



Co-funded by
the European Union

Request for Proposal
for Challenge Labs Poland Activity in 2024 and 2025
(KAVA no. 18253)

Table of Contents

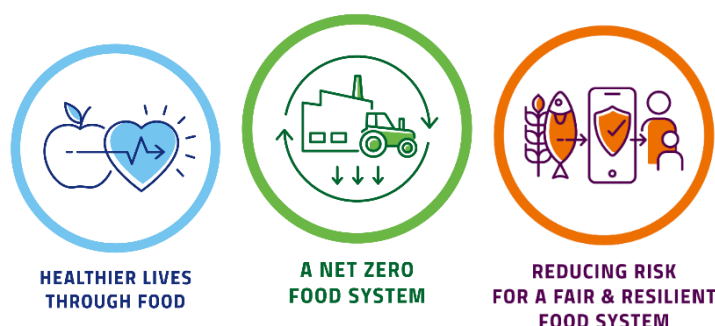
1. Introduction	2
About EIT Food Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS)	2
2. Details of Challenge Labs Poland Activity	2
The Background and Overview of the Activity	2
3. Description of Role & Profile	3
3.1 Role and Tasks	3
Stage 1 – Scouting phase	3
Stage 2 – Recruitment of participants	3
Stage 3 – Implementation of the Activity	4
Stage 4 – Summary report and Follow-up support	5
Research on industry challenges	5
3.2 Profile	6
4. Benefits for the Selected organisation	6
5. Application Preparation, Submission & Evaluation	6
5.1 Timeline	6
5.2 Who can apply?	7
5.3 Application Submission	7
6. Evaluation and Selection Process	7
6.1 Eligibility	7
6.2 Evaluation Process	7
7. Administrative Items	8
7.1 Appeal to Results	8
7.2. EIT Food Legal Framework & Legal Documents to be signed	9
7.3 Payment Schedule	9
7.4 Monitoring	9
7.5 Support	9
8. Challenge Labs - Application form	9
ANNEX 1 – Eligibility	12
ANNEX 2 – EIT KPIs 2023-2025	12
ANNEX 3 – EIT Food Competency Framework	13
ANNEX 4 – EIT Food Redress Mechanism	13

1. Introduction

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 which 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](#).

About EIT Food Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS)

The EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS) is the EIT Community’s outreach scheme introduced in 2014 to share good practices and experiences emerging from EIT Community activities. The EIT RIS provides targeted support to individuals and organisations to take part in and benefit from EIT Innovation Communities’ activities, services and programmes.

EIT RIS aims at strengthening those regions in Europe which are modest and moderate in terms of innovation in the agri-food sector. It is open to innovators that are not partners of EIT Food and supports targeted stakeholders through a portfolio of projects.

2. Details of Challenge Labs Poland Activity

This Request has the objective of selecting one organization - the Selected Organization to implement the Challenge Labs Poland in 2024 and 2025 (the “Activity” or “Challenge Labs Poland”). Two editions of the Activity should be finalised by 30th November 2025.

The Background and Overview of the Activity

The aim of the “Activity” is double fold, to find innovative solutions to big, tangible problems faced by the food sector and to build capacity among the participants of the Activity to develop entrepreneurial skills. The Challenge Labs Poland is a multi-stage programme designed using principles from design thinking and

service design. Challenge Labs Poland aims to include students, technologists, scientists, professionals, consumers, and companies. This diverse mix helps analyse the food system comprehensively, exploring sustainability challenges through conversations with industry experts and consumers.

The primary objective for the 2024 and 2025 editions of Challenge Labs Poland is multi-faceted. It aims to attract at least 10 ready teams or early-stage start-ups or at least 50 individual participants who want to join these teams, fostering their growth and providing a platform for creativity and collaboration in the agri-food field. Applicants should carefully review the attached list of EIT Food KPIs provided in Annex 2 and select the metrics that best align with their project goals. Applicants must articulate their chosen KPIs in the application form.

In 2024 and 2025, the Activity aims to tackle both immediate challenges and foster long-term growth in Poland's agrifood sector. It focuses on boosting the quality of emerging startups, and helping their technologies reach the market. Support extends beyond Challenge Labs Poland to prepare participants for other EIT Food programs (like [Seedbed](#) or [Food Accelerator Network \(FAN\)](#)). Startup alumni are also encouraged to participate in the [EIT Food Impact Funding Framework](#).

To learn more about Challenge Labs Poland you can enter the official website:
<https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/challenge-labs>

3. Description of Role & Profile

3.1 Role and Tasks

The Selected organization will play a crucial role in managing various tasks throughout the 2 editions of Challenge Labs Poland for 2024 and 2025 (one edition per each year). The responsibilities are outlined in different stages, each contributing to the overall success of the Activity:

Stage 1 – Scouting phase

- **Collaboratively agree on final challenges** between the Selected organization and EIT Food (look at *Research on industry challenges* part);
- **Scout thematic mentors/experts**, in relevant topics (e.g., entrepreneurship, business model, sales, pitching, marketing, customer discovery, policy making, etc.), **moderators** (the persons from the Selected organisation(s) that help and coordinate the implementation of the Activity), and **partner company(ies)/sponsoring company(ies)**, that will/may define its challenge or industry problem to be solved by the participants; **adjust training opportunities** to the local ecosystem;
- **Secure collaboration with at least one Polish university**, scientific institute, or technological park to involve students and PhD students in the Activity;
- **Scout participants beyond universities**, aiming for a diverse mix from the start-up community, entrepreneurs, researchers, academics, young farmers/food producers, and agrifood sector employees.

Stage 2 – Recruitment of participants

- **Recruit participants** from diverse backgrounds, including students, graduates, young researchers, entrepreneurs, and professionals interested or involved in agrifood.
- **Evaluate applications and select participants**. EIT Food CLC North-East will monitor the recruitment process at all stages. Details regarding the participant recruitment process, application evaluation, eligibility, and selection criteria will be discussed with the Selected organization(s).
- **Ensure a minimum of 50 workshop participants or at least 10 early-stage start-ups** with at least 8 participating **experts/mentors** and an adequate number of **moderators**. The Selected organization(s) are also responsible for collecting a minimum of 50 signed **Participant Consent Forms** from the individual participants or **all necessary supporting documents** in case of start-up training, **group presentations** (as

evidence of acquired skills), and **NDA**s with experts/mentors to protect the Activity solutions. Ready team members should explain their motivation to participate together. Ensure that each team member signs the Participant Consent Form.

Stage 3 – Implementation of the Activity

<i>Individuals</i>	<i>Registered startups</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver online and/or in-person activities, offering resources to build participants' entrepreneurship skills. At least 3 skills of The EIT Food Education Competency Framework are expected to be acquired. The format and method may vary based on the Selected organization(s)' agenda but culminate in a Final Pitching Activity or presentation of team solutions. This could involve a public speaking and business competition to select winners and connect them with the local start-up and business ecosystem, including investors and industry representatives. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct workshops covering various aspects of innovative solution creation, such as law, finance, marketing, logistics, product management, business planning, prototyping, pitching, and negotiations. Organize group sessions with thematic experts focusing on entrepreneurial skills development, including design thinking, creative tasks, natural talents, emotional intelligence in business, and coaching tools. Provide training on specific and relevant aspects of Intellectual Property (IP) rights in Poland and legal issues surrounding product or technology creation. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address real challenges – participants' outcomes should be measurable and possess the potential to evolve into a product, initiate a startup, or participate in EIT Food programs available to Polish participants for further project development. 	
<i>Duration – to be proposed</i>	<i>Duration – minimum 2 months (frequency and programme to be proposed)</i>

- Submit a Final Pitching Activity agenda for approval by the EIT Food CLC North-East representative at least 3 weeks before the Final Pitching Activity. Provide a press release/other communication information for the acceptance of the EIT Food Communication team minimum 4 weeks in advance, following the instruction [here](#).
- Manage invitations and registrations of the participants, registration of their attendance, and logistics. Design, and organize the Final Pitching Activity, including its rules and terms. Evaluate the final pitch deck of each group/team and define the winners. Contribute at least three independent members to the Jury for evaluating participants' pitching presentations.
- Conduct workshops and Final event in Polish providing English translation if needed. Pitch decks could be provided in English.
- Arrange venue, catering, audio-visual materials, moderators, and speakers for face-to-face events.
- For online events, provide technical arrangements, including communication platforms and checked sound and video equipment.
- Create a landing page and use social networking platforms for participants to access materials, updates, news, and chat.
- Collaborate with EIT Food CLC North-East to customize the event format and schedule based on the local agrifood and start-up ecosystem specificities.
- Promote other EIT Food programs available for Polish participants within the Activity's agenda. Additionally, introduce the [EIT Food Start-up Manual, available online](#).
- Applicants are encouraged to be creative and propose additional features for the event format. The Selected organization(s) will collaborate with EIT Food CLC North-East to tailor the event schedule to the local agrifood and start-up ecosystem.

Stage 4 – Summary report and Follow-up support

December 2024 & December 2025

- Provide a final Activity report and share success stories and best practices, obtain the participants' feedback, and send all necessary documentation to the EIT Food CLC North-East representative.

Tasks during all Activity stages:

- Designate a contact person for permanent communication with the EIT Food CLC North-East representative, ensure regular follow-up sessions with him/her on the Activity progress, carrying Internal Activity Coordination.
- Contribute to disseminating the Activity and news through internal communication and social media channels. Send evidence of at least 3 media publications in the national press (digital or paper).
- Ensure correct branding, and EIT Food visibility and respect its visual identification in all communication materials (online events, agendas, etc.) in accordance [with the guidelines](#) provided by EIT Food CLC North-East.
- Encourage and foster the participation of the selected participants on social media, interviews on the national media and/or in EIT Food channels.

Research on industry challenges

Using EIT Food's and the Selected organization's online and offline channels and network, Selected organisation is expected to propose EIT Food a series of challenges facing the food system in Poland through research and interviews with agrifood sector representatives and agrifood companies. Ideally 2 or 3 challenges will be generated by an agrifood company(ies) who will become co-financing partner(s) of the Challenge Labs Poland 2024 and 2025. Research should focus on the identification and formulation of problem statement/specific challenges within the EIT Food missions: Healthier Lives Through Food, Net Zero Food System, Reducing Risk for a Fair and Resilient Food System. The organisation should prepare a short report summarising the findings and main challenges identified which will be then used as the starting point of the workshop.

Example 1: *The problem with regenerative agriculture is that traditional companies are not willing/able to pay the additional prices required for the mode of production.' "How to bring to the table a fresh, convenient and sustainable lettuce". "How to produce a circular yogurt".*

Example 2: *Products made with alternative proteins are still less available and more expensive than meat. How can we use technology to increase sustainable production of plant based products on a bigger scale?*

Example 3: *Packaging of food products is often not sustainable and contributes to production of non-recyclable waste. How can we change current food packaging to minimize their negative impact on the environment?*

NB. The mentioned list of challenges serves as a proposal, we kindly request that an applying organization(s) submit a refined plan featuring specific challenges tailored to the unique and specific needs and goals of a Polish agrifood market.

Additional challenges or problems **unrelated** to those proposed by the EIT Food CLC North-East, yet focused on innovations in the agrifood field, may also be suggested and presented for participants to solve by Partner(s)/Sponsor companies.

The Selected organization is authorized to carry out **multiple editions** of the Challenge Labs Poland to achieve the required number of participants. The focus of each edition can be tailored to address different challenges.

3.2 Profile

Eligible entities, including companies, incubators, accelerators, higher education institutes, research institutes, or non-governmental/civic organizations, are invited to apply. The Selected organization should have:

Expertise and Experience:

- Demonstrated proficiency in organizing impactful events and workshops using various innovation methodologies.
- Strong background and prior experience in the agrifood sector.
- Recognition as a key player in the local entrepreneurship ecosystem with robust regional outreach.
- Commitment to the Activity timeline (to be adjusted in 2024 to December 2025) and a well-established network in the agrifood sector.

Legal and Administrative Criteria:

- Legal persons capable of signing a subcontracting agreement with EIT Food CLC North-East, operating within Poland and with a strong regional presence.

Entrepreneurial Support Track Record:

- Proven history of working with innovative startups in the agrifood sector.
- Experience in designing and implementing start-up scouting processes.
- A wide network of business connections, and valuable experts, especially in the agri-food sector.

4. Benefits for the Selected organisation

Organisation/s chosen by EIT Food CLC North-East to organise the Activity will be offered the following benefits:

- **Financial Support:** Selected organisation receives up to €15,000 gross funding from EIT Food CLC North-East to cover the Activity expenses, aiding in the execution of innovative initiatives.
- The Selected organisation can receive additional remuneration in a maximum amount of EUR 5 000 (five thousand euro) + 23% VAT, in case of fulfilling a task indicated in §3 section 3.1) hereof, i.e., for the acquisition of an agrifood company as co-partner of the Event (success fee) in the amount of 30% of the total net amount paid by the agrifood company being co-partner.
- **Enhanced Visibility and Networking Opportunities:** By collaborating with EIT Food CLC North-East and the wider EIT community, Selected organisation(s) gain access to a global platform, increasing its/their visibility within the food innovation ecosystem. This exposure can lead to networking opportunities with industry leaders, potential partners, and investors, ultimately enhancing the reach and influence within their respective fields.

5. Application Preparation, Submission & Evaluation

5.1 Timeline

For 2024:

Application Open	22 nd of July 2024
Application Close	19 th of August 2024
Evaluation (additional interviews with 2-3 best applicants, if needed)	By 2 nd of September 2024
Communication with Selected organization(s)	By 13 th of September 2024

5.2 Who can apply?

Funding for this Request is available to all eligible organisations from Member States of the European Union (EU) and [Horizon Europe Associate Countries](#).

5.3 Application Submission

The deadline for submitting full applications is August 19, 2024, at 23:59 CEST, using the attached template: 'EIT Food Challenge Lab Poland, 2024-2025 Application Form,' signed by an authorized applicant representative. Please send the application, referring to the selection criteria outlined above, to malgorzata.kowalinska@eitfood.eu (with milda.krauzlis@eitfood.eu in CC), titled 'Challenge Labs Poland 2024/2025 Application Form'.

Applications submitted by ineligible organisations will be automatically rejected. EIT Food reserves the right to contact the applicant organisations by e-mail or phone asking for additional explanations or supporting documents and to schedule selection interviews with short-listed organisations.

6. Evaluation and Selection Process

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 in one of the EU or Horizon Europe eligible countries listed above for a minimum of 3 years. • Comply with requests for documents during due diligence/validation. • Operate in a country targeted by the Request.
Application Eligibility	To be 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

All submitted applications will undergo an eligibility check and evaluation to determine their feasibility and suitability for funding.

Category	Description	Score
1. Expertise in Supporting Agrifood Entrepreneurs.	Demonstrated proficiency in providing training and support specifically tailored for agrifood entrepreneurs. This criterion assesses the organization's understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities within the agrifood sector.	0-5

2. Innovative Event Organization in Entrepreneurship.	Proven track record in planning and executing innovative events related to entrepreneurship and start-up education, showcasing a deep understanding of industry trends and effective audience engagement.	0-5
3. Integration within the Local Startup, Academic and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem.	Deep involvement within the local startup and/or entrepreneurship ecosystem, evidenced by a robust network of organizations actively supporting startups and innovations in agrifood field in Poland.	0-5
4. Customization of the EIT Food Activity to Local Context and Needs.	A well-defined strategy demonstrating a thorough understanding and integration of the local context and needs, with a commitment to tailoring Challenge Labs Poland activities for maximum impact in the Polish settings	0-5
5. Interest and Expertise in the Agrifood Sector.	Evidence of interest and expertise specifically in the agrifood sector, showcasing a comprehensive understanding of industry trends, challenges, and innovations.	0-5
6. Detailed Budget Representation for Best Value.	The ability to present a strategic proposal with insights into potential sponsors and funding sources, ensuring financial sustainability for the Activity in Poland is assessed. It also evaluates the submission of a detailed budget, emphasizing the best value for money through a comprehensive and cost-effective financial plan for the proposed activities.	0-5

Each evaluation sub-criterion will be scored from 0 to 5 using the following scoring system. The application can receive a maximum of 30 points.

Score		Description
0	Not addressed	Not addressed.
1	Poor	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
2	Fair	The application broadly addresses the criterion but there are significant weaknesses.
3	Good	The application addresses the criterion well, but several shortcomings are present.
4	Very good	The application addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
5	Excellent	The 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 attached to this call.

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

Selected applicant will receive a second communication with instructions regarding the completion of the following documents, as well as agreeing to EIT Food’s conflict of interest policy.

7.3 Payment Schedule

The Selected Organisation will sign a subcontract agreement with EIT Food CLC North-East with a total funding of 15,000 EUR gross per year to cover the eligible costs of implementing Challenge Labs Poland activities. The funding will be paid in instalments. Subsequent payments are linked to the completion of deliverables. The majority of the funding will be transferred at the end, once eligible costs have been determined and contractual obligations have been met. If the Selected Organization(s) does not achieve the specific agreed performance target („indicator of activity”), the payment will be reduced.

The Selected organization will sign a subcontract agreement that will end on 31/01/2025. Nevertheless, the new subcontract agreement shall be signed for a successive period of one year if the specific criteria based on objectively measurable indicators set up in the subcontract agreement were met. In case of the signing of the new subcontract agreement, the budget, tasks and performance targets will be defined separately for 2025.

7.4 Monitoring

The Activity will be monitored and may be audited.

7.5 Support

If you have any questions about this Request, please contact malgorzata.kowalinska@eitfood.eu (with milda.krauzlis@eitfood.eu in CC).

All communication between EIT Food and applicants is only possible in writing, all requests will be done and answered by e-mail only. All questions should be sent before the application deadline.

8. Challenge Labs - Application form

*Please fill in the application form, ensuring that **all fields** are completed. Please submit the application in electronic format **both as PDF and editable MS Word files by 23:59 CEST on 19 August 2024** to: malgorzata.kowalinska@eitfood.eu (with milda.krauzlis@eitfood.eu in CC). Applications incomplete or sent after the deadline will be rejected. Please do not provide further supporting documents and capture all relevant information in this form.*

1. Name of the applicant organisation in English	
2. Name of the applicant organisation in local language	
3. Legal form	
4. Office address (street, city, country)	
5. Website address	

6. Type of organisation (<u>underline one</u>)		
business enterprise	higher education institute	public research organisation
knowledge transfer intermediary (incl. industry association, innovation cluster, technology park, entrepreneurship support organisation)		
other (please specify)		
7. Name of contact person		
8. Position		
9. E-mail		
10. Phone		
11. Year of establishment of your organisation		
12. Total number of employees		
13. Please list social media channels currently used by your organisation (with web addresses):		
Facebook		
Twitter		
LinkedIn		
YouTube		
Other (please specify)		

14. Please provide a brief description of your organisation and its main activities:
15. Please provide examples of the most relevant workshops/trainings from 2017-2023 that were provided by your organisation to startups from your region, including short description of these activities, key outcomes and impact [<i>Experience in training and supporting innovative startups</i>]:
16. Please provide examples of the most relevant events/projects in the field of agrifood that were organized by your organisation in 2017-2023 including short description of these activities, type of your engagement in the project, project partners and key outcomes [<i>Experience in the organization of events in the field of agrifood dedicated to innovation/entrepreneurship/foodtech</i>]:
17. Please present familiarity with the agrifood industry in the target country; existing contacts and projects with relevant local stakeholders; existing pipeline of early stage innovative startups [<i>Role in the ecosystem</i>]:

<p>18. Please propose a plan of how you will tailor the general structure proposed above, with the approach to the organization Challenge Labs project’s activities including draft agenda, date, location, speakers and how they correspond to the purpose of the event outlined by EIT Food (approach to the organization of the Project’s activities).</p>
<p>19. Please provide a brief description of skills to be developed through the activity (based on the EIT Food Competency Framework ¹);</p>
<p>20. Please describe planned sources of co-funding [<i>Sources of co-funding</i>]:</p>
<p>21. Please propose the Event budget (in EUR), taking into account the guidelines provided by EIT Food [<i>Cost of service planned by applicant</i>]:</p>
<p>22. Would you like to add any other information relevant to this call and application?</p>

By submitting this application form, I confirm that the information provided above correctly represents the scope of activities and plans of my organisation. I understand that the information provided in this form may be used to define obligations and performance targets in subcontracting agreement. I give consent to processing the application by EIT Food, its Co-Location Centres and external experts involved in the evaluation process. I am willing to cooperate and provide further information or documents confirming the facts presented above. If selected by EIT Food, I declare the willingness to act as the organiser of the Challenge Labs 2024-2025, based on conditions described in the “Request for Proposals to Organize Challenge Labs 2024-2025”.

Date, place

Name of the person submitting the application

Position

Organisation submitting the application

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. 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.

ANNEX 2 – EIT KPIs 2023-2025

NB: When determining potentially achieved Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the EDUCATION area, please consider only those applicable to EIT Labelled Programmes, as Challenge Labs Poland falls under this category.

ANNEX 3 – EIT Food Competency Framework

ANNEX 4 – EIT Food Redress Mechanism