



## Finding innovative solutions for water scarcity in Southern Europe.

### Call for mentors to support startups on innovative solutions for Water Scarcity in Southern Europe

*EIT Food together with Climate KIC, Manufacturing and Raw Materials KICs are looking for 30 mentors to support selected startups that will participate in InnoWise Challenge Labs events which gather 30 of the most disruptive and innovative startups working on SMART solutions (including both technologies and services) with the aim to move towards a water-efficient and water-saving economy.*

*Each expert will be assigned to one startup to provide them with guidance and support as well as promote market acceptance of the startup product or service.*

**Application deadline:** 11th of June 2020

**Application template:** online form (click on this [link](#))

Further details about EIT Food can be found at: [www.eitfood.eu](http://www.eitfood.eu), and the principles of the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme are described at: <https://eit.europa.eu/activities/outreach/eit-regional-innovation-scheme-ris>. With respect to the present call, **EIT Food will not provide new information that has not already been included in this call document**, but can assist the potential applicants by explaining contents of this document (please contact Elvira Domingo [elvira.domingo@eitfood.eu](mailto:elvira.domingo@eitfood.eu)).

#### Background information of EIT

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is an independent EU body. We increase Europe's ability to innovate by nurturing entrepreneurial talent and supporting new ideas.

EIT mission is to:

- Increase Europe's competitiveness, its sustainable economic growth and job creation by promoting and strengthening cooperation among leading business, education and research organisations.



# Finding innovative solutions for water scarcity in Southern Europe.

- Power innovation and entrepreneurship in Europe by creating environments for creative and innovative thoughts to thrive.
- Innovation through integration.
- To strengthen Europe's ability to innovate, action is needed to overcome the fragmented European innovation landscape. This is where the EIT comes in. We have a pioneering role in increasing European sustainable growth and creating jobs by reinforcing Europe's innovation capacity. The EIT brings together leading organisations from business, education and research, the so-called 'knowledge triangle', to form dynamic cross-border partnerships - EIT Innovation Communities.

The Innovation Communities are intended to:

- Develop innovative products and services;
- Start new companies; and
- Train a new generation of entrepreneurs.

## Background to the call for mentors

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) are launching a call for mentors that will support 30 selected startups to make their innovative products and services reach the market. These activities are framed under the initiative **RIS Finding innovative solutions for water scarcity in Southern Europe** (hereinafter the Project).

The overall objective of the Project, involving EIT Food, EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Manufacturing and EIT Raw Materials, is finding innovative solutions to prevent and mitigate water scarcity and drought situations, as well as the over usage of water, with the aim to move towards a water-efficient and water-saving economy, focusing on raising awareness, learning to save water, and managing the available resources more efficiently. Among the key objective of the project, there is the ambition to create a multi-sectorial network of at least 50 stakeholders engaged in water scarcity.



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One of the project activities is the organization of **InnoWise Challenge Labs**, a set of events and activities which include training in business case skills, mentoring and idea competition. These market-oriented events are intended to strengthen the capacities of the startups to increase their business opportunities, find investors and make their solutions reach the market thereby making their business grow.

A total of 30 innovative startups working on water SMART solutions will participate in InnoWise Challenge Labs. The innovations shall respond to the **6 Water Scarcity Challenges** identified by the Project Body of Knowledge (BoK).

Challenge Labs will be organized in 3 steps:

### **1<sup>st</sup> Step: Online event**

The first step is an on-line event with the 30 startups on **25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020** focused on training in business case skills (i.e. Environmental Technology Validation training, pitching or business model training) as well as specific sessions enabling the matchmaking of startups with mentors.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Step: Mentoring**

As a second step, mentoring activities will be organized for the 30 startups. Thus, the selected startups will be accompanied and coached by selected mentors in order to help them to overcome the obstacles, optimize resources, and take full advantage of the KIC opportunities and the vast pan-European network of EIT partners in their journeys as innovators. Mentoring activities will take place between July and October 2020.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Step: Competitive events Greece, Italy and Spain**

3 Competitive events will take place along September and October 2020 in Italy, Greece, and Spain. 10 startups in each target country will present their solutions in a pitching session competition. Thus, 2 startups from each country will be awarded with an economic prize (total 6 startups awarded).



## Finding innovative solutions for water scarcity in Southern Europe.

### Activities of the experts to be carried out in the frame of this call

- Participate actively the match-making session held during the first **online InnoWise Challenge Lab event** in June 2020 as a mentor candidate for startups.
- Participate in at least **4 online mentoring meetings** with one selected startup (approximate time: 1 hour per meeting)
- **Guide** the startup to define an effective exploitation route for its innovation
- Prepare a **report** with main conclusions (in English)
- Participate in at least one **regional InnoWise Challenge Lab** event (to be organized in Greece, Italy and Spain) in the region where the startup is pitching (optional)
- An online platform will be enabled for experts during and beyond the Project, to facilitate networking, knowledge and experience sharing. Selected mentors under this call will be required to register in this platform. Detailed information will be shared after selection.

The activities will be scheduled as follows:

- **Online Challenge Lab (in English) including match-making session:** 2 days event to be held on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2020.
- **Mentoring meetings:** To be agreed between each mentor and startup. Meetings shall take place between June and October 2020.
- **Conclusion report:** To be submitted to EIT Food by the end of October 2020.
- **Regional InnoWise Challenge Labs:**
- **InnoWise Challenge Lab in Spain:** held in Málaga, the week from 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2020 (to enable participation in Smart-Agrifood summit).
- **InnoWise Challenge in Italy:** held in Puglia (Bari), the week 12<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> of September 2020 (to enable participation in Fiera del Levante).
- **InnoWise Challenge in Greece:** held in Athens, the week to be determined (as side event to Green Deal or Water Innovation Forum)
- Each InnoWise Challenge Labs is planned for a maximum of 2 days (preferably from Tuesday to Thursday).



# Finding innovative solutions for water scarcity in Southern Europe.

## **Payment for participation**

**Travel and accommodation expenses** related to the participation of the selected experts in the regional InnoWise Challenge Labs will be covered by EIT Food up to a maximum of 850€/expert.

No further amounts will be available to cover other costs.

In case regional InnoWise Challenge Labs are finally organized as online events there will be no costs to cover as travel and accommodation would not be necessary.

## **Additional benefits**

The KICs budget is able to cover the participation costs to the meetings, giving as additional benefits : acknowledgement and visibility of the contributing experts as startups mentors; the creation of a network of experts across Southern Europe able to influence how innovation is designed for such challenge; work with start-ups and professionals eager to work in challenges provided and needs that will be risen from experts.

## **Who are we looking for?**

Anyone with something to offer can make a good mentor. However, EIT Food are ideally seeking senior executives who have the network, experiences and skills to bring the most value to the startups and entrepreneurs we work with.

Experience and qualifications, includes – but are not limited to – candidates that have:

Required experience in working/understanding/analysing water related challenges in Southern European regions

Required fluency in English

Experience in innovation, business creation and modelling

Experience in investment, boosting innovation, entrepreneurship, etc.

Other desirable experience and knowledge:

Previous experience in other mentoring programmes

Education to post-graduate degree level in a relevant field or at least 5 years of experience within sectors (agriculture and food, climate change, manufacturing, raw materials) connected to Water Scarcity.



# Finding innovative solutions for water scarcity in Southern Europe.

Experience in Knowledge Triangle Integration model and working with knowledge triangle stakeholders (education, research, business)

Desirable experience with international programmes and organisations related to water

Actively participate to other networks connected to Water topics (PRIMA initiative, H2020, S3, Interreg, NEXUS, ...)

Good understanding of EU regional policy framework, EU programmes supporting regional transitions, S3 and other initiatives

Considering the first workshop online participation, ability to connect and access an online meeting (e.g. Go to Webinar, Microsoft Teams or Skype) on a stable internet connection and ability to interact will be the candidate's responsibility.

## **Selection process**

Candidates will be assessed on their CV and online form provided at the link below.

Applications will close on 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2020 at 23:59 CET.

Selected candidates will be informed by the 18<sup>th</sup> of June in case of success and requested to attend the first online Challenge Lab on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2020.

Up to 30 candidates will be selected.

We will be looking to appoint individuals with expertise in the area of water scarcity and Southern Europe challenges with a balance representation of expertise in areas covered by the 4 participating KICS including, Climate change, Food & agriculture, Manufacturing and Raw materials.

It will be a requirement for candidates to carry out the activities described in the present call.

EIT KICs values diversity and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified candidates regardless of age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or ethnic background.

The KICs will assess candidates' profiles based on the online form below:

## **APPLY NOW**

*All personal data of the involved experts will be processed in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). More information can be found in the form.*

The candidate experts will be selected by the 4 involved KICs members Team based on the provided information and will receive upon selection another invitation, followed by the relevant materials and more precise guidance.