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the European Union

Call for retailers Straight to Market 2025 Guidelines

SUP-RIS-25-01

EIT FOOD
Leuven, Belgium

2025

[Eitfood.eu](https://eitfood.eu)

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Call Fact Sheet

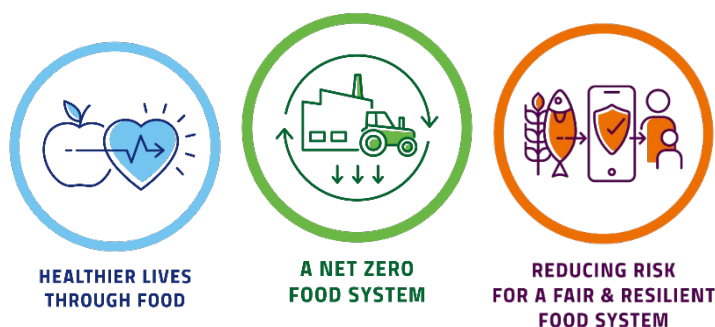
Title of Call	Call for Retailers - Straight2Market 2025
Objective and Scope	Straight to Market fosters collaboration between retailers and startups to market food products, develop Proofs of Concept focused on food waste and loss, and drive technological innovation through open innovation initiatives that address key retail industry challenges
Call Deadline	20 th June 2025
Available Funding	150.000 €
Project Duration	July 2025 - July 2026
How to apply	MyEITFood Portal
Contact Information	izaskun.valle@eitfood.eu

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](#).

2. Purpose and Scope

This initiative fosters collaboration between retailers and startups to market food products, test and implement Proofs of Concept (PoC) that drive technological advancements in the retail sector.

The RIS Straight to Market programme, seeks to:

- Market food products
- Test and implement Proof of Concepts focused on Food Waste and Loss
- Create an open innovation environment where retailers collaborate with startups to address retail industry challenges.

3. Who can apply?

There are two possibilities:

- A) As a **consortium retailer-startup**, if each organization delivers the respective required documentation for approval and each of them submits the respective application. Startup and retailers must apply independently. All products and technologies should help to **achieve [EIT Food's missions](#)**. Below is a summary of the innovations accepted:

- **Food Products**

EIT Food goal	Type of product
1. Reduction in relative risk[®] of obesity & Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) prevalence in target populations due to known dietary factors	Products with levels of salt &/ or free sugars &/or trans & saturated fats reduced to, or below, recommended Food-Based Dietary Guidelines for Europe (targeting food groups known to be major sources of these dietary factors); or products on the market with an improved nutritional profile.
2. Products on the market derived from alternative sources	Products on the market derived from alternative sources (e.g., alternative proteins; new plant varieties; alternative production techniques, etc.
3. Reduction in food waste & food loss	New products or processes launched using revalorised &/ or reintegrated food system side-streams and waste streams
4. Improvement in food system contribution to outcomes under EU Circular Economy Monitoring Framework and Improved environmental impact of agrifood systems	New products or processes using revalorised &/ or reintegrated food systems side-streams and waste streams. Outcomes under EU Circular Economy Monitoring Framework include inter alia waste management, recycling, competitiveness & innovation. Volume reduction in CO2 equivalent tons from Agri-Food system through products

- **Retail technology solutions**

EIT Food goal	Type of technology
Reduction in Food Waste and Food Loss	Reducing food loss across retailer's activity and client experience.
Circular Solutions for Food Systems	Addressing critical areas for retailers like sustainability and waste reduction.

Resilient Supply Chain	Tackling challenges in building robust and adaptive supply chains with an emphasis on leveraging AI and digital tools.
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- B) **Individual retailers.** Retailers can apply individually. EIT Food, together with the retailer, will seek suitable products and technological solutions to match.

4. Funding

The total budget for this call is €150.000. Implementing participants will receive a subgrant to fund their cost. This is cascade funding:

The project runs from July 2025 to July 2026. The maximum funding available for that period per application is €50.000.

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 whole 3-year Grant Agreement. Legal entities from non-Horizon Europe Associate countries can participate in consortia but are limited to funding of 60 000 over 3 years for a Grant Agreement. This funding is implemented under GA 01101912. In those limits are included all the EIT Funding awarded to an organization across all the activities and prizes for the 3-year grant agreement.

The Subgrant is based on actual costs. All costs, including co-funding, 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. Eligibility

Organisations Eligibility	Each participating organisation must:
Retailers and startups	- All: Be a legally incorporated entity in one of the EU or Horizon Europe eligible countries listed below for a minimum of 3 years. EU Member States: Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain Horizon Europe Associated Countries: Turkey Outermost Regions: Azores and Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain) - Startups: Startups must be legally constituted with a minimum of two full-time founders and must have demonstrable business metrics. - Provide a PIC Number:: https://www.eitfood.eu/files/PIC-Guidance.pdf
Proposal Eligibility	To eligible proposals must:
Retailers and startups	- All: Be submitted before the deadline - All: Be complete, in English and with all mandatory supporting documents uploaded: - Gantt chart with implementation schedule for Project activities; - Signed document with project costs; - Business Plan. - Budget breakdown and funding sources, using this template.

5.1 Timeline

This funding opportunity follows the timeline below:

Call Open Date	May 15, 2025
Call Deadline	June 20, 2025
Evaluation	1 week after the deadline
Communication to selected participants	June 27, 2025
Standstill period, Onboarding, Validation and Contracting	4 weeks after the communication
Indicative start of project implementation	July 2025
Market Launch Deadline	December 31, 2025
KPIs achieved	July 2026

The standstill period is a set time after funding selection for appeals, final administrative checks, and compliance in the award process. The project cannot start before this period. The standstill period of 30 days applies to this call.

5.2 Application Submission

Applications must be submitted via [MyEITFood Portal](#), no later than the call deadline.

6. Selection and evaluation 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 a minimum of 2 external and 2 internal evaluators, based on the criteria below.

All evaluators have been 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.

For Startups

The following criteria and weighting will be used in the assessment of startups presented:

Impact (50%)	• Contribution to specific challenges in the industry listed in the call, including extent of alignment with EIT Food Missions 30% • Potential business impact and scalability (ability to commercialize new products based on existing and improved commercialization capacities and to relate with other actors in the commercialisation chain -startups, retailers- through the existing food delivery network) 40% • Ability to access the mainstream market 30%	1-5
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Excellence (30%)	- Solutions must enhance the competitiveness and efficiency of the value chain 60% - Solutions must be innovative and potentially disruptive 40%	1-5
Quality and efficiency of implementation (20%)	- Risk analysis and mitigation plan in place 30% - Adequate resources (human and financial) and relevant experiences (participation in activities related to new product development in agri-food/packaging sector, marketed innovation and consumer engagement; ability to present the relevance of these experiences for EIT Food) 50% - Detailed timeline for the implementation of your solution, including key milestones and deliverables (20%)	1-5

Each evaluation sub-criterion will be scored from 1 to 5 using the following scoring system.

For Retailers

The following criteria and weighting will be used in the assessment of retailers presented:

Impact (50%)	Strategic Alignment: Innovation areas to implement PoCs aligned with the retailer's strategic goals and EIT Food impact objectives 40% Impact on Operations: The potential positive impact of the PoCs on the retailer's operations, efficiency, and customer experience 40% - Impact for side beneficiaries of the implemented solution 20%	1-5
Excellence (30%)	Challenge presented must enhance the competitiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the value chain 60% Innovation Potential: The retailer's readiness and capability to implement innovative solutions and technologies 20% Scalability and Replicability: The potential for scaling the PoCs across multiple stores or locations and replicability within the industry 20%	1-5
Quality and efficiency of implementation (20%)	- Risk analysis and mitigation plan in place 30% Resource Commitment: The retailer's commitment of resources (time, personnel, and budget) to support the PoC implementation 30% Collaboration Willingness: The retailer's willingness to collaborate closely with startups and other stakeholders 20% - Extent of proposal's co-funding rate 20%	1-5

The quality threshold for selection is a total weighted score of 3. The top highest-scoring applications will be selected.

Score	Classification	Description
1	Poor	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses
2	Fair	Proposal broadly addresses the criterion but there are significant weaknesses
3	Good	Proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present
4	Very good	Proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present
5	Excellent	Proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

7. Programme requirements

a. KPIs

All **EIT Food funded** projects should achieve relevant EIT Food Core Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Each of the selected consortium (1 start-up + 1 retailer) will have to comply timely the following **mandatory KPIs**:

KPI title	KPI description	Supporting evidence	Target date	Target Per PoC
Marketed Innovations (EITHE02.4)	Number of innovations introduced on the market during the KAVA duration or at the latest within 18 months from the start of the project with a sales revenue of at least 10 000 EUR documented. Innovations include new or significantly improved products (goods or services) sold. The number and quality of marketed innovations will be evaluated.	Declaration of the product owner describing the innovativeness (new or significant improvement in terms of physical of functional parameters) of a product/process, link to the KIC societal challenge and the KAVA, as well as information on the KAVA investment in the innovation development. Documented proof such as an invoice or an online sales records demonstrating that the purchase of at least 10,000 EUR has been made by a customer/s.	Each “PoC” should launch a product or service by 31st December 2025. Purchase of at least 10.000€ by July 1st 2026.	1

b. Deliverables

Grant recipients must submit final deliverables at the end of the implementation period. For this activity the deliverables include:

1. Compliance with mandatory deliverables and KPIs.
 - a. **Deliverable 1: Testing Activities Report:** Submit a detailed report on the testing activities conducted for each PoC by **December 31, 2025**, including plans for market introduction and commercialization. Note that product development, marketing campaigns, and packaging redesign will not be funded by this program and remain the responsibility of the retailer and startup.
 - b. **Deliverable 2: Communication Plan:** Develop and submit a communication plan by February 1, 2026, ensuring the dissemination of project activities and the RIS S2M program in the media.
 - c. **Marketed Innovations (EITHE02.4)**
 - d. **Proof of market launch** with €10,000 in sales revenue by July 1, 2026.
- e. Marketing and branding commitment (**including EIT Food logo on packaging for one year**).
 - Participation in at least one EIT Food event.
 - Dissemination activities (press, online articles, media exposure):
 - Publish at least one article on results, best practices, or lessons learned.
 - Publish at least one article in the retailer's specialized newsletter or other media, highlighting the product's nutritional or sustainability benefits
 - Engage with local media to secure at least two publications in the local language (press, thematic magazines, or online portals). The article must mention EIT Food and the S2M program.

c. Monitoring

The project will be monitored and may be audited. All Activities selected for funding undergo continuous monitoring by EIT Food to ensure effective progress and implementation in accordance with the Project Agreement.

EIT Food will request regular reporting of KPIs and deliverables, together with the supporting documentation. The monitoring process may result in an amendment to the Activity workplan and/or budget, however the Financial Return Mechanism Agreement cannot be re-negotiated following the approval of the Activity.

In the case of under-performance, significant delay of implementation, misconduct, misalignment with the project specifications in the grant management system or any other reason jeopardizing the timely implementation of the Activity identified during the monitoring process, EIT Food reserves the right to discontinue or restructure the funding of the Activity at any point during the Activity duration.

Regular progress reports on KPIs and financials.

Collaborate on project monitoring, including cost justification and budget declarations.

Provide documented proof (e.g., invoice or online sales records) demonstrating a minimum of €10,000 in sales by July 1, 2026, for every product launched. Except for the startup selection process, all tasks must be executed collaboratively and in full alignment between the retailer and the startup.

d. Intellectual Property Policy

Grant recipients must adhere to [EIT Food Intellectual Property's \(IP\) Policy](#) which complies with the IP provisions outlined in Article 16 of the Horizon Europe [Model Grant Agreement](#).

8. Support

For technical assistance please contact support@eitfood.eu. For any other questions about this call that has not been addressed in this guidelines or annexes, please contact Izaskun Valle at izaskun.valle@eitfood.eu.

Please visit our [website](#) for information about upcoming events to support your application. You will also find our list of Frequently Asked Questions.

Annex 1 – Eligibility

Please Note:

1. Failing any of the above call specific 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 its 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 – Administrative Items

Onboarding

Entities that have never been part of projects funded by the EIT and that do not have a PIC validated by the Research Executive Agency (REA) of the European Commission will be subject to a PIC validation process managed by the EIT Community Onboarding Service, where they might be required to provide additional documentation and to sign a Declaration of Honor (DoH). As part of the onboarding process, selected entities must:

- Register on EIT Food grants management platform.
- Sign and submit the Declaration of Size.
- Sign and submit the Financial Identification Form.

If the assessment results are not satisfactory, the EIT Food might reject the participation of this entity and will then check whether the proposal is still eligible.

EIT Food reserves the right to undertake financial due diligence on any applicant and the outcomes of this may result in a range of options from amended pre-financing or grant distribution to rejection.

For further information on the project implementation, you will be contacted by Business Support Team.

EIT Food Legal Framework & Legal Documents to be signed

Selected applicants 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:

To be signed between the participant and EIT Food:

1. Framework Agreement
2. Kava Contract

Your questions: For inquiries about the application process, contact support@eitfood.eu. For program-related questions, reach out to izaskun.valle@eitfood.eu

Payment Schedule

EIT Food will transfer funding into instalments. A proportion of the Activity budget will be prefinanced, with subsequent payments being linked to the completion of deliverables, EIT label award, and the accountable KPIs. The majority of the grants will be transferred at the end of the Activity, once eligible costs have been determined and following the completion of final Activity reporting and the fulfilment of all obligations specified in the Project Agreement.

Please note: the amount and timing of funding is dependent on the dispersal of funds to EIT Food from the EIT.

Appeal on Evaluation Results

Applicants can submit an appeal within 5 days of receiving their result, 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 refer to EIT Food Redress guidance.