This activity has received funding from EIT Food, the innovation community on Food of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the EU, under the Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation

Call for expressions of interest to carry out activities within "Building entrepreneurial capacity for women in agrifood business"

EIT Food is looking for 3 organisations based in the South of Europe, namely from Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain or Turkey and 2 organisations based in the East of Europe, namely from Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia or Slovenia, that would organise activities within the project "Building entrepreneurial capacity for women in agrifood business" [hereinafter named Project] in 2020.

Application deadline: *6th March 2020.*
Application template: *see Annex.*
Further details about EIT Food can be found at: 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* ***Lara Rodríguez*** *lara.rodriguez@eitfood.eu (for applications from Greece, Portugal, Spain or Turkey) or* ***Aleksandra Nizynska*** *aleksandra.nizynska@eitfood.eu (for applications from Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia or Slovenia)*

1) Background information: EIT Food

EIT Food is one of the largest and most impactful food-related initiatives worldwide. As a Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), EIT Food connects partners from leading businesses, universities and research centres across Europe. It is a people-centric and resource-smart transformer of the European food system, driving consumer confidence and improved global health.

EIT Food's vision is to put Europe at the centre of a global revolution in food innovation and production, and its value in society. EIT Food will engage consumers in the change process, improve nutrition and make the food system more resource-efficient, secure, transparent and trusted. EIT Food has six strategic objectives:

- *Overcome low consumer trust*: support Europeans in the transition towards a smart food system that is inclusive and trusted;
- *Create consumer valued food for healthier nutrition*: enable individuals to make informed and affordable personal nutrition choices;
- *Build a consumer-centric connected food system*: develop a digital food supply network with consumers and industry as equal partners;
- *Enhance sustainability*: develop solutions to transform the traditional 'produce-use-dispose' model into a circular bioeconomy;

- *Educate to engage, innovate and advance*: Provide 'food system' skills for more than 10,000 students, entrepreneurs and professionals through advanced training programmes;
- *Catalyse food entrepreneurship and innovation*: foster innovation at all stages of business creation.

EIT Food boosts the skills and entrepreneurial spirit in the sector and unlocks the potential of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), which in turn will accelerate innovation, create jobs, benefit businesses and increase Europe's competitiveness.

1.1 EIT Food Regional Innovation Scheme

The EIT RIS is the EIT Community's outreach introduced in 2014 to share good practices and experience emerging from EIT Community activities. The EIT RIS opens up the activities of EIT's Innovation Communities to innovators that are not partners, by providing targeted support to individuals and organisations to take part in and benefit from EIT Innovation Communities' activities, services and programmes.

EIT Food RIS aims at strengthening those regions in Europe which are modest and moderate in terms of innovation in the agrifood sector. This outreach scheme is open to innovators that are not partners of EIT Food and provides targeted support to EIT RIS stakeholders through a portfolio of projects.

2) Background information: Entrepreneurial capacity-building for women in the agrifood business

To boost the entrepreneurial skills of women in RIS countries, EIT Food will perform the Project in five RIS countries; 3 based in the South of Europe, namely in Greece, Portugal, Spain or Turkey and 2 based in the East of Europe, namely in Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia or Slovenia. As a matter of fact, applicants would need to select one of these countries where they will be willing to develop this project; not being possible to choose more than one.

The main objective is to **find innovative solutions that tackle the problems faced by the food system created by women entrepreneurs while supporting them to grow these entrepreneurial ideas**. On balance, the Project will also help these women to access other programmes offered by EIT Food. All these women entrepreneurs must come from within the above-mentioned regions.

The secondary aims of the activities are:

- Developing early stage startups and create new ones
- Sparking co-founder relationships
- Building links between industry, academia, startups and the wider community

The activities will include:

- scouting services,
- mentoring and education of female entrepreneurs working in the agri-food sector,

- organising workshops and providing networking opportunities,
- organising a final competition event

The present call is launched by EIT Food to select organisations that would perform activities described in the Project Activities format and requirement sections. The selection process is implemented as an open call managed by EIT Food, Co-Location Centre South, using clear and transparent selection criteria.

2.1. Project Activities format and requirements

The selected organisation will manage the following tasks within the Project:

Stage 1- Scouting

We are looking for talented people that want to be involved and drive this project further. 10 female talents will be selected per country by EIT Food and they will be beneficiaries of the Project. Moreover, 10 mentors per country will be selected to provide personalised mentorship to the beneficiaries during 5 months.

Task of the organisation:

- Support the scouting of mentors and experts in relevant topics (e.g. entrepreneurship, business model, sales, pitching, marketing, customer discovery, etc.) providing at least 10 key contacts.
- Support the scouting of female early stage startups or women with entrepreneurial talent interested in the agrifood system, providing at least 10 key contacts.

Duration: From March to June 2020

Stage 2- Online programme

EIT Food will design and create a dedicated online community to upskill selected female entrepreneurs and will create training modules with useful information, webinars and virtual meetings to optimise beneficiaries learning**.**

Task of the organisation:

- Support EIT Food by offering free access, relevant content, materials to be included in the online platform and/or contacts that could be of utility for the development and execution of the Project.
- Promote communication using online community in the local language, engaging participants and facilitating professional networking.

Duration: Development from March to June 2020. The platform will be operating during at least 6 months after its launch, namely from July to December 2020.

Stage 3- First networking event

After the selection of beneficiaries and their mentors, and once that the online campus is launched, the partner organisation will design and perform a first networking event with the objective of

matchmaking between selected female entrepreneurs and their mentors.

Task of the organisation:

- Design and promotion of the event: creation of a final agenda, provision of information pack for communication with beneficiaries, management of invitations and registrations, contract of a venue, catering, audio-visual materials, facilitators and propose speakers.
  Audience: Minimum 30 people
  Timing: Early July
  Duration: at least 6 hours, preferably on Friday or weekend

Stage 4- Second Masterclass event

Estimated by the intermediate point of the Project implementation, the Partner organisation will design and perform a second face to face event with the objective of providing high level coaching to the beneficiaries and dedicated training from experts to complement online educational actions ensuring greater project impact.

Task of the organisation:

- Design and promotion of the event: creation of a final agenda, provision of information pack for communication with beneficiaries, management of invitations and registrations, contract of a venue, catering, audio-visual materials, facilitators and propose speakers.
  Audience: Minimum 30 people
  Timing: Mid-September
  Duration: at least 6 hours, preferably on Friday or weekend

Stage 5- Final event and pitching competition for a prize

Proposed as a final networking event for the Project, the partner organisation will design and perform this last face to face workshop with the objective of empowering beneficiaries and to provide them with project visibility externally. The partner organisation will also design and perform a pitching competition between the 10 women entrepreneurs, aiming to win a Prize from EIT Food of 10.000 EUR (1st prize) or 5.000 EUR (2nd prize).

Specific task of the organisation:

- Design and promotion of the event: creation of a final agenda, managing invitations and registration, contracting venue, catering, audio-visual materials, facilitators and proposing speakers.
- Contribute to the final pitch evaluation of female startups providing one independent member to be part of the jury panel. Selection and prizes criteria will be shared in advance.
  Audience: Minimum 30 people
  Timing: End November
  Duration: at least 6 hours, preferably on Friday or weekend

These workshops will act as networking events for the female entrepreneurs to meet with local food and innovation ecosystem (startups, investors, food companies, universities and research centres, NGOs, etc.). They will serve as a platform to discuss the current challenges in the local agrifood system

and present the EIT Food activities to the invited audience.

Applicants are welcome to be creative and introduce more features to the proposed format of events. The selected organization will work closely with EIT Food on customising the format and schedule of the event to the peculiarities of the local agrifood and startup ecosystem.

Stage 6- Communication of the Project

Task of the organisation:

- Contribute to the dissemination of the Project activities and news, using adequately internal communication and social media channels, and providing a final report on press appearances, number of social media publications and dissemination strategies.

Duration: From March to December 2020

2.2. Project Activities budget

The selected organisation will sign a subcontracting agreement with the relevant EIT Food's Co-Location Centre with gross funding **up to 21.000 €** to cover the eligible costs of the 3 startup events/workshops and other additional actions.

When applying for the call, interested organisations should submit an agenda proposal aligned with the events format requirements and a budget proposal listing the costs associated with events planning and organisation.
It will be highly valuated any budget proposal that is finely adjusted to its regional commercial environment and cost of living, providing realistic service costs and budget breakdown in relation with the country where the organisation is based.

Please note that the following expenses are compulsory to be included into the budget proposal:

- audio-visual materials
- catering
- venue renting
- facilitators
- VAT

3) Applications to organize the Project Activities

EIT Food invites organisations from ***Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey*** to submit their proposals to become an organizer of the Project activities.

3.1. Countries or regions targeted by the call

The project will be run in five of the above-mentioned countries.

3.2. Eligible organisations

- Legal persons[1] (such as companies, incubators or accelerators, higher education institutes, research institutes, non-governmental organisations),
- Operating in a country/region targeted by the call,
- Able to sign a subcontracting agreement with relevant EIT Food's Co-Location Centre
- Recognised as important players in the local female entrepreneurship ecosystem with strong regional outreach,
- Experienced in supporting female entrepreneurs,
- Capable of organising successful events and workshops,
- Able to organize the Project activities in the timeframe from early March to early December 2020.

3.3. Benefits for organisations selected as Project activitiesorganizers

Candidates chosen by EIT Food to organise the Project activities will be offered the following benefits:

- Ability to benefit from the collaboration with EIT Food and the EIT community (as subcontractors in EIT Food activities);
- Subcontracting agreement with relevant EIT Food's Co-Location Centre with gross funding **up to 21.000€** to cover the eligible costs of the EIT Food female startup event's planning and organisation;
- Knowledge and organisational support of EIT Food and Co-Location Centres in organising and implementing the actions.

Organising the Project Activities shall be considered an opportunity to become associated with EIT Food, establish relations with its community and potentially become better embedded in the EIT Food activities. The selected organisation will also benefit from the increased visibility in their local entrepreneurship ecosystems, strengthening their position on the regional and national levels.

3.4. Selection criteria

All proposals will be evaluated taking into account the following criteria, related to the applicant organisation and Project activities:

1. **Experience in training and supporting female entrepreneurs**
2. **Experience and ability to successfully organise and execute events in the field of innovation/entrepreneurship/women's empowerment**
3. **Role in the ecosystem and existing network**
4. **Plan of how you will tailor the general structure proposed above, with the approach to the organization of Project Activities**
5. **Cost of service planned and budget breakdown**
6. **Interest and/or expertise in the food system.**

Above criteria will be evaluated on a 0-15 scale: 0 – not satisfactory; 5 – satisfactory; 10 – good and 15 points – very good. The application can receive a maximum of 90 points.

[1] Consortia are not eligible in this call.

3.5. Application Form

Please fill in the application form, ensuring that ***all fields*** *are completed. Please submit the application in electronic format* using the subject tittle "**Building entrepreneurial capacity for women from rural areas in agrifood business – Application Form**". *by 6th of March 2020 to:* lara.rodriguez@eitfood.eu and/or aleksandra.nizynska@eitfood.eu. *Please do not provide further supporting documents and capture all relevant information in this form.*

1. What country are you applying to (specify one)?		
2. Name of the applicant organisation		
3. Website address		
4. Type of organisation (underline one)		
business enterprise	higher education institute	public research organisation
knowledge transfer intermediary (incl. industry association, innovation cluster, technology park, entrepreneurship support organisation)		
other (please specify)		
5. Name of contact person		
6. E-mail		
7. Please describe social media channels currently used by your organisation (with web addresses):		
8. Please provide a brief description of your organisation and its main activities.		
9. Please provide examples of the most relevant workshops/trainings/programs of your organisation that were provided to female entrepreneurs from your region including short description of these activities, key outcomes and impact [*Experience in training and supporting female entrepreneurs*].		
10. Please provide examples of your experience and ability to successfully execute the organisation of events in the field of innovation/entrepreneurship/women's empowerment [*Experience and most relevant events/projects in the field that were organised by your organisation including: short description of these activities, type of your engagement in the project, project partners, sources of funding, key outcomes and impacts]*		

11. Please present familiarity with the female entrepreneurship in the target country; existing contacts, description of network of people that would attend the events and projects with relevant local stakeholders, [*Role in the ecosystem and network*]
12. Please propose a plan of how you will tailor the general structure proposed above, with the approach to the organization of Project Activities including draft agenda, dates, location, speakers and how they correspond to the purpose of the event outlined by EIT Food [*Approach to the organization of Project Activities*]
13. Please propose the cost of service planned and a budget breakdown for each event (in EUR), following the recommendations of "Best Value for money" policies. [*Cost of service planned by applicant*]
14. Please provide your interest and expertise in the food system.
15. Please provide any additional information that you consider relevant to this call and application

By submitting this application form, I confirm that the information provided above correctly represents the scope of activities and plans of my organisation. I understand that the information provided in this form may be used to define obligations and performance targets of EIT Food Hub in subcontracting agreement. I give consent to processing the application by EIT Food, its Co-Location Centres and external experts involved in the evaluation process and I am willing to cooperate to provide further information or documents confirming the facts presented above. If selected by EIT Food, I declare the willingness to act as the organizer of the Project Activities in 2020 based on conditions described in the "Call for expression of interest to carry out activities within "Building entrepreneurial capacity for women from rural areas in agrifood business"

Date, place ……

Name of the person submitting the application ……

Position ……

Organisation submitting the application ……