

Call for expression of interest to participate in EIT Food RIS PSRAL – testing service

EIT Food is looking for 5 companies that would participate in testing of R&D services developed during the InfraBooster training programme as a part of the EIT Food RIS PSRAL project.

Application deadline: 26 July 2024, 3 pm CEST

Application template: see Annex.

Further details about EIT Food can be found at: www.eitfood.eu. More information about the EIT Food RIS PSRAL educational programs coordinated by University of Warsaw are available at:

- InfraBooster Foundation:

<https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/infrabooster/infrabooster-foundation>

- InfraBooster Practitioner:

<https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/infrabooster/infrabooster-practitioner>

- Government Executive Academy:

<https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/infrabooster/gea>

1. Background information

1.1. EIT Food

EIT Food is one of the largest and most impactful food-related initiatives worldwide. As part 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 members have a strong belief that the food sector needs to be transformed and that this can only be achieved by reconnecting partners within the food sector and by giving the consumer a more central role.

1.2. EIT Food RIS Public Sector Representatives Activity Line (PSRAL)

EIT Food RIS Public Sector Representatives Activity Line (“EIT Food RIS PSRAL”, “Project” or “Activity”) delivers capacity building and professional education to representatives of public sector in countries of EIT Regional Innovation Scheme in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe (“RIS”). It provides insights into new agri-food technologies, mission-oriented innovation policies for food system and best practices in leveraging publicly funded research infrastructures for industrially oriented R&D and entrepreneurship.

EIT Food RIS PSRAL consists of two interlinked educational programs. **InfraBooster** promotes effective use of publicly funded research infrastructures owned by universities or research institutes and relevant for R&D efforts of private sector agri-food companies and startups. **Government Executive Academy** encourages policy makers from national and regional authorities to enhance innovative policies in accordance with agri-food trends, best practices and opportunities for international collaboration.

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- InfraBooster Foundation:

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1.3. Expected outcomes for the economy and the society

The Activity enables public sector representatives from various European countries to drive societal and economic transformation towards sustainable, circular economies and modernized food systems that are ready to face international competition. InfraBooster is maximizing the effective use of research infrastructures, established through public funding, and create cross-border and in-country connections between science and industry. This aims to promote existing infrastructures for industrial R&D and entrepreneurship. The Government Executive Academy ensures that regional and national policies take into account agri-food-related societal challenges. It acknowledges the potential of innovative technologies, address new regulatory challenges, and encourage the development of local agri-food innovations. These efforts will further lead to job creation, increased competitiveness of industrial companies, and improvements in the scientific excellence of local research organisations.

The Activity is strengthening the innovative potential of participating countries by developing capacities of public sector representatives and transferring knowledge related to agri-food technologies and innovation policies. It supports the development of Smart Specialisation Strategies and mission-oriented policies that address societal challenges. The Activity aims to reduce the knowledge gap between policy makers in RIS and non-RIS countries by promoting the innovation agenda of EIT Food among ministries, regulators, funding agencies, and other public sector organisations. Specifically, these outcomes will be achieved through the delivery of InfraBooster and the Government Executive Academy, which offer educational activities aimed at promoting the effective use of publicly funded research infrastructures for the agri-food sector. Additionally, the Activity will establish direct synergies between EIT Food activities and other EU-funded support programs in RIS countries.

2. Participation in “EIT Food RIS Public Sector Representatives Activity Line”

Selected activities of EIT Food RIS PSRAL will be implemented with the support of dedicated subcontractors. The present call is launched by EIT Food jointly with University of Warsaw to select companies that will deliver testing of R&D services that were successfully developed within the second stage of InfraBooster training programme - InfraBooster Practitioner, to ensure the highest quality and effectiveness of developed services. This call seeks companies eager to gain valuable insights into new agri-food technologies and leverage best practices in utilizing publicly funded research infrastructures for industrially oriented R&D and entrepreneurship. Join us in driving innovation and advancing the

agri-food industry towards a sustainable future. Each subcontractor selected in the present call will deliver testing for one of the service specified in section 2.4 of this call document. As a service tester, each subcontractor will have the opportunity to evaluate new R&D services and provide valuable feedback.

The selection process is implemented as an open call, using clear and transparent selection criteria, and the selection will be carried out with the help of experts evaluators. In 2024, each subcontractor will benefit from **net funding of 9,500€** to carry out the tasks and implement the contractual obligations (based on subcontracting relationship, i.e. by issuing VAT invoices, without the requirement to apply Horizon Europe rules for personnel cost accounting). The subcontractors will have a precisely defined workplan, linked to the timeline of Project activities.

2.1. Eligibility

Eligible companies need to meet the following criteria:

1. A legal person (informal organizations/unregistered startup teams are not eligible);
2. Operate within sectors or industries that can benefit from advanced if testing R&D service;
3. Willing to carry out tests of a selected R&D services that was successfully developed within the InfraBooster Practitioner training programme;
4. Able to sign a subcontracting agreement with the EIT Food Co-Location Centre and act as a subcontractor in a project funded based on Horizon Europe/EIT modalities;
5. Possessing knowledge, skills, and resources needed to carry out the subcontracted tasks.

While evaluating applications, EIT Food will also consider the following criteria:

6. Clear and compelling justification of motives for the applicant company to select a specific R&D service, including its alignment with the business needs, goals, and operational challenges;
7. Proposed plan of service testing, incl. timeline.

2.2. Contractual tasks of subcontractor

The subcontractor will be responsible for the organisation and delivery of testing the R&D service as part of their operations. Specific new R&D services were developed within the InfraBooster Practitioner training programme, leveraging specialist research infrastructures of scientific organisations. The Subcontractor will deliver testing to ensure the highest quality and effectiveness of the developed R&D services before they become widely available on the market. The following list of contractual tasks applies:

- Participation in meetings with the service provider unit to plan and implemented the testing;
- Implement and integrate the selected R&D service into the Subcontractor's operational environment;
- Conduct comprehensive testing to assess the service's functionality, performance, and compatibility with existing Subcontractor's company systems and processes;
- Provide regular updates and feedback to the service provider team regarding the testing progress, challenges encountered, and initial observations;
- Submitting "Report on the new R&D service testing"—detailed instructions and report templates are provided by the University of Warsaw and the report includes: evidence of the implementation of the testing performance, confirmed by an invoice issued by the service provider to the

subcontractor, amounting to at least 10,000€ net (in case of invoices in local currencies, net amount must be at least 10,000€ converted to the local currency using the average rate of respective local National Bank from the day before the date of issuing the invoice, please note that the calculation and conversion rate details must be provided in the invoice), data about outcomes of the tests; brief overview of the R&D service tested, objectives of the testing, details about the use of research infrastructures of the scientific organisation providing the service, and key findings;

- Participation in the debriefing session with the team from University of Warsaw to discuss the Project experiences and lessons learned, following the submission of the report.

2.3. Benefits for organisation selected as subcontractor

Organisation selected as subcontractor will be offered the following benefits in 2024:

- Ability to benefit from the association with EIT Food and the EIT community (as subcontractor in EIT Food activities), and the brands of EIT Food and the EIT;
- Rights to participate in thematic project meetings, organized by EIT Food and its partners (no membership fees will be required from subcontractors; EIT Food will not cover travel costs to attend internal meetings, but organisations designated as subcontractors can use their assigned budgets to cover these costs);
- Rights to promote the association with EIT Food project, commercialise the product(s) developed as outcomes of the testing of R&D services process and introduce them to the market;
- Opportunities for networking with EIT Food partners, including opportunities for joint project ideation and involvement in other EIT Food projects;
- Subcontracting agreement with EIT Food Co-Location Centre with funding as defined in this call document, contingent upon the delivery of contractual tasks. Payments will be linked to compliance with the contractual tasks and deliverables;
- Opportunity to leverage R&D services providers' and their researchers teams' insights for new product design and commercialisation using services functionality;
- Knowledge and organisational support of EIT Food, its CLCs and partners in implementation of the activities planned for each subcontractor of the Project.

Becoming a subcontractor in EIT Food project shall be considered an opportunity to become associated with the community of EIT Food, establish relations with EIT Food partners and become better embedded in their activities, as well as to benefit access to advanced R&D services that you utilize within company operations. Subcontractors will also benefit from the increased visibility in their local innovation ecosystems, strengthening their position on the regional and national levels.

2.4. Information about services used for market testing

(1) Development of healthy bakery and pastry products

Service Provider: University of Life Sciences “King Mihai I” from Timisoara (ULST), Bakery Laboratory of Interdisciplinary Research Platform (PCI)

Description: This service focuses on the development and innovation of healthy bakery and pastry products, utilizing the expertise of PCI at ULST. The service includes training and mentoring in bakery and pastry product development, logistical and informational support in targeted nutrition, and



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consulting for customized technology formulas. It offers a complete portfolio that includes technology, manufacturing recipes, process parameters, technical specifications, nutritional value calculations, and finished product analysis of dietary flour products. The service provides cost-effective and sustainable solutions to obtain dietary flour products. PCI's main goal is to provide research, innovation, and technological transfer services, aligning with the latest dietary trends and consumer needs, particularly in developing hypoglycemic, gluten-free, and keto-friendly products.

Contact to service providers: Prof. Ersilia Alexa: ersiliaalexa@usvt.ro; Assoc. Prof. Diana Raba: diana.raba@usvt.ro; Lecturer Monica Negrea: monicanegrea@usvt.ro; Lecturer Diana Obistoiu: dianaobistoiu@usvt.ro.

(2) Pesticide innovation upgrade

Service Provider: University of Belgrade, Chemical Laboratory for Pesticides- Institute of Phytomedicine at the Faculty of Agriculture

Description: This service focuses on developing innovative pesticide products, leveraging the expertise of the Chemical Laboratory for Pesticides. The laboratory, accredited and equipped with modern equipment for pesticide analysis, aims to strengthen the capacities of domestic companies in developing effective, safer, and environmentally friendly pesticide products. The team's experience in plant protection product analysis, testing, registration, product certification, and consulting services forms the backbone of this service. The service includes the analysis of active ingredients in pesticides through a safe, efficient, and reliable process. Its customized solution, with innovative methodology, helps save up to 40% of clients' time on testing and analysis.

Contact to service providers: Kristina Stevanović: kristina.stevanovic@rect.bg.ac.rs; Tamara Čolić Milosavljević: tamara.colic@rect.bg.ac.rs; Nedeljko Milosavljević: nedeljko.milosavljevic@rect.bg.ac.rs.

WWW: <https://agrif.bg.ac.rs/sr/fakultet/laboratorije-i-usluge/laboratorije/hemijska-laboratorija-za-pesticide>

3) R&D services Research and Development Services at Your Door

Service Provider: University of Sarajevo, Institute for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (UNSA – INGEB)

Description: The service offers comprehensive genetic analysis, precise predictions, and the use of a validated genetic database. It focuses on leveraging predictive genetic modeling to develop resilient crop varieties suited to changing environmental conditions, thereby contributing to sustainable agriculture and biodiversity preservation. It includes versatility of methods, expertise, and dedicated know-how customization. UNSA-INGEB, equipped with sophisticated equipment and bioinformatic tools, offers services including genetic sequencing of food samples, disease resistance analysis, and crop yield forecasting. The institute's drive for commercialization of research outcomes aligns its scientific pursuits with market needs, benefiting various sectors including food, pharmaceuticals,

agriculture, and healthcare. It offers solutions that are ready-to-use, feasible, comprehensive, and actionable.

Contact to service providers: Prof. Dr. Lejla Kapur-Pojškić: lejla.pojskic@ingeb.unsa.ba; Prof. Dr. Maja Arslanagić-Kalajdžić: maja.arslanagic@efsa.unsa.ba; Ms. Nina Begović: nina.begovic@unsa.ba.

(4) Microbiological control of food products based on MALDI-TOF MS

Service Provider: Trakia University Stara Zagora, Laboratory of Food quality and safety at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

Description: The laboratory focuses on biological and chemical hazards affecting food safety and quality, employing classical ISO methods and scientific-based alternative methods. Matrix-Assisted Laser Desorption/Ionization Time of Flight Mass Spectrometry (MALDI-TOF MS) allows precise identification of agar-media isolated microorganisms and description of microbiota in raw materials and ready to eat products. The service based on MALDI-TOF MS analyses multiple samples simultaneously, rapid and accurate, and targets early detection of pathogens or spoilage organisms, resulting in reduced product recalls. The method is cost-effective and time-saving. The Laboratory of Food quality and safety has a broad inventory of food testing instruments and is experienced in providing training courses in animal welfare, HACCP, and molecular methods in food analysis.

Contact to service providers: Professor Todor Stoyanchev, PhD: todor.stoyanchev@trakia-uni.bg; Assistant Professor Ralitsa Kyuchukova, PhD: ralitsa.kyuchukova@trakia-uni.bg; Assistant Professor Desislava Bangieva, PhD: desislava.bangieva@trakia-uni.bg; Assistant Professor Rumyana Fasulkova: rumyana.fasulkova@trakia-uni.bg.

(5) Seed quality control and plant health analysis

Service Provider: University Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, Institute of Agriculture

Description: The leading institute specializes in seed quality control and plant health analysis, employing modern equipment and methods. It offers One Stop Shop Services, including sampling, transport, analysis, and recommendations. In one place, clients can get the full service portfolio needed for crops: seed quality analysis, serological detection of viruses, and molecular detection of viruses and virus-like organisms. Services include regular inspections, sampling, testing, and certification, improving overall seed material quality backed by extensive research experience, modern technology, and a focus on addressing industry challenges. The lab aims to ensure seed and plant health, contributing to higher agricultural yields and market sales by providing specialized expertise based on cutting-edge technology.

Contact to service providers: PhD Marija Gjosheva Kovachevikj: m.kovachevikj@zeminst.edu.mk; Katerina Bandjo Oreshkovikj kbandzo@yahoo.com; Despina Popovska Stojanov: despina.popovska@yahoo.com; Afrodita Ibushoska: ibusoskaa@yahoo.com

WWW: <http://zeminst.ukim.edu.mk/>

3. Selection process

Interested and eligible organisations are invited to **submit their applications by 26 July 2024, 3 pm CEST**, using the attached “EIT Food PSRAL” Application Form”. **Please send the electronic version of application, based on the attached template, to: infrabooster@wz.uw.edu.pl**. Incomplete applications or applications submitted by ineligible organisations will be rejected. Complete applications will be evaluated by an expert committee using standardized selection criteria. EIT Food reserves the right to contact the applicant organisations by e-mail asking for additional explanations or supporting documents, and to schedule selection interviews with the short-listed organisations. All applications will be evaluated using transparent selection criteria, and all applicants will receive concise written feedback, sent to an e-mail account indicated in the application template.

All proposals will be evaluated taking into account the following **eligibility criteria**, related to the applicants and their operations:

1. A legal person (informal organizations/unregistered startup teams are not eligible);
2. Operate within sectors or industries that can benefit from advanced if testing R&D service;
3. Willing to carry out tests of a selected R&D services that were successfully developed within the InfraBooster Practitioner training programme;
4. Able to sign a subcontracting agreement with the EIT Food Co-Location Centre and act as a subcontractor in a project funded based on Horizon Europe/EIT modalities (EIT Food partners and Rising Food Stars members are not eligible);
5. Possessing knowledge, skills, and resources needed to carry out the subcontracted tasks.

Eligibility criteria 1-5 will be evaluated on a 0-10 scale: 0 – not satisfactory; 10 – satisfactory.

Applications that meet all of the eligibility criteria (1-5) and receive 50 points will be further evaluated, based on the following **selection criteria**:

6. Clear and compelling justification for why each subcontractor selected a specific R&D service and how it aligns with their business needs, goals, and operational challenges Scale of existing sales and/or delivery operations;
7. Proposed plan of service testing, incl. timeline.

Selection criteria evaluated on a 0-10 scale: 0 – non satisfactory; 5 - satisfactory; 10 – excellent.

The application can receive max. 70 points for criteria 1-7. The highest ranked applications that meet all the eligibility criteria (1-5) will be selected.

Each selected organisation will sign the contract. If the contract is not signed within 3 months after announcing the call results, the EIT Food Co-Location Centre reserve the right to decide on subsequent actions: (1) launching a new call, or (2) selecting another organisation based on the previous scoring under the current call or (3) resignation of contracting and testing of a respective R&D services in 2024.

“EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs” Application Form

Please fill in the application form, ensuring that **all fields** are completed. Please submit the application in electronic format (PDF) by **26 July 2024, 3 pm CEST** to email address: infrabooster@wz.uw.edu.pl. Applications that are incomplete or sent after the deadline will not be considered. Please do not provide further supporting documents and limit your application to presenting all information required by this form.

“EIT Food RIS PSRAL” Application Form – testing service	
1. Country	
2. Name of the applicant organisation	
3. Legal form	
4. Company registration address (street, postcode, city)	
5. Company registration number	
6. Date of company registration	
7. Website address	
8. Contact person	
7. Position	
8. E-mail	
9. Phone	
10. I declare that our company is willing to carry out test of a selected R&D service that was successfully developed within the InfraBooster Practitioner training programme.	Yes / No*
11. I declare that our company possesses knowledge, skills, and resources needed to carry out the subcontracted tasks.	Yes / No*
12. Please indicate the product R&D service for which you would like to carry out testing (tick “X” to indicate one service from the list of available R&D services; if you are interested in testing of more than one service, please submit separate applications for each service):	

(1) Development of healthy bakery and pastry products	
(2) Pesticide innovation upgrade	
(3) R&D services Research and Development Services at Your Door	
(4) Microbiological control of food products based on MALDI-TOF MS	
(5) Seed quality control and plant health analysis	
15. Please provide a clear and compelling justification for why your company selected the specific R&D service and how it aligns with your business needs, goals, and operational challenges.	
16. Please describe proposed plan of service testing, incl. specific timeline.	

* - Please select (underline) the applicable answer

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 in subcontracting agreement. I give consent to processing the application by EIT Food, its Co-Location Centres, University of Warsaw and external experts involved in the evaluation process, and am willing to cooperate to provide further information or documents confirming the facts presented above.

If selected, I declare the willingness to promptly proceed to sign the subcontract agreement with EIT Food based on the template published online by EIT Food as part of the call documentation. I will act as subcontractor in 2024 based on conditions described in the "Call for expression of interest to participate in "EIT Food RIS PSRAL" – testing service". I am aware of the scope of services that should be provided and confirm having familiarized myself with the contents of the call and subcontract agreement, published online by EIT Food as part of the call documentation.

Date, place

Name of the person submitting the application

Organisation submitting the application