



EIT Food Entrepreneurship – Terms & Conditions

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EIT Food – Making Food Innovation Happen

Knowledge & Innovation Centre on Food,
part of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

<http://www.eitfood.eu>





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1. EIT Food

1.1 EIT Food

EIT Food IVZW is an international non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of Belgium, having its registered address at Philipssite 5, Ubicenter A bus 34, 3001 Leuven, Belgium, registered at the Crossroads bank for Enterprises with number 0672.423.992, Register of Legal Entities Leuven (hereinafter referred to as 'EIT Food').

EIT Food is a pan-European partnership designed to empower innovators and entrepreneurs to develop world-class solutions to food 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, improve nutrition and making food systems more resource-efficient, secure, transparent and trusted.

EIT Food is one of the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KIC) of the EIT (European Institute of Innovation and Technology) and funded by the European Commission. It unites more than 60 partners along the Food value chain – academic and research institutions as well as industry– from more than 20 European countries. Its five Innovation Hubs across Europe (also called Co- location Centres - CLCs) aim at fostering innovation across the regional ecosystems of industry, research institutions and universities.

1.2 Objectives of EIT Food

EIT Food aims to boost the skills and entrepreneurial spirit in the sector and unlock the potential of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) who will accelerate innovation, create jobs, benefit businesses, and increase Europe's competitiveness. EIT Food has six strategic objectives:

Overcome low consumer trust

EIT Food supports European citizens in the transition towards a smart food system that is inclusive and reassuring.

Create consumer valued food for healthier nutrition

EIT Food enables individuals to make informed and affordable personal nutrition choices.

Build a consumer-centric connected food system

EIT Food develops a digital food supply network with consumers and industry as equal partners.

Enhance sustainability through resource stewardship

EIT Food develops solutions to transform the traditional 'produce-use-dispose' model into a circular bio-economy.

Educate to engage, innovate and advance

EIT Food provides 'food system' skills for more than 10,000 students, entrepreneurs and professionals through advanced training programmes.

Catalyse food entrepreneurship and innovation

EIT Food fosters innovation at all stages of business creation.

2. Seedbed Incubator

Project Name: Seedbed Incubator

2.1 Scope of the Programme

The Seedbed Incubator is a 4-6-month market discovery programme that trains and incubates entrepreneurial teams developing cutting-edge disruptive technologies with applications in the agrifood sector. The aim of the programme is to transform innovative ideas into market-validated business propositions.

The Seedbed Incubator Programme is delivered by top EU Universities, Research and Innovation Organisations, and Entrepreneurship programme specialists who provide their expertise in startup training and technology commercialisation. The programme is focused on entrepreneurial academics, aspiring entrepreneurs and newly formed startups, typically younger than 12 months, with business propositions that could transform the food system and are underpinned by science and technology. During the programme, Seedbed participants are provided with access to expert training and personalised business support to identify their core business assumptions, to develop a commercial roadmap that's validated with stakeholders in the agrifood sector; financial support to speak to at least 100 customers and users to test the market need and refine product ideas. There's also potential for follow-on support to spin out or startup a new company, or fund pilot feasibility tests with identified partners via EIT Food's Impact Fund.

This document sets out the further details and the terms and conditions with regards to the sub-granting budget of up to €6,000 to deliver the tasks associated with participating in the EIT Food Seedbed Incubator Programme, plus up to €1,000 for travelling to Seedbed events. Another €10,000 will be granted to teams who qualify for the Seedbed Plus training programme.

2.2 Funding

The EIT Food Seedbed teams that complete the four-day online virtual Bootcamp and are subsequently selected for the market discovery phase of the programme (up to 40 teams), will

be allocated a sub-granting budget of up to €6,000^[1], in phased milestone payments. This budget is allocated to deliver against the tasks associated with participating in the EIT Food Seedbed Incubator Programme market discovery phase. The tasks include attendance at training sessions, activities associated with the market discovery milestones, and completing EIT Food Seedbed reporting requirements and programme surveys. A budget of up to €1,000 will be additionally granted for travelling to in-person Seedbed events, like Seedbed’s kick-off in Bilbao, Spain and attendance at the final Seedbed Showcase event, the day after the Venture Summit in Lisbon, Portugal. The respective EIT Food Partner, as instructed by EIT Food IVZ2, shall fund teams with up to €7,000 in the form of a sub-grant awarded to the team members / legal entity in phased milestone payments. All specific conditions of funding will be described in the consent form and financial arrangements signed by the members of the team. Eventually, teams who qualify for the Seedbed + training programme will have the opportunity to receive another maximum of €10,000 equity-free funding.

2.3 Expected timeline

The following table outlines the expected timeline for the EIT Food Seedbed Programme. These dates may change but the EIT Food Seedbed Programme Coordinator will notify you if there are any changes to this expected timeline.

Application opens	January 26 th 2023
Application closes	March 26 th 2023
Outcome notification for Stage I (expected date)	4 th week of April
Start of Stage I - Online four-day bootcamps (1 per mission)	15 th May to Jun 1 st 2023
2 nd round of selection for shortlisted startups	1 st week of June 2023
Outcome notification	5 th June 2023
Award letter, Subgrant Agreement, Participant Consent Form and relevant programme agreements signed	3 rd week June 2023
Seedbed Kickoff & start of Market Discovery Journey (approximately)	1 st week July – Nov 2023
Seedbed Showcase Final Event & EIT Food Venture Summit	November 2023

2.4. Eligibility

2.4.1 General considerations

Our EIT Food Entrepreneurship programmes (i.e. Seedbed Incubator, EIT Food Accelerator Network and RisingFoodStars) are complementary, each focusing on a different stage of company with a different offer. Therefore, a participant cannot be part of more than one programme per calendar year. For a complete overview of current EIT Food programme offering please visit the EIT Food Entrepreneurship homepage. Consulting services companies without novel technology, products or IP, and one-person ventures are not eligible.

Ventures owned by EIT Food employees or members of EIT Food government bodies and ventures in which EIT Food employees or members of EIT Food government bodies have an interest, are also excluded. EIT Food includes all CLCs of EIT Food and all government bodies.

2.4.2 Eligibility criteria

To be considered eligible for the programme, applicants must:

- Be a resident, citizen or legal entity based in a Member State of the European Union (EU) or Europe associated countries once confirmed (see information on Horizon Europe participation here)
- Note that: UK citizens and UK-based companies are eligible. However, eligibility to receive funding will be determined based on the UK's eligibility status for EU funding at that time;
- Submit a fully completed application in English through the online platform by the deadline set in article 4.1 including all requested documents;
- Be set to make a big impact on any part of the agriculture or food supply chain thus committed to building a healthier, more trusted and sustainable food system;
- Have a technological solution within the scope of one of EIT Food focus areas:
 - Targeted nutrition
 - Sustainable aquaculture
 - Sustainable agriculture
 - Alternative proteins

- Digital transformation of traceability
- Circular food systems
- Be committed to the programme for at least 8 hours a week – we expect active, consistent engagement in the programme;
- Not having received more than €60,000 in **EIT Food** financial support (subgrants or prizes) per calendar year and per applicant;
- Accept these Programme terms and conditions;
- None of the Exclusion Criteria must apply to the applicant, as outlined in article 3.3.

Only applications meeting the eligibility criteria will be evaluated by reviewers.

2.4.3 Exclusion

Applicants may be excluded if they (or the recipients):

- are subject to an administrative sanction (i.e. exclusion or financial penalty);
- are in one of the following situations (exceptions and conditions may apply following the applicable laws):
- bankrupt, being wound up, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, having their affairs administered by a liquidator or by the courts, entered into an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar proceedings or procedures under national law (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
- declared in breach of social security or tax obligations by a final judgment or decision (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts) found guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the person or entity belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes wrongful intent or gross negligence by a final judgment or decision (including where a natural or legal person who is a member of the administrative, management, or supervisory body of the person or who has powers of representation, decision or contract with regard to that person or a natural person who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment is in this situation)

- convicted of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including where a natural or legal person who is a member of the administrative, management, or supervisory body of the person or who has powers of representation, decision or contract with regard to that person or a natural person who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment is in this situation)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under a legal commitment financed by the EU or Euratom budget (including where a natural or legal person who is a member of the administrative, management, or supervisory body of the person or who has powers of representation, decision or contract with regard to that person or a natural person who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment is in this situation)
- found guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 (including where a natural or legal person who is a member of the administrative, management, or supervisory body of the person or who has powers of representation, decision or contract with regard to that person or a natural person who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment is in this situation)
- It has been established by a final judgement or final administrative decision that the person or entity has created an entity in a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or any other legal obligations in the jurisdiction of its registered office, central administration or principal place of business or it has been established by a final judgement or final administrative decision that an entity has been created with the intent for doing so (including where a natural or legal person who is a member of the administrative, management, or supervisory body of the person or who has powers of representation, decision or contract with regard to that person or a natural person who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment is in this situation);
- have misrepresented information required for participating in the EIT Food funding scheme or fail to submit such information;
- were involved in the preparation of the any documentation regarding this call or are involved in the evaluation process of this call and this entails a breach of the principle of equality of treatment, including a distortion of competition (that cannot be remedied otherwise);
- if EIT Food is required to do so following the applicable laws and regulations or directions from the EIT;
- the participant no longer complies with these terms and conditions.

2.5 Application and Evaluation Process

2.5.1 Application

Interested applicants must apply on the EIT Food Entrepreneurs website (entrepreneurship@eitfood.eu) EIT Food will screen the applications to ensure all applicants meet the stated eligibility criteria and they are sent to the programme which is relevant to their startup needs.

This is a completely open call. We welcome applications from all EU Member States and associated countries and encourage diversity.

The programme language is English so all submission material must be submitted in English.

Incomplete applications may be considered inadmissible if essential elements are missing.

2.5.2 Outline of the programme

The EIT Food Seedbed Incubator Programme takes place in three key phases:

1. Training and coaching at a 4 –day online bootcamp for up to 60 shortlisted applicants
2. Market Discovery Journey for 40 finalists, with online entrepreneurship courses on CANVAS learning platform (throughout the programme)
3. Seedbed Kickoff Event & Final Seedbed Showcase Event

A Project Team's place on the Seedbed Programme is subject to successful completion, evaluation and approval of its action plan following the online training programme.

Date	Seedbed Incubator	Description
April 2023	Outcome Notification	Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application. Successful applicants (up to 60 teams) will be invited to the 4-day online bootcamp.
Phase 1: Four-Day Online Bootcamp		

May 2023	Training & final selection process	<p>Successful teams will be invited to attend an online, centralised 4 day bootcamp. The bootcamp will train and support entrepreneurial teams on (1) Strategyzer's Lean methodology to define clear value propositions and winning business models; and (2) digital testing and market discovery methodologies to gather rapid and accurate market feedback on the likely success of their business idea. A key output of the 4-day online bootcamp will be for teams to finalise and submit their business model canvas, market discovery action plan and participation in a final pitch session. All teams will receive training and coaching support in preparing these documents and pitching.</p> <p>A Seedbed panel will complete an appraisal of the quality of the team's engagement and performance at the bootcamp, including an evaluation of their BMC, action plan, and pitch. The top 40 highest-ranking teams will be recommended to proceed to Phase 2 of the Seedbed Programme and be offered up to €6,000 in phased milestone payments, for Market Discovery activities. All teams will be notified on the outcome of this selection process beginning of June. Award criteria outlined below.</p>
Phase 2: Market Discovery Journey		
June – November 2023	Market Discovery Journey	<p>Following the bootcamp, successful teams selected for phase 2, Market Discovery, will have access to €7,000 equity-free funding, in phased milestone payments, to facilitate market testing activities and to speak to potential customers, stakeholders, and end-users to better understand the market needs and develop a solution, customers are willing to pay for. The market discovery phase will take place across 5 months. During this time, Seedbed teams are required to access remote and/or face-to-face coaching and business training from their assigned Seedbed coach and business experts. Additionally, participants will be offered access to online training modules on the CANVAS platform, with clinics and workshops offered for 1:1 support by top-quality trainers on key entrepreneurial topics. Some of the activities above are mandatory and all Seedbed participants are expected to participate. Teams will be provided with a full detailed timeline for participation upfront.</p>
Phase 3: Presenting your Seedbed Journey and Planning Next Steps		
October 2023	Presentation Training Day	<p>The Seedbed Teams are required to complete 1-2 days of training and preparation to prepare presentations for the Seedbed Showcase online. During this training, teams will be helped to understand what they have discovered, and they will be trained on how to articulate this; reflect on their key outcomes and next key milestones; and receive guidance and support to fine tune their presentation for the Seedbed Showcase Event.</p>

Nov 2023	Seedbed Showcase Part 1	The 40 Seedbed Teams will be expected to attend the Seedbed Showcase pitch event (pitches delivered per mission), where they will present their Seedbed journey and learnings to a panel of experts. The panel will offer advice on next steps for commercialisation and consider whether to recommend the innovation for startup/spinout or other commercialisation pathways. The panel will also recommend the appropriate course of action in terms of follow on support from EIT Food.
Nov 2023	Seedbed Showcase Part 2	The EIT Food Seedbed programme will hold a final in-person event to conclude the programme, the day next to EIT Food Venture Summit, depending on potential COVID-19 restrictions. All EIT Food Seedbed participants are required to attend the final of the Seedbed Showcase event. All participating teams are then asked to complete a programme exit survey and submit their customer connections tracker and final commercial roadmap by the end of November.
Nov – Dec 2023	Seedbed +	As part of Seedbed Showcase Event, teams will be evaluated on the market-validation and commercial potential of their project. Those scored with 'high-impact' commercial potential will be exclusively selected to receive an additional maximum of 10,000 € equity-free funding, and further tailored support, till the end of 2023 to work on building their business.

Throughout the time on the Seedbed Programme, teams are required to update their Business Action Plans which will be used to monitor team activity on a monthly basis. This should be kept up to date and detail activities, learnings, outcomes and actions to be carried out as a result of engaging with the market. Seedbed Business Coaches will use this document to assess if satisfactory progress is being made against key milestones.

2.5.3 Selection

The online applications will be scored by a panel of judges according to the eligibility and selection criteria. Ineligible applications will be informed in May 2023.

Selection criteria:

Essential Criteria

- The applicant shall have stable and sufficient resources of funding to maintain his or her activity throughout the period for which the funding is awarded and to participate in its funding ('financial capacity', exceptions may apply for natural persons);
- The applicant shall have the professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the proposed action or work programme unless specifically provided otherwise ('operational capacity').
- For those applications involving intellectual property (IP) that belongs to an academic institution (or any third party), the applicant must have permission to use the IP to participate the Seedbed Incubator Programme.
- The programme participating team will consist of at least two members who possess the background, capability and motivation to enable the technological solution to be tested with the market and to allow the idea to succeed (ideally a mix of technical and business skills). The exception is made for those applicants from research centres where the IP belongs to the research organisation. In this instance, the TTO must be involved in some aspects of the programme.
- The innovation is clearly aligned to one of the EIT Food mission goals and one of the six EIT Food focus areas, and has the potential to have a wide-scale impact on the global food system

Additional Criteria

- **The Problem:** The applicant has a good understanding of the problem they propose to solve.
- **The Solution:** The applicant articulates how their technology or IP might solve the identified problem and has a clear USP.
- **The Technology/IP:** The team's technology / IP is sufficiently developed to warrant exploring commercial opportunities, with at least experimental proof of concept established, and validated in a test/lab setting.
- **Potential Business Model:** The team has considered their business model and show a basic understanding of the target market, regulatory and competitive landscape. If the team has already made some market traction (first sales or established pilot projects), they are too mature for the programme and should be considered for the EIT Food FAN programme.

- Team: The team has the right level of competencies to exploit the commercial potential of the technology. For those applicants from research institutes, their tech transfer involvement is essential.

Depending on the quality of the applications, up to 60 high-scoring applicants will be offered a place in a four-day training online bootcamp delivered per mission. All three bootcamps will take place in May 2023 starting, 15th of May for Mission 3, 22th of May for Mission 2 & 29th of May Mission 1.

Award criteria:

A Project Team's place on the Seedbed Programme is subject to successful completion, evaluation and approval of its business model canvas, action plan and pitch following the four-day online training bootcamp. A Seedbed panel will score the teams following the bootcamp according to the award criteria. The top 40 teams will be awarded a place on phase 2 (Market Discovery), of the EIT Food Seedbed Incubator Programme.

- The team actively engaged and completed all aspects of the trainings and bootcamp training, submission of business model canvas and market discovery plan and budget, and final pitch
- The team are coachable, open minded and have shown the skills and qualities necessary to engage with potential stakeholders, customers and users and learn from the market discovery phase. The team has taken the training and advice from the delivery team and business coaches into consideration to evolve their business model canvas
- The team's technology / intellectual property is solving a clearly articulated problem, has a clear USP and is sufficiently developed to warrant exploring commercial opportunities
- The team has articulated a unique value proposition and have identified a number of assumptions which underpin them to evaluate with the market
- The team have a basic business model in place that can be validated as part of the programme

At EIT Food we are committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all European citizens. EIT Food firmly believes that equality is key to a more sustainable, healthy and trustworthy food system and we encourage applications from those currently underrepresented in the startup ecosystem.

2.6 Project Reporting

Participants may be asked at a later stage for further documents (for legal entity validation, bank account validation, ethics review, declaration of honour on exclusion grounds, reporting in the context of a subgrant agreement etc). Moreover, startups supported by the Programme agree to participate in the Programme evaluation the end of the Programme. Moreover, they agree to participate in the Programme impact survey and to provide additional information (esp. financial data and information on investment capital raised) for up to three additional years after the end of the Programme. Finally, participants in the Programme shall allow and support any checks, reviews, audits and investigations by EIT Food, EIT and/or any other competent EU body deemed necessary.

2.7 Payment arrangements and agreements to be signed

The successful Seedbed awardees, awarded a place on the Market Discovery Phase of the programme, will be allocated a sub-granting budget of up to €7,000, in phased milestone payments. This budget is allocated to deliver the tasks associated with participating in the EIT Food Seedbed Incubator Programme. These tasks will be outlined in the Market Discovery Action plan, signed off by both the team and Seedbed Coach.

Once selected, EIT Food Seedbed Incubator Delivery Partners and each participant sign a subgrant agreement outlining the conditions of the financial support provided. This subgrant agreement ensures compliance with the funding to EU and Horizon Europe guidelines. The funding received through the subgrant is to be spent on eligible innovation activities spanning no further than 31st December 2023. Thus, all the funding provided is to be spent in 2023.

Calendar of the payments and further payment conditions will be discussed with the participant and will be set out in full in the Subgrant Agreement. Payments shall be made to the bank account indicated by Participant in the Personal Data Form.

The awardees shall be responsible for all possible taxes, wire transfers and other possible costs related to the payments.

2.8 Other

2.8.1 IP rights and confidentiality

The applications submitted are handled confidentially. Information submitted will be viewed on a “need to know basis” by a limited group of people within the EIT Food community. Submitted information will only be used for review purposes, and those reviewing the submitted information have confidentiality agreements in place with EIT Food.

Applicants retain full and exclusive ownership of their intellectual property rights, during and after the funding period.

By submitting their application participants warrant that they hold ownership or have legally secured the right to use all elements of the innovative product or service and that the provided materials and information do not infringe any intellectual or other property rights, including patents, of any other persons, companies or other entities. Elements of the submission that are based on rights held by others, such as patents, shall be marked as such in the submission. Participants shall indemnify and hold harmless EIT Food IVZW, or any assignee or affiliate for any allegations or claims by third parties of infringement of intellectual property rights by the product or service of participants. Participants shall have the right to further develop, use and license their intellectual property rights for creating, making, marketing and distributing products, services and technology.

2.8.2 Publicity – Promoting Programme – Visibility of the EU Funding

Publicity by the participants

The companies selected must support the promotion of EIT Food, by providing targeted information in a strategic and effective manner.

Unless EIT Food requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, selected applicants must:

- display the EIT Food logo with the EU emblem on their web page or any other communication material regarding the participation in the Programme. When displayed together with another logo, the EIT Food logo and EU emblem must have appropriate prominence;
- include the following text: “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” on their web page or any other communication material regarding the participation in the Programme.

For the purposes of their obligations, the selected participants may use the EIT Food logo and the EU emblem without first obtaining approval from EIT Food. This does not, however, give it the right to exclusive use. Moreover, they may not appropriate the EU emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

Publicity by EIT Food

EIT Food and its partners may use, for its communication and publicising activities, information relating to the action or the product or service of the participants, documents notably

summaries for publication as well as any other material that it receives from the participants (including in electronic form).

EIT Food or its partners may publish the name of the participants their origin, affiliation, the amount of funding and its nature and purpose — unless they have requested to waive this publication (because disclosure risks threatening its security and safety or harm its commercial interest).

Photos, videos and sounds taken/recorded by EIT Food during the programme, in preparation of the award ceremony or during the award ceremony and other EIT Food events are the sole property of EIT Food and may be used for press releases or publications by EIT Food or its partners.

2.8.3 Privacy

Processing of personal data by EIT Food

Any personal data will be processed by EIT Food in accordance with the EIT Food privacy policy.

Processing of personal data by the participants

The participants must process personal data in compliance with applicable EU and national law on data protection (including authorisations or notification requirements, if any), see the GDPR recommendations.

2.8.4 Security

The activities must be carried out in compliance with Commission Decision 2015/444, i.e. security-sensitive information must be EU-classified, if its unauthorised disclosure could adversely impact the interests of the EU or of one (or more) of its Member States. Applications that are too security-sensitive cannot be admitted to the programme.

2.8.5 Conflict of interest

The participants must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective award of the grant is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interest').

They must inform EIT Food without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

EIT Food may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

2.8.6 Liability for damage

To the maximum extent permitted by law, EIT Food cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the participants or to third parties as a consequence of the grant, including for gross negligence on the part of the beneficiary.

EIT Food cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the participants in the context of the grant.

To the maximum extent permitted by law, under no circumstances and under no legal theory whether in tort (including negligence) contract or otherwise shall EIT Food, the EIT Food Partners or the EIT, any of its nodes or affiliates, be liable for any special indirect, punitive, incidental or consequential damages, including loss of profit.

If the liability of EIT Food or the EIT cannot be excluded following the applicable laws, but can be limited, the liability of EIT Food IVZW or the EIT shall be limited to the amount of grant awarded.

Please note other liability clauses may apply at a later stage.

2.8.7 Administrative sanctions

If a participant has committed irregularities or fraud or has made false declarations, EIT Food may also:

- exclude the participant from all future contracts, grants and contests financed from the EU or Euratom budget and/or
- impose a financial penalty.

2.8.8 Miscellaneous

In general, the Participant should understand that EIT Food is supported by the EIT and is bound by the agreements with the EIT.

2.9 Cancellation or postponement of the Programme and withdrawal

The Programme may be cancelled or postponed:

- In case of irregularities, fraud, breach of obligations;
- No applications are received;
- If directed or decided by EIT or following the applicable laws and regulations;
- In case of exceptional circumstances including force majeure;
- If underlying agreements such as the FPA or SGA or an internal grant agreement would be terminated or suspended or if specifically, EIT Food's participation to the same would be terminated or suspended.

Please note that amounts may also be rejected, recovered, postponed in case the exclusion criteria would become applicable to the participant, the participant is no longer eligible or if imposed accordingly by the applicable laws and regulations or the agreements signed between EIT Food and the EIT.

2.10 Amendments

EIT Food reserves the right to make reasonable amendments to these terms and conditions e.g. due to changes in laws and regulations or EIT rules. Amendments and additions to these terms and conditions shall be valid if communicated in writing on the EIT Food website or otherwise made available to the applicants.

2.11 Applicable laws and jurisdiction

These terms and conditions are governed by the laws of Belgium. Any disagreement or dispute which may arise in connection with these terms and conditions which cannot be settled amicably will be brought before the courts of the registered seat of EIT Food.

2.12 Contact

For more information regarding the Seedbed Incubator, please contact:

Benoit Buntinx

EIT Food Business Creation Manager

support@entrepreneurship.eitfood.eu

Seedbed & Other information sources

Entrepreneurship web page: <https://entrepreneurship.eitfood.eu>

EIT Seedbed Incubator Programme web page: <https://entrepreneurship.eitfood.eu/launch>

[1] The €7,000 subgrant allocated to successful Seedbed teams is related to Market Discovery activities and travel to EIT Food core programme events.

3 EIT Food Accelerator Network

Project Name: EIT Food Accelerator Network

3.1 Scope of the programme

The EIT FAN is a multi-hub accelerator programme delivered across Europe, to support high impact agrifood startups to maximise their success towards market adoption. Once startups have applied for the EIT FAN and have chosen their Tech Validation Quest theme of interest, they will go through a rigorous selection process where they will be judged by a series of experts including entrepreneurs, investors and experts from the agriculture and food industries.

If successful, startups will be invited to join one of the five accelerator programmes or Tech Validation Quests taking place in parallel across Europe:

- Munich, Germany - Theme “Accelerating the Technology Revolution in Agriculture”
- Haifa, Israel - “Food as Medicine”
- Bilbao, Spain - Theme: “Achieving Net Zero Carbon Farming”
- Helsinki, Finland - Theme: “Scaling the Alternative Protein Revolution”
- Paris, France - Theme: “Novel Ingredients & Processes”

Over a 3-month acceleration period, selected startups will have access to a great variety of tools, resources, mentors and expertise and will get the opportunity to build a Technology Validation Case to accelerate the growth of their business towards a successful market adoption.

At the end of the accelerator programme, there will be a TECH Day per hub where startups from that specific hub will be invited to pitch their Tech Validation Case in front of a Jury including entrepreneurs, researchers and experts from the agriculture and food industries. The best startups of each hub will be awarded the opportunity to test and validate their Technology either with a University, a Research Center or a Corporate.

The aim of the EIT FAN is to provide support to agrifood startups:

- To accelerate their Technology Validation and access cutting-edge facilities and equipment across Europe

- To reach the market faster via the EIT Food Innovation Community, e.g. finding potential partners and piloting customers (i.e. pilot projects)
- To facilitate future funding steps (such as seed investments, financing loans and other financing instruments);
- To gain higher visibility via EIT Food channels, the agrifood space in general and to connect them to the local and European startup ecosystem

3.2 Timeline & Admissibility

The present call is open until March 26th. After the cut-off date, the following process will apply (more details on the application documents and selection procedure can be found below).

1. Submission of online application before cut-off date
2. First evaluation round by a carefully selected panel of experts
3. Acceptance/rejection notification and written feedback on the application provided
4. Shortlisted startups are invited to a second round of evaluation
5. Acceptance/rejection notification and written feedback on the application provided
6. Acceptance letter and agreement signed
7. Start of the local accelerator programme

Applications must be submitted by the contact person of the company via an online platform. Incomplete applications may be considered inadmissible if essential elements are missing. For more information, please contact the accelerator manager at the end of this document.

3.3. Eligibility

All EIT Food activities are governed by the rules set out in the Framework Partnership Agreement (see Model FPA) as well as the Model Specific Grant Agreement with the EIT, under the Horizon Europe Annotated Grant Model.

3.3.1 Eligibility Criteria

To be considered eligible for the programme, applicants must be agri-food startups:

- that are set to make a big impact on any part of the agriculture or food supply chain thus committed to building a healthier, more trusted and sustainable food system
- At (pre)seed stage successfully completed customer validation and potentially can already demonstrate traction indicator (e.g. Lols, sales, letters of support)
- Registered company successfully completed technology readiness level 4 (“technology validated in lab”) and customer readiness level 4 (“confirmed problem/needs from several customers and/or end users”)
- Active in the EU and its member states or EU associated countries (i.e. Iceland, Norway, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Israel, Moldova, Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Tunisia, Georgia Armenia),
- Committed to the programme (we expect active, consistent engagement in the programme - this requires the presence from at least one team member for the duration of the accelerator programme)

EIT Food offers several programs targeting entrepreneurs, startups and SMEs at various stages of maturity:

We encourage projects at idea/concept stage, without being a registered company, to consider applying for the “SeedBed Incubator”:

Link: <https://www.eitfood.eu/entrepreneurship/projects/Seedbed>

For scaleups with more advanced product(s)/service(s), we recommend applying to become member in the “Rising Food Stars association”:

Link: <https://www.eitfood.eu/entrepreneurship/projects/risingfoodstars>

For a complete overview of current EIT Food programme offering please visit the following homepage: <https://www.eitfood.eu/entrepreneurship>

3.3.2 Exclusion Criteria

Consulting service companies without tangible product will be excluded, including one-person company.

Participants that have already received a maximum funding of 60,000 EUR from any of the Knowledge & Innovation Communities (KIC) supported by the EIT in this particular calendar year cannot participate in the programme.

Participants will be excluded if they (or one of them):

- are subject to an administrative sanction (i.e. exclusion)
- are in one of the following situations:
 - bankrupt, being wound up, having their affairs administered by the courts, entered into an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar proceedings or procedures under national law (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
 - declared in breach of social security or tax obligations by a final judgment or decision (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
 - found guilty of grave professional misconduct by a final judgment or decision (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
 - convicted of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
 - shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under a procurement contract, grant agreement or grant decision financed by the EU or Euratom budget (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
 - found guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
- have misrepresented information required for participating in the EIT FAN or fail to submit such information
- were involved in the preparation of the grant documents and this entails a distortion of competition.

3.4 Documents

Participants may be asked at a later stage for further documents (for legal entity validation, bank account validation, ethics review, declaration of honour on exclusion grounds, etc). Moreover, startups supported by the EIT FAN agree to participate in the programme evaluation at the end of the programme. Moreover, they agree to participate in the EIT FAN impact survey and to provide additional information (esp. financial data and information on investment capital raised) for up to three additional years after the end of the programme. Finally,

participants in the EIT FAN shall allow and support any checks, reviews, audits and investigations by EIT Food, EIT and/or any other competent EU body deemed necessary.

3.5 Selection Procedure, Financial Support and Criteria

The application procedure is the following:

1. Online application:

Applicants must submit by March 26th an online application form where they should illustrate: efforts to achieve product-market-fit, technology and IP, traction and impact, market and competition, business model, revenue projections, team expertise.

2. Online Evaluation:

The first evaluation round is performed online by a carefully selected panel of entrepreneurs and experts in the agrifood space to evaluate the (potential) impact of the startup and the alignment of the application with the underlying objectives of EIT Food: the best applications passing this screening will be invited to pitch their idea to a panel of experts in an online or in-person session. After the first evaluation round, every startup receives written feedback from the panellists on the evaluation of their application.

The first evaluation round criteria include:

- Problem-Solution Fit
- Innovative Potential
- Business Model & Traction
- Team Capabilities

3. Technology & Business Deep Dives and motivation interviews

The second evaluation round is an online or in person pitching session (“Technology & Business Deep Dives” and motivation interviews) organised by the local accelerator representatives. A carefully selected panel of entrepreneurs and experts in the agrifood space will evaluate each startup based on the criteria mentioned below during the EIT FAN Technology & Business Deep Dives: (potential) impact of the startup, the economic viability as well as technical and customer readiness levels. The evaluator panels during round one and two usually have a different composition.

To ensure there is an adequate fit between the support the EIT FAN provides in each hub and a start-up's need., each applicant will be asked a few questions to assess the motivation to join the programme .

The results of the Technology & Business Deep Dives and motivation interviews will result in a global ranking. Taking into account theme preferences, corporate interest in a start-up applicant as well as position in the global ranking, applicants will be invited to join the programme. The selected applicants will sign an agreement with EIT Food to enter the programme at a particular location.

3.6 Other Conditions

3.6.1 Payment and arrangements of financial support

EIT Food is committed to support the best ideas and the projects with the highest potential to generate an impact in the agrifood value chain. As regards to the EIT FAN, EIT Food provides access to sub-grants to cover expenses in product development and travel. A budget outline on how the startup plans to spend the money shall be submitted after the announcement of the cohort. A template for cost categories is provided by EIT Food.

EIT Food, European Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors may carry out checks, audits and investigations in relation to the grant.

3.6.2 Publicity – Promoting the EIT FAN – Visibility of the EU Funding

Publicity by the participants

The companies selected must support the promotion of the EIT Food Accelerator Network, by providing targeted information in a strategic and effective manner.

Unless EIT Food requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, selected startups must:

- a) display the EIT Food Accelerator Network logo with the EU emblem and
- b) include the following text:

“Co-Funded by the European Union” on their web page.

For any communication activity related to the EIT FAN (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.) startups must:

- c) Use “#EITFAN” for online communication about the programme
- d) Tag EIT Food Accelerator Network if applicable (LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/eit-food-accelerator-network-/>; Facebook: @EITFood.eu; Twitter: @EIT_Food)

When displayed together with another logo, the EIT FAN logo and EU emblem must have appropriate prominence.

For the purposes of their obligations, the selected companies may use the EIT FAN logo and the EU emblem without first obtaining approval from EIT Food.

This does not, however, give it the right to exclusive use.

Moreover, they may not appropriate the EU emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

Publicity by EIT Food

EIT Food may use, for its communication and publicising activities, information relating to the action, documents notably summaries for publication as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material that it receives from the participants (including in electronic form).

EIT Food will publish the name of the funded companies, their origin, and its nature and purpose — unless they have requested to waive this publication (because disclosure risks threatening its security and safety or harm its commercial interest).

Photos and videos taken by EIT Food during the EIT Food events where the selected companies will feature are the sole property of EIT Food.

3.6.3 Dissemination and Exploitation of Results

Applicants retain full and exclusive ownership of their prior information and intellectual property rights. By submitting their application applicants warrant that they hold ownership or have legally secured the right to use all elements of the innovative product or service and that the provided materials and information do not infringe any intellectual or other property rights, including patents, of any other persons, companies, or other entities. Elements of the submission that are based on rights held by others, such as patents, shall be marked as such in the submission.

EIT Food and their authorised representatives in the program undertake to ensure the confidentiality of the projects presented and developed throughout the EIT FAN. By submitting the application within the program, applicants consent that EIT Food and its accelerator hubs will collect, transfer, process, store and delete your data under abovementioned conditions.

The selected companies agree that their data as well as non-confidential information about their project, may be used by EIT Food and their authorised representatives without compensation for promotion of their activities.

3.6.4 Processing of personal data

Processing of personal data by EIT Food

Any personal data will be processed by EIT Food in accordance with the EIT Food privacy policy notice(s): <https://www.eitfood.eu/pages/privacy-policy>

Processing of personal data by the participants

The participants must process personal data in compliance with applicable EU and national law on data protection (including authorisations or notification requirements, if any), see the GDPR recommendations.

3.6.5 Ethics

The activities must be carried out in compliance with:

- a) ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity) and
- b) applicable international, EU and national law.

No funding will be awarded for activities carried out outside the EU, if they are prohibited in all Member States.

The participants must ensure that the activities of their company have an exclusive focus on civil applications.

The participants must respect the highest standards of research integrity — as set out, for instance, in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.

3.6.6 Security

The activities must be carried out in compliance with Commission Decision 2015/444, i.e. security-sensitive information must be EU-classified, if its unauthorised disclosure could adversely impact the interests of the EU or of one (or more) of its Member States. Applications that are too security-sensitive cannot be admitted to the programme.

3.6.7 Conflict of Interest

The participants must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective award of the grant is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interest').

They must inform EIT Food without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

EIT Food may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

3.6.8 Liability for damages

EIT Food cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the participants or to third parties as a consequence of the grant, including for gross negligence.

EIT Food cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the participants in the context of the grant.

3.6.9 Withdrawal of the (non-)financial support – Recovery of the undue amounts

EIT Food may withdraw the prizes after its award and recover all payments made, if it finds out that:

- a. false information, fraud or corruption was used to obtain it
- b. a winner was not eligible or should have been excluded
- c. a winner is in serious breach of its obligations under these Terms & Conditions.

3.6.10 Administrative sanctions

If a participant has committed irregularities or fraud or has made false declarations, EIT Food may also:

- a. exclude the participant from all future contracts, grants and contests financed from the EU or Euratom budget for a maximum of five years (or 10 years in case of repetition) and/or
- b. impose a financial penalty between 2% and 10% of the value of the grant (or between 4% and 20% in case of repetition).

3.6.11 Cancellation of the programme

EIT Food may cancel the programme or decide not to award any of the aforementioned prizes — without any obligation to compensate participants —, if:

- a. no applications are received
- b. the jury does not find a winner
- c. the winner(s) is not eligible or must be excluded

3.6.12 Terms & Conditions

By signing the confirmation of participation, applicants agree to the Terms and Conditions. EIT Food reserves the right to make reasonable amendments to these Terms and Conditions. Amendments and additions to these Terms and Conditions shall be valid if communicated in writing on the EIT Food website or otherwise made available to the applicants.

These Terms and Conditions are governed by the laws of Belgium. Any disagreement or dispute which may arise in connection with these Terms and Conditions which cannot be settled amicably will be brought before the courts of Bruxelles, Belgium.

To the maximum extent permitted by law, under no circumstances and under no legal theory whether in tort (including negligence) contract or otherwise shall EIT Food and the EIT Food partners involved in this activity be liable for any special indirect, punitive, incidental or consequential damages, including loss of profit.

You may withdraw your application as well as participation in the EIT FAN any time by informing us by email or withdrawing your registration any time.

3.7. Contact

The EIT FAN is organised by EIT Food and its regional Accelerator Hubs which act as managing partners in coordinating the collection, evaluation, awarding and follow-up process at regional level.

Contact Details EIT Food

Marie Russier

EIT FAN Programme Manager

E-Mail: marie.russier@eitfood.eu

Contact Details Accelerator Hubs

Accelerator Hub Bilbao, Spain

Juliet Bray

E-Mail: juliet.bray@eitfood.eu

Accelerator Hub Munich, Germany

Linda Schuh

E-Mail: linda.schuh@unternehmertum.de

Accelerator Hub Haifa, Israel

Dr. Avital Regev Siman-Tov

E-Mail: avitalr@technion.ac.il

Accelerator Hub Helsinki, Finland

Mirva Lampinen

E-Mail: Mirva.Lampinen@vtt.fi

Accelerator Hub Paris, France

Marie Breysse

E-Mail: marieb@shakeupfactory.com

Other information sources

EIT Food web page: www.eitfood.eu

EIT FAN web page: <https://entrepreneurship.eitfood.eu/accelerate/>

Partners of EIT FAN: www.eitfan.eu/partners

4. RisingFoodStars Network

4.1 Introduction

EIT Food wants to transform Europe's food system, making it better for people's health and the environment. EIT Food is a pan-European partnership designed to empower innovators, entrepreneurs and students to develop world-class solutions to food 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, improve nutrition, and make food systems more resource-efficient, secure, transparent and trusted.

The RisingFoodStarsNetwork is an Entrepreneurship service of EIT Food. This service is offered by the Association RisingFoodStars, which is a core partner and affiliate of EIT Food. A member to this Association—the RisingFoodStar—can act as a partner within EIT Food and collaborate at the same eye height with its members, the leading European businesses, universities, research centres and institutes from the entire food value chain. The RisingFoodStars are impact-driven, aspiring scaleups that demonstrate the desire, potential and readiness to begin their transformational journey to unlock their commercial potential and achieve rapid and sustainable growth with the aim to become a food star of tomorrow. They have the ambition to improve any part of the agriculture or food supply chain, thus committed to building a future-fit food system that is healthier and more sustainable. You can only become a RisingFoodStar upon submission of an eligible application. This guideline serves those companies who are willing to become a RisingFoodStar in 2023.

4.2 The Network

The RisingFoodStar association identifies the most promising aspiring scaleups in the Agrifood-Tech space and empowers them to lead the revolution towards a future-fit food system. The higher goal of this network is to give you a Pan-European recognition and provide you with access to all the resources you need to design and follow your own journey to successfully scale up and become a food star of tomorrow!

RisingFoodStars association boosts your chances of scaling up successfully by supporting you to:

- Articulate your “Why” through persuasive story telling
- Crystallise your vision, business model and update your pitch
- Define your strategic priorities and focus on scaling up

- Attract the right talent and commercial partners
- Build your leadership and management capabilities
- Transform from product to commercial orientation
- Develop organizational structure, processes, and performance culture

Within this framework, the RisingFoodStars Association leads five streams in which the members can participate:

1. **SCALE UP SCAN:** You receive a thorough scan of your company by scaleups experts to assess your strengths and shortcomings and define together your specific needs in order to successfully scale up. The scaleup scan consists of ~1.5 days deep dive with our experts upon which you receive a detailed report on your scaleup potential including a review of your strategy, vision, operations, go to market, leadership, team and culture. The report is followed by a 1.5h debrief with our experts to define together your top 3 scaling opportunities.
2. **FLIGHT PLAN:** After defining your strategic priorities, we provide you with small group customized and interactive workshops and 1:1 mentorship sessions to develop a plan of action and build your capabilities.
3. **PARTNERSHIP BUILDING:** We help you identify and connect with the right decision makers within our 100+ corporate partners to widen your market access and commercial reach. Thanks to our corporate venture services, we support you to personalise your value proposition to industry partners and connect you with the right stakeholders in our partner organisations. We will facilitate the process from matchmaking, project set-up all the way until successful project completion.
4. **FUNDING:** We find you the right funding opportunities through our own EIT Food impact fund and our network of 30+ leading investors including Food Sparks by Peak Bridge. We offer you the exclusive opportunity to receive direct financial support from EIT Food impact fund to fuel your growth and your commercial partnership pilots with corporate partners: up to €500,000 per venture through a Simple Agreement For Future Equity ("SAFE") instrument. Read here for more information: [Investment: EIT Food Impact Fund - EIT Food](#).
5. **SPOTLIGHT:** We give you privileged access to leading corporates and investors via the biggest pan-European conferences such as FutureFoodTech London, F&A Next or our own venture summit in Lisbon. As part of a RisingFoodStar, you also receive financial support to travel to those key events. On top of this, we highlight your success story in our media channels including social media, website, podcasts with a reach of over 8Mn.

4.3 The Candidates

We welcome all companies that at the submission stage, identify with the following:

1. **Impact-driven:** RisingFoodStars demonstrate the potential to rapidly become real game changers, driving positive impact in one of our 3 missions: 'Healthier lives through food', 'Net-zero food systems', and 'A fully transparent, resilient and fair food system'. Drive for impact must be explicit in the mission, values, business model, KPIs and founders' mindset.
 2. **Innovative:** RisingFoodStars have unique and scalable technology combined with a healthy business model. They have an existing IP Strategy with TRL>6 (Industry pilot prototype validated)
 3. **Leaders:** RisingFoodStars have a compelling vision with the right capabilities and mindset to transform from product/service to commercial orientation. They have a Team of Min 10 Full time employees with both technical and commercial skills.
 4. **Ready to grow rapidly:** RisingFoodStars have reached a tipping point in their growth journey where a critical transformation is needed to overcome critical barriers to growth at critical times. This means that they have raised late Seeds / Series A AND/ OR started generating a revenue of at least 100K with a multi-customer portfolio and aiming for a rapid growth.
- You add value to the current pool of RisingFoodStars and network of EIT Food partners. The current list of members is available [here](#).

4.4 Eligibility

4.4.1 General criteria

- You are not involved in another EIT Food Business Creation programme (i.e. Seedbed and EIT Food Accelerator Network). All programs are complementary. Each is focusing on a different stage of company with another offer. For a complete overview of current EIT Food programme offering, please visit the homepage.
- You have no conflict of interests. Ventures owned by EIT Food employees or members of EIT Food governing bodies and engagements in which EIT Food employees or members of EIT Food governing bodies have an interest are also excluded. EIT Food includes all CLCs of EIT Food and all governing bodies.

4.4.2 Formal criteria

- You have your legal entity based in a Member State of the European Union (EU) or Horizon Europe associated countries
- You submitted a fully completed application and requested supported documents in English through the online platform by the deadline set on the RisingFoodStars website.
- You read and accepted the RisingFoodStars Statutes, RisingFoodStars By-Laws, EIT Food Privacy Policy and Model Subgrant Agreement upon submission.

4.4.3 Program-specific criteria

- You are a **SMALL sized company** as defined in the [EU recommendation 2003/361](#).

Category	Staff headcount	Turnover	or	Balance sheet total
Medium-sized	< 250	≤ € 50 m		≤ € 43 m
Small	< 50	≤ € 10 m		≤ € 10 m
Micro	< 10	≤ € 2 m		≤ € 2 m

- You exist for **less than ten years**
- You are part of or of added value to the **agrifood ecosystem**
- You started generating revenues **with a validated product-market fit in your home market**
- You have a technological solution within one of the **focus areas of EIT Food**:
 - Targeted nutrition
 - Sustainable aquaculture
 - Sustainable agriculture
 - Alternative proteins
 - Digital transformation of traceability
 - Circular food systems

For a better understanding of our priorities, please visit our [strategic agenda for 2018 - 2024](#).

4.5. Application and Evaluation Process

4.5.1 Application

Below are the expected timelines for the application process:

Application opens	26/01/2023
Application closes	26/03/2023
Evaluation and Pitch rounds	April/ May 2023
Outcome notification (expected date)	End of May 2023
Accession agreement signed	May/June 2023
Onboarding	June 2023

4.2.1 Application

In order to apply, you can simply follow the 3-step process on <https://www.myeitfood.eu/>



Applications are transparent and open to all eligible applicants from January 26th to March 26th, 2023.

4.1.3 Evaluation

After receiving your full application, we will first assess your data against the eligibility criteria. If eligible, we will evaluate based on the following 5 categories:

1.Motivation: What drives you and your team,and why would you like to join RisingFoodStars?

2. Problem validation: Which problem are you solving and for whom?

3. Problem-Solution fit: Why is the technological solution you offer an excellent fix for the problem you mentioned?

4. Operating model: RisingFoodStars focuses on companies in the early scale-up phase. Your operating model should be exact at this point.

5. Team: We believe that team is the most crucial factor for a successful venture. We want to get to know you better and see if you have what it takes to be a RisingFoodStar. We will weigh the results of each category according to their presumed importance, before we aggregate those results to an overall score/ranking and a focus area ranking. These outcomes will be sent to the Advisory Committee for their review.

4.1.4 Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee of the Association RisingFoodStars will review all eligible applications. The Committee consists of members of EIT Food, its partners and independent expert evaluators. The Advisory Committee will invite applications whose submission falls within the "grey zone" for an online clarifying Q&A session. Overall, the Advisory Committee will motivate their reasons to reject or accept an application in a non-binding advice to the Board.

4.1.5 Pitch Rounds

The Advisory Committee will invite high-rated applicants where there are still some questions for an online clarifying Q&A. The exact dates will be announced on the website of the RisingFoodStars and the relevant RisingFoodStars applicants will be informed by email. The purpose of the pitch is to clarify any outstanding issues and give some more background if needed.

4.1.6 Board Review

The Board of the Association RisingFoodStars will issue a final decision on the acceptance of applicants to the RisingFoodStars network. The Board may deviate based on business or strategic reasons from the Advisory Committee's non-binding advice.

4.1.7. Notification of candidates

All applicants will be informed individually on the final decision through the email address provided on the application. The RisingFoodStars Manager will reach out to successful applicants to prepare their membership. Note that we handle the submitted applications confidentially. Confidentiality agreements bind everybody that reads the applications during the review process. Applicants retain full and exclusive ownership of their background intellectual property rights.

5. Accession

5.1 Accession Agreement

Upon accession and at the beginning of every running Financial Year, each RisingFoodStar will co-sign an accession agreement (see model). This letter outlines the mutual obligations per Financial Year. Shortly after accession, each RisingFoodStar will also provide further documents (for legal entity validation, bank account validation, ethics review, declaration of honour on exclusion grounds, reporting in the context of a subgrant agreement etc.). Each RisingFoodStar will be involved in the annual monitoring & evaluation, participate in the Programme impact survey and provide additional information if necessary (esp. financial data and information on investment capital raised) for up to three additional years after the end of the membership.

5.2 On boarding:

We will invite new RisingFoodStars to attend a deep dive about EIT Food, to get a full insight on the EIT Food ecosystem, its partners, its opportunities and its staff. NB: the written and verbal presentation must be in the English language. At least one member of your team must be present, and we will ask you to confirm this in your submission.

6. Funding & Membership Terms

Being a RisingFoodStar not only allows you access to knowledge and networks. Membership can also lead to the co-financing of your engagement in EIT Food's activities, for example, to further develop your business or support your travel or scale up expenses. We offer two types of financial support: Subgranting RisingFoodStars members who are not involved in KIC activities (as from 1st year of membership), can under certain conditions benefit from financial support for scaling activities through a subgrant that can reach a max €4K per year. EIT KAVA –Pre-financing: Through participation in projects, called KIC Added Value Activities (KAVA), you can receive EIT funding from your 2nd year of membership. However, the evaluation of proposed KIC Activities will be carried out by external evaluators appointed by the Management Board of EIT Food ivzw. This process is beyond control of the RisingFoodStars. A cap of €100K EIT funding per year applies for RisingFoodStars. EIT funding is not a prefunding –for RisingFoodStars, actual costs are reimbursed 3 times/year.