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Request for proposals

EIT Food RisingFoodStars Commercial Track 2025

EIT Food – Making Food Innovation Happen

Knowledge & Innovation Center on Food,
part of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

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<http://www.eitfood.eu>

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1. Overview of EIT Food

EIT Food is Europe's leading food innovation initiative, working to make the food system more sustainable, healthy and trusted.

The initiative is made up of a consortium of key industry players, startups, research centres and universities from across Europe. It is one of eight Innovation Communities established by the European Institute for Innovation & Technology (EIT), an independent EU body set up in 2008 to drive innovation and entrepreneurship across Europe.

EIT Food aims to collaborate closely with consumers to develop new knowledge and technology-based products and services that will ultimately deliver a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle for all European citizens.

For more information about our company please visit the following website: www.eitfood.eu

RisingFoodStars - The RisingFoodStars (RFS) Network is a programme which allows successful, impactful agrifood tech scale-ups to scale to the next level in becoming the international gamechangers of the future.

The programme addresses (typically B2B) scale-ups that are well past the startup phase and already have paying customers and are poised for significant growth and global scale. RisingFoodStars helps them grow and scale impact faster and boosts their chances of business success. We accompany them in their scaling journey, all the way from mission crystallisation and communication, definition and implementation of strategic priorities, investment, leadership skills upgrade, access to the right partners, and much more!

Within RisingFoodStars' commitment to deliver access to top-quality support from experts, a call for trainers and coaches to deliver a Commercial Training Track to the RisingFoodStars scale-ups is open.

2. Scope of work

General objectives

The main goal of the RisingFoodStars 2025 Commercial Track is to support companies in creating a stable/increasing flow of commercial deals.

To achieve the main goal, companies need to have an enhanced understanding of the following components:

- **Recap on Go-to-Market Strategies:** Re-iteration and fine-tuning of GTM strategies and understanding of the basics of commercialisation to ensure alignment and understanding.
- **Sales Scaling:** Enhanced and scalable sales strategies, sales team development, and customer-centric market penetration.
- **Organizational Scaling:** Develop internal structures and processes to support growth from an R&D focused company to a sales focused company.

The following will be considered as success measures of this track:

- Companies' satisfaction rate (measured via form upon track closure).
- No. of deals closed at the end of year by participating companies.
- No. of conversations with potential leads/corporates.
- Growth in no. of sales FTEs in team.
- No. of new markets entered.
- Reduction in production costs and time-to-market.

Detailed work scope

The training provider should propose a training plan for the participating companies. The training should serve the objective of equipping our scale-ups with all tools, notions, tips and networking necessary to upgrade their commercial skills to support their scaling journey. Some topics to cover should include:

Recap on Market Analysis, Product-Market Alignment and Go-to-Market Strategies

- Utilizing various data and resources for market insights and strategic decisions making.
- Go-to-Market Strategies and aligning products with market needs.
- Conducting effective product testing and incorporating feedback leveraging buyer personas and pain points and user journeys.

Sales Scaling and Sales Strategies

- Designing scalable end-to-end sales processes.
- Ensuring regulatory compliance incl. pre- and post-market compliance.
- Implementing Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems for tracking and managing interactions.
- Lead Generation Strategies and tools.
- Mastering negotiation tactics to close deals effectively.
- Strategies for converting leads into long-term customers.
- Developing persuasive communication tailored to diverse audiences incl. for product development and testing conversations.
- Customer Retention and Service Excellence.

Organisational Scaling and HR to become a sales-oriented venture

- Identifying key competencies for sales roles.
- Effective hiring practices and onboarding programs.
- Exploring licensing business models and distributor sales channels.

Deliverables, Timing and organisation of work

The suggested structure for reference (subject to modification, to align to the trainer's personal experience of efficient delivery):

- 1-2 h activation workshop as a teaser on the "Essentials of commercialisation". Would ideally take place in-person (in mid-June during the cohort kick-off). An online format could be considered.
- Selection of participating companies by the end of July after the activation workshop.
- Preparation calls with the selected companies (eyes on identifying key points where support is required and on segmenting the participating companies by needs and maturity if required, clarifying current GTM approach and stage) in August.
- 2 days bootcamp in person (tentatively in September. Exact dates and European location tbd).
- Potential in-person event during NextBite in Brussels 15th-16th October.
- Follow-up group and/or peer-to peer coaching and/or 1:1 coaching session with the participating companies, to further focus on themes where support is most needed until the end of the year using individualized growth plans with clear KPIs. Sharing experiences and best practices among the participating companies is encouraged.

- If possible, access to industry experts i.e., in the form of a roundtable, meet the buyer event or similar.

The different elements of the program should be envisioned as a learning journey taking place from June until December 2025. All sessions should place priority on equipping the companies with material which is actionable, personalised and which considers the stage of maturity and nature of our scale-ups.

While most scale-ups will have a sales strategy in place and might already serve a customer portfolio, some companies, specifically those operating in biotech, might be at an earlier stage of commercial maturity. Proposals must clearly indicate the target group of trainees in terms of level of commercial maturity. If possible, an all-encompassing proposal should cover all levels of commercial maturity while specifying and individualising training content based on maturity of the participating companies. Specific focus on the agrifood sector will be considered a plus (which means both AgTech and FoodTech). As mentioned above, the training will be delivered in a hybrid format (with segments in person and online). English will be the delivery language.

3. Proposal Process

3.1. Participation

Participation in this proposal procedure is open to all tenderers.

3.2. Submission of proposal

	Date
Sending out RFP invitations to the potential suppliers	27 th March 2025
Deadline for requesting clarification from EIT Food	10 th April 2025
Deadline for submitting proposals	13 th April 2025
Intended date of notification of award	12 th May 2025
Intended date of contract signature	16 th May 2025

Proposals must be emailed in English to the following address to:

Contact name: for the attention of Lena Marijke Wenzel

E-mail: lenamarijke.wenzel@eitfood.eu

The proposal shall contain:

- **the technical response to the service requested (point 3) incl.**
 - Experience of trainer(s) delivering the Commercial training including experience in commercial, impact and entrepreneurial realms. Expertise in the agrifood sector will be considered a plus (FoodTech and AgTech).
 - Connections to agrifood ecosystem and facilitation with industry mentors and events.
 - Inclusion of AI tools to support any aspect of commercialisation will be considered a plus.
 - Structure, focus and main topics of the training. A clear and detailed agenda MUST be suggested. Tailored content for both FoodTech and AgTech companies will be considered a plus. Tailored content for different levels of commercial maturity will be considered a plus.
 - Brief description of session(s) design, including how it will ensure engagement and actionable outcomes.
- **the financial offer (the price for the services.)** The Financial offer shall be expressed in Euros, VAT shall be indicated separately.

Responses should be concise and clear. The tenderer's proposal will be incorporated into any contract that results from this procedure. Tenderers are, therefore, cautioned not to make claims or statements that they are not prepared to commit to contractually. Subsequent modifications and counter-proposals, if applicable, shall also become an integral part of any resulting contract.

The tenderer confirms that the individual submitting the natural or legal entity's proposal is duly authorized to bind its entity to the proposal as submitted. The tenderer also confirms that it has read the instructions to tenderers and has the experience, skills and resources to perform, according to conditions set forth in this proposal and the tenderers' proposal.

Note: as mentioned throughout this brief, our companies are already well past the acceleration phase, what we call scale-up phase, and thus are already familiar with the basic commercial aspects of running a business. The aim is not to share the basics of a GTM strategy, though a refresher might be provided, but to really provide in-depth and tailored support to their commercial upskilling and commercial scaling depending on their commercial maturity (pre-sales, sales).

3.3. Validity of the proposals

Tenderers are bound by their proposals for 90 days after the deadline for submitting proposals or until they have been notified of non-award.

The selected winner must maintain its proposal for a further 60 days to close the contract.

Proposals not following the instructions of this Request for Proposal can be rejected by EIT Food.

3.4. Requests for additional information or clarification

In case the tenderers require additional information or clarifications, these should be addressed to the person indicated below. All communication between EIT Food and tenderers is only possible in writing, all requests

will be done and answered by e-mail only. All questions should be sent prior to deadline for requesting clarification as specified in Section 3.1. In case of complex or high value procurements, EIT Food may arrange a clarification session of which it will inform all tenderers.

Contact name: for the attention of Lena Marijke Wenzel

E-mail: lenamarijke.wenzel@eitfood.eu

EIT Food has no obligation to provide clarification.

3.5. Costs for preparing proposals

No costs incurred by the tenderer in preparing and submitting the proposal are reimbursable. All such costs must be borne by the tenderer.

3.6. Clarification related to the submitted proposals

After submission of the proposals, they shall be checked if they satisfy all the formal requirements set out in the proposal dossier. Where information or documentation submitted by the tenderers are or appears to be incomplete or erroneous or where specific documents are missing, EIT Food may request the tenderer concerned to submit, supplement, clarify or complete the relevant information or documentation within an appropriate time limit. All communication between EIT Food and tenderers is only possible in writing, all requests will be done and answered by e-mail only.

3.7. Negotiation about the submitted proposal

After checking the administrative compliance of the tenderers, EIT Food reserves the right to negotiate the contract terms with the tenderers. In this negotiation EIT Food may ask all tenderers to adjust the proposal or specific sections of the proposal within an appropriate time limit. In case of negotiation, EIT Food shall provide further information about the proceedings and timing.

3.8. Evaluation of proposals

The quality of each proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the below mentioned award criteria. The award criteria will be examined in accordance with the requested service indicated in Section 2 of the document.

- Expertise of the trainer in the area with on-ground experience. Any referrals and supporting arguments about your expertise in accompanying scaleups will be welcome. (maximum 20 points)
- Capacity to speak to the specific reality and challenges of our RisingFoodStars companies, tailored to a small audience of 6-8 companies and including as well 1:1 segments. (maximum 20 points)
- Capacity to build a full track pre- and post-bootcamp (with relevant content and format: ex.: 1:1s, intros to corporates, peer-learning, etc) (maximum 20 points)
- Structured, engaging and interactive approach incl. capacity to provide tools and frameworks which are user-friendly, still customisable to the needs of each startup. (maximum 20 points)
- Capacity to include AI tools or use cases were relevant. (maximum 10 points)

- Capacity to pull the trainer's own relevant network to add value to the track (ex. corporates, coaches, successful scaleups, etc.) (maximum 10 points)
- Better value for money (maximum 10 points)

Total maximum score: 110 points

The results of the award procedure will be communicated in writing (via e-mail) to the successful and unsuccessful tenderers.

3.9. Appeals/complaints

Tenderers believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may file a complaint. Appeals should be addressed to EIT Food. The tenderers have 3 calendar days to file their complaints from the dispatch of the award notification e-mail

3.10. Signature of contract

Please refer to Annex 1 for the template contract that shall apply to this procedure. Any changes desired by the tenderer in the provisions contained in the body of this Service Agreement must be communicated to EIT Food as part of the proposal of such tenderer. Any such changes will be considered as part of the evaluation of the proposal of each tenderer

Within 5 days of receipt of the contract from EIT Food, the winning tenderer shall sign and date the contract and return it to EIT Food. Upon receipt, EIT Food shall countersign and return one signed copy of the contract to the winning tenderer.

3.11. Cancellation of the proposal procedure

In the event of cancellation of the procurement procedure, EIT Food will notify tenderers of the cancellation. In no event shall EIT Food be liable for any damages whatsoever including, without limitation, damages for loss of profits, in any way connected with the cancellation of a proposal procedure, even if EIT Food has been advised of the possibility of damages.

3.12. Ethics clauses / Corruptive practices

EIT Food reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to substantial errors, irregularities or fraud. If substantial errors, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the Contract, EIT Food may refrain from concluding the Contract.

The supplier shall take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the contract is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests'). The supplier should

immediately inform EIT Food if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the tasks.

3.13. Annexes

Annex 1: Contract Template. The Contract Template is provided for information purposes only and might be subject to considerable modifications.

Annex II: Declaration of Honour