Request for EIT Food Accelerator Network Programme Implementing Participants (KIC Partnership call) Guidelines

IMP-BC-26-18178

EIT FOOD

Leuven, Belgium

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eitfood.eu

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Call Fact Sheet

Title of Call	Request for EIT Food Accelerator Network Programme Implementing Participants (2026-2028)
Objective and Scope	This call is aimed at Partners of EIT Food only in the following countries: Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Spain and Netherlands. It aims to select Hubs for the EIT Food Accelerator Network (EIT FAN) Programme for the period 2026–2028. Selected organisations will be responsible for delivering EIT FAN activities across Europe. Each Hub will scout, evaluate, train, and connect high-potential agrifoodtech startups in alignment with the programme's innovation, entrepreneurship, and impact goals.
Call Deadline	October 01, 2025, 23:59 CET
Available Funding	4,320,000 Euros (720,000 Euros per application)
Project Duration	January 2026 – December 2028
How to apply	Please submit your online application, including necessary attachments via myeitfood.eu.
Contact Information	Yulia Bodnar, EIT Food Accelerator Network Programme Manager yulia.bodnar@eitfood.eu

1. Introduction

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

We have 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.

Our Missions

EIT Food´s Missions respond to major societal challenges within the food system: Healthier Lives Through Food, Food System Resilience and Net Zero Food System. The alignment of our chosen challenges towards United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and EU policy is detailed in our main funding strategy document agreed with EIT (European Institute of Innovation & Technology). For more about our Missions-led approach please visit our website.

2. Adding Implementing Participants to EIT Food Accelerator Network Programme

2.1. About EIT Food Accelerator Network

The EIT Food Accelerator Network (EIT FAN) is a 2–3 month, theme-based acceleration programme delivered in a hybrid format through dedicated innovation Hubs across Europe.

In 2025, the EIT FAN Hubs focused on the following themes:

- **Circular Solutions for Food Systems** – Helsinki Hub
- **Food as Medicine** – Haifa Hub
- **Future-Resilient Agriculture** – Warsaw Hub
- **New Ingredients & Bioprocessing** – Paris Hub
- **Resilient Supply Chains & Reducing Scope 3 Emissions** – Munich Hub
- **Sustainable Food Packaging** – Bilbao Hub

The programme supports high-potential agrifoodtech startups in accelerating their growth by helping them validate their technology, improve commercial and investment readiness, and ultimately achieve successful market adoption.

2.2. Description of Activities

Each selected Implementing Participant will be responsible for delivering the EIT Food Accelerator Network programme at their designated Hub and thematic focus area. This includes full-cycle innovation support for agrifoodtech startups - from scouting and evaluating applicants to delivering a hybrid acceleration programme and facilitating meaningful ecosystem connections.

Implementing Participants will identify and attract high-potential startups that align with the designated theme of their Hub, encourage them to apply and lead or support a two-round evaluation process to select the most promising candidates. Once selected, startups will be onboarded into a structured programme that combines expert-led workshops, tailored mentoring, peer learning, and online and in-person networking activities aimed at supporting technology validation, business model development, corporate collaboration, and investment readiness.

Throughout the programme, Implementing Participants will provide continuous support to startups, leveraging their regional and thematic ecosystems to create targeted connections with corporates, investors, and other relevant stakeholders. They will also organise in-person events to enhance visibility and engagement, maintain consistent communication with their cohort, and ensure progress tracking and data collection.

To ensure cohesion and quality across the EIT FAN network, all Implementing Participants are expected to adhere to shared delivery standards, engage in regular coordination with EIT Food, and remain adaptable to the programme's evolving strategic goals and formats in future cycles.

2.3. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

All **EIT Food funded** projects should achieve relevant Core Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Each Implementing Participant contributes to these indicators but is not expected to deliver them independently or bear sole responsibility for their fulfilment.

For the EIT Food Accelerator Network Programme, the main KPIs are:

Code	KPI	KPI Definition
EITHE02.4	Marketed Innovations	Number of innovations introduced on the market during the KAVA duration or at the latest within 18 months from the start of the project with a sales revenue of at least 10 000 EUR documented. Innovations include new or significantly improved products (goods or services) and processes sold.
EITHE06. 1	Investment attracted by KIC-supported start-ups and scale-ups	Investment attracted by KIC-supported start-ups and scale-ups.
EITHE 08.1	Number of successful participants in EIT professional development courses, online training courses a	Number of successful participants in EIT professional development courses, online training courses and other education/training activities delivered or in a process of delivery.
EITHE03.1	Supported Start-ups/Scale-ups	Number of start-ups supported by KICs for at least 2 months in year N, provided the KIC's services contribute to the company's growth (including potential). Examples of such services are mentoring, consultancy on access to finance and markets, product / service marketing, legal advice, internationalization, match-making, etc. The services should be provided for a total period of at least two months. Start-ups and scale-ups will be reported by country of registration of the venture.

Please note: At the end of the funding period, EIT Food requires specific structured data and documentation to verify the achievement of KPIs. Grantees must report their KPI achievements and ensure that all required structured data and supporting evidence is submitted in accordance with the guidelines provided (see EIT Food KPI Guidance Document for details).

In addition to the Core EIT KPIs, the EIT Food Accelerator Network Programme also tracks the following internal performance indicators for each Implementing Participant (target to be set at the beginning of each year):

KPI	KPI Definition
Programme satisfaction rate	Percentage of satisfaction reported by participating startups regarding the quality and value of the Hub's delivery

	(measured via post-programme survey). Suggested yearly target for 2026-2028 – 85%.
Number of Eligible Applications Submitted per Hub	Total number of complete and eligible startup applications received per Hub during the official application period. Used as an indicator of outreach and ecosystem engagement. Suggested yearly target for 2026-2028 – a minimum of 30 eligible applications.

2.4. Deliverables and Milestones

Grant recipients must submit final deliverables at the end of the implementation period. For this activity the deliverables include:

- Report on the execution of the programme in the Hub.

Grant recipients have obligations on communication, dissemination and visibility rules. Please see Article 17 of the Model Grant Agreement and EIT Food's Brand Guidelines.

Grant recipients must adhere to EIT Food Intellectual Property´s (IP) Policy which complies with the IP provisions outlined in Article 16 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement.

3. Description of Role & Profile

3.1. Thematic Focus Areas – EIT FAN Hubs 2026-2028

Applicants are invited to apply for one of the following EIT FAN thematic focus areas, each delivered through a designated Hub. These themes reflect EIT Food's strategic priorities for innovation and impact, and the associated Hubs are positioned to ensure balanced ecosystem representation across Europe, building on existing programme strengths.

Each theme represents a distinct innovation domain within the agrifoodtech landscape. Applicants should select the thematic focus area that best aligns with their expertise, ecosystem access, and capacity to deliver.

Theme 1: Personalised and Preventive Nutrition
Focus areas may include functional and targeted nutrition, food reformulation, bioactive compounds, and solutions supporting consumer health, wellbeing, and longevity.

Theme 2: Packaging, circularity and Resource Efficiency in Food Systems
Focus areas may include sustainable packaging, valorisation of side streams, upcycled ingredients, regenerative processes, and closed-loop solutions for sustainable production.

Theme 3: Novel Food Ingredients and Processing Technologies
Focus areas may include plant-based innovation, microbial and cellular agriculture, sustainable ingredient replacements, clean-label formulations, and enabling biotechnologies.

Theme 4: Smart and Sustainable Supply Chains
Focus areas may include reducing losses across the supply chain, Scope 3 emission mitigation, digital traceability, resource-efficient logistics, and data-driven sustainability.

Theme 5: Digital and Autonomous Farming Solutions
Focus areas may include smart agriculture, AI- and robotics-enabled production, data platforms for farm optimisation, and innovations in soil, nutrient, and crop management.

Theme 6: Water-Smart Agrifood Systems
Focus areas may include efficient water use in agriculture and food processing, smart irrigation, water recycling and reuse, water quality monitoring, and drought-resilient practices for sustainable food production.

Note:

The exact names and distribution of themes across EIT FAN Hubs will be reviewed and confirmed by EIT Food prior to the start of the 2026 programme year. Some adjustments to thematic scope or alignment may be introduced to reflect evolving strategic priorities. Implementing Participants should be prepared to accommodate such refinements as part of the onboarding and planning process.

3.2 Responsibilities of Implementing Participants

Each implementing participant will be responsible for delivering a 2-3-month hybrid programme at their designated Hub. While each Hub will focus on a distinct thematic area, the core responsibilities are consistent across all locations and span the full innovation support cycle: scouting, evaluating, onboarding, supporting, and connecting high-potential agrifoodtech startups.

Key Responsibilities

1. Scouting & Outreach
Promote the EIT FAN call for applications across relevant channels and within their ecosystem.
Actively scout and engage with high-potential startups that align with the Hub's thematic focus.
Encourage and guide eligible startups through the application process.

2. Application Evaluation
Pre-screen all submitted applications to ensure eligibility and thematic relevance.
Support EIT Food in facilitating and co-organising Round One (written application review) as well as implement payment to the selected evaluators in this Round.
Lead and deliver Round Two (startup interviews in a pitch + Q&A format), including evaluation, jury moderation and selection of finalists.

3. Programme Delivery & Startup Support
Implementing participants will co-design and deliver a high-quality hybrid acceleration programme that supports startup development in areas such as technology validation, commercial readiness, investment readiness and corporate readiness.

Responsibilities include:

- Onboarding selected startups into the cohort and providing continuous support throughout the programme;
- Delivering workshops, structured networking, and tailored 1:1 support aligned with programme expectations;
- Guiding startups in refining their technology validation and commercial development roadmaps based on maturity stage and commercial goals;
- Ensuring at least two in-person engagements with the startup cohort, each lasting 2–3 days;
- Maintaining clear, proactive, and consistent communication with all participating startups.

4. Ecosystem Engagement

Facilitate tailored connections between startups and key stakeholders, including corporates, investors, potential customers, and research and technology partners.
Organise in-person, Hub-themed event/s to showcase the cohort and foster ecosystem engagement.

5. Monitoring, Reporting & Compliance

Track startup progress and capture relevant data and evidence throughout the programme lifecycle.
Report on programme activities, impact, and use of funds in compliance with EIT Food's financial and administrative guidelines.

6. Programme Coordination

Maintain regular coordination with EIT Food (e.g. participate in weekly Hub calls and joint planning sessions).
Ensure strategic and operational alignment across all programme elements.

Note:

Quantitative delivery expectations (e.g. minimum hours of training, mentoring, number of networking events, etc.) will be defined by EIT Food prior to each programme year and agreed upon with all Implementing Participants as part of the onboarding process. Targets may be adjusted in future cycles to reflect evolving strategic priorities and the changing needs of participating startups.

3.3. Annual Programme Cycle

The programme is delivered on an annual cycle, typically running from **January to December, for three years**, with the following key phases:

- **January–February** – Call for Startups
- **March–April** – Startup Evaluation
- **May–September** – Programme Delivery

Please note:

The timeline for the 2026 programme will be confirmed during the onboarding and planning process with selected Implementing Participants and may be adjusted to reflect strategic and operational needs. Implementing Participants should be prepared to accommodate such refinements as part of the onboarding and planning process.

3.4. Financial Sustainability and Future Participation

Under the strategic guidance of EIT Food and the EIT, EIT FAN is entering a transition phase towards a financially sustainable model. This shift is designed to ensure the long-term delivery and impact of the programme beyond the current EIT funding framework.

As part of this call, EIT Food is seeking Implementing Partners that can propose a coherent and feasible financial sustainability model for delivering the programme within a specific Hub. This should include mechanisms such as co-financing. Preference will be given to partners able to contribute co-financing from 2026 onwards, with the aim of making financial sustainability a mandatory mechanism as of 2027. In practical terms, from 2027 at the latest, continued participation in the EIT FAN network by participants (Implementing Partners) will be conditional on securing 50% of the total costs required to operate a Hub - including programme delivery, network coordination, and subgrants to startups - equivalent to 180,000-200,000 Euros per year. This amount takes into account co-financing needed to cover both Hub costs as well as coordination of the programme and subgrants to startups.

Applicants should outline a preliminary financial sustainability strategy as part of their proposal, describing any current or planned mechanisms for generating or attracting funding. In particular, EIT Food encourages the mobilisation of co-financing from sources beyond the corporate sector – such as banks, public institutions, or other funding organisations – that can provide stable and mission-aligned support.

This will be assessed both in the context of the 2026 programme and as part of evaluating long-term continuation potential. This approach reflects EIT FAN's commitment to building resilient innovation ecosystems and ensuring scalable impact across Europe.

3.5 Profile of Implementing Participant

EIT Food is seeking experienced and impact-driven organisations to serve as implementing participants for the EIT Food Accelerator Network (EIT FAN). Applicants should demonstrate a **strong track record in supporting early-stage innovation** and the ability to mobilise regional and thematic ecosystems around agrifood innovation.

The ideal applicant is an organisation with:

- **Proven experience in startup acceleration**, incubation, venture support, or ecosystem building, preferably in the agrifoodtech or deep tech sectors;
- Demonstrated capacity to **design and deliver structured programmes for minimum 10 startups** that combine training, mentoring, expert guidance, and ecosystem engagement;
- The ability to **deliver coaching and training services using either in-house resources or subcontracted experts**, ensuring quality, relevance, and consistency across the programme;
- Strong operational and event management capabilities, including **hybrid delivery** of both online and in-person activities;
- Access to a broad network of **relevant stakeholders**, including corporates, investors, research institutions, and policymakers aligned with the selected thematic focus;
- Familiarity with **EU-funded programmes**, performance reporting, and budget accountability;
- A dedicated and competent team with the **skills, expertise, and time capacity** to deliver the activity;

- Capacity to coordinate closely and proactively with EIT Food and other Implementing Participants throughout the programme cycle.

4. Funding

The total budget for this call is 4,320,000 Euros. Implementing participant recipients will receive a subgrant to fund their cost. This is cascade funding.

The project runs from January 2026 to December 2028. The maximum funding available for that period per application is 720,000 Euros per Hub (240,000 Euros per year, per Hub).

There is a 6 million EUR limit per participants from Member States of the European Union (EU) and from [Horizon Europe Associate Countries](#) for the whole 3-year Grant Agreement. Legal entities from non- Horizon Europe Associate countries can participate in consortia but are limited to funding of 60 000 over 3 years for a Grant Agreement. This funding is implemented under GA 01101912. In those limits are included all the EIT Funding awarded to an organization across all the activities and prizes for the 3-year grant agreement.

The Subgrant is based on actual costs and value for money. All costs, including co-funding, 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:

- Participants are not permitted to give a subgrant to another third party.

Note:
The total call budget and the maximum funding budget per application might be subject to changes pending the approval of the EIT Food Business Plan 2026-2028 from the EIT.

5. Call Timeline and Application

5.1 Timeline
This funding opportunity follows the timeline below:

Call Open Date	September 01, 2025
Q&A session	September 11, 12:00 CET, 2025
Call Deadline	October 01, 2025, 23:59 CET
Evaluation	October 02-9, 2025
Communication to selected participants	October 9-10, 2025
Standstill period, Onboarding, Validation and Contracting	30 days after selection
Indicative start of project implementation	January 1, 2026

The standstill period is a set time after funding selection for appeals, final administrative checks, and compliance in the award process. The project cannot start before this period. The standstill period of 30 days applies to this call.

5.2 Application Submission

Applications must be submitted via My EIT Food Portal, no later than the call deadline.

6. Eligibility, Evaluation and Selection Process

6.1 Eligibility

This call is open to all eligible EIT Food Partners. Consortia of up to two Implementing Participants are allowed. Please read Annex 1, in addition to the following eligibility criteria:

Organisation Eligibility	Each implementing participant must:
	- Be a legally incorporated entity in one of the following countries: Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Spain, Netherlands for a minimum of 1 year. These countries have been selected to preserve continuity of the EIT FAN programme and build on its existing outreach and ecosystem presence. - Hold a valid **PIC number** as per the EIT guidelines: https://www.eitfood.eu/files/PIC-Guidance.pdf - Ensure compliance with EIT Food principles, including transparency, impartiality, and balanced impact. - Be an official partner (strategic/delivery/community) of EIT Food at the time of submitting the application (verified through a signed contract).
Application Eligibility	Each application must:
	- Be complete, with all mandatory application documents uploaded. - Be fully written in English. - Be submitted on time via the official application platform, using the prescribed submission template. - Select one specific Hub theme as outlined in the call documentation. - Adhere to the EIT FAN programme delivery structure for the period 2026-2028. - Demonstrate both thematic relevance and delivery capacity, including alignment with the selected theme, access to relevant networks, and the ability to scout, onboard, and support high-potential agrifoodtech startups. - Ensure compliance with EIT Food principles, including transparency, impartiality, and balance. - Acknowledge that EIT Food is the owner of the EIT FAN programme brand. Applicants must agree to adhere to EIT FAN branding and communication guidelines and understand that, if

		selected, they will be delivering the programme as one of the official EIT FAN Hubs, under the unified brand identity managed by EIT Food.

6.2 Evaluation Process

All submitted applications will undergo an eligibility check and evaluation to determine their feasibility and suitability for funding.

During the eligibility check, if EIT Food identifies obvious or technical errors in a proposal, applicant will have the opportunity to correct or resubmit their proposal within three (3) calendar days following the call submission deadline.

The correction window is intended to ensure that these issues do not unduly affect the evaluation of otherwise eligible proposals. Please note that this opportunity is strictly limited to rectifying technical errors and does not permit substantive modifications to the proposal content.

The evaluation will be conducted by a minimum of 2 external evaluators and 1 internal evaluator, based on the criteria below.

All external evaluators have been selected in an open and transparent process. All evaluators, both internal and external, are trained extensively on the European Union´s Code of Conduct for Evaluators, namely on the importance of transparency, fair treatment of all applicants, confidentiality and how to avoid conflict of interest. Evaluators must contractually agree to recuse themselves in the event of a conflict of interest.

6.2.1. Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria and weighting will be used in the assessment:

Criteria	Sub criteria	Score
1. **Excellence (20%)**	Assesses the applicant's expertise and relevance to the specific thematic focus of the work package. **1.1 Expertise & Track Record (10%)** Proven experience in supporting agrifoodtech startups through acceleration, incubation, or ecosystem building **1.2 Thematic Relevance (10%)** Relevance of applicant's domain expertise and network to the selected Hub's theme and – startup related activities	0-5
2. **Impact (30%)**	Evaluates the applicant's ability to engage the ecosystem and deliver long-term impact for startups and stakeholders within the thematic area. **2.1 Ecosystem Connectivity (10%)** Depth and breadth of networks relevant to the Hub theme (e.g. startups, corporates, research, investors)	0-5

	2.2 Startup Value Generation (10%) Ability to connect startups with high-value opportunities (e.g. pilots, investments, partnerships) **2.3 Demonstration of previous experience with EIT Food (10%)** Example of activities done in collaboration with EIT Food and impact generated	
3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation (50%)	Assesses the applicant's ability to effectively implement the programme, including the strength of the delivery team, quality of the proposed activities, financial planning, and ability to meet performance and coordination requirements. **3.1 Programme Design (10%)** Quality and relevance of the proposed startup support programme, including the structure and clarity of workshops, mentoring, networking, and events, as well as the suitability of proposed experts, mentors, and speakers. **3.2 Team and Operational Capacity (10%)** Experience, complementarity, and readiness of the delivery team (including any co-applicants) to deliver the programme, meet reporting obligations, and coordinate effectively with EIT Food. **3.3 Financial Sustainability Model (20%)** Quality and feasibility of the applicant's strategy for securing complementary funding from non-EU sources, with co-financing to begin no later than 2027. **3.4 Value for Money (10%)** Efficiency and justification of the proposed budget in relation to the expected programme outcomes and overall impact. Inclusion of a programme budget for a minimum of 10 startups with the possibility to have additional startups.	0-5
Total		15

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

The quality threshold for selection is a total weighted score of 3.5. The top highest-scoring applications will be selected.

Score		Description
1	Poor	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses
2	Fair	Application broadly addresses the criterion but there are significant weaknesses

3	Good	Application addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present
4	Very good	Application addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present
5	Excellent	Application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

All applicants will be alerted in writing to the outcome of their proposal.

The recipients of EIT Funding must take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action and, where applicable, in line with the gender equality plan. They must aim, to the extent possible, for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level.

6.3 Appeal on Evaluation Results

Applicants can submit an appeal within 5 days of receiving their result, if:

- The evaluation of their proposal has not been carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in this document.

For more details, please refer to EIT Food Redress guidance.

7. Administrative Items

7.1 Onboarding

Entities that have never been part of projects funded by the EIT Food and that do not have a PIC validated by the Research Executive Agency (REA) of the European Commission will be subject to a PIC validation process managed by the EIT Community Onboarding Service. All validated entities will proceed with the signature of legal agreements with EIT Food.

As part of the onboarding process, selected entities must:

- Sign and submit the Declaration of Size.
- Sign and submit the Financial Information Form.
- Register on EIT Food grants management platform.

Additionally, EIT Food reserves the right to request to the EIT Community Onboarding Service a Financial Assessment Capacity to check the financial capacity of any entity of a selected proposal. In such case, EIT Food may require:

- an enhanced financial responsibility regime, i.e. joint and several liability for all subgrantees or joint and several liabilities of Affiliated Entities if any
- prefinancing paid in instalments (multiple/additional prefinancing)
- (one or more) prefinancing guarantees

or

- propose no prefinancing or
- request that the entity be replaced or, if needed, might reject the entire proposal

In other words, if the assessment results are not satisfactory, the EIT Food might reject the participation of this entity and will then check whether the proposal is still eligible.

For further information on the project implementation, please read the EIT Food Activity Implementation Guidelines for Participants.

7.2 EIT Food Legal Framework & Legal Documents to be signed

Selected applicants will receive a second communication with instructions regarding the completion of the following documents, as well as agreeing to EIT Food´s conflict of interest policy:

To be signed between the participant and EIT Food:

1. **Framework Agreement**
2. **Kava Contract**

It is highly recommended that this document be signed by all members of the consortium:

Consortium Agreement. It is suggested to consider using the DESCA model as a framework for the consortium agreement.

Any other legal agreements to make this grant eligible.

7.3 Payment Schedule

EIT Food will transfer funding in instalments. A proportion of the Activity budget will be prefinanced, with subsequent payments being linked to the completion of deliverables, EIT label award, and accountable KPIs. 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.

Please note: the amount and timing of funding is dependent on the dispersal of funds to EIT Food from the EIT.

7.4 Monitoring

The project will be monitored and may be audited. All Activities selected for funding undergo continuous monitoring by EIT Food to ensure effective progress and implementation in accordance with the Project Agreement.

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, misalignment with the project specifications in the grant management system 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.

A formal ex-post impact assessment within at least five years of the end of the activity and its outputs is required for each activity, including those implemented by third parties.

7.5 Support

If you have any questions about this Request for Implementing Participants, please contact yulia.bodnar@eitfood.eu.

Please visit our [website](#) for any updates to this call and information about upcoming events to support your application. You will also find our list of Frequently Asked Questions (to be added shortly after the call launch).

ANNEX 1 – Eligibility

Please Note:

1. Failing any of the above call specific criteria will make your application ineligible. If an applicant is ineligible, the participant 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.

3. Pursuant to Article 2 (2) of the Decision 2022/2506 of 15 December 2022 on measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary *where the Commission implements the Union budget in direct or indirect management pursuant to of Article 62(1) points (a) and (c), of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046,* **no legal commitments shall be entered into with any public interest trust established on the basis of the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity maintained by such a public interest trust***. This prohibition applies to financial support to third parties (sub-grants and prizes), hence the proposal of any entity or group of entities where a Participant is included in the list of public interest trusts shall be considered as not eligible.

4. Applicants will be deemed ineligible if:

a. 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;

 b. 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;

 c. 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;

d. is found to be attempting to influence the decision-making process of the call during the process;

e. attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon its undue advantages in the call process;

f. it has been established by a final judgment that the organisation is guilty of fraud, corruption or money laundering.

ANNEX 2 – History of changes

Version	Publication date	Changes
1.0	September 1, 2025	Original version
1.1	September 3, 2025	**Cal Fact Sheet, Objective and Scope** 'This call is aimed at Partners of EIT Food only in the following countries: Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Italy and Netherlands.' Changed to: 'This call is aimed at Partners of EIT Food only in the following countries: Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Spain and Netherlands.' **3.1.Thematic Focus Areas – EIT FAN Hubs 2026-2028** 'Theme 2: Circularity and Resource Efficiency in Food Systems Focus areas may include valorisation of side streams, upcycled ingredients, regenerative processes, and closed-loop solutions for sustainable production.' Changed to: 'Theme 2: Packaging, circularity and Resource Efficiency in Food Systems Focus areas may include sustainable packaging, valorisation of side streams, upcycled ingredients, regenerative processes, and closed-loop solutions for sustainable production.' **6.1. Eligibility** 'Be a legally incorporated entity in one of the following countries: Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Netherlands for a minimum of 1 year.' Changed to: 'Be a legally incorporated entity in one of the following countries: Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Spain, Netherlands for a minimum of 1 year.'

1.2	September 9, 2025	**3.4. Financial Sustainability and Future Participation**
		Paragraph updated:
		'As part of this call, EIT Food is seeking Implementing Partners that can propose a coherent and feasible financial sustainability model for delivering the programme within a specific Hub. This should include mechanisms such as co-financing. Preference will be given to partners able to contribute co-financing from 2026 onwards, with the aim of making financial sustainability a mandatory mechanism as of 2027. In practical terms, from 2027 at the latest, continued participation in the EIT FAN network by participants (Implementing Partners) will be conditional on securing 50% of the total costs required to operate a Hub - including programme delivery, network coordination, and subgrants to startups - equivalent to 180,000-200,000 Euros per year. This amount takes into account co-financing needed to cover both Hub costs as well as coordination of the prorgamme and subgrants to startups.'
		4. Funding
		Sentence updated:
		'The project runs from January 2026 to December 2028. The maximum funding available for that period per application is 720,000 Euros per Hub (240,000 Euros per year, per Hub).'
		5.1 Timeline
		Added: Q&A session, September 11, 12:00 CET, 2025