FutureFoodS Call 2026

FAQ

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Scope & Topics

Q: What are the three dimensions of sustainability?

A: Projects should take all three dimensions of sustainability (environmental/ economic/ social incl. nutrition and health) into account, but are not obliged to address all dimensions to the same extent; Projects should envisage clearly how they will contribute to the transformation towards sustainable food systems (see SAPEA definition on p. 4).

Q: In terms of the food systems approach, would a local food system count (e.g. focused on a particular region/district) or do you have a preference for food-product focused systems?

A: Yes, a local food system would count.

Q: Please can you still define more precisely what do you mean by European context. Can the projects concentrate on specific European contexts, e.g. Nordics, Eastern Europe or Southern Europe?

A: This is a transnational call striving to bring partners from all over Europe together. Depending on the topic this could of course also be with focus on the Nordics, Eastern Europe or Southern Europe.

Q: Will the coming calls differ significantly in relation to topic from the current call?

A: The call topics are based on the FutureFoodS SRIA, which builds the backbone. For each call, a scoping is being performed to be able to incorporate EU/ national/ regional priorities and latest developments and trends into future calls. In case research needs are persistent, topic themes may also be similar.

Q: Where do I find help to judge whether my chosen topic falls in the scope?

A: Please consult the Call Announcement and topic text thoroughly. You can also consult the FutureFoodS SRIA (available on the website). You may also contact the Call Office or your national/ regional contact point to discuss your chosen topic. Please keep in mind that in the end the evaluators will judge/evaluate your proposal.

Q: Can a project span two topics.

A: Each proposal has to run under a topic and thus you have to decide for one topic. In case of overlaps you may consider which topic shows a stronger fit. Please be aware that not all funders support all topics.

Q: Can topics be combined? e.g. a german partner goes for topic 2, the others for topic 3?

A: In its application the consortium needs to decide and name the topic it wants to go for.

Q: Is it valuable for FOs to see applications that approach the three topics simultaneously? Or is it more valuable to focus on one of the topics?

A: You have to choose one Topic for the application, so it is advisable to concentrate on one Topic. In the last FutureFoodS calls there were overarching elements, which were important throughout all topics offered.

Q: Scope question: NCD's due to unhealthy lifestyles/nutrition or unhealthy food environments are in scope, focusing on, say diabetes is not in scope. Is this a correct interpretation?

A: Projects should focus primarily on the three call topics and not on questions dealing with health/ diseases. However, when appropriate, problems and impacts affecting health could also be considered within the project, but they should not be the main research focus of the project.

Q: What level of detail is expected on project tasks in the pre-proposal, seeing that it should focus on the problem analysis and not the full impact plan?

A: Please have a look at Annex A "Impact Plan" and the pre-proposal templates (Annex C). A full workplan with description of workpackages, tasks etc. is only asked at full-proposal step. We recommend to give a clear outlook without further details to enable evaluators to understand the basics of your proposal.

Q: The following disclaimer applies: '[...]diseases related to nutrition and lifestyle are not in focus in this partnership'. I understand this to mean that diseases (e.g. diabetes) are not relevant to this call. Could you clarify what exactly 'health' means and includes, and what is not meant?

A: At FutureFoodS, health is consistently viewed through the lens of the food systems approach. It is not about the medical or clinical perspective of the individual, but rather about the systemic framework that enables healthy and safe nutrition for society.

The understanding of "health" is included in the following aspects in line with FutureFoodS objectives:

1. Nutrition and Sustainable Healthy Diets
2. Food Safety
3. The inseparable link to sustainability

Please note that clinical or medical research is out of scope, and all topics maintain a clear "Post-Harvest" focus.

Q: If the project starts at TRL 3 and also includes the development of a prototype during its implementation, should we still select the "Exploratory" category, would the project still be considered exploratory?

A: Sometimes it is difficult to decide for a project type, because the project covers aspects of both research and innovation and spans several TRLs. In this case consider where the main focus of the project lies and choose this category.

Q: If the project is exploratory but on novel foods does it need the regulation aspect?

A: This question is not clear. If you ignore regulatory aspects would you find the project sufficient and results applicable to achieve impact?

Food Systems Approach, Impact Plan & Theory of Change

Q: Do you expect a proposal to produce effects and impacts in all the partners' countries or could they jointly collaborate to produce impacts in only one?

A: We expect the projects to produce effects and impacts in all the partners´countries or at least the results and impacts should be transferrable.

Q: Could give us an example of theory of change justification for the food system (for some of the topics) as it is an unusual format for presenting impact. And in general --any guidance for system innovation and pathways. Many thanks!

A: We cannot provide a full example of a theory of change for the food system. Please have a close look at the Call description and Annex A to gain understanding. Also, we recommend to visit the following info pages:

- https://www.nwo.nl/en/impact-plan-approach
- https://impact.nwo.nl/en/working-with-an-impact-plan

Q: Should Theory of Change be included in the pre-proposal?

A: The Theory of change is the framework for the impact plan we are using for this call. This means it plays a role from the very beginning. In the pre-proposal you will be asked to provide a problem and context analysis. In the full-proposal you will be asked to provide a full impact plan. The two things build upon each other. Please have a look at Annex A and C.

Consortium, Partners & Stakeholder Engagement

Q: Which special rules are there for sub-contracting ? Is there a limit? The sub contract must be signed before the submission and up load some where? or we can do later ?

A: There is no general rule concerning subcontracting and no need for an upload but applicants need to respect national/regional rules: Please contact the concerned National contact point(s) / Regional contact point(s) to discuss. See also Annex B.

Q: If the associated partner is solely providing samples for analysis, it is not appropriate to expect them to commit to any specific findings. Could the letter of commitment be rephrased or adapted accordingly?

A: Annex E is a template. It says: „ This template may be used for applicants participating in R&I proposals who choose to be self-funded or who are not eligible for funding, so called "associated partners", in order to provide evidence of their commitment. Unless otherwise stipulated by national or regional regulations, associated partners may not receive funding through subcontracting with a consortium partner. Grey-marked fields must be completed. Organisations are allowed to use their own templates, however, the content of the letter as described hereunder should be regarded as the minimum requirement. An authorised representative of the organisation must sign this document. In case of failure in providing such commitment at full-proposal stage, an applicant will be regarded as ineligible and may be rejected from the consortium."

Q: Eligibility of Cooperation partners (self-financed): is a PIC code still required? Isn't it sufficient with a Letter of Commitment?

A: Associated partners also need to fill in their PIC number (mandatory requirement by the European Commission). If no PIC is available, please contact the Call Office.

Q: Do the letters of commitments in Annex E regard only the associated and self-funded partners, or all partners of the consortium?

A: Letter of commitments are only needed for associated partners/self-funded partners.

Q: What about more loose, ideal partners? Does the letter of commitment also apply to them?

A: Letter of commitments are only needed for associated partners; other partners/ stakeholders can give a letter of support if they want but it is not required. Please make sure to describe those partners and their roles in the proposal.

Q: In our project, none of the involved partners are self-financed, do we still need the commitment letters? Because on the website we can´t avoid to attach one.

A: Only associated partners need to upload a letter of commitment each. (If technical problems persist, please contact the call office.)

Q: Do we need to get letters of commitment from societal stakeholders already, or is it enough to identify (some/most) participating stakeholders who we would (like to) work with?

A: You only need to provide letters of commitment for associated partners. Whether you want to include societal stakeholders as partner, associated partner or in any other way, e.g. via a stakeholder board is your decision. We recommend to clearly describe those partners and their roles in the proposal.

Q: What is the consequence when an associated partner changes organizations (the new organization would also be eligible)? Do we inform the CO beforehand?

A: For all changes it is always advisable to inform the Call Office. Associated partners are not included in the elgibility check as they are per definition not asking for funding. The requirement for an associated partner is to provide a letter of commitment. Please still take into account that a change of the organisation of an associated partner means a change in the partner profile and will lead to needed adjustments in the respective profile (organisation info).

Q: If an NPO in Austria cannot apply directly due to the funding agency only accepting research institutions, can it still be part of a proposal?

A: Partner that are not eligible to apply for funding can still be part of a proposal/consortium – as self-funding/associated partner.

Q: Are there specific requirements for the inclusion of certain types of organisations (e.g., universities, private companies, or NGOs)? Can large enterprises also apply for funding? "I am not a scientist; I am an entrepreneur. Can I still apply for this call?"

A: In general there is no restriction. The rules for the inclusion/ funding of certain types of organisations differ between the different Funding Organisations. Please consult Annex I or get in contact with the responsible regional/national contact point (see Annex B)

Q: Can associated partners reclaim any costs within the project, e.g. for travel?

A: No. Self-funding/ associated partners can join project consortia with their own resources and/or bring their own funding. They cannot claim costs. Self-funded partners will not be subject to national/regional eligibility assessments. They will appear within the project proposal as “associated partners” and will need to submit a “letter of commitment” (Annex E) with the full-proposal submission.

Q: How can an organisation from a country that has no Funding organisation taking part in the Call join a proposal?

A: Those organisations can participate as associated partners.

Q: Concerning the multi-stakeholder engagement, do you require all stakeholders to be consortium members?

A: No, Stakeholders can also be involved in other ways, for example being associated partners or through advisory boards or networks.

Q: How important is the diversity of the participating countries? Could it be an obstacle for receiving the funding if all participating countries are rather from Northern Europe?

A: The minimum requirement is 3 fundable partners from 3 different countries. Since this is an EU/ transnational programme, added value on EU level is important. This can be achieved by involving a diversity of countries, but it is not a must. It could also be achieved by ensuring that results are transferrable and relevant on EU level. Please have a look at the evaluation criteria and supportive questions.

Q: Can we have a partner from outside the EU?

A: Yes, you can have a partner from outside the EU. There is the possibility that partners from outside the EU participate as associated partners. For partners from Turkiye and Norway there is also the possibility to participate as funded partner since there are funding organisations from Türkiye and Norway involved in this call. Please take a look at Annex I containing the national regulations (updated for each call).

Eligibility & National/Regional Rules

Q: Where we can find PIC Number? Does each Partner need to have one?

A: The PIC number can be found here: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/participant-register-search] If you want to participate in a call for proposals, your organisation needs to be registered and have a 9-digit Participant Identification Code (PIC) as mandatory requirement by the European Commission.

Q: Who is the contact point for this call?

A: All the contact points can be found in [Annex B] (https://futurefoods.ptj.de/call3-pp?genericModule=callDocuments&action=download&id=1775) of the Call Announcement. You can find all the call documents here: https://futurefoods.ptj.de/call3-pp

Q: Can pre-eligibility checks be done by contact points before submission of preproposals?

A: Please contact your respective national/ regional contact point to clarify this question.

Q: Can you please clarify the application steps?

A: The co-funded call is conducted as a two-step-procedure. As a first step, a pre-proposal has to be submitted via the submission tool. In a second step - following an invitation, a full-proposal has to be submitted via the submission tool. Some funders may require additional procedures and/or documents according to their respective national/regional regulations. Therefore it is important to check Annex I and get in touch with the contact points.

Q: Are there any restrictions on who can be the coordinator, like needing a PhD?

A: There are no general restrictions. Some funders have specific requirements concerning the qualifications of the PI. Please check the relevant national/regional regulations carefully and always contact your national/ regional contact points when in doubt.

Q: For disciplinary representation in our consortium - How are the life sciences and social sciences defined in this call, would nutrition/public health or agricultural science quality as a "life science"?

A: The call announcement contains no specific definition for life sciences and social sciences. Depending on the focus, nutrition/public health and agricultural science can be both life science and social science. In the proposal you are asked to state the disciplines involved.

Q: For Gender diversity & representation, would a consortium of all women be disqualified ?

A: No, the application would not be disqualified. Gender equality is not an eligibiltiy criteria. However, the composition of the consortium is part of the evaluation. One of the subcriteria (Quality and Efficiency of the implementation; full-proposal only) enquires whether gender equality is sufficiently integrated in the consortia as well as the work plan, including the distribution of power and influence.

Q: Can one organization submit 2 pre-proposals on different topics?

A: Yes, this is possible in principle. Please note: The same person cannot act as Principal Investigator of a Coordinator for more than one proposal. Please additionally check the relevant nat/reg regulations (Annex I)

Q: If your consortium consists of organisations from three countries, what happens if the consortium meets requirements for funding from one or two countries, but not the other? Is the project then not eligible altogether?

A: The failure of one applicant to meet any of the eligibility criteria, including the national/regional eligibility criteria, will result in the rejection of the entire proposal.

Q: Is the eligibility determined by country? So for example if my consortium has an SME in Spain, can a German university then still apply to a German call that does not allow SMEs but it does uni’s

A: Proposals must be in line with the general eligibility criteria as described in the call announcement and comply with national/ regional criteria as established in Annex I respectively. A Spanish SME and a German University can both be partner in one consortium. It is important to consult the national/regional regulations (Annex I) carefully.

Q: In the Appendix with the eligible countries, there is a list of beneficiaries. This list deviates from the list in the call for proposals. What is the difference?

A: Annex H lists those organisations which are consortium partners within FutureFoodS but are also allowed to apply for the call. This Annex is mandatory and has relevance for Conflict of Interest. Annex H is only of

importance for the organisations listed there. In order to check which countries/regions are represented by funding organizations, you´ll need to consult table 4 in the Call Announcement or Annex B or Annex I.

Q: Can the research team supporting the PI from an organization change between pre-proposal and full proposal? Is it possible to only name the PI and add the research team after pre-proposal approval?

A: Team members are not mandatory to be added in the proposal. However, this also means that the less information the evaluator has about the team, the more difficult the assessment may become. If not only the supporting team is to change, but a change of organization is planned, then the points mentioned in section 7.2.1 of the Call Announcement must be considered. The affected funders should be contacted in any case to discuss the details.

Q: Is it eligible if team members do not have affiliation with the partner institution right now but in case of receiving funding in this project they will be employed at the partner institution?

A: Not all team members (of a partner) are known at the time of application. If a team member is not known, we recommend to leave this open (indicated as n.n.). The recruiting of a team member will then be part of the negotiations with the national/regional funder.

Q: Does every partner of the consortium have to get in touch with a National contact point or just the coordinator?

A: All partners applying for funding should ensure eligibility, thus we highly recommend every partner to get in contact with their national/regional contact points.

Q: What if national Funder does not fund a certain topic . We want to partner with partners from country x but the funder from that country is not funding that topic . This means partner from country x cannot get funding and cannot be a partner, but associate partner?

A: In this case the partner from country x can only participate as associated partner.

Q: What is the use of contacting your FO beforehand? So what exactly should be discussed with our FO before applying?

A: There are formal regulations for proposals which vary from country/region to country/region. If these regulations are not followed, the proposal is ineligible and will be rejected. This has consequences for the whole proposal. While we generally recommend to get in contact, some funders insist that the respective project partner contacts them before submitting the proposal. Failure to comply may render the proposal ineligible.

Q: You mentioned that an entity can only be eligible as a coordinating entity for one application - can you clarify if this as at the individual or the entity level - means an individual cannot be the coordinator on multiple proposals or the entity that the individual is associated with?

A: It is on **individual** level: The same person cannot act as Principal Investigator of a Coordinator for more than one proposal.

Q: Do you need to have the consortium fully known at pre-proposal stage? Or is this more for full proposal phase?

A: Yes, the main partners should be known. The information given in the pre-proposals is binding and thus, no changes are allowed, unless in case of force majeure or explicitly requested by the IEP, a FO or the CB. However, all changes must comply with the requirements of the call and the respective FOs

Q: Can we apply with multiple partners from other countries than ours?

A: The minimum requirement for project consortia is to be comprised of at least three partners from at least three different Member States or Associated Countries participating in the call and eligible to request funding from the FOs participating in this call and providing funding for the selected topic and project type (Table 4). A proposal consisting of partners from only one country would not be eligible. There is no maximum number of partners but we recommend to keep the number manageable (not more than 8 partners).

Funding, Budget & Costs

Q: What is the funding rate for industries / SMEs—100% or less?

A: This question can´t be answered in a general way. Therefore, please consult in Annex I the respectively national/regional rules or get in contact with the respective national/regional contact point.

Q: What is the overall funding rate, and are there different rates for universities, research organisations, private companies, and large industrial partners?

A: All partners are funded by their respective national/ regional funding organisations (not the EC). Thus, the funding rate depends on the National/Regional regulations which you find in Annex I.

Q: Are the projects co-funded or fully funded through this call? What is the percentage of co-funding, if any?

A: The call is a co-funded call, but this means that the funding provided by the participating funding organisations is co-funded by the European Union (so called cascade funding or Financial support to Third Parties). The funding rate for the project applicants depends on the National/Regional regulations only. Please have a look at Annex I.

Q: Is it mandatory for all partners to contribute a certain percentage of their own funding (own contribution)?

A: No, this depends on the National/Regional regulations. Please have a look at Annex I.

Q: Will project funding come solely from the coordinator's /national or regional funding organisation, or from multiple organisations across the consortium?

A: The coordinator and each partner will be funded through their respective funding organisation. This funding organisation has to be chosen and indicated by the corresponding partner in the submission tool. Funding contracts will be done between the coordinator/ or partner and the specific funding organisation bilaterally once the proposal has been selected for funding

Q: Will international partners receive funding from their own funding organisations or from the coordinator's funding organisation?

A: Each partner (from a selected project) eligible for funding and requesting funding from one of the funding organisations involved in the call will receive funding from the funding organisation he is asking funding from. Associated partners need to bring their own contribution without receiving funding.

Partners and associated partners do not receive the funding from the coordinators funding organisation.

Q: For a consortium with three partners from different countries, the total budget will be funded by three different national/regional funders, correct?

A: Yes

Q: If the funding body rejects a partner, is the entire project cancelled?

A: Yes.

Q: Can the project budget and partners be revised in the second stage of the application process?

A: The information given in the pre-proposals is binding and thus, no changes are allowed, unless in case of force majeure or explicitly requested by the IEP, a FO or the CB. However, all changes must comply with the requirements of the call and the respective FOs. (Further details see Call Announcement

Q: If one country's national agency can only fund a limited number of partners, how does it affect the project? (e.g., when multiple partners from one country apply and only some get funding)

A: It will not be the case that within one project some project partners from a certain country will receive money and other partners from the same country won´t. The funding decision is taken on project basis. Either there is enough money for all eligible partners from the same country or the whole project cannot be funded. The selection is based on the scientific evaluation by the expert panel and the availability of funds.

Q: What happens if only 3 out of 4 countries in a consortium have funding available due to budget constraints?

A: The selection of full proposals follows strictly the ranking lists and the availability of funds: If one of the funding organisations has no money left the whole proposal won´t be funded.

Q: What is the maximum overall project funding? Is it the sum of the individual national funding limits?

A: There is no overall maximum funding limit for a project. Some funding organisations have set limits for the applicants. In the case that all funding organisations involved in a proposal have set limits for their applicants, the sum of these limits is theoretically the funding limit for the project.

Q: Is the available funding by national funding organisations limiting the possible number of successful applications i.e. if a national budget is small, does that mean only a few projects will be funded, or is the indicated budget not the total available from a funding organisation?

A: Yes, the availability of funds from a national/regional funding organisation is limiting the number of projects this funding organisation will be able to fund. A certain amount of additional funding is available via the EC co-funding the call.

Q: Do we need to follow both EU financial regulations and those of the co-funding organisations?

A: Funding contracts will be negotiated and signed between you and your funding organisation, so you have to follow the rules of your respective funding organisation.

Q: Is there a range or an expected budget per proposal?

A: There is no expected range of project budget (in general). The project budget must fit to the size and content of your project. Please be aware of Annex I, where you can find the rules of each funding organisation.

Q: Is there a separate funding limit for each applicant from a different country in the consortium? If a country with a lower funding limit is involved, is it favorable that an applicant from a country with a higher funding limit should be the coordinator?

A: The funding limit is set by each funding organisation and outlined in Annex I. The coordinator should not be selected based on the funding amount.

Q: Is there additional funding for the project coordinator outside the national funding?

A: No, there is no additional funding for the project coordinator beyond the national funding. However, some funding organisations allow higher funding limits if the applicant is coordinator of a proposal. Please have a look at Annex I for details.

Q: Is there a minimum or maximum budget for the consortium or individual partners? Are there any budget limits for each partner or only for the consortium as a whole?

A: There is no overall maximum or minimum funding limit for a project. Some funding organisations have set limits for the applicants. Please refer to Annex I for more details.

Q: How is "Total Person Months" (PM) calculated? Should it include both paid and unpaid contributions, such as the time professors contribute without receiving project staff payments? Do "Person Months" refer to project staff (funded by the project), or should they include the time the project coordinator and other participants will devote to the project?

A: A person month is a unit of measurement representing the amount of work one person completes in one month. For example, if a task takes 3 person months, this means it would take one person three months or three people one month to complete. The total Person months we ask in the submission tool are for the organisation of the coordinator (or the partner) and include all the persons from that organisation, the **funded ones as well as the in-kind contributions.** The total person months should account for all individuals and tasks, whether funded or in-kind, and each partner in the consortium should report the person months for their own organisation.

Q: Is funding tied to the principal investigator, or is it distributed based on the consortium's overall funding from different countries?

A: The funding contracts are always bilateral between a funding organisation and a partner or the funding organisation and the coordinator. The funding is paid directly from the funding organisation to the partner / coordinator and not via the coordinator to the partner.

Q: Is the funding received directly from the respective national funding organisations?

A: Yes!

Changes, Resubmission & Proposal Development

Q: Full proposal: In the online platform, the character limit on the Food systems approach-section has increased from 2000 to 3500 characters and it says "additional information needed". Are we expected to change/elaborate on this part?'' Also, other sections now have the character increased.... Are we, in each of these sections supposed to add extra-info, developed the info we previosly provided?

A: Yes, increasing the character limit opens up the opportunity to include additional or more detailed information. There is no need to use the character limit in case no adaptation is necessary.

Q: Full proposal: In the partner profile, can we add a new **team member**? / Would it be possible to change someone in the staff of a partner? Would it be possible to make a substitution in the staff of one of the partners (specifically, a post-doc for a pre-doc)?

A: Yes. If changes are not possible in the tool but necesssary for your submission, please contact the Call Office.

Q: Full proposal: If we included figures in the pre-proposal for e.g. project summary, can we change these for the full proposal to clarify, even if the project summary text does not change?

A: Yes, you can change the figures. If changes are not possible in the tool but necesssary for your submission, please contact the Call Office.

Q: Full proposal: If we want to change the budget. Is it worth asking at all or is it totally forbidden? And if so, do we need to ask every single regional and national FO?

A: According to the Call Announcement, the following rules must be complied with: Change of budget can be allowed by the relevant FO. The NCP/ RCP of a FO can decide according to its own rules whether a justification is needed. Prior to such a change, the CO must be informed. Applicants must explicitly indicate any changes made compared to the pre-proposal in the online submission platform.

Q: Full proposal: Can we make small changes to what we already entered, such as references, figures without substantially changing the action or budget?

A: Yes, such changes are possible. If you are in doubt or if changes are not possible in the tool but necesssary for your submission, please contact the Call Office.

Q: Full proposal: Does it have to be added to the history of changes?

A: All changes have to be added to the history of changes in a reasonable way (e.g. adding a reference is not a change but an addition)

Q: Full proposal: Do we have to ask for permission every time even for small changes?

A: The sections where changes are allowed are not blocked. The sections where changes are not allowed or only after having the approval from FO/CO are blocked Relevant changes should be noted in the history of changes.

Q: Full proposal: Is it allowed to remove a subcontracting task which was previewed in the first stage and include a full partner which can carry out the task as part of the consortium for the second stage?

A: See call announcement, section 7.2.1: „ Requests for changes in the full-proposal phase" The information given in the pre-proposals is binding and thus, no changes are allowed, unless in case of force majeure or explicitly requested by the IEP, a FO or the CB. However, all changes must comply with the requirements of the call and the respective FOs

Q: Full proposal: Regarding the stakeholder approach: shall we preview specific funding for reaching out to stakeholder organizations which are not included in the project consortium (example outreach to JRC if the project funding is approved)?

A: If these stakeholder organisations are important for your project; important to apply the systems approach/multi stakeholder approach you should calculate a certain amount of resources (time/ money) for these activities. But please note: According to the Call Announcement, the following rules must be complied with: Change of budget can be allowed by the relevant FO. The NCP/ RCP of a FO can decide according to its own rules whether a justification is needed. Prior to such a change, the CO must be informed. Applicants must explicitly indicate any changes made compared to the pre-proposal in the online submission platform.

Q: Full proposal: In the online platform, the problem and context analysis has been pre-filled but as text that can be edited. As the character limit has not changed for this section, are we allowed to make changes to the problem and context analysis? Other pre-filled sections do not allow us to make edits

A: The sections where it is allowed to make changes are not blocked. The problem and context analysis belongs to the impact pathway which we ask for only now in the full-proposal. Therefore, it might be necessary to adapt the problem analysis. In case you plan to make large changes in this section please do not forget to also note them in the history of changes section in the tool.

Q: Full proposal: We were told that the ethical self assesment was not reviewed during this peer review phase. However we are told to add additional infomation, what information excatly is needed?

A: Often there are missing or insufficient parts in the Ethical self-assessment. Please double check. As described in the Call Announcement (section 6.3), the evaluation criteria of this call for proposals include the evaluation of compliance with relevant ethical requirements. Applicants should always describe any relevant ethical aspects in their proposal and especially in the Ethical self-assessment. Any work involving the use of animals or humans should be carried out with the appropriate authorisation, taking into account EU and national ethics requirements. In order to identify any potential ethical issues, applicants are required to complete an ethics self-assessment and provide support documentation referred to in the ethics issues checklist. Please consult the available Horizon Europe programme guidance:

How to complete your ethics self-assessment. If any ethical issues are expected to arise during the proposed project, these must be addressed in the full-proposal.

Q: Full proposal: The allowed maximum number of characters for the Food Systems Approach statement has been increased, but no indications are provided. Any guidelines on what specific additional information is required?

A: Writing the full proposal you may give a more detailed description. How you use it is up to you.

Q: Full proposal: The section on Food Systems Approach is now extended in terms of characters. Can we substitute the text in the whole section or are we allowed only to extend the previous text?

A: Both is allowed. In case of substantial changes please give a short indication in the history of change section.

Q: Full proposal: Is it possible to use some of the budget to compensate stakeholders for e.g., workshop participation?

A: In theory, yes, depending on the national/ regional funders rules. But please note: According to the Call Announcement, the following rules must be complied with: Change of budget can be allowed by the relevant FO. The NCP/ RCP of a FO can decide according to its own rules whether a justification is needed. Prior to such a change, the CO must be informed. Applicants must explicitly indicate any changes made compared to the pre-proposal in the online submission platform.

Evaluation, Ranking & Selection

Q: What is the role of national funders in the decision-making?

A: National funders provide the funding. They have no influence on the evaluation of the proposals. Whether a proposal can be funded depends on its position on the ranking list(s) and the funds still available to the respective funder.

Q: Full proposal: Do you have the rankings from the pre-proposal?

A: Yes, but the ranking list is not publicly available.

Q: Any idea of the expected acceptance rate for this phase?

A: There is no expected acceptance rate, it depends on ranking and available funding

Q: What is the maximum budget allocation for this call?

A: The budget allocated for this call is published in the call announcement.

Q: Will the peer reviewer from the first round also review in the second round?

And in what way are the reviews from the first round taken into account in the second round?

A: The two steps in the FutureFoodS call are separate phases and thus, expert panel composition may vary. In general, experts are advised to take the pre-proposal recommendation given into account (they have access to the 1.step evaluations). Morevoer, the Evaluation office will try to have a good balance of experts assigned (new vs. previously assigned).

Q: Related to the question of the number of projects per topic funded, is this proportionally distributed?

A: There will be two ranking lists per project type (not topic) following the evaluation results. The budget is not allocated proportional to topics, but the Call Board will try to have a good balance of topics to the extent possible.

Q: How many projects per topic are intially planned for funding?

A: We cannot make any predictions on this. Whether a full proposal is selected for funding depends on its ranking and the available funding.

Q: Our national funder has stated already that they can fund max 3 projects on a country level. Would there be a situation that the consortium might be funded, but then the national funder states that they don't anymore have funds left for this project? How would you navigate such a situation.

A: Projects are selected based on the ranking list(s) and the available funds. A selection meeting with all funders involved will be conducted and the proposals will be selected jointly which should mitigate such a situation.

Q: If we submit a full proposal (which complies with formal requirements), what is the likelihood that the project will receive funding?

A: We cannot make any predictions on this. Whether a full proposal is selected for funding depends on its ranking and the available funding. In previous calls the success rate in the second step was ~45%.

Q: One of the evaluation criteria assesses whether the project plan includes the involvement of young researchers to be trained: can you define young researcher?

A: No, there is no concrete definition to follow, but this is meant to encourage involvement of researchers at the earlier stages of their career.

Q: Is the Evaluation National (a National commission for all national submissions) or International (an international commission for all international submissions)?

A: Each eligible proposal will be evaluated by a minimum of three IEP members. They will apply evaluation criteria and score the pre-proposals and full-proposals as described in section 8.2 (of the Call Announcement), respectively. The IEP consists of **international** experts in the fields covered in the topics of the co-funded call.

Q: How many projects will be selected? What is the success rate, which percentage of submitted proposals will be selected in pre- and full proposal step?

A: The number of projects to be selected is not pre-determined and depending on a variety of factors, such as the available funding, the funding the projects are requesting, and the number of projects. Therefore one cannot seriously predict the number of proposals to be funded or the success rate.

Q: Will the projects be awarded following a portfolio approach to make sure a number of projects is selected for each of the three call topics? Or will they be selected following one ranking list, no matter to which of the three topics they applied?

A: There will be two separate ranking lists for the two projects types (see section 3), but there will be no separate ranking lists for the three topics.

Q: Will different Evaluation criteria be applied between preproposal and Full proposal?

A: The standard Horizon Europe criteria are applied. Eligible pre-proposals will be evaluated against the two equally weighted evaluation criteria excellence and impact, as described in section 8.2 of the Call Announcement. The evaluation procedure will be conducted as described in section 8. Eligible full proposals will be evaluated against the following three equally weighted evaluation criteria excellence, impact and quality and efficiency of the implementation, as described in section 8.2. The procedure will be conducted as described in section 8.

Q: What is the weight of the different sections of the proposals during the first stage evaluation?

A: The International Expert Panel will evaluate the proposals as a whole. There are no specific weightings for sections.

Q: Are the suggested R&I aspects part of the evaluation rubric? and which topics are for "research" vs "innovation"

A: Evaluation criteria and sub-criteria can be found in table 5 of the call announcement. Projects under all 3 topics can be either Exploratory Research Projects or Accelerating Innovation Projects. Please check which funding organisations support which topics and/or project types.

Q: Both project types will be evaluated separately. Will the composition of the evaluation committee also be different?

A: The composition will vary in order to cover the requirements of the two project types to the extent possible.

Q: If the project follows in between the two project types, Research and Innovation, how will this be assessed?

A: You will have to decide for one of the two project types.

Q: How is the composition of the consortium rated?

A: In general there are two levels: 1) the eligibility level: the general eligibility criteria (chapter 6.2.1 General eligibility criteria) contain information on how to compose a balanced consortium and by this indicate how the consortiums´ composition will be rated (number and work balance of the partners of a consortium) 2) the expert evaluation: the evaluation criteria (Table 5, Call Announcement) provide information on how the composition of the consortium will be rated.

Q: There is no question on the submission platform asking about gender, how then can you evaluate the gender diversity of the consortium?

A: The excellence evaluation criteria states: "Soundness of the proposed overall methodology, including the integration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content as well as open science practices/ including the underlying concepts, models, assumptions, inter-disciplinary approaches, appropriate consideration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content, and the quality of open science practices, including sharing and management of research outputs and engagement of citizens, civil society and end-users where appropriate." Evaluators will get information about the gender dimension by reading the information that each proposal provides, e.g. in the team compositions but mainly in the descriptive parts.

Q: If we are resubmitting a proposal is it important to address all feedback received from evaluation committee for our previous submission?

A: There is no obligation to do so. However, if you received advice from the evaluators, you should take it seriously and carefully consider whether or not to incorporate it into the new proposal.

Q: In the last call we were rejected mostly because of the impact plan. We had the impact plan in the pre-proposal but still evaluated not sufficient. Any suggestion on what is expected there?

A: We cannot answer this specific question. In general, you can find information on the impact plan in Annex A. There you also find links towards online workshops about working with an Impact Plan. Otherwise, we can only refer to the feedback you have received from us.

Project Types & TRL

Q: For partners in the project type “Accelerating Innovation”, is it a must to have an academic research partner? Or is it possible to apply with several NGOs specialised in food systems

A: There is no general rule that mandates that a project needs to have an academic research partner. But, some of the funders may have different national rules. Please carefully consult the national/regional regulations for this.

Q: You mentioned that the different types of projects have different budgets. This difference is strategically important when seeking funding, but not clear/specified in the call document. Do we need to contact our respective funders for this information?

A: The different project types do not have different budget as such. You can contact your national funding organisation for this question.

Q: To what extent can research activities also be included as part of an ‘Accelerating Innovation’ project?

A: In general, the “Accelerating Innovation” projects are also R&I projects, and thus research should play an important role. For technology driven project the TRL of 6-8 might give some guidance. Please consult section 3 of the Call Announcement.

Q: You want rather high TLR....to make Impact; on the other side you want food system change and system approach....this is contradicting for me.

Q: There is no contradiction between TRL levels and systems approach. Considering a systems approach does not mean that only basic research on the food system itself is allowed. It means that all proposals, no matter project type or TRL level, should consider the implications of their proposal for the food systems and the interconnection with food systems.

Q: I would like to understand in what cases the TRL scales would not be applicable / not be taken into account into the project evaluation?

A: In cases where the project is not concerned with research on technology but rather societal or policy questions for example. For those categorization in TRL might not be applicable.

Work Plan, Timeline & Implementation

Q: Applicants need to be careful in making sure the person months indicated in the WP descriptions match what it says in the partner profiles?

A: Yes, otherwise this would be inconsistent.

Q: Can you please specify where one finds the "Work Packages" section?

A: You find it under ”work plan” in the full-proposal.

Q: I do not have this section on Work Packages to start with, only a section called "Work Plan" with narrative sections, but no tasks, deliverables, milestones that you have just shown.

A: The work plan section is an interactive section. It adapts to what you fill in. The work packages and tasks and milestones appear as soon as you start adding work packages with the ”+” sign in the ”work plan” section. Please contact the call office in case of any difficulties or have a look at the webinar slides and recording.

Q: Are the amount of FTE and the task duration linked for the WP's? It may be that for some WP's we require on average 0.5 FTE over a longer period. Is this an issue in the system or will this work without problems

A: You only need to fill in the PM per Task and Partner. There is no technical link in the system between your entered PM and the work packgae duration.

Q: Do all partners in a consortium have to start their projects at the same point in time?

A: This would be ideal, but it is often not possible due to adminsitrative issues (different contract negotiation duration). However, a common timeframe should be found and agreed upon. Furthermore, the funders involved should be asked whether any specific deadlines must be met.

Q: Can we postpone the start date?

A: The start date is indicative when preparing the proposal, but should be realistic. Some funders have rules regarding the start of the project. Please clarify this at national/regional level. If a change of the start date is OK, please also enter this change in the „Description of changes from pre- to full-proposal“ in the tool.

Q: Regarding the Research Plan (Work Plan) . The packages are automatically transferred into a Gantt chart. However, there is no possibility to enter a specific duration for each work-package. Should we define the timeline in the objectives or the description?

A: You can define the duration of each task in a work package. The Work Plan modul than takes the first start month of a task and the last end month of a task as the duration of the Workpackage.

Submission Tool & User Accounts

Q: Who enters the data in the submission portal: can all beneficiaries edit or the coordinator only?

A: The coordinator has to fill in most of the sections. Partners have to fill in the partner section and have to support the coordinator – providing the data she/ he needs to have in order to fill in the different sections – like the finance tables.

Q: Will there be a platform available for partner search?

A: Yes, the partner platform is open: https://futurefoods.ptj.de/call3/partnering

Q: Is there a template for what needs to be included in the Letter of Commitment? and is this needed at the Pre-proposal stage?

A: Annex E is the Letter of Commitment template. It is available in the download section. LOC is only needed at full proposal step.

Q: The partnering tool is only available after logging in as a partner or coordinator - correct? How does one do that if the partner/coordinator roles are dependent on the funder?

A: No, the partnering tool is available to everyone and accessible to find a consortium before logging in at all.

Q: Can we transfer data from previous application to the new one?

A: No

Q: If I we want to register as a partner but not as a coordinator is the same log in and follow the coordinator registration?

A: A Partner will be invited by the Coordinator. No need to register yourself; only the coordinator registers. The Partner can login, after invitation, following "Partner Login"

Q: Where can we find the list of funders?

A: The list of funders can be found in the Call Announcement, it is Table 4 (Overview of participating FOs and funding opportunities).

Proposal Content & Formal Requirements

Q: Can we include 5 publications from our whole team (not only the coordinator)?

A: Yes, you are free to decide which publications you want to include / which ones are most relevant to the project.

Q: Referring to the pre-proposal template's CV of Coordinator, in which you need to list up to 5 publications by main researcher (?) If the project type is accelerating innovation, and the approach is very co-creative by nature, how significant role does the scientific background of one researcher play?

A: The publications in the partner profile do not have to be from the principle investigator alone, but can stem from the team involved. The CV should demonstrate the applicant's qualifications and experience. This should enable the evaluator to assess the applicant's skills and competencies. Evaluation criteria in the pre-proposal phase are excellence and impact. How exactly these are demonstrated is up to the applicants. There is no general rule that mandates that a project needs to have an academic research partner. But - some of the funders may have different national rules. Please carefully consult the national/regional regulations for this.

Q: Are figures included in the 8000 characters of project description?

A: Figures are included using the figure provided as a file, so the content of the figure does not count. However, one need to insert the figure through a short code in the text, this is counted towards the characters. But this is only a few short characters.

Q: Can we provide a CV for each team member?

A: No, just one CV per Partner/Coordinator

Q: Is there a standard budget table template similar to the table in the portal?

A: There is a pre-proposal template available which includes an example for a financial table.

Q: How does the additional literature work. Should we treat these as end notes that correspond to the text in the project description? Or can they be simply a list of the literature we consulted in developing the project description?

A: Both is possible, it is a non-mandatory field, you can use it as you see fit.

Q: Under project coordinator/partner info - you ask us to describe our tasks in the project in 2000 characters. Are these the tasks of the whole TEAM or the tasks of the PI ?

A: Please describe the task of your Team, not only the PI.

Reporting, Dissemination, Exploitation & Other

Q: For the DEC, the annex does not focus on the exploitation but mostly only dissemination and communication. Should we also elaborate on exploitation?

A: Yes, please also elaborate on exploitation.

Q: Do the funding organisations expect one or several deliverables per WP, as in Horizon Europe funded projects?

A: There are no specific rules for this.

Q: Or would it be sufficient to provide annual (formal) reports of the work conducted in the reporting period?

A: Please read section 9.4. of the Call Announcement for further information. Requirements concerning the reporting at **national/regional** level depend on the national/regional rules.

Q: Would it be sufficient to promise scientific publications of the results, instead of deliverables?

A: No. Deliverables are due during the project lifetime and can and should include more than only scientific publications. They help assess the projects progress and success

Q: Or would it be sufficient to promise fact sheets, blogs, posts on social media as means of dissemination of results?

A: Fact sheets, blogs and posts on social media are examples of means of dissemination and possible deliverables. However, in the full proposal a comprehensive Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication Plan is expected (Annex G).

Q: DEC plan - is this for stakeholders within the project (e.g. farmers we are working with) or outside the project? Or both?

A: Please read Annex G, it explains in detail what is expected in the DEC Plan

Q: Is the exact start date of the project decided by the consortium?

A: Yes, it also depends on the duration of national/regional contract negotiations. A joint project start of all partners within the timeframe given in the Call Announcement is the aim