

Call for Subcontractor: Product Testing for Food Product Startups – EIT Food Straight2Market 2025 Programme

EIT Food is seeking experienced subcontractors to conduct comprehensive product testing for innovative food product and tech startups in the agrifood system.

Application deadline: 20th June 2025, 23:59 CEST.

Further details about EIT Food can be found at: www.eitfood.eu, and the information on the S2M programme is available at <https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/ris-straight2market-2>

With respect to the present call, EIT Food will not provide new information that has not already been included in this document but can assist the potential applicants by explaining contents of this document, please contact: izaskun.valle@eitfood.eu

1. **About the programme**

The *Straight2Market (S2M) 2025* Call, launched by EIT Food, is designed to support startups, early-stage entrepreneurs with MVPs, and students in accelerating the market readiness of innovative food products and technologies.

With a strong focus on **nutrition, sustainability, and retail engagement**, the programme promotes meaningful collaborations between startups and European retailers. Participants benefit from **financial support, expert mentoring**, and the opportunity to **test their solutions in real-world market environments**.

2. **Who are we looking for?**

We are looking to recruit experienced subcontractors to conduct product testing for food product. The testing targets include:

- Market-ready food product startups
- MVP food startups

Applicants should demonstrate:

- Prior experience in product testing and validation
- Deep understanding of market-readiness stages (particularly MVP to early-market entry)
- Ability to assess strategic fit and innovation potential
- Capability to perform tests in various European countries
- Active network within the European startup and retail ecosystem

Both independent professionals and consulting agencies are welcome to apply.

3. **Scope of work**

- Conducting comprehensive product testing for food product startups
- Performing consumer and product-specific tests
- Providing detailed feedback and recommendations for product improvement
- Strategic assessment

4. **Eligibility criteria**

- Natural person (applying independently / not on behalf of an employer or organisation) or;
- Officially registered company (in case of organisation applying with portfolio of advisors);
- Not employed by EIT Food or one of the EIT Food Hubs;
- Able to sign a subcontracting agreement with EIT Food's Co-Location Centres and act as a subcontractor in a project funded based on Horizon Europe/EIT modalities;
- Able to develop the Programme activities in the time and manner described in the present call;
- Possessing a knowledge of the European agrifood startup and retail scene;
- Excellent command of English.

5. **Remuneration**

Applicants are expected to provide an offer for their services, including a detailed breakdown of costs for different types of testing services. The proposal should include the price for all services listed in the Scope of Work, with individual pricing per startup per test. The total budget should accommodate testing for 11 startups, with variable pricing based on specific testing needs and feedback requirements. EIT Food reserves the right to keep the maximum budget of 138.206 EUR. During the evaluation process, EIT Food might contact candidates for further information on the proposal.

The selected applicant will sign a subcontracting agreement with one local office of EIT Food. The subcontractor will be paid for their services by EIT Food within 30 days after receiving an invoice. The details will be specified in the contract.

6. **Application and selection process**

Interested and eligible individuals are invited to submit their proposals before **20th June, 2025, 23:59 CEST** to izaskun.valle@eitfood.eu with as subject line: "Application + Company Name – Testing Subcontractor – S2M 2025 Programme".

Each applicant should submit the application in English.

Incomplete proposals or submitted by ineligible individuals will be automatically rejected. Complete applications received by EIT Food will be evaluated by a committee including representatives of EIT Food using selection criteria presented in point 3.2. EIT Food reserves the right to designate the subcontractors only if the submitted application ensure the excellence and value for money, and to relaunch the call if the present selection process would not yield satisfactory results. EIT Food reserves the right to contact the applicants by e-mail or phone asking for additional explanations or supporting documents, and to schedule selection interviews with short-listed individuals.

Suitable profiles will remain in EIT Food's data base for two consecutive years following application year.

7. **Selection process**

All proposals will be evaluated taking into account the following criteria, related to the applicant's profile and experience:

1. Experience in the agrifood sector and food product and retail tech startups
2. Network of contacts in the indicated market
3. Cost of service offered
4. Relevance and depth of testing experience (food startups)
5. Understanding of MVP/market-ready innovation landscapes
6. Quality and clarity of proposed testing methodology
7. Network and access to relevant retail ecosystems

An eligible application can receive a maximum of 100 points. Each criterion will be evaluated on a scale from 0 to 20:

- 0 – not satisfactory;
- 10 – satisfactory;
- 15 – good;
- 20 – very good.