Call for expressions of interest to organize and conduct startups events (Challenge Labs) within the Project “Finding innovative solutions for water scarcity in Southern Europe”

EIT Food is looking for three organisations based in Greece, Italy and Spain that would organise and conduct events (Challenge Labs) in 2020 for startups dealing with water scarcity challenge within the Project “Finding innovative solutions for water scarcity in Southern Europe”

Application deadline: 20th of May 2020.
Application template: see point 3.5

Further details about EIT Food can be found at: www.eitfood.eu, and the principles of the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme are described at: https://eit.europa.eu/activities/outreach/eit-regional-innovation-scheme-ris. With respect to the present call, EIT Food will not provide new information that has not already been included in this call document, but can assist the potential applicants by explaining contents of this document (please contact Elvira Domingo elvira.domingo@eitfood.eu)

1) Background information: EIT

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is an independent EU body. We increase Europe’s ability to innovate by nurturing entrepreneurial talent and supporting new ideas.

EIT mission is to:

- Increase Europe's competitiveness, its sustainable economic growth and job creation by promoting and strengthening cooperation among leading business, education and research organisations.
- Power innovation and entrepreneurship in Europe by creating environments for creative and innovative thoughts to thrive.
- Innovation through integration

To strengthen Europe’s ability to innovate, action is needed to overcome the fragmented European innovation landscape. This is where the EIT comes in. We have a pioneering role in increasing European sustainable growth and creating jobs by reinforcing Europe’s innovation capacity. The EIT brings together leading organisations from business, education and research, the so-called ‘knowledge triangle’, to form dynamic cross-border partnerships - EIT Innovation Communities.

2) Background information: EIT Food

EIT Food is one of the largest and most impactful food-related initiatives worldwide. As a Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), EIT Food connects partners from leading businesses, universities and research centres across Europe. It is a people-centric and resource-smart transformer of the European food system, driving consumer confidence and improved global health.

EIT Food’s vision is to put Europe at the centre of a global revolution in food innovation and production, and its value in society. EIT Food will engage consumers in the change process, improve
nutrition and make the food system more resource-efficient, secure, transparent and trusted. EIT Food has six strategic objectives:

- **Overcome low consumer trust**: support Europeans in the transition towards a smart food system that is inclusive and trusted;
- **Create consumer valued food for healthier nutrition**: enable individuals to make informed and affordable personal nutrition choices;
- **Build a consumer-centric connected food system**: develop a digital food supply network with consumers and industry as equal partners;
- **Enhance sustainability**: develop solutions to transform the traditional ‘produce-use-dispose’ model into a circular bioeconomy;
- **Educate to engage, innovate and advance**: Provide ‘food system’ skills for more than 10,000 students, entrepreneurs and professionals through advanced training programmes;
- **Catalyse food entrepreneurship and innovation**: foster innovation at all stages of business creation.

EIT Food boosts the skills and entrepreneurial spirit in the sector and unlocks the potential of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), which in turn will accelerate innovation, create jobs, benefit businesses and increase Europe’s competitiveness.

### 3) Background information: Challenge Labs

The overarching objective of the Project, working together with other EIT Comunities as Climate KIC, Manufacturing and Raw Materials, is to increase the competitiveness of targeted RIS regions by supporting the integration/implementation of innovative solutions to cope with water scarcity.

**Challenge Labs** are a series of events where **innovative startups** are trained, mentored and invited to present their innovative solutions (including both technologies and services) to prevent and mitigate water scarcity and drought situations, as well as the over usage of water, with the aim to move towards a water-efficient and water-saving economy.

Challenge Labs include the following events:

#### 1st Challenge Lab event (1 online event):

The first on-line Challenge Lab event will be a 8-10 hours training for startups delivered in the second part of June 2020. The event will gather 30 startups and include training sessions in business case skills and idea competition (e.g. preparation for pitching their ideas to potential investors) and specific sessions to enable the matchmaking of startups with mentors.

**Non-Specific tasks for the selected organisation are required for this online event.**

#### 2nd Challenge Lab event (3 face to face events)

The second Challenge Lab event will be organized during September – October 2020 in 3 countries: Italy, Greece, Spain. It will be organized preferably physically, if possible. 10 startups (same as the above ones) per targeted country will present their solutions in a pitching session. The startup innovations will be evaluated by a selected Jury. 2 startups from each country will be awarded with an economic prize.
The Challenge Labs are networking and business development events for entrepreneurs to meet with the innovation ecosystem (start-ups, investors, companies, universities and research centres, NGOs, etc.). They will serve as a platform to discuss the current water challenges and present the EIT activities.

The Challenge Labs events are scheduled as follows (*):

- Online Challenge Lab (in English): unique event for the 30 selected start-ups, held from 22nd to 26th of June 2020.
- Challenge Lab in Spain: held in Málaga, the week from 24th – 28th of September 2020 (as side event in Smart-Agrifood Summit).
- Challenge Lab in Italy: held in Puglia (Bari), the week 12th – 20th of September 2020 (as a side event in Fiera del Levante).
- Challenge Lab in Greece: held in Athens, the week to be determined (as side event to Green Deal or Water Innovation Forum)

*The organization of the three regional Challenge Labs is subjected to the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. In order to keep health and safety conditions for all participants, physical events in Greece, Italy and Spain could be transformed into online events.

The present call is launched by EIT Food to select one organisation in each country to perform the activities described in the Project Activities format and requirement sections. The selection process is implemented as an open call managed by EIT Food, Co-Location Centre South, using clear and transparent selection criteria.

The activities will include:

- Organization of one face to face event including pitching session and award ceremony (or alternatively, three on-line events in case the evolution of COVID-19 crisis does not recommend to organize face to face events)
- Dynamization/facilitation/conduction of the events (e.g. having moderators for the different sessions)
- Dissemination of the events
- Preparation of reports and materials.
- Event logistics: renting venue, catering, hosting of e-platform (if needed), audiovisual equipment, event development materials, etc.

*EIT Food will provide with dissemination and merchandising materials

2.1. Project Activities format and requirements

The selected organisation will manage the following tasks within the Project:

Stage 1- Organization of the first Challenge Lab on-line event

The first Challenge Lab event will be an online event with 30 startups that will present their solutions and receive training to facilitate their market penetration. The event will have several training sessions with experts which need to be conducted/moderated by the selected organization. A specific session
on match-making will be organized by the selected organization with the objective of matching the invited mentors with the 30 startups so that each startup is assigned with the most suitable mentor.

Non-Specific tasks for the selected organisation are required for this online event.

Stage 2- Challenge Lab events in the three target countries: Greece, Italy and Spain

One face to face event shall be organized by each selected organization in each of the 3its respective target countryies: Greece, Italy and-or Spain (total 3 regional events). 10 startups (from the 30 mentioned above) will participate in each event. The event will be also open to an audience of relevant stakeholders in the water and entrepreneur sectors including experts, other innovators, investors, companies, public agencies, etc. Each event will organize a competition based on pitching sessions with the 10 participating startups. The selected organisation in each country will design and perform a pitching competition between the 10 startups and an Award Ceremony in each of the 3 target countries so that the winning startups will be awarded with a Prize from EIT Food of 10.000 EUR (1st prize) or 5.000 EUR (2nd prize). Key note speakers will be also invited to provide their expertise and support startups to commercialize their products and services.

In case EIT Food considers that the organization of any (or all) of the three regional Challenge Labs needs to be cancelled to preserve the health of the participants due to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the selected organization(s) responsible for the affected country(ies) shall be able to organize as an alternative, an on-line event in each country where the face to face event is cancelled and provide the same programme and contents.

Specific tasks for the selected organisations for each of the three regional events:

- Support EIT Food with the scouting of the audience including relevant actors from the water sector and entrepreneur sectors including experts, other innovators, investors, companies, governments, policy makers, etc. at least 10 key contacts (including minimum 2-3 investors)
- Support EIT Food with the scouting of keynote speakers relevant for the topic of interest, providing at least 10 key contacts.
- Preparation of the event agenda (in cooperation with EIT Food) and layout of the final version.
- Preparation of an invitation letter in the respective language (Greek, Italian and Spanish) for relevant stakeholders.
- Management of invitations and registration to the event
- Contracting catering and audio-visual equipment (PC or laptop with adequate software for presentations, projector and speakers, among others if needed)
- Conduction of the event, including but not limited to the following tasks: to moderate the different sessions, to control timing of speakers and startups, to facilitate/dynamize the sessions encouraging the active participation of startups and experts.
- Organization and conduction of an engaging activity between different experts (i.e. investors, policy makers, companies....)
- Organization and conduction of a pitching competition for startups
- Organization and conduction of the Award Ceremony for the winning startups
- Preparation of a complete report with a summary and main conclusion of the different sessions.
Dissemination of the event: dissemination in social media (e.g. Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.) before, during and after the event including the preparation of information pack for communication (e.g. banners).

Preparation of one-page press release with main features of the event in English, Spanish, Italian and Greek.

Video recording of the event and production for final dissemination video (3 – 4 minutes video).

Professional pictures of the event.

And in case of cancellation of face to face events:

Set up and management of the e-platform hosting the online event (e.g. Zoom, Gotomeeting, Webex, etc.) offering free access to the participants and technical support if needed.

Duration of the tasks: From September to October 2020

Language of the events will be English

Duration of the event: At least 6 hours including pitching competition and ceremony award (in parallel or combined with mayor events see page 3)

Audience: Minimum 60 people

Applicants are welcome to be creative and introduce more features to the proposed format of events. The selected organization will work closely with EIT Food on the graphic design and customising the format and schedule of the event to the peculiarities of the startup ecosystem.

Stage 3- Communication of the Project

Task of the organisation:

- Contribute to the dissemination and wide promotion of the Project activities and news, using adequately communication and social media channels, and providing a final report on press appearances, number of social media publications and dissemination strategies.

Duration: From June to December 2020

2.2. Project Activities budget

Each of the selected organisations will sign a subcontracting agreement with EIT Food with gross funding of 7,000 € to cover the eligible costs of the Challenge Lab event and other additional actions.

When applying for the call, interested organisations should submit an agenda proposal aligned with the events format requirements and a budget proposal listing the costs associated with events planning and organisation.

Please note that the following expenses are compulsory to be included into the budget proposal:

- event photography
- video recording
- catering
3) Applications to organize the Project Activities

EIT Food invites organisations from Greece, Italy and Spain to submit their proposals to become an organizer of the Project activities.

3.1. Countries or regions targeted by the call

The project will be run in the three above-mentioned countries.

3.2. Eligible organisations

- Legal persons (such as companies, incubators or accelerators, higher education institutes, research institutes, non-governmental organisations),
- Operating in a country/region targeted by the call,
- Able to sign a subcontracting agreement with relevant EIT Food’s Co-Location Centre
- Recognised as important players in the entrepreneurship ecosystem with strong regional outreach
- Experienced in supporting entrepreneurs and startups,
- Capable of organising successful events and workshops, including online events.
- Able to organize the Project activities in the timeframe from September to October 2020.

3.3. Benefits for organisations selected as Project activities organizers

Candidates chosen by EIT Food to organise the Project activities will be offered the following benefits:

- Ability to benefit from the collaboration with EIT Food and the EIT community (as subcontractors in EIT Food activities);
- Subcontracting agreement with relevant EIT Food’s Co-Location Centre with gross funding of 7,000€ to cover the eligible costs of the EIT Challenge Lab event’s planning, dissemination and organization.
- Knowledge and organisational support of EIT Food and Co-Location Centres in organising and implementing the actions.

Organising the Project Activities shall be considered an opportunity to become associated with EIT Food, establish relations with its community and potentially become better embedded in the EIT Food activities. The selected organisation will also benefit from the increased visibility in their local entrepreneurship ecosystems, strengthening their position on the regional and national levels.

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1 Consortia are not eligible in this call.
3.4. Selection criteria

All proposals will be evaluated considering the following criteria, related to the applicant organisation and Project activities:

1. Quality of response – including proposed deliverables and services (40%)
2. Capability and experience successfully dynamization and facilitation of experts’ working groups meeting to produce results (40%)
3. Pricing – ensuring the best value for money (20%)

Above criteria will be evaluated on a 0-15 scale: 0 – not satisfactory; 5 – satisfactory; 10 – good and 15 points – very good. The application can receive a maximum of 90 points.

3.5. Application Form

Please fill in the application form, ensuring that all fields are completed. Please submit the application in electronic format using the link provided below by 20th of May 2020. Please do not provide further supporting documents and capture all relevant information in this form.

**APPLY NOW**

All personal data of the involved experts will be processed in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The candidate experts will be selected by EIT Food and other KICs members Team based on the provided information and will receive upon selection another invitation, followed by the relevant materials and more precise guidance.

Information to successful candidates will be sent by 30th May 2020.