Co-funded by the European Union

Request for proposals

to participate in EIT Food RIS PSRAL – testing service

EIT Food – Making Food Innovation Happen

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

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 nine 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

2. Scope of work

EIT Food RIS Public Sector Representatives Activity Line ("EIT Food RIS PSRAL", "Project") delivers capacity building and professional education to representatives of public sector in countries of EIT Regional Innovation Scheme in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe ("RIS"). It provides insights into new agri-food technologies, mission-oriented innovation policies for food system and best practices in leveraging publicly funded research infrastructures for industrially oriented R&D and entrepreneurship.
Part of the EIT Food RIS PSRAL project, EIT Food IntraBooster is an educational program that promotes effective use of publicly funded research infrastructures owned by universities or research institutes and relevant for R&D efforts of private sector agri-food companies and startups.

The present request for proposals is launched by EIT Food CLC North-East Sp. z o.o. ("EIT Food CLC NE") jointly with University of Warsaw to **select 11 companies that will deliver testing of R&D services** that were successfully developed within the EIT Food RIS PSRAL project, to ensure the highest quality and effectiveness of developed services.

This request for proposals seeks companies eager to gain valuable insights into new agri-food technologies and leverage best practices in utilizing publicly funded research infrastructures for industrially oriented R&D and entrepreneurship. Join us in driving innovation and advancing the agri-food industry towards a sustainable future. Each subcontractor selected in the present request for proposals will deliver testing for one service provider ("Service provider") of the services specified in section 2.2 of this request for proposals document. As a service tester, each subcontractor will have the opportunity to evaluate new R&D services and provide valuable feedback.

The selection process is implemented as an open request for proposals, using clear and transparent selection criteria, and the selection will be carried out with the help of experts' evaluators. In 2025, each subcontractor will benefit from **net funding of 9,500€** to carry out the tasks and implement the contractual obligations (based on subcontracting relationship, i.e. by issuing VAT invoices, without the requirement to apply Horizon Europe rules for personnel cost accounting).

2.1. Contractual tasks of subcontractor

The subcontractor will be responsible for the organisation and delivery of testing the R&D service as part of their operations. Specific new R&D services were developed within the EIT Food RIS PSRAL project, leveraging specialist research infrastructures of Service providers being scientific organisations. The subcontractor will deliver testing to ensure the highest quality and effectiveness of the developed R&D services before they become widely available on the market. The following list of contractual tasks applies:

- Participation in meetings with the Service provider unit to plan and implemented the testing;
- Implement and integrate the selected R&D service into the subcontractor's operational environment;
- Conduct comprehensive testing to assess the service's functionality, performance, and compatibility with existing subcontractor's company systems and processes;
- Provide regular updates and feedback to the Service provider team regarding the testing progress, challenges encountered, and initial observations;
- Submitting "Report on the new R&D service testing" (the "Report") – detailed instructions and report templates are provided by the University of Warsaw and the report includes: evidence of the implementation of the testing performance, confirmed by an invoice issued by the Service provider to the subcontractor for the purchase of the service to be tested, amounting to at least 10,000€ net (in case of invoices in local currencies, net amount must be at least 10,000€ converted to the local currency using the average rate of respective local National Bank from the day before the date of issuing the invoice, please note that the calculation and conversion rate details must be provided in the invoice), data about outcomes of the tests; brief overview of the R&D service tested, objectives of the testing, details about the use of research infrastructures of the Service providers, and key findings;
- Participation in the debriefing session with the team from University of Warsaw to discuss the R&D service testing experiences and lessons learned, following the submission of the report.
- Communicating with the media (newspapers, industry or thematic magazines, specialist internet portals) to ensure at least one publication in the local language describing the testing service, to be published before submitting the Report. The publication should include the name of the tested service and information stating that it was developed within the EIT Food InfraBooster.

2.2. Information about R&D services

(1) **Integral use of bioactive-rich extracts from underexploited materials: applications in the development of new products**

Service Provider: Phytochemicals Laboratory, CITAB Research Center, University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro (UTAD)

Description: This service focuses on the valorization of food industry by-products for the development of innovative and sustainable food products, following a zero-waste approach. Leveraging the expertise of CITAB at UTAD, the service includes training and mentoring in upcycling food residues, developing high-value food ingredients, and optimizing processing techniques. The service provides comprehensive support, including technological solutions, customized formulations, process optimization, nutritional profiling, and quality analysis. By transforming food industry residues into functional and nutritious ingredients, this initiative promotes circular economy principles, reduces waste, and enhances sustainability. The main objective is to bridge research, innovation, and industry needs by creating sustainable, nutrient-rich food solutions. This includes the development of high-protein, fiber-rich, and antioxidant-enhanced products tailored to health-conscious and environmentally responsible consumers.

Contact to service providers: Professor Ana Novo Barros: abarros@utad.pt

(2) **DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FRUIT AND VEGETABLE-BASED PRODUCTS From diversity of raw materials to diversity of innovative final products**

Service Provider: Laboratory for Sensory Analysis, Institute of Food Technology - FINS, University of Novi Sad

Description: The Institute of Food Technology offers comprehensive sensory analysis services: sensory evaluation methods, consumer testing methods instrumental measurements of sensory properties in specialized laboratories to help organizations improve product quality and better understand consumer needs. We provide advanced tools for optimizing production processes, developing new formulations, and enhancing consumer experiences. Through collaboration, we support companies in improving their market position with precise sensory data, covering sensory attributes, and overall product acceptability. Additionally, we offer training programs to enhance the skills of industry personnel in sensory analysis and consumer science. Our approach integrates scientifically proven methods with practical solutions, ensuring that businesses not only improve their products but also strengthen their workforce, ultimately boosting competitiveness and market performance.

Contact to service providers: Milica Pojić (Principal Research Fellow); Mladenka Pestorić (Principal Research Fellow): mladenka.pestoric@fins.uns.ac.rs; Dubravka Škrobot (Senior Research Associate): dubravka.skrobot@fins.uns.ac.rs; Jelena Tomić (Senior Research Associate): jelena.tomic@fins.uns.ac.rs; Dragana Ubiparip Samek (Research Associate): dragana.ubiparip@fins.uns.ac.rs; Renata Kovač (Research Associate): renata.kovac@fins.uns.ac.rs; Nikola Maravić (Research Assistant): nikola.maravic@fins.uns.ac.rs

Link to service website: https://fins.uns.ac.rs/industrial-and-business-cooperation/?lang=en

(3) **NanoSense: Cradle of breakthrough inventions using nano- and micro-technologies**

Service Provider: BioSense Institute, University of Novi Sad

Description: NanoSense is a one-stop shop for nanomaterial fabrication and characterization, supporting companies developing nano-coatings for seeds, nanofertilizers, nanopackaging, functional nanoingredients, and sensors in agri-food sector. BioSense Institute's ISO5–ISO7 cleanroom facility offers state-of-the-art synthesis, deposition, etching, and characterization tools, including EBL, Raman, FIB, PVD, HRSEM, XRD, and AFM. Unlike facilities that focus solely on characterization, NanoSense provides end-to-end support—from material synthesis to product validation—along with expert training and consultations. This tailored services ensure efficient R&D, helping companies turn nanotechnology innovations into real-world applications. As the only integrated facility of its kind in the Balkan region, NanoSense delivers cost-effective, sustainable, and high-quality solutions for advancing nanotechnology in agriculture and food production.

Contact to service providers: PhD Jovana Stanojev (Lab Manager, Lead Contact): jovana.stanojev@biosense.rs; PhD Goran Kitić (Head of Center for Sensing Technologies): gkitic@biosense.rs; PhD Jasna Mastilović (Senior Researcher, Tech-transfer): jasna.mastilovi@biosense.rs

Link to service website: https://biosense.rs/en/equipments

(4) **AgriSmart solutions by BioBIT: Precision monitoring and sustainable crop management**

Service Provider: Technological Transfer Office (BioBIT Laboratory), National Research and Development Institute for Food Bioresources – IBA Bucharest

Description: The agricultural equipment producers need to validate fertilizer distribution technologies in real conditions. For them, AgriSmart Validation offers a customized R&D testing service based on precision mapping and remote sensing. This service includes in-field testing using agricultural drones equipped with NDVI and multispectral cameras, combined with high-resolution orthophoto generation and digital analysis. It ensures reliable data collection and spatial visualization to validate machine performance, crop response, and optimized input use. Unlike standard lab tests or field demonstrations, our service provides scalable, real-time field validation with expert interpretation, using infrastructure and expertise from the METROFOOD-RI national node. It results a support for agritech companies in product optimization, marketing validation, and compliance with sustainability goals.

Contact to service providers: Claudiu Utoiu: claudiu.utoiu@bioresurse.ro, +40 744 663 598; Bogdan Dragancea: bogdan.dragancea@gmail.com, +40 734 801 251

(5) **PhytoLab: Development of valuable metabolites**

Service Provider: Plant Biotechnology Research Laboratory, Faculty of Engineering, Marmara University
Description: The laboratory specializes in plant micropropagation, providing sustainable and standardized solutions for the pharmaceutical, cosmetic, and dietary supplement industries. Unlike conventional propagation methods that rely on seasonal plant availability, our in-vitro tissue culture approach ensures year-round production under controlled conditions. This technology enables the rapid and large-scale multiplication of plants with genetic stability, offering a cost-effective and efficient alternative to traditional propagation techniques. Our service addresses industry demands for consistency, efficiency, and sustainability while ensuring high-quality plant material for various applications.
Contact to service providers: Prof. Ahu Altınkut Uncuoğlu: ahu.uncuoglu@marmara.edu.tr; Prof. Yıldız Aydın: ayildiz@marmara.edu.tr; Dr. Ezgi Çabuk Şahin: ezgi.sahin@marmara.edu.tr

(6) **Empowering Business Decisions with Non-Hypothetical Science-Driven Consumer Insights**

Service Provider: Laboratory of Behavioural and Experimental Economics Science (LABEES), Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food – Skopje, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje
Description: LABEES helps companies understand what consumers truly value—by using science-based, real-incentive experiments instead of hypothetical surveys. As the first experimental economics lab in the Western Balkans, based at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food in Skopje, they specialize in uncovering consumer preferences for product features, sustainability, and pricing. The service supports businesses in testing new products or prototypes, measuring willingness to pay, and refining pricing and marketing strategies. By simulating real purchase decisions, LABEES delivers insights you can trust—reliable, actionable, and tailored to your market. Ideal for agrifood, retail, and innovation-driven companies, LABEES reduces risk, supports smarter decisions, and strengthens your competitive advantage, backed by an expert academic team and advanced research infrastructure.
Contact to service providers: Prof. Dr. Marina Nacka: marina.nacka@fznh.ukim.edu.mk; Prof. Dr. Andreas Drichoutis: adrihout@aua.gr; Prof. Dr. Ivana Janeska Stamenkovska: ijaneska@fznh.ukim.edu.mk; Prof. Dr. Dusica Santa: dsanta@fznh.ukim.edu.mk

(7) **CharmsLab: Development of Innovative Techniques in Food**

Service Provider: CharmsLab - University of Belgrade Faculty of Chemistry
Description: The service offered by CharmsLab provides advanced analytical solutions for detecting contaminants in food and related products. Using cutting-edge mass spectrometry and chromatography, CharmsLab offers tailored methods to identify both known and unknown contaminants, ensuring compliance with international food safety standards. Key aspects include: Instrumental Analysis: Detection using LC-MS/MS, GC-MS/MS, ICP- MS, NMR, and FTIR techniques; Customized Approach: Tailored methods for specific client need in food matrices; Comprehensive Support: Consultancy on contamination risk management and procedural optimization.
This service is especially valuable for manufacturers in the dairy, fruit juice, and bakery sectors. CharmsLab's team guarantees fast, accurate results and customized solutions, minimizing risks and protecting brand reputation.

Contact to service providers: MSc Tatjana Božić (Team Leader and Contact Person): tbozic@chem.bg.ac.rs; PhD Boban Anđelković (Lead Scientist): aboban@chem.bg.ac.rs; MSc Tamara Vasović (Method Development Lead): tvasovic@chem.bg.ac.rs; MSc Natalija Petronijević (Key Account Manager): petronijevic@chem.bg.ac.rs

(8) **Microplastics extraction, identification, and particle number analysis**

Service Provider: Microplastics extraction and characterization laboratory, Faculty of Chemistry, University of Belgrade
Description: This service focuses on isolating, identifying, and analyzing microplastic particles in various sample types. Our laboratory is equipped with a MicroFTIR (Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy) with high-resolution imaging and wizard software for ultra-fast mapping. This enables the lab to perform both qualitative (chemical composition, shape and size) and quantitative analysis of microplastics, using a rich spectral database. This analytical setup, combined with validated sample preparation protocols, facilitates the comprehensive study of microplastics in different sample types. The service delivers detailed results, meeting the latest ISO 24187:2023 standards. The service is also unique due to its affordability and fast turnaround, offering a more efficient alternative to expensive international labs.
Contact to service providers: Prof. Tanja Ćirković-Veličković (Lead and Contact Person): tcirkov@chem.bg.ac.rs; Tamar Mutić: tmutic@chem.bg.ac.rs; Darko Kostić: darkoko@chem.bg.ac.rs
Link to service website: https://www.chem.bg.ac.rs/analize/MicroFTIR/index-en.html

(9) **TrueGeneID - Enhance Quality with DNA Testing for Wine Grape Varieties**

Service Provider: Institute for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, University of Sarajevo (UNSA – INGEB)
Description: INGEB offers genetic testing of grapevines and planting material to vineyards and wineries, ensuring that grape varieties meet local and international standards, avoiding fines and legal issues while maintaining wine authenticity and quality. By verifying grapevine seedlings before planting, we help wineries save money and protect their investments. The service streamlines production, reduces waste, and enhances efficiency. Additionally, INGEB support transparency by confirming accurate wine labelling, bolstering consumer trust and regulatory compliance. Ultimately, the service provides a competitive edge, enabling wineries to guarantee authenticity, enhance marketability, and expand into new international markets. INGEB team's expertise ensures every step of the analysis is handled in-house, offering unmatched accuracy, efficiency, and data protection.
Contact to service providers: Prof.dr. Belma Kalamujić Stroil: belma.kalamujic@ingeb.unsa.ba; Prof.dr. Alen Mujčinović: a.mujcinovic@ppf.unsa.ba; Ena Hatibović, MA: ena.hatibovic@unsa.ba

(10) **Permeatest – permeability testing services**

Service Provider: Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Sarajevo
Description: The Permeatest service offers permeability studies for safety and efficacy assessments. It provides regulatory-relevant OECD compliant permeation studies, with high throughput permeation study equipment ensuring repeatability. This setup enables in vitro skin permeation studies, crucial for the safety assessment of cosmetic and pharmaceutical products, as well as agrifood products that might permeate skin. The ability to provide both permeation studies and formulation optimization makes this facility unique in the region. Permeatest provides comprehensive support, including expert evaluations by an interdisciplinary team and adherence to GLP and GMP standards, ensuring high-quality results. The service also stands out by making itself accessible to companies that may not have in-house expertise or infrastructure for these complex tests.
Contact to service providers: prof. dr. Alisa Elezović: alisa.elezovic@ffsa.unsa.ba; prof. dr. Tamer Bego: tamer.bego@ffsa.unsa.ba; prof. dr. Elma Omeragić: elma.omeragic@ffsa.unsa.ba

(11) **Feed your products with natural extracts**

Service Provider: Supercritical Extraction Research Group, Łukasiewicz Research Network - New Chemical Syntheses Institute
Description: The institute specializes in the process of supercritical fluid extraction. The service offers a well-developed modern infrastructure – from research, pilot to production scale, and highly-qualified extraction

research team. It also offers implementation of new methods for separation of bioactive compounds: molecular distillation processes and preparative chromatography techniques. The service includes identification of chemical composition of natural extracts using chromatographic and spectrophotometric methods.

Contact to service providers: PhD Dorota Kostrzewa: dorota.kostrzewa@ins.lukasiewicz.gov.pl; PhD Agnieszka Dębczak: agnieszka.debczak@ins.lukasiewicz.gov.pl; PhD Paweł Kowalik: pawel.kowalik@ins.lukasiewicz.gov.pl

Link to service website: www.ins.lukasiewicz.gov.pl
http://ins.pulawy.pl/index.php/en/research-departments/supercritical-extraction-department

3. Proposal Process

3.1. Participation

Participation in this proposal procedure is open to all eligible tenderers.

Eligible tenderers need to meet the following criteria:

1. A legal person (informal organizations/unregistered startup teams are not eligible);
2. Operate within sectors or industries that can benefit from advanced testing R&D service;
3. Willing to carry out tests of a selected R&D services that was successfully developed within the EIT Food RIS PSRAL project;
4. Able to sign a subcontracting agreement with the EIT Food Co-Location Centre North-East and act as a subcontractor in a project funded based on Horizon Europe/EIT modalities;
5. Possessing knowledge, skills, and resources needed to carry out the subcontracted tasks.

While evaluating applications, EIT Food CLC NE will also consider the following criteria:

6. Clear and compelling justification of motives for the applicant company to select a specific R&D service, including its alignment with the business needs, goals, and operational challenges;
7. Proposed plan of service testing, incl. timeline. All activities should be finished by 31/10/2025 at the latest.

3.2. Submission of proposal

	Date
Deadline for submitting proposals	26.06.2025, 14:00 CEST
Intended date of notification of award	04.07.2025
Intended date of contract signature	31.07.2025

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

E-mail: infrabooster@wz.uw.edu.pl

The proposal, based on the attached template (Annex III ’EIT Food RIS PSRAL’’ Application Form) shall contain:

- required information regarding the tenderer
- clear and compelling justification for selected the specific R&D service and how it aligns with tenderer’s business needs, goals, and operational challenges
- proposed plan of service testing, incl. specific timeline.

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.

The tenderer confirms that the individual submitting 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.

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 CLC NE.

3.4. Requests for additional information or clarification

In case the tenderers require additional information or clarifications, these should be addressed to the e-mail indicated below. All communication between EIT Food CLC NE 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 3.2.

E-mail: infrabooster@wz.uw.edu.pl

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 CLC NE should 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 CLC NE and tenderers is only possible in writing, all requests will be done and answered by e-mail only.

3.7. 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.

All proposals will be evaluated taking into account the following **eligibility criteria**, related to the applicants and their operations:

1. A legal person (informal organizations/unregistered startup teams are not eligible);
2. Operate within sectors or industries that can benefit from advanced testing R&D service;
3. Willing to carry out tests of a selected R&D services that were successfully developed within the EIT Food RIS PSRAL project;
4. Able to sign a subcontracting agreement with the EIT Food Co-Location Centre North-East and act as a subcontractor in a project funded based on Horizon Europe/EIT modalities (EIT Food partners and Rising Food Stars members are not eligible);
5. Possessing knowledge, skills, and resources needed to carry out the subcontracted tasks.

Eligibility criteria 1-5 will be evaluated on a 0-10 scale: 0 – not satisfactory; 10 – satisfactory.

Applications that meet all of the eligibility criteria (1-5) and receive 50 points will be further evaluated, based on the following **selection criteria**:

6. Clear and compelling justification for why the subcontractor selected a specific R&D service and how it aligns with their business needs, goals, and operational challenges.
7. Proposed plan of service testing, incl. timeline.

Selection criteria evaluated on a 0-10 scale: 0 – non satisfactory; 5 - satisfactory; 10 – excellent.

The application can receive max. 70 points for criteria 1-7. The highest ranked applications per each service, that meet all the eligibility criteria (1-5) will be selected. Only one proposal will be chosen to test each service.

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

3.8. 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 CLC NE. The tenderers have *3* calendar days to file their complaints from the dispatch of the award notification e-mail

3.9. Signature of contract

Please refer to Annex I 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 CLC NE as part of the proposal of such tenderer.

Within 7 days of receipt of the contract from EIT Food CLC NE, the winning tenderer shall sign and date the contract and return it to EIT Food CLC NE. Upon receipt, EIT Food CLC NE shall countersign and return one signed copy of the contract to the winning tenderer.

3.10. Cancellation of the proposal procedure

In the event of cancellation of the procurement procedure, EIT Food CLC NE will notify tenderers of the cancellation. In no event shall EIT Food CLC NE 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 CLC NE has been advised of the possibility of damages.

3.11. Ethics clauses / Corruptive practices

EIT Food CLC NE 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 CLC NE may refrain from concluding the contract.

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

3.12. Annexes

Annex I: Contract Template.

Annex II: Declaration of Honour Template

Annex III: ''EIT Food RIS PSRAL'' Application Form