FAQs – Sisukas Finland Resilient Agriculture Landscape

Is the reporting done regarding EU Horizon rules and specifically does the coordinator need to take care of the submissions of the financial reports for all partners?

- *Yes, the reporting is done based on costs incurred, according to Horizon Europe rules. The PMO (WP1) is responsible for actually submitting the financial reports for all partners because they are the stated lead applicant and have the right level of access to the back-office system etc. However, we would expect that your consortium partners - being the ones who know their spend and activities etc - would actually provide the info and support the process themselves, with PMO in charge of coordinating and submitting. It requires good collaboration, but it is certainly manageable.*

It states that the training activities must undergo EIT accreditation process: what kind of fee to budget here ? Do we accredit the tailor made training package for the Landscape or the already existing modules its going to be built on?

- *There is no fee related for EIT Food accreditation - instead, this refers to particular EIT Food-led validation processes that confirm participants have actually learned something impactful from their training. So training modules delivered by the consortium will have to be accredited based on surveys etc to ensure they have impact.*

Is WP1 expected to review the partners' financial reports and raise concerns if they do not comply with the Horizon rules? Or is this checking done at the EIT Food?

- *EIT Food checks cost reports for legitimacy, and costs that are not eligible will not be paid to that partner. Though you will submit the project's cost reports (including for each participant), and should encourage them to properly fill them out, it is their responsibility to provide the correct information if they would like to be paid.*

How many times a year must reports be submitted?

- *Cost reporting occurs once per year, in Q1 (Jan-Mar approximately).*

Should the Horizon Europe template be used for budgeting, or is there another template available?

- *There should be a budget template within the application form on Salesforce.*

Does the consortium agreement need to be in place before submitting the application?

- *The consortium must apply as a collective, with someone assigned to tackle each work package, and ready to work collaboratively to meet the project requirements. However, the KAVA contract with EIT Food and consortium agreement are sorted following selection of the winning consortium.*

What does it mean in practice that EIT Food makes agreements with each farmer?

- *This refers to the idea that farmers, to take part in the project, will sign a basic agreement committing to enacting practices to transition to regenerative agriculture, and to sharing the necessary data for the project to report its outcomes. They will also naturally have a contract with their buyers who co-finance the project.*

How is "Southern Finland" defined for this call? The call guide doesn't specify exact regions, so we wanted to confirm before assessing partner fit.

- *The specific definition is not hugely important, and there is no geographical boundary. That name refers to the fact that the produce is largely sourced from the Southern part of Finland.*

On the 100 farms, will the consortium need to identify and onboard them ourselves or will the corporate offtakers bring an already-onboarded cohort, with our role being to train/support them (WP2)?

- *The corporate offtakers are the ones bringing in the farmers. The implementing consortium will play a role in onboarding etc, and perhaps may be asked to support in some way in recruitment, but recruitment responsibility is with the offtakers, and the applicants do not need to bring farmers in.*

Does EIT Food already have identified corporate off-takers, aggregators, cooperatives, or farms associated with the Landscape, or will the selected consortium be responsible for recruiting and enrolling the target cohort of around 100 farms? At application stage, would you expect applicants to name prospective farms or farm-network partners?

- *Corporate offtakers are already attached to the Project, so we will not expect applicants to bring their own named farms, although there may be some role in supporting farmer recruitment efforts once onboarded.*

Could you clarify the intended funding model for farmer participation and transition support? In particular, should the €1.1 million cover only consortium delivery costs, including MRV and advisory services, or is the proposal expected to include direct farmer payments, implementation incentives, or corporate co-financing?

- *That amount covers all delivery consortium delivery costs - direct farmer payments etc are not part of the EIT Food Call costs.*

To support proportionate scoping of the soil-carbon MRV work package, can you share any indicative information on the expected farm geography, main arable systems/crops, approximate farm sizes or hectares, and whether the “existing MRV platform” referenced in the call has already been selected?,

- *Unfortunately we cannot provide any more information on this than what is in the Call Guidelines, in the interest of fairness for all applicants.*

As the €1.1 million budget must cover all consortium delivery costs, could you clarify EIT Food's / off-taker's expectation for baseline sampling under WP5? Specifically, should applicants cost and plan for all participating farms to be recruited and baseline-sampled within one coordinated initial campaign, or should they assume phased recruitment requiring multiple sampling campaigns? If the latter, is there an indicative enrolment and baseline-completion timetable that applicants should use for budget purposes?

- *That information is as yet undetermined, so you must use the information in the Call Guidelines to inform your application. We are targeting crop years 2027, 2028 and 2029. Does it make it impossible for you to prepare your application on this basis? Or can you provide enough info at application stage that can then be moulded based on project requirements?*

The call guidelines say "EIT Food provides catalytic funding, which is matched and ideally exceeded by contributions from participating corporates". Just to clarify, does that mean there is a minimum 50% co-funding requirement from companies? I.e. as the EIT Food subgrant is up to 1.1 MEUR, that should be matched or exceeded with up to 1.1 MEUR external co-funding?

- *That text is misleading - the catalytic funding is already confirmed and committed by a consortium of corporate offtakers. It is not the responsibility of the consortium applying to this call to provide co-financing.*

If such matching is expected, can it be satisfied through farmer-facing value delivered outside the grant budget itself (e.g. price premiums, in-kind agronomic support, or data infrastructure provided by corporate partners, similar to the model used in Navarra 360º), or does it need to take the form of demonstrable cash co-investment tied directly to the project budget?

- *See above - no need for co-financing by applicants.*

The KAVA Contract template indicates that the EIT Food reimbursement rate is set individually per participant at KAVA initiation, based on participant category and project type. Could you clarify what reimbursement rate(s) would typically apply to the different types of organisations we might expect in this consortium, e.g. SMEs/non-profit/research/advisory bodies versus corporate partners?

- *As long as the costs they submit are eligible, all parties in the implementing consortium are paid in full, up to the amount that they submitted and were accepted for in their application. Cost reporting takes place in Q1 each year, where EIT Food checks the reports to ensure costs are eligible*

Does EIT Food offer any partner-matching support or a list of organisations seeking consortium partners for this call?

- *We do not currently have a list of partners seeking additional consortium members, and I am not aware of applicants who have asked for this. You can post on FoodHIVE to see if anyone is interested.*

Can you confirm that legal entities from Horizon Europe associated countries (Türkiye) are eligible for full funding under this call, subject to the usual eligibility conditions?

- *Yes, they would be eligible, according to the criteria in the Call Guidelines and associated documentation.*

Would an RDE prototype at approximately TRL 4→5 be suitable for WP2/WP3 if adapted and validated in Finland?

- *I cannot answer detailed questions like that beyond what is in the Call Guidelines - as long as they meet the eligibility requirements in the Guidelines, the key criteria for selection is that an applicant is able to fully meet the requirements of the Call.*

What would be a realistic budget range and pre-financing arrangement for a German micro-SME, and can personnel/founder time, software/cloud, data processing, travel and validation be eligible costs?

- *Those are eligible costs, but I cannot advise on the level of financing - that is an intra-consortium matter.*

Can you clarify background/foreground IP and farm/project-data rights, particularly whether Symbioverse could retain its existing RDE IP and use appropriately consented project data for validation and further technology development?

- *Information on those rights etc is available in the documents on the Call webpage, but EIT Food does not take away IP from applicants. The KAVA contract and a consortium agreement would set out those matters in more detail following selection.*

Are the Finnish delivery organisations, corporate offtakers and/or farmer-facing partners already identified, and may prospective partners know who they are?

- *We do have the corporate offtakers confirmed already, but this is not public info. Every other partner is being selected through this Call.*

Does the call prescribe a minimum number of farms or hectares that must participate in the WP4 operational pilot, or may applicants propose a justified pilot scale within the available budget? (this does affect how costs are distributed for WP4)

- *There is no specific number in the Call, it is up to applicants to determine.*

Could you confirm the indicative project start and end dates, annual reporting expectations and applicable reimbursement and indirect-cost rules, particularly in relation to delivery through the 2029 crop year?

- *The project start and end dates are already within the Call Guidelines. Reporting expectations again I would say are within the Call Guidelines, though I am not entirely sure which reporting requirements you mean? The Guidelines do set out the type of reporting the corporate co-financers will need to receive. In terms of reimbursement, depending on the size*

of your organisation you receive 20, 30 or 50% of your annual costs up front in Q1, with the remainder of the costs incurred reported and claimed back in Q1 of the following year. I'm not sure what more detail you needed, but all info applicants need should be in the documents on the Call webpage.

The Call Guidelines do not set a minimum period of incorporation for a consortium member. However, the proposal form includes a mandatory question for each consortium member: "Has this organisation been a legally incorporated entity in the stated country for a minimum of one year?" Could you please confirm:
1. Does answering "No" to this question make the entity ineligible to receive EIT Food funding in this call?
2. Which date is the one-year period counted to: the application deadline, the project start date, or the signature of the Financial Support Agreement?

- *There is no disqualification for answering 'No'. They are still eligible if they can demonstrate sufficient capability to meet the requirements of the Work Package. The application deadline is the one-year cut-off as far as I am aware - but again, it is not a pre-requisite for eligibility.*