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# Call for Proposals

Call Guidelines for Activities to start in 2022

Call Guidelines

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## Glossary

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| Activity, or KIC Added Value Activity (KAVA) | EIT Food Business Plan consists of Activities (projects), commonly referred to as “KAVA”s, each belonging to one →Area. Each Activity is conceived in a way to contribute to the Strategic Objectives of EIT Food and structured to promote knowledge triangle integration by involving partners from higher education, research and innovation.  |
| Area   | EIT Food defines several areas in which it operates: Education; Innovation and Research; Entrepreneurship; Public Engagement; and Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) <sup>1</sup>   |
| Business Plan                                | The document specifying the detailed plan of EIT Food for the upcoming year/s. It consists of a main body text and several annexes describing the Activities in detail. The Business Plan is annexed to the →Grant Agreement signed between EIT Food and EIT.   |
| Co-funding                                   | Funding of the KAVA from other than EIT financial contribution sources, in particular: partners’ own investments and national or regional public funding programmes. Other EU (Non-EIT) funding sources cannot serve as co-funding.   |
| CLC: Co-Location Centre                      | EIT Food has five Co-Location Centres, or CLCs, which are regional offices located in Belgium, Germany, Poland, Spain and the UK. Each office is responsible for a CLC Region; a grouping of countries. More information on CLCs is available on the EIT Food website.  |
| Deliverable                                  | In EIT terminology, a Deliverable describes an →Output of an →Activity. It is defined by the consortium and takes the format of a document that will be submitted as part of the report to EIT. As well as KPIs, EIT uses the deliverables to assess whether the Activity has achieved its stated goals and is entitled to the full funding requested.  |
| Focus Area                                   | Thematic area where to focus EIT Food activities in the coming 2-3 years. These Focus Areas will build the basis for the EIT Food Programme in the coming years and encompass the whole agrifood ecosystem, from primary sector to retail and consumption.  |
| Grant Agreement (GA)                         | The Grant Agreement between EIT and EIT Food defines the scope of activities and budget for a specified period. The Partners, by signing the Accession Form to the GA, give EIT Food the mandate to manage the EIT Grant Cycle. They also become liable in the general terms listed in the GA. The EIT Food →Business Plan is an Annex of the GA.<br><br>This call for proposals is for activities which will be included in the 2021-2022 GA, through a GA contract amendment later in 2022. |
| Grant  | The award of EIT funding for delivery of the action. Note “Amended grant” is referred to below. Annual amendment of the project grant takes place, and the amended value is used to calculate factors including co-funding requirements, return on investment (ROI) requirements, etc.  |

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.eitfood.eu/regional-innovation-scheme>

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| Impact                              | <p>The positive effects of EIT Food funded Activities on economy, society and the environment. Under Horizon Europe these impacts will be captured and communicated through Key Impact Pathways. The objective is to generate new and more knowledge and new technologies, drive growth and competitiveness of the EU, and to have significant social, economic and environmental impact of EIT Food’s investments over time. These impact pathways are classified as follows:</p> <p><b>Scientific impact:</b> Related to supporting the creation and diffusion of high-quality new knowledge, skills, technologies and solutions to food system challenges.</p> <p><b>Societal impact:</b> Related to the impact of activities in developing solutions that address food system challenges (health, environment), and support the uptake of novel solutions by industry and society to tackle food system challenges.</p> <p><b>Economic impact:</b> Related to fostering all forms of innovation, including breakthrough innovation, and strengthening market deployment of innovations; also job creation and retention.</p> <p><b>Environmental impact:</b> Related to improving the direct impact of socio-economic activities of Agri-Food systems on the environment such as reducing GHG emissions, improving water quality and use, reducing use of chemical pesticides and biodiversity protection.</p> |
| Internal Agreement                  | <p>All beneficiaries must sign an Internal Agreement as a pre-condition to obtain EIT Funding. According to with Article 5.3 of the PA, all the provisions of the Partnership Agreement (PA) must be transposed in the KIC’s legal and operational arrangements, which is made effective by means of the signature of the internal agreements signed by the KIC LE with the EIT Food Partners.</p>   |
| Key Exploitable Results (KERs)      | <p>A product, process, new service, new standard, new training courses etc, which will be further developed for market introduction after the Activity end, and which responds to a specific need of a well-defined group of consumers/users.</p>  |
| KIC: Knowledge Innovation Community | <p>EIT Food is one of now eight Knowledge Innovation Communities (KICs) that operate under the regulations of EIT.</p>   |
| KPI: Key Performance Indicator      | <p>Set of impact indicators aiming to build proxies assessing the capacity of the EIT Food to generate innovation-based growth.</p>  |
| Knowledge Triangle Integration      | <p>Our Impact Pathways integrate business creation, education, public engagement, and innovation investment programmes in an EIT model referred to as “Knowledge Triangle Integration” (KTI). For EIT Food this means ensuring “KTI” from first principles through consumer-centric activity design to achieve outcomes leading to real-world impact for individuals, society, and business.</p>   |
| Output                              | <p>What a →KAVA produces as the result of the work performed. This is a project deliverable in the standard meaning of the term (see →Deliverable). Examples are new products, services or processes, transformation of existing products, innovative education and training</p>   |

|                                  |  |
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|                                  | modules, new curricula and qualifications, e- learning modules, guidance material for new approaches and methodologies, testbeds and experimental facilities, prototypes, patents, publications, etc. Outputs have economic and societal impact.   |
| EIT Food Partner                 | An organisation that has undergone the necessary application process to become a partner of the EIT Food Partnership and is affiliated to EIT Food IVZW. More details on Partnership Policy, Partner Rights and Obligations are available on the EIT Food website.   |
| KIC Partner (Beneficiary)        | A Partner of EIT Food who signs an Accession Form to accede the Grant Agreement with EIT. Organisations must become a KIC Partner to participate in the EIT Food Business Plan as an EIT grant recipient.  |
| Partnership Agreement (PA)       | This is the 4-year contract between EIT and EIT Food with the effective date of January 1, 2021, laying down the general terms and conditions under which the KIC EIT Food must operate as an Institutionalised European Partnership.  |
| Project Agreement                | An agreement signed between EIT Food and the project consortium for 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.   |
| Programmes                       | Each →Area has a number of segments, which are clusters of programmes. Programmes are specific types of educational courses or communication activities. For the area Education, these are for example Master Education, or Doctoral Education.  |
| Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) | The EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS) was introduced in 2014 to advance the innovation performance of more countries and their regions across Europe, especially countries with moderate or modest innovation scores as defined by the <b>European Innovation Scoreboard</b> . Since its establishment, the EIT RIS, which is steered by the EIT and implemented by its Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), has successfully led to a significant expansion of EIT Community activities to more countries and regions across Europe, contributing to a pan-European spread of EIT Community engagement opportunities and networks. |
| Task                             | Work package of an →Activity.  |
| TRL: Technology Readiness Levels | TRL are a type of measurement system used to assess the maturity level of a particular technology. Manufacturing Readiness Levels, in turn, are used to assess the maturity of a given technology, system, subsystem, or component from a manufacturing perspective. See Annex 3 for more detail.  |

# 1 Introduction: Building the EIT Food Portfolio

EIT Food is established under Horizon Europe<sup>2</sup> and forms part of the family of Knowledge Innovation Communities (KICs) established by the European Institute of Innovation & Technology<sup>3</sup> (EIT).

**EIT Food’s vision is a world where everybody can access and enjoy sustainable, safe, and healthy food – with trust and fairness from farm to fork.**

The intention of this call for proposals is to maximise the societal, economic and environmental impact of innovative ideas and consortia within the scope of EIT Food’s *Impact Framework*, as described in our *Strategic Agenda<sup>4</sup> 2021-27*. Our portfolio of current initiatives and previously funded activities can be viewed on the EIT Food [website<sup>5</sup>](#).

EIT Food’s *Impact Framework* targets four primary *Impact Goals* for food system change, which will lead to a long-term contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)<sup>6</sup> and the priorities of the EU Green Deal<sup>7</sup>:

- Improvement in conditions for enhanced public trust in the food system
- Reduction in relative risk of obesity & Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) prevalence in target populations due to known dietary factors
- Improved environmental impact of agri-food systems
- Enabling transition to a circular & sustainable economy

This EIT Food call for proposals supports the translation and application of advanced research, innovation and transformative business ideas and practices which help solve major systemic barriers to impact as they arise in key *Focus Areas* within the food system.

Proposed innovations responding to this call should already be at a sufficiently advanced stage of development, including a credible route to market and milestones towards achieving EIT Food’s *Impact Indicators* for food system change in the near future (see Annex 2 Table 1). Further, it should be clear that EIT Food co-funding and participation in the EIT Food network will significantly accelerate scale up towards impact.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/horizon-europe\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/horizon-europe_en)

<sup>3</sup> <https://eit.europa.eu/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.eitfood.eu/media/documents/EIT\\_Food\\_Strategic\\_Agenda\\_2021-2027.pdf](https://www.eitfood.eu/media/documents/EIT_Food_Strategic_Agenda_2021-2027.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.eitfood.eu/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

<sup>7</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en)

## 2 Purpose of this Call

The purpose of this Call is to maximise the societal, economic and environmental impact of innovative ideas and consortia within the scope of EIT Food’s Impact Framework, as described in our Strategic Agenda 2021-27<sup>8</sup>.

### 2.1 Call Summary

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Type of activities</b>                | Collaborative activities bringing innovative technology solutions to the market in the agrifood sector, which result in commercially viable products and services. These activities shall embody principles of <i>Knowledge Triangle Integration</i> in their delivery, outcomes, and impact, producing impact KPIs to drive the achievement of EIT Food’s Impact Indicators. See Section 3 below for more details on the scope of activities.   |
| <b>Submission Process</b>                | <p>The Call process will require the submission of one proposal made up of two parts: Part A (eligibility and outline information) and Part B (full proposal details).</p> <p>The proposal will be evaluated in a 2-stage process. The deadline for <b>both</b> Part A and Part B submissions on the EIT Food application platform, Plaza, is <b>14 January 2022, 23:59 CET</b>.</p>   |
| <b>Consortium</b>                        | <p>Minimum 3 organisations from at least 2 different eligible countries representing at least two sides of the knowledge triangle.</p> <p>Please note that only organisations from countries eligible under the Horizon Europe framework programme can participate in EIT Food activities. These are all EU Member States and countries that have associated with the Horizon Europe programme (Associated Countries<sup>9</sup>).</p> <p>The association with the Horizon Europe programme of several countries that are not EU Member States, which were previously associated with the Horizon 2020 programme and therefore eligible to receive its funding, has not yet been confirmed. Therefore, the eligibility of organisations from these countries cannot be ascertained at this moment. Eligibility of costs in 2022 will depend on the timely association of the country and the specific conditions of the association agreement.</p> |
| <b>Activity leadership</b>               | Any consortium partner can be the “lead partner”; however, we encourage the activity to be led by the partner responsible for commercialising the activity’s results.  |
| <b>Maturity of innovation - TRL</b>      | A Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 7 or above (TRL 6 must be completed and demonstrated).  |
| <b>Expected size of EIT grant amount</b> | Indicative maximum EIT grant amount (a reimbursement amount of eligible costs, excluding co-funding):  |

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.eitfood.eu/media/documents/EIT\\_Food\\_Strategic\\_Agenda\\_2021-2027.pdf](https://www.eitfood.eu/media/documents/EIT_Food_Strategic_Agenda_2021-2027.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide\\_horizon\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide_horizon_en.pdf) (page:11)

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|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• up to €400,000 for 2022;</li> <li>• up to a maximum €1.400.000 during 2022-2024.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Maximum duration of the activity</b>   | Activities may last up to 24 months and may span 2022-2024. Proposals should clearly state when the Activity will be complete, and how many months of funded activity they require, in each calendar year.  |
| <b>Funding</b>  | <p>The funding available for this call is granted under the Horizon Europe programme, and as such the Horizon Europe eligibility rules must be complied with. Successful applicant's funding for spend in 2022 will be confirmed per the Timeline (12). Budget requested for subsequent years (2023 and 2024) is dependent on the outcome of Activity monitoring and EIT's award to EIT Food through the next business planning cycle. The award is conditional upon EIT Food signing the EIT Grant Agreement for that year for the expected amount of EIT Grant.</p> <p>An amount of funding is ringfenced to fund RIS Activities. Activities funded through the allocated RIS budget have preferential financing conditions and additional RIS eligibility criteria. Only a limited number of RIS Proposals can be funded under the RIS budget, indicatively no more than 2 or 3 proposals.</p>   |
| <b>Maximum reimbursement rate and Co-funding</b>  | EIT Food will fund up to 60% of total eligible costs of the Activity (reimbursement rate). As such, the consortium must co-fund a minimum of 40% (co-funding) of the total project eligible costs with sources of funding different than EU funding. Exceptionally, activities funded through the allocated RIS budget can receive up to 85% of EIT funding as reimbursement of the total eligible Activity costs.  |
| <b>Financial Return Mechanism: contributing to the EIT Food Financial Sustainability Strategy</b> | <p>A Financial Return Mechanism is mandatory for each proposed Activity, as part of the EIT Food Financial Sustainability Strategy.</p> <p>For example, a suitable Financial Return Mechanism may be based on revenue sharing, i.e. sharing a percentage of revenues generated by the Key Exploitable Result(s) (KER) during an agreed time period within the agreed exploitation period.</p> <p>As an indication of the expected financial return from each Activity, the <b>minimum required</b> financial return shall be <b>50%</b> of the EIT grant budgeted for the lifetime of the Activity, and any proposed return should be risk adjusted. Preferential conditions are foreseen for activities which are evaluated to excel in terms of Impact and KPI delivery, and for those RIS Proposals funded from the allocated RIS budget.</p> <p>A Financial Return Mechanism Agreement must be agreed and signed by the Exploiting Parties and EIT Food as a mandatory condition for funding.</p> |
| <b>Transition to Horizon Europe</b>   | EIT Food's Business Plan 2022 is executed under the new EU Horizon Europe Framework Programme running from 2021 until 2027. There may be a future variation to <b>partnership requirements</b> , funding rules or evaluation mechanisms from 2023, dependent upon further legal requirements passed to EIT Food under Horizon Europe. Any such  |

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|  | changes will be advised as soon as possible to funded organisations selected from this call for proposals. |
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Please note, there will be a series of webinars through November and December to discuss the call and run through the process. There will be registration links published on our website (<https://www.eitfood.eu/opencall2022>) and for further information, please email [Call2022@eitfood.eu](mailto:Call2022@eitfood.eu).

### 3 Overall Scope

EIT Food is calling for consortia of organisations to submit proposals for collaborative activities which will bring innovative technology solutions to the market in the agrifood sector. These activities shall embody principles of *Knowledge Triangle Integration* in their delivery, outcomes, and impact, producing KPIs to drive the achievement of EIT Food's Impact Goals.

Proposals responding to this call must include the following key elements:

1. Propose one or more near-to-market, commercially viable innovative technology solutions (goods, services, processes or products) aligned with EIT Food Focus Areas, Challenges and Impact Framework (please refer to section 4 below for more details).
2. The said innovative solution(s) must have a TRL level 7 at the time of the proposal submission (including proof of TRL level 6 completed and demonstrated).
3. All proposed activities, regardless of activity duration, must launch at least one innovative solution (marketed innovation) by 31 December 2023, including revenue generated of at least 10.000 EUR. Activities ending in 2024 must launch an additional marketed innovation by 31 December 2024. Please refer to section 4.3 for more details.

A non-exhaustive list of the types of Activities which would be of interest to EIT Food under this call includes:

- Translating or repurposing current technologies from outside food sector(s) to provide or enable solutions to major Focus Area challenges & system problems identified by EIT Food.
- Bringing knowledge and transparency to consumers through co-creation activities in order to foster enhanced trust in the food system.
- Activities which demonstrate and prove the potential for new solutions, innovations, technologies, or public interventions to deliver EIT Food's Impact Goals and KPIs at significant scale.
- Proposals from other funding bodies to engage in joint funding of competitive challenges to identify game-changing solutions to problems related to EIT Food Impact Goals.
- Proposals to act as a "follow-on" accelerator funder to innovations already developed to a high TRL level through other funding, such as EU Horizon Europe programmes.

## 4 Strategic Fit: Impact, Focus Areas, KPIs

The selected activities from this Call must 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*. All applicants must demonstrate alignment with EIT Food Impact Framework, Focus Areas and KPIs.

### 4.1 EIT Food Impact Framework

The best evidence that our portfolio is helping meet EIT Food's vision is alignment of Activity outcomes with the EIT Food Impact Framework, which combines our strategic, impact and focus areas objectives to identify clear points of system change.

In order to align with this vision, EIT Food's portfolio of activities targets the following **Impact Goals**:

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

The **EIT Food Impact Framework** specifically aims to support the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among others:

#### Healthier Diets

- UN SDG 3.4: Addressing the food contribution to Non-Communicable Disease (NCD)
- UN SDG 2.2: Tackling childhood Obesity

#### Circular, Sustainable Food Systems

- UN SDG 12.3 Reducing Food System Climate Change Footprint
- UN SDG 2.4 Ensuring Food Security & Safety
- UN SDG 9: Enabling Transition to a Circular Economy through Capacity Building

More detailed information about the Impact Framework can be found in **Annex 2 Table 2: Impact Framework** of this document.

### 4.2 Impact Indicators

As part of our strategy for system change, EIT Food has developed corresponding system change *Impact Indicators* to measure progress towards achieving our Impact Goals. These indicators have been developed in response to a set of system-level challenges and contributing factors relating to the Impact Goals and summarised in **Annex 2 Table 1: Impact Indicators**.

EIT Food has developed the **EIT Food Impact Pathway template** to support proposal applicants understand and identify how their proposed Activity fits within the EIT Food Impact

Framework and how their Activity definition and objectives will lead to sustained long-term change. Applicants are encouraged to use the Impact Pathway Template, including a helpful Glossary.

It is essential that the forecasts of impact be evidence-based. Proposals must indicate what change will happen as a result of meeting an Impact Indicator, and how this change might be measured. The Impact Framework gives indicative reference sources to establish change baselines in areas such as dietary targets and life cycle analysis of environmental hotspots, but proposals should be specific about the change they aim to bring about as a result of a product, technology or lifestyle intervention and how it can be proved or inferred.

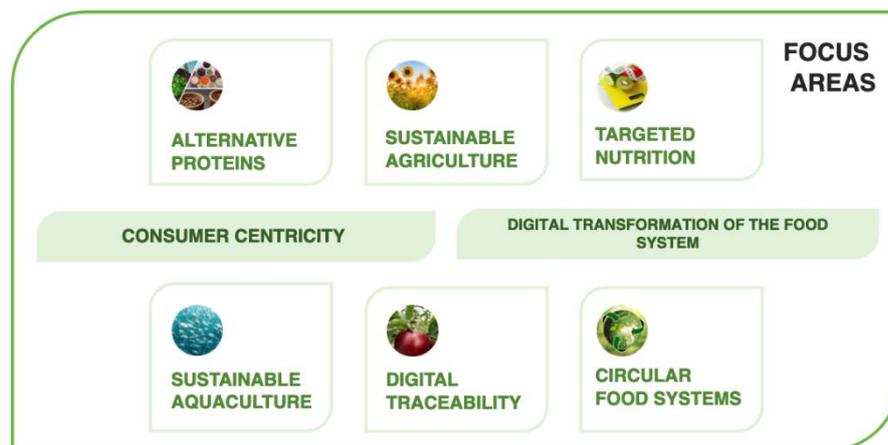
**Examples:**

- Establishing the average € savings per B2B customer of employing a new technology compared with current state of the art would then allow for a forecast of overall economic benefit based on total market share or sales numbers.
- Demonstrating the average additional KG reduction in domestic food waste experienced by a sample group of app users compared with levels in the general population would allow a forecast of CO<sup>2</sup> equivalent savings based on the total population of App users.

It is important that funded proposals show a clear logic and method to reliably forecast change, as they will be measured in both parts A and B of the evaluation.

### 4.3 Focus Areas

The Focus Areas depicted below have been identified by the EIT Food partnership as areas of the food system which currently offer the greatest potential for solutions to emerge, which deliver measurable change against our Impact Indicators:



Consumer centricity and digital transformation are present throughout all six of the Focus Areas, reflecting fundamental shifts in innovation thinking and practice. Applicants are asked to identify whether their proposal relates to one or more of these Focus Areas and/ or cross-cutting factors.

In **Annex 1: Innovation Focus Area Challenges for 2022**, EIT Food presents discussions and insights into each of the Innovation Focus Areas, reflecting on priority challenges and opportunities identified by the EIT Food partnership through open dialogue with sector experts and relevant stakeholders. These are not an exclusive set of priorities and challenges, and it is open to applicants to present ideas responding to new and emerging challenges with the potential to help achieve the EIT Food Impact Goals.

## 4.4 Short-term KPIs at Activity Level

Progress towards long-term impact in EIT Food activities is initially measured by key performance indicators (KPIs) – EIT Core KPIs – defined by the EIT, and EIT Food specific KPIs, which have been defined to measure the additional impact of EIT Food’s activities.

Applications should select activity-level KPIs that they will deliver during and/or after the duration of the funding period as described below. These KPIs must coherently link their activities and deliverables to the long-term Impact Indicators. Please see Annex 2 for detailed information about Impact Indicators.

Previous EIT Food applicants should be aware that following the transition to Horizon Europe, a new KPI framework is in place for EIT-funded activities. Please ensure you are using the most recent KPI list when preparing your proposals.

All proposals must have at least one committed KPI target every calendar year, including 2022, independently of the Activity start date in 2022.

### Mandatory KPIs:

All proposals – including RIS proposals – must include **at least the following mandatory KPIs**. Note that KPI performance is taken into account in the proposal’s evaluation, therefore applicants should state how they will exceed the minimum requirement, wherever possible:

- **EITHE02.1: At least one Marketed Innovation**, including documented sales revenue of at least 10000 EUR (ten thousand euros) in the year the KPI is to be delivered. Innovations include new or significantly improved products (goods or services) and processes sold. Activities completing in 2022 or 2023 must deliver **at least one** marketed innovation by 31 December 2023. Activities completing in 2024 must achieve at least one marketed innovation by end 2023 **and at least an additional** marketed innovation by end of 2024.
- **EITHE01.1: At least one Designed/Tested Innovation**, to be achieved within 6 months from the start of the activity.
- **EITHE14.1: Continuously disseminated results/GP/LL**: Results from the Activity should be continuously disseminated: number of results, good practice (GP) and lessons learnt (LL) disseminated by the KIC through appropriate means (e.g., publications, online repositories, fact sheets, targeted workshops). Results are any tangible or intangible output of the action, such as data, knowledge and information.

**Strongly Recommended KPIs:**

The following KPIs are strongly recommended, but not mandatory:

- **EITHE01.5: Innovation testbeds established** to test innovation products/services to be reported by country.
- **EITHE04.1: Start-ups established** in year N as a result/based on the output(s) of Innovation/Research related KAVA(s), or start-ups created for the purpose of an innovation activity to organise and support the development of an asset, but not later than 3 years after completion of the KAVA.
- **EITHE01.6: Co-creation**: Number of participants involved in designing/testing of innovative products/services per KTI area and country.

Combinations of other KPIs are also encouraged.

**Education KPIs:**

Proposals including an Education component must include at least the following KPIs:

- **EITHE08.1: Participants in (non-degree) education and training**: Participants completing EIT professional development courses and online training courses and other education/training activity with clearly defined learning outcomes, and that carry out competency assessment.

**RIS KPIs:**

RIS proposals must contribute to EIT Food’s mandatory KPIs by selecting the relevant RIS-specific sub-set of KPIs. The target value of the proposal’s selected RIS KPIs should also be reflected in the overall figure of EITHE KPIs.

As an example, if a RIS proposal is designing 2 products/services, 1 of them is being tested in Italy (a RIS country) in 2023, and the other one is being tested in The Netherlands, the proposal must select the following KPIs:

| KPI Code                | KPI Title  | Target Value 2023 |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------|
| <b>EITHE01.1</b>        | <b>Designed/Tested Innovations</b>                     | 2                 |
| <b>EITHE01.3-EITRIS</b> | <b>EIT RIS Designed/Tested Innovations</b>             | 1                 |
| <b>EITHE01.4-EITRIS</b> | <b>EIT RIS Countries – Designed/Tested Innovations</b> | 1                 |

All applicable KPIs that count with a subset of RIS KPIs (i.e. marketed innovations) must be selected in the proposal.

A similar level of impact and ambition is expected from all proposals under this call, irrespective of their country/region of implementation and execution.

## 5 Key Requirements for Preparation and Submission of a Proposal

### 5.1 Consortium Building and Partnership Application of New Organisations

This call is open to all organisations eligible for Horizon Europe funding; you do not need to be an EIT Food partner to submit a proposal.

All organisations which are successful in this call process will be required to complete the onboarding process to become a KIC Partner and accede to the Grant Agreement (GA) signed with the EIT. They will also in due course need to formally become an EIT Food Partner before the projected start date of the activity. Additional information regarding the EIT Food partnership categories, corresponding rights and obligations and application forms are available on the EIT Food website<sup>10</sup>.

As soon as the results of the call are shared, all organisations who are not already EIT Food partners will be contacted by EIT Food to start the partner application/registration and onboarding process. Once the procedure for approving/registering the new partners by EIT Food is completed and we have received all the administrative onboarding documents, these will be shared with the EIT for the final approval/registration in the EIT system, approving them as “KIC Partner” and therefore beneficiaries. The cost eligibility starting date of new applicants will depend on the date when they become an eligible beneficiary, after acceding to the EIT Food Grant Agreement.

### 5.2 Detailed Consortium Requirements

More details regarding Consortium Eligibility Criteria can be found in Section 8. Note, the information below refers to “Partner”, meaning any organisation who was successfully selected as a result of this call for proposals, and is either an existing KIC partner, or is onboarded as a partner following their successful application/registration process:

- Partner Status: As explained above, in order to receive funding for Activities in the 2021-2022 EIT Food Business Plan, organisations need to become a “KIC partner” (beneficiary) and an “EIT Food Partner”, i.e. a member of the EIT Food Partnership Association.
- Partner Roles: each partner involved in an Activity should have a clear role in the consortium towards achieving the defined Knowledge Triangle Integration objectives and have strong credentials to take up that role. As the nature of activities change throughout the course of implementation, it is not to be assumed that partners should remain unchanged throughout the total duration of the Activity.
  - Activity Leader: The Activity Leader should be an employee of the organisation that is selected as lead partner. The Activity Leader is responsible for the overall management of the Activity, ensuring that all outputs,

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.eitfood.eu/news/post/more-info-on-eit-food-partnerships>

deliverables, impacts and financial requirements are achieved and reported. Any organisation may take up this role, however we encourage the activity to be led by the partner responsible for commercialising the activity's results; the Exploiting Party.

- Exploiting Party/Parties: At least one of the partners must take the role of the exploiting party who will commercially exploit the 'Key Exploitable Result(s)' (KER) that result from the Activity, and sign the Financial Return Mechanism Agreement with EIT Food. The exploiting party or parties must be an already existing legally registered company at the time of application.
- Consortium Adaptability: it is essential to have the right participants involved in the consortium, depending on what actions and milestones are planned.
- Consortium Agreement: partners in a consortium must agree to negotiate and sign a Consortium Agreement regarding their operation and co-ordination, to ensure that the action is implemented properly, covering for instance:
  - the internal organisation of the consortium
  - the management of access to the Portal
  - different distribution keys for the payments and financial responsibilities in case of recoveries (if any)
  - additional rules on rights and obligations related to background and results (see Article 16)
  - settlement of internal disputes
  - liability, indemnification and confidentiality arrangements between the beneficiaries.

## 5.3 Workplan and Budget

The workplan for an Activity must describe tasks (work packages), milestones with measurable go/no-go criteria, and next steps towards implementation following successful Activity realisation. It also defines Outputs and Deliverables, and target values for the KPIs that will be achieved in 2022 and beyond.

### Activity Budget Structure

- The Activity budget should be broken down into the pre-defined cost categories of the Horizon Europe Programme (e.g. Personnel costs (A), sub-contracting (B), etc..). Costs should be budgeted separately for each legal entity (Partner or Affiliated entity). Indirect costs are calculated automatically as a 25% flat rate of some of the direct costs according to Horizon Europe regulations;
- Budget planning should consider the Horizon Europe rules of cost eligibility. Only costs complying with the eligibility rules of the Grant Agreement will be considered eligible during reporting;
- To ensure that all consortia can meet the Horizon Europe requirement to execute communication and dissemination activities as part of their work (see also below), consortia must budget an appropriate and proportionate amount of the total Activity budget for the development and execution of these activities.

## Funding Structure

There are two sources of funding possible to cover the costs of an Activity: EIT grant funding, and partner co-funding, i.e. if an activity is 60% EIT-funded, then the co-funding ratio must be 40%, and vice versa.

In some Functional Areas, KIC Partners and Affiliated Entities are required to budget for a certain level of co-funding in their activities. This means that they are expected to cover a proportion of the eligible costs from their own resources, and would only be reimbursed with EIT grant for a pre-defined percentage of eligible costs.

The EIT reimbursement rate for this call is **60%** of the total eligible costs; **85%** for RIS proposals. Therefore, co-funding ratios (co-funding as a percentage of total eligible budgeted costs) for activities in this call shall be at least 40%; 15% for RIS proposals.

## Risk Management

Risk management is an important component of good project planning and management. A risk mitigation plan should be designed to eliminate or minimise the impact of the risk occurrences that have a negative impact on the activity. It is an EIT requirement for each proposal to submit a list of risks and associated mitigation measures.

Please note that the risk register must include risks and mitigation measures for a KIC partner within the consortium leaving or no longer being eligible to receive EIT funding.

## 5.4 Guidance for Multi-Annual Activities

This Call is open to consortia seeking to apply for funding for Activities which should last no longer than 24 months during the years 2022-2024. All Activities must deliver KPI outcomes in each calendar year in which they are funded (see specific details regarding KPIs in Section 4.3 above).

A formal performance-based monitoring of the funded Activity will be conducted at minimum once a year. In the case of multi-annual activities, after 2022, each additional calendar year's funding will be granted based on the monitoring assessment at the end of the previous year of the activity and final decision of the EIT Food Management Board. For example, an Activity operating in 2022 and 2023 will have a monitoring assessment at the end of 2022, which will determine funding in 2023. In the case of under-performance, significant delay of implementation, misconduct of the consortium, or any other reason jeopardising 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 in the Activity duration.

## 5.5 Communication and Dissemination

As part of the Horizon Europe framework, all activities are called upon to take measures to bring their work to the attention of as many relevant stakeholders as possible. Horizon guidance on dissemination as well as communication and a detailed presentation available online propose interesting input and examples on how to communicate EU research and

innovation activities.<sup>11</sup> Any communication and dissemination activity related to an Activity funded by EIT Food, must adhere to the stringent EIT and Horizon brand guidelines<sup>12</sup>. This includes KIC partner and Activity websites, social media posts and channels, and other collateral related to the Activity.

Each selected Activity under this Call for Proposals must hold at least one event **open to the public** and actively promoted. Additionally, all proposals must incorporate an Output ("Communication and Dissemination Plan"), linked to a deliverable "Communication and Dissemination Report", as well as at least one KPI on dissemination.

In order to tackle the task of communication and dissemination, it is strongly advised to involve an experienced communication entity in the consortium. This can be achieved either by collaborating with a relevant organisation in the consortium (e.g. by involving a communications staff member) or by working with an external party. In most cases such an external party would be sub-contracted. The selection of a sub-contractor, including the value for money eligibility requirement, would be part of activity implementation.

For more guidance on communication tools, check the EIT Food communications hub<sup>13</sup>.

## 6 The EIT Regional Innovation Scheme: RIS

The EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) contributes to the advancement of the innovation performance of targeted countries by strengthening the capacity of their innovation enablers and actors, and linkages among them (such as business accelerators, incubators, start-ups, scale-ups, businesses including SMEs, agencies, educational and research institutions and their infrastructures, etc.) through the dissemination and implementation of the successful elements of the Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI) approach across RIS countries.

Countries eligible to take part in the EIT RIS (2021-2024):

- EU Member States: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.
- Horizon Europe Associated Countries\*: Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine.
- Outermost Regions: Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion, Martinique, Mayotte and Saint-Martin (France), the Azores and Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain).

*\*These third countries, which are all listed in the European Innovation Scoreboard, will be eligible for the EIT RIS, following the successful conclusion of individual Horizon Europe Association Agreements.*

RIS is an integral part of all the EIT Food activities. All EIT Food RIS activities, must be designed in line with EIT Food multi-annual strategies and priorities, provided that the activities

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<sup>11</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide\\_horizon\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide_horizon_en.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.eitfood.eu/branding/category/introduction-2>

<sup>13</sup> <https://eitfood.freshdesk.com/support/home>

contribute towards achieving the EIT's objectives and deliver the desired tangible deliverables and impact, especially in terms of widening participation in the EIT KICs.

During the 2021-2027 period, the EIT RIS aims to deliver on the following objectives:

- improving the innovation capacities of the local ecosystem, via capacity building activities and closer interactions between the local innovation actors (such as, clusters, networks, regional public authorities, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), research organisations, Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutions, SMEs) and their activities;
- supporting the objective of attracting and facilitating the integration of potential new partners in the EIT KICs and link local innovation ecosystems to pan-European innovation ecosystems;
- act as a bridge towards relevant Research and Innovation Smart Specialisation Strategies (RIS3s);
- leveraging additional private and public funding, with particular attention to European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF).

## 6.1 Submitting a RIS proposal

From 2021 onwards, the EIT budget devoted to implementing EIT RIS activities will be at least 10% and maximum 15% of the overall EIT Food Business Plan for the period. Activities funded through the allocated EIT RIS budget have preferential financing conditions, with a higher EIT funding contribution (up to 85% of the activity budget) and lower benchmark for providing a financial return through a Financial Return Mechanism, as outlined in section 7 below.

Proposals addressing the RIS objectives outlined above, are welcome to participate in this call. Specific RIS eligibility and application requirements must be adhered to, which can be found in section 8.2 below.

EIT Food wishes to see the integration of organisations from EIT RIS countries into consortia across our portfolio of activities and would encourage all consortia to consider the geographic profile and market opportunities arising, including RIS country-based organisations, and targeting RIS markets for launch of innovations, products and services, etc.

KIC Partner-led RIS activities supplement the centrally co-ordinated portfolio of RIS activities, implemented in line with the EIT Food RIS Strategy. Activities under EIT RIS must aim at attracting and facilitating the integration of potential new partners with the EIT KICs, as well as, linking local innovation ecosystems to pan-European innovation ecosystems, provided that they do not belong to the performance groups of Innovation Leaders or Strong Innovators, according to the European Innovation Scoreboard.

## 7 The Financial Return Mechanism

As part of the legal agreement with the EIT, EIT Food has established plans to be financially autonomous in the future and not dependent on the EIT grant. Plans for future financial autonomy are outlined in the Financial Sustainability Strategy of EIT Food. The selected activities under this call are expected to comply with EIT Food's Financial Sustainability Strategy by submitting a proposed Financial Return Mechanism for the Activity, to be subsequently agreed with EIT Food.

More details on the principle of Financial Sustainability, and the process for agreeing the terms of the proposed Financial Return Mechanism after being awarded funding are provided in Annex 4 of these Guidelines.

In this section, we provide an overview of the main elements of what shall be submitted in the proposal.

## 7.1 Defining a Financial Return Mechanism

A suitable Financial Return Mechanism may be based on revenue sharing, i.e. sharing a percentage of revenues generated by the Key Exploitable Result(s) (KERs) during an agreed time period within the agreed exploitation period, or on another mechanism proposed by the exploiting party/ parties.

In other words, it can be considered a “success fee” payable to EIT Food and related to the exploitation of the Activity’s KERs resulting from the Activity.

Compulsory information related to the Financial Return Mechanism has to be completed at proposal submission and submitted by the ‘exploiting party or parties’ who will commercially exploit the ‘Key Exploitable Result(s)’ (KER) that result from the Activity. A proposal template is foreseen for the Commercialisation Strategy and Financial Return Mechanism (please refer to Eligibility requirements in Section 8.1).

## 7.2 Determining the proposed financial return

The commercialisation strategy and proposed Financial Return Mechanism are key components of the proposal and feature in both Part A and Part B evaluations:

- **Part A:** The credibility of the business concept and robustness of the commercialisation strategy is an evaluation sub-criterion during the Part A evaluation process, and the proposal must receive an average score of at least 3 – Good – to pass to the next stage.
- **Part B:** the assessment of the Financial Return Mechanism accounts for 30% of the evaluation score. Sub-criteria address: (1) the ambition and competitiveness of the mechanism; (2) whether the financial return is realistic based on clear market assumptions and robust IP management plan, and (3) whether the ramp up in expected annual revenues is realistic and substantiated by project milestones for market introduction and commercial scale-up. Any proposal which does not receive a score of at least 3 – Good – for sub-criterion (1) above will not be considered for funding.

It is therefore a very important element of the proposal and sufficient efforts must be made at proposal stage to present a credible and ambitious financial return to EIT Food.

As a minimum threshold, the minimum required financial return shall be **50%** of the EIT grant budgeted for the lifetime of the Activity. Any subsequent budget amendment resulting from the monitoring process and approved through the Business Plan amendment process will be taken into consideration, should the budgeted EIT grant change over time.

For example, if the total proposed Activity budget is 1 M EUR, of which 60% is reimbursed by EIT Food, or 600 K EUR, then the exploiting party or parties must propose a mechanism which provides a return of at least 300 K EUR upon commercialisation, within an acceptable timeframe.

The example above illustrates the minimum expected return; proposals with a greater financial return would be considered more ambitious and achieve a higher score in sub-criterion (1) above.

Furthermore, it is up to the exploiting party/parties to propose a reasonable “risk adjusted” financial return, which may require an additional percentage of return above the minimum required amount. The proposed risk-adjusted success fee should consider the specific risk profile of the market for Key Exploitable Results. In particular, Consortia should consider the following:

- The proposed and agreed time phasing of the return shall be the start year and end year of the revenue sharing (exploitation period). Please note that nearby market introduction of the KERs after the Activity is assumed. Therefore, the start of the exploitation period must take place at the latest two years after the Activity ends. Also note that the total allowed exploitation period linked to the revenue sharing cannot exceed six years. If the proposed percentage for the financial return mechanism is not reached by the end of the agreed period, then the financial return mechanism shall continue until said percentage is achieved, with the limit of six years after the start year.
- During the exploitation period (two years after the Activity ends and a maximum of six years), the progress of the Financial Return Mechanism shall be evaluated by EIT Food and in case that no revenues have been generated during said period, EIT Food reserves the right to request the grant of the Access rights of the Key Exploitable Results from the Consortia.
- The credibility of the Business Case for Key Exploitable Result(s) of your Activity, concerning the underlying parameters of the projected revenues: market, team, product (key exploitable results) and milestones for go-to-market and scale up.

As an example, if the Financial Return Mechanism is expected to start after 2 years from the KAVA end-date, an additional 2% reimbursement could be foreseen (total proposed mechanism should be 52% of total EIT food funding). If additionally, the reimbursement is foreseen in a time period of 4 years, an additional 2% financial return per each year could be proposed (in total 60% of EIT funding).

### ***Special considerations***

EIT Food acknowledges that the instance may arise where a proposed Activity exceeds expectations in terms of Impact, but the consortium may have difficulty in providing the expected financial return. Therefore, proposals which consistently score an average of 5 across the 3 sub-criteria for “Impact Pathways and KPIs” during the Part A evaluation will exceptionally be allowed to reduce the minimum required financial return to 35% based on risk criteria, once the evaluation processes for Part A & Part B have been completed. However, all such proposals must still comply with the minimum required return of 50% of budgeted grant at proposal submission.

- Activities selected for funding under the Regional Innovation Scheme have preferential financing conditions, and the **expected** financial return shall be 35% of the EIT grant budgeted for the lifetime of the Activity, with any lower proposed financial return being taken into consideration during the evaluation process.

Please note that all Education programmes embedded in proposals must use the suite of EIT Food Education services and infrastructure to ensure alignment and inclusion in the course catalogue. For proposals including an “Education” component, the Financial Return should include a 50% revenue share of course fees.

### 7.3 The Financial Return Mechanism Agreement

The Financial Return Mechanism proposed by the exploiting party/parties will be finalised with EIT Food after the proposal’s selection. A Financial Return Mechanism Agreement (FRMA) must be signed with the exploiting party/parties of the consortium, on behalf of all of the members of the Activity consortium. The Agreement will be finalised according to EIT Food FRMA terms and conditions. The FRMA must be finally agreed and signed by the Exploiting Party(ies) and EIT Food as a mandatory condition for funding. Further details on this process are provided in Annex 4.

## 8 Eligibility Criteria to submit a Proposal

All consortia and proposals for this Call must meet **all** eligibility requirements below in order to proceed to the evaluation phase. EIT Food reserves the right to determine if these criteria are achieved. All ineligible and incomplete proposals will be rejected.

### 8.1 Eligibility requirements

**Important: Any proposal not meeting all the eligibility requirements will not be considered for funding. Most eligibility elements will be checked automatically by the call platform, Plaza, and proposals which do not comply will not be allowed to submit a proposal.**

#### Consortium eligibility requirements:

- Consortium size: the consortium must include at least **three eligible organisations**. Only organisations from countries eligible under the Horizon Europe Framework programme can participate in EIT Food activities. These are all EU Member States and countries that have associated with the Horizon Europe programme (Associated Countries<sup>14</sup>).

*Note: The association with the Horizon Europe programme of several countries that are not EU Member States which were previously associated with the Horizon 2020 programme and therefore eligible to receive its funding, has not yet been confirmed. Therefore, the eligibility of organisations from these countries cannot be ascertained at this moment. Eligibility of costs in 2022 will depend on the timely association of the country and the specific conditions of the association agreement.*

<sup>14</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide\\_horizon\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide_horizon_en.pdf) page:11

- Geographic coverage: the minimum requirement for the consortia is to involve organisations from at least **two different eligible countries**.
- Consortia must include at least **one Exploiting Party/Parties** that will launch the new or improved innovative solutions (product, service, start-up, process). The Exploiting Party must be an existing, officially registered business entity at the time of proposal submission.
- The consortium must contribute to **Knowledge Triangle Integration**, representing different areas of the food system, by involving organisations from at least two fields of the knowledge triangle : education/academia; research; business/industry.

#### **Proposal eligibility requirements:**

- **Mandatory KPIs**, as detailed above in Section 4.3. All proposals must have at least one committed KPI target every calendar year, including 2022, independently of the Activity's start date.
- **Minimum Co-funding 40% / EIT Reimbursement Rate 60%** is a mandatory requirement for all innovation Activities.
  - **Special condition for RIS Proposals funded through the RIS budget:** Minimum Co-funding of 15% (EIT Reimbursement Rate of 85%) is a mandatory requirement for all Activities funded by the allocated RIS budget.
- **Financial Return Mechanism:** the **minimum required** financial return shall be **50%** of the EIT grant budgeted for the lifetime of the Activity. The proposed Financial Return Mechanism will be assessed during the evaluation process and will be evaluated according to the evaluation criteria listed in Section 10.
  - **Special condition for RIS Proposals funded through the RIS budget:** the **expected** financial return shall be **35%** of the EIT grant budgeted for the lifetime of the Activity. The proposed Financial Return Mechanism will be assessed during the evaluation process and will be evaluated according to the evaluation criteria listed in section 10.

#### **Organisation eligibility criteria:**

A proposal will be deemed ineligible if any organisation in the consortium is:

1. 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;
2. 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;

3. 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;
4. is found to be attempting to influence the decision-making process of the call during the process;
5. attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the call process;
6. it has been established by a final judgment that the organisation is guilty of fraud, corruption or money laundering.

Additionally, all organisations must meet the following criteria:

- Be a legally incorporated entity in the EU or Horizon Europe eligible country, which has been incorporated for a minimum of 2 years.
- Have at least 1 year's published accounts showing business activity.
- Have at least two statutory officers such as registered directors.

### **Mandatory documents to upload:**

All proposals must submit the following 5 mandatory supporting documents to be eligible for evaluation:

1. **An Implementation Schedule (a Gantt chart or other)**, detailing the Activity timeline and deliverables. Upload one single PDF file. Free format, no template available.
2. **A Business Model Canvas<sup>15</sup>**: including details concerning the problem and innovative solution, target market, competition, marketing, and commercialisation plan, timeline, and milestones to achieve the product launch, as well as financial forecasting based on Key Exploitable Results (KERs). Relevant Impact Indicators must be included in the Business Canvas. An **Impact Pathways template is available<sup>16</sup>** to help develop and improve the Business Model Canvas. Upload one single PDF file.
3. **A Criticality map<sup>17</sup>**: describing the criticality of each technology composing the innovative solution. Upload one single PDF file.
4. **A Commercialisation Strategy and Financial Return Mechanism**: All four items mentioned below shall be uploaded as one single pdf document:
  - **Main Commercialisation and Financial Return Mechanism<sup>18</sup>**.
  - **Serviceable Obtainable Market**: documentation explaining which expected SOM and market share your quantification is based on. This might include: draft

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.eitfood.eu/opencall2022-mandatorytemplates>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.eitfood.eu/opencall2022-additionalresources>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.eitfood.eu/opencall2022-mandatorytemplates>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.eitfood.eu/opencall2022-mandatorytemplates>

/expected offtake agreements, letters of intent customers, market research reports, competitor analysis etc.). Free format, no template available.

- **Market introduction / distribution channels:** a Business Plan that includes the description of the sales/distribution channels for the described SOM. Free format, no template available.
  - **Roadmap Go To Market And Scale Up Milestones For KERs:** evidence documenting the status of the activities required to launch the innovation in the market (product readiness level). Free format, no template available.
5. **Proof of TRL 7 or above (TRL 6 completed and demonstrated)** by providing supporting documentation which should provide proof in the form of prototypes, data, feedback from tests/ trials, consumers' assessment, that back-up achievements of key previous TRL levels. See Annex 3 for TRL/MRL Information. Upload one single PDF file.

## 8.2 RIS Proposal eligibility requirements & application process

All proposals applying for this call must comply with **all** eligibility criteria listed above in section 8.1.

In addition, in order to be considered eligible for funding under the allocated RIS budget with preferential funding conditions, consortia must submit a "RIS Proposal".

RIS Proposals must comply with all four elements of the following eligibility criteria:

1. The proposed activity should be implemented/developed in a minimum of 3 RIS countries.
2. The main beneficiaries of the product/service/training/business resulting from the activity should be based in RIS countries.
3. The proposed activity must target RIS markets for the launch of innovations, products and/or services.
4. The majority of eligible members in a RIS proposal must be from RIS regions.

### RIS Proposal Application Process:

1. All RIS Proposals must check the RIS box in PLAZA in order to be considered a RIS Proposal.
2. All RIS Proposals should be titled as: "**RIS (proposal title)**" in PLAZA in order to be considered a RIS Proposal.
3. Consortia submitting RIS Proposals will have the opportunity to have the same or similar proposal considered under the general Call. For this, RIS proposals should indicate in PLAZA before submitting the application, that they also wish to be

considered for the regular call conditions (i.e. with no preferential financial conditions) by referencing their regular call proposal number in the field "Reference to your "Mainstream" proposal" in PLAZA Tab 0. The proposals that select this option need to submit a separate second proposal in the system (with financial return minimum 50% and Co-Funding minimum 40%) in order to be assessed in the general call. A consortium might choose to do this, so that if the RIS proposal does not meet the RIS eligibility criteria or the RIS budget is exhausted, they will be considered for the main call under the general requirements.

Those RIS proposals that indicate in the submission platform that they only wish to be considered for funding under the allocated RIS budget (with preferential financing conditions), will not be considered for the general Call, should they not meet the RIS criteria or should the allocated RIS budget be exhausted.

#### RIS Proposal Eligibility check:

- If assessed to be an **eligible RIS Proposal** according to the 4 RIS eligibility criteria outlined above, RIS Proposals will proceed to Part A and B of the evaluation process detailed in Section 10.
- If the proposal is assessed to be **ineligible for RIS funding**, proposals which have indicated their intent to be considered also for the general Call will be assessed following the same rules and criteria as described in these Call Guidelines.

#### RIS Proposal Evaluation process:

All proposals (RIS proposals and regular proposals) will be scored in a single ranking. The highest ranked RIS Proposals will be funded from the allocated RIS budget, with preferential financial conditions. Only a limited number of proposals can be funded under the RIS budget (Indicatively no more than 2 or 3 proposals).

Once the RIS budget is exhausted, those RIS proposals which have indicated their wish to be considered as a general proposal will be considered according to their evaluation outcome alongside other Innovation proposals and by applying the standard financial criteria, particularly related to co-funding % and financial return requirements.

## 9 How to Submit a Proposal

The proposal's Activity Leader must complete the proposal submission process by providing the necessary information and documentation in PLAZA, the EIT Food portal.

There will be 4 steps to complete the submission of the proposal:

1. **Register for the call:** Existing EIT Food Partners do not need to register, as they already have an access to PLAZA. All organisations who do not have an active PLAZA account must first register in PLAZA via this link:  
<https://plaza.eitfood.eu/OrganisationRegistration>

Registration is open to all organisations within eligible Horizon Europe participating countries. Registration process may take a minimum of 48 hours to approve, so it is

suggested to complete registration in advance of starting the proposal, and at the latest before Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December.

2. **Start your proposal:** Each consortium needs a designated Activity Leader who shall log in to PLAZA and begin filling in the required fields. To start the process, log in to PLAZA and on *home page*, proceed to *Call for Proposals* section. Choose *Call for Proposals 2022* and click *Add New Proposal* button to start filling in the necessary information. In order to return to your proposal at a later time and continue working, the proposal can always be accessible in Activity Leader’s PLAZA account. The Activity Leader can always follow the same step and continue editing it by selecting the Edit button.
3. While selecting the consortium members, please make sure that all organisations in your consortium have completed their registration in PLAZA. Once the registration is completed, the proposal’s activity leader will be able to select the consortium organisations from a drop-down list when adding their consortium’s information.  
**Proposal information and Documents:** Make sure all requested information and necessary documents are filled in and uploaded in PLAZA. All eligibility criteria shall be carefully read before submission.
4. **Submit:** Once the proposal and supporting documents are completed please proceed and submit the proposal by the proposal deadline.

## 10 Evaluation Criteria

Proposals that meet all of the above eligibility requirements will proceed to the Evaluation Stage. First the eligible Part A proposals will be evaluated based on criteria described in 10.1. After Part A evaluation and ranking, the selected proposals proceeding to PART B will be evaluated based on criteria described in section 10.2.

### 10.1 Evaluation Criteria – Part A

External experts will evaluate Part A of all proposals which pass the eligibility criteria and include all mandatory documents.

External Experts will evaluate Part A based on the following criteria and weighting:

- Excellence: 40%
- Impact Pathways (See Annex 2) and KPIs: 30%
- Quality and Efficiency of Implementation: 30%

| Excellence<br>40% |  | Impact Pathways and KPIs<br>30% |   | Quality and efficiency of implementation<br>30% |   |
|-------------------|--|---------------------------------|---|---|---|
| 25%               | *Clearly demonstrated market and societal need/demand for the proposed innovation. | 40%                             | Proposal significantly contributes towards EIT Food’s Societal, Environmental, Economic impact. There is a clear link between the | 40%   | Value for Money of the proposed activity.<br>Extent of proposal’s co-funding rate will be |

|     |  |     | project's KPIs and Impact Indicators.  |     | reflected in the evaluation score.   |
|-----|--|-----|--|-----|--|
| 25% | Innovativeness of the proposed solution, advancing state of the art in the field.                          | 40% | <p>Proposal's intended impact is significant, as measured by the # of EIT Core KPIs and additional KIC-specific KPIs for Innovation, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketed Innovations</li> <li>• Designed and Tested Innovations</li> <li>• Start-ups created</li> <li>• Innovation testbeds established</li> </ul> <p>Extent of proposal's intended impact will be reflected in the evaluation score.</p> | 40% | Competences, operational capability, and complementarity of the consortium to achieve project objectives |
| 25% | *Soundness/credibility of the business concept and robust commercialisation strategy.                      | 20% | Clearly demonstrated collaborative strength and synergies of consortium to contribute to the EIT Food Focus Area Challenges with the innovation(s) being developed.  | 20% | Adequate resources (human and financial) to achieve project objectives                                   |
| 25% | Stage of development of the innovation and its critical/non-critical technologies is clearly demonstrated. |     |  |     |  |

Each evaluation sub-criterion will be scored from 0 to 5 using the following scoring system:

0 - Not addressed

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 number of 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 final result for the proposal.

**\* Important remark:** Any proposal scoring less than 3 (Good) in the criteria “Clearly demonstrated market need/demand” or “Soundness/credibility of the business concept and robust commercialisation strategy” will be excluded during the Part A evaluation process.

## 10.2 Evaluation Criteria – Part B

Proposals proceeding to PART B of the evaluation process will be evaluated by external experts, based on the following criteria and weighting:

- Excellence: 40%
- Implementation and Impact: 30%
- Financial Return Mechanism: 30%

| Excellence<br>40% |   | Implementation and Impact<br>30% |   | Financial Return Mechanism<br>30% |  |
|-------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 25%               | Consortium's research and analysis of market need is clearly demonstrated. Value proposition for consumers is clearly demonstrated.   | 30%                              | Effectiveness and feasibility of the workplan are clear and convincing to achieve project objectives.<br><br>Thorough and comprehensive risk register and corresponding mitigation plan.                            | 40%                               | **Ambitious commercialisation strategy and competitive Financial Return Mechanism contribution to KIC's Financial Sustainability   |
| 25%               | Business plan is well researched and convincing. Uniqueness of the innovation is clearly demonstrated.  | 40%                              | **Extent, relevance, and timeliness of contribution from project-level KPIs and Impact Indicators towards overall KIC KPI targets and Societal Impact Indicator targets.  | 30%                               | Revenues expected from the Key Exploitable Results (KER) are realistic. The market assumptions of said revenues are thoroughly explained. A robust IP management plan is in place. |
| 25%               | **Convincing Proof of TRL stage of at least 7 at the time of proposal submission, in the form of prototypes, data, feedback from tests/ trials, consumers' assessment, that show evidence of completion/achievement of TRL 6. | 15%                              | Strength of Economic Impact, via forecasted income and through wider economic, societal, health or environmental gains which can be attributed to the activity.   | 30%                               | The ramp up in expected annual revenues is realistic and substantiated by project milestones for market introduction and commercial scale-up.                                      |
| 25%               | Feasibility to increase the TRL level of the innovation within the timeframe of the proposed activity is realistic and clearly explained.   | 15%                              | Demonstration of Knowledge Triangle Integration, through contribution of EIT Food support/ programmes/ network/ capability & resources to the development, deployment and scaling up of solutions and Impact Goals. |                                   |  |

Each evaluation sub-criterion will be scored from 0 to 5 using the following scoring system:

0 - Not addressed

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 number of 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 final result for the proposal.

**\*\*Important remark:** Any proposal scoring less than 3 (Good) in the criteria “*Proof of TRL stage of at least 7*”, or “*contribution to project-level KPIs and Impact Indicators*”, or “*Ambitious commercialisation strategy and competitive Financial Return Mechanism contribution to KIC’s Financial Sustainability*” will not be considered for funding.

## 10.3 Priorities in Activity Funding

Following the evaluation and ranking of proposals, EIT Food may need to distinguish between proposals addressing all of the above Evaluation Criteria and resulting in an equal score. The following evaluation criteria will be prioritised for final selection and funding:

1. EIT Food’s Investment as measured by **the value for money** of the proposed activity, budget requested & activity duration.
2. Proposals delivering **higher impact** as measured by multiple priority KPIs in 2022 or 2023 as follows: EITHE01, EITHE02, EITHE04 (EITHE04 can be achieved after completion of the KAVA).
3. Proposals contributing to the KIC Financial Sustainability with a higher return on investment **above 50%** of the amended EIT funding and/or deliver the agreed return on investment in a shorter timeframe.
4. **Strategic alignment** of proposal to the EIT Food Strategic Agenda, as assessed by the proposal’s contribution to solving the selected Focus Areas Challenges, and contribution to Impact Indicators targets.
5. Proposals with a reimbursement rate **below 60%**

EIT Food will therefore take those evaluation scores from the 5 criteria listed above as scored in Part A and/or Part B, and come to a final score using those criteria alone. The proposal with the highest score will be selected for funding.

## 11 Evaluations and Selection

The proposals template in PLAZA has two parts: Part A and Part B. The deadline for **both** Part A and Part B submissions on the EIT Food application platform, PLAZA, is **14 January 2022**.

Complete and submitted proposals received by this date, and fulfilling eligibility criteria for both Part A and Part B, will go to the Evaluation Stage beginning with Part A.

Based on Part A evaluation scores and available EIT funding for Business Plan 2022, a sub-set of submissions will proceed to Part B. Given our projected budget, EIT Food anticipates funding between 15 and 25 Activites, each between €400-600k annual spend. To provide a suitable shortlist for Part B evaluation, we will select the top-ranking proposals from the Part A evaluation which cumulatively equate to a budget of at most 4 times the budget available

for the call. As a result, EIT Food aims to award funding to approximately 25% of the proposals which undergo a Part B evaluation.

## 11.1 Eligibility Check

Immediately after the submission deadline, the Eligibility Check of Part A and Part B will occur. At this step, a completeness and first eligibility check will take place. Part A and Part B of the application must be complete and all mandatory supporting documents uploaded. If any of the fields or mandatory documents are missing or incomplete, the proposal will not progress to the Part A evaluation.

The eligibility of the proposal can also be assessed in the different stages of the evaluations (Part A and Part B evaluation).

## 11.2 Part A Evaluation

Part A submissions which pass the Eligibility Check will be shared with **expert evaluators** for evaluation. Each proposal will be rigorously evaluated by 3 expert evaluators, who will discuss their assessments in a **Consensus meeting** with EIT Food. A Rapporteur will compile evaluator feedback to be shared with the consortia. Following the Consensus Meeting, the proposals will be ranked and a select number of those proposals will proceed to Part B Evaluation. If needed, additional specialists may be involved in the review process for specific areas of the proposal, including financial return mechanisms.

## 11.3 Part B Evaluation

The selected Part B submissions will receive an invitation to a **Panel Meeting**. Prior to the Panel Meeting, expert evaluators will review all Part B submissions. On the Panel Meeting day, Consortia will make an online pitch followed by a Q&A session with the evaluators. After each presentation and Q&A, evaluators will score the proposals. A Rapporteur will compile evaluator feedback to be shared with the consortia. If needed, additional specialists may be involved in the review process for specific areas of the proposal, including financial return mechanisms.

*Note: As indicated in the Criteria section above, any proposal scoring less than 3 (Good) in the criteria “Proof of TRL stage of at least 7”, or “contribution to project-level KPIs and Impact Indicators”, or “Ambitious commercialisation strategy and competitive Financial Return Mechanism contribution to KIC’s Financial Sustainability” will not be considered for funding. Proposals receiving a 0 in any of the 3 categories will be excluded.*

## 11.4 Internal Panel

Once the Panel Meetings with external evaluators are completed, an internal EIT Food panel will take place to review the evaluator scores and comments, validating consistency across the evaluations.

The Internal Panel will resolve cases where a consensus was not reached, rank the above-threshold proposals, and give a priority order for proposals with the same score, if the case arises.

The ranking decision of the internal panel will be submitted to the EIT Food Management Board for the final decision.

## 11.5 EIT Food Management Board Consensus Meetings

The final decision of the internal panel will be submitted to the EIT Food Management Board for the final approval of the Activities in order to be added to the 2021-2022 EIT Food Business Plan.

## 11.6 Feedback to all Applicants

All consortia will be informed about their proposal's evaluation results with an evaluation form indicating the positive and negative points of the proposal, as assessed by the expert evaluators. The form will be prepared based on Rapporteur's and internal panel's minutes. Feedback will also be provided following the Part B evaluation process

# 12 Timeline of the Call 2022

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Call 2022 Guidelines are published</b>   | 01.11.2021  |
| <b>Webinars for applicants</b><br>EIT Food will host webinars providing more details on what is expected from this call, including a Q&A session. | Throughout November 2021, see the EIT Food call for proposals website for details:<br><a href="https://www.eitfood.eu/opencall2022">https://www.eitfood.eu/opencall2022</a> |
| <b>Proposal submission deadline (Parts A and B)</b>   | 14.01.2021  |
| <b>Completeness and Eligibility Check</b>   | 14-21.01.2021   |
| <b>PART A Evaluation by external expert reviewers</b>   | 24.01-4.02.2022   |
| <b>Consensus Meeting for Part A</b>   | 07.02-18.02.2022  |
| <b>Final Decision on invitees to Part B Evaluation</b>  | 21-25.02.2022   |
| <b>Part A Feedback to applicants</b>  | 28.02-04.03.2022  |
| <b>Part B Panel Meeting (Pitch and Q&amp;A session with applicants - online via Zoom, link to be provided by EIT Food)</b>                        | 14.03-25.03.2022  |
| <b>Internal EIT Food Panel</b>  | 28.03-01.04.2022  |

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| <b>EIT Food Management Board Consensus Meeting</b>   | 18.04-22.04.2022 |
| <b>Communication to applicants for final acceptance or rejection to the EIT Food Business Plan 2021-2022</b> | 25.04-29.04.2022 |

The timeline proposed above is indicative and EIT Food reserves the right to adjust the timeline as required. Any amendment to the foreseen timeline will be communicated on the EIT Food website (<https://www.eitfood.eu/opencall2022>).

## 13 Next Steps for Selected Proposals

### 13.1 Final approval for funding

Proposals will be selected for funding according to the timeline provided in Section 12. An award notification letter will outline the administrative requirements to be followed by the consortia. The EIT Food Business Plan 2021-2022 is amended to include new Activities at certain times of year, as specified by the EIT. It is anticipated that Activities selected via this Call will be included in the Amended Business Plan 2021-2022 in Q3 2022.

### 13.2 Proposals involving new organisations

Following the Management Board decision, all applicants will receive feedback regarding their proposals. Activity Leaders of the selected proposals which involve organisations who are not already EIT Food partners will be contacted to start the new partnership application process. Further information on partner onboarding is available on the EIT Food website.

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

This section summarises the legal framework of EIT Food, including the documents that will have to be signed by the consortia of selected proposals and any organisations joining the EIT Food Partnership as a result of this Call for Proposals:

#### The Legal Framework between EIT, EIT Food and its Partners

- **Partnership agreement (PA) 2021-2024:** overarching contract signed between the EIT and the KIC, EIT Food, establishing the general terms and conditions under which EIT Food must operate as an Institutionalised European Partnership.
  - **Internal Agreement (IA) 2021-2024:** signed between EIT Food and each Partner transferring PA obligations. It is signed for the same duration as the PA and it includes provisions stemming from the PA, including KIC governance

principles, monitoring and reporting, financial sustainability, confidentiality, communication and visibility requirements. Current EIT Food partners have already signed an IA, while new partners will have to sign the IA as part of their administrative onboarding with EIT Food.

- **(Model) Grant Agreement (GA) 2021-2022:** signed between the EIT and EIT Food covering the respective Business Plan period. The GA sets out the rules relating to the grant allocated for the implementation of the Business Plan, including activities and budget, rules on cost eligibility, communication and branding, and others.
  - **Accession Form to GA 2021-2022 (AF):** to become a beneficiary in the GA and to ensure eligibility of costs, all partners involved in the Business Plan Activities must sign an AF. New partners will need to sign the AF as part of the onboarding process with EIT Food.

#### Activity specific agreements:

- **Project Agreement:** to be signed between EIT Food and the project consortium for 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.
- **Consortium Agreement:** to be signed among consortium partners for the duration of project implementation.
- **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.

It is important to note that at the time of publishing these guidelines, the EIT intends to implement a cascade funding model with KICs from 2023 onwards. This means that KIC Partners, as Grant Beneficiaries, would become subgrantees of the EIT Food organisation, or recipients of “Financial Support to Third Parties” in the form of Grants, as foreseen in the Grant Agreement.

Multi-annual Activities which are planned to continue beyond 31/12/2022 will be considered for the 2023-2025 Business Plan. Any inclusion in the 2023-2025 Business Plan will be determined in 2022 based on the Activity monitoring process, and according to the size of the grant awarded by EIT for the planning period.

## 13.4 Payment schedule

The total EIT Grant awarded to EIT Food for business plan Activities is transferred in installments by the EIT to EIT Food, for distribution among the grant beneficiaries (i.e. KIC Partners). EIT Food’s financing flows are therefore dependent on the payment schedule implemented by EIT as foreseen in the Grant Agreement.

A proportion of the Activity budget will be pre-financed, with subsequent payments being linked to the achievement of milestones. 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 fulfillment of all obligations specified in the Project Agreement. The availability and timing of pre-financing for the Activity are dependant on the payment schedule established by the EIT.

## 13.5 Monitoring of EIT Food Activities

The Activities selected for funding will 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. The monitoring will cover several aspects relating to the activity implementation including, but not limited to: achievement of milestones; risk management; financial management; quality assurance; progress against KPI achievement and impact delivery; communication and dissemination; and progress towards commercialisation and exploitation of results.

The monitoring process may result in an amendment to the activity workplan and/or budget, or reforecasting of the expected financial returns stipulated in the Financial Return Mechanism Agreement.

In the case of multi-year activities spanning several calendar years, funding for the next year will be granted based on the monitoring assessment at the end of the current year of the activity. The final decision for the continuation of multi-year activities and the allocated budget will be taken by the EIT Food Management Board based on the outcome of the monitoring process and budget availability.

In the case of under-performance, significant delay of implementation, misconduct of the consortium, or any other reason jeopardising 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 in the Activity duration.

Furthermore, EIT Food will monitor all activities after activity completion to track long-term impact, the status of commercialisation and to ensure the achievement of KPIs anticipated after Activity end.



# Annex 1: Innovation Focus Area Challenges for 2022

## 1. Alternative Proteins: Challenges

Protein diversification requires shifting away from an over-reliance on resource-intensive animal proteins and moving towards lower-impact protein ingredients and a greater variety of products.

**Call 2022 Ambition:** We seek Activities which develop solutions to produce new raw materials and optimize production processes, create affordable alternative protein choices, and grow awareness and trust in alternative proteins. Priority challenges to be addressed are plant-based proteins, single cell fermentation and cell-based technologies.

### CHALLENGES

1.1 Evaluation and creation of novel alternative protein raw materials and ingredients, also considering valorisation of different side-streams to drive positive environmental impact, reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>, water and energy consumption and / or reduction in food waste & food loss.

1.2 Create diverse selection of consumer end-products using alternative proteins. Hybrid products made from alternative and traditional proteins sources can be considered. Target in cleaner labels and shorter ingredient lists. Changes in consumer acceptance and behaviour as well as effective communication of the benefits of alternative proteins are essential objectives of the solutions to be provided.

1.3 Optimise processes to produce alternative proteins and manufacture consumer end-products, to facilitate upscaling and implementation in production environment, reducing complexity and costs. Creation of solutions to remove roadblocks to the adoption of new processes is also included.

1.4 Improve sensorial and functional properties, nutritional profile of alternative protein-based ingredients and consumer end-products via improved, novel processes and technologies. Cross-cutting emphasis on co-creation methodologies with consumers.

## 2. Sustainable Agriculture: Challenges

There is a need to increase the sustainability of farming practices and promote regenerative and circular farming approaches to reduce the impact of agriculture.

**Call 2022 Ambition:** We invite proposals that contribute to the regeneration of biodiversity and ecosystem services, aid in coping with climate change and building-up agricultural resilience and drive digital transformation, technology adoption, citizen engagement, and capacity building.

### CHALLENGES

2.1 Agriculture remains a highly resource intensive industry: we need to develop systemic and digitally enabled solutions for a more sustainable use of resources (e.g., energy, water, fertilizers, pesticides and land) based on, for example, the development and optimisation of smart and precision farming technologies.

2.2 Realising the potential of crops while reducing the connection between potentially harmful residues and the demand for shelf and nutritional quality requires alternative predictable and efficacious inputs: we need to develop alternative solutions to enhance crop yield and resilience making use of more sustainable soil and/or crop management practices as well as other practices to increase plant tolerance to stress (abiotic, biotic) including climate change.

2.3 Livestock production is the most significant source of GHG emissions from agriculture, but emission reduction must be paired to an efficient, high quality and animal-friendly production system: we need to develop solutions that substantially reduce GHG emission from livestock. Solutions can include precision livestock management and/or alternative feed ingredients and should be coupled with additional benefits such as an increase in animal welfare and quality and reduction in the use of medicines and vaccines.

### 3. Targeted Nutrition: Challenges

Transforming the food system to fight non-communicable diseases (NCDs) by improving diets and lifestyles is urgently needed to promote healthy eating habits and keeping people healthy, while enhancing consumer awareness about the relationship between food and health.

**Call 2022 Ambition:** We invite proposals that aim to halt and reverse the rise in obesity levels, promote healthy aging and reduce the number of dependent adults, double protein food sources available, and develop personalized nutrition strategies

3.1 Develop more nutritious and affordable food ingredients and products that support the reduction of risk factors for NCDs and micronutrient deficiencies in different target populations.

3.2 Create non-invasive and scientifically reliable diagnostic tools, monitoring devices, consumer empowerment tools and user interfaces to help provide ongoing and actionable personalized nutrition guidance to consumers and healthcare professionals.

3.3 Provide commercial solutions based on robust and scientific modeling that incorporates multiple indicators of an individual's health, including but not limited to biomarkers, genetics, and microbiome.

### 4. Sustainable Aquaculture: Challenges

Aquaculture is expected to provide an ever-increasing portion of global fish consumption in the coming decade. As seafood consumption increases, sustainable aquaculture must keep up with demand while providing many other economic, social, and environmental benefits.

**Call 2022 Ambition:** We seek new approaches to transform and expand current aquaculture practices into smarter, circular systems by developing innovative and sustainable solutions to create safe, healthy, and high-quality food.

#### CHALLENGES

4.1 Develop solutions and technologies to optimize farm management and supply chain (from product processing, collaboration platforms and transportation systems) and minimize inputs and pre- and post-harvest losses

|  |
|--|
| 4.2 Promote new emerging sustainable production systems and aquaculture species: Adapt existing systems to new species or production of species in currently underexploited areas. Scale up of systems for production, harvest, and processing of seaweed. |
| 4.3 Develop environmentally friendly solutions (and tools) for animal and plant health, including alternative (and sustainable) raw materials and micronutrients for fish and feed production, waste management, animal health and welfare.                |
| 4.4 Develop safe and high-quality aquaculture products, including innovative transformation and preservation technologies, and digital tools to engage and develop trust among consumers through health and green claims, traceability, and transparency.  |

## 5. Digital Traceability: Challenges

|  |
|--|
| <p><b>Scope:</b> Digitalisation of traceability can improve the safety, efficiency and sustainability of food and increase consumer trust. Moreover, it is one of the steppingstones in the digital transformation of food systems.</p> <p><b>Call 2022 Ambition:</b> Develop transparent and traceable food supply chains to make the food system (1) safe, (2) efficient, (3) sustainable and (4) transparent to consumers and food actors by increasing investments and use/adoption/development of digital tools / technologies and addressing the barriers to user acceptance and increased confidence.</p> |
| <b>CHALLENGES</b>  |
| 5.1 Develop efficient and affordable digital solutions and technologies to ensure food safety by increasing the speed of response, without compromising quality.   |
| 5.2 Create efficient and affordable digital tools to boost transparency across the food chain, increasing consumer confidence in the food system and reducing fraud.   |
| 5.3 Build systems to improve coordination across the food chain to optimize adaptation to consumer demand and reduce food loss and waste; this includes assessing and monitoring environmental, economic, societal and health indicators to support the achievement of SDGs.   |

## 6. Circular Food Systems: Challenges

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Scope:</b> We must shift from our current linear model (make, use, dispose) to a circular food system. This implies the reuse of resources, reduction and (re)-utilisation of side and waste streams to prevent food loss and waste and to allow nutrient recycling and reduction in GHG emissions as well as water and land use. Consumers and value chain stakeholders are key enablers of this shift.</p> <p><b>Call 2022 Ambition:</b> We invite proposals that are based on a food systems approach and include training/education of e.g., retailer and/or consumers. Solutions must deliver on at least one of the following impact indicators: GHG emissions, water use, food loss and/or food waste, waste management, recycling, and upcycling.</p> |
| <b>CHALLENGES</b>   |
| 6.1 Develop a system approach to value-chain pain points to ensure optimal resource use and mitigate food loss and waste. Create solutions that address a. the extended use of non-optimal and non-sustainable preservation technologies for food spoilage; b. the lack of natural and environmentally friendly preservative alternatives or technologies to extend shelf life and reduce food spoilage.  |

|   |
|---|
| <p>6.2 Develop functional packaging concepts and sizes to enable shelf-life optimization; create sustainable packaging alternatives with a suitable balance among packaging performance, cost, performance of processing and end-of-life.</p> |
| <p>6.3 Development of systems that allow the environmental and sustainable management of side-streams and related processes, to obtain their efficient valorisation and optimize the use of resources.</p>                                    |
| <p>6.4 Create initiatives that increase stakeholder awareness including consumer behaviour and incentive interventions.</p>   |

## Annex 2: Impact Pathways

### Introducing Project Impact Pathways

Within EIT Food's updated Strategic Agenda 2021-27, we have detailed an underpinning Theory of Change which guides decision making, actions and progress measurement towards system change supporting our Impact Goals.

While each Impact Goal has a dedicated pathway to impact as part of that Theory of Change, in reality, our activities often produce a blend of deliverables, KPIs and Impact Indicators which contribute to more than one Impact Goal simultaneously – for example, building trust, while also improving health outcomes through digital supply chain solutions which reduce food fraud and contamination.

We therefore encourage consortia to define and take ownership of their own Project Impact Pathway, pulling together relevant Impact Goals, KPIs and Impact Indicators in a format which places the specific project problem and objectives within the context of our shared Impact Framework.

### Developing Project Impact Pathways

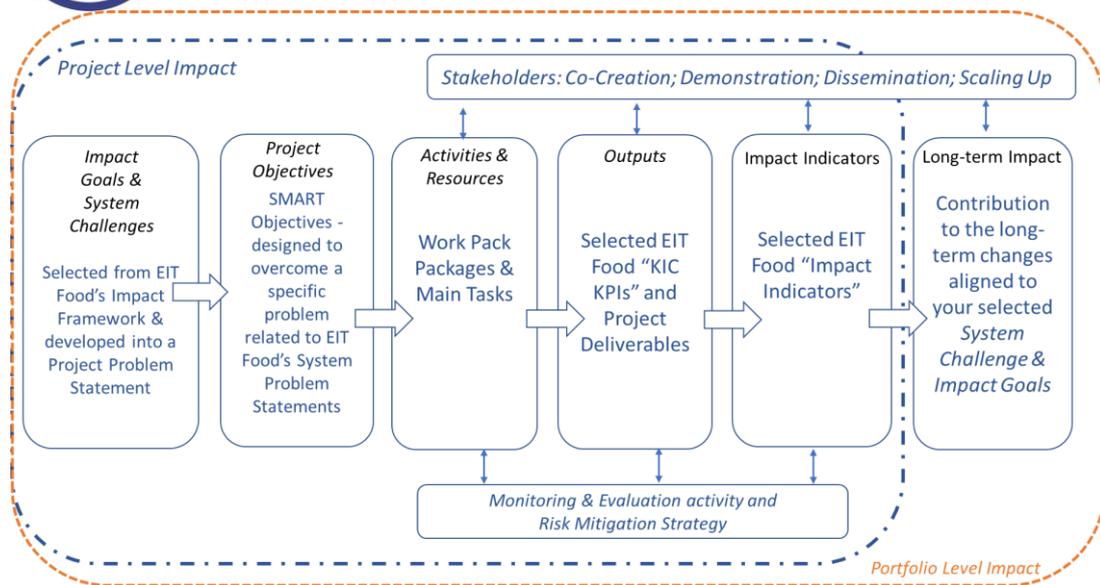
Broadly, our competitive Calls for Activities are intended to prioritise achievement of our Impact Indicators, although we welcome proposals which encompass scaling up and demonstrating long-term impact.

Through rigorous design of project-level problem statements and corresponding objectives, those impact indicators should solve significant systemic problems in a way which extrapolates to allow reliable inference of long-term impact.

### Impact Pathway Template

As a planning tool, we have also created an Impact Pathway Template to help with the selection of goals, challenges, KPIs and Impact Indicators which logically fit together to form Impact Pathways at the Activity level.

The intention is to assist applicants to produce a Project Impact pathway which is consistent with our portfolio model and will allow comparison between activities and accurate profiling of investment and results. The pathway logic model is as follows:



**Evaluation of impact** potential will assess the following planning and execution aspects:

- Overall strength of logic, planning and evidence supporting Project Impact Pathway.
- Extent, relevance and timeliness of contribution from activity-level KPIs and Impact Indicators towards overall KIC KPI targets and Impact Indicator targets.
- Strength of Economic Impact, both directly via agreed financial return mechanism/ forecast income and indirectly through wider economic, societal, health or environmental gains which can be attributed to the activity.
- Demonstration of a distinctive contribution of EIT Food support/ programmes/ network/ capability & resources to the development, deployment and scaling up of solutions and Impact Goals, particularly through *Knowledge Triangle Integration*.

**Table 1: Impact Indicators**

All EIT Food funded activities should lead to improvement in one or more of the following *Impact Indicators and jointly deliver at minimum the set targets by 2024*:

| Impact Goal  | Impact Indicator   | 2024 KIC Targets |
|--|--|------------------|
| 1.Improvement in conditions for enhanced public trust in the food system | Increase # people taking part in “co-creation” as part of EIT Food activities.   | 12000            |
|  | Increase # new digital solutions in use to improve supply chain efficiency, integrity, and transparency.   | 10               |
| 2.Better Health Outcomes from our Diet                                   | Increase # consumers using technology, solutions or guidance developed with the support of EIT Food to personalise or change diet in line with relevant Food-Based Dietary Guidelines for Europe <sup>19</sup> | 2000             |

<sup>19</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/health-knowledge-gateway/promotion-prevention/nutrition/food-based-dietary-guidelines>

|   |   |           |
|---|---|-----------|
|   | Increase # food products on the market with levels of salt &/ or free sugars &/or trans & saturated fats reduced to, or below, recommended Food-based Dietary Guidelines for Europe                 | 12        |
|   | Increase in the number of food products on the market with an improved nutritional profile  |           |
|   | Increase # new digital solutions in use to improve supply chain efficiency, integrity, and transparency.  | 10        |
| 3.Improved environmental impact of Agri-Food systems        | Volume reduction in CO2 equivalent tonnes <sup>20</sup> from areas/ business segments/practices of the agri-food system identified as major contributory sources by Life Cycle Analysis methodology | 8M tCO2eq |
|   | Increase # products on the market derived from alternative sources  | 15        |
|   | Increase # products or processes launched using revalorised &/ or reintegrated food system side-streams and waste streams.  | 15        |
| 4.Enabling transition to a circular and sustainable economy | Increase % of alumni of KIC Education activities retained in the food system.   | 85        |
|   | Increase # of new skills and professions within the food sector supported by EIT Food.  | 8         |
|   | Increase # new entrepreneurs supported by EIT Food and starting a new business within 3 years   | 60        |
|   | Increase # start-ups and scale ups supported by EIT Food trading and reporting 1.5X increased revenue 3 years after support ceased  | 30        |
|   | Increase # new jobs created in start-up/ scale-ups  | 149       |
|   | Increase # new innovation ecosystems/ clusters developed with the support of EIT Food   | 5         |
|   | Increase # products or processes launched using revalorised &/ or reintegrated food system side-streams and waste streams.  | 15        |
|   | Increasing € value attributable to Social, Environmental & Economic Return on Investment per 1€ invested in the EIT Food portfolio of activities (“Portfolio ROI”)                                  | ROI>1:1   |

<sup>20</sup> Applications may wish to include own LCA data, however it is acceptable to reference reliable published 3rd party LCAs and scenario analysis may be used to determine baselines & intervention points (e.g.: “Consumer Footprint – Basket of Products Indicator on Food”, JRC Technical Report, 2017 [https://eplca.jrc.ec.europa.eu/uploads/ConsumerFootprint\\_BoP\\_Food.pdf](https://eplca.jrc.ec.europa.eu/uploads/ConsumerFootprint_BoP_Food.pdf); or the EIT Food sponsored “EnviroScore” project: <https://osf.io/t2hz4/download/?format=pdf>)

**Table 2: Impact Framework – System Challenges and Associated Indicators**

| Impact Goal  | System Challenges   | Impact Indicator   | Long-term Impact Measurement   |
|--|---|--|--|
| 1.Improvement in conditions for enhanced public trust in the food system | Low consumer trust in the food system creates conditions where innovation which may benefit consumers is slowly adopted.  | Increase # people taking part in “co-creation” as part of EIT Food activities.   | Improvement in trust metrics identified by EIT Food’s Trust Report <sup>21</sup> and Trust Tracker data.   |
|  |   | Increase # new digital solutions in use to improve supply chain efficiency, integrity and transparency.  |  |
| 2. Better Health Outcomes from our Diet                                  | A combination of the product options encountered by the consumer and the basis of their decision making in relation to those products can have a serious negative effect on both the healthiness and sustainability of dietary choices. | Increase # consumers using technology, solutions or guidance developed with the support of EIT Food to personalise or change diet in line with relevant Food-Based Dietary Guidelines for Europe <sup>22</sup> | Reduction in relative risk of obesity & Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) prevalence in target populations due to known contributory dietary factors. |
|  |   | Increase # food products on the market with levels of salt &/ or free sugars &/or trans & saturated fats reduced to, or below, recommended Food-based Dietary Guidelines for Europe                            |  |
|  |   | Increase in the number of food products on the market with an improved nutritional profile   |  |

<sup>21</sup> [https://www.eitfood.eu/media/news-pdf/EIT\\_Food\\_Trust\\_Report\\_2020.pdf](https://www.eitfood.eu/media/news-pdf/EIT_Food_Trust_Report_2020.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/health-knowledge-gateway/promotion-prevention/nutrition/food-based-dietary-guidelines>

| Impact Goal  | System Challenges  | Impact Indicator  | Long-term Impact Measurement  |
|--|--|---|---|
|  |  | Increase # new digital solutions in use to improve supply chain efficiency, integrity and transparency.   | Reduction in estimated burden <sup>23</sup> (€) of preventable foodborne disease and targeted contributory food safety factors. |
| 3.Improved environmental impact of Agri-Food systems         | Slow transformation of the agri-food system into a circular economy is holding back improvement in environmental outcomes and leading to wasted resources and lost value within the food system. | Volume reduction in CO2 equivalent tonnes <sup>24</sup> from areas/ business segments/practices of the agri-food system identified as major contributory sources by Life Cycle Analysis methodology | Improvement in impact on ecosystems due to factors identified as EU Green Deal and/ or CAP targets                              |
|  |  | Increase # products on the market derived from alternative sources  |   |
|  |  | Increase # products or processes launched using revalorised &/ or reintegrated food system side-streams and waste streams.  |   |
| 4. Enabling transition to a circular and sustainable economy | A shortage of scientific, entrepreneurial and managerial skills needed to solve complex challenges in a changing agri-food system is a major barrier to innovation across the system.            | Increase % of alumni of KIC Education activities retained in the food system.   | Increasing participation of individuals/ professionals in the transition to a circular and sustainable                          |
|  |  | Increase # of new skills and professions within the food sector   |   |

<sup>23</sup> (<https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention/food-safety/publications/2017/the-burden-of-foodborne-diseases-in-the-who-european-region-2017>)

<sup>24</sup> Applications may wish to include own LCA data, however it is acceptable to reference reliable published 3rd party LCAs and scenario analysis may be used to determine baselines & intervention points (e.g.: "Consumer Footprint – Basket of Products Indicator on Food", JRC Technical Report, 2017 [https://eplca.jrc.ec.europa.eu/uploads/ConsumerFootprint\\_BoP\\_Food.pdf](https://eplca.jrc.ec.europa.eu/uploads/ConsumerFootprint_BoP_Food.pdf); or the EIT Food sponsored "EnviroScore" project: <https://osf.io/t2hz4/download/?format=pdf>)

| Impact Goal | System Challenges   | Impact Indicator   | Long-term Impact Measurement   |
|-------------|---|--|--|
|             |   | supported by EIT Food.   | economy in agri-food   |
|             | Investment in food sector R&D, innovation and start-ups lags behind other sectors in Europe, with the majority of businesses operating at micro-company level with little innovation-led growth. This is holding back transition to a circular, sustainable food economy. | Increase # new entrepreneurs supported by EIT Food and starting a new business within 3 years                                      | Improvement in food system contribution to outcomes under EU Circular Economy Monitoring Framework <sup>25</sup> |
|             |   | Increase # start-ups and scale ups supported by EIT Food trading and reporting 1.5X increased revenue 3 years after support ceased |  |
|             |   | Increase # new jobs created in start-up/ scale-ups   |  |
|             |   | Increase # new innovation ecosystems/ clusters developed with the support of EIT Food  |  |
|             |   | Increase # products or processes launched using revalorised &/ or reintegrated food system side-streams and waste streams.         |  |

<sup>25</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/circular-economy/indicators/monitoring-framework>

| Impact Goal | System Challenges  | Impact Indicator  | Long-term Impact Measurement |
|-------------|--|---|------------------------------|
|             | <p>The wider value of investment in the transition to a circular, sustainable agri-food economy is not well understood and is not translated into ambitious programmes of impact investment within Europe by non-EU sources.</p> | <p>Increasing € value attributable to Social, Environmental &amp; Economic Return on Investment per 1€ invested in the EIT Food portfolio of activities (“Portfolio ROI”)</p> |                              |

## Annex 3: Technology and Manufacturing Readiness Levels

Technology Readiness Levels (TRL)<sup>26</sup> and/or Manufacturing Readiness Levels (MRL)<sup>27</sup> of the proposal should be at level 7 or ideally higher (completed level 6 must be completed and demonstratable) at the time of submission. TRL are a type of measurement system used to assess the maturity level of a particular technology. Manufacturing Readiness Levels (MRL), in turn, are used to assess the maturity of a given technology, system, subsystem, or component from a manufacturing perspective. See below a more detail view of the different levels.

| Technology Readiness Levels (TRL)   |   | Manufacturing Readiness Levels (MRL)                |     |   |
|---|---|---|-----|---|
| Where a topic description refers to a TRL, the following definitions apply, unless otherwise specified: |   | Phase   | MRL | State of Development  |
| TRL   | 1 | Phase 3:<br>Production<br>Implementation            | 9   | Full production process qualified for full range of parts and full metrics achieved |
|   | 2 |   | 8   | Full production process qualified for full range of parts                           |
|   | 3 |   | 7   | Capability and rate confirmed   |
|   | 4 | Phase 2:<br>Pre production                          | 6   | Process optimised for production rate on production                                 |
|   | 5 |   | 5   | Basic capability demonstrated   |
|   | 6 | Phase 1:<br>Technology<br>assessment and<br>proving | 4   | Production validated in lab environment   |
|   | 7 |   | 3   | Experimental proof of concept completed   |
|   | 8 |   | 2   | Application and validity of concept validated or demonstrated                       |
|   | 9 |   | 1   | Concept proposed with scientific validation   |

<sup>26</sup> Source: The TRL scale as a Research & Innovation Policy Tool, EARTO

<sup>27</sup> Source: developed by United States Department of Defence

# Annex 4: The Financial Return Mechanism: Supporting EIT Food's Financial Sustainability Strategy

## Introduction

A unique feature of the Partnership Agreement between the EIT and EIT Food is the obligation for EIT Food to become financially sustainable on the long term. This means that as a condition to receive the EIT funding, EIT Food must develop and implement revenue-generating strategies to sustain the innovation ecosystem and KTI activities beyond the period covered by the EIT grant. Plans to achieve financial autonomy are outlined in the Financial Sustainability Strategy in the EIT Food Strategic Agenda.

EIT Food is committed to developing a level of financial autonomy which gradually reduces the proportion of EIT grant funding within a mixed portfolio of funding over the long-term. As a result, EIT Food supports Activities and initiatives with potential to provide both a financial return and a diverse mix of revenue streams and mechanisms.

Through this call, it is the ambition of EIT Food to attract and support excellent and complex activities close to maturity for market uptake.

In line with the EIT Food Financial Sustainability Strategy and EIT requirements, all Innovation Activities are required to give a financial return to EIT Food. Once an Activity has been selected for funding, the proposed Financial Return Mechanism will be formalised according to the EIT Food Financial Return Mechanism Agreement (FRMA) terms and conditions. The FRMA must be agreed and signed by the Exploiting Parties and EIT Food as a mandatory condition for funding.

The payment of the amounts due to EIT Food (during the actual commercial exploitation) should not be considered reimbursement of the EIT Food grant awarded to the Activity. Instead, the FRMA details the mechanism designed to contribute to the financial sustainability of EIT Food based on the Activity's successful commercialization. In other words, it is a "success fee" related to the exploitation of the Activity's Key Exploitable Results resulting from the Activity.

## Process for concluding the Financial Return Mechanism Agreement with Annex Term Sheet

- A Financial Return Mechanism Agreement (FRMA) will be signed between EIT Food and the exploiting party (or parties) of each Activity. The terms of the FRM will be documented in a Termsheet as an attachment to the Financial Return Mechanism Agreement. The FRMA should be finalised before the activity commences.
- The FRMA template, including the framework of the term sheet as annex to the FRMA structure, is provided on the website<sup>28</sup> (the term sheet template provided may be subject to further modifications or adaptations to adapt to the corresponding Activity).
- In case multiple KERs are to be exploited by multiple exploiting partners, each relevant exploiting partner must co-sign the FRMA to commit to the agreed financial return generated by its KER(s).

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<sup>28</sup> <https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/eit-food-call-for-proposals-2022#tab4>

## Annex 5: Redress Mechanism

**In case proposers have concerns that there have been procedural shortcomings and/or factual errors in the evaluation of their proposal, they can seek a review of the evaluation procedure through the redress mechanism. It should be noted that this mechanism is not meant to call into question the judgement made by the expert review panel.**

Upon receipt of the outcome of the application, the Activity Leader of the proposal (or a representative of their organisation) may request an evaluation review, if there is an indication that the results of the eligibility checks were incorrect or that there has been a procedural shortcoming or a manifest error of assessment.

A complaint can be made if the Activity Leader considers that the assessment of the eligibility and/or evaluation of their proposal has not been carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in this document. The deadline to launch a complaint is 5 days from receipt of the outcome of the application.

Complaints must be:

- related to the evaluation process, or eligibility checks, for the proposal in question;
- set out a clear description of the grounds for complaint;
- received within the time limit specified above;
- sent by the Activity Leader or a representative of their organisation;
- sent to the attention of EIT Food's COO, to: [Redress@eitfood.eu](mailto:Redress@eitfood.eu)

An acknowledgment of receipt will be sent to complainants. This acknowledgement of receipt will indicate the estimated date of a definitive reply. After a previous evaluation of the complaint a redress committee may be convened to examine the eligibility or evaluation process for the complaint. The redress committee will bring together relevant staff of EIT Food and will be chaired by the EIT Food CEO. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of requests, and fair and equal treatment of applicants. During the evaluation review procedure, the committee itself, however, does not re-evaluate the proposal. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the committee may review the evaluation results and examine the CVs of the experts. The committee will not call into question the judgement of appropriately qualified panels of experts. In the light of its review, the committee will recommend a course of action. If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could affect the eventual funding decision, it is possible that all or part of the proposal will be re-evaluated.

Please note:

- a re-evaluation (redress committee) will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the quality assessment of a proposal. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on other criteria;
- the evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score;
- only one request for evaluation review per proposal will be considered by the committee;
- all requests for evaluation review will be treated in confidence.



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