

Warsaw, 7 March 2025

Call for experts for the EIT Food Accelerator Network Programme (FAN) Warsaw Hub: Tech validation, Business Consulting, Corporate & Investment Readiness

EIT Food CLC North-East sp. z o.o. (hereinafter: the “EIT Food CLC NE”) is looking for an organization or professional(s) (hereinafter: the “Consultants”) experienced in future resilient agriculture topics, to support startups participating in the EIT Food Accelerator Network Programme (FAN) – the Warsaw Hub, for diverse roles and profiles, including tech validation coaches, business consultants, corporate and investment readiness experts.

Application deadline: 14th March, 11:00 CET.

Further details about EIT Food can be found at: www.eitfood.eu, and the information on the FAN programme is available at <https://www.eitfood.eu/entrepreneurship/accelerate-food-accelerator-network>

With respect to the present call, EIT Food CLC NE will not provide new information that has not already been included in this document but can assist the potential applicants by explaining contents of this document (please contact): Kamila Czerwinska, Regional Accelerator Programme Manager at EIT Food CLC North-East – kamila.czerwinska@eitfood.eu

Call Fact Sheet

Title of Call	Call for experts for the EIT Food Accelerator Network Programme (FAN) Warsaw Hub
Objective and Scope	Creating pool of experts for FAN Warsaw
Call Deadline	14 March 2025, 11:00 am CET
How to apply	Application form (attached) + CV should be sent to kamila.czerwinska@eitfood.eu by 14th March, 2025, 11:00 CET, with the title: FAN Warsaw Call for experts – [Name and Surname of Applicant]
Contact Information	Kamila Czerwinska kamila.czerwinska@eitfood.eu

1. Background information

1.1. About the EIT Food

Supported by the European Union, EIT Food leads Europe's largest food innovation community. EIT Food creates connections across the food system to stimulate new ideas to drive change and accelerate innovation to build a future-fit food system, that produces healthy and sustainable food for all.

Entrepreneurship plays a fundamental role in transforming the food system. EIT Food supports innovative impactful agrifood entrepreneurs and startups to deliver new food innovations and businesses across Europe.

1.2. The Food Accelerator Network (FAN) programme

The Food Accelerator Network (FAN) programme (the "Programme") is a 3-month, theme-based programme designed for seed startups with traction indicators looking for tech validation and business acceleration to drive a successful market adoption. The Programme connects impactful agrifood startups with industry-leading corporates, investors, research partners and industry specialists to help the transition from an early-stage company to an investment and market-ready business. The EIT Food Accelerator Network helps startups locate labs, pilot sites and agricultural land to help them pilot, validate and accelerate their tech innovation.

The Programme is designed for:

- early-stage startups with a scalable product wanting to further validate their technology,
- with a prototype, or pilot project (paid or unpaid) – TRL 4-5-6,
- pre-series-A, with revenues below €500,000 and a team no bigger than 20 people,
- ideally, startups with successfully completed customer validation,
- Ideally, startups with demonstrate traction, for example through letters of support, sales, or signed letters of intent.

As a cohort-style programme (10 startups per hub), the Programme is delivered across six hubs: Warsaw, Bilbao, Helsinki, Haifa, Munich, and Paris. Each hub delivers the FAN programme but will have its own thematic focus looking for startups developing innovative technologies under the following themes: Future resilient agriculture, Sustainable food packaging, Circular Solutions for Food System, Food as medicine, Resilient Supply Chains & Reducing Scope 3 Emissions, New ingredients & Bioprocessing.

1.3. About the Food Accelerator Network (FAN) Warsaw Hub

As of 2025 a new FAN Hub was set in Warsaw with the accelerator's theme "**Future Resilient Agriculture**". The Hub will support startups with technological solutions, services and products that can contribute to more **resilient, sustainable and regenerative agriculture**. Specifically, the Hub accepts applications of startups developing solutions related to **soil health & soil biodiversity, bioinputs, crop innovations, carbon and nitrogen farming, smart farming, including water management, the smart solutions using AI as well as AgRobotics**.

The first part of the Programme (May & July) will primarily focus on connecting the startups with the

Programme corporate partners, top industry experts and research institutions to identify and develop the areas where the startups need to validate or test their technology (technology validation and corporate readiness). The second part of the Programme (September to October) will focus on supporting the startups to raise investment.

2. Scope of work

We are creating now in FAN Warsaw Hub a pool of experts (Consultants). We are interested to receive applications from individuals or from companies with portfolio of professionals whose skills and experience match the requirement.

We recruit three broad categories of Consultants:

- 2.1. **Tech validation coaches:** to help startups to analyse gaps, and build a “tech validation roadmap” to test, validate with the research & corporate partners within the Warsaw Hub topics: soil health & soil biodiversity, bioinputs, crop innovations, carbon and nitrogen farming, smart farming, including water management, the solutions using AI as well as AgRobotics.
- 2.2. **Business consultants / corporate readiness experts & coaches :** to coach the European startups joining the Programme to prepare them to collaborate with corporate clients, refine their business model, build a scaling up roadmap, sales strategies, or tackle legal issues, etc.
- 2.3. **Investment readiness experts:** to serve as experts for panels, and /or as coaches to help startups joining the Warsaw Hub Programme to prepare them to collaborate with investors.

You can apply to more than one role, in that case please specify it in your application and make sure to list relevant experience to all of the roles.

See below information regarding:

- the detailed explanation and key responsibilities for each role,
- the eligibility and selection criteria, remuneration, and the selection process.

3. Detailed explanation of roles and responsibilities

3.1. Tech validation coaches

We are looking for experienced technology experts to serves as coaches to help startups to analyse gaps, build a “tech validation roadmap” to test / validate with the research partners and corporates. The plan will be built during the first two months of the Programme (May-June), during which the startups will also receive also additional trainings on tech validation and corporate readiness. Once the tech validation roadmap is finalized, the startups will present it to EIT Food for funding, to carry out their validation. The aim is to successfully test at different scales the technology / solution proposed by the startup with a research centre.

[Note: There is also a separate call for tech validation workshop facilitators and providers, if you are

interested, please refer to the [EIT Food Open Calls website](#).]

Key responsibilities:

Potential responsibilities include i.a.:

- Advise the Programme Manager with Programme design and implementation.
- Support with the selection process of the top 20 startups chosen for second round of evaluations.
- Prepare and conduct the assessment of the selected 10 Startups, based on agreed criteria, to identify tech validation gaps and objectives for the Programme. This assessment will help adjust and tailor the Programme according to each of the entrepreneurs' needs for their tech validation to succeed and connecting them to the right research institutes, industry partners and experts.
- Prepare the tech validation roadmap / plan: Support each startup with weekly individual and group coaching sessions during the Tech Validation phase of the FAN programme (Mid-April to Mid-July), advising and supporting them to put together their plan, connecting them with the right experts when necessary and identifying technological gaps.
- Prepare startups for tech validation processes and the requirements of research institutes and corporate due diligence, including helping startups understanding corporate expectations for technology and product validation.
- Prepare the startup for the presentation of the tech validation proposals to the partners in July. The plan should include a) objectives for the testing, b) workplan to carry out the testing within the best time frame, c) clear steps and stages, d) milestones to be achieved, e) resources to be needed, f) commitments on both sides, g) expectations and exploitation of results and exploitation.
- Support, if necessary, the startups in the preparation of their presentation and pitches to the partners, planned for mid-July.
- Track and evaluate startups' performance and deliver biweekly reports to the FAN Programme Manager.

Time commitment: Expecting 1-2 days per week across 14 weeks (mid-April to Mid-July), depending on number of startups coached. The timeline will be specified between each coach and startup. The number of days may vary according to the weeks and the startups' workload; however we are expecting a total of 10-28 days across during the 3 month Programme.

Key eligibility and selection criteria for this role include:

We are looking for tech validation experts that have:

- first-hand knowledge and experience in technology validation, R & D, technology product development and go-to-market strategies, building pilots, especially in such areas as: soil health & soil biodiversity, bioinputs, crop innovations, carbon and nitrogen farming, smart farming, including water management, the solutions using AI as well as AgRobotics.
- an excellent understanding of the challenges that can arise for tech validation, working for or with research institutes, and ideally also corporates, designing pilots in the agricultural sector.
- a good understanding of the agritech sector and the role of technology in future resilient agriculture.
- experience in providing guidance and coaching to the startups as they build and design their

tech validation proposal.

- Countries served: Excellent understanding of European agrifood landscape and knowledge concerning specific European countries
- Experience in mentoring, advising, coaching startups
- Availability end of April – 8th July.

3.2. Business consultants / corporate readiness experts & coaches

We are looking for experienced business consultants to serve as coaches to help startups to build the corporate readiness. This may include such aspects as: refining the business model, building the pilot with a corporate, refining the value proposition, building sales / Go2Market strategy, building the product development roadmap & gap analysis, legal matters for startups (incl. GDPR, IP rights) etc.

The corporate readiness will be built during the first two months of the Programme, during which the startups will also receive support on tech validation. The objective is to help startups to prepare to work with corporate partners.

We are looking for candidates that have first-hand knowledge and experience in working with corporates and startups, in business development, building a venture, building a pilot with corporates, having a good understanding of technology product development and go-to-market strategies. Due to the focus of the role, the candidates need to have a good understanding of the challenges that can arise for designing pilots in the agricultural sector, and preferably an experience of running projects with corporates. We would like the candidate to be sufficiently experienced to provide guidance to the startups as they build and design their collaboration with corporates. In addition, the candidate needs to have a good understanding of the agritech sector and the role of technology in sustainable agriculture, to guide the startups effectively.

[Note: There is also a separate call for corporate readiness / business strategy workshop facilitators and providers, if you are interested, please refer to the [EIT Food Open Calls website](#).]

Key responsibilities:

Potential responsibilities include i.a.:

- Advise the Programme Manager with Programme design and implementation.
- Support with the selection process of the top 20 startups chosen for second round of evaluations.
- Prepare and conduct the assessment of the selected 10 Startups, based on agreed criteria, to identify corporate readiness gaps and objectives for the Programme, in cooperation with tech validation coaches. This assessment will help adjust and tailor the programme according to each of the entrepreneurs' needs for working with companies, building successful pilots, and connecting them to the clients, industry partners and experts.
- Support each startup with individual and group coaching sessions, during the Tech Validation and Corporate Readiness phase of the FAN programme (Mid-April to Mid-July), advising and supporting them to design a pilot project and put together their corporate readiness plan, cooperating with tech validation coaches where necessary.
- Prepare startups for working with corporate partners and for FAN corporate days. This includes

supporting startups in the preparation of their presentation and pitches to the corporate partners, planned for mid-July.

- Track and evaluate Startups' performance and deliver reports to the FAN Programme Manager.

Time commitment: Expecting up to 10 hours per startup, across 14 weeks (mid-April to Mid-July). The exact involvement may vary and will depend on number of startups coached. The timeline will be specified between each coach and startup. The number of hours may vary according to the weeks and the startups' workload.

Key eligibility and selection criteria for this role include:

We are looking for candidates that have:

- proven business development experience, corporate, innovation, entrepreneurial and/or investment background,
- at least five years of proven professional experience:
 - in advising startups on scaling up, sales strategies, and linking them with corporate partners and clients,
 - in designing and running pilots with corporate partners,
 - in helping startups or companies develop new business,
 - in executive management, responsible to start, grow business, serve new markets,
 - in coaching/mentoring startups for business development,
 - demonstrating hands-on experience with fast growth organisation, in corporate, open innovation units,
 - in resolving executive management issues in early-stage companies' context,
 - working with the network of international agrifood contacts, with businesses and markets.
- a good understanding of the agritech sector, its stakeholders, potential and challenges, and the role of technology in future resilient agriculture. Specific knowledge related to: soil health & soil biodiversity, bioinputs, crop innovations, carbon and nitrogen farming, smart farming, including water management, the solutions using AI as well as AgRobotics is an asset.
- Countries served: Excellent understanding of European agrifood landscape and knowledge concerning specific European countries
- Experience in mentoring, advising, coaching startups
- Availability end of April – 8th July.

3.3. Investment readiness experts

We are looking for experienced investment experts: to serve as experts for panels, workshops, and /or as coaches for the European startups joining the Warsaw hub to help prepare them to collaborate with investors.

The investment readiness will be built throughout the Programme, with main part in September. The objective is to help startups to adequately prepare to receive external funding from investors. We are looking for experts wanting to get involved or as guest experts in panel discussions and workshops, or as coaches. Please specify your preference and availability in application.

We are looking for candidates that have first-hand knowledge and experience in investment readiness support, investment funds, corporate venturing, startup analysis, financial analysis, financial planning, in working with investors and securing funding for companies.

We would like the candidate to be sufficiently experienced to provide guidance and coaching to the startups as they prepare for investment. In addition, the candidate needs to have a good understanding of the agritech sector and the role of technology in sustainable agriculture, to guide the startups effectively.

[Note: There is also a separate call for investment readiness workshop facilitators and providers, if you are interested, please refer to the [EIT Food Open Calls website](#).]

Key responsibilities:

Potential responsibilities can include i.a.:

- Guest experts and speakers:
 - Serve as panel experts, workshop guest speakers, etc.
- Coaches:
 - Advise the Programme Manager with programme and activity design and implementation.
 - Prepare and conduct the assessment of the selected 10 Startups, based on agreed criteria, to identify investment readiness gaps and objectives for the Programme, in cooperation with tech validation and corporate readiness coaches. This assessment will help adjust and tailor the Programme according to each of the entrepreneurs' investment needs.
 - Support each startup with individual and group coaching sessions.
 - Prepare startups for meetings with investors. This includes supporting startups in the preparation of their documentation, presentation and pitches to the investors, planned for October and November.
 - If necessary, track and evaluate startups' performance and deliver reports to the FAN Programme Manager.

Time commitment: Exact involvement will depend on the role. We foresee time commitment between 1 h for panel involvement to 10 hours of coaching per startup. The timeline for experts coaching startups will be specified between each coach and startup. The number of hours may vary according to the weeks and the startups' workload.

Key eligibility and selection criteria for this role include:

We are looking for candidates that have:

- Professional experience related to the role: at least 3 years of proven professional experience in investment readiness support, corporate venturing, startup analysis, financial analysis, financial planning, in working with investors and securing funding for companies. We also are looking for representatives of agritech startups / companies representatives that have experience in working with investors that successfully obtained investment.
- Years of experience: at least 3 years of proven professional experience in the areas mentioned in point 1.
- Experience in agritech sector: a very good understanding of the agritech sector, its stakeholders, potential and challenges, and the role of technology in future resilient

agriculture. Specific knowledge related to: soil health & soil biodiversity, bioinputs, crop innovations, carbon and nitrogen farming, smart farming, including water management, the solutions using AI as well as AgRobotics is a strong advantage.

- Countries served: Excellent understanding of European agrifood landscape and knowledge concerning specific European countries
- Experience in mentoring, advising, coaching startups
- Availability end of April – June, and September.

4. Formal eligibility, selection criteria and selection process

4.1. Formal eligibility

- Natural person, natural person conducting business activity or registered company,
- Able to sign an agreement with EIT Food CLC NE in a project funded based on Horizon Europe/EIT modalities;
- Excellent command of English / Excellent written and verbal communication skills.

4.2. Selection criteria

The specific eligibility & selection criteria for each of the role are described above in points 2.1, 2.2. and 2.3.

4.3. Application process

To apply, please send:

1. short **CV** of Consultant(s),
2. an **attached application form** including required rate, and outlining their most relevant experience with regards to the role, required expertise and tasks.
- 3.

The application should be sent to kamila.czerwinska@eitfood.eu by **14th March, 2025, 11:00 CET**, with the title: FAN Warsaw Call for experts – [Name and Surname of Applicant]

4.4. Selection process

All proposals will be evaluated taking into account the selection criteria, related to each role as described in the application form:

1. Professional experience related to the role
2. Years of experience
3. Experience in agritech sector
4. Specific knowledge related to future resilient agriculture
5. Experience in mentoring, advising, coaching startups
6. Countries served / experience in specific markets
7. Availability in the period when the Programme takes place
8. Rate per hour

An eligible application can receive a maximum of 160 points. Each criterion will be evaluated on a scale from 0 to 20:

- 0 – not satisfactory;
- 5 – satisfactory;
- 15 – good;
- 20 – very good.

Criteria 1 and 2 has weight 1.2, criteria 3,4,5,8 have weight 1, criterion 6 has weight 0.2 and criterion 7 has weight 0.5. In those cases scoring mechanism is as follows: points for criterion x weight.

The applicants will be informed of the outcome by the end of March. The matchmaking with the startups will take place in April.

4.5. Remuneration

Applicants are expected to provide an offer for their services (gross and net amount per 1 hour, in EUR) in the application form. The proposal should include the price for all services listed in the Scope of Work. EIT Food CLC NE reserves the rights to keep the maximum hourly rate at 150 EUR.

The selected applicants will sign a subcontracting agreement with EIT Food CLC NE. The Consultants will be paid for their services by EIT Food CLC NE latest in 30 days after receiving an invoice/ receipt. The details will be specified in the contract.

Annex: Application form