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Request for Implementing Participants of Building Entrepreneurial Capacities for Women in the Agrifood Sector (KAVA no. 20099-25) in Southern Europe

IMP-RIS-20099-25-01

EIT FOOD

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Eitfood.eu

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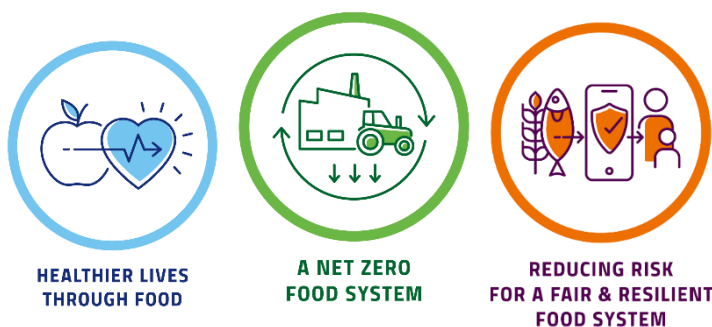
1. Introduction

1.1 About EIT Food

EIT Food is the world’s largest food innovation community, creating connections right across the food system. Supported by the European Union (EU), we invest in projects, organisations and individuals who share our goals for a healthy and sustainable food system.

We have built a unique not-for-profit business to carry out transformative programmes in skills, education, entrepreneurship, start-up investment and communications. We deliver these programmes in partnership with our members to create a culture and build a community which sees the long-term value in the food innovation we fund.

Our Missions



EIT Food’s Missions respond to major societal challenges within the food system. The alignment of our chosen challenges towards United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and EU policy is detailed in our main funding [strategy document](#) agreed with EIT (European Institute of Innovation & Technology). For more about our Missions-led approach please visit [our website](#).

1.2 About EIT Food Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS)

The EIT RIS is the EIT Community’s outreach introduced in 2014 to share good practices and experience emerging from EIT Community activities. The EIT RIS opens the activities of EIT’s Innovation Communities to innovators that are not partners, by providing targeted support to individuals and organisations to take part in and benefit from EIT Innovation Communities’ activities, services and programmes. EIT Food RIS aims at strengthening those regions in Europe which are modest and moderate in terms of innovation in the agrifood sector. This outreach scheme is open to innovators that are not partners of EIT Food and provides targeted support to EIT RIS stakeholders through a portfolio of projects.

EIT Food RIS activities are performed in Southern and Central Eastern Europe and managed by respective Co-Location Centres – South (hereinafter named “**EIT Food CLC South**”) and North-East (hereinafter named “**EIT Food CLC NE**”). Empowering Women in Agrifood Project (hereinafter named “**Project**”) is run both in South and Central Eastern Europe – activities in both regions are run in synergy and coordinated by Activity Leader from EIT Food CLC South. This Call is managed by EIT Food CLC South.

2. Adding Implementing Participants to Empowering Women in Agrifood (EWA) Project

This Request for Implementing Participants of Building Entrepreneurial Capacities for Women in the Agrifood Sector (KAVA no. 20099-25) in Southern Europe has the objective of selecting one organisation per country, namely from **Portugal and Spain**, to implement the Project.

The Project, run in 12 European countries, aims to provide up to 120 women entrepreneurs across 12 RIS targeted Countries with the required knowledge, confidence, support and networking opportunities to meet and exceed their aspirations, leading them to successfully start and develop sustainable businesses. The Project will run for a period of 6 months supporting early-stage female entrepreneurs and it will seek out and assist women to grow and develop their businesses with a tailored, focused approach that specifically considers the concrete challenges which female entrepreneurs face generally as well as the barriers which can limit entrepreneurial activity.

The main objective of the Project is to support women entrepreneurs in the food sector within the above-mentioned countries to find innovative solutions that tackle the current food system challenges, build and develop business ideas.

The secondary aims of the Project are:

- developing early-stage startups and create new ones.
- sparking co-founder relationships.
- building links between industry, academia, startups and the wider community.

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

3. Description of Role & Profile

3.1 Role

Each organisation selected from 2 countries mentioned in point 2 (the “Selected Organisation”) will manage the following tasks within the Project in their respective Country:

Stage 1 – Scouting phase (duration: from April to May 2025)

The aim of the scouting phase is to select **10 female participants** per Country to become direct beneficiaries of the Project (“**Mentees**”). Moreover, **10 Mentors (“Mentors”)** per Country have to be selected to provide personalised 1:1 mentorship to the Mentees for 6 months (from June to November - both included). Mentors should be selected by their experience and the specific needs of the Mentees. Mentoring process should include at least 1,5 hours session per week. Both online and offline format of sessions are possible and should be decided directly by a mentoring pair for their best comfort.

Tasks of the Selected organisation:

- a. scouting of Mentors in relevant topics (e.g. entrepreneurship, business model, sales, pitching, marketing, customer discovery, etc.) providing at least 10 engaged Mentors,
- b. contracting selected Mentors based on the definition of Mentor’s profile, selection criteria the lists of roles and responsibilities provided by EIT Food CLC South,

- c. scouting of female conducting early-stage startups or women with entrepreneurial talent interested in the agrifood system, providing at least 20 eligible applications,
- d. evaluation of female entrepreneurs' applications based on the eligibility and criteria provided by EIT Food CLC South and selection of 10 Mentees.

Note: female entrepreneurs' scouting, application questionnaire and evaluation will be carried out within the F6S platform. The Selected organisation should register and get familiar with F6S and with scouting methodology.

Stage 2 – Matchmaking and mentoring process

Timing of the Matchmaking activity: end of May/beginning of June 2025

After the selection of Mentees and Mentors, a **Matchmaking activity** (event) should be organised to create mentoring pairs and introduce them to the Project in each Country.

Mentors' selection will be based on their background, expertise, motivation and fit with the entrepreneurs selected (entrepreneurs diagnostics will reveal the main challenges to work on).

The selected Mentor will support the overall progress of the entrepreneur they are partnered with during the programme. The Mentor is not a consultant but rather someone to guide, question and enable the entrepreneur's success. During the sessions they will work to prepare a Business Pitch deck that will be utilised during the final Pitching Day. Every mentor will provide their feedback on the mentee for the progress score.

Tasks of the Selected organisation:

- a. design and organisation of the Matchmaking activity, including:
 - creation of a final agenda, including introduction to Intellectual Property (IP) rights and 5 min. presentation of each Mentee and her business idea,
 - at least 1 interactive matchmaking exercise to create mentoring pairs,
 - sharing an online survey on the self-assessed needs of Mentees and potential areas of mentoring for Mentors at least one week before the activity,
 - provision of information pack about the Project with beneficiaries,
 - management of attendance and registrations,
 - in case of face-to-face event – provide all necessary arrangements (contract of a venue, catering, audio-visual materials, facilitators and speakers).

Note: there should be mentoring sessions follow-up and monthly feedback survey collection both from Mentees and Mentors.

Stage 3 – Training programme (duration: June – November 2025)

The aim of the training programme is to reinforce specific skills of the Mentees and expose them to real life challenges in their business. The Selected organisation will be responsible for scouting thematic experts ("**Experts**") and adjusting training opportunities to the local ecosystem in a way which will develop expected competences to be acquired by the Mentees (EIT Food CLC South will provide the Selected Organisation with various competences expected to be acquired upon the completion of the Project).

Additionally, EIT Food is running a dedicated online platform (“Platform”) for EWA community to connect the female entrepreneurs and provide them with useful information, webinars and virtual meetings to optimise beneficiaries learning. Note: A short training for the virtual community use will be provided to the key contact from the organisations selected prior to the programme execution.

Task of the Selected organisation:

- a. Design and implement a training itinerary for the Mentees considering their needs, an initial group/individual diagnostic and the expected competences to be acquired during the programme. The training should tackle at least 2 of the following areas:
 - leadership skills (team management, diversity and inclusion, public speaking, pitching, negotiations, active listening, empathy, time management);
 - business skills (financial management, legal matters, IP management, data management, successful sales, market mapping);
 - agrifood expertise (new trends in agrifood sector, new regulations in agrifood sector – country wise and at the EU level incl. New Green Deal and Farm to Fork Strategy, food security requirements, supply chain in agrifood).
 - provide at least one of the following training opportunities
 - group sessions with thematic Experts who support Mentees with their self-development (natural talents, emotional intelligence in business and coaching) and specific elements of their businesses like law, finance, marketing, logistics.
 - learning-by-doing opportunities in which women are taking part in the process of creating podcasts, photo shooting for advertisement campaigns other startup competitions.
- c. design and organisation of a **Masterclass activity** (event): with the objective of providing networking, high-level coaching to the Mentees and dedicated training from Experts to complement online educational actions ensuring greater Project’s impact – it can be dedicated to specific aspect of the business idea development or can be focused on reinforcing specific skills such as public appearances, media relations, sales and negotiations.
- d. utilise of the EIT Food StartUp Manual provided by EIT Food CLC South in online version, expanding any specific topic during mentoring or training.
- e. Offering once a month access to new material on the Platform:
 - video and/or audio publications relevant to female entrepreneurs for building their entrepreneurial skills and gather expertise knowledge within the following pathways mentioned in point a) above.

Stage 4 – Pitching and awards ceremony (before the 29th of November 2025)

The **Pitching activity** (event) should be organised with the aim of exposing Mentees to public speaking and business competition, selecting two winners of 1st Final Grant (10 000 EUR gross) and 2nd Final Grant (5 000 EUR gross) granted from EIT Food South, and additionally networking them with the local startup ecosystem (investors, Business Angels, innovators, industry representatives).

This event should act as a networking event for the female entrepreneurs to meet with the local food and innovation ecosystem (startups, investors, food companies, universities and research centres, NGOs, etc.). It should serve as a platform to discuss the current challenges in the local agrifood system and present the EIT Food activities to the invited audience – it can be a panel discussion or inspirational speech aimed at reinforcing female entrepreneurship in agrifood sector in the local ecosystem. The presence of a role model from the female entrepreneurship scene would be highly recommended.

Tasks of the Selected Organisation:

- a. design, organisation and promotion of the Pitching activity including:
 - creation of a separate document indicating general rules/terms and conditions of the event on a basis of a template provided by EIT Food CLC South,
 - creation of a final agenda, considering that during the event participants:
 - present their final pitches,
 - are evaluated by the Jury,
 - receive competition results based on the progress score (50%) and pitching score (50%).
 - managing invitations and registration,
 - in case of face-to-face event – contract of venue, catering, audio-visual materials, facilitators and proposing speakers,
 - at least part of the event must be open to general public. There needs to be an attractive panel discussion, training session, inspirational speech, cocreation workshop accompanying the pitching session.
- D. contribute to evaluation of Mentees’ pitching presentations providing at least 2 independent members to be part of the Jury. Selection criteria for Mentees’ pitching evaluation will be shared in advance by EIT Food CLC South.
- E. evaluate a final business deck of each Mentee, which would rate as in their Programme progress score.

Audience: Minimum 40 people (excluding Mentors, Mentees and organisers)

Note: Selected Organisation is welcome to be creative and introduce more features to the proposed format of event. The Selected Organisation will work closely with EIT Food CLC South on customising the format and schedule of the event to the specificities of the local agrifood and startup ecosystem.

Stage 5 – Communication of the Project (duration: from April to December 2025)

Tasks of the Selected organisation:

- a. Contribution to the dissemination of the Project’s activities and news, using adequately internal communication and social media channels, and providing a separate communication and dissemination report on press appearances, number of social media publications and dissemination strategies.
- b. Ensure correct branding, EIT Food visibility and respect of the EWA visual identification in all communication materials in accordance with the guidelines provided by EIT Food CLC South.
- c. Provide EIT Food CLC South representative with events agenda, press release/social media or other communication information at least 3 weeks in advance, following the template provided by EIT Food CLC South.
- d. Distribution of Project materials to Project participants.
- e. Sending evidence of at least 3 media publications in the national press (digital or paper).
- f. Encourage and foster participation of the selected women on social media, interviews on the national media and/or in EIT Food channels.

Stage 6 – Project internal coordination (duration: April – December 2025)

Tasks of the Selected organisation:

- a. Ensuring regular update to the EWA EIT Food CLC South coordinator with any Project's progress or action on top of regular communication.
- b. Designation of the person managing the Project for permanent contact with the representative of EIT Food CLC South.
- c. Complying with the conditions set out in the KAVA contract and performing the necessary Project's activities indicated in the Annex to the document. Attendance to monthly update meetings summarizing Project's implementation process, fostering cross-country synergies and networking.
- d. Use of tools and platforms required by the Project: SharePoint, F6S application platform, EWA community platform, Zoom.
- e. Distribution of additional materials for Project's participants provided to the Selected Organisation by EIT Food CLC South.
- f. Carry out a final Project report, providing all the required information of Project implementation.
- g. Share Project's success stories and best practices for Project's implementation and growth.
- h. Ensure EIT Food branding is always visible and respected in all communication materials (online events, agendas etc.) and guarantee the visual world of the programme standardised throughout all EWA countries.

3.2 Profile

EIT Food CLC South invites organisations from **Portugal and Spain** to submit their proposals to become an implementor of the Empowering Women in Agrifood in respective country.

Eligible organisations must be legal entities, which could be companies, incubators, accelerators, higher education institutes, research institutes, or non-governmental organisations. Operating within the respective country targeted by the call is a fundamental requirement. Additionally, these organisations are acknowledged as pivotal contributors to the local female entrepreneurship ecosystem, displaying a robust regional outreach. A crucial aspect of eligibility involves a proven track record of experience in supporting and empowering female entrepreneurs.

Furthermore, organisations must exhibit proficiency in organizing successful events and workshops, underlining their capacity to execute impactful initiatives. The ability to adhere to the Project timeline is essential, with a commitment to organize Project activities within the specified timeframe, spanning from April to December 2025. Lastly, a wide network of business connections or the capability to engage valuable experts, particularly in the agrifood sector, is required.

4. Funding

4.1 Funding overview

Selected Organisation will receive a subgrant to fund their cost. This is cascade funding:

- Participation in the KAVA is from **March - December 2025**
- Estimated funding for that period per Selected Organisation is **40,000 EUR** gross

There is a 6 million EUR limit per participants from Member States of the European Union (EU) and from [Horizon Europe Associate Countries](#) for the 3-year business plan. This KAVA is implemented under GA 01101912.

The Subgrant is based on actual costs and value for money. All costs need to comply with Horizon Europe regulations regarding the eligibility of expenses. Please refer to Article 6 of the [Model Grant Agreement](#) and the [Annotated Model Grant Agreement](#).

5. Application Preparation, Submission & Evaluation

5.1 Timeline

Application Open	01.07.2024
Application Close	01.08.2024
Evaluation	01.08-01.09.2024
Communication to selected participants	15.09.2024

5.2 Who can apply?

Funding for this Request for Implementing Participants of Building Entrepreneurial Capacities for Women in the Agrifood Sector (KAVA no. 20099-25) in Southern Europe is available to organisation from **Portugal and Spain**.

5.3 Application Submission

The deadline for the submission of full applications is **1st August 2024 at 23:59 (CET)**. The full application will consist of the submission of the Application Form attached to the Call, signed by an authorized representative of the applicant.

All applications must be emailed in **English** to the following address within the deadline mentioned above:

Subject line: Empowering Women in Agrifood – Application Form [country]

E-mail: carolina.silvamarques@eitfood.eu

6. Evaluation and Selection Process

All submitted applications will undergo an eligibility check and evaluation to determine their feasibility and suitability for funding. The evaluation will be conducted by at least 3 evaluators, including at least 1 internal evaluator.

When relevant, the external evaluators will be selected in an open and transparent process. All evaluators, both internal and external, are trained extensively on the [European Union’s Code of Conduct for Evaluators](#), namely on the importance of transparency, fair treatment of all applicants, confidentiality and how to avoid conflict of interest. Evaluators must contractually agree to recuse themselves in the event of a conflict of interest.

6.1 Eligibility

Please read Annex 1 carefully, in addition to the following eligibility criteria:

Organisation Eligibility	Each implementing participant must:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be a legally incorporated entity (for example company, incubator or accelerators, higher education institute, research institute, non-governmental organisation) in one of the EU or Horizon Europe eligible country listed above for a minimum of 3 years.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a PIC Number: https://www.eitfood.eu/files/PIC-Guidance.pdf • Comply with requests for documents during due diligence/validation. • Operate in a country/region targeted by the call. • Be recognised as important player in the local female entrepreneurship ecosystem with strong regional outreach. • Be experienced in supporting female entrepreneurs. • Be capable of organising successful events and workshops. • Be able to organize the Project activities in the timeframe from April to December 2025. • Have a wide network of business connections or capable to reach valuable experts especially in the agrifood sector.
Application Eligibility	The eligible applications must:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be complete, with all mandatory supporting documents uploaded. • Be submitted on time via our application template, in English.

6.2 Evaluation Process

At least 3 | evaluators, being at least 1 internal evaluator, will evaluate proposals based on the criteria below. All external evaluators have been selected in an open and transparent process and must contractually agree to recuse themselves in the event of a conflict of interest.

Category	Description	Score
1.Experience in training and supporting female entrepreneurs	<i>Demonstrated proficiency in training and providing support to female entrepreneurs, showcasing a comprehensive understanding of their unique challenges and opportunities.</i>	0-15
2.Experience and ability to successfully organize and execute innovative events in the field of entrepreneurship/women's empowerment.	<i>Proven track record of planning, organizing, and executing events in the field of entrepreneurship and women's empowerment and organizing highly innovative events, showing a deep understanding of industry trends and audience engagement.</i>	0-15
3.Being part of the local startup and/or female entrepreneurship ecosystem and having well established network of their organisations supporting startups and/or female entrepreneurs in the respective country.	<i>Deeply ingrained within the local ecosystem with a robust network of organisations, showcasing active collaboration and support for startups and female entrepreneurs.</i>	0-15
4.Proposition of tailoring the Project's activities mentioned in point 3 of this document, with adjustments to the local context and needs.	<i>A well-defined strategy showcasing thorough understanding and integration of local context and needs, demonstrating a commitment to tailoring project activities for maximum impact.</i>	0-15
5.Interest and/or expertise in the agrifood sector.	<i>Evidence of interest and expertise in the agrifood sector, with a comprehensive understanding of industry trends, challenges, and innovations.</i>	0-15

6. Proposal of sponsors and/or additional financial support for the implementation of the Project on the local market.	<i>Strategic proposal, showcasing a thorough understanding of potential sponsors and supplementary funding sources, demonstrating a proactive approach to financial sustainability</i>	0-15
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Each evaluation sub-criterion will be scored from 0 to 15 using the following scoring system.

The application can receive a maximum of 90 points.

Score		Description
0	Not satisfactory	Not addressed or the criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses
5	Satisfactory	Application broadly addresses the criterion, but many shortcomings are present
10	Good	Application addresses the criterion well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
15	Excellent	Application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

7. Administrative Items

7.1 Appeal to Results

Applicants can submit an appeal within 5 days of result receipt, if:

The evaluation of their proposal has not been carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in this document.

For more details, please read [EIT Food Redress Mechanism](#).

7.2. EIT Food Legal Framework & Legal Documents to be signed

Selected instructions regarding the completion of the following documents, as well as agreeing to EIT Food's conflict of interest policy:

New Participant:

- A. **Framework Agreement**
- B. **Kava Contract**

7.3 Payment Schedule

The Selected Organisation will sign Framework Agreement and KAVA Contract with EIT Food with a total funding of 40 000 EUR gross to cover the eligible costs of implementing EWA project activities according to the workplan in a respective country.

The funding will be paid in instalments.

Please note that the following expenses are compulsory to be included by Selected Organisation:

- in case of face-to-face events: event photography, video recording, catering, venue renting, facilitators and/or speakers' cost, VAT Included,
- in case of online events: streaming system, subtitling option or simultaneous translations English/native language facilitators and/or speakers' cost, VAT Included, additional training sessions (business, self-development etc.).
- Mentor or expert remuneration contracted for EWA programme entrepreneurs' benefit.

7.4 Monitoring

The project will be monitored and may be audited.

7.5 Support

In case the applicants require additional information or clarifications, these should be addressed to the person indicated below. All communication between EIT Food and applicants is only possible in writing.

ANNEX 1 – Eligibility

Please Note:

1. Failing any of the above criteria will make your application ineligible. If an applicant is ineligible, the participant will be informed.
2. According to EU policies and measures, Russian entities will not be authorised to participate in any new grant under the EU Research and Innovation programmes. This ban applies not only to their potential participation as beneficiaries, but to their potential participation in any kind of role: beneficiaries, linked third parties/affiliated entities, subcontractors, in-kind contributors, international partners/associated partners, and third parties receiving financial support. Find the full statement from the European Commission [here](#).
3. Pursuant to Article 2 (2) of the Decision 2022/2506 of 15 December 2022 on measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary *where the Commission implements the Union budget in direct or indirect management pursuant to of Article 62(1) points (a) and (c), of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046*, **no legal commitments shall be entered into with any public interest trust established on the basis of the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity maintained by such a public interest trust**. This prohibition applies to financial support to third parties (sub-grants and prizes), hence the proposal of any entity or group of entities where a Participant is included in the list of public interest trusts shall be considered as not eligible.
4. Applicants will be deemed ineligible if:
 - a. bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, where its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business Activities are suspended, or where it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national laws or regulations.
 - b. it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the organisation is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the applicable law.
 - c. it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the organisation is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the organisation belongs, or

by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes a wrongful intent or gross negligence.

- d. is found to be attempting to influence the decision-making process of the call during the process.
- e. attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the call process.
- f. it has been established by a final judgment that the organisation is guilty of fraud, corruption or money laundering.