confidentially. Information submitted will be viewed on a “need to know basis” by a limited group of people within the EIT Food community. Submitted information will only be used for review purposes, and those reviewing the submitted information have confidentiality agreements in place with EIT Food.

Applicants retain full and exclusive ownership of their intellectual property rights, during and after the funding period.

By submitting their application participants warrant that they hold ownership or have legally secured the right to use all elements of the innovative product or service and that the provided materials and information do not infringe any intellectual or other property rights, including patents, of any other persons, companies or other entities. Elements of the submission that are based on rights held by others, such as patents, shall be marked as such in the submission. Participants shall indemnify and hold harmless EIT Food IVZW, or any assignee or affiliate for any allegations or claims by third parties of infringement of intellectual property rights by the product or service of participants. Participants shall have the right to further develop, use and license their intellectual property rights for creating, making, marketing and distributing products, services and technology.

### 2.8.2 Publicity – Promoting Programme – Visibility of the EU Funding

#### Publicity by the participants

The companies selected must support the promotion of EIT Food, by providing targeted information in a strategic and effective manner.



Unless EIT Food requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, selected applicants must:

- display the EIT Food logo with the EU emblem on their web page or any other communication material regarding the participation in the Programme. When displayed together with another logo, the EIT Food logo and EU emblem must have appropriate prominence;
- include the following text: “This activity has received funding from EIT Food, the innovation community on Food of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the EU” on their web page or any other communication material regarding the participation in the Programme.

For the purposes of their obligations, the selected participants may use the EIT Food logo and the EU emblem without first obtaining approval from EIT Food. This does not, however, give it the right to exclusive use. Moreover, they may not appropriate the EU emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

### **Publicity by EIT Food**

EIT Food and its partners may use, for its communication and publicising activities, information relating to the action or the product or service of the participants, documents notably summaries for publication as well as any other material that it receives from the participants (including in electronic form).

EIT Food or its partners may publish the name of the participants their origin, affiliation, the amount of funding and its nature and purpose — unless they have requested to waive this publication (because disclosure risks threatening its security and safety or harm its commercial interest). EIT Food may include applicant information in its startup-corporate matchmaking program.

Photos, videos and sounds taken/recorded by EIT Food during the programme, in preparation of the award ceremony or during the award ceremony and other EIT Food events are the sole property of EIT Food and may be used for press releases or publications by EIT Food or its partners.

## **2.8.3 Privacy**

### **Processing of personal data by EIT Food**

Any personal data will be processed by EIT Food in accordance with the EIT Food privacy policy.

### **Processing of personal data by the participants**

The participants must process personal data in compliance with applicable EU and national law on data protection (including authorisations or notification requirements, if any), see the GDPR recommendations.

#### 2.8.4 Security

The activities must be carried out in compliance with Commission Decision 2015/444, i.e. security-sensitive information must be EU-classified, if its unauthorised disclosure could adversely impact the interests of the EU or of one (or more) of its Member States. Applications that are too security-sensitive cannot be admitted to the programme.

#### 2.8.5 Conflict of interest

The participants must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective award of the grant is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interest').

They must inform EIT Food without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

EIT Food may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

#### 2.8.6 Liability for damage

To the maximum extent permitted by law, EIT Food cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the participants or to third parties as a consequence of the grant, including for gross negligence on the part of the beneficiary.

EIT Food cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the participants in the context of the grant.

To the maximum extent permitted by law, under no circumstances and under no legal theory whether in tort (including negligence) contract or otherwise shall EIT Food, the EIT Food Partners or the EIT, any of its nodes or affiliates, be liable for any special indirect, punitive, incidental or consequential damages, including loss of profit.

If the liability of EIT Food or the EIT cannot be excluded following the applicable laws, but can be limited, the liability of EIT Food IVZW or the EIT shall be limited to the amount of grant awarded.



Please note other liability clauses may apply at a later stage.

### 2.8.7 Administrative sanctions

If a participant has committed irregularities or fraud or has made false declarations, EIT Food may also:

- exclude the participant from all future contracts, grants and contests financed from the EU or Euratom budget and/or
- impose a financial penalty.

### 2.8.8 Miscellaneous

In general, the Participant should understand that EIT Food is supported by the EIT and is bound by the agreements with the EIT.

## 2.9 Cancellation or postponement of the Programme and withdrawal

The Programme may be cancelled or postponed:

- In case of irregularities, fraud, breach of obligations;
- No applications are received;
- If directed or decided by EIT or following the applicable laws and regulations;
- In case of exceptional circumstances including force majeure;
- If underlying agreements such as the FPA or SGA or an internal grant agreement would be terminated or suspended or if specifically, EIT Food's participation to the same would be terminated or suspended.

Please note that amounts may also be rejected, recovered, postponed in case the exclusion criteria would become applicable to the participant, the participant is no longer eligible or if imposed accordingly by the applicable laws and regulations or the agreements signed between EIT Food and the EIT.

## 2.10 Amendments

EIT Food reserves the right to make reasonable amendments to these terms and conditions e.g, due to changes in laws and regulations or EIT rules. Amendments and additions to these terms and conditions shall be valid if communicated in writing on the EIT Food website or otherwise made available to the applicants.



## 2.11 Applicable laws and jurisdiction

These terms and conditions are governed by the laws of Belgium. Any disagreement or dispute which may arise in connection with these terms and conditions which cannot be settled amicably will be brought before the courts of the registered seat of EIT Food.

## 2.12 Contact

For more information regarding the Seedbed Incubator, please contact:

**Lukxmi Balathanan**

Seedbed Incubator Lead

lukxmi.balathanan@eitfood.eu

**Seedbed & Other information sources**

EIT Seedbed Incubator Programme web page: <https://entrepreneurship.eitfood.eu/launch/>



# 3 EIT Food Accelerator Network

Project Name: EIT Food Accelerator Network

## 3.1 Scope of the programme

The EIT Food Accelerator Network (FAN) is a multi-hub accelerator programme delivered across Europe with a hub presence in Brazil, to support high impact agrifood and foodtech startups to further validate their technology and accelerate their go-to-market readiness. Once startups have applied for the EIT FAN and have chosen the theme that best matches their product/solution, they will go through a rigorous selection process where they will be evaluated by a series of experts including entrepreneurs, investors and experts from the agriculture and food industries.

If successful, startups will be invited to join one of the five accelerator programmes taking place in parallel across Europe:

- Munich, Germany - Theme “Future Proof Agriculture”
- Haifa, Israel – “Food as Medicine”
- Bilbao, Spain – Theme: “Sustainable Food Packaging”
- Helsinki, Finland – Theme: “Food Bioprocessing”
- Paris, France – Theme: “Next Generation of Plant Sourced Solutions”

Over a 2-3-month acceleration period, selected startups will have access to a great variety of tools, resources, mentors and expertise and will get the opportunity to (re)-shape their product tech development roadmap as well as advance their commercial and investment readiness with the ultimate goal: a successful market adoption.

At the end of the accelerator programme, there will be a Technology Validation pitch event per hub where startups from that specific hub will be invited to pitch their Tech Validation Case in front of a Jury including entrepreneurs, researchers and experts from the agriculture and food industries. The top 3 best performing startups of each Tech Validation pitch event (15 startups in total) will receive a financial award of 50,000 euros, 30,000 euros or 20,000 euros to implement their project with the facilities of their choice (Universities, Research Centers).

The aim of the EIT FAN is to provide support to agrifood startups:

- To accelerate their Technology Validation and access cutting-edge facilities and equipment across Europe
- To reach the market faster via the EIT Food Innovation Community, e.g. finding potential partners and piloting customers (i.e. pilot projects)
- To facilitate future funding steps (such as seed investments, financing loans and other financing instruments);
- To gain higher visibility via EIT Food channels, the agrifood space in general and to connect them to the local and European startup ecosystem

## 3.2 Timeline & Admissibility

The present call is open until February 19<sup>th</sup>. After the cut-off date, the following process will apply (more details on the application documents and selection procedure can be found below).

1. Submission of online application before cut-off date
2. First evaluation round by a carefully selected panel of experts
3. Acceptance/rejection notification and written feedback on the application provided
4. Shortlisted startups are invited to a second round of evaluation
5. Acceptance/rejection notification and written feedback on the application provided
6. Acceptance letter and agreement signed
7. Start of the local accelerator programme

Applications must be submitted by the contact person of the company via an online platform. Incomplete applications may be considered inadmissible if essential elements are missing. For more information, please contact the accelerator manager at the end of this document.

## 3.3. Eligibility

All EIT Food activities are governed by the rules set out in the Framework Partnership Agreement (see Model FPA) as well as the Model Specific Grant Agreement with the EIT, under the Horizon Europe Annotated Grant Model.

### 3.3.1 Eligibility Criteria

To be considered eligible for the programme, applicants must be agri-food startups:

- that are set to make a big impact on any part of the agriculture or food supply chain thus committed to building a healthier, more trusted and sustainable food system;
- That have an innovative solution/product in one of the EIT FAN themes 2024:
  - **Future Proof Agriculture**
    - ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE
    - Soil health
    - Water management
    - Bio inputs
    - Crop innovations
    - Smart farming
  - **Food as Medicine**
    - Targeted and functional foods
    - Food reformulation
    - Probiotics, prebiotics, symbiotics and postbiotics
    - Food bioactive ingredients (antioxidants and beyond)
    - Food for healthy ageing
  - **Sustainable Food Packaging**
    - New materials from renewable resources
    - Eco-friendly coatings and laminates
    - Smart packaging
    - Minimal processing technologies
    - Resource efficient packaging
    - Recycling improvement & new reuse business models
  - **Food Bioprocessing**
    - Cellular agriculture
    - Precision fermentation (e.g. protein lipids, pigments)
    - Single cell proteins
    - Plant cells
    - Mycoproteins
    - Production technologies (e.g. predictive modelling and measurement tools)
  - **Next Generation of Plant Sourced Solutions**
    - New ingredients from plant sources (incl. algae)
    - Enabling processes, technologies
    - Upcycling, side stream valorisation
    - Clean label innovation
    - Natural food preservatives
- At (pre-)seed stage successfully completed customer validation and potentially can already demonstrate traction indicator (e.g. Lols, sales, letters of support);
- Registered company in or after 2014 with a porotype or ongoing pilot project (paid or unpaid);

- Legal entity based in the EU and its member states or EU associated countries (i.e. Iceland, Norway, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Israel, Moldova, Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Tunisia, Georgia Armenia);
- Note that Swiss-based companies are eligible. However, eligibility to receive funding will be determined based on the Swiss's eligibility status for EU funding at that time;
- For Swiss-based startups: not having received more than €60,000 in **EIT Food** financial support (subgrants or prizes) per calendar year and per applicant;
- Committed to the programme (we expect active, consistent engagement in the programme - this requires the presence from at least one team member for the duration of the accelerator programme);
- Submit a fully completed application in English through the online platform by the deadline set in article 3.2 including all requested documents;
- Accept these Programme terms and conditions;
- None of the Exclusion Criteria must apply to the applicant, as outlined in article 3.3.2

EIT Food offers several programs targeting entrepreneurs, startups and SMEs at various stages of maturity:

We encourage projects at idea/concept stage, without being a registered company, to consider applying for the “SeedBed Incubator”:

Link: <https://www.eitfood.eu/entrepreneurship/projects/Seedbed>

For scaleups with more advanced product(s)/service(s), we recommend applying to become member in the “Rising Food Stars association”:

Link: <https://www.eitfood.eu/entrepreneurship/projects/risingfoodstars>

For a complete overview of current EIT Food programme offering please visit the following homepage: <https://www.eitfood.eu/entrepreneurship>

### 3.3.2 Exclusion Criteria

Consulting service companies without tangible product will be excluded, including one-person company.

Participants that have already received a maximum funding of 60,000 EUR from any of the Knowledge & Innovation Communities (KIC) supported by the EIT in this particular calendar year cannot participate in the programme.

Participants will be excluded if they (or one of them):

- are subject to an administrative sanction (i.e. exclusion)

- are in one of the following situations:
  - bankrupt, being wound up, having their affairs administered by the courts, entered into an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar proceedings or procedures under national law (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
  - declared in breach of social security or tax obligations by a final judgment or decision (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
  - found guilty of grave professional misconduct by a final judgment or decision (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
  - convicted of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
  - shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under a procurement contract, grant agreement or grant decision financed by the EU or Euratom budget (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
  - found guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
- have misrepresented information required for participating in the EIT FAN or fail to submit such information
- were involved in the preparation of the grant documents and this entails a distortion of competition.

### 3.4 Documents

Participants may be asked at a later stage for further documents (for legal entity validation, bank account validation, ethics review, declaration of honour on exclusion grounds, etc). Moreover, startups supported by the EIT FAN agree to participate in the programme evaluation at the end of the programme. Moreover, they agree to participate in the EIT FAN impact survey and to provide additional information (esp. financial data and information on investment capital raised, innovations introduced on the market) for up to three additional years after the end of the programme. Finally, participants in the EIT FAN shall allow and support any checks, reviews, audits and investigations by EIT Food, EIT and/or any other competent EU body deemed necessary.

### 3.5 Selection Procedure, Financial Support and Criteria

The application procedure is the following:

### 1. Online application:

Applicants must submit by February 19<sup>th</sup> an online application form where they should illustrate: efforts to achieve product-market-fit, technology and IP, traction and impact, market and competition, business model, revenue projections, team expertise.

### 2. Online Evaluation (March 1<sup>st</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>)

The first evaluation round is performed online by a carefully selected panel of entrepreneurs and experts in the agrifood space to evaluate the (potential) impact of the startup and the alignment of the application with the underlying objectives of EIT Food: the best applications passing this screening will be invited to pitch their idea to a panel of experts in an online session. After the first evaluation round, every startup receives written feedback from the panellists on the evaluation of their application.

The first evaluation round criteria include:

- Problem-Solution Fit
- Innovative Potential
- Technology Validation needs
- Business Model & Traction
- Team Capabilities

### 3. Technology & Business Deep Dives and motivation interviews (March 19<sup>th</sup> –April 18<sup>th</sup> )

The second evaluation round is an online pitching session (“Technology & Busine Deep Dives” and motivation interviews) organised by the local accelerator representatives. A carefully selected panel of entrepreneurs and experts in the agrifood space will evaluate each startup based on the criteria mentioned below during the EIT FAN Technology & Business Deep Dives: tech validation needs, (potential) impact of the startup, the economic viability as well as technical and customer readiness levels. The evaluator panels during round one and two have a different composition.

To ensure there is an adequate fit between the support the EIT FAN provides in each hub and a start-up’s need., each applicant will be asked a few questions to asset the motivation to join the programme .

The results of the Technology & Business Deep Dives and motivation interviews will result in a global ranking. Taking into account theme preferences, corporate interest in a start-up applicant as well as position in the global ranking, applicants will be invited to join the programme. The selected applicants will sign an agreement with EIT Food to enter the programme at a particular location.



## 3.6 Other Conditions

### 3.6.1 Payment and arrangements of financial support

EIT Food is committed to support the best ideas and the projects with the highest potential to generate an impact in the agrifood value chain.

As regards to the EIT FAN, EIT Food provides access to sub-grants as a lump sum:

- to cover travel expenses. Startups receive a subgrant of 1,500 EUR at the end of the programme if they submit a report showing that:
  - they have attended at least 80% of the programme
  - they have put the complete EIT FAN logo on their website
  - they have participated in the Tech Validation pitch event

A report template is provided by EIT Food.

- as part of the Tech Validation pitch events. The top 3 best performing startups of each Tech Validation pitch event (15 startups in total) will receive a financial award of 50,000 euros, 30,000 euros or 20,000 euros to implement their project with the facilities of their choice (Universities, Research Centers). Startups are evaluated by a jury composed of external experts, EIT Food & hub representatives and corporates (if no conflict of interest) based on pre-defined criteria linked to the Tech Validation feasibility and the relevance with the business. Winning startups will be requested to provide a budget outline on how they plan to spend the money. An intermediary report and a final will also be requested to keep track of the expenses.

A template for the budget outline and the reports are provided by EIT Food.

EIT Food, European Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors may carry out checks, audits and investigations in relation to the grant.

### 3.6.2 Publicity – Promoting the EIT FAN – Visibility of the EU Funding

#### Publicity by the participants

The companies selected must support the promotion of the EIT Food Accelerator Network, by providing targeted information in a strategic and effective manner.

Unless EIT Food requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, selected startups must:

- a) display the EIT Food Accelerator Network logo with the EU emblem and
- b) include the following text:  
“Co-Funded by the European Union” on their web page.

For any communication activity related to the EIT FAN (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.) startups must:

- c) Use “#EITFAN” for online communication about the programme
- d) Tag EIT Food Accelerator Network if applicable (LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/eit-food-accelerator-network-/> ; Facebook: @EITFood.eu; X: @EIT\_Food)

When displayed together with another logo, the EIT FAN logo and EU emblem must have appropriate prominence.

For the purposes of their obligations, the selected companies may use the EIT FAN logo and the EU emblem without first obtaining approval from EIT Food.

This does not, however, give it the right to exclusive use.

Moreover, they may not appropriate the EU emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

### Publicity by EIT Food

EIT Food may use, for its communication and publicising activities, information relating to the action, documents notably summaries for publication as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material that it receives from the participants (including in electronic form).

EIT Food will publish the name of the funded companies, their origin, and its nature and purpose — unless they have requested to waive this publication (because disclosure risks threatening its security and safety or harm its commercial interest). EIT Food may include applicant information in its startup-corporate matchmaking program."

Photos and videos taken by EIT Food during the EIT Food events where the selected companies will feature are the sole property of EIT Food.

### 3.6.3 Dissemination and Exploitation of Results

Applicants retain full and exclusive ownership of their prior information and intellectual property rights. By submitting their application applicants warrant that they hold ownership or have legally secured the right to use all elements of the innovative product or service and that the provided materials and information do not infringe any intellectual or other property rights, including patents, of any other persons, companies, or other entities. Elements of the submission that are based on rights held by others, such as patents, shall be marked as such in the submission.

EIT Food and their authorised representatives in the program undertake to ensure the confidentiality of the projects presented and developed throughout the EIT FAN. By submitting the application within the program, applicants consent that EIT Food and its accelerator hubs will collect, transfer, process, store and delete your data under abovementioned conditions.

The selected companies agree that their data as well as non-confidential information about their project, may be used by EIT Food and their authorised representatives without compensation for promotion of their activities.

### 3.6.4 Processing of personal data

#### Processing of personal data by EIT Food

Any personal data will be processed by EIT Food in accordance with the EIT Food privacy policy notice(s): <https://www.eitfood.eu/pages/privacy-policy>

#### Processing of personal data by the participants

The participants must process personal data in compliance with applicable EU and national law on data protection (including authorisations or notification requirements, if any), see the GDPR recommendations.

### 3.6.5 Ethics

The activities must be carried out in compliance with:

- a) ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity) and
- b) applicable international, EU and national law.

No funding will be awarded for activities carried out outside the EU, if they are prohibited in all Member States.

The participants must ensure that the activities of their company have an exclusive focus on civil applications.

The participants must respect the highest standards of research integrity — as set out, for instance, in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.

### 3.6.6 Security

The activities must be carried out in compliance with Commission Decision 2015/444, i.e. security-sensitive information must be EU-classified, if its unauthorised disclosure could adversely impact the interests of the EU or of one (or more) of its Member States. Applications that are too security-sensitive cannot be admitted to the programme.

### 3.6.7 Conflict of Interest

The participants must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective award of the grant is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interest').

They must inform EIT Food without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

EIT Food may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

### 3.6.8 Liability for damages

EIT Food cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the participants or to third parties as a consequence of the grant, including for gross negligence.

EIT Food cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the participants in the context of the grant.

### 3.6.9 Withdrawal of the (non-)financial support – Recovery of the undue amounts

EIT Food may withdraw the prizes after its award and recover all payments made, if it finds out that:

- a. false information, fraud or corruption was used to obtain it
- b. a winner was not eligible or should have been excluded
- c. a winner is in serious breach of its obligations under these Terms & Conditions.

### 3.6.10 Administrative sanctions

If a participant has committed irregularities or fraud or has made false declarations, EIT Food may also:

- a. exclude the participant from all future contracts, grants and contests financed from the EU or Euratom budget for a maximum of five years (or 10 years in case of repetition) and/or
- b. impose a financial penalty between 2% and 10% of the value of the grant (or between 4% and 20% in case of repetition).

### 3.6.11 Cancellation of the programme

EIT Food may cancel the programme or decide not to award any of the aforementioned prizes—without any obligation to compensate participants —, if:

- a. no applications are received
- b. the jury does not find a winner
- c. the winner(s) is not eligible or must be excluded

### 3.6.12 Terms & Conditions

By signing the confirmation of participation, applicants agree to the Terms and Conditions. EIT Food reserves the right to make reasonable amendments to these Terms and Conditions. Amendments and additions to these Terms and Conditions shall be valid if communicated in writing on the EIT Food website or otherwise made available to the applicants.

These Terms and Conditions are governed by the laws of Belgium. Any disagreement or dispute which may arise in connection with these Terms and Conditions which cannot be settled amicably will be brought before the courts of Bruxelles, Belgium.

To the maximum extent permitted by law, under no circumstances and under no legal theory whether in tort (including negligence) contract or otherwise shall EIT Food and the EIT Food partners involved in this activity be liable for any special indirect, punitive, incidental or consequential damages, including loss of profit.

You may withdraw your application as well as participation in the EIT FAN any time by informing us by email or withdrawing your registration any time.

### 3.7. Contact

The EIT FAN is organised by EIT Food and its regional Accelerator Hubs which act as managing partners in coordinating the collection, evaluation, awarding and follow-up process at regional level.

#### Contact Details EIT Food

**Marie Russier**

EIT FAN Programme Manager

E-Mail: [marie.russier@eitfood.eu](mailto:marie.russier@eitfood.eu)

#### Contact Details Accelerator Hubs

**Accelerator Hub Bilbao, Spain**

Juliet Bray

E-Mail: [juliet.bray@eitfood.eu](mailto:juliet.bray@eitfood.eu)

**Accelerator Hub Munich, Germany**

Nikola Baumschlager

E-Mail: [nikola.baumschlager@unternehmertum.de](mailto:nikola.baumschlager@unternehmertum.de)

**Accelerator Hub Haifa, Israel**

Dr. Avital Regev Siman-Tov

E-Mail: [avitalr@technion.ac.il](mailto:avitalr@technion.ac.il)

**Accelerator Hub Helsinki, Finland**

Mirva Lampinen

E-Mail: [Mirva.Lampinen@vtt.fi](mailto:Mirva.Lampinen@vtt.fi)

**Accelerator Hub Paris, France**

Marie-Charlotte Poyet

E-Mail: [mariecharlotte@shakeupfactory.com](mailto:mariecharlotte@shakeupfactory.com)

#### Other information sources

EIT Food web page: [www.eitfood.eu](http://www.eitfood.eu)

EIT FAN web page: <https://www.eitfood.eu/entrepreneurship/accelerate-food-accelerator-network>



# 4. RisingFoodStars Programme

## 1. Introduction

The RisingFoodStars is an Entrepreneurship programme provided by EIT Food. The beneficiaries of the RisingFoodStars programme are impact-driven, aspiring scaleups that demonstrate the desire, potential and readiness to begin their transformational journey to unlock their commercial potential with the aim to scale rapidly and become a food star of tomorrow. They have the ambition to improve any part of the agriculture or food supply chain, thus committed to building a future-fit food system that is healthier and more sustainable. You can only become a RisingFoodStar upon submission of an eligible application. This guideline serves the companies who are willing to become a RisingFoodStar in 2024.

## 2. The Programme

The RisingFoodStars programme identifies the most promising ventures in the Agrifood-Tech space who are on their journey to scaleup rapidly and empowers them to lead the revolution towards a future-fit food system. The higher goal of this programme is to give you a Pan-European recognition and to provide you with access to all the resources, tools and network you need to challenge, design and follow your own journey to successfully scale up and become a food star of tomorrow.

RisingFoodStars programme boosts your chances of scaling up successfully by supporting you to:

- Challenge and re-fine your vision, mission, business model and adapt your pitch to your new growth stage as a promising scaleup;
- Define your strategic priorities to scaleup efficiently and successfully;
- Unlock your commercial potential and attract the right customers;
- Define your fundraising strategy and attract the relevant investors;
- Build your leadership and management capabilities, revamp your organisation structure and attract the right talent;
- Transform from a technical product / service to a commercially oriented organisation.

### Core Programme

By joining the RisingFoodStars programme, you receive the core services below:

1. **SCALE UP DIAGNOSIS** : You receive a thorough scan of your company by scaleups experts to assess your strengths and shortcomings and define together your specific needs in order to successfully scale up.





2. **SCALEUP ACTION PLAN:** After defining your strategic priorities, we provide you with small group customised and interactive workshops as well as 1:1 mentorship sessions to develop a plan of action and build your capabilities. The workshops menu is accessible to all your team.
3. **PARTNERSHIP BUILDING:** We help you identify and connect with the right decision makers within our 100+ corporate partners to widen your market access and commercial reach. Thanks to our corporate venture services, we support you to personalise your value proposition to industry partners and connect you with the right stakeholders in our partner organisations.
4. **FUNDING:** We help you to find the right funding opportunities through our own EIT Food impact fund and our network of 30+ leading investors including Food Sparks by Peak Bridge. As part of your core membership, you are also eligible to receive direct financial support from EIT Food impact fund to fuel your growth and your commercial partnership pilots with corporate partners: up to €500,000 per venture through a Simple Agreement For Future Equity (“SAFE”) instrument (this is not guaranteed, the decision at the sole discretion of EIT Food impact fund team). Read here for more information: [Investment: EIT Food Impact Fund - EIT Food](#).
5. **VISIBILITY:** We give you privileged access to leading corporates and investors via the biggest pan-European conferences such as FutureFoodTech London, F&A Next or our own venture summit in Lisbon. As part of a RisingFoodStar, you also receive financial support to travel to those key events. On top of this, we highlight your success story in our media channels including social media, website, podcasts with a reach of over 8Mn.

The core services detailed above are priced at 4,500 euros/ year. For new joiners in 2024, since they will be joining us in July 2024, the membership fees for 2024 will be 2,250 euros (pro-rated to the number of participation months, covering our core services till end of December 2024).

## Side Tracks

To complete the participation and to support you further with your scaling journey, we also developed 3 side tracks you can choose from based on your needs (highly recommended but optional):

1. **Track 1: Series A investment readiness**
  - Two-day in person Bootcamp in small teams (max 8 startups) covering all you need to be ready for your series A fundraising
  - Access to best-in class tools, models, templates, frameworks built by top-notch investors.
  - Additional 4h of exclusive mentorship in a 1:1 format with the best mentors in the market
  - Detailed 1h feedback session on your series A pitch from our investment team.
  - Privileged access to leading series A investors in agrifoodtech
2. **Track 2: Customer acquisition growth**
  - Two days in person bootcamp in small teams (max 8 startups) covering all you need to speed up your commercialisation

- Additional 4h exclusive 1:1 mentorship with best mentors and experts in the area
- Feedback on your commercial pitch to key customers from our CVS team
- Dedicated support to prepare your application to get access to EIT Food innovation funding

### 3. Track 3: Visibility boost

- Visibility in events: First right of refusal on free tickets, booths and pitching\* (whenever relevant and subject to availability), up to 6 events per year.
- Hands-on mentorship on how to revive your purpose and branding
- Extra travel budget: up to 2 extra trips (for a value of 1000 euros) covering EIT Food sponsored events or your choice of relevant events related to your scaling journey
- Extra media boost: support on video/ content generation, PR, social media, podcast...

Each track is priced at an additional 2,000 euros. A 20% discount is applied to the second purchased track, if you choose more than 1 side track.

### Access to Grants

The selected companies to the RisingFoodStars programme are entitled to get support grants under the form of lump sums for the following purposes:

- Travel to EU or International Agrifood events (up to 2000 euros)
  - o 500 euros for EU and associated countries
  - o 1000 euros for international events
- Up to 6 hours of mentorship (up to 900 euros: lump sum of 150 euros per hour)

They are entitled to claim the grant over the period running between the date of signature of the contract and 31<sup>st</sup> December of the running year.

To validly claim a support grant, the company should send out the following justifications:

- **Travel:** proof of attendance to the event, e.g. name of the company and the employee on attendance list with name and dates of the event or scan of the badge of the event including name of the employee, company, name and dates of the event or picture of the recipient representative in the booth or on the stage of the event.
- **Mentorship:** timesheet of the mentor stating number of hours provided, at which dates and name of the recipient company

### 3. Eligibility

#### General criteria

- You are not involved in another EIT Food Business Creation programme (i.e. Seedbed and EIT Food Accelerator Network). All programs are complementary. Each is focusing on a different stage of company with another offer. For a complete overview of current EIT Food programme offering, please visit the homepage.
- You have no conflict of interests. Ventures owned by EIT Food employees or members of EIT Food governing bodies and engagements in which EIT Food employees or members of EIT Food governing bodies have an interest are also excluded. EIT Food includes all CLCs of EIT Food and all governing bodies.
- You add value, and you are complementary to the current pool of RisingFoodStars and network of EIT Food partners. The current list of members is available [here](#).

#### Formal criteria

- You have your legal entity based in a Member State of the European Union (EU) or Horizon Europe associated countries
- You submitted a fully completed application and requested supported documents in English through the online platform by the deadline set on the EIT Food website.
- You read and accepted the EIT Food Privacy Policy, the RisingFoodStars service contract and Model Subgrant Agreement upon submission. Programme-specific criteria
- You are a **SMALL sized company** as defined in the [EU recommendation 2003/361](#),

Category	Staff headcount	Turnover	or	Balance sheet total
Medium-sized	< 250	≤ € 50 m		≤ € 43 m
<b>Small</b>	<b>&lt; 50</b>	<b>≤ € 10 m</b>		<b>≤ € 10 m</b>
Micro	< 10	≤ € 2 m		≤ € 2 m

- Your company exists for **less than ten years**
- You have a technological solution within one of the 3 missions:
  - Healthy lifestyles
  - Net Zero
  - Fair and resilient supply chain
- You have a **unique and scalable technology validated in market conditions** combined with a healthy business model (TRL>6)
- You are generating revenues from a strategic multi-customers portfolio (Min 100K euros)
- You have a compelling vision with the right capabilities and mindset to transform from a technological product/service to a commercial organisation.
- You have a team of 10+ Full Time employees with both technical and commercial skills.
- You are aiming to raise a Series A within the next 6-12 months

For a better understanding of our priorities, please check our website: [www.eitfood.eu/entrepreneurship](http://www.eitfood.eu/entrepreneurship)

## 4. Application and Evaluation Process

### Timeline

Below are the expected timelines for the application process:

Application opens	18/12/2023
Application closes	19/02/2024
Evaluation and Pitch rounds	March/ April 2024
Outcome notification (expected date)	End of May 2024
Service contract signature and announcement	June 2024
Onboarding and start of the programme	July 2024

### Application

To apply please fill in the application form on our website: <https://www.eitfood.eu/entrepreneurship>.

Applications are transparent and open to all eligible applicants from Dec 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, to Feb 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

### Evaluation

After receiving your full application, we will first assess your data against the eligibility criteria. If eligible, our evaluation committee will score your application against key criteria:

- 1.Motivation: What drives you and your team, and why would you like to join RisingFoodStars?
- 2.Problem validation: Which problem are you solving and for whom?
- 3.Problem-Solution fit: Why is the technological solution you offer an excellent fix for the problem you mentioned?
- 4.Business model: RisingFoodStars focuses on companies in the early scale-up phase. Your business model should be validated in market and scalable.
- 5.Team: We believe that team is the most crucial factor for a successful venture. We want to get to know you better and see if you have what it takes to be a RisingFoodStar. We like to see a mix of technical and commercial profiles in your team.

The evaluation Committee of the RisingFoodStars programme will review all eligible applications. The Committee consists of members of EIT Food, its partners and independent expert evaluators. The evaluation Committee will score your applications online and invite the best candidates for a pitching and



Q&As session. The evaluation Committee will invite high-rated applicants where there are still some questions for an online clarifying Q&A. The exact dates will be announced on the website of the EIT Food and the relevant RisingFoodStars applicants will be informed by email. The purpose of the pitch is to clarify any outstanding issues and give some more background if needed.

Candidates selected after the pitching round might be called for a leadership interview to assess their leadership skills and coachability.

### Notification of candidates

All applicants will be informed individually on the final decision through the email address provided on the application. The RisingFoodStars Manager will reach out to successful applicants to prepare their membership. Note that we handle the submitted applications confidentially. Confidentiality agreements bind everybody that reads the applications during the review process. Applicants retain full and exclusive ownership of their background intellectual property rights.

Onboarding: We will invite the selected RisingFoodStars to attend a deep dive about EIT Food, to get a full insight on the EIT Food ecosystem, its partners, its opportunities, and its staff. At least one member of your team must be present, and we will ask you to confirm this in your submission.

## 5. Terms of the contract

To benefit from the RisingFoodStars programme each company has to comply with a number of Obligations:

- a) Before entering the programme, each beneficiary must have:
  - Signed contract specifying which services they are willing to purchase (core programme, side track 1, side track2, side track 3)
  - Paid the related service invoice.
  - Provided the legal registry document proving the incorporation of the legal entity.
  - Filled the onboarding form
  - Filled in and signed the Subgranting agreement to be entitled to get grants for travel and mentorship.
  - Attended the onboarding meeting by at least one representative of your team
  
- b) At the end of each legal year, the beneficiary can renew the contract for up to 3 times (i.e. four consecutive years). if the beneficiary is willing to renew the contract to participate in the RisingFoodStars programme, the company must
  - Continue to be eligible for the programme
  - Show proof of involvement in the programme's activities (min of 3 events or trainings)
  - Show proof of growth and success (revenue, fundraising, expansion to new markets, job creation)
  - Attend the mandatory 1:1 with RisingFoodStars manager at the end of the programme
  - Comply with the branding guidelines (displaying EIT Food Logo on the website: <https://www.eitfood.eu/branding/how-to-use-the-eit-food-eu-logo>)
  - participate in the Programme impact survey



- Reconduct the service contract
  
- c) After exiting the programme and for 3 years after participation, the companies must commit, upon request to provide additional information such as financial data and information on investment capital raised).