1. Eligible costs / commercial rates

Question: *Given that the Call Guidelines state that funding is based on eligible actual costs, could you clarify whether professional services firms can charge commercial/T&M rates, or whether reimbursement is strictly limited to actual personnel costs plus the applicable indirect cost rate?*

Answer: Implementing participants receive a subgrant based on actual costs and value for money. All costs must comply with Horizon Europe cost categories and eligibility rules. For more information this, please visit Horizon Europe Annotated Grant Agreement.

Question: *Can we use our standard market conform fee rates? Or do we need to adhere to calculating fee rates in the same way as Horizon Europe project?*

Implementing participants receive a subgrant based on actual costs and value for money. All costs must comply with Horizon Europe cost categories and eligibility rules. For more information this, please visit Horizon Europe Annotated Grant Agreement.

2. Liability cap

Question: *Given the liability and indemnification obligations included in the KAVA terms, and that we have not identified a clear overall liability cap, could you confirm whether a liability cap applies to individual consortium partners and, if so, how this is determined?*

Answer: There is **no express monetary liability cap** in the KAVA Contract applicable to individual consortium partners. Liability exposure is effectively determined by the nature of the obligation breached: joint and several for technical implementation, sole and uncapped for the hold-harmless obligation, and sole for third-party damage, with the only relief being the exclusion of indirect/consequential losses (absent wilful act, gross negligence or confidentiality breach) and the duty to mitigate. You may wish to consider whether additional protections, such as a monetary liability cap per partner (e.g., linked to the value of the subgrant received), should be negotiated, or addressed in the consortium agreement contemplated under Article 8.

3. Joint and several liability

Question: *Given that the KAVA terms state that consortium participants are jointly and severally liable for the technical implementation of the project, could you clarify what this means in practice if one consortium partner fails to perform its part of the work?*

Answer: If an EIT Food Participant fails to implement its part of the KAVA or in case it withdraws from a KAVA, the other EIT Food Participants in that KAVA become responsible for implementing this part, finding a replacement or completing the KAVA, without being entitled to any additional funding at KAVA level for doing so, unless the EIT FOOD expressly relieves them of this obligation or unless the failure to implement the part of the KAVA is due to gross negligence of EIT FOOD.

4. Payment / pre-financing

Question: *Given that funding is linked to eligible costs incurred under the project, could you clarify the expected payment schedule, including whether pre-financing is available and how long reimbursement typically takes following submission of costs?*

Answer: EIT Food will disburse funding in instalments. A proportion of the activity budget will be pre-financed to each consortium member based on company size, and subsequent annual payments will be linked to eligible incurred costs reported by recipients. The payment section states that relevant costs will be reported at the end of 2027, with payment expected around April-May 2028.

For more information on the payment schedule, please see EIT Food Project Financing Policy.

Question: *Could the beneficiary agree a meaningful mobilisation advance followed by delivery milestones? When would such an advance become an eligible/reportable subcontract cost? Could our payment dates be contractually independent of the beneficiary's later EIT reimbursements, including if its own prefinancing is reduced or removed?*

The Call Guidelines do not regulate payment terms between a beneficiary and its subcontractors; they regulate payment to the consortium.

5. Funding availability / dependency on EIT funding

Question: *Given that the Call Guidelines state that the amount and timing of funding is dependent on the disbursement of funds to EIT Food from EIT, could you clarify what this means for consortium participants in practice? In particular, at what point is the project funding formally committed or guaranteed?*

Answer: Funding is formally granted after the KAVA contract signature, exceptionally there can be delays in payment.

Question: *Is the funding 100%? Or is a contribution expected?*

The project is funded at 100%, with no requirement for applicants to provide a financial contribution.

Question: *Is FFDI contributing financially towards the expected project, or is it fully EU funded?*

As mentioned in the call guidelines: FFDI and EIT Food are working together within the EIT Food Resilient Agriculture portfolio, aligned with a landscape approach to strengthen resilient, sustainable and inclusive agricultural systems. The call is funded through EIT Food, as part of the EIT Food Resilient Agriculture Portfolio.

6. Partner default / additional work

Question: *Given that the KAVA terms appear to allow activities of a defaulting partner to be reallocated to the remaining consortium participants, could you clarify whether remaining partners could be required to take on additional scope without an increase in the overall funding?*

Answer: Due to joint liability, the other consortium members in the project become responsible for implementing this part, finding a replacement or completing the KAVA.

7. Margin / indirect costs

Question: *Given that the funding model provides reimbursement of eligible costs and an indirect cost allowance, could you confirm whether any margin or mark-up can be included in the budget?*

Answer: The funding is a subgrant based on actual eligible costs and value for money. Any indirect-cost treatment must follow the applicable Horizon Europe eligibility rules and EIT Food financing policy. For more information this, please visit Horizon Europe Annotated Grant Agreement.

Question: *Could you confirm that the applicable indirect cost rate for overheads is 25%?*

Answer: Yes, the applicable indirect cost rate is 25%. For further details, please refer to the Horizon Europe Annotated Grant Agreement (aga_en.pdf).

8. Background IP

Question: *Given the rights granted in relation to project results under the KAVA terms, could you clarify how a partner's pre-existing methodologies, tools, models and know-how (Background IP) are protected when used in developing project outputs?*

Answer: The KAVA Contract as drafted does not contain self-contained protections for Background IP. Protection depends on the (external) Framework Agreement and the (yet-to-be-concluded) consortium agreement. Partners contributing significant pre-existing IP should treat this as a material gap to be addressed before committing proprietary methodologies, tools, models, or know-how to a KAVA. In general, Pre-existing models, methodologies, tools, data, know-how and other assets brought into the project remain the property of the relevant consortium partner. If Background IP is developed, adapted or improved under the project, only the project-funded improvements, adaptations or newly generated results are project results; the underlying Background IP remains with its original owner. Open availability of project results is also subject to Background IP and third-party-right restrictions.

9. Commercialisation / repayment

Question: *Given that the KAVA terms include provisions relating to commercialisation and financial return, could you clarify what constitutes commercialisation and when a repayment or profit-sharing obligation would be triggered?*

Answer: Applicants must identify work packages that may generate commercial income, commercial exploitation or equivalent commercial value, the EIT Food funding allocated to them, the partner expected to commercialise, and a forecast of returns. If a project result is commercialised, the relevant exploiting partner or consortium may be required to return up to 100% of the EIT Food funding allocated to the commercialised work package through an agreed profit share. Payments begin six months after the final financing tranche and may run for up to five years. No repayment is required for results or activities that are not commercialised.

Question: *Would receipt of that ordinary service fee require us to sign a KAVA or profit-sharing agreement, or accept equity or success-based repayment obligations? Separately, would later commercial reuse of funded software components trigger the call's financial-return mechanism for us?*

The profit-sharing mechanism applies to the consortium; it does not regulate the relationship with a subcontractor.

10. Subsequent use of methodologies

Question: *Given these commercialisation provisions, could you confirm whether they could apply where a partner subsequently uses its pre-existing methodologies, tools or know-how in other engagements, rather than directly commercialising a project output?*

Answer: The call protects underlying Background IP and limits project results to the project-funded improvements, adaptations and newly generated results. In doubt, a partner contributing significant pre-existing methodologies, tools, or know-how should, as a priority within the Consortium Agreement signed with other participants seek: (i) an express contractual carve-out confirming that Background IP remains the sole property of the contributing partner and is excluded from the definition of Results; (ii) a clear limitation that the financial return mechanism applies only to revenues derived from the exploitation of KAVA-specific project outputs; and (iii) confirmation that a partner's independent use of its own pre-existing IP in unrelated engagements does not trigger any obligation under the consortium agreement.

Question: *How should the subcontract distinguish our existing reusable software from project-funded connectors, registries and model components? Which ownership, disclosure and licensing obligations must flow down to us to meet the published CBA rights? Could general components remain reusable across crops, seasons and other customers?*

Answer: Background IP is regulated under section 2.3, Deliverables and Milestones of the Guidelines, including Background IP.

11. Open-source / public outputs

Question: *Given the requirements around dissemination and/or making project outputs publicly available, could you clarify which outputs are expected to be open source and how this applies where an output incorporates a partner's proprietary methodologies or tools?*

Answer: This should be addressed in the Consortium agreement. The WP1 final report must be published publicly on an open-source basis. The WP2 report summarising transition costs and benefits must also be open source. The CBA Model itself is a specific project result but is not required to be open source. The party or parties generating the CBA Model retain ownership, while EIT Food and FFDI receive a non-exclusive, royalty-free, worldwide and perpetual right to use, adapt, further develop and apply it, subject to Background IP and third-party rights.

12. Consortium partner vs subcontractor

Question: *Given the different requirements applying to consortium participants and subcontractors, could you clarify the implications of participating under either model, particularly in relation to funding, liability and IP?*

Answer: Consortium participants are beneficiaries of the grant and are jointly responsible for implementing the project. They receive funding directly, have shared liability and must abide to the IP terms described in the Call Guidelines. Subcontractors provide specific services to the consortium under a commercial contract, are paid by the beneficiary. Any intellectual property arrangements involving subcontractors should be addressed in the subcontracting agreement.

As per the Call Guidelines, subcontracting may not exceed 30% of total costs and must comply with Horizon Europe procurement principles, including fair competition, equal treatment and avoidance of conflicts of interest.

For more information the subcontracting eligible costs and procurement rules, please visit Horizon Europe Annotated Grant Agreement.

Question: *May an eligible beneficiary contract our younger entity for a specialist task? Does the five-year requirement also apply to non-beneficiary suppliers, and what additional supplier qualification or financial checks would apply?*

Answer: The Call Guidelines state that only legal entities established for at least five years are eligible to apply as applicants/beneficiaries. The Call does not regulate this in the case of subcontractors.

Question: *Would the proposed evidence/assumption layer be suitable for subcontracting within WP1 or WP2, with beneficiaries retaining responsibility for scientific thresholds, dairy economics and validation? Which parts must remain directly with a beneficiary, and what readiness evidence would be required from a specialist supplier?*

Answer: The Guidelines recognise that some expertise may be provided through subcontracting. When subcontracting, participants must comply with Horizon Europe procurement rules, particularly the principles of fair competition, equal treatment and avoidance of conflicts of interest. Applications must be submitted by a complete consortium covering three work packages; there is no application route for an individual specialist supplier.

Question: *We would describe the proposed specialist role and budget in the application and follow the Horizon Europe procurement rules. Does FFDI impose any additional requirement to complete supplier selection before submission or obtain EIT Food's approval before contracting? What additional documentation, if any, is required for a young technical supplier?*

Answer: See above.

Question: *I have reviewed the rules related to subcontracting, which state that "When subcontracting, participants must comply with the Horizon Europe procurement rules, particularly the principles of fair competition, equal treatment and avoidance of conflicts of interest." The guidance in the Annotated Model Grant Agreement (pages 78-80) are helpful, but*

one thing still isn't clear. Is there a threshold below which (e.g., subcontracting below X% of the total budget or below X EUR) no competitive process is required?

Answer: The answer is no, as the Best Value for Money must always be demonstrated. If an entity's internal procurement policy establishes a threshold below which a procurement procedure is not required, the entity must nevertheless be able to demonstrate how, including in the event of an audit.

13. Contracting model

Question: *Could you clarify the envisaged contracting structure for the consortium? Will EIT Food contract separately with each consortium participant, or will there be one agreement with the consortium/lead partner? Will the KAVA template form the basis for these agreements?*

Answer: The call states that the Framework Agreement, KAVA Contract and Profit Sharing Agreement are to be signed between each participant and EIT Food. It also recommends a Consortium Agreement signed by all consortium members, with the DESCA model suggested as a framework. This indicates participant-level agreements with EIT Food (mandatory) and a consortium agreement (as recommendation).

Question: *Section 7.2, "EIT Food Legal Framework & Legal Documents to be signed", states that selected participants must sign three documents: the Framework Agreement, the KAVA Contract and the Profit Sharing Agreement. Where do I find these documents?*

Answer: You will find all these documents of the Call webpage.

14. Funding amount, VAT and expenses

Question: *Could you confirm whether the indicated €900k project funding is inclusive or exclusive of VAT, and how travel and other project-related expenses should be treated within the available funding?*

Answer: The call provides up to EUR 900,000 in total funding and requires all claimed costs to satisfy Horizon Europe eligibility rules. Travel and other project-related expenditure must therefore be included within the available project budget and claimed only if eligible, necessary and properly supported. VAT included.

Question: *Could you please clarify the expected timeline of the work? The call states the project duration is December 2026 – May 2027. However, the model contract includes budget for 2026 - 2027 - 2028 and the call itself mentions a 3-year grant*

Answer: The project runs from December 2026 to 30 June 2027, including the full month of June. The KAVA Agreement is a template document that will be completed and tailored to reflect the details of each selected project. The reference to the three-year Grant Agreement relates to EIT Food's funding framework, rather than the duration of this project.

Question: *Does the project timeline cover the full period up to 30 June, or does it end on 1 June?*

Answer: The timeline covers the full period up to and including 30 June.

Question: Is there a format for the budget?

Answer: The budget is an integral part of the application and should be completed within the application submission process. Applicants should prepare the budget in line with the Call Guidelines, ensuring that all proposed costs comply with Horizon Europe cost categories and eligibility rules.

15. Governance and administrative requirements

Question: *Could you provide more detail on the governance and project management support EIT Food will provide during delivery, and the level of reporting, cost administration and other administrative requirements expected from consortium participants?*

Answer: The consortium must propose a clear governance and steering structure, roles, responsibilities, decision-making, coordination, timeline, milestones, deliverables and risk management. WP3 includes coordination with EIT Food, periodic and final reporting, communications and dissemination. EIT Food will continuously monitor the project, with an assigned Project Monitor, and will request yearly actual-cost, KPI and deliverable reporting with supporting documents. The activity may also be audited and is subject to a formal ex-post impact assessment within at least five years after the activity end.

Please see the Activity Implementation Guidelines for further details.

Question: *The Call mentions that Wageningen University conducted a small scale CBA for FFDI. Could this be shared, or will it only be shared following the selection of the consortium?*

Answer: As stated in Annex 5 of the Call Guidelines, listed materials will be made available to the selected consortium.

16. Consortium proposal submission

Question: *Can the consortium submit one joint proposal covering all consortium partners and work packages, or are separate submissions/documents required from individual partners?*

Answer: The call requires an application from a complete consortium covering all three work packages. Applications are submitted through the MyEITFood Portal and must contain all mandatory forms, annexes and supporting documents. The proposal should clearly describe consortium composition and the organisations covering key roles, including arrangements made through subcontracting or other collaboration.

Question: *Do we need to have consortium partners in all six countries?*

Answer: No. There is no requirement to have a consortium partner established in each of the six countries. According to the Guidelines, the selected consortium must be located in Europe and should cover all countries included in this call. Local farm advisory organisation(s) covering all six countries may participate as consortium members or be engaged through subcontracting where appropriate.

Question: *The call specifically states that the consortium must comprise at least 1 research organization. What counts as a research organization? For instance, is it only a university or higher education institution, or could this also include think thanks or similar organizations that conduct research?*

Answer: The Guidelines require at least two sides of the EIT knowledge triangle to be represented, for example one research and one business entity, and state that at least one scientific organisation must be part of the consortium as scientific coordinator. The Guidelines also do not specify which legal forms qualifies. They do, however, specify the expected expertise and role of the scientific organisation.

17. Q&A process and timeline

Question: *Until what date can applicants submit clarification questions, and when will EIT Food provide responses? Will all questions and answers be shared with all applicants?*

Answer: EIT Food will support applicants until the application deadline. Please note that last minute requests may not be addressed on time, and we suggest applicants allocate enough time to ask questions and prepare their applications, ahead of the deadline.

Questions and answers will be published in the FAQ, in the call webpage.

Question: *Is there an official, transparent channel through which specialist suppliers can present capabilities to eligible consortium leads? Please also point us to any current FAQ or supplier guidance and any deadline for clarification enquiries.*

Answer: Please refer to our Foodhive community to try and establish useful connections. With regard to eligibility, please refer to the Call Guidelines, which outline all requirements, including consortium composition and assessment criteria.

18. WP1: Geographic scope / phased approach

Question: *Given the broad geographic scope of the initiative, would it be possible to take a phased approach, focusing initially on 3–4 priority countries to develop and validate the methodology, before assessing its applicability and transferability to the broader set of European countries and farming contexts?*

Answer: The Call Guidelines specify, as part of the minimum required scope, application of the methodology in a minimum of six countries, together with validation of key assumptions and outputs with local advisors in the selected countries. Under WP1 Phase 2, the methodology should be applied in practice in key geographies and farming systems in at least six countries.

The Guidelines do not prescribe a specific sequencing of the work across those countries. However, the proposal must cover the minimum required scope of applying the methodology in at least six countries within the project. Application in additional countries beyond this minimum is identified as optional extended scope.

Therefore, an approach limited to only three or four countries for the required application and validation would not meet the minimum scope set out in the Call Guidelines.

19. WP1: Testing the methodology

Question: *Given that the methodology will include measures and targets that may cover a longer-term transition period (e.g., up to 10 years), could you clarify what is expected from farm-level testing within the project timeframe? Specifically, is the objective to test the practical feasibility and applicability of the methodology, rather than to validate the actual long-term outcomes of the proposed measures?*

Answer: The Guidelines do not specify a requirement to monitor farms over a longer-term period in order to validate the actual long-term outcomes of implementing the proposed practices. WP1 and WP2 are, however, closely interlinked: the thresholds, targets and farm archetypes developed under WP1 provide inputs to the Cost-Benefit Analysis under WP2.

The 10-year horizon specified in the Guidelines applies to the WP2 CBA model, which should describe farm-level financial impacts year-on-year for 10 years following implementation of regenerative practices. Where data on long-term impacts are not available, the Guidelines specify that scenarios should be used.

Therefore, within the project timeframe, the Guidelines focus farm-level testing on the practical feasibility and applicability of the methodology, while longer-term impacts are addressed through the modelling. More broadly, both WP1 and WP2 are focused on the development and testing of methodologies, rather than on validating long-term outcomes through extended farm monitoring.

20. WP1: Applicability beyond the case studies

Question: *Given the requirement that the methodology should be applicable and repeatable to other European regions beyond the six case studies, could you clarify the expected level of validation across different countries and farming contexts within the scope of this project?*

Answer: The Call Guidelines require, as part of the minimum scope, application of the methodology in at least six countries and validation of key assumptions and outputs with local advisors in the selected countries. Under WP1, the methodology should be applied in key geographies and farming systems and tested on a number of farms and regions to assess and verify feasibility in practice.

Applicants should therefore reflect in their proposal how they intend to deliver this cross-country application and validation. This is also reflected in the evaluation criteria.

The Guidelines do not prescribe a minimum number of farms or regions per country or a specific number of farming contexts to be covered. Application in additional countries and enhanced validation or stakeholder consultation are identified as optional extended-scope activities.

The methodology is expected to be transferable to other European regions and farming contexts. The application and validation activities undertaken within the selected countries are therefore intended to test and demonstrate the methodology in practice, while supporting its broader applicability beyond the specific countries, farms and regions included within the project scope.

21. WP1: Specificity of thresholds and targets

Question: *At what level should the thresholds and targets be defined: as a common European framework, at country/region level, or potentially differentiated by farm type, production system and local environmental conditions?*

Answer: The Call Guidelines do not prescribe a single level at which all thresholds and targets must be defined. Under WP1, the consortium is required to develop a contextualised and science-based methodology for setting thresholds and targets that is applicable across different geographies and farming systems. Applicants are expected to design and justify the methodology and the most appropriate conceptual basis for defining the thresholds and targets.

The final WP1 deliverable should include quantified, contextual thresholds and targets which, at a minimum, meet relevant local legislation, European Green Deal targets and/or SBTN requirements, together with an overview of relevant EU and national legislation. The methodology must also be demonstrated in practice in at least six countries and be transferable to other European regions and farming contexts.

The specific level of differentiation is not prescribed in the Call Guidelines; applicants should set out and justify their proposed approach within the methodology, while meeting the requirements for contextualisation, scientific robustness, practical applicability and transferability set out in the Call.

Rather than prescribing upfront whether thresholds and targets should be defined at European, national, regional or farming-system level, the consortium is expected to develop a methodology that enables contextualisation at the most appropriate level. Depending on the topic, this may result in targets being applied and interpreted at different levels.

22. WP1: Access to farms and data

Question: *Will EIT Food / FFDI facilitate access to the case-study farms and relevant farm-level data, or is the consortium expected to identify/recruit farms and source the required data itself?*

Answer: The Call Guidelines require the consortium to include or engage relevant local farm advisory organisation(s) covering all selected countries. Their role includes supporting implementation and validation in local farming contexts and, where relevant, providing access to farm data, farmer insights and local expertise.

Applicants are also expected to demonstrate farm-level advisory experience, including direct work with farmers and access to farm-level insights and economic information.

EIT Food is not in a position to facilitate direct access to the case-study farms. The Call Guidelines do not specify that FFDI will recruit farms or guarantee access to farm-level data on behalf of the selected consortium.

The Guidelines therefore place an explicit requirement on the consortium to include or engage local farm advisory organisations with relevant farm-level access and expertise, while they do not specify any broader commitment by EIT Food or FFDI to provide access to case-study farms or all required farm-level data.

23. WP1: Minimum country scope

Question: *The call refers to various geographic areas but there seems to be different countries referred in the introduction and in the main text in different areas. I wanted to confirm that the minimum 6 countries MUST be: France, UK, Netherlands, Germany, Denmark and Poland, or is there flexibility?*

Answer: The Call Guidelines set a minimum scope of six countries: the Netherlands, Poland, France, Denmark, Germany and the UK. Implementation in additional countries during this project is optional. Under Extended scope, optional where feasible within budget and timeline, the Guidelines mention application in additional countries beyond the minimum scope. The Guidelines also state that WP1 - Methodology is required to be applicable and repeatable to other European regions beyond the 6 case studies from the project geography; WP2 - The model will be applicable across a minimum of 6 countries and have the ability to add new countries and practices to the model.

24. WP1: Baseline farm data and recruitment

Question: *It is unclear what has already been gathered in terms of data with how many farms to date: has any baseline information been gathered for farms using the SAI criteria? How many of the 1000 farms have been recruited?*

Answer: The Guidelines require the consortium to include or engage relevant local farm advisory organisation(s), whose role includes providing acthe cess to farm data, farmer insights and local expertise. They do not commit EIT Food/FFDI to recruiting farms or providing required farm-level data on behalf of the consortium. The consortium is expected to demonstrate how it will secure the necessary local advisory involvement, farmer/farm-level insights and validation. Annex 5 mentions documents and materials that will be made available to selected consortia.

25. WP1: Local advisory organisations

Question: *The requirement for advisors: Can I clarify that there is an expectation that at least 6 advisory organisations, one for each country mentioned, must be part of the consortium or sub-contracted? Each of the 3 FFDI dairy companies, Danone, FrieslandCampina and Arla, have existing advisors; is the expectation that for each country, other advisory organisations are added to the existing farm advisors already in place?*

Answer: The Call Guidelines do not require six separate advisory organisations. Local farm advisory organisation(s) will cover all 6 countries covered by this call. One organisation may cover one or more countries, provided there is at least one relevant local farm advisory organisation identified for each selected country. Local advisory organisation(s) may participate as consortium members or be engaged through subcontracting where appropriate.

26. WP1 and WP2: Interpretation of project benefits

Question: *In the proposal form, the following question is included: "Describe how you would improve and measure project benefits including carbon sequestration, GHG emissions, soil health, biodiversity, water quality and farmer wellbeing." Could you clarify what this means? Is it a request to explain how regen ag project benefits on carbon etc. can be monitored over time? Or is this a question about the environmental impact of the project itself? It is a little unclear how this question relates to the activities in scope.*

Answer: Please interpret this question within the scope of the FFDI Call Guidelines. It relates to the expected farm-level outcomes of regenerative agricultural practices and their assessment within the work described under WP1 and WP2. It does not introduce an additional requirement to assess the environmental footprint of project implementation itself.

Source notes

Primary source: Future Fit Dairy Initiative Landscape Call webpage

Call Guidelines: FFDI Call Guidelines

Key sections used: Call Fact Sheet; Sections 2.1-2.3, 3.1-3.2, 4-4.1, 5.1-5.2, 6.3-6.4 and 7.1-7.5; Annexes 6 and 7.

Important drafting note: Where the call is silent or ambiguous, this document deliberately avoids presenting an assumption as a confirmed contractual position. Those items are marked for consultation before any answer is shared externally.