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Request for proposals

Business Development Expert: EWA and Supernovas

EIT Food – Making Food Innovation Happen

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

<http://www.eitfood.eu>

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1. Overview of EIT Food

EIT Food is Europe's leading food innovation initiative, working to make the food system more sustainable, healthy and trusted.

The initiative is made up of a consortium of key industry players, startups, research centres and universities from across Europe. It is one of eight Innovation Communities established by the European Institute for Innovation & Technology (EIT), an independent EU body set up in 2008 to drive innovation and entrepreneurship across Europe.

EIT Food aims to collaborate closely with consumers to develop new knowledge and technology-based products and services that will ultimately deliver a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle for all European citizens.

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

Scope of Work

Title of the assignment:

Strategic and Business Development Support for Gender-Focused Programmes (EWA and Supernovas)

General objectives:

EIT Food is launching a request for proposals to contract a Business Development Expert to support the strategic development of two key gender-focused initiatives.

- EWA (Empowering Women in Agrifood) - an EIT Food programme that supports early-stage female entrepreneurs in the agrifood sector across Europe.

- Supernovas - a cross-EIT (Food, Urban Mobility and Manufacturing) initiative that supports women entrepreneurs and investors, with the aim of fostering women presence in the ecosystem.

Both initiatives promote gender equality in the innovation ecosystem. This assignment will define mid-term strategies, develop funding models, map participant pathways into broader EIT Food support offers, and identify synergies between the two programmes.

Detailed work scope:

Main tasks:

- Develop a 2–3-year strategic roadmap for EWA, including funnel design, target countries for expansion and alignment with internal KPIs.
- Define a financial sustainability strategy for both EWA and Supernovas, exploring diverse funding sources (grants, sponsorship, co-financing).
- Map participant pathways from EWA and Supernovas into other EIT Food initiatives.
- Identify cross-programme synergies to improve resource efficiency and strategic positioning.
- Facilitate up to 3 internal/external workshops to validate findings and co-develop strategy.

Key Outputs:

- Strategic Plan for EWA (including funnel logic, expansion strategy, KPI alignment, financial model, and synergy opportunities).
- Financial Sustainability & Synergy Report (for both EWA and Supernovas).
- Integrated Participant Pathways Plan (maps transitions into other EIT Food programmes).
- Strategic Communication Materials (including pitch decks and internal presentations)

Methodology and organisation of work:

- The contractor is expected to work in close coordination with the EIT Food team – the work is not built from zero, but on top of the work done and in collaboration with the Supernovas and EWA Project Managers.
- Input will be gathered via workshops, interviews, and document review.
- Work can be conducted remotely, with optional travel if needed.

Timing and planning:

- Duration: August – November 2025
- Kick-off: within 1 week of contract signing
- Final deliverables due by 30 November 2025

Subcontractor Profile:

Skills and experience in:

- Business Development and strategy
- Excellent communicator in English.
- Attention to detail.
- Highly organised and able to work all-around tasks.

Knowledge and familiarity with:

- Entrepreneurship ecosystem in Europe
- Agrifood sector
- EIT ecosystem

Eligible Subcontractor:

- Proposals are welcome from a wide range of providers, including both individual consultants (freelancers) and structured organisations such as consultancy firms or specialised service providers. Regardless of the legal form, applicants must demonstrate the relevant expertise, capacity and track record to successfully deliver on the scope of work described in this RFP
- Desirable: strategic interest in gender areas, in the entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem.

3. Proposal Process

3.1. Participation

Participation in this proposal procedure is open to all tenderers that might apply through our official channels.

3.2. Submission of proposal

	Date
Sending out RFP invitations to the potential suppliers	Potential suppliers will apply (we will not invite)
Deadline for requesting clarification from EIT Food	July 24 th , 2025
Deadline for submitting proposals	July 28 th , 2025
Intended date of notification of award	July 31 st , 2025
Intended date of contract signature	August 8 th , 2025

Proposals must be emailed in English to the following address to:

Contact name: for the attention of Carolina Silva Marques

E-mail: carolina.silvamarques@eitfood.eu

The proposal shall contain:

- **The technical response to the service requested** (Proposed methodology and timeline, background information on the contractor (e.g. CV or team experience))
- **The financial offer (the price for the services.)** VAT shall be indicated separately.

Responses should be concise and clear. The tenderer's proposal will be incorporated into any contract that results from this procedure. Tenderers are, therefore, cautioned not to make claims or statements that they are not prepared to commit to contractually. Subsequent modifications and counterproposals, if applicable, shall also become an integral part of any resulting contract.

The tenderer confirms that the individual submitting the natural or legal entity's proposal is duly authorized to bind its entity to the proposal as submitted. The tenderer also confirms that it has read the instructions to

tenderers and has the experience, skills and resources to perform, according to conditions set forth in this proposal and the tenderers' proposal.

3.3. Validity of the proposals

Tenderers are bound by their proposals for 90 days after the deadline for submitting proposals or until they have been notified of non-award.

The selected winner must maintain its proposal for a further 60 days to close the contract.

Proposals not following the instructions of this Request for Proposal can be rejected by EIT Food.

3.4. Requests for additional information or clarification

In case the tenderers require additional information or clarifications, these should be addressed to the person indicated below. All communication between EIT Food and tenderers is only possible in writing, all requests will be done and answered by e-mail only. All questions should be sent prior to deadline for requesting clarification as specified in Section 3.1. In case of complex or high value procurements, EIT Food may arrange a clarification session of which it will inform all tenderers.

Contact name: for the attention of Carolina Silva Marques

E-mail: carolina.silvamarques@eitfood.eu

EIT Food has no obligation to provide clarification.

3.5. Costs for preparing proposals

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

3.6. Clarification related to the submitted proposals

After submission of the proposals, they shall be checked if they satisfy all the formal requirements set out in the proposal dossier. Where information or documentation submitted by the tenderers are or appears to be incomplete or erroneous or where specific documents are missing, EIT Food may request the tenderer concerned to submit, supplement, clarify or complete the relevant information or documentation within an appropriate time limit. All communication between EIT Food and tenderers is only possible in writing, all requests will be done and answered by e-mail only.

3.7. Negotiation about the submitted proposal

After checking the administrative compliance of the tenderers, EIT Food reserves the right to negotiate the contract terms with the tenderers. In this negotiation EIT Food may ask all tenderers to adjust the proposal or specific sections of the proposal within an appropriate time limit. In case of negotiation, EIT Food shall provide further information about the proceedings and timing.

3.8. Evaluation of proposals

The quality of each proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the below mentioned award criteria. The award criteria will be examined in accordance with the requested service indicated in Section 2 of the document.

1. **Strategic Vision and Relevance (30%):** Demonstrated understanding of the goals of EWA and Supernovas, and relevance of the proposed direction for strategy, scaling and sustainability.
2. **Methodology and Feasibility (30%):** Clarity and practicality of the proposed approach and of the timeline and steps to deliver outputs effectively.
3. **Experience and Track Record (25%):** Previous work with similar strategic or programme design assignments. (Not mandatory but desired: Experience in gender-focused initiatives, entrepreneurship support or EU-funded projects.
4. **Quality and Presentation of Proposal (15%):** Coherence, structure and professionalism of the proposal submission.

Total maximum score: 100 points

The results of the award procedure will be communicated in writing (via e-mail) to the successful and unsuccessful tenderers.

3.9. Appeals/complaints

Tenderers believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may file a complaint. Appeals should be addressed to EIT Food. The tenderers have 30 calendar days to file their complaints from the dispatch of the award notification e-mail

3.10. Signature of contract

Within 5 days of receipt of the contract from EIT Food, the winning tenderer shall sign and date the contract and return it to EIT Food. Upon receipt, EIT Food shall countersign and return one signed copy of the contract to the winning tenderer.

3.11. Cancellation of the proposal procedure

In the event of cancellation of the procurement procedure, EIT Food will notify tenderers of the cancellation. In no event shall EIT Food be liable for any damages whatsoever including, without limitation, damages for

loss of profits, in any way connected with the cancellation of a proposal procedure, even if EIT Food has been advised of the possibility of damages.

3.12. Ethics clauses / Corruptive practices

EIT Food reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to substantial errors, irregularities or fraud. If substantial errors, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the Contract, EIT Food may refrain from concluding the Contract.

The supplier shall take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the contract is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests'). The supplier should immediately inform EIT Food if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the tasks.