

Call for Experts: Growth Advisors – EIT Food Sales Booster 2024 Programme

EIT Food is looking for experienced growth advisors to support startups participating in the EIT Food Sales Booster 2024 to expand their sales to a new market

Application deadline: 28th May, 2024, 23:59 CEST.

Further details about EIT Food can be found at: www.eitfood.eu, and the information on the Sales Booster programme is available at <https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/sales-booster>

With respect to the present call, EIT Food will not provide new information that has not already been included in this document but can assist the potential applicants by explaining contents of this document (please contact:

- *Izaskun Valle Mendieta, Senior Regional Project Officer – Startups at EIT Food CLC South – izaskun.valle@eitfood.eu*
- *Kamila Czerwinska, Project Manager at EIT Food CLC North-East – kamila.czerwinska@eitfood.eu.*

1. **About the programme**

Sales Booster is a custom-made programme of EIT Food that helps innovative startups explore and enter new agrifood markets in Europe (the “Programme”). The Programme supports startups with training, coaching, expert advice, and network to prepare for their development and growth in new markets. The Programme offers highly customized support to innovative startups serving their needs on an individual basis.

The Programme is designed for the two types of innovative startups:

- agrifood startups with impactful solutions in one of EIT Food’s focus areas ([Innovation areas - EIT Food](#))
- startups from other sectors with solutions that can be applied in the agrifood industry.

Selected startups join the Programme and receive tailored support that takes into account their growth stage, current needs, and geographical focus.

All teams will attend an introductory session with business and agrifood experts, followed by individual work with a growth advisor.

Personal growth advisors support startup’s exploration process, help them to assess their needs, and to develop an expansion plan. By the end of the Programme, each startup develops and submits an internationalisation action plan for a chosen country.

2. Who are we looking for?

We are looking to recruit experienced Growth Advisors to support startups during a 3-month internationalisation phase. We are interested to receive applications from individuals or from companies with portfolio of professionals whose skills and experience address needs of startups in creation of internationalisation plan as well as support them in making impactful business connections in targeted markets.

The role of **Growth Advisors** during this phase is:

- to work individually with startups and help them build robust and achievable internationalisation plan for the targeted market. The plan should be custom-made and address opportunities as well as risks involved in the plan.
- to facilitate relationships between startups and potential market entry channels (for example corporations, retailers, distributors and other businesses alike) and provide impactful connections through which startups can make market entry a successful endeavour.

Requirements:

We are looking for advisors with proven business development experience, internationalization expertise and entrepreneurial and/or investment background. EIT Food Growth Advisors need to have **at least five years** of proven professional experience:

- as investor or board advisor, helping organisations develop new business
- in executive management, responsible to start new business and serve new markets
- coaching/mentoring senior management for business development
- demonstrating hands-on experience with fast growth organisation
- resolving executive management issues in early-stage companies' context
- demonstrating a personal network of international contacts with businesses and markets

Applicants shall not mandatorily tick all the boxes, as we encourage diversity in the pool of coaches and will assess the application individually. Where applicable, proof of the professional experience may be requested.

Essential skills and competences:

- Trust building, empathetic, credible, independent and patient
- Curious, inquisitive, analytical, challenging, questioning
- Facilitating, friendly but pertinent, pragmatic

Growth Advisors must demonstrate thorough understanding of:

- Value proposition development
- Validation of the offer
- Go-to-Market and export strategies
- Business development and international sales
- People management
- Finance and investment readiness
- Organisational development
- Supply chain and distribution
- Chosen market knowledge and network

3. Scope of work – Growth Advisors

- Be assigned to a startup and work with them regularly during internationalisation phase (2 h in weekly sessions in span of three months).
- Provide support and advice on startup's internationalisation plan including facilitating relationships between startups and potential market entry channels.
- Set up monthly deliverables aligned to deliver internationalisation plan for the startup and provide feedback on those deliverables.
- Track and evaluate startups' performance on building internationalisation plan and deliver monthly reports to the EIT Food team.
- Help the startup prepare final internationalisation plan that will be presented to the EIT Food at the end of the Programme (specific date to be confirmed).
- At the end of the Programme, provide the startup with feedback on their progress and advice for the next steps.
- Be willing to connect teams with relevant people from your network in chosen market.
- Participate in an introductory session for all coaches before the start of the Programme.

The Growth Advisors will be engaged in the Programme from May until November 31, 2024 (specific dates to be confirmed individually with chosen Advisors).

Overall commitment of a Growth Advisor is around **24 – 30 hours during the 3 months period** (the exact number of hours and teams will be specified in the agreement).

The Growth Advisors are expected to focus on the startup's progress and be willing to invest additional time in helping and advising the teams, if needed.

4. Eligibility criteria

- Natural person (applying independently / not on behalf of an employer or organisation) or;
- Officially registered company (in case of organisation applying with portfolio of advisors);
- Not employed by EIT Food, EIT Food partner or one of the EIT Food Hubs;
- Able to sign a subcontracting agreement with EIT Food's Co-Location Centres and act as a subcontractor in a project funded based on Horizon Europe/EIT modalities;
- Able to develop the Programme activities in the time and manner described in the present call;
- Familiar with the processes and challenges of running an early stage innovative company;
- Possessing a knowledge of the European agrifood startup scene;
- Excellent command of English.

5. Remuneration

Applicants are expected to provide an offer for their services (gross and net amount in EUR) in the application form. The proposal should include the price for all services listed in the Scope of Work. EIT Food reserves the rights to keep the maximum hourly rate at 100 EUR. During the evaluation process, EIT Food will determine the number of coaches needed for the Programme and might approach the selected candidates with an updated financial offer.

The selected applicants will sign a subcontracting agreement with one/several local offices of EIT Food. The Growth Advisors will be paid for their services by EIT Food in 30 days after receiving an invoice. The details will be specified in the contract.

6. Application and selection process

Interested and eligible individuals are invited to submit their applications (CV and attached application form) **by May 20th, 2024, 23:59 CEST** to kamila.czerwinska@eitfood.eu and izaskun.valle@eitfood.eu with as subject line: "Application – Growth Advisors Sales Booster 2024 Programme".

Each applicant should submit:

1. A complete application form in English;
2. A curriculum vitae (CV) and/or a link to their LinkedIn profile.

Incomplete applications or applications submitted by ineligible individuals will be automatically rejected. Complete applications received by EIT Food will be evaluated by a committee including representatives of EIT Food using selection criteria presented in point 3.2. EIT Food reserves the right to designate the subcontractors only if the submitted applications ensure the excellence and value for money, and to relaunch the call if the present selection process would not yield satisfactory results. EIT Food reserves the right to contact the applicants by e-mail or phone asking for additional explanations or supporting documents, and to schedule selection interviews with short-listed individuals.

The number of selected candidates will be determined by EIT Food during the evaluation process. Suitable profiles will remain in EIT Food's data base for two consecutive years following application year.

7. Selection process

All proposals will be evaluated taking into account the following criteria, related to the applicant's profile and experience:

1. Thorough understanding of value proposition development, validation of the offer, go-to-market and export strategies, business development and international sales, people management, financial management, investment readiness, strategic marketing organisational development, supply chain and distribution.
2. Professional experience in one or more of the following areas: investor or board advisor, new business development, executive management, international expansion or new business delivery, coaching or mentoring senior management; successful startup scaling.
3. Experience in mentoring, coaching and training startups.
4. Network of contacts in indicated market.
5. Cost of service offered by an applicant.

An eligible application can receive a maximum of 100 points. Each criterion will be evaluated on a scale from 0 to 20:

- 0 – not satisfactory;
- 10 – satisfactory;
- 15 – good;
- 20 – very good.

The successful applicants will be informed of the outcome by the end of May. The matchmaking with the startups will take place in the following week.