

General Information	
Preliminary title of the European Partnerships	EIT Food
Short description of the partnership	It aims at catalysing the transformation of the food system by integrating education, innovation, business creation and consumer engagement activities, to foster the production <u>and consumption</u> of safe and healthy food, and promoting sustainable practices in agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries.
Services directly involved	DG EAC, European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)
Context and problem definition <i>[this section is new compared to the previous template]</i>	<p>The global food system faces significant challenges. 3.5 billion people suffer from hunger and micronutrient deficiencies while unhealthy lifestyles and worldwide numbers of overweight (~2 billion) and obese (>500 million) people are still growing. Obesity has been estimated to cost the EU € 60 billion annually through healthcare costs and lost productivity.</p> <p>The permanent availability of food has reduced its perception as a highly valued and critically important product, as almost one-third of total food production is being wasted. In the EU, around 88 million tonnes of food waste are generated annually with associated costs estimated at € 43 billion (FUSIONS, 2016). However, global population growth and changes in dietary patterns require an increase in overall food production by more than 60% to feed 10 billion people by 2050. The Council conclusions adopted on 26 November 2018 have stressed the importance of tackling food and nutrition security challenges.</p> <p>Food production puts significant pressure on the environment. It is by far the largest user of global freshwater supplies, with agriculture being responsible for 70 % of consumption. It also accounts for 60 % of global terrestrial biodiversity loss. Including primary production, the food sector accounts for more than 25 % of global greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>The ability of the European agri-food sector to address these challenges is hampered by a number of obstacles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low consumer trust: highly publicised food contamination and authenticity scares have led to consumer concerns over the complexity of the global food system, undermining confidence in the transparency, safety and integrity of the food value chain. • Fragmentation and limited innovation capacity: the European food sector is characterised by a wide range of company sizes, with 99.1% SMEs delivering 50% of the turnover of the whole sector, with innovation lagging behind other sectors. The lack of a vivid start-up culture within the food sector, reflected by a low 1.4% share of all EU start-ups (compared to 19.1% in IT/software development; 6.5% in bio, nano and medical technology; 4.0% in green technology), calls for a new mind-set that fosters an entrepreneurial spirit and cross-sector collaboration. • Slow adoption of emerging technologies: The food sector has been slow to adopt new technologies following the digital revolution that could re-connect people with the food they consume and make them active partners in the food system. • Lack of skills: A shortage of scientific, entrepreneurial and managerial skills, needed to solve complex multidisciplinary challenges, requiring a food-system approach, poses a major barrier to innovation.
Objectives and expected impacts	<p>EIT Food six Strategic Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Overcome low consumer trust in food, to involve citizens in the transition towards a smart and sustainable food system. 2) Create consumer valued food for healthier nutrition, enabling individuals to make informed and affordable personal nutrition choices. 3) Build a consumer-centric connected food system to develop a digital

	<p>food supply network with consumers and industry as equal partners.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4) Enhance sustainability through resource stewardship to transform the traditional ‘produce-use-dispose’ model into a circular bio-economy. 5) Educate to engage, innovate and advance, providing ‘food system’ skills for students, entrepreneurs and professionals through advanced training programmes. 6) Catalyse food entrepreneurship and innovation, fostering innovation at all stages of business creation. <p>Expected Scientific impact - Strengthening human capital in R&I:</p> <p>To strengthen the workforce in Europe’s food system, EIT Food identified three different groups of individuals that will be addressed by modern, non-traditional education systems: degree-seeking students; professionals with different backgrounds; farmers. This will create a new human resource pool with individuals trained in a range of relevant skills. It will overcome the compartmentalisation of knowledge and skills in specific areas of the food system and will also increase skills and competences of farmers in Europe and globally to make them partners in joint developments along the supply chain. In addition, EIT Food will develop education tools and opportunities for the broad public, to help citizens understand the food supply chain and be involved in its transformation.</p> <p>Expected Societal impact:</p> <p>EIT Food innovations will contribute to achieving a reduction in both the prevalence and diet-related risk of developing metabolic syndrome in Europe. At the same time, they will help reduce food losses and food waste and build a more circular economy, contributing to decreasing freshwater withdrawals as well as the greenhouse gas emissions of the food system by 2030. The technology solutions developed by EIT Food and its partners will increase the connectivity and transparency of the food system, to provide added value for consumers, farmers and the industry at the same time.</p> <p>Expected Economic impact:</p> <p>EIT Food’s activities will significantly increase the number of successful start-ups, as well as enabling the accelerated growth of SMEs in the food sector in Europe. EIT Food will boost the competitiveness of the EU food sector and aims to ensure that Europe remains the major exporter of food and drink in world trade. EIT Food will proactively support entrepreneurs as well as SMEs in transforming their ideas into business along the entire start-up cycle and in clearly defining their market opportunities. This will ultimately decrease the failure rate and catalyse the creation and growth of start-ups and SMEs through KIC activities in the food sector.</p>
<p>Necessity test: rationale for a European Partnership</p>	<p>The rationale for a European partnership in this area includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The magnitude and the scale of the food challenges, affecting a sector which is highly fragmented, due to the high-number of SMEs and family farms present in the EU, but also highly interconnected, through complex supply chains which span national borders. • The complexity of the challenges which involve all stages in the food chain demands a multi-stakeholder approach. • The need to overcome the issue of low consumer trust in the food system. This is essential in order to ensure consumers’ acceptance of and support for innovation in the agri-food sector, across the EU and its internal market, where issues such as food safety, novel foods and food labelling are already tackled. • The need to complement innovation activities with education and business creation activities, achieving a seamless integration of the knowledge triangle in the agri-food sector. • The need to ensure that R&I generated and supported by Horizon Europe can reach the market and be scaled-up, by linking them with a

	strong business creation programme, connected with other EU instruments such as the EIC and InvestEU.
Relevant for the following parts of Horizon Europe	<p>Pillar II 'Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness'</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Cluster Health <input type="checkbox"/> Cluster Culture, creativity and inclusive society <input type="checkbox"/> Cluster Civil Security for Society <input type="checkbox"/> Cluster Digital, Industry and Space <input type="checkbox"/> Cluster Climate, Energy and Mobility <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cluster Food, Bioeconomy Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-cluster <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pillar III 'Innovative Europe'
Currently identified links with other partnership candidates / Union programmes	<p>EIT Food synergies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going dialogue with several Commission DGs working on food, to increase synergies between EIT Food's activities and EU policies • Active contacts with art. 185 partnership PRIMA and art. 187 BBI JU to identify potential cooperation opportunities in the fields of agriculture and the broader bioeconomy. • European Partnerships on Circular bio-based Europe, Safe and Sustainable Food System for People, Planet & Climate, A climate neutral, sustainable and productive Blue Economy, Environmental Observations for a sustainable EU agriculture, Accelerating farming systems transition: agro-ecology living labs and research infrastructures. • Close collaboration with other KICs on specific projects related to food, health and climate change in the field of innovation, education and business creation. • EIT Food is also exploring the set-up of a structured collaboration with the EIC and InvestEU, to develop synergies to the benefit of innovators and startups that require financial support and investment, as well as business incubation and acceleration services.
Does the proposed partnership build on currently active ones?	EIT Food is the continuation of the EIT-KIC partnership of the same name currently implemented through the EIT. It was established in 2017, following a call for proposal in 2016 and its activities can be supported by the EIT for a period from 7 to 15 years.
Expected type and composition of partners	<p>- EIT Food is composed of more than 50 leading organisations from businesses, universities, research centres and institutes across 13 countries in Europe and from the entire food value chain. The KIC has its headquarters in Leuven and is organised around 5 co-location centres (CLCs) where education, research and industry partners are brought together and interact. Co-location centres are located in the UK, Belgium, Spain, Germany and Poland. In addition, EIT Food has established a network of Hubs located in 13 countries: Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey.</p> <p>- Partners come from across the EU and cover all stages of the food chain, from primary production, to distribution, through food processing and manufacturing. To ensure that the partnership covers the necessary competence areas, has a balance of industry and non-industry partners, and has strong geographical balance, the KIC follows three core principles when admitting new partners:</p> <p>- Excellence and complementarity: EIT Food strives to evolve its partnership with excellent and complementary new partners. Prospects</p>

	<p>should be able to complement and/or extend existing EIT Food competences and fully support and contribute to EIT Food objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource commitment: candidate partners are required to demonstrate their ambition to allocate their financial resources to EIT Food's objectives. - Regional coverage: EIT Food will further develop its geographic footprint to be an encompassing pan-European organisation representing and leveraging the diversity of Europe. <p>Potential new partners may submit an open application to join the KIC, or may be identified and approached by EIT Food to fulfil the needs of the partnership. A clear and transparent application and approval mechanism is in place.</p>
Contributions and commitments expected from partners	In addition to the EIT grant, the KIC budget includes additional revenue from various sources, e.g. membership fees, ROI from shares in companies, business support services, etc. Partners also provide in-kind contributions to co-fund the activities.
Currently envisaged implementation mode(s).	<input type="checkbox"/> Co-programmed European Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Co-funded European Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Institutionalised European Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Article 185 <input type="checkbox"/> Article 187 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EIT-KIC
Justification of the implementation mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, EIT Food is driven by a strong integration of Knowledge Triangle activities, coupled with a consumer-centred approach. Based on a multiannual strategy and Business Plans, EIT Food runs an integrated portfolio of activities in the field of education, innovation, support to entrepreneurship and consumer engagement, in order to facilitate the transition from student to entrepreneur, from innovative idea to new product or service, bridging the gap between the lab and the final consumer. • Each business plan covers a period of one year; it is assessed by external experts, scrutinised and approved by the EIT GB. It is a mean to flexibly address the key issues a KIC tackles. • Place-based approach: i.e. integration of a KIC (through its CLCs) in local innovation ecosystems to strengthen the ties between innovation actors. • As a KIC, EIT Food is meant to be financially sustainable and keep operating after the end of the support of the EIT. • Target group: EIT Food involves the actors of the Knowledge Triangle. However, it also aims to involve other actors that can contribute to its objectives, i.e. consumers, financial actors, local governments, civil society organizations. Entities managing and/or funding research and innovation programmes can also be involved in order to ensure synergies with initiative at national/local level. • EIT Food benefits from the EIT support and guidance on strategic and operational matters, including synergies with other EU initiatives. It also benefits from the interactions and synergies with the other KICs through dedicated cross-KIC activities.
Proposed starting year	The partnership was established in 2017. It is proposed to continue funding this KIC in the course of Horizon Europe.