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EIT Food open Call for Proposals 2023

Frequently Asked Questions

(1)

1 General questions

1. What are the submission deadlines?

This call for proposals offers two cut-off dates for submission:

- 14 October 2022, noon CET
- 13 April 2023, noon CET

2. Are these two submission deadlines or essentially two independent calls?

This call is a single call with two windows to submit your proposals. The first window has the deadline in October and the second window has the deadline in April 2023. Both submission windows have the same conditions to apply.

Projects will be evaluated and selected after each submission window with 5 million EUR ear-marked for the second submission window.

3. What is the amount of funding available for this Call?

The funding amount for this Call is 20 million EUR in total, of which at least 5 million EUR is ear-marked for the second submission deadline.

In the first cut-off window, projects will be selected up to a total of the 15 million available, provided that they are above the quality threshold. The budget not used in the first window will be automatically added to the 5 million ear-marked for the second submission window.

4. Is there a maximum amount of the grant?

Grants will be up to 600.000 EUR per Activity for those lasting 12 months and up to 1,2 million EUR per Activity over a maximum of 24 months.

5. How will the actual grant be calculated? Will this be based on Horizon Europe rules (grant = % of actual costs, with maximum budgeted grant) or on EIT Food rules (grant = actual costs - budgeted co-funding)?

There is only one way to calculate the Grant: the total budget should consist of all eligible costs that will be incurred by the Consortium to implement the Activity. The reimbursement rate is the % of those eligible costs that will be funded by the EIT grant. The co-funding is the difference between the total eligible costs and the EIT grant.

It is important that Consortia budgets all the estimated eligible costs for implementing the Activity. The Grant will cover a % of those costs, the maximum reimbursement rate in this Call is 70%, and with the limit of the funding limits per Activity mentioned above.

6. Do projects starting in mid July 2023 have a 2 year duration or do they end in December 2024?

All proposals may have a maximum duration of 24 months, regardless of the starting date. The end date is directly related to the start date. All Activities selected for this Call must have an end date of 31 December 2025 or before.

7. Which KPIs are required?

Activities must deliver at least one KPI EITHE02.1 Marketed Innovation, including documented sales revenue of at least 10.000 EUR (ten thousand Euros) in the year the KPI is to be delivered, and no later than 6 months following the official end date of the project.

During the reporting period proof will be requested for those sales, including invoices and other documents as proof of payment of those invoices. The granting authority (EIT) will review the documentation submitted by EIT Food on behalf of the Consortia. The KPIs will be considered as validated upon approval by the granting authority (EIT).

8. Will the proposals be submitted via PLAZA or another portal?

The proposals will need to be submitted via [PLAZA](#). We will provide a [tutorial for using PLAZA](#) on the Call website.

2 Consortium Eligibility and EIT Food partnership questions

1. Can a company which is not EIT FOOD member participate in a project and under what conditions?

Yes. To participate in this call for proposals a company must:

- Be a legally incorporated entity in the EU or Horizon Europe eligible country, which has been incorporated for a minimum of 3 years
- Have at least 3 years' published accounts showing business Activity. Note: EIT food will limit the grant value to 50% of turnover, based on the average turnover of the previous 3 years.
- Have at least two statutory officers, such as registered directors. One-person legal entities are not eligible to participate in this call.
- Provide a PIC Number: [Register your organisation in the "Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal – European Commission"](#)

2. What are the consortia eligibility requirements?

Consortia must have:

- At least three eligible organisations from two different EU countries or [Third countries associated to Horizon Europe](#) at the time of proposal submission.

- Each of the three organisations must be active participants in the Consortium, showing a role, commiserate with the level of budget, and should not fall under the same ownership.
 - At least one Exploiting Party/Parties responsible for commercial exploitation resulting from the Activity
 - Members from 2 segments of the Knowledge Triangle: education/academia; research; business/industry.
3. Is there any advantage in the evaluation for EIT FOOD partners?
No. There is no difference in evaluation between Consortia including one/more existing EIT Food Partner(s) and consortia of all external organizations. The same is true for the Activity Leader.
4. Who can lead the Activity?
Any eligible Consortium participant can be the “lead partner”. However, we encourage the Activity to be led by the participant responsible for commercialising the Activity’s results.
5. Can project Consortia include non-EU organizations (e.g., US) or contractors or are we limited to EU?
Please find the full list of eligible Third Countries Associated to Horizon Europe [here](#).
6. Are UK based organisations invited to participate?
Yes. UK participants are welcome to participate in Consortia. However the association of UK to Horizon Europe programme is not yet concluded. For that reason, UK participants will still be considered as non-eligible for EIT funding until their association is completed. Meanwhile, the UK has in place national funding schemes to facilitate the participation of UK participants and we encourage UK participants to learn about the mechanisms in place from the UK government.
7. Can a research institute apply for the Call? E.g., an on-farm animal breeding experiment (practical conditions, in cooperation with a medium-sized farm)?
Yes, we encourage any organisation that meets the eligibility criteria to apply.
8. Are there specific rules for RIS proposals or/and RIS partners involvement (Note: Regional Investment Scheme within the EIT Food partnership)
No, there are no special rules or conditions for RIS proposals or/and RIS partners.
9. Could you please indicate what contribution an RFS can make (Note: Rising Food Star within the EIT Food partnership).
Rising Food Stars are welcome to participate in the Call. There are no special rules or conditions for RFS.
10. What are the restrictions regarding Russian entities?

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

3 Proposal requirements, Reimbursement Rate, Cost Eligibility questions

1. What are the Proposal eligibility criteria?

Proposals must:

- Be submitted completely, in English, with all mandatory documents in our PLAZA submission tool by the deadline
- Have a Reimbursement Rate of 70%
- Comply with Financial Sustainability Requirements stated in the Call Guidelines.
- Comply with the KPI requirements stated in the Call Guidelines
- Be cost compliant with Horizon Europe regulations regarding the eligibility of expenses. Please refer to Article 6 of the [Model Grant Agreement](#) and the [Annotated Model Grant Agreement](#).

2. What are the reimbursement and co-funding rates for this Call?

EIT Food will fund up to 70% of total eligible costs of the Activity (reimbursement rate). As such, the Consortium must co-fund a minimum of 30% (co-funding) of the total project eligible costs with sources of funding other than EU funding.

3. Is the co-funding rate a competitive factor or is it set?

To be eligible, each proposal must provide at least 30% co-funding. The extent of proposal's co-funding rate is a criterion that will be assessed by evaluators and reflected in the evaluation score. Thus, the co-funding rate is both an eligibility and a competitive factor.

4. Can you specify and/ or give example of fundable costs that can be calculated in the budget? Internal vs. external etc.

All costs need to comply with Horizon Europe regulations regarding the eligibility of expenses. Please refer to Article 6 of the [Model Grant Agreement](#) and the [Annotated Model Grant Agreement](#).

In addition to the guidance provided by Horizon Europe, the proposals must comply with the following maximum thresholds:

- Subcontracting can amount to a maximum of 15% of total costs

- Depreciation can amount to a maximum of 10% of total costs. In case of adding additional depreciation costs, please consult EIT Food in advance.
- Sub-granting: participants will be funded through a subgrant. Participants are not permitted to give a subgrant to another third party.

The most common type of costs are staff costs, depreciation of equipment used in the project, travel of the participants, and other costs of goods and services. Indirect costs are added as a flat rate. Subcontracting should only be used as an exception and for a limited part of the costs in implementing the activity.

5. Will the Cascade Model be in place for these projects?

Yes, the Cascade Model will be in place for these projects. Cascade funding, also known as Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) or sub-granting under the EU Financial Regulation, is a commonly used mechanism to deliver EU funding. For this call this means that the implementation of the portfolio of activities is cascaded by the beneficiary, EIT Food, to further recipients, the selected Activities.

4 TRL and Commercialisation questions

1. Can you please elaborate on what you consider a viable business opportunity?

A viable business opportunity has a clearly defined market need and commercialisation plan with the ability to grow and expand.

2. Does the Consortium have to show documented sales of 10.000 EUR?

Yes. An invoice is required to verify proof of sales of 10.000 EUR. Additional documentation might be requested for validation as for example the proof of payment of such invoices.

3. Is there any formal obligation to deliver the sales evidence by a certain time after project completion?

Sales evidence of 10.000 EUR must be submitted in the year the KPI is to be delivered and not later than 6 months following the official end date of the project.

4. What qualifies as an "innovative technology" i.e., when we talk about circular business models, is a new business model / ecosystem with specific criteria put in place considered an innovative technology? (We already have requests to scale up)
Innovations include new or significantly improved products (goods or services) and processes sold which address at least one of the specific challenges within the EIT Food Focus Areas. Further information is available in the Call Guidelines.

5. Does the result have to be a completely new products or can it also be an augmented/improved already existing/selling products?

Innovations include new or significantly improved products (goods or services) and processes sold which address at least one of the specific challenges within the EIT Food Focus Areas. Further information is available in the Call Guidelines.

6. What are the specific Challenges for this Call?

For this Call, there are specific challenges within each of the EIT Food Focus areas. This information is available in the Call Guidelines Annex 2.

5 Financial Sustainability questions

1. What is the estimated percentage of the financial return to EIT Food in the Financial Return Mechanism?

Each proposal must contribute to the financial sustainability of EIT Food with a specific and robust Financial Return Mechanism (FRM) defining the Return on Investment (ROI) for successful activities. In this Call, there will be 3 types of Financial Return Mechanisms. This information is available in the Call Guidelines.

2. What happens if you do not achieve the predicted ROI on time?

When applicants choose one of the three Financial Return Mechanisms, they commit to make all reasonable efforts to exploit and reach the targeted ROI within the chosen Financial Return Mechanism.

- Non-completion fee. Should the project - in spite of reasonable efforts to exploit - not result in commercialisation of the results, EIT Food is entitled to claim a 10% 'non completion fee' of the EIT Food funding allocated to each Consortium partner. The 'non-completion fee' is applicable for all three Financial Return Mechanisms. In case of revenue sharing (FRM1), should revenues from commercialising the KERs fall behind and the ROI is lower than 10% of the EIT Food funding, EIT Food will charge an additional amount to each individual Consortium partner up to the 10% 'non completion fee'.
- Additional access rights. During the project, and during the exploitation period, the progress of the FRM shall be evaluated by EIT Food. In case the exploiting party/parties could not reach the targeted ROI linked to the chosen FRM (e.g., 35% under FRM 1, 20% or 30% under FRM 2, or 30% under FRM 3) EIT Food reserves the right to request the following additional Access Rights; *exclusive or non-exclusive, fully paid-up, irrevocable, worldwide Access Rights to use the results of the project for the enhancement of EIT Food and the EIT Food Partners, for example for use in scientific papers and benchmarking. Such access rights shall include the right to grant sublicenses.* This may obviously impact a commercialisation strategy that would be based on a stricter and more limited scheme of Access Rights.