



Calling2Scale Gunma Gateway to Japan 2026

Call Guidelines

Terms & Conditions

Version 1.0

3 August 2026

EIT Food

Leuven, Belgium

eitfood.eu

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Call Factsheet

Title of call	Calling2Scale Gunma: Gateway to Japan 2026 — Call for Applications
Call ID	<i>EIT Food/Calling2Scale Gunma: Gateway to Japan 2026/2026</i>
Objective and scope	Support 10-14 advanced European start-ups through a hybrid market-entry and corporate-collaboration programme in Japan. The programme connects start-ups with Gunma Prefecture and participating Japanese corporates to translate validated corporate innovation needs into collaboration opportunities, Proof-of-Concept (PoC) pathways and market-entry roadmaps.
Call open / deadline	Opens 3 August 2026 — closes 3 September 2026, 17:00 CET.
Available support	- The estimated total funding allocated to this call for financial support to third parties up to €30,800, distributed in a pre-fixed travel lump sum as follows: - Travel and accommodation support of €2,200 per start-up to 10-14 startups.
Activity duration	Participation period runs from selection to 15 December 2026: - Online Bootcamp: 9 October – 13 November 2026 - Immersion Lab: Week of 24 November 2026.
How to apply	MyEITFood portal
Contact	Bohdan Novoshytskyi (bohdan.novoshytskyi@eitfood.eu) and Catherine Breyssens (catherine.breyssens@eitfood.eu)

1. About the main partners of Calling2Scale Gunma

Calling2Scale Gunma — Gateway to Japan 2026 is delivered by EIT Food through the EIT Global Outreach platform, in collaboration with the Gunma Prefecture Governor's Office. The partners jointly provide the resources, expertise and networks required to implement the programme.

1.1. European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union, is Europe's largest innovation network, dedicated to strengthening innovation, creating jobs and driving sustainable growth. As an integral part of Horizon Europe — the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation — the EIT fosters collaboration between business, education and research organisations through pan-European partnerships known as Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) to address pressing global challenges.

1.2. EIT Global Outreach

As the global arm of the EIT, EIT Global Outreach accelerates the international expansion of top European start-ups, equipping them with the resources, expertise and networks needed to commercialise breakthrough innovations, secure investment and scale in key global markets. It operates through established hubs in Silicon Valley, Israel and the United Kingdom, as well as a global platform delivering high-impact programmes in markets such as Japan, India, Canada, Brazil and the US East Coast. Since its launch in 2018, the programme has helped scale more than 30 innovations to market, facilitated over €100 million in investments and built meaningful cross-border collaborations.

1.3. EIT Food

EIT Food is the world's largest and most dynamic food innovation community. Acting as the lead KIC for Calling2Scale Gunma, EIT Food invests in projects, organisations and individuals that share its goals for a healthy and sustainable food system, creating and scaling agrifood start-ups and equipping entrepreneurs with the skills needed to bring new technologies and products to market. In this programme, EIT Food coordinates the delivery, contracting and monitoring on behalf of the EIT Global Outreach platform.

1.4. Gunma Prefecture

Gunma Prefecture, located north of Tokyo, is one of Japan's strongest regional economies, home to a vibrant manufacturing and technology base spanning automotive, manufacturing, health technology, robotics and energy. It blends industrial tradition with bold technology policy and is strongly supported by the Gunma Governor's Office, which sees international co-creation as key to the region's sustainable growth. A diverse network of stakeholders — government agencies, businesses, universities, financial institutions and local communities — actively collaborates to support start-ups. Recognising the potential of connecting local corporations with cutting-edge European solutions, Gunma Prefecture has partnered with EIT Global Outreach to foster mutual business growth and create new business models within the prefecture.

2. Objectives and scope of Calling2Scale Gunma

2.1. What is Calling2Scale Gunma?

Calling2Scale Gunma is a curated, three-month international programme designed for advanced European start-ups, combining virtual activities (online workshops and 1:1 sessions) with in-person activities (the

Immersion Lab in Gunma and Tokyo). It offers high business value and membership of a dynamic global–European innovation community. Participation is open to start-ups established in the EU or in Horizon Europe-associated countries.

The programme equips leading European start-ups seeking to enter the Japanese market with hands-on tools, best practices, funding routes and Proof-of-Concept (PoC) opportunities with Gunma-based corporates. By connecting start-ups with Gunma-based leading corporates — whether globally recognised or key regional players — the programme provides a fast track to validate a product, build real partnerships and grow in one of the world's most advanced economies. Participants receive comprehensive guidance on market-entry strategy, regulatory pathways, landing-site selection and direct access to partners, investors and customers, while learning from successful start-ups and global experts in intellectual property, business development and branding. Backed by the EIT's global network, Calling2Scale is a strategic first step into Japan and, from there, the broader Asian market.

2.2. Programme goals

Support EU start-ups' market entry into Japan: enable fast and effective entry into the Japanese market and beyond by equipping start-ups with hands-on tools, regulatory insights and cultural understanding, positioning Gunma as a strategic launchpad for expansion across Asia.

Launch new EU innovation in the Japanese market: connect European start-ups directly with committed Japanese industry players, facilitating proof-of-concepts, pilot projects and long-term commercial agreements based on clearly defined innovation needs (Annex 4).

Strengthen Gunma's innovation ecosystem: provide Japanese corporates with access to cutting-edge European technologies and solutions, supporting their innovation goals and enhancing the region's global competitiveness.

2.3. Structure of the programme

The programme is hybrid and features three key elements: (1) an online training bootcamp for the European start-ups; (2) 1:1 support meetings with dedicated innovation contact points from within the participating Japanese corporates; and (3) a five-day Immersion Lab in Gunma and Tokyo. Dates are tentative and may change; any changes will be duly reported by the project management team.

Phase	Dates	Participants	Focus and support
Application	3 August – 3 September 2026	Open to all eligible applicants	Submission via MyEITFood portal; eligibility check and evaluation.
Online Bootcamp & 1:1 sessions	9 October – 13 November 2026	10-14 selected start-ups	Six virtual 2-hour training sessions; structured 1:1 meetings with dedicated innovation contact points from participating Japanese corporates.
Immersion Lab (Gunma, Japan)	Week of 24 November 2026	Selected start-ups (C-level attendance)	Five-day on-the-ground programme: curated matchmaking, corporate site visits, sector roundtables and PoC scoping. Travel reimbursement of €2,200.

Phase	Dates	Participants	Focus and support
Follow-up & reporting	15 December 2026	Selected start-ups	Two closing virtual sessions on next steps; submission of the final report and proof of participation (Deliverable 1).

Online training bootcamp

The bootcamp facilitates early engagement between European start-ups and Gunma-based corporates, building meaningful connections ahead of the in-person meetings and enabling collaboration discussions to begin earlier. It provides curated tools, insights and knowledge to understand the Japanese market through six virtual two-hour sessions covering themes such as:

- Exploring Japan's innovation ecosystem, from the private sector to government incentives;
- Navigating business and cultural barriers;
- Mastering the pitch — storytelling and preparation for pitching to corporates;
- Entering global markets — regulatory frameworks and market-entry strategies;
- Sector deep dives — global industry challenges, emerging trends and innovation barriers;
- Corporate collaboration and PoC excellence — how to engage large enterprises and run PoCs in international markets.

1:1 support meetings (online)

An essential component of the first phase, the 1:1 meetings initiate meaningful engagement between start-ups and Japanese corporates, build strategic alignment and prepare the ground for real collaboration. Following an initial introduction and matchmaking between each start-up and a relevant corporate innovation contact point, meetings continue independently to foster deeper relationships. These sessions focus on real business challenges, aligning needs and solutions, and creating a customised roadmap for identifying use cases, adapting the solution and preparing for impactful in-person engagement in Japan.

Immersion Lab (Gunma, in person — week of 24 November 2026)

Selected start-ups join a five-day Immersion Lab in Japan designed to give a real, on-the-ground understanding of how to succeed in the Japanese market and to translate the virtual connections established earlier into concrete, long-term partnership and PoC opportunities. The agenda includes:

- Curated sessions with corporates, investors and public-sector partners to explore strategic alignment and co-development opportunities;
- On-site visits to corporate R&D centres, manufacturing facilities and innovation hubs;
- Access to industry-led tracks, real data environments and beta-test sites that can serve as launching points for collaborative pilots;
- Sector-specific roundtables and deep-dive workshops to co-develop PoC frameworks and pilot strategies;
- Peer learning and ecosystem exposure, including with leading Japanese start-ups and European start-ups that have already entered the Japanese market successfully.

Two closing virtual sessions, held approximately one week after the Immersion Lab, are dedicated to follow-up and recommended next steps towards establishing partnerships in Japan.

2.4. Why apply?

Direct access to Gunma-based leading corporates. Participating start-ups are matched with corporates that have already joined the programme and are actively seeking European solutions for identified challenges (Annex 4), ensuring a high level of commitment and clear demand for implementation-oriented collaboration.

A gateway to the Japanese and Asian market. Through the Immersion Lab, participants gain direct access to Gunma's leading industry players and valuable insight into scaling across Asia, including the cultural, regulatory and business practices essential for regional expansion.

Curated market-access training for Japan. Start-ups receive tailored mentorship and practical training from innovation contact points at participating Japanese corporates and the Gunma Governor's Office, together with tools on pitching, go-to-market strategy, sales, marketing and legal regulation focused on Japan.

Global positioning. Joining the programme makes participants EIT alumni, granting access to the EIT's global ecosystem of over 3,000 partners worldwide.

2.5. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

All EIT Global Outreach-funded projects must achieve the relevant Core KPIs. For Calling2Scale Gunma the main KPIs are set out below. At the end of the funding period, grantees must report on their participation in the programme which will contribute to the KPI achievements. Startups will be asked to submit the required structured data and supporting evidence in accordance with the [EIT Food KPI Guidance Document](#).

Code	Target	Description
EITHE03.1	12	WP3 (GO) Number of start-ups and scale-ups supported by the KIC.
XKIC-RI101	1	Impact stories featuring testimonials produced per initiative per year, in line with EIT branding and communications requirements and showcased on the website.

2.6. Deliverables and milestones

Grant recipients must submit the project deliverables. For this activity the deliverable is:

- **Deliverable 1 — Final report and proof of participation** (expected delivery date: 15 December 2026). For more, see section 6.3.

Grant recipients have obligations on communication, dissemination and visibility (see Article 17 of the [Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement](#)) and must adhere to the [EIT Food IP Policy](#), which complies with the IP provisions in Article 16 of the Model Grant Agreement.

3. Application process

3.1. Who can apply

This call is open to advanced start-ups established in the EU or in Horizon Europe-associated countries. Applicants must comply with the eligibility criteria below and with the criteria set out in Annex 1. Only proposals that meet all admissibility criteria will proceed to the eligibility assessment stage.

Organisation eligibility Each participant must:	• Be a legally incorporated entity established in an EU Member State (including outermost regions and overseas countries and territories) or in a Horizon Europe Associated Country eligible for Pillar III activities; • Provide a PIC number (see the PIC guidance); • Have a market-ready product at Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 7 or higher (see Annex 6); • Have completed at least one funding round (e.g. seed or later);
Application admissibility Each application must:	• Be complete, with all mandatory application documents uploaded; • Identify one of the thematic domains listed in Annex 4; • Be submitted on time via the MyEITFood portal; • Be written entirely in English.

Supporting evidence

Applicants must provide the following evidence to demonstrate they meet the eligibility criteria:

- Incorporation or registration certificate – proof of legal incorporation;
- Product documentation / technical description showing deployment, or demonstration multimedia materials, or revenue evidence linked to the product – proof of Technology Readiness Level;
- Investment agreement / SAFE / convertible note, or shareholder register indicating the funding round, or a press release / investor announcement – proof of at least one funding round completed.

Furthermore, a pitch deck is required.

Ethical constraints and equal opportunity

In line with EU restrictive measures and the Horizon Europe Programme Guide, legal entities established in Russia, in Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine are not eligible to participate in any capacity. This follows from, inter alia, Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 (as amended, most recently by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/1745) concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, and Council Regulation (EC) No 765/2006 concerning restrictive measures in respect of Belarus. Entities established outside Russia but owned, directly or indirectly, for more than 50% by a person or entity established in Russia are likewise not eligible. The restriction concerning Hungarian public-interest trusts set out in Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506 also applies (see Annex 2).

The call is open to all applicants, including those without an existing partnership agreement with EIT Food; all members of the KIC Partnership have equal opportunity to participate.

The EIT is committed to advancing gender equality in research, innovation and entrepreneurship. Recipients of EIT funding must take all measures to promote equal opportunities between women and men in the

implementation of the action and aim, to the extent possible, for gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action. Applicants are encouraged to reflect gender balance within their teams; gender aspects will be given attention during evaluation.

3.2. How to apply and admissibility criteria

Applications are made through the dedicated form on the [MyEITFood portal](#). The call for applications **opens on 3 August 2026 and closes on 3 September 2026, 17:00 CET**. To avoid disappointment, applicants are strongly advised to familiarise themselves with the application form before beginning and to start the application process at least 24 hours before the deadline. Applications must be completed as follows:

- a. Applicants must complete all required information fields in **the application form**;
- b. Incomplete submissions, or submissions by any other means (e.g. email), will be rejected;
- c. Proposals must be submitted before the deadline; all late applications will be rejected;
- d. The application must fall within one of the programme's thematic domains, addressing the needs and challenges of the corporates (Annex 4);
- e. Each applicant may submit only one application;
- f. Where the same individual (founder, co-founder or project team member) appears in applications from different legal entities, the applicants concerned will be notified and given three (3) calendar days to withdraw all but one application; failing this, all affected applications will be declared inadmissible.

3.3. Exclusion criteria

Entities participating in this Call can be excluded at any time (during the evaluation, the onboarding and contracting phase, or the implementation phase) if they:

- a. are bankrupt, being wound up, having their affairs administered by the courts, entered an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar proceedings or procedures under national law (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts);
- b. have been banned from taking part in public procurement processes, performing executive duties or shareholder status, completing professional work;
- c. are guilty of grave professional misconduct (professional misconduct includes: violation of ethical standards of the profession, wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility, false declarations/misrepresentation of information, participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition, violation of IPR, attempting to influence decision-making processes or obtain confidential information to gain advantage);
- d. have committed fraud, corruption, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking;
- e. have shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar;
- f. are guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests;
- g. have created an entity under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social, or other legal obligations in the country of origin;

- h. have a conflict of interest at the commencement or at any time during the entire duration of the application or the completion process; a conflict of interest could arise in particular as a result of economic interests, political or national affinities, family or emotional ties, or any other relevant connection or shared interest related to the call.

To join the programme, applicants will be required to sign the Code of Conduct for Participants (**Annex 1**) confirming that the exclusion criteria do not apply to them.

4. Evaluation and selection process

All submitted applications undergo an eligibility check and evaluation to determine their feasibility and suitability for the funding opportunity. The selection is conducted in line with the principles of Horizon Europe, ensuring a fair, transparent and merit-based process with equal treatment of all applicants. Notifications for all applications are sent to applicants in writing.

4.1. Evaluation methodology

The evaluation is organised in two phases: (1) assessment of the application form, and (2) interviews. During the eligibility check, if EIT Food identifies obvious or technical errors in a proposal (e.g. system malfunctions, typos or missing supporting documents), the applicant will have the opportunity to correct or resubmit within three (3) calendar days following the call deadline. This correction window is strictly limited to rectifying technical errors and does not permit substantive modifications to the proposal content.

4.2. Eligibility check

An eligibility check is performed against the criteria stated in section 3 and Annex 1 to validate each application's compliance with the requirements of this call. Applications that fail the eligibility check are rejected and receive a notification. Eligible applications proceed directly to Phase 1 evaluation.

4.3. Phase 1 — Evaluation of the application form

In Phase 1, each eligible application is assessed by an external evaluator. The external evaluator is selected through an open and transparent process, and on the basis of their skills, experience and knowledge to carry out the tasks assigned. The external evaluator is trained on the [European Union's Code of Conduct for Evaluators](#) — on transparency, fair treatment, confidentiality and the avoidance of conflicts of interest — and are contractually required to recuse themselves in the event of a conflict of interest.

Evaluation criteria

The following criteria and weighting are used in the assessment. Each criterion is scored from 0 to 5; the scores across all three criteria are totalled to produce a ranked list. The maximum available score is 15 points. **Phase 1 score accounts for 60% of the final score (see Section 4.5).**

Criterion	Description	Score
<i>Excellence</i>	Substance and differentiation of the solution: what the technology or product does and how it compares with alternatives. Strength of the validation evidence: whether a PoC or pilot has been run on this specific product, in what context, with which partner or customer type, with what results and what was learned. Precision of fit with the challenge as the corporate framed it.	0-5

Criterion	Description	Score
Impact	Definition of the target customer and market segment in Japan or Asia, and credibility of the commercial potential and expected short- and long-term traction. Specificity and feasibility of the proposed PoC, pilot, commercial agreement or collaboration with the selected corporate, including whether it could plausibly begin within the programme horizon. Mutuality of the expected value — what the corporate gains and what the start-up gains. Significance of the wider impact claimed, and whether it follows from the solution.	0-5
Quality & efficiency of implementation	Fit between the core team's skills, roles and experience and what the proposed collaboration would require. Demonstrated track record in international market entry and in working with corporate, industrial or public-sector partners, including what was learned from it. Realism of Japan-entry readiness: the resources and capacity available, and the concreteness and proportionality of the preparatory actions planned before the bootcamp.	0-5

Score	Rating	Meaning
0	Not addressed	The criterion is not addressed or cannot be assessed from the information provided.
1	Poor	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
2	Fair	The application broadly addresses the criterion, but significant weaknesses remain.
3	Good	The criterion is addressed well, though a number of shortcomings are present.
4	Very good	The criterion is addressed very well, with only a small number of shortcomings.
5	Excellent	The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion; any shortcomings are minor.

Threshold and invitation to Phase 2

The quality threshold for progressing to Phase 2 is **a total score of 11 out of 15 in Phase 1**. The minimum pass threshold for individual award criteria is 3.

Applications meeting the Phase 1 threshold (a total of at least 11 out of 15 points, with a minimum score of 3 on each criterion) are ranked in descending order of their Phase 1 score, separately for each participating corporate challenge owner they selected. **Up to the five (5) highest-ranked threshold-passing applicants per participating corporate** are invited to Phase 2. Where fewer than five applications addressing a given corporate meet the threshold, only those applications are invited.

A final outcome notification is issued to all applicants in accordance with Section 4.5, and the redress procedure in Section 5 is available to all applicants.

Additional invitations

Where more than five applications addressing a given corporate meet the threshold and, following the interviews, no applicant for that corporate is selected, EIT Food reserves the right to invite the next highest-ranked threshold-passing applicant for that corporate to a Phase 2 interview, in strict descending order of the Phase 1 ranking. Any such additional interviews follow the same format, criteria and scoring as all other Phase 2 interviews, and the resulting final scores are ranked on the same basis. Additional invitations, if any, are issued no later than 25 September 2026.

4.4. Phase 2 — Interviews

Up to the five highest-ranked applicants scoring 11 or more per participating corporate in Phase 1 are invited to a short online interview (**up to 30 minutes**) with representatives from Gunma Prefecture, participating Gunma-based companies and EIT Food. All internal evaluators are chosen on the basis of their skills, experience and knowledge to carry out the task assigned. All internal evaluators are trained on the [European Union's Code of Conduct for Evaluators](#) — on transparency, fair treatment, confidentiality and the avoidance of conflicts of interest — and are contractually required to recuse themselves in the event of a conflict of interest.

The following criterion and weighting are used in the assessment. The criterion is independently assessed by each member of the interview panel. The criterion is scored from 0 to 5. The maximum available score is 5 points. A minimum score of 3 on the Phase 2 criterion is required. Phase 2 score is the arithmetic average of all panel members' scores. **Phase 2 score accounts for 40% of the final score (see section 4.5).**

Criterion	Description	Score
<i>KIC portfolio strategic fit and compliance with the financial sustainability principles and knowledge triangle integration</i>	Overall recommendation to join the programme: An overall assessment of the startup's suitability for the programme, considering both quality and fit.	0-5

Score	Rating	Meaning
0	Not addressed	The criterion is not addressed or cannot be assessed from the information provided.
1	Poor	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
2	Fair	The application broadly addresses the criterion, but significant weaknesses remain.
3	Good	The criterion is addressed well, though a number of shortcomings are present.
4	Very good	The criterion is addressed very well, with only a small number of shortcomings.

Score	Rating	Meaning
5	Excellent	The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion; any shortcomings are minor.

4.5. Final ranking and notification

Following Phase 2, a final ranked list will be prepared on the basis of the evaluation results in Phase 1 and Phase 2.

The final score is a weighted combination: Phase 1 total, weighted 60%, plus Phase 2 total, weighted 40%. The highest-scoring applications will be selected, up to the available number of places, with a maximum of 14 selected start-ups.

All applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome of their application on 5 October 2026. As part of the notification process, applicants will receive structured evaluation feedback, including the score awarded and a general summary consolidating the evaluator(s)' assessments and comments. Selected applicants will receive information on the next steps, including onboarding, legal documentation and participation requirements. Non-selected applicants will be informed of the redress procedure described in Section 5.

4.6. Portfolio composition and tiebreakers

To ensure that the selected cohort reflects the full thematic scope of Calling2Scale Gunma and the innovation needs of the six participating Japanese corporates, the Evaluation Committee may apply portfolio-balancing considerations when making the final selection from applications that have passed the minimum quality threshold.

As a guiding principle, the final cohort will aim to include **at least one** selected start-up relevant to each participating Japanese corporate, provided that at least one eligible application addressing that corporate's challenge area has passed the minimum quality threshold. No application will be selected solely to satisfy portfolio balance if it has not met the eligibility requirements and minimum quality threshold.

To ensure balanced engagement and manageable matchmaking capacity, **no more than three** start-ups will be selected to the same participating Japanese corporate or corporate challenge area, unless duly justified by the Evaluation Committee.

4.6.1. Tiebreakers

Where two or more applications receive the same final score and cannot all be selected due to the limited number of available places, the Evaluation Committee will apply the following tiebreakers in the order listed below:

1. Contribution [to EIT Regional Innovation Scheme \(RIS\)](#) objectives. Where applications are otherwise equivalent in score and quality, priority may be given to an applicant established in an [EIT RIS-eligible country](#).
2. Higher score under the "Impact" criterion.
3. Higher score under the "Excellence" criterion.
4. Higher score under the "Quality and efficiency of implementation" criterion.
5. Higher score under the "EIT Global Outreach strategic fit" criterion.

If applications remain tied after applying the above tiebreakers, the Evaluation Committee will document the rationale for its final selection decision in the evaluation report.

4.7. Reserve list

Based on the evaluation ranking, a reserve list of 3-5 applicants will be established. If selected participants withdraw, or additional places become available, applicants from the reserve list will be invited to join the programme in order of their ranking. The reserve list will remain valid until 13 November 2026, corresponding to the end of the online bootcamp. This validity period is set to ensure that any replacement applicant invited from the reserve list can still participate meaningfully in the programme and, in particular, take part in the in-person Immersion Lab in Japan.

4.8. Standstill period

A standstill period of thirty (30) calendar days applies. It runs from the date of notification of the selection results, 5 October 2026, until 4 November 2026. During this period, applicants may submit a request for review in accordance with the appeals procedure set out in Section 5 and the EIT Food redress procedure.

The financial support awarded under this call consists of a lump-sum sub-grant of €2,200 per selected start-up to support travel and accommodation connected with participation in the Immersion Lab in Japan. An applicant whose request for review is upheld will be admitted to the programme in time to participate in the Immersion Lab and will be eligible for the same financial support, subject to fulfilment of the applicable eligibility, onboarding and contractual requirements. The applicant concerned will also be able to join all remaining online bootcamp sessions. The recordings of any bootcamp sessions already held will be made available to the applicant.

5. Appeals procedure

Applicants may appeal against the selection decision. The only grounds for appeal are that the evaluation of the proposal was not carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in these Call Guidelines, or process errors and technical problems beyond the control of the applicant (for example, a technical failure of the electronic submission system, or a human or technical error by EIT Food staff). The scores awarded by evaluators do not, in themselves, constitute grounds for an appeal. Appeals are handled in accordance with the [EIT Food Redress guidance](#).

Applicants should submit their appeal in writing to redress@eitfood.eu as soon as they identify an error, and no later than 15 calendar days after receiving their result. EIT Food acknowledges receipt within 48 hours, assesses the claim and delivers a first response within two weeks.

If there are grounds for appeal, EIT Food will attempt to remedy the consequences (e.g. if a technical error prevented the submission of a proposal or application, a late submission may still be accepted as eligible).

The Steering Committee of the EIT Community Regional Innovations and Internationalization Cluster is notified about the matter if:

- the applicant does not accept a rejection of the appeal, or the remediation suggested by the EIT Food,
- there are grounds for appeal, but the problem cannot be remedied any more without disrupting the process.

The final decision regarding the appeal and the suggested remedies shall be brought by the Steering Committee of the EIT Community Regional Innovations and Internationalization Cluster within 4 weeks.

6. Funding terms and conditions

6.1. General conditions

The total budget for financial support in this call is up to **€30,800**. EIT Global Outreach offers a pre-fixed lump-sum **sub-grant of €2,200 per participating start-up** to cover travel and accommodation costs for the Immersion Lab in November 2026. This support is provided as lump sum, upon the signing of a sub-grant agreement (Annex 7). Financial support is provided per start-up, irrespective of whether the team is represented by one or more members, and may not be received twice for the same activity. The amount was determined on the basis of average market costs of a return economy flight between Europe and Tokyo and five nights' accommodation in the Gunma area during the Immersion Lab week, benchmarked against current market rates at the time of call design.

6.2. Form of financial support

Financial support to start-ups takes the form of a pre-fixed lump-sum sub-grant to cover travel and accommodation costs associated with participation in the Immersion Lab. The sub-grant is disbursed against deliverables and evidence of participation. Support is based on a lump-sum sub-grant agreement signed between the start-up and EIT Food (Annex 7); EIT Food provides all necessary documentation. A start-up that does not accept the agreement is not eligible for the financial support. Any other legal agreements required to make the grant eligible must also be signed.

6.3. Payment schedule

The sub-grant contribution is disbursed in instalments and is conditional upon the delivery of the project deliverables. The first instalment is paid as pre-financing and represents 50% of the sub-grant; the balance is transferred upon completion of the final deliverable.

Deliverable	Date of completion	Value / share of the sub-grant
Deliverable 1 — Final report and proof of participation	15 December 2026	€2,200 — 100% of the sub-grant

The deliverable is associated with a proportional cost allocation and deduction rate; where deliverable is not completed, or is only partially fulfilled, a deduction is applied up to the amount associated with the incomplete deliverable. To prove that the activity has been successfully implemented, the following deliverable must be submitted and approved:

Deliverable 1 — Final report and proof of participation

To receive the final instalment, each selected start-up submits a final report and proof of participation after completing the programme, using the template to be provided by EIT Food. The report confirms that the start-up has actively participated in the programme and used the support in line with the objectives of Calling2Scale Gunma, and must include:

- a short summary of the start-up's participation, including the online bootcamp, 1:1 meetings and Immersion Lab where applicable;
- a description of the main activities completed, key meetings attended and support received;

- a summary of business outcomes, learnings and next steps, including any follow-up discussions, collaboration or PoC/pilot opportunities and market-entry actions identified;
- a brief description of the commercialisation strategy for the proposed innovation, including expected market uptake, cooperation with customers, users or corporate partners, expected financial returns;
- confirmation of the participating representative(s) and their role in the start-up;
- proof of participation in the relevant programme activities (e.g. attendance records, agendas or calendar invitations, travel/hotel confirmations, photos where appropriate and consented to, copies of presentations, or written confirmation of meetings with Japanese corporates, mentors, investors or public-sector representatives).

The final payment is based on the approval of this deliverable and the satisfactory completion of the programme. EIT Food may request clarifications or additional documentation, and may reduce or withhold the final payment if the deliverable is not submitted, is incomplete, or does not provide sufficient evidence of participation. For more information, see the [EIT Food Project Financing Policy](#). The timing of funding depends on the disbursement of funds to EIT Food from the EIT.

6.4. Onboarding and legal documents

Entities that have never been part of EIT Food-funded projects and that do not hold a PIC validated by the Research Executive Agency (REA) will be subject to a PIC validation process managed by the EIT Community Onboarding Service. As part of onboarding, selected entities must sign and submit the Declaration of Size and the Financial Information Form, and register on the EIT Food grant-management platform. EIT Food may request a financial capacity assessment and, depending on the result, may require an enhanced financial-responsibility regime, prefinancing in instalments or prefinancing guarantees, or may propose no prefinancing or, if necessary, reject the participation of an entity. For further information, see the [EIT Food Activity Implementation Guidelines for Participants](#).

7. IP rights, confidentiality and conflict of interest

The applications submitted to EIT Food for the Calling2Scale Gunma programme are handled under confidentiality. Everybody who comes in contact with the applications and deliverables during the review process is bound by confidentiality agreements. By applying for the Calling2Scale Gunma programme, applicants consent to access, keep, and use their data by the EIT Communities and Climate-KIC, EIT Food, EIT Health, 28Digital, InnoEnergy, EIT RawMaterials, EIT Urban Mobility, EIT Culture and Creativity for the Programme implementation. In particular the personal data of applicants will be shared with the EIT and Gunma Prefecture for reporting purposes as well as with evaluators and mentors of the programme. Personal data is processed in accordance with the [EIT Food Privacy Policy](#).

Applicants retain full and exclusive ownership of their prior information and intellectual property rights. Applications should be grounded in the applicant's own ideas and creations; where they incorporate third-party intellectual property, the applicant must hold clear permissions (such as a licence agreement or a formal transfer of rights). The intellectual property rights of all materials, curriculum and methodology used during the programme remain with EIT Food, and participants may not share them with third parties or use them for purposes unrelated to the programme. Grant recipients must adhere to the [EIT Food IP Policy](#).

EIT Food staff are bound by the policy on conflicts of interest. Applicants and beneficiaries must avoid any conflict of interest and comply with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination and sound financial management.

8. Communication, dissemination and visibility

Participants selected to the programme are expected to acknowledge the support of the EIT Community and to display the EIT Community logo in a visible place on their website within one month of joining the programme; the relevant guidelines are shared with the teams.

Participants may be interviewed and should participate in media interviews at the organisers' request, and are encouraged to act as ambassadors within their professional networks, sharing news of their acceptance and progress on social media with the EIT Community logo or account tagged where available.

When participants announce that they became a participant of the Calling2Scale Gunma 2026 programme, they shall make sure to have the EIT Community logo displayed on the image they are using or should mention the EIT Global Outreach account, if it is available on that platform (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, others).

All images and assets displaying an EIT KIC, the EIT Community, EIT Global Outreach or the EIT must be approved by the organisers and must respect the EIT visual guidelines, which are provided to the participants and available on request.

It is recommended to promote the programme as the ambassador among local networks, by sharing information about being accepted and completing each step of a programme in the professional network and social media.

Selected start-ups are expected, at minimum and proportionately to the scale of the support, to: (1) publish at least one public announcement (e.g. social media or website) of their selection at the start of the programme and one on outcomes at its close, tagging the EIT Global Outreach account and using the acknowledgement statement above; (2) contribute, on request, to one impact story or testimonial produced by the programme (KPI XKIC-RI101); and (3) summarise business outcomes, lessons learned and next steps in the final report (Deliverable 1), which the programme may share in aggregated form with the EIT, Gunma Prefecture and participating corporates.

9. Monitoring and audit rights

Participants are aware that EIT Food, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities, the European Commission, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) may carry out checks, reviews, audits and investigations relating to the call and its implementation.

Beneficiaries shall cooperate with any formal ex-post impact assessment carried out by EIT Food, the EIT or bodies mandated by them for a period of at least five (5) years after completion of the funded activity, including by responding to reasonable requests for information on business outcomes attributable to the programme.

10. Disclaimer of liability

10.1. Liability for damages

EIT Food and the EIT Communities cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the participants or to third parties as a consequence of the sub-grant, including for gross negligence, nor for any damage caused by any of the participants in the context of the sub-grant.

10.2. Force majeure

EIT Food shall not be liable for non-performance or undue performance of the programme as a result of force majeure — understood as an objective, external and unforeseeable event whose consequences cannot be prevented despite due diligence (in particular pandemic, fire, flood, and similar). In such cases no contractual penalties will be charged. EIT Food reserves the right to discontinue Calling2Scale Gunma should the financing provided by the EIT or Gunma Prefecture be terminated.

11. Key dates

Milestone	Date (2026, indicative)
Call opens	3 August 2026
Call deadline	3 September 2026, 17:00 CET
Phase 1 evaluation	4 September – 7 September 2026
Phase 2 interviews	9 September – 30 September 2026
Communication of results	5 October 2026
Kick-off webinar	9 October 2026
Online bootcamp and 1:1 sessions	9 October – 13 November 2026
Immersion Lab (Gunma & Tokyo)	Week of 24 November 2026
Closing virtual sessions	Early December 2026
Deliverable 1 — final report due	15 December 2026

Dates are tentative and may change; the project management team will report any changes, which will be published in an updated version of these Call Guidelines.

11.1. Standstill period

A standstill period of thirty (30) calendar days applies. It runs from the date of notification of the selection results, 5 October 2026, until 4 November 2026. During this period, applicants may submit a request for review in accordance with the appeals procedure set out in Section 5 and the EIT Food redress procedure.

The financial support awarded under this call consists of a lump-sum sub-grant of €2,200 per selected start-up to support travel and accommodation connected with participation in the Immersion Lab in Japan. An applicant whose request for review is upheld will be admitted to the programme in time to participate in the Immersion Lab and will be eligible for the same financial support, subject to fulfilment of the applicable eligibility, onboarding and contractual requirements. The applicant concerned will also be able to join all remaining online bootcamp sessions. The recordings of any bootcamp sessions already held will be made available to the applicant.

12. How to get in touch

For any questions about this call, please contact the programme team: Bohdan Novoshytskyi (bohdan.novoshytskyi@eitfood.eu) and Catherine Breysens (catherine.breysens@eitfood.eu).

Annex 1 — Code of Conduct for Participants

Exclusion criteria — conflict of interest. Entities participating in this Call can be excluded at any time (during the evaluation, the onboarding and contracting phase, or the implementation phase) if they:

- are bankrupt, being wound up, having their affairs administered by the courts, entered an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar proceedings or procedures under national law (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts);
- have been banned from taking part in public procurement processes, from performing executive duties or holding shareholder status, or from completing professional work;
- are guilty of grave professional misconduct (including violation of ethical standards, false declarations or misrepresentation, participation in a cartel or other competition-distorting agreement, violation of intellectual property rights, or attempts to influence decision-making or obtain confidential information to gain advantage);
- have committed fraud, corruption, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking;
- have shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize or expert contract;
- are guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests;
- have created an entity under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin;
- have a conflict of interest at the commencement of, or at any time during, the application or completion process (arising, in particular, from economic interests, political or national affinities, family or emotional ties, or any other shared interest related to the call).

Declaration. I, _____, hereby declare that I am not in any of the situations of exclusion listed above. In case of doubt, I accept that I may be requested to provide supporting evidence of non-exclusion.

Date and place: _____

Signature: _____

Annex 2 - EU restrictions on participation

EU restrictive measures

Entities subject to EU restrictive measures under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)¹ as well as Article 75 TFEU², are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). Special rules also apply to entities covered by Commission Guidelines No 2013/C 205/0522³.

Legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine

Given the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the involvement of Belarus, there is currently no appropriate context allowing the implementation of the actions foreseen in this programme with legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine. Therefore, even where such entities are not subject to EU restrictive measures, such legal entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity. This includes participation as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis for justified reasons.

With specific regard to measures addressed to Russia, following the adoption of the Council Regulation (EU) 2024/1745 of 24 June 2024⁴ (amending Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 of 31 July 2014) concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, legal entities established outside Russia but whose proprietary rights are directly or indirectly owned for more than 50% by a legal person, entity or body established in Russia are also not eligible to participate in any capacity.

Measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary

Following the [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/2506](#), as of 16 December 2022, no legal commitments can be entered into with Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain. Affected entities may continue to apply to calls for proposals and can participate without receiving EU funding, as associated partners, if allowed by the call conditions. However, as long as the Council measures are not lifted, such entities are not eligible to participate in any funded role (beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, recipients of financial support to third parties, etc.). In case of multi-beneficiary grant calls, applicants will be invited to remove or replace that entity in any funded role and/or to change its status into associated partner. Tasks and budget may be redistributed accordingly.

Restrictions for the protection of European communication networks

¹ Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#)

² Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#)

³ Commission guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#) on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp. 9-11)

⁴ OJ L 229, 31.7.2014, p. 1–11

The protection of European communication networks has been identified as an important security interest of the Union and its Member States⁵. For further information, please refer to the Horizon Europe, Work Programme 2025, General Annexes, B – Eligibility on page 14⁶.

⁵ European Council conclusions of 1 and 2 October 2020 (EUCO 13/20), point 11; Council Conclusions on the significance of 5G to the European Economy and the need to mitigate security risks linked to 5G, 14517/19.

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2025/wp-14-general-annexes_horizon-2025_en.pdf

Annex 3 — Scoring criteria

All applicants are evaluated against the pre-defined eligibility, admissibility and selection criteria. Applications first pass a yes/no eligibility and admissibility check; eligible and admissible applications are then scored on the three selection criteria in Phase 1. Applicants passing the threshold of 11 points are invited to interviews where they are scored on one selection criteria in Phase 2.

Eligibility check

Eligibility criterion (yes/no — if no, not eligible)	Check
The applicant is a legally incorporated entity established in the EU or a Horizon Europe-associated country (Pillar III eligible).	yes / no
The applicant provided a PIC number.	yes / no
The applicant offers a market-ready product at TRL 7 or higher.	yes / no
The applicant has completed at least one funding round (seed or later).	yes / no

Admissibility check

Admissibility criterion (yes/no — if no, not admissible)	Check
The application is complete.	yes / no
The application identifies one of the thematic domains listed in Annex 4.	yes / no
The application is submitted on time via MyEITFood.	yes / no
The application is written in English.	yes / no

Selection criteria – Phase 1 (60% of the total final score)

Each criterion is scored from 0 to 5 (see the rubric in section 4.3). The four scores are totalled to produce a ranked list; the maximum available score is 15 points.

Criterion	Focus of assessment	Score
Excellence	Substance and differentiation of the solution: what the technology or product does and how it compares with alternatives. Strength of the validation evidence: whether a PoC or pilot has been run on this specific product, in what context, with which partner or customer type, with what results and what was learned. Precision of fit with the challenge as the corporate framed it.	0-5
Impact	Definition of the target customer and market segment in Japan or Asia, and credibility of the commercial potential and expected short- and long-term traction. Specificity and feasibility of the proposed PoC, pilot, commercial agreement or collaboration with the selected corporate, including whether it could plausibly begin within the programme horizon. Mutuality of the expected value — what the corporate gains and what the start-up gains. Significance of the wider impact claimed, and whether it follows from the solution.	0-5

Criterion	Focus of assessment	Score
Quality & efficiency of implementation	Fit between the core team's skills, roles and experience and what the proposed collaboration would require. Demonstrated track record in international market entry and in working with corporate, industrial or public-sector partners, including what was learned from it. Realism of Japan-entry readiness: the resources and capacity available, and the concreteness and proportionality of the preparatory actions planned before the bootcamp.	0-5
Maximum total	Quality threshold for progression to Phase 2: 11 / 15	15

Selection criteria – Phase 2 (40% of the total final score)

Up to 5 applicants scoring 11 or more per participating corporate (see ranking rules in Section 4.4) are invited to a short online interview (up to 30 minutes) with representatives from Gunma Prefecture, participating Gunma-based companies and EIT Food. The Phase 2 criterion is independently assessed by each member of the interview panel. Phase 2 is the arithmetic average of all panel members' scores.

The interview is scored against a dedicated criterion:

Criterion	Description	Score
KIC portfolio strategic fit and compliance with the financial sustainability principles and knowledge triangle integration	Overall recommendation to join the programme: An overall assessment of the startup's suitability for the programme, considering both quality and fit.	0-5

Score	Rating	Meaning
0	Not addressed	The criterion is not addressed or cannot be assessed from the information provided.
1	Poor	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
2	Fair	The application broadly addresses the criterion, but significant weaknesses remain.
3	Good	The criterion is addressed well, though a number of shortcomings are present.
4	Very good	The criterion is addressed very well, with only a small number of shortcomings.
5	Excellent	The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion; any shortcomings are minor.

A minimum score of 3 on a Phase 2 criterion is required.

Following Phase 2, a final ranked list will be prepared on the basis of the evaluation results. The final score is a weighted combination: Phase 1 total, weighted 60%, plus Phase 2 total, weighted 40%. The highest-scoring applications will be selected, up to the available number of places, with a maximum of 14 selected start-ups.

Annex 4 — Detailed thematic scope

Calling2Scale Gunma focuses on six impact technology domains derived from the innovation challenges of the participating Gunma-based corporates and the EIT scope. Applications must fall within one of the following domains. We seek start-ups offering solutions to the challenges described below.

1. Sanden

Challenge 1 – Intelligent Thermal Management. How can AI-driven thermal management improve energy efficiency, passenger comfort and driving range in next-generation electric vehicles?

We are looking for innovative solutions that leverage AI, machine learning and vehicle data (navigation, weather, occupancy, driving behavior, etc.) to optimize HVAC performance while reducing energy consumption and improving vehicle efficiency. Solutions supporting NVH optimization are also welcome.

Challenge 2 – Thermal Energy Storage. How can innovative thermal energy solutions maximise energy efficiency and driving range in electric vehicles?

We are looking for scalable solutions that improve the storage, recovery and utilisation of thermal energy in EVs through advanced materials, energy recovery systems, heat exchangers or integrated thermal management technologies.

Challenge 3 – Advanced Heat Transfer. How can next-generation heat transfer technologies improve the efficiency and sustainability of electric vehicle thermal management systems?

We welcome breakthrough solutions that reduce energy consumption, improve thermal performance and simplify system design through innovative cooling technologies, advanced materials or new engineering approaches.

2. Gunseisha

Challenge 1 – Circular Plastics. How can innovative technologies transform waste plastics into high-value circular products and sustainable fuels?

We are looking for breakthrough solutions in advanced recycling, waste valorisation, sustainable fuel production and circular business models that maximise both environmental and commercial value.

Challenge 2 – Environmental Value Certification. How can digital technologies and innovative assessment methods create trusted, internationally recognised markets for circular products and recycled fuels?

Solutions may include Life Cycle Assessment, Digital Product Passports, carbon accounting, traceability platforms, ESG technologies or other approaches that improve transparency and market acceptance.

Challenge 3 – Circular Business Models. How can innovative circular business models accelerate regional resource circularity by combining Japan's industrial strengths with Europe's circular innovation ecosystem?

We welcome scalable technologies, digital platforms and business models that transform waste into valuable resources while supporting a low-carbon future.

3. JINS

Challenge 1 – Seamless Eyewear Experience. How can we eliminate all forms of stress associated with wearing glasses to create an experience users forget they are wearing?

We seek comprehensive solutions that resolve physical, visual, environmental, and psychological discomforts, delivering a completely seamless daily experience.

Challenge 2 – Advanced Healthcare Eyewear. How can eyewear evolve beyond basic vision correction to actively solve and alleviate daily health and wellbeing issues?

We welcome solutions utilizing advanced technologies to provide direct, proactive care and therapeutic support for overall eye health, as well as physical and mental wellbeing.

Challenge 3 – Functionality in Critical Environments. How can innovative eyewear solve critical challenges and provide reliable assistance in severe or unpredictable situations?

We are looking for technologies that ensure stable operational support, safety, and high performance under extreme conditions, such as disaster environments.

4. Taiyo Yuden

Challenge 1 – Sustainable Packaging Solutions. How might we accelerate the adoption of more sustainable packaging solutions without compromising the performance and functionality needed to protect product quality?

We are looking for innovative packaging materials, designs, and circular solutions that improve sustainability, reduce waste, and lower carbon footprints while maintaining the functionality required for packaging and shipping electronic components.

Challenge 2 – Energy Efficiency and Resource Valorization. How might we accelerate decarbonization and energy efficiency across our manufacturing and non-manufacturing sites? And how can we unlock value from resources such as waste heat, wastewater, and other underutilized assets?

We are looking for innovative solutions that improve energy efficiency in HVAC systems and other energy-intensive operations, and create new value from waste heat, wastewater, and other underutilized resources across our manufacturing and non-manufacturing sites.

Challenge 3 – Sensing for Environmental Monitoring and Disaster Resilience. How might we leverage sensing technologies, including millimeter-wave and optical sensing, to create innovative solutions for environmental monitoring and disaster resilience, while contributing to a more sustainable society?

We are looking for startups interested in exploring opportunities to leverage our technologies for environmental monitoring, risk prediction, disaster prevention, and resilience.

5. Nippon Kayaku

Challenge 1 – AEM Water Electrolysis. How can we accelerate the commercialization of cost-efficient green hydrogen systems by integrating our advanced Anion Exchange Membrane (AEM) into high-performance water electrolysis solutions?

We seek startup partners to integrate our advanced Anion Exchange Membrane (AEM) into practical water electrolysis systems for cost-efficient green hydrogen production. We are interested in pilot-ready solutions that improve efficiency, durability, and system economics, including stack components, compact hydrogen units, and related subsystems. This collaboration aims to accelerate commercialization and build long-term international partnerships in scalable hydrogen technologies.

Challenge 2 – Electrochemical CO₂ Capture. How can we develop electrochemical CO₂ capture systems with significantly lower energy consumption and system cost for industrial and atmospheric applications?

We seek partners to co-develop electrochemical CO₂ capture systems for industrial exhaust gas and direct air capture. Using electrochemical cells and our proprietary redox-active materials, we aim to create pilot-ready solutions with lower energy consumption and cost. We welcome startups with strengths in system

design, modular hardware, and process integration to help translate our core chemistry into scalable carbon management technologies.

Challenge 3 – Microphysiological Systems (MPS) for Drug Discovery. How can we accelerate the adoption of microphysiological systems (MPS) as trusted drug discovery tools by demonstrating stronger translational relevance to nonclinical and clinical outcomes?

We seek startup and academic partners to co-develop MPS-based drug discovery tools with stronger relevance to nonclinical and clinical outcomes. Our goal is to generate practical evidence that supports wider adoption of MPS while reducing reliance on animal testing. We welcome collaborations in disease models, toxicity and efficacy evaluation, biomarker analysis, and data-driven validation using our pharmaceutical nonclinical and clinical assets.

6. Kyowa Industrial

Challenge 1 – Intelligent Manufacturing. How can AI help create the next generation of intelligent manufacturing?

We are looking for innovative solutions that improve production efficiency, quality, flexibility and sustainability through AI, robotics, automation and predictive analytics.

Challenge 2 – Advanced Manufacturing Technologies. How can advanced manufacturing technologies improve precision, productivity and operational excellence?

We welcome machining technologies, digital manufacturing solutions and process optimization tools that increase productivity while reducing waste and energy consumption.

Challenge 3 – Factory of the Future. How can digital technologies transform traditional factories into intelligent, connected and sustainable production environments?

Solutions may include Industrial AI, Digital Twins, robotics, autonomous systems, IoT and smart factory platforms that accelerate the transition towards Industry 5.0.

Annex 5 — Overview of the EIT and the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities organizing EIT Global Outreach

The **European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)** is dedicated to enhancing Europe's ability to innovate by nurturing entrepreneurial talent and supporting groundbreaking ideas. Through its "knowledge triangle" model, the EIT connects leading companies, universities, and research centres to form dynamic cross-border partnerships called Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). These communities work collaboratively to address pressing societal challenges and drive innovation.

Currently, there are eight thematic KICs under the EIT umbrella, actively participating in the EIT RIB Programme:

- Climate-KIC: Tackling climate change through innovation.
- 28Digital: Fostering digital transformation.
- EIT Food: Driving innovation in the agri-food sector.
- EIT Health: Advancing health and well-being.
- InnoEnergy: Leading the transition to sustainable energy.
- EIT RawMaterials: Securing sustainable supply chains for raw materials.
- EIT Urban Mobility: Improving mobility and urban living.
- EIT Culture and Creativity: Empowering Cultural and Creative Innovation in Europe.

The EIT Community Regional Innovation and Internationalisation (RI&I) Cluster is a horizontal initiative providing a platform for KICs to collaborate, share best practices, and launch joint activities. It focuses on fostering innovation in Emerging European regions, including countries eligible for the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme. The EIT RIS aims to bridge the innovation gap, particularly in countries where innovation performance is considered modest or moderate, as defined by the European Innovation Scoreboard.

Overview of Climate KIC

Climate KIC is Europe's leading climate innovation agency and community, working with public and private stakeholders to support climate transition. Climate KIC creates climate-resilient societies and fights climate breakdown, building better futures for local communities globally. It uses innovation to mobilise systems change and bridge the gap between climate commitments and current reality. Together with partners, Climate KIC generates, implements and integrates climate solutions by mobilising finance, testing business models, and opening pathways for institutional change and behavioural change. Climate KIC makes systems transformation meaningful by enabling change in the places where people live and work, creating a positive feedback loop for change.

Overview of 28Digital

28Digital embodies the future of innovation by mobilizing a pan-European multi-stakeholder open-innovation ecosystem of top European corporations, SMEs, startups, universities and research institutes, where students, researchers, engineers, business developers and investors address the technology, talent, skills, business and capital needs of digital entrepreneurship. 28Digital builds the next generation of digital ventures, digital products and services, and breed digital entrepreneurial talent, helping business and entrepreneurs to be at the frontier of digital innovation by providing them with technology, talent, and growth support. 28Digital answers specific innovation needs by, for example, finding the right partners to bring technology to the market, supporting the scale-up of digital technology ventures, attracting talent and developing their digital knowledge and skills.

Overview of EIT Food

EIT Food is the world's largest and most dynamic food innovation community. We accelerate innovation to build a future-fit food system that produces healthy and sustainable food for all. Supported by the EIT, we

invest in projects, organizations, and individuals that share our goals for a healthy and sustainable food system. We unlock innovation potential in businesses and universities and create and scale agrifood startups to bring new technologies and products to market. We equip entrepreneurs and professionals with the skills needed to transform the food system and put consumers at the heart of our work, helping build trust by reconnecting them to the origins of their food.

Overview of EIT Health

EIT Health is one of Europe's largest public-private partnerships in healthcare innovation, comprising approximately 150 partners, including leading companies, universities, research and development centers, hospitals, and institutes. Its mission is to build an ecosystem that fosters the development of future healthcare solutions, enabling European citizens to live longer and healthier lives. Key contributions of EIT Health include:

- Upgrading the skills of healthcare professionals across Europe.
- Investing in Europe's best talent and entrepreneurial projects.
- Facilitating the commercialization of innovative health products and solutions.

EIT Health is co-funded by the EIT, a body of the European Union.

Overview of InnoEnergy

InnoEnergy operates at the centre of the energy transition and is the leading innovation engine in sustainable energy. It brings the technology, business model innovation and skills required to accelerate the green deal, progress towards Europe's decarbonisation and re-industrialisation goals, whilst also improving energy security.

Ranked as the most active investor in the energy sector in 2022 by Pitchbook, named in 2023 as one of Europe's top 10 most active deeptech investors by Sifted, and recognised in 2022 as Europe's leading impact investor in cleantech by Startup Genome, InnoEnergy backs innovations across a range of areas. These include energy storage, transport and mobility, renewables, energy efficiency, hard to abate industries, smart grids and sustainable buildings, and cities.

InnoEnergy has a portfolio of more than 200 companies, which are estimated to generate €110 billion in revenue and save 2.1G tonnes of CO₂e accumulatively by 2030. Collectively, these companies have raised more than €9.7 billion in investment to date. InnoEnergy is the driving force behind three strategic European initiatives which include the European Battery Alliance (EBA), the European Green Hydrogen Acceleration Center (EGHAC) and the European Solar Photovoltaic Industry Alliance (ESIA).

Overview of EIT RawMaterials

Minerals and metals are key enablers of the green and digital transition. Raw materials are critical to preserving the global competitiveness of the EU's most strategic economic sectors. Today, only a fraction of the most relevant raw materials is produced in Europe. This can be changed through a circular economy approach, through innovation in recycling, substitution, processing, mining, and exploration. EIT RawMaterials overarching mandate is to support securing the supply of critical raw materials to the European industry by driving innovation along the raw materials value chain.

EIT RawMaterials builds on the world's largest network of partners in raw materials. EIT RawMaterials mission is to develop raw materials into a major strength for Europe by boosting competitiveness, growth and attractiveness of the European raw materials sector via radical innovation, new education approaches and guided entrepreneurship.

Overview of EIT Urban Mobility

Founded in 2019 as an initiative of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union, EIT Urban Mobility is committed to accelerating the transition to sustainable mobility. We

accelerate the sustainable urban mobility transition by providing established businesses, startups, universities, research institutes, and the public sector with access to markets, talent, funding and knowledge. We empower our partners to develop and deploy new solutions that address the mobility challenges European cities face. We work in partnership with over 250 organisations and collaborate with a wider network of more than 1,100 organisations across 35 countries. Our work supports our vision for sustainable and decarbonised urban mobility and more livable urban spaces for all.

Overview of EIT Culture and Creativity

EIT Culture & Creativity is the institutional partnership dedicated to transforming Europe's Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries to become more sustainable, resilient, and competitive. Established in 2023 by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), an EU body, the organisation offers funding, knowledge, and tailored support. Our vision is to empower the CCSI as a vital force for economic, social, and environmental transformation. Our mission is to drive responsible growth through innovation, education, business creation, and societal impact. Our initial strategic focus is on five sectors — architecture, gaming, fashion, cultural heritage, and audiovisual media — offering targeted support to innovators to scale ideas, translate innovation into impact, and redefine entrepreneurship for the creative economy.

Annex 6 — Technology Readiness Levels (TRL): a quick guide

Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) are the standard scale used across Horizon Europe to describe the maturity of a technology, from basic research (TRL 1) to a proven system in operational use (TRL 9). This call requires a market-ready product at TRL 7 or higher.

TRL	Description
TRL 1	Basic principles observed — scientific research begins to be translated into applied research.
TRL 2	Technology concept formulated — practical applications are identified, though speculative and unproven.
TRL 3	Experimental proof of concept — analytical and laboratory studies validate key predictions.
TRL 4	Technology validated in the laboratory — basic components are integrated and tested together.
TRL 5	Technology validated in a relevant environment — components are tested under realistic, though simulated, conditions.
TRL 6	Technology demonstrated in a relevant environment — a representative prototype is tested in conditions close to the real setting.
TRL 7	System prototype demonstration in an operational environment — the prototype is tested in real-world conditions at near-final scale.
TRL 8	System complete and qualified — the technology is proven to work in its final form and under expected conditions.
TRL 9	Actual system proven in an operational environment — the technology is fully deployed and commercially available.

Annex 7 – Lumpsum subgrant agreement template

EIT Food Lump-Sum Subgrant Agreement

This Lump-Sum Subgrant agreement, hereinafter the **“Agreement”**, shall have effect as of [DATE] and is entered into by and between:

EIT Food, with registered office at Ubicenter A, Philipssite 5 bus 34, 3001 Heverlee (Leuven), Belgium, hereinafter referred to as “EIT Food” or “KIC LE”;

And

[Recipient of Subgrant], hereinafter referred to as the “Recipient”;

Hereinafter, jointly or individually, referred to as “Parties” or “Party”;

WHEREAS:

EIT Food has entered into a Partnership Agreement (**“PA”**) with the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (**“EIT”**), establishing a long-term cooperation laying down the general terms and conditions under which EIT Food must operate as an institutionalised European partnership under the Horizon Europe Programme.

Under the terms of the PA, EIT Food has been awarded a grant by the EIT, and the purpose to support activities under a Business Plan and therefore entered into a Grant Agreement with the EIT (the **“GA”**), laying down the provisions concerning the implementation of the activities through grants, which, among others, allows the KIC LE to provide Subgrant to third parties for projects and actions related to KAVAs (the **“Financial Support to Third Parties”**).

Within the framework of the PA and the GA, the KIC LE has set up a project, being the project “[REDACTED]”, hereinafter referred to as the **“Project”**.

The Recipient will be involved in the Project as a **Third Party Receiving Financial Support**.

In this Agreement the Parties wish to lay down the contractual arrangements between them regarding their respective rights and obligations for the implementation by the Recipient the Project, transposing to the extent needed the provisions of the GA.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

1. Article 1: Definitions

1.1 Definitions

Words beginning with a capital letter shall have the meaning defined either herein or in the Horizon Europe Programme, the EIT Regulation, in the Partnership Agreement Internal Agreement, or Grant Agreement, including their respective Annexes.

1.2 Additional Definitions

“Authorised Representative” shall mean the person or persons duly authorised to sign this Agreement, including its Annexes, on behalf of a Party.

“Effective Date” shall mean the date first referenced above.

“EIT” or “granting authority” shall mean the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, currently regulated by Regulation (EU) 2021/819 of the European Parliament and of the Council of May 20, 2021 (**“EIT Regulation”**).

“Force Majeure” shall mean any situation or event that

- prevents either Party from fulfilling their obligations under this Agreement,
- was unforeseeable, exceptional situation and beyond the Parties’ control,
- was not due to error or negligence on their part (or on the part of other participants involved in the action), and
- proves to be inevitable in spite of exercising all due diligence.

“Grant Agreement” or “GA” shall mean the agreement signed by the EIT and the KIC LE, as altered, amended, re-instated or replaced from time to time, setting out the rights and obligations applicable to the EIT grant awarded for the implementation of the KIC Business Plan, which provides the legal framework for this Agreement and all agreements signed with all Third Parties receiving Financial support from EIT Food. a.

“Horizon Europe Programme” shall mean Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013.

“Partnership Agreement” or “PA” shall mean the agreement laying down the general terms and conditions under which the EIT Food must operate as an institutionalised European partnership, entered by and between the EIT and the KIC LE as altered, amended, re-instated or replaced from time to time.

“KIC Business Plan” shall mean the KIC Business Plan as defined in the PA.

“Project” shall mean the participation of the Recipient in the Project “[]”.

“Deliverable(s)” shall mean the conditions identified in Annex 1 as agreed Deliverables.

“Third Party Receiving Subgrant” shall mean a recipient of Subgrant to third parties, in the form of grants, prizes or similar forms of support, including this lump-sum contribution.).

2. Article 2: Purpose

The purpose of this Agreement is to lay down the contractual arrangements between the Parties regarding their respective rights and obligations pertaining to the fulfilment by the Recipient of the agreed Deliverables, in view of implementing the Project.

3. Article 3: Entry into force, duration, and termination

3.1 Entry into force and duration

This Agreement shall have effect from the Effective Date and shall apply until the end date or until the satisfactory achievement of the last Deliverable, whatever occurs first. The expected end date is [] (the period between the Effective Date and the end date/achieved Deliverable being referred to as the “Duration”).

However, this Agreement may be terminated in accordance with Article 3.2 of this Agreement.

3.2 Termination

3.2.1. In the event that the Recipient is in breach of its obligations under this Agreement, the KIC LE may give formal notice to the Recipient requiring that such breach will be remedied within 14 calendar days of this formal notice, unless such breach cannot be remedied.

If such breach is substantial and is not remedied within that period or, is not capable of remedy, the KIC LE may decide to declare the Recipient to be a defaulting Party and to decide on the consequences thereof which may include termination of this Agreement upon notice and other measures, such as suspension/recovery any payment of (part of) the financial contribution received; or stopping the Project).

3.2.2. The KIC LE may terminate this Agreement with immediate effect through written notice to the Recipient in the event the further achieving the Deliverables is prevented or delayed with more than one month by Force Majeure.

3.2.3. If the GA is terminated by the EIT or the KIC LE, the KIC LE shall have right to terminate this Agreement upon notice to the Recipient.

3.3 Effects of termination

3.3.1. Survival of rights and obligations

After termination, the Recipient's obligations that by their nature should survive the termination of this Agreement, including (in particular Articles 7 (Visibility and communication), 9 (Liability), 10 (Obligations from EIT agreements) 11 (Confidentiality), 12.7 (Applicable law) and 12.8 (Dispute resolution)), shall continue to apply.

Termination shall not affect any rights or obligations of the Parties incurred prior to the date of termination, unless otherwise stipulated herein or agreed between the Parties. This includes the obligation to provide all input, deliverables, and documents for the period that the Agreement was still in force and effect.

4. Article 4: Agreed Deliverables

The Recipient shall make all best endeavours to achieve the agreed Deliverables set forth in Annex 1.

The Recipient shall use the Lumpsum only for:

- for expenses incurred during the Duration and related to the budget headings only;
- for expenses related to the Budget Headings only;
- to achieve the agreed Deliverables;
- to meet the reporting requirements;
- to carry out any other approved activities directly relating to the agreed Deliverables;
- take part in the efficient implementation of the Project and cooperate, perform and fulfil, promptly and on time, all of its obligations under this Agreement as may be reasonably required from it and in a manner of good faith as prescribed by Belgian law;
- remain eligible under the Horizon Europe programme funding for the entire duration of this Agreement. Costs and contributions will be eligible only as long as the Recipient and the Project are eligible;
- promptly notify to the KIC LE any significant information, fact, problem or delay likely to affect its participation in the Project;
- promptly provide all information reasonably required by the KIC LE for the implementation of the Project.

5. Article 5: Monitoring and reporting

The Recipient shall:

- Maintain true and accurate records and copies of evidence of its use of the funding through the Duration and for a period of five (5) years after the termination of this Agreement.
- comply with any reporting policy and instructions issued by the KIC LE, in accordance with the timing and conditions it sets out as may be amended/modified by the KIC LE;
- comply with any and all other monitoring and reporting requirements, including any future requirements by the KIC LE and/or as may be established by the KIC LE, as the case may be pursuant to requirements of EIT.

Failure to comply with this provision shall result in the material breach of this Agreement.

6. Article 6: Financial provisions

In consideration of participating in the Project and meeting its obligations under this Agreement, the Recipient shall receive a lump-sum financial contribution for the completion of work package Deliverables under the Project, in accordance with these financial provisions.

6.1. Financial contribution

EIT Food shall provide the lump-sum funding upon the agreed Deliverables being achieved, in accordance with the schedule in Annex 1.

The Recipient is eligible for lump-sum contributions are eligible if:

- such sums were foreseen in the budget, as specified in Annex 1, and
- the work packages are completed to the reasonable satisfaction of EIT Food, in accordance with Annex 1, i.e.:
 - the work is properly implemented by the recipient
 - the results are achieved; and
 - within the duration of the Project.
- The lump-sum contributions for activities are not already funded under other EU grants

6.2 Use of lump-sum funding

EIT Food shall fund the Recipient under this Agreement only for the achievement of agreed Deliverables and only in an amount not to exceed the overall accepted contribution amount specified in Annex 1. With respect to each Deliverable budget heading, as per Annex 1, EIT Food shall pay the lumpsums only up to the line item for such budget heading.

6.3. Funding mechanism and payments

For all payments to be made by EIT Food, the Recipient shall submit to EIT Food a justification of the Deliverable achievement.

Payment is subject to the approval of the periodic report and the work packages declared.

In no event shall EIT Food have any obligation to provide any part of the Funding if the Recipient departs from the agreed Deliverables. Incomplete work packages and work packages that have not been delivered or cannot be approved will be rejected.

Payment by EIT Food to the Recipient hereunder, shall be made to the bank account informed in the Vendor Information Form. Any other bank account details may be provided by the Recipient to EIT Food after the execution of this Agreement, which new details shall only be effective five working days after receipt by EIT Food of written notice from Recipient in that respect.

Lump-sum payments will be made by EIT Food upon EIT Food's acceptance of the Deliverable achievement.

The payment structure shall be as follows: The first instalment shall amount to 50% of the total EIT Food contribution and will be provided as pre-financing. Each Deliverable is assigned a value expressed as a percentage of the total EIT Food contribution, as detailed in Annex 1. Subsequent payments will be made only upon EIT Food's acceptance of the relevant Deliverable(s), in accordance with the assigned value. The total payments to the Beneficiary shall not exceed 100% of the total EIT Food contribution specified in this Agreement.

If the Agreement is terminated before the completion of the Project, the Recipient has the right to receive part of the funding for the partially achieved Deliverable.

Payments will be made from the EIT Food account with account number **BE02 0018 0504 7940**. Any recoveries shall be made to this bank account.

6.4 Record keeping

Recipients must keep records and other supporting documents to prove the proper implementation of the action (proper implementation of the work and/or achievement of the results as described in Annex 1) in line with the accepted standards in the respective field (if any).

Recipients do not need to keep specific records on the actual costs incurred.

6.5 Budget Change Provisions

Any reallocation of funds or changes to the approved budget require the prior written approval of EIT Food. No budget changes shall be implemented without such approval.

Requests for budget changes must be submitted in writing to EIT Food, clearly stating the reasons for the proposed reallocation and providing supporting documentation as necessary.

EIT Food will review the request and communicate its decision in writing within a reasonable timeframe. Approval may be granted, denied, or made subject to conditions at EIT Food's sole discretion.

Project-specific thresholds and additional requirements for budget changes, if any, are set out in Annex 1. The Parties shall refer to Annex 1 for further details regarding applicable limits and procedures.

7. **Article 7: Visibility rules and communication**

7.1. Use of names, logos or trademarks

Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as conferring rights to use in advertising, publicity or otherwise the name of the KIC LE or any of its logos or trademarks without its prior written approval.

7.2. Co-branding

The Recipient shall take into account and respect any co-branding guidelines and requirements provided and set by EIT Food.

The Recipient shall comply with these co-branding obligations in accordance with the monitoring processes as provided for by EIT Food.

Article 8 Intellectual Property Rights

Background means any and all, data, information or know-how (tangible or intangible), including any IPRs that is/are owned or controlled by a Party or that a Party has a right to license, prior to the Effective Date; or

Parties agree that no rights in the Background shall be transferred under this Agreement

Results shall be owned by the Party whose employee(s) generated such Results, or on whose behalf such Results have been generated.

The KIC LE and the Recipient may enter into additional arrangements regarding the use of the Results and the Background.

Article 9: Liability towards each other

9.1 Limitations of contractual liability

The Parties shall take all the necessary steps to limit or mitigate any damage.

No Party shall be responsible to the other Party for any indirect or consequential loss or similar damage such as, but not limited to, loss of profit, loss of revenue or loss of contracts, provided such damage was not caused by a wilful act, gross negligence or by a breach of confidentiality.

The terms of this Agreement shall not be construed to amend or limit either Party's statutory liability.

9.2 Damage caused to third parties

Each Party shall be solely liable for any loss, damage or injury to third parties resulting from the performance of the said Party's obligations by it or on its behalf under this Agreement.

9.3 Hold harmless

The Recipient shall hold the KIC LE and its respective assigns and employees, officers and directors harmless from and against all losses, costs, liabilities, claims, damages and expenses, resulting from or relating to or arising out of the breach or default in the performance of any obligation on the Recipient's part under this Agreement through a legal action, including any counterclaim, that has proceeded to final judgment by a court of competent jurisdiction, in either case to the extent it determined a breach or default by the Recipient in the performance of this Agreement, provided it is not caused by the KIC LE's wilful act or gross negligence. The Recipient will be entitled to make observations towards the KIC LE, regarding the Recipient's obligation to hold the KIC LE harmless and the KIC LE shall reasonably consider such observations by the Recipient. The KIC LE shall take into account the reasonable requests of the Recipient with regard to the defence and the settlement of such claims, including the selection of counsels, and it is understood that KIC LE shall not settle any claim without the consent of the the Recipient.

9.4 Force Majeure

No Party shall be considered to be in breach of the Agreement if it is prevented from fulfilling its obligations under the Agreement by Force Majeure.

Each Party will notify the other Party of any Force Majeure without undue delay.

Article 10: Obligations from EIT agreements

The Recipient acknowledges and agrees that some obligations imposed on EIT Food following the PA and the GA are also applicable to the Recipient and Recipient shall do everything that is necessary in order to enable EIT Food to comply with these obligations. More specifically the Recipient agrees to comply with the clauses mentioned 12, 14 19, 20 25 of the GA as set out in Annex 1 of this Agreement related to inter alia:

- Conflict of interest (article 12 GA)
- Ethics and values (article 14 GA)
- General Information obligations (article 19 GA)
- record keeping (article 20 GA)
- Check, reviews, audits and investigations (article 25 GA)

Article 11: Confidentiality

The Parties must keep confidential any data, documents or other material (in any form) that is identified as sensitive in writing, or when disclosed orally has been identified as confidential at the time of disclosure and has been confirmed and designated in writing within 15 calendar days from oral disclosure at the latest as confidential information by the disclosing Party, is “Sensitive Information”.

Unless otherwise agreed between the Parties, they may use Sensitive Information only to implement the Agreement.

The Parties may disclose Sensitive Information to its personnel or other participants in the Project only if they:

- a. need to know it in order to implement the Agreement and
- b. are bound by an obligation of confidentiality.

It may moreover disclose Sensitive Information to third parties, if:

- a. this is necessary to implement the Agreement or safeguard the EU financial interests and
- b. the receiving parties of the information are bound by an obligation of confidentiality.

The confidentiality obligations no longer apply if:

- a. the disclosing Party agrees to release the other Party
- b. the information becomes publicly available, without breaching any confidentiality obligation
- c. the disclosure of the Sensitive Information is required or permitted by EU, international or national law
- d. a time period of 5 years after the disclosure of the Sensitive Information has passed, unless otherwise agreed upon between the Parties
- e. the Sensitive Information is subsequently independently developed by or on behalf of the receiving Party without use of the disclosing Party’s Sensitive Information.

If and when the confidentiality obligations no longer apply, the receiving party of the information undertakes to return to the disclosing Party, or to destroy, on request all Sensitive Information that has been disclosed to the receiving parties including all copies thereof and to delete all information stored in a machine readable form to the extent practically possible. The receiving parties may keep a copy to the extent it is required to keep, archive or store such Sensitive Information because of compliance with applicable laws and regulations or for the proof of on-going obligations provided that the receiving party comply with the confidentiality obligations herein contained with respect to such copy.

If either Party becomes aware that it will be required, or is likely to be required, to disclose Sensitive Information in order to comply with applicable laws or regulations or with a court or administrative order, it shall, to the extent it is lawfully able to do so, prior to any such disclosure

- notify the disclosing Party, and
- comply with the disclosing Party's reasonable instructions to protect the confidentiality of the information.

8. Article 12: Miscellaneous

12.1 Inconsistencies and severability

Should any provision of this Agreement become invalid, illegal or unenforceable, it shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this Agreement. In such a case, the Parties shall be entitled to request that a valid and practicable provision be negotiated which fulfils the purpose of the original provision.

12.2 No representation, partnership or agency

No Party shall be entitled to act or to make legally binding declarations on behalf of the other Party.

Nothing in this Agreement shall be deemed to constitute a joint venture, agency, partnership, interest grouping or any other kind of formal business grouping or entity between the Parties.

12.3 Notices and other communication

Any notice to be given under this Agreement shall be in writing to the addresses and recipients as listed below.

Formal notices:

If it is required in this Agreement that a formal notice, consent or approval shall be given, such notice shall be signed by a Party's Authorised Representative(s) and shall either be served personally or sent by mail with recorded delivery or e-mail with receipt acknowledgement.

Other communication:

Other communication between the Parties may also be affected by other means such as e-mail with acknowledgement of receipt, which fulfils the conditions of written form.

Any change of persons or contact details shall be notified immediately by the respective Party to the other Party.

12.4 Assignment and amendments

No rights or obligations of the Parties arising from this Agreement may be assigned or transferred, in whole or in part, to any third party without the other Party's prior formal approval.

Any amendments or modifications to this Agreement or its annexes must be made in writing and signed by the Authorized Representatives of both Parties. Proposed amendments shall be communicated to the other Party with reasonable advance notice, and must include a brief justification for the requested change. No amendment or modification shall be effective unless and until it is executed in writing by both Parties.

12.5 Language

This Agreement is drawn up in English, which language shall govern all documents, notices, meetings, arbitral proceedings and processes relative thereto.

12.6 Mandatory national law

Nothing in this Agreement shall be deemed to require a Party to breach any mandatory statutory law under which the Party is operating.

12.7 Applicable law

This Agreement shall be construed in accordance with and governed by the laws of Belgium.

12.8 Settlement of disputes

The Parties shall endeavour to settle their disputes amicably.

All disputes arising out of or in connection with this Agreement, which cannot be solved amicably, shall be finally settled before the courts of Brussels.

12.9 Data Protection

The Recipient ensures that any processing of personal data shall be performed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).

The collected personal data will be used solely for the implementation, follow-up, reporting and management of this Agreement by the Recipient and its subsidiaries and for dissemination of information and communication purposes foreseen for this Agreement. Data subjects have the right to access, rectify or delete their personal data. Data subjects can also object to its processing. To exercise these rights, data subjects can contact Recipient at legal@eitfood.eu.

9. Article 13: Annexes

The following annex is attached to this Agreement:
Annex 1 – Project Plan, Budget & Financial stipulations

In case of conflict between the provisions of this Agreement and its Annexes, the provisions of this Agreement will prevail.

10. Signatures

The Parties have caused this Agreement to be duly signed by the undersigned Authorised Representatives.

The signature of a Party via a scanned or digitized image of a handwritten signature (e.g. scan in PDF format) or an electronic signature (e.g. via DocuSign), shall have the same force and effect as an original handwritten signature for the purposes of validity, enforceability and admissibility. Each Party receives a fully executed copy of the Agreement. Delivery of the fully executed copy via e-mail or via an electronic signature system shall have the same force and effect as delivery of an original hard copy.

For KIC LE

Name: Richard Zaltzman

Title : CEO

In : Leuven, Belgium

On :

Signature _____
11.

Recipient:

Name:

Title:

In:

On:

Signature _____

12. Annex 1 – Project Plan, Budget & Financial stipulations

Estimated Budget Breakdown by Deliverable and Work Package

Deliverable	Date of completion	Lump-Sum (€)
Deliverable 1 - Final report and proof of participation	15 December 2026	2,200
Total funding awarded to the Recipient under this Agreement		2,200

Each Deliverable listed below is assigned a value expressed as a percentage of the total EIT Food contribution. The first instalment shall be 50% of the total EIT Food contribution, provided as pre-financing. Subsequent payments are conditional upon EIT Food's acceptance of the relevant Deliverable(s), and the total payments to the Beneficiary shall not exceed 100% of the total EIT Food contribution.

Annex 8 — History of Changes

Version	Publication date	Changes
1.0	03.08.2026	Original Version