

Cross-KIC EIT Regional Executive Academy in Bulgaria 2021

Call for proposals

Overview of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

The [European Institute of Innovation and Technology](#) (EIT) is an independent EU body that is boosting Europe's ability to innovate. The EIT nurtures entrepreneurial talent and supports new ideas, bringing together the "knowledge triangle" of leading companies, universities and research centres to form dynamic cross-border partnerships called Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). Currently there are eight thematic KICs: EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Digital, EIT InnoEnergy, EIT Health, EIT Raw Materials, EIT Manufacturing, EIT Urban Mobility and EIT Food.

Overview of EIT Food

EIT Food is one of the Knowledge and Innovation Communities of the EIT. It is a pan-European partnership, with a consumer-centred approach, to empower innovators, entrepreneurs and students to develop world-class solutions to societal challenges, accelerate innovation, create jobs and increase Europe's competitiveness. As one of the largest food-related initiatives worldwide, EIT Food wants Europe to lead a global revolution in food innovation and production. Our ambition is to redesign the way our food is produced, delivered, consumed and recycled and to create a future-proof and effective food sector which supports a sustainable and circular bioeconomy.

Overview of EIT RIS

The [EIT Regional Innovation Scheme](#) (EIT RIS) is the EIT Community's outreach scheme with the objective to contribute to boosting innovation in European countries and regions that belong to the groups of 'modest and moderate' innovators (according to the European Innovation Scoreboard). All KICs of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology implement various EIT RIS activities.

Background

In 2020 as a part of cross-KIC collaboration in EIT RIS eligible countries EIT Regional Executive Academies (EIT REA) were organized to facilitate the process of revision and update of regional operational programmes and share KIC expertise in fostering innovations with representatives of regional authorities, policy makers and executives from the KICs' partner and RIS Hub networks. The pilot program proved to be effective in providing better connection of EIT communities to the local stakeholders as well as raising awareness of possible synergies and positive outcomes of running jointly innovative activities at a local level.

Possibility of exchanging experiences, insight into the global trends in KICs specific fields and gaining pan-European perspective of innovation policy are the main benefits for the participating representatives of different regions. For EIT representatives the program allows to establish closer communication among KICs partners and public regional authorities in EIT RIS countries. The event shall contribute to understanding of the regional priorities, trends across the KICs' industries and connecting the best-fit funding source to the local development needs, thus creating synergies between the different funding sources.

EIT Food, EIT Health, EIT Innoenergy and EIT Manufacturing supported by the other KICs are developing the EIT Regional Executive Academy program for 2021 editions.

One of four local editions of the EIT Regional Executive Academy is to be organized by EIT Food in Bulgaria. **By this call EIT Food invites local organizations from Bulgaria that have specific connection to innovation policy design and implementation and operates in any of the fields indicated at the EIT KICs introduction to apply and participate within the program as the local co-organizer and host of the EIT Regional Executive Academy.**

How is the activity structured?

Project goals

EIT Regional Executive Academy aims to increase the innovation and entrepreneurial capacity, bringing together key local innovation policy experts and stakeholders across Bulgaria.

EIT Regional Executive Academy shall offer capacity building and stimulating learning environment for representatives of regional level administration from Bulgarian regions to ensure:

- better alignment of regulations and support programs to global trends in the respective industries through communication with industry experts and cross-regional collaboration between authorities;
- whereas the Managing Authorities have rather territorial focus, the Academy would provide better understanding of the complexity of the innovation ecosystems, how to plug in effectively the local ecosystem into international networks and raising awareness of typical obstacles to the market introduction of innovations;
- enhanced alignment between regional priorities and KICs' EIT RIS activities, especially in the context of national/ regional smart specialisation strategies;
- dialogue with local government stakeholders from EIT RIS countries, contributing towards the further development of EIT Communities' activities for EIT RIS regions;
- development of regional and international contact networks within the Quadruple Helix (science-industry-government-NGOs) and enriching international collaborative networks of regional authorities and regulators
- gaining by regional actors a direct access to the good practices and enabling replicating them in their respective territories.

Organizations targeted by this call are encouraged to prepare proposals which will support the development and implementation of actions cumulatively leading to the event.

Benefits to the EIT REA participants

Possibility of exchanging experiences, insight into the global trends in KICs specific fields and gaining pan-European perspective of innovation policy are the main benefits for the participating representatives of different regions and institutions. For EIT representatives the program allows to establish closer communication among KICs, their partners and public authorities in EIT RIS countries. The interactive format of the courses shall create background for exploring opportunities for establishing potential collaborations, scouting for project partners, recognising potential co-founding sources. Initiated dialogue shall contribute to connecting the best-fit funding source to the local development needs, thus creating synergies between the different funding sources including EIT and local regional funds taking into consideration and reflecting to the regional priorities.

EIT REA organization

EIT Regional Executive Academy will be organized as a multi modules course with 2 days main session event for up to 25 participants: representatives of regional authorities, local key stakeholders and innovation policy actors. Each day the participants will be involved in 4-6 hours workshops including: key speakers/experts' presentations, Q&A sessions, panel/group discussions, case studies analysis and other forms of interactive training. Preceding and follow up communication will be carried out.

The program coordination and communication between EIT KICs and the selected organization will be carried out in English, but the event may be organized in local language or in English with selected parts requiring translations.

EIT REA organization tasks

Organisation selected in this call will:

- jointly with EIT Food and other KICs develop agenda for the EIT Regional Executive Academy,
- develop concept for training modules contributing to consistent program,
- invite key speakers and experts, collect relevant business and project cases to be discussed,
- jointly with involved speakers prepare necessary teaching materials, optional home assignments and evaluation tools,
- translate necessary content into local language or English
- prepare promotional materials, organize recruitment and the registration process, prepare initial communication package for the participants,
- provide venue and catering (if face-to-face or hybrid event is agreed to be conducted), and/or arrange communication platform and secure technical support during the whole event,
- provide moderator(s) for the event and/or panel/group discussions,
- document the event using recording or photos/screen shots and participants lists,
- prepare conclusions, send certificates and brief notes to the participants,
- circulate evaluation questionnaire, collect feedback from participants and speakers, conduct additional desk research needed for fact sheet on local capacities and collaboration,
- write summary report and provide EIT Food with final deliverables.

EIT REA final deliverables

As a result of the EIT REA main session events and communication with participants the selected organization will be responsible for providing EIT Food with:

- 1 set of introductory materials in English, translated into local language ready to be used by local EIT RIS Hub in its activities,
- database of 10 key stakeholders (institutions/experts) contacts identified in each region participating in the local EIT REA edition, based on the input from the participants of EIT REA and own desk research,
- fact sheet on local capacities and list of identified potential collaboration opportunities within the KICs' thematic scope prepared for regions from which EIT REA participants come from,
- report with conclusions and recommendations for follow-up actions with reference to identified contacts and opportunities available for circulation among involved KIC's stakeholders.

Funding terms

The selected organization will receive up to 16.000 EUR for the organization of the local edition of the EIT Regional Executive Academy in Bulgaria and implementation of the activity. Selected organization will receive specific conditions of funding described in an agreement signed between them and EIT Food.

How to apply?

Interested and eligible organisations are invited to submit their applications in English by **13 October 2021, 15:00 CEST** using the attached template: "EIT Regional Executive Academy in Bulgaria 2021 – Call for proposals. Application form". Please send the electronic version of the application, based on the form provided below, to: paulina.nowotka@eitfood.eu

The application is open to organisations placed in Bulgaria with specific connection to innovation policy design and implementation, which operate in any of the fields indicated at the EIT KICs introduction and are able to co-organize and host of the EIT Regional Executive Academy. Organizations eligible for this call are:

- Legal persons (such as companies, incubators or accelerators, innovation centres, higher education institutes, research institutes, non-governmental organisations, etc.);
- Operating in a country/region targeted by the call;

- Able to sign a subcontracting agreement with EIT Food’s Co-Location Centre North-East and act as a subcontractor in a project funded based on Horizon Europe/EIT modalities;
- Recognised as important actors in the local innovation ecosystems;
- Capable of organising local events and able to organise the RIS EIT Regional Executive Academy in Bulgaria before the end of November in an on-site or on-line event format (to be chosen depending on the local pandemic situation).

Applying organisation declares to have an experience in preparing and carrying such events.

Selection process

All applications will be evaluated using transparent selection criteria. Incomplete applications or applications submitted by ineligible organisations will be automatically rejected.

Only applications submitted in English will be accepted. Applications submitted in other languages or a different way than its requested will not be considered. Incomplete applications or applications submitted by ineligible organisations will be rejected.

EIT Food reserves the right to designate the subcontractors only if the submitted applications ensure the excellence and value for money, and to relaunch the call if the present selection process would not yield satisfactory results.

EIT Food reserves the right to contact the applicant organisations by e-mail or phone asking for additional explanations or supporting documents, and to schedule selection interviews with short-listed organisations.

Complete applications received by EIT Food will be evaluated taking into account the following criteria, related to the applicant organisational capacity and Cross-KIC RIS EIT Regional Executive Academy requirements:

Criteria	Weight
1. Experiences related to innovation policy design and implementation (participation in relevant projects or other activities, role in the ecosystem, existing contacts), ability to present the relevance of these experiences for EIT Food;	20%
2. Experience in organisation of events, training, workshops with relevant local stakeholders;	10%
3. Approach to the organisation of Cross-KIC RIS EIT Regional Executive Academy in Bulgaria 2021 (proposed event format offline/online, specific topics, speakers and how they correspond to the purpose of the event outlined by EIT Food);	30%
4. Potential for project delivery (effectiveness and efficiency of budget allocation)	20%
5. Involvement in activities with any of the KICs	10%
6. Applicants motivation. Potential to enrich the diversity of EIT community and increase the impacts of EIT-funded activities within the regional/national innovation ecosystems.	10%

A score will be given by all evaluation committee in relation to each criterion based on the following guidelines and a weighted average will be calculated:

Score	Appreciation	Explanation
0	N/A	The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information
1	Poor	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
2	Fair	The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
3	Good	The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
4	Very Good	The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
5	Excellent	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

The scores will be used to create the ranking list. The highest ranking organisation will be invited to host **Cross-KIC RIS EIT Regional Executive Academy** with the KICs in 2021.

EIT Food reserves the right to split the tasks and after consultations with leading applicants contract more than one organization to implement different parts of the activity described in this call.

Once a decision is reached, there is no opportunity to appeal.

The successful and unsuccessful applicants will be informed about the result of the selection procedure via email sent to an account indicated in the application template.

The selected organisations will be required to sign subcontracting agreements with EIT Food's Co-Location Centre North-East (Warsaw). If for some reasons on the part of chosen organization the subcontracting agreement is not signed in 10 days after the announcement of the call results, EIT Food may select another applicant based on the ranking lists without launching additional call.

Key dates

- **Deadline for application submission: 13 October 2021, 15:00 CEST**
- EIT REA developed concept and draft agenda: 31 October 2021
- EIT Regional Executive Academy workshops online or onsite: 2 days in November 2021
- EIT REA feedback and draft report: 17 December 2021

EIT Food reserves the right to change the dates of particular project activities after consultations with successful applicant/s.

Do you have any questions?

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us at

Paulina Nowotka: paulina.nowotka@eitfood.eu