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# Call 2023: Public Engagement

## Proof of Concepts 2023, 2024, 2025

EIT FOOD

Leuven, Belgium

August 2022

[Eitfood.eu](http://Eitfood.eu)

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## 1. Introduction

EIT Food is the world's largest food innovation community, creating connections right across the food system. Supported by the EU, we invest in projects, organisations and individuals who share our goals for a healthy and sustainable food system.

We've built a unique not-for-profit business to carry out transformative programmes in skills, education, entrepreneurship, start-up investment and communications. We deliver these programmes in partnership with our members to create a culture and build a community which sees the long-term value in the food innovation we fund through open, competitive calls.

EIT Food has a strategic approach to systems change to create societal and economic impact. This is underpinned by a robust Theory of Change and a clear set of impact indicators and goals published in our [Strategic Agenda 2021-27](#).

### **What is the purpose of this call for Proof of Concepts?**

We are looking for innovative public engagement project ideas with the potential for societal impact, to be tested in a Proof of Concept phase.

Topics selected for the Proofs of Concepts should support EIT Food's vision: a world where everyone can access and enjoy sustainable, safe, and healthy food – with trust and fairness from farm to fork. EIT Food is working towards these four Impact Goals:

- Improvement in conditions for enhanced public trust in the food system
- Better health outcomes from our diet
- Improved environmental impact of the Agri Food systems
- Enabling transitions to a circular and sustainable economy

The PoC project ideas should have an aim to:

- Equip individuals to make more informed choices (healthier/more sustainable)
- Increase transparency & engagement in the food system
- Include consumer involvement in shaping a future food system

### **Who can apply?**

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

## 2. Key Information and Requirements

This is a request for organisations to bring innovative ideas to be tested via a Proof of Concept (PoC), for the potential for societal impact.

A Proof of Concept is a scoping exercise to test whether an idea, a certain concept or approach when turned into reality, would bring societal impact as envisioned. Via this call, we offer an opportunity for individual organisations or small consortia to spend sufficient time on testing and demonstrating the relevance of the proposed approach for establishing the societal impact feasibility of the idea. The PoC phase can also be used to build a scale up model for a multi-year project.

This call is for Proof of Concepts to take place between March - August 2023 (Period 1), January - June 2024 (Period 2) and January - June 2025 (Period 3). The call for Period 1 is now open and each year a new submission window will open for PoCs to be submitted to run in Period 2 and 3 (see dates in table below). PoCs demonstrating societal potential can bring forward a full proposal for evaluation and potential funding for a multi-year (maximum 3 years) project to commence full activity in the subsequent year after the PoC period. A successful PoC, where potential impact is demonstrated, is a prerequisite to bring in a full project proposal to EIT Food's public engagement area.

Examples of the PoCs that were implemented in 2021 can be found [here](#).

<p>Submission Deadlines for PoCs</p> <p>Period 1: March – August 2023 Submission Window 1</p> <p>Period 2: January – June 2024 Submission Window 2</p> <p>Period 3: January – June 2025 Submission Window 3</p>	<p><b>Submission Window Launch/Opening Dates:</b> Submission Window 1: 15.09.2022 Submission Window 2: 15.06.2023 Submission Window 3: 15.06.2024</p> <p><b>Submission Window Deadlines:</b> Submission Window 1: 15.11.2022 12:00 CET Submission Window 2: 15.08.2023 12:00 CET Submission Window 3: 15.08.2024 12:00 CET</p> <p><b>Submission Review Period:</b> Submission Window 1: 15.11.2022 -15.01.2023 Submission Window 2: 15.08.2023 -15.10.2023 Submission Window 3: 15.08.2024 -15.10.2024.</p> <p>Further information and webinars can be found on the website</p>
<p>How to Apply</p>	<p>Applications should be submitted via the submission template</p>
<p>EIT Food funding per project</p>	<p>50.000 EUR per PoC</p>
<p>Reimbursement Rate / Co-funding</p>	<p>EIT Food will fund up to 90% of total costs of the activity (reimbursement rate). Projects must contribute 10% (co-funding).</p>
<p>Final Deliverable</p>	<p>The final deliverable of each PoC is a presentation showcasing the outcomes of the PoC period, including demonstrated potential impact.</p>
<p>Additional Information</p>	<p>Can be found in the call webpage</p>

This is an open call which means the call guidelines will be published on EIT Food Plaza and the EIT Food website, the Procurement and Tenders Portal, and promoted by EIT Food.

## 3. Call specific requirements

### 3.1 KPIs

It is not mandatory to include Key Performance Indicators (KPI) as part of the PoC. However, if your PoC can contribute towards the [EIT Food KPIs](#), please make sure you include this in your application.

### 3.2 Deliverables & Milestones

Each PoC needs to submit a **final deliverable** at the end of the implementation period. The deliverable should include:

- A presentation of the main PoC outcomes. The format of this presentation is up to the consortium. It should clearly showcase the methodology followed, the findings of the PoC and outline the societal potential (if any). The language used should be understandable to a non-specialist audience.

If the PoC has proven to have societal potential, the PoC activity leader is expected to submit a **full project proposal for continuation**. More instructions on this process will be shared by the Public Engagement Programme Management team towards the end of the completion of the PoC.

A consortium may conclude based on project outcomes that their PoC has not demonstrated enough societal potential to submit a full proposal. If that is the case, only the presentation of the main PoC outcomes is necessary as a final deliverable.

The final deliverable will be reviewed by external reviewers and the Public Engagement Programme Management team of EIT Food for inclusion in the Business Plan.

### 3.3 Duration

A Proof of Concept, once approved, will run for six months. It is expected that they run from March to August 2023, January to June 2024, January to June 2025. This will be subject to available funding as well as business plan approval.

### 3.4 Financial Aspects

#### 3.4.1 EIT Funding Allocation

The total maximum EIT funding allocated to this call is 360.000 EUR per submission window excluding the 10% co-funding.

#### 3.4.2 Reimbursement rate

As long as you can demonstrate your ability to fund 10% of your project costs from other sources, EIT Food will reimburse up to 90% of your project costs for Public Engagement projects.

### 3.4.3 Eligibility of Expenditures

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
- Sub-granting: participants will be funded through a subgrant. Participants are not permitted to give a subgrant to another third party.

### 3.4.4 Financial Sustainability

Financial Sustainability is not a compulsory requirement and societal impact is key. However, Public Engagement will need to contribute to Financial Sustainability, so we need projects in our portfolio that contribute. If the applicant sees a potential for financial sustainability, we encourage them to put in their full proposal and to deliver on it. Financial Sustainability will be viewed favourably in the proposal review.

If the PoC creates products for the purpose of future commercialisation, a Financial Return Mechanism (FRM) is mandatory to comply with EIT Food's Financial Sustainability Strategy (FSS).

### 3.5 Monitoring

All Activities selected for funding undergo continuous monitoring by EIT Food to ensure effective progress and implementation in accordance with the Project Agreement, and to trigger payments according to the achievement of milestones, deliverables and KPIs.

EIT Food may request regular reporting of actual costs incurred with the subgrant, as well as regular reporting of KPIs and deliverables, together with the supporting documentation.

The monitoring process may result in an amendment to the Activity workplan and/or budget, however the Financial Return Mechanism Agreement cannot be re-negotiated following the approval of the Activity.

In the case of under-performance, significant delay of implementation, misconduct of the consortium, or any other reason jeopardizing the timely implementation of the Activity identified during the monitoring process, EIT Food reserves the right to discontinue or restructure the funding of the Activity at any point during the Activity duration.

## 4. Intellectual Property

### 4.1 Intellectual Property Policy

[EIT Food Intellectual Property's \(IP\) Policy](#) complies with Horizon Europe's IP Policy, found in Article 16 of the [Model Grant Agreement](#).

### 4.2 Additional Access Rights

For Public Engagement (Communication) activities, consortia will be required to grant to KIC LE additional Access Rights on (non-confidential) Data/Developed (Communication) tools, resulting from the activity. KIC LE will have to be granted the right to these for internal purposes, including further research such as but not limited to quantitative and qualitative studies, and for communication/dissemination and publication by disclosing the Data/developed tools to the general public by appropriate means, excluding scientific publications. The rights include the rights to communicate through press information services, inclusion in widely accessible databases, editing or redrafting, translation, presenting, showcasing, and exhibiting, storage and archiving and the right to authorise third parties to act on behalf of EIT Food.

## 5. General Proposal Preparation, Submission & Evaluation

### 5.1 Who can apply?

The call for Proof of Concepts is open to individuals and consortia from Member States of the European Union (EU) and from [Horizon Europe Associate Countries](#). In an exceptional case, an entity not coming from the EU or the Third countries (not associated to Horizon Europe) can be awarded financial support, if approved directly by the EIT.

On our website you will find a link to our collaboration tool Hype which can help build your consortium if, or when, you decide to apply for funding.

PoCs can be applied to by only one member and the PoC period can be used to build the consortium for the following years that would implement the full proposal. However, the PoC submission needs to already outline the key skills needed for the full activity to be successful.

Please find eligibility requirements for individual organisation, consortium and proposal eligibility in Section 6.1.

### 5.2. Proposal Submission

The submission template can be found on the call page. It should be a maximum of 3 pages. The Proof of Concept should be submitted to these the submission deadlines corresponding to the different running periods (see table in section 2):

- Submission Window 1 Deadline: 15.11.2022 12:00 CET
- Submission Window 2 Deadline: 15.08.2023 12:00 CET
- Submission Window 3 Deadline: 15.08.2024 12:00 CET

### 5.3 Mandatory Documents

All documents that need to be submitted are described on the call page.

## 6.Evaluation and Selection Process

Proposals are selected based on your proposal’s evaluation result, portfolio fit and available funding.

PoCs will be evaluated based on their:

- Excellence: Unique and innovative approach
- Impact: Potential, Impact tracking approach
- Quality and efficiency of the implementation

All PoC proposals will be evaluated by three external reviewers and EIT Food Programme Management.

### 6.1 Eligibility

We begin by conducting an internal eligibility check on all members of your consortia and on your proposal.

Individual Organisation Eligibility	Each applicant or consortia member must provide:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their company registration number</li> <li>• Their PIC number (see <a href="#">here</a> how to obtain this number)</li> </ul>
Consortia Eligibility <sup>1</sup>	The consortia must be composed of:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least two applicants from two different countries from EU or <a href="#">Third countries associated to Horizon Europe</a>.</li> </ul>
Proposal Eligibility	To eligible proposals must:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be complete, with all mandatory supporting documents uploaded</li> <li>• Be submitted on time via our submission template, in English</li> <li>• Have a reimbursement rate of 10%</li> <li>• Be cost compliant with Horizon Europe regulations regarding the eligibility of expenses. Please refer to Article 6 of the <a href="#">Model Grant Agreement</a> and the <a href="#">Annotated Model Grant Agreement</a></li> </ul>

#### Please Note:

1. Failing any of the above criteria will make your proposal ineligible. Failing to meet the Individual Organisation criteria will make that single organisation ineligible, which might affect the eligibility of the whole proposal, depending on the relevance of the role of the applicant being removed. If an applicant or the proposal is ineligible, participants will be informed.
2. 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.](#)

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<sup>1</sup> This is only for those applying as a consortium not for those applying as individual organisations



3. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if any organisation in the consortium is:
- bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, where its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business Activities are suspended, or where it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national laws or regulations;
  - it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the organisation is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the applicable law;
  - it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the organisation is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the organisation belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes a wrongful intent or gross negligence;
  - is found to be attempting to influence the decision-making process of the call during the process;
  - attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the call process;
  - it has been established by a final judgment that the organisation is guilty of fraud, corruption or money laundering.

## 6.2 Evaluation Process

Three external evaluators who are experts in public engagement will review each of the proposals. They will evaluate them based on the matrix below with the evaluation criteria.

The evaluation criteria have the following weighting:

- Excellence: 30%
- Impact: 20%
- Quality and efficiency of the implementation: 50%

Excellence – 30%		Impact – 20%		Quality and efficiency of implementation – 50%	
35%	Outline of problem and solution	55%	Contribution to EIT Food's Impact Goals	30%	Effectiveness of the proposed workplan
30%	Innovativeness of the proposed solution	25%	Demonstration of distinctive EIT/EU added value	30%	Competence and experience y of the proposed organisation or consortia
25%	Soundness/credibility of the concept	20%	Potential Contribution to Societal Impact	40%	Robustness of implementation plan beyond the workplan, scale of impact.
10%	Value for Money of the proposed activity				

Each evaluation sub-criterion will be scored from 1 to 5 using the following scoring system:

- 1 - Poor: The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses
- 2 - Fair: Proposal broadly addresses the criterion but there are significant weaknesses
- 3 - Good: Proposal addresses the criterion well, but a few shortcomings are present
- 4 - Very good: Proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present

5 - Excellent: Proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

The resulting scores are then normalised to calculate the result for the proposal. Notification of the outcomes will be sent by email to applicants in January 2023, November 2023 and November 2024.

### 6.3 Appeal on Evaluation Results

Activity leaders can submit an appeal on within 5 days of result receipt, if:

- There is an indication that the results of the eligibility checks were incorrect
- The evaluation of their proposal has not been carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in this document.

For more details, please read [EIT Food Redress Mechanism .docx](#)

## 7. Next steps for selected Proposals

### 7.1 EIT Food legal framework & legal documents to be signed

Following the initial notification letter, selected proposals will receive a second communication with instructions regarding the completion of the following, as well as agreeing to EIT Food's conflict of interest policy:

- EIT Food Partner Agreement concluded between EIT Food and EIT Food Partners (regardless of partner category) outlining the main principles of the KIC Partnership and the rights and obligations of the Partners of the Partners in EIT Food.
- Subgrant Agreement between EIT Food and Partners receiving EIT grants setting out the main principles under the Cascade Funding for a Partners receiving EIT grants under the Cascade Funding and outlining the main rights and obligations in this regard, such as liability, IP principles, payments, termination, suspension etc.
- Project Agreement between EIT Food and the project consortium the duration of project implementation, setting out obligations (such as KPI delivery, Financial Return Mechanism), funding amount for each partner as well as other aspects governing the implementation of the project.
- Financial Return Mechanism Agreement: An agreement on the Financial Return Mechanism needs to be signed between EIT Food and exploiting party/parties of the consortium.

### 7.2 Payment Schedule

EIT Food will transfer your funding in instalments. A proportion of the Activity budget will be pre-financed, with subsequent payments being linked to the achievement of the deliverables as explained in Section 3.2.

The majority of the grant will be transferred at the end of the Activity, once eligible costs have been determined and following the completion of final Activity reporting and the fulfilment of all obligations specified in the Project Agreement.