

Call for expressions of interest to carry out activities within “Empowering Women in Agrifood”

EIT Food is looking for 8 organisations based in Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Turkey that would organise activities within the project “Empowering Women in Agrifood” [hereinafter named Project] in 2021.

Application deadline: 31st March 2021.

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 with inquiries regarding applications from **Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Turkey** contact Lara Rodríguez lara.rodriquez@eitfood.eu and with inquiries regarding applications from **Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania** contact Aleksandra Nizynska aleksandra.nizynska@eitfood.eu).

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: Empowering women in Agrifood - entrepreneurial capacity-building for women from RIS regions in the agrifood business

To boost entrepreneurial skills of women in RIS countries, EIT Food will perform the Project in eight RIS countries, out of the following – Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain or/and Turkey.

The main objective of the activities to be developed is to support women entrepreneurs in the food sector within the above-mentioned countries to find innovative solutions that tackle the current food system problems and build business ideas. On balance, the Project will also help these women to access other programmes offered by EIT Food.

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 training of female entrepreneurs working in the agrifood sector,
- organising workshops and providing networking opportunities,
- organising a final pitching event

To learn more about Empowering Women in Agrifood project you can enter the website: <https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/women-entrepreneurs-in-agrifood>

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 together with Co-Location Centre North-East, using clear and transparent selection criteria.

2.1. Project Activities format and requirements

The selected organisation will manage the following tasks within the Project in their respective country:

Stage 1- Scouting phase

The aim is to select 10 female talents per country by EIT Food and the organisation implementing Project in each country to become direct beneficiaries of the Project. Moreover, 10 mentors per country will be selected to provide personalised 1:1 mentorship to the beneficiaries for 6 months (from June to November, both included)

Tasks of the organisation:

- Scouting of mentors and experts in relevant topics (e.g. entrepreneurship, business model, sales, pitching, marketing, customer discovery, etc.) providing at least 10 engaged mentors.
- Subcontracting selected mentors based on the list of mentor responsibilities provided by EIT Food.
- Support the scouting of female early-stage startups or women with entrepreneurial talent interested in the agrifood system, providing at least 20 eligible applications.
- Evaluation of female entrepreneurs' applications based on the eligibility and criteria provided and selection of 10 female entrepreneurs ("mentees").

Entrepreneurs scouting, application questionnaire and evaluation will be carried out within the F6S platform. The selected organisation should register and get familiar with F6S and with scouting methodology.

Duration: From April to May 2021

Stage 2- Online programme

EIT Food is running a dedicated online Platform for EWA community to upskill selected female entrepreneurs and provides training modules with useful information, webinars and virtual meetings to optimise beneficiaries learning.

Tasks of the organisation:

- Offering once a week access to new material - video and audio or publications relevant to female entrepreneurs for building their entrepreneurial skills and gather expertise knowledge within the following pathways:
 - Leadership skills (team management, diversity and inclusion, public speaking, pitching, negotiations, active listening, empathy, time management)
 - Business skills (financial management, legal matters, IP management, data management, successful sales, market mapping)
 - Agrifood expertise (new trends in agrifood sector, new regulations in agrifood sector – country wise and at the EU level incl. New Green Deal and Farm to Fork Strategy, food security requirements, supply chain in agrifood)
- Posting all events organised within the Project.

- Promote communication using online community in the local language, engaging participants and facilitating professional networking.
- Monitoring of online mentoring – foster interactions between mentors and mentees and tracking mentoring performance on the Platform

Duration: June – November 2021

Stage 3 – Training programme

The aim of the training opportunities is to reinforce specific skills of the mentees and expose them to real life challenges in their business.

Task of the organization:

- Utilise the new EIT Food startup manual information, expanding any specific topic during mentoring or training
- Provide at least one of the following training opportunities:
 - additional podcasts and/or webinars in local language with English subtitles to present specific elements of the business development
 - group sessions with thematic mentors who support mentees with specific elements of their businesses like legal, financial, marketing, logistic experts
 - learning-by-doing opportunities in which women are taking part in the process of creating podcasts, photo shooting for advertisement campaign of their product/service, take part in other startup competitions

Duration: June – October 2021

Stage 4- Matchmaking event

After the selection of mentees and mentors, a matchmaking event (face to face or online) will be organised to match mentees with mentors and introduce them to the EWA programme in each country.

Tasks of the organisation:

- Design and promotion of the event:
 - creation of a final agenda, incl. 5 min presentation of each mentee and her idea, 1 interactive matchmaking exercise to create mentoring pairs,
 - sharing an online survey on the self-assessed needs of mentees and potential areas of mentoring for mentors at least one week in advance,
 - provision of information pack for communication with beneficiaries,
 - management of invitations and registrations,
 - in case of face to face event - contract of a venue, catering, audio-visual materials, facilitators and speakers
 - the online form of the event can be divided into 2 days.

Audience: Minimum 20 people
Timing: June 2021
Duration: at least 5 hours, in case of an online format the event can be divided into two sessions

Stage 5- Masterclass event

The second face to face or online event will be held 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.

Tasks of the organisation:

- Design and promotion of the event:
 - creation of a final agenda, considering that the event should be divided in two parts:
 - **Internal training for mentees** – it can be dedicated to specific aspect of the business idea development (mentees and mentors work together on the IP management of the solution or create distribution channels) or can be focused on reinforcing specific skills such as public appearances, media relations, sales and negotiations. This part needs to last at least 5 hrs and can be divided into several days, especially in case the event is organised online
 - **External event for women interested in pursuing their career in agrifood** – it can be a panel discussion or inspirational speech aimed at reinforcing female entrepreneurship in agrifood sector in the local ecosystem. A presence of role model forms the female entrepreneurship would be highly recommended. The event must have a clear target group e.g. female scientists, female students, women from rural areas, female professionals 10+ experience who are thinking about starting their own business in agrifood, young mothers willing to create their own company after the maternity leave etc. This part needs to last at least 2 hrs.
 - provision of information pack for communication with beneficiaries,
 - management of invitations and registrations,
 - in case of face to face event - contract of a venue, catering, audio-visual materials, facilitators and propose speakers

Audience: Minimum 50 people

Timing: no later than 10th October 2021

Duration: at least 5 hours, in case of an online format the event can be divided into two sessions

Stage 6- Pitching event

The third face to face or online event (Pitching event) will be organised with the aim of exposing mentees to stress related to pitching, select 1st (10.000 euro) and 2nd Prize (5.000 euro) winners and network them with the local startup ecosystem (investors, Business Angels, innovators, industry representatives). This event will act as networking event for the female entrepreneurs to meet with local food and innovation ecosystem (startups, investors, food companies, universities and research centres, NGOs, etc.). It 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.

Tasks of the organisation:

- Design and promotion of the event:
 - creation of a final agenda, taking into account that:
 - During the event participants:
 - present their pitches
 - are evaluated by Judges

- receive competition results based on the progress score (60%) and pitching score (40%).
 - At least part of the event has to be open to general public. There needs to be an attractive panel discussion, training session, inspirational speech, cocreation workshop accompanying the pitching session.
 - managing invitations and registration,
 - in case of face to face event – contract of venue, catering, audio-visual materials, facilitators and proposing speakers.
- Contribute to the final pitch evaluation of female startups providing two independent members to be part of the Jury panel. Selection and prizes criteria will be shared in advance.
- Evaluate a final business deck for the startups which would rate as in their Programme progress score
 - Audience: Minimum 50 people
 - Timing: by 30th November 2021

Duration: at least 5 hours, in case of an online format the event can be divided into two sessions

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 7- Communication of the Project

Tasks of the organisation:

- Contribute to the dissemination of the Project activities and news, using adequately internal communication and social media channels, and providing a short report on press appearances, number of social media publications and dissemination strategies.
- Ensure correct branding, EIT Food visibility and respect of the EWA visual world in all communication materials in accordance with the guidelines provided by EIT Food
- Provide EWA CLC coordinator with events agenda, press release/social media or other communication information at least 3 weeks in advance, following the template provided
- Distribution of EIT Food EWA materials to project participants (Starter kit, T-shirts, business planners, bags, startup manuals etc.)
- Send evidence of at least 5 media publications in the national press (digital or paper)
- Encourage and foster participation of the selected women on social media, interviews on the national media and/or in EIT Food channels

Duration: From April to December 2021

Stage 8 – Project Internal coordination

Tasks of the organisation:

- Ensure monthly update to the relevant EWA CLC coordinator with any project progress or action on top of regular communication.
- Attendance to EWA regional calls, fostering cross-country synergies and networking

- Use of tools and platforms required by the project: EWA Platform, F6S, Zoom and others.
- Carry out a final EWA Activities report, providing all the required information
- Share project success stories and best practices for project implementation and growth
- Ensure EIT Food branding is always visible and respected in all communication materials (online events, agendas etc) and guarantee the visual world of the programme standardised throughout all EWA countries.

Duration: April – December 2021

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 of **35.000 € (VAT included)** to cover the eligible costs of implementing the EWA activities according to the workplan in one country.

This gross funding would include any mentor or expert remuneration contracted for EWA entrepreneurs' benefit.

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.

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

- In case of face to face events: event photography, video recording, catering, venue renting, facilitators and/or speakers' cost, VAT Included
- In case of online events: streaming system, subtitling option or simultaneous translations English/native language, facilitators and/or speakers' cost, VAT Included

3) Applications to organize the Project Activities

EIT Food invites organisations from **Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Turkey** to submit their proposals to become an organizer of the Project activities in respective country.

3.1. Countries or regions targeted by the call

The Project will be run in eight of the above-mentioned countries.

3.2. Eligible organisations

- Legal persons¹ (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

¹ Consortia are not eligible in this call.

- 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 April to early December 2021.

3.3. Benefits for organisations selected as Project activities organizers

Organisations 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 of **35.000€** to cover the eligible costs of the EIT Food EWA activities.
- 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 considering 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 tailoring the general structure proposed above, with the approach to the organisation 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.

1.1. Empowering Women in Agrifood – Application Form

Please fill in the application form, ensuring that **all fields** are completed. Please submit the application in electronic format using the subject title “**Empowering Women in Agrifood – Application Form**” by 31st of March 2021 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. Maximum length: 10 pages

1. What country are you applying to (specify one)?	<i>Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey</i>	
2. Name of the applicant organisation		
3. Website address		
4. Type of organisation (<u>underline one</u>)		
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 list 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 [<i>Experience in training and supporting female entrepreneurs</i>].		
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 [<i>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</i>]		

<p>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, <i>[Role in the ecosystem and network]</i></p>
<p>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, date, location, speakers and how they correspond to the purpose of the event outlined by EIT Food. <i>[Approach to the organization of Project Activities]</i></p>
<p>13. Please propose the cost of service planned and a budget breakdown for each event (in EUR)<i>[Cost of service planned by applicant]</i></p>
<p>14. Please provide your interest and expertise in the food system.</p>
<p>15. Please provide any additional information that you consider relevant to this call and application</p>

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 2021 based on conditions described in the “Call for expression of interest to carry out activities within “Empowering women in agrifood”

Date, place

Name of the person submitting the application

Position

Organisation submitting the application