



## CALL FOR PROPOSALS AND GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

**Call reference:** EUBA-EFSA-2023-ENREL-01

**Call title:** Selection of hosting sites and fellows for EFSA's European Food Risk Assessment Fellowship (EU-FORA) Programme

Restricted to **the list of competent organisations** established by the Authority's Management Board in application of article 2 the Commission Regulation (EC) No 2230/2004 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 with regard to the network of organisations operating in the fields within the Authority's remit.

**Brief description of the call objectives:** Selection of consortia of article 36 organisations, one acting as fellow sending organisation and the other acting as hosting site, offering a work programme to the fellow for a 12-month training.



## INDICATIVE PROCEDURE TIMETABLE

Milestone	Date <sup>1</sup>	Comments
<b>Launch date</b>	07/11/2023	Date of call publication on EFSA's website and Funding and Tenders portal.
<b>Deadline for applicants to raise clarification questions to EFSA</b>	06/03/2024	If, after having read this Call for proposals and guide for applicants, you have any questions, you may address them to <a href="mailto:EFSAProcurement@efsa.europa.eu">EFSAProcurement@efsa.europa.eu</a> by indicating the Call reference.
<b>Deadline for EFSA to reply to clarification questions</b>	08/03/2024	Replies will be provided on EFSA's webpage where this Call is published and which the applicants are requested to consult regularly.
<b>Deadline for submission of proposals</b>	14/03/2024 At 17:00 (CET)	Applicants can submit proposals by following the instructions in section 3.1 of this call for proposals. All applications must be submitted through the EU Funding and Tenders portal, following the instructions provided. <b>Hard copy paper applications will not be accepted.</b>
<b>Notification of the evaluation results</b>	MAY 2024	Estimated <i>Attention: outcome of the present call will be communicated to all applicants to the e-mail address indicated in their proposal. Accordingly, applicants who have submitted proposals under the present call are strongly invited to check regularly the inbox in question.</i>
<b>Grant agreement(s) signature</b>	JUNE 2024	Estimated

<sup>1</sup> All times are in the time zone of the country of the EFSA.



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**ANNEXES**

Annex 1: Draft grant agreement

Documents to be submitted with proposals to be downloaded from the EU Funding and Tender portal Submission Service, see section 2 'Selecting proposal':

Annex 2: Administrative Declaration

Annex 3: Declaration on honour on exclusion criteria

Annex 4: Declaration on honour on selection criteria

Annex 5: Selection criteria template (all requirements including CVs)

Annex 6: Award criteria template



## 1. GRANT OPPORTUNITY AND CONDITIONS<sup>2</sup>

### 1.1 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Article 36 (1) of the Regulation (EC) 178/2002<sup>3</sup> (hereinafter: "EFSA Founding Regulation") of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, stipulates that the Authority shall promote the European networking of organisations operating in the fields within the Authority's mission. The aim of such networking is, in particular, to facilitate a scientific cooperation framework by the coordination of activities, the exchange of information, the development and implementation of joint projects<sup>4</sup>, the exchange of expertise and best practices in the fields within the Authority's mission. The list of competent organisations designated by the Member States, which may assist EFSA with its mission, is approved and regularly updated by EFSA's Management Board. The full list of Article 36 organisations can be found [here](#).

EFSA's founding regulation was amended by Regulation (EU) 2019/1381 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on the transparency and sustainability of the EU risk assessment in the food chain.

The Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004 of 23 December 2004 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) 178/2002 with regard to the network of organisations operating in the fields within the EFSA's mission specifies in Article 4 that tasks may be entrusted by the Authority to organisations on the list of competent organisations.

**The present call specifically focuses on the below tasks defined in Article 4(3):**

1. disseminating best practices and improving methods of collecting and analysing scientific and technical data, particularly for the purposes of facilitating comparability and producing a Community-level summary;
2. preparing the harmonisation of risk assessment methods.

Article 5(2) of the Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004<sup>5</sup> of 23 December 2004 specifies that the financial support to the networking organisations shall take the form of subsidies (grants) awarded in accordance with the EFSA's financial regulation and implementing rules.

The present Call for proposals and guide for applicants (hereinafter referred to as "the Call") is procedurally governed by Title VIII of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union.

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<sup>2</sup> The applicant is reminded that this Call and guide for applicants contains a selection of the most important conditions for the grant implementation. For the full set of conditions, the applicant is invited to consult the draft grant agreement in Annex 1 of this Call.

<sup>3</sup> Regulation (EC) 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, as amended by Regulation (EU) 2019/1381 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on the transparency and sustainability of the EU risk assessment in the food chain.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2002:031:0001:0024:EN:PDF>

<sup>4</sup> Project is frequently referred to in this Call as "action", in line with EU Financial Regulation terminology.

<sup>5</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:379:0064:0067:EN:PDF>



This call is based on EFSA Founding regulation and EFSA's 2023 Draft Work Programme for grants and operational procurements as presented in Annex XII of the Programming Document 2023–2025, available on the EFSA's website<sup>6</sup>.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

### BACKGROUND

In 2016, in close cooperation with the Advisory Forum and the EFSA Focal Points, EFSA established the European Food Risk Assessment Fellowship (EU-FORA) Programme to help achieve one of EFSA's strategic objectives: Strengthening the food risk assessment capacity and knowledge community across Europe.

The legal framework for the programme is Article 23(b) (Tasks) of EFSA's Founding Regulation: "To promote and coordinate the development of uniform risk assessment methodologies in the fields falling within its mission".

Moreover, EFSA's Strategy 2027 Strategic Objective No. 2 states that EFSA should ensure preparedness for future risk analysis needs. The expected outcome under Strategic Objective No. 2 is to achieve increased risk analysis capabilities (knowledge, expertise, methodologies, and data) to maintain relevance for the future.

The EU-FORA programme will establish a regular 12-month learning-by-doing fellowship, the objectives of which are to:

- attract and motivate mid-career professionals to become risk assessors, thus increasing the pool of experts available in Europe;
- intensify exchange and cooperation among national food safety agencies and EFSA, hence stimulating the involvement of MS in regulatory risk assessment work;
- contribute to harmonising and further developing food safety risk assessment practices and methodologies across Europe, with the aim of building a common EU culture for risk assessment;

The scientists that will participate in the programme as fellows, supervisors, tutors, programme coordinators and others will constitute a pool of experts, available to support the risk assessment activities of EFSA and the MS. The programme will contribute to strengthening the overall capacity in regulatory food safety risk assessment in Europe allowing more countries to support such EU activities.

Furthermore, the exchange of staff (fellows) through the programme and the interaction between supervisors, tutors, coordinators and others from different EU countries and different EU institutions, will greatly contribute to the harmonisation of food safety risk assessment methodologies in Europe and the subsequent building of a common EU risk assessment culture.

The first 12-month cycle of fellowships started in September 2017 and since then, 87 fellows have already graduated, constituting the so-called EU-FORA Alumni.

Each 12-month fellowship is complemented and completed by a common training programme of seven weeks in total, comprising one three-week induction training module and four separate one-week training modules (see 1.2.8 The training programme to complement the 'learning by doing' fellowship for more information).

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-01/amp2325.pdf>



The focus of the EU-FORA fellowship programme will be targeted to activities falling within EFSA's remit, so as to attract professionals from relevant fields such as: agriculture, biochemistry, bioinformatics, biology, biometrics, biotechnology, chemistry, dietary exposure, environmental sciences, epidemiology, food science, food technology, genetics, health and food safety, human medicine, life sciences, mathematics, microbiology, molecular biology, natural sciences, nutrition, pharmacy, public health, statistics, toxicology, veterinary medicine or related areas.

Funding, organising, steering and monitoring the EU-FORA fellowship programme is the responsibility of EFSA.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

The specific objectives of this call are to:

- (1) **select hosting sites** for the training of one or more fellows, for a period of 12 months; and
- (2) **select fellows** as proposed by their institutions of origin.

Specifically, the call seeks to identify **consortia of hosting sites and fellow sending organisations**, both of which must be competent organisations<sup>7</sup> under Art. 36 of the EFSA Founding Regulation. The sending organisation will propose a fellow to be trained under a work programme offered by the other consortium partner, who will act as hosting site and will be responsible for the training of the fellow. Hosting sites are expected to have a strong capacity and broad experience in one or more activities relevant to food safety risk assessment.

In order to achieve the objectives of the Call, the two eligible organisations (competent organisations under Art. 36 of the EFSA founding regulation) must be from **two different** EU countries, Norway or Iceland.

The detailed selection and award criteria to be used to select the fellow hosting sites and the fellows are listed in section 2.4 & 2.5 of this call for proposals.

### 1.2.1 Obligations and benefits of becoming a fellow hosting site

#### ***Obligations:***

The fellow hosting site is responsible for the design of the work programme, its implementation and the overall training of the fellow.

The fellow hosting sites need to appoint a supervisor for each fellow<sup>8</sup> (see below for more details) and propose the area and range of activities/work programme the fellow(s) will be involved in during the 12-month assignment. The details of this work programme, including the learning objectives, will be finalized in agreement between the assigned fellow and the supervisor at the start of the fellowship period.

During the fellow's stay at the hosting site indicated in the proposal (set with a minimum of 3 months, see below), the fellow hosting site coordinates the activities of the fellow placed in its premises. All activities of the fellow must comply with host country administrative labour law, regulations and codes of conduct. It is important to note that EFSA should not be responsible for any breach of national legislation of the fellow hosting site. **EFSA will not be directly liable to the fellows for any payments or reimbursement due to the fellow at the hosting site.** Should EFSA incur in any costs for defending any legal action resulting from the fellowship within the hosting site country, it reserves the right to seek legal compensation from the fellow hosting site.

<sup>7</sup> <https://efsa.my.site.com/competentorganisations/s/>

<sup>8</sup> The applicant does not have to propose individual named supervisors with their proposal at this stage.



The fellow's stay at the hosting site is set with **a minimum of three (3) months**<sup>9</sup>. EFSA does not prescribe the maximum duration of the stay of the fellow at the hosting site, as long as the minimum duration is three (3) months. However, it is to be noted that **EFSA will not increase the grant amount** in any case and that the length of the stay (if longer than the minimum required) will not be considered an award criterion.

During their placement at the hosting site, the fellow should be entitled to leave days, justified absences and working hours equivalent to those of other individuals working at the hosting organisation. However, leaves are to be avoided during the period the fellow will attend the on-site placement at the hosting site and must be agreed in advance between the employer of the fellow and the hosting site. **Leaves must not be taken during the induction training and four one-week training sessions.**

Depending on the nature of the work programme, hosting sites may ask fellows to sign a confidentiality agreement covering the duration of the work programme. This will be dependent upon the work to be carried out by the fellow at the hosting site and is to be decided between the sending organisation and the fellow hosting site.

The fellow hosting site will sign a grant agreement with EFSA as the leading partner in the consortium.

If a fellow hosting site successfully applies for and is granted more than one fellow, the fellow hosting site will receive one lump sum grant per confirmed fellow and will sign one grant agreement for each fellow. Further information on the evaluation of applications and ranking, in particular in situations where one fellow hosting site applies to host more than one fellow, is included in section 2.5.

### **Benefits:**

As a fellow hosting site, the hosting organisation will have the opportunity to (1) profit from the skills and knowledge a fellow will bring from their institution of origin; (2) understand the issues and perspectives of colleagues in other countries; (3) strengthen bilateral co-operations with other institutions. Moreover, during the 12-month fellowship, the fellow will become part of the scientific workforce of the fellow hosting site, contributing to their tasks and activities.

The fellow hosting site will also benefit from the participation of the appointed supervisor(s) to the EU-FORA Community and the publication of the technical summary report of the work performed by the fellow under the proposed work programme in a special issue of the EFSA journal.

Additionally, all the material produced by the training contractor's team<sup>10</sup> for the modular training throughout the year may be used also for teaching purposes in the fellow hosting sites.

## **1.2.2 Obligations and benefits of the fellow hosting site supervisor**

### **Obligations:**

The fellow hosting site will assign a supervisor to each fellow hosted.<sup>11</sup> The supervisor is expected to:

- Define the activity portfolio/work programme for the fellow;

<sup>9</sup> The stay at the hosting site can be split into several shorter periods with no limitation as long as the total length of the stay remains within the stated range (minimum of 3 months, no maximum prescribed). However, splitting the placement in shorter periods should not jeopardise its ultimate objective of enhancing networking and supporting learning by doing.

<sup>10</sup> Under call for tenders OC/EFSA/AFSCO/2016/02 "Developing, organizing and delivering of training activities under the EFSA European Food Risk Assessment Fellowship Programme", a contractor was selected to design training materials and deliver training. Those training materials are the property of EFSA and will be made available to the fellow hosting sites and fellow sending institutions upon request, including any subsequent updates.

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 8.





- Be the fellow's closest supervisor/mentor during the 12-month fellowship and therefore, they are expected to create an environment and conditions so that the learning objectives can be achieved by the fellow during the 12-month fellowship.
- Supervise the implementation of the "learning by doing" assignment, regularly liaise with EFSA, and ensure smooth integration of the fellow;

At least 8 hours per week will have to be invested in the supervising and mentoring of each fellow, of which at least 2 hours should be carried out by the appointed supervisor.

Supervisors are nominated by the fellow hosting site, and it should be noted that there will not be a separate "call" for supervisors.

### ***Benefits:***

The supervisor will have the opportunity to work closely with EFSA and will become part of the EU-FORA Community. They may also appreciate getting to know colleagues from across Europe, build a common forum with other hosting site supervisors to exchange experience and best practice as well as supporting and promoting promising talents in the food risk assessment community.

### **1.2.3 Obligations and benefits of becoming a fellow sending organisation**

#### ***Obligations:***

The sending organisation shall identify an eligible fellow according to the criteria listed in section 2.4, and in agreement with the hosting organisation with which they will co-submit the application. Sending organisations are encouraged to identify in the proposal an alternate fellow as potential replacement in case of drop-out of the programme by the originally proposed fellow.

The proposed fellow(s) (and alternate(s), if applicable) to be trained must not have been a fellow in past editions of the EU-FORA Programme.

The fellow's employer must continue to pay their salary, to maintain their administrative status throughout the period of fellowship, and to inform EFSA of any change in the fellow's status in this regard. The fellow should also continue to be entitled to leave days, justified absences and working hours equivalent to those of other individuals working at the fellow sending organisation.

However, leaves are to be avoided in particular during the period the fellow will attend the on-site placement at the hosting site and must be agreed in advance between the employer of the fellow and the hosting site. **Leaves must not be taken during the induction training and four one-week training sessions.**

The fellow's employer must also pay all travel and accommodation expenses related to their physical presence at the hosting site and participation in the work programme<sup>12</sup>. The sending organisation shall ensure that the appointed fellow be released from their regular duties in order to perform the work programme, including participation in the common scheduled training activities where the fellow is obliged to take part, i.e. the induction training and the four specific one-week training modules spread throughout the 12-month fellowship period. The fellow sending organisation will ensure that any activity performed by the fellow will not prevent them from performing the work programme and following the mandatory trainings.

Travel and accommodation expenses related to attendance at the induction training and the one-week training modules will be covered by the training provider through a contract signed with EFSA.

<sup>12</sup> In line with the travel and accommodation reimbursement rules of the sending organisation.



During the fellow's stay at the hosting site (see further details above), all activities of the fellow must comply with host country administrative labour law, regulations and codes of conduct. It is important to note that EFSA should not be responsible for any breach of national legislation of the fellow hosting site. **EFSA will not be directly liable to the fellows for any payments or reimbursement due to the fellow at the hosting site.** Should EFSA incur in any costs for defending any legal action resulting from the fellowship within the hosting site country, it reserves the right to seek legal compensation either from the fellow sending organisation and/or the fellow hosting site.

**Benefits:**

The organisation of origin of the fellow will benefit from (1) the knowledge and experience in different aspects of food safety risk assessment that the fellow will acquire and bring back after the completion of the programme; (2) the direct contacts established with the fellow hosting site; (3) the publication of a technical summary report of the scientific work performed under the Programme in a special issue of the EFSA journal; and (4) the use of the EU-FORA Alumni network of which the fellow becomes a member.

Additionally, all the material produced by the training contractor's team<sup>13</sup> for the modular training throughout the year may be used also for teaching purposes in the fellow sending institution.

**1.2.4 Obligations and benefits of becoming a fellow****Obligations:**

Fellows shall continue to be paid by their employer (sending institution) during the totality of the fellowship. Attendance to EU-FORA induction training and training modules is mandatory, and both hosting site and institution of origin shall facilitate this.

Leaves are to be avoided in particular during the period the fellow will attend the on-site placement at the hosting site and must be agreed in advance between the employer of the fellow and the hosting site. **Leaves must not be taken during the induction training and four one-week training sessions.**

The fellow must comply with any legal requirements, regulations or codes of conduct which are required of the regular staff of the fellow hosting site during the time they are placed there. It is important to note, however, that the fellow is not an 'employee' of the hosting site but remains an employee of the organisation of origin.

Selected fellows may also be asked to complete a declaration of interest or sign a confidentiality agreement by the hosting organisation during the time of placement. This will be dependent upon the work to be carried out by the fellow at the hosting site and is to be decided by the fellow hosting site.

**Benefits:**

With the participation in the fellowship programme, fellows will gain an extended and practical knowledge of scientific aspects related to food safety risk assessment, such as how to collect and analyse relevant data, how to select and apply risk assessment methodologies, how to use computer models in risk assessment, or how to provide effective risk communication.

Fellows will be inspired by the many interesting, innovative and enthusiastic people of the food risk assessment knowledge community they will meet during the 12-month period. They will stay in touch with these colleagues and actively shape the EU-FORA Alumni network and, subsequently, the EU-FORA Community.

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<sup>13</sup> See footnote 10.



The fellow's participation in the programme will be rewarded by a certificate of participation issued by EFSA and technical summary report of their scientific work may be published in a special issue of the EFSA journal.

### 1.2.5 Accumulation of roles

Competent organisations may undertake different and accumulated roles in the participation of the EU-FORA programme. They can apply to become a fellow hosting site and/or send fellows to participate in the programme.

It is possible for a single hosting site to train more than one fellow, e.g. via participation in more than one different consortium or in a consortium where more than one fellow is identified by the fellow sending organisation. The maximum number of fellows to be trained in a hosting site **under the same work programme** is three (3) fellows. The maximum number of assignments per country is set to a maximum of five (5) fellow placements per country.

### 1.2.6 Overall fellow selection and placement process

Fellows will be identified by their sending organisation in agreement with the hosting organisation and selected following the criteria listed in section 2.4.

During the fellowship, fellows will remain at their place of employment except for the time to attend the trainings intended as physical events<sup>14</sup> and the time indicated in the proposal for the placement at the hosting site. These short placements (set with a minimum of 3 months, no maximum prescribed<sup>15</sup>) are intended to enhance networking and to support learning by doing. The duration, learning and training objectives of the placement are to be indicated in the proposal. The suitability of the fellow for the proposed work programme will also be evaluated.

Sending organisations are encouraged to propose an alternate fellow for each fellow proposed for a specific work programme, should the originally selected fellow drop out of the programme in the first two months.

Early drop-out of a fellow in the first two months: in the event of a fellow deciding to drop out of the programme prior to the commencement of the programme or at any time during the first two months, the consortium will provide written justification to EFSA. On a case-by-case basis, EFSA, in consultation with the consortium shall consider the individual circumstances<sup>16</sup> of the drop out and reserves the right to recover<sup>17</sup> proportionally the grant for the period already undertaken and to terminate the agreement. However, at such an early stage in the programme, the consortium, in consultation with EFSA, would have the possibility to consider the alternate fellow identified in the proposal as potential replacement, if applicable. If for any reason, the alternate fellow would not be available/was not identified in the proposal, the grant agreement would be terminated and written reasons should be provided by the consortium to EFSA in order to document the drop out of the original fellow. If a suitable replacement is found, the grant agreement with the consortium will continue, and any financial / administrative matters will be documented and agreed in writing accordingly.

<sup>14</sup> See 1.2.8 The training programme to complement the 'learning by doing' fellowship for further information.

<sup>15</sup> See footnote 9.

<sup>16</sup> Evidence of family bereavement, serious illness of the fellow or immediate family member or any other extenuating circumstances would not result in proportional recovery of the grant.

<sup>17</sup> Recovery would be by EFSA from the hosting site as the coordinator of the grant agreement.



Drop-out of a fellow after the first two months: In the event a fellow drops out of the programme any time after the first two months, the grant agreement should be terminated and reasons for the termination documented by the consortium. On a case-by-case basis, EFSA, in consultation with the hosting site, shall consider the individual circumstances<sup>18</sup> related to the drop out and reserves the right to recover<sup>19</sup> proportionally the grant. It would not be possible to offer the fellowship to the alternate fellow in the proposal as any new replacement fellow would have missed the initial phase of the programme, preventing proper performance during the remaining of the programme.

### 1.2.7 Support provided to the fellows and the fellow hosting sites

The management of the Fellowship Programme is ensured by EFSA through a Programme Manager, who will liaise with both the fellow(s), the fellow sending organisation and the fellow hosting site supervisor(s) at the fellow hosting site and will also act as observer in the training modules. The Programme Manager will also organise remote or in-person meetings along the fellowship with all the parties to assure the smooth integration of the fellow and progress of the programme.

Issues related to the satisfactory performance of the agreed work programme: in case of issues arising during the 12-month fellowship (e.g. professional or personal issues either on the part of the fellow, the fellow's sending organisation or the fellow hosting site) with impact on the satisfactory performance of the agreed work programme, the fellow sending organisation, the fellow hosting site, the hosting site supervisor, and the fellow shall consult in the first instance the Programme Manager at EFSA. It will be assessed, on a case-by-case basis, the situation and the actions to be taken. Any proposed action should be documented by EFSA, communicated to all parties and the necessary steps taken in order to address the issues.

### 1.2.8 The training programme to complement the 'learning by doing' fellowship

**Training modules:** These common training modules are intended to complement the 12-month 'learning by doing' fellowship. They will last seven weeks in total and are **compulsory**. The fellow's hosting site and the fellow's sending organisation will need to plan the programme they offer to accommodate the training module dates, which will be fixed by EFSA, to allow all fellows to attend<sup>20</sup>.

The modules will be composed as follows:

1. Induction training (3 weeks) at the start of the programme in September 2024, at EFSA's premises in Parma, Italy.
2. Four specific modules spread over the remainder of the 12-month period:

**Module 1** (one week – estimated late November-early December 2024, virtual) covering:

- Animal Health and Welfare
- GMO
- Plant Health
- Nutrition
- Regulated Products
- Environmental Risk Assessment

<sup>18</sup> See footnote 16.

<sup>19</sup> See footnote 17.

<sup>20</sup> EFSA reserves the right to request that all trainings be organised virtually. The decision to hold the training virtually or physically will be taken by EFSA closer to the time of the training. In principle, the induction training and the training module 3 will be organised in person, while the remaining training modules are to be organised virtually.



**Module 2** (one week – estimated mid-March 2025, virtual) covering:

- Emerging risks
- Nanotechnology
- Risk ranking
- Adverse Outcome Path (AOP), Mode of Action (MoA) and the IATA approach

**Module 3** (one week – estimated mid-June 2025, at EFSA's premises in Parma, Italy) covering:

- Introduction to Risk Communication and Crisis Response
- Risk perception
- Risk participation
- 'Hands-on' Risk Communication

**Module 4** (one week – estimated August 2025, virtual) covering:

- General introduction and Legislative background of data collection
- Guidance documents for data reporting
- Data models
- Catalogues and reporting tools
- Data validation

The training modules will be balanced between interactive teaching methods / case studies (50-60%) and theory (40-50%).

**Training contractor:** will be selected by EFSA via a procurement open call for tenders. The contractor will be responsible for developing and delivering the compulsory training modules described above. In addition, the contractor is also responsible for all logistics such as travelling or accommodation of the fellows to attend the training if held physically.

The hosting sites and fellow's sending institutions have no active role in relation to the contractor's duties. It is simply requested to respect the time schedules for the training modules so that the fellows can attend all the compulsory training modules. It should be noted that the **travel and subsistence costs** of the fellow to attend all the above-mentioned trainings, are **not** to be paid by the fellow, their sending institutions or by the fellow hosting site. The contractor coordinating these trainings for EFSA will cover such costs.

#### **1.2.9 EU-FORA yearly summer workshop**

In advance of the fellowship cycle starting in September, the EU-FORA summer workshop may be organised by EFSA in late June to share all relevant information, clarify any open questions, fine-tune last details, and ensure all actors involved are aligned.

Expected workshop participants:

1. Fellow hosting site supervisors
2. Appointed Fellows
3. Training contractor's project team
4. Representatives of the EU-FORA Alumni.
5. EFSA's Programme coordinators

**The cost of attending the summer workshop for fellow hosting site supervisors and appointed fellows will be met by the contractor and is not to be covered under the grant agreement.**



### 1.3 TASKS, DELIVERABLES, TIMELINES, MEETINGS AND PAYMENTS

No.	Deliverables	Deadline
1	<p><b>Agreed work programme:</b></p> <p>A final finetuned version of the work programme (based on a template to be provided by EFSA following the signature of the grant agreement) will have to be co-submitted by the hosting site, in agreement with the fellow and the fellow sending organisation, no later than one month after the actual beginning of the fellowship.</p>	1 month from the start of the fellowship i.e. by 01/10/2024
2	<p><b>Interim Report:</b></p> <p>An interim report (based on a template to be provided by EFSA following signature of the grant agreement) will have to be co-submitted by the hosting site (for each fellow hosted) and the fellow's sending organisation, indicating the initial work plan, how it has been rolled out during the first six months of the placement and if progress is being made towards meeting the learning objectives defined between the fellow and the supervisor at the start of the placement.</p> <p>The interim report should be submitted by the coordinator (fellow hosting site) to EFSA six months from the commencement of the fellowship.</p>	6 months from the start of the work programme i.e. by 01/03/2025
3	<p><b>Final Report:</b></p> <p>A final report (based on a template to be provided by EFSA following signature of the grant agreement) will have to be co-submitted by the hosting site (for each fellow hosted) and the fellow's sending organisation, indicating the initial work plan, how it has been rolled out during the 12-month placement and if the learning objectives defined between the fellow and the supervisor at the start, have been met.</p> <p>The final report should be submitted by the coordinator (fellow hosting site) to EFSA no later than the end of July (1 month prior to the formal end of the work programme).</p>	1 month prior to the end of the work programme i.e. by 01/07/2025
4 (not linked to payment)	<p><b>Technical summary report</b></p> <p>Each fellow, with support of the hosting site supervisor, will draft a technical summary report (template to be provided by EFSA) of his/her scientific work at the hosting site. This technical summary report may be published in a special issue of the EFSA journal expected in Autumn 2024. This technical report should be provided to EFSA not later than the end of the fellowship (i.e. before 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025) to allow sufficient time for EFSA to prepare for publication (e.g. proofreading, editing, etc.).</p>	at the end of the fellowship i.e. by 31/08/2025

No.	Meetings	Deadline for finalisation
1	Although no physical meetings are foreseen between the fellow hosting site, the fellow's sending institution and EFSA, the fellow hosting site will be expected to liaise with the Programme manager to finalise arrangements for the commencement of the programme, as well as for follow-up during the 12-month placement.	As required



No.	Payment from EFSA to the fellow hosting site (coordinator)	Linked to EFSA approval of deliverable No.
1	<b>Pre-Financing payment</b> as specified in articles I.4.1 and I.5.2 of the draft grant agreement (Annex 1 of the call for Proposals).	Not linked to deliverables
2	<b>Payment of the balance</b> as specified in article I.4.4 and I.5.4 of the draft grant agreement (Annex 1 of the call for Proposals).	1/2/3

Deliverables must be drafted in English. The use of the grant deliverables may be subject to publication, subject to the terms and conditions set out in the draft grant agreement (Annex 1 of the call for proposals).

#### 1.4 INFORMATION ON THE GRANT AGREEMENT

Applicants should note that the draft grant agreement is published with the call for proposals. If any applicant should have specific comments on the provisions of the draft grant agreement, these must be raised in a clarification, prior to the deadline for receipt of proposals so that a clear and transparent reply may be published for the benefit and information of all applicants.

##### 1.4.1 Direct Agreement

This Call for proposals aims to conclude 15 Direct Grant Agreements.

The maximum duration of each Direct Agreement is **12 months** from the start of the induction training, which usually takes place the first week of September.

The total amount EFSA has available to award grants under this call for proposals is **€ 825,000**, based on a total amount per grant (for each fellow) of **€ 55,000**. The full amount will be paid on condition the fellowship programme is completed in full by the fellow and the deliverables under the grant are received and approved by EFSA. Evidence of actual costs incurred by both parties in the consortium are not required. Applicants should note that in the Administrative Form (Part A) of Funding and Tender Portal Submission Service, there is an obligatory field regarding the budget (section 3). **Applicants should insert a total of 55,000 EUR in the total field, without the need to show the split of the budget between the two partners.**

The total amount of the EFSA grant intends to support the costs incurred by the fellow sending organisation by releasing an employee of their tasks while they remain a staff member of the institution, as well as the costs derived from the payment of fellow expenses for physical attendance at hosting site. Moreover, the sum is intended to compensate the costs of supervision by the hosting site. Finally, the sum will serve to contribute to the administrative costs associated to the signature and implementation of the Programme by both organisations<sup>21</sup>. € 55,000 is intended to support all costs of both the fellow sending organisation and the hosting site, and EFSA does not prescribe how the grant should be divided between the two organisations. Such decision is entirely at the discretion of the consortium, but EFSA reminds that payment of the grant will only be made to the coordinator (fellow hosting site) and it is their responsibility to transfer the agreed proportion of the funds to the fellow sending organisation in due time.

<sup>21</sup> From the budget foreseen, fellows may, with the agreement of the fellow sending institution and the hosting site, attend conferences, workshops, etc which may take place away from the hosting site. Any costs for such attendance must be covered by the grant provided to the consortium.





EFSA intends to fund proposals for the placement of 15 fellows. EFSA reserves the right to award more than 15 fellow placements in the event that more than 15 proposals pass the assessment of the award criteria and in case of increased budget availability.

EFSA further reserves the right not to award placements for all 15 fellows if the quality of the submitted proposals is not satisfactory. EFSA also has the right not to award any grant and to cancel the whole grant procedure at any time before the signature of the grant agreement without any compensation to be paid to the applicant.

## 1.5 ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS

To be eligible, applicants must be on the list of competent organisations designated by the Member States in accordance with Article 36 of Regulation (EC) 178/2002 and Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004.<sup>22</sup>

In order to achieve the objectives of the call, proposals must be submitted by a consortium of **two eligible organisations** from **two different** EU countries. Norway or Iceland. The applicant (consortium leader) is responsible for identifying consortium partners. **The fellow hosting site will be the consortium leader** (applicant) and will propose a work programme and be responsible of the training of the fellow. The other partner in the consortium is the fellow sending organisation and will propose a fellow to be trained under the proposal.

Applicants may search for a consortium partner through:

- 1) their designated Article 36 Organisation's contact person having granted the access to the Article 36 Database and/or
- 2) their respective EFSA national Focal Point.<sup>23</sup> EFSA national Focal Points have the role to support and facilitate the creation of consortia acting as a networking interface between national organisations (e.g. having access to EFSA databases of contacts, project ideas and other networking activities facilitating MS engagement in fields of EFSA's remit, among others).

## 1.6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

For proper understanding of this call, it is important to have clarity on the terminology regarding involved organisations and their roles.

### Proposals submitted by consortium:

- **The Applicant** submits the proposal to EFSA on behalf of the consortium. The applicant is the leading entity of the consortium **and the hosting site**, in charge of the working programme and training of the fellow. There can be only one applicant per application.
- **The Partner** is the other entity in the consortium and the **fellow sending organisation**, in charge of the identification of the staff member to be trained under the proposal. There can only be one partner per application.

Once the grant is awarded, the grant agreement is signed between EFSA and the applicant (leading entity of the consortium).

<sup>22</sup> <https://efsa.my.site.com/competentorganisations/s/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/partnersnetworks/eumembers#focal-points-eu-food-safety-connecting-hubs>





Partners do not sign the grant agreement directly but instead sign a mandate (template provided by EFSA) authorising the applicant to sign the grant agreement and any future amendments on their behalf.

As soon as the grant agreement is signed, the applicant becomes the Coordinator and partner becomes co-beneficiary. The coordinator and co-beneficiary are referred to as the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries are jointly and severally liable for the technical implementation of the project as described in the proposal which becomes Annex 1 of the grant agreement. If a beneficiary fails to implement its part of the project, the other beneficiaries become responsible for implementing that part.

**The coordinator** has the following important roles:

- Takes part in implementing the project;
- Provides supervision and training to the fellow and liaises daily with them and liaises directly with EFSA on issues related to supervision of the work programme;
- Monitors the action is implemented properly;
- Act as intermediary for communication between the consortium and EFSA;
- Receives and answers all claims EFSA might have in relation to implementation of the project;
- Requests and reviews any documents or information required by EFSA and verifies their completeness and correctness before passing them to EFSA;
- Informs EFSA and the partner/s of any event that is likely to substantially affect implementation of the project;
- Submits the deliverables and reports to EFSA;
- Requests and receives payments from EFSA and distributes the funds to the partner without unjustified delays.

The coordinator may not delegate the above-mentioned tasks to the co-beneficiary or subcontract them to any third party.

**The other beneficiary:**

- Takes part in implementing the project;
- Continues to pay the salary to the fellow during the whole period of fellowship, including the time of placement at the hosting site;
- Ensures that the fellow remains subject to the national social security and pension rights system;
- Releases the fellow from his/her working obligations to ensure adequate performance of the working programme and training;
- If applicable, liaises with the hosting site to ensure the fellow is adequately insured for, e.g., lab work if so required;
- Forwards to the coordinator the data needed to draw up reports, financial statements and other documents required under the grant agreement;
- Informs the coordinator of any event or circumstances likely to substantially affect or delay the implementation of the project.

## 1.7 IMPLEMENTING CONTRACTS AND SUBCONTRACTING

**Implementation contracts:**

Where the implementation of the project requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), e.g. purchase of services and/or goods or equipment necessary for the implementation of the action, the beneficiary must award the contract to the entity offering the best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests. The beneficiary is expected to clearly document the tendering procedure and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.



Entities acting in their capacity as contracting authorities within the meaning of Directive 2014/24/EU<sup>24</sup> must comply with the applicable national public procurement rules.

**Sub-contracting is not permitted under this call for proposals.**

## 1.8 GRANT PRINCIPLES

The financial help provided by EFSA under this Call is a grant governed by the EU Financial Regulation referred to in part 1.1.

The form of grant awarded under this Call is based on **financing not linked to the costs** of the relevant operations in accordance with Article 125 (1)(a) of the EU Financial Regulation. Grants financed in this way require the fulfilment of conditions set out in sector specific rules of Commission decisions or the achievement of results measured by reference to previously set milestones or through performance indicators.

The present call for proposals comes with an innovative and simplified grant management, where the grant amounts paid to the partner are based on the pre-defined sums which are not linked to the actual costs of the action. This means there is no need for co-financing from the partner, and no need for completion of estimated budgets or timesheets to record the work. The agreed sums are set at a level designed to stimulate the mutually convenient partnership creation. The payment of agreed sums from EFSA will be carried out based on the acceptance by EFSA of the delivered work. If you have questions on this grant form, during the application period, please raise any clarification questions to [EFSAProcurement@efsa.europa.eu](mailto:EFSAProcurement@efsa.europa.eu).

The financial support provided by EFSA under this Call is a grant governed by the EU Financial Regulation referred to in part 1.1. Accordingly, the grant awarded following this Call must comply with certain grant principles established in the EU Financial Regulation, specifically:

- **Non-retroactivity:** A grant may be awarded for a project which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate in the grant application the need to start the action before the grant agreement is signed. In accordance with Article 193 of the Financial Regulation. The tasks entrusted by EFSA should not be performed before the signature of the grant Agreement.

Article 180(3) of the EU Financial Regulation specifically states that **the following grant principles are NOT applicable** where the grant takes the form of financing not linked to the costs pursuant to article 125(1)(a):

- **Co-financing:** In accordance with Article 190 of the Financial Regulation, grants shall involve co-financing.
- **No-profit:** In accordance with Article 192(3)(d) of the Financial Regulation, grants shall not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the project for the applicant or partner.
- **Non-cumulative:** In accordance with Article 191(3) of the Financial Regulation, in no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice from the EU budget.

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<sup>24</sup> Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC (OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 65-242)



### 1.12 OPEN ACCESS

EFSA is committed to the publication of grant outputs in the [Knowledge Junction](#) in order to improve transparency, reproducibility and evidence reuse. The Knowledge Junction runs on the EU-funded Zenodo research-sharing platform where uploaded items receive a unique Digital Object Identifier to make them citable. Any part of the output resulting from the action under this grant may be published (at EFSA's discretion) on the Knowledge Junction with attribution to the beneficiary.

### 1.9 PUBLICITY

All beneficiaries are expected to follow the rules on visibility of EFSA funding set out in Article II.8 of the grant agreement.

According to Article 38 of the EU Financial Regulation EFSA is bound to publish information on recipients of its grants at its website. Such publication shall take place no later than 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded and shall cover these data of the beneficiaries:

- name of the beneficiary
- address of the beneficiary
- subject of the grant
- amount awarded

### 1.10 PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA IN RELATION TO GRANT PROCEDURES

#### Processing of personal data by EFSA

Information on the processing of personal data by EFSA in the context of this grant procedure is available in the [Privacy Statement](#) on the EFSA website as well as in Article II.7 of the draft grant agreement. Any personal data included in the Agreement must be processed by EFSA in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725.<sup>25</sup>

Applicants should note that personal data as applicant or selected beneficiary may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) if you are in one of the situations mentioned in Article 136 of the Financial Regulation. For more information see the Privacy Statement on: [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect\\_en.cfm#BDCE](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm#BDCE)).

#### Processing of personal data by the beneficiary

In case the implementation of activities under the grant agreement resulting from this call entails the processing of personal data, the beneficiary shall comply with the relevant rules in Article II.7.2 of the Grant Agreement (Annex 1) as a data processor of EFSA.

### 1.11 PUBLIC ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS

In the general implementation of its activities and for the processing of grant procedures in particular, EFSA observes Regulation (EC) N° 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents.

<sup>25</sup> Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC



### **1.13 HUNGARIAN PUBLIC INTEREST TRUSTS ESTABLISHED UNDER HUNGARIAN ACT IX OF 2021**

Following the Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506, as of 16th December 2022, no legal commitments (including the grant agreement itself as well as subcontracts, purchase contracts, financial support to third parties etc.) can be signed with Hungarian public interest trusts established under Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain.

Affected entities may continue to apply to calls for proposals. However, in case 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).

In this case, co-applicants will be invited to remove or replace that entity. Tasks and budget may be redistributed accordingly.



## 2. SELECTING PROPOSALS

**The Evaluation Committee** established by EFSA specifically for this call will evaluate the submitted proposals in five steps:

1. Verification of submission requirements (2.1)
2. Eligibility criteria (2.2)
3. Exclusion criteria (2.3)
4. Selection criteria (2.4)
5. Award criteria (2.5)

If the proposal fails at any step it is automatically excluded from further evaluation. EFSA may contact the applicant during the evaluation process if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes.

### 2.1 VERIFICATION OF SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The following will be verified:

- proposal was submitted within the deadline for submission of proposals;
- administrative data for grant application form is duly signed by the authorised representative of the applicant;
- proposal is complete and includes all the supporting documents.

### 2.2 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Criterion No. 2.2	Requirements and requested evidence
<b>1</b>	<b>Eligibility criteria</b>
	The following requirements will be verified:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant applies in a consortium with partner;</li> <li>• At the day of deadline for submission of proposals, the applicant and also its partner are on the list of competent organisations designated by the Member States in accordance with Art 36 of Regulation (EC) 178/2002 and Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004;</li> <li>• Applicant and also its partner are involved in the execution of the project.</li> </ul>
	Requested evidence:
	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE DECLARATION</b> Annex 2, available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal under Part B Templates. The applicant and partner must complete and sign the form. The applicant must upload the signed form in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.

### 2.3 EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Criterion No. 2.3	Requirements and requested evidence
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<b>2</b>	<b>Exclusion criteria</b>
	The following requirements will be verified:
	The applicant and partner must sign a declaration on their honour certifying they are not in one of the exclusion situations referred to in the Articles 136-140 of EU Financial Regulation.
	Requested evidence:
	<b>THE DECLARATION ON HONOUR ON EXCLUSION CRITERIA</b> Annex 3, available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal under Part B Templates. The applicant and the partner must complete and sign separate forms. The applicant (consortium leader) must convert the two declarations on honour on exclusion into one single pdf and upload the single document in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.

## 2.4 SELECTION CRITERIA

### A) Financial capacity

Criterion No. <b>2.4A</b>	Requirements and requested evidence
<b>1</b>	<b>Financial capacity</b>
	The purpose of the selection criteria is to verify the financial capacity of the applicant and in case of consortium also of its partner/s.
	The applicant and its partner must have stable and sufficient financial resources to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maintain their activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out.</li> </ul>
	Requested evidence:
	<b>Documents to be provided by the applicant:</b>  <b>DECLARATION ON HONOUR ON SELECTION CRITERIA</b> Annex 4, available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal. Only the consortium leader is required to complete and sign the form. The consortium leader must upload the form in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.

### B) Professional and operational capacity

Criterion No. <b>2.4.B</b>	Requirements and requested evidence
<b>1</b>	<b>Professional and operational capacity:</b>
	Requirements:
	The consortium as a whole must have the professional resources, competencies and qualifications necessary to complete the proposed project:



	<p><b>1. Requirements for the fellow hosting site:</b> For the organisation as a whole (not specifically for individual supervisors), scientific capacity demonstrating relevant, high-level knowledge and expertise in conducting scientific work in relation to Food Safety Risk Assessment.</p> <p><b>2. Requirements for the fellow hosting site:</b> Sufficient resources to allocate a dedicated supervisor to each hosted fellow, with provision for a back-up supervisor in case of need. Supervisors should have at least 5 years of professional experience in the field in which they would supervise a fellow.<sup>26</sup></p> <p><b>3. Requirements for the fellow hosting site:</b> If the only common language between the supervisor and fellow is English, the supervisor must be able to carry out their supervisory role using a level of English of at least B2 level.</p> <p><b>4. Requirement for the fellow sending organisation:</b> The fellow (and alternate fellow, if applicable<sup>27</sup>) must be a staff member of a competent organisation under Art. 36 of EFSA's founding regulation; they must have worked for their employer under a permanent or contract basis for at least 12 months before their fellowship and shall remain in the service of that employer throughout the period of fellowship<sup>28</sup>. The fellow (and alternate) must not have been a fellow in past editions of the EU-FORA Programme.</p> <p><b>5. Requirement for the fellow sending organisation:</b> The fellow (and alternate fellow, if applicable<sup>29</sup>) must have a level of education which corresponds to completed university studies of at least three (3) years attested by a diploma in one of the following fields: agriculture, biochemistry, bioinformatics, biology, biometrics, biotechnology, chemistry, dietary exposure, environmental sciences, epidemiology, food science, food technology, genetics, health and food safety, human medicine, life sciences, mathematics, microbiology, molecular biology, natural sciences, nutrition, pharmacy, public health, statistics, toxicology, veterinary medicine or related areas.</p> <p><b>6. Requirement for the fellow sending organisation:</b> The fellow (and alternate fellow, if applicable<sup>30</sup>) must have a good knowledge of English language (at least B2 level according to CEFR), with strong ability to communicate clearly and effectively in both spoken and written English.</p> <p><b>7. Requirement for the fellow sending organisation:</b> The fellow (and alternate fellow, if applicable<sup>31</sup>) must have a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 15 years of experience in performing scientific work or tasks related to food safety<sup>32</sup> (including risk assessment, risk communication and risk management aspects) before their fellowship.</p>
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<sup>26</sup> See footnote 8.

<sup>27</sup> The identification of an alternate fellow is not a requirement. However, sending organisations are encouraged to identify in the proposal an alternate fellow as potential replacement in case of drop out of the original fellow in the first two months of the programme.

<sup>28</sup> EFSA may request to submit original supporting documents in the course of the fellowship.

<sup>29</sup> See footnote 27.

<sup>30</sup> See footnote 27.

<sup>31</sup> See footnote 27.

<sup>32</sup> In this call, 'food safety' is to be understood as a comprehensive expression including risk assessment, risk management and risk communication activities in any of the fields under EFSA's remit.



	<p><b>8. Environmental management (the answers to this section are for information purposes and will not be considered under any criteria, neither selection nor award criteria)</b></p> <p>Environmental protection is an integral part of EFSA's governance. EFSA has established, implemented and maintains a certified environmental management system in accordance with the international standard ISO 14001 and the European EMAS regulation. Environmental impacts of EFSA's activities are identified, managed and monitored in order to improve environmental performance. This commitment to environmental sustainability requires us to consider a life-cycle perspective when purchasing our services.</p> <p>For this reason, we are asking you some information on the environmental management of your activities, to be provided filling in <b>Annex 5 (Selection criteria - Information on environmental management)</b>.</p>
	Requested evidence:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 1:</u></b> A written summary of expertise gained over at least the past 10 years by reference to major projects and or publications in the field of the proposed fellow work programme.</li> <li>• <b><u>EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 2:</u></b> A statement confirming that any supervisor nominated for implementation of the project will have at least 5 years of professional experience in the field in which they would supervise a fellow and confirmation the fellow hosting institution has sufficient resources to allocate one supervisor to each hosted fellow, with a back-up if required.</li> <li>• <b><u>EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 3:</u></b> A statement confirming that any supervisor nominated for implementation of the project will be able carry out their supervisory role using a level of English of at least B2 level in the event that the only common language between the supervisor and fellow is English.</li> <li>• <b><u>EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 4-7:</u></b> <b>CURRICULUM VITAE</b> of each fellow (including alternate) to be provided in EUROPASS FORMAT<sup>33</sup>, with clear indication of the aspects to be assessed under selection criteria 4-7.</li> <li>• <b><u>EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 8 (the answers to this section are for information purposes and will not be considered under any criteria, neither selection nor award criteria):</u></b> Annex 5 – Selection criteria, Information on environmental management</li> </ul> <p><b>For requirements 1-8 a template (Annex 5) is available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal. The applicant must upload the completed template (a single pdf document of all requirements including CVs) in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.</b></p>

<sup>33</sup> <https://europa.eu/europass/en/create-europass-cv>





## 2.5 AWARD CRITERIA

Criterion No. <b>2.5</b>	<p><b>For the award criteria a template (Annex 6) is available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal. The applicant must upload the completed template (a single pdf document of all criteria) in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.</b></p> <p>The award criteria serve to assess the quality of the proposals in relation to the objectives of the Call. The following award criteria are applicable in this call.</p>
<b>1</b>	<p>The extent to which the proposed work programme (e.g. areas and range of relevant activities) meets the overall objectives of the EU-FORA Programme. The consortium should provide a detailed description of the proposed work programme, including the selected time for physical placement<sup>34</sup>, its duration (set with a minimum of 3 months, no maximum prescribed<sup>35</sup>), training and learning objectives of the physical placement of the fellow at the hosting site, for which points <b>(MAX 70 POINTS)</b> will be awarded as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clarity of the description of the proposed fellow work programme and relevance to EFSA, as well the sending and hosting organisation's activities <b>(MAX 30 POINTS)</b>;</li> <li>2. Range of specific activities which the fellow will be involved in, so as to maximise acquisition / exchange of knowledge in addition to desk and/or laboratory work (for example: participation to workshops, conferences, panels and working groups meetings etc.) <b>(MAX 25 POINTS)</b>;</li> <li>3. Degree to which the proposed work programme offers a wide understanding of the whole Risk Assessment process <b>(MAX 15 POINTS)</b>;</li> </ol>
<b>2</b>	<p>The adequacy of the proposed possible supporting activities for ensuring smooth and effective fellow supervision by the dedicated supervisor of the fellow throughout the 12-month fellowship programme, including activities to integrate the fellow in the organisation culture and work practices during the period of placement <b>(MAX 30 POINTS)</b>, as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Specific provisions and activities to assure effective supervision and integration of the fellow in the organisation (for example: regular meetings with the main supervisor, mentoring provided by other relevant staff, info-sessions, etc.) <b>(MAX 20 POINTS)</b>;</li> <li>b. Supporting measures and actions to assist the smooth settlement of the fellow in the environment of the hosting organisation (for example: assistance in identifying accommodation, language lessons, other training, learning and networking opportunities etc.) <b>(MAX 10 POINTS)</b></li> </ol>

In order to be ranked in the reserve list, the proposal must:

- score a minimum of 55 points out of a maximum possible 100 points; and, at the same time;
- score at least half of the points attributed to each criterion overall (i.e. 35/70 for criterion 1 and 15/30 for criterion 2).

**Ranking:** Each proposal will be evaluated individually and separately, against the above award criteria and given a score. Proposals which have satisfied these award criteria thresholds will be ranked in a

<sup>34</sup> In the case of award, this information can be finetuned in the agreed work programme (deliverable No. 1, see 1.3 tasks, deliverables, timelines, meetings and payments for more information.

<sup>35</sup> See footnote 9.



reserve list based on the award criteria score. The fifteen highest ranked proposals will be proposed for grant award, subject to the below-mentioned limitations of maximum number of fellows per fellow hosting site and per country (see 1.2.5 Accumulation of roles).

A reserve list will be established from the remaining proposals (over and above the 15 highest ranked) which pass the evaluation of the award criteria. The award of any grant for fellow hosting, over and above the 15 highest ranked (in case of increased budget availability at EFSA or inability to conclude a grant agreement with one of the 15 highest ranked), will reflect the ranking of proposals in the reserve list.

*Consortium where the fellow hosting sites offer to host more than one fellow:*

In the event that a fellow hosting site proposes to host more than one fellow, they can do so in the following way:

- by the submission of a single work programme which could be offered to more than one fellow, indicating the number of placements applied for, or;
- by the submission of different work programmes, one per fellow.

In the former case, since the maximum number of fellows to be trained in a hosting site **under the same work programme** is (3) fellows, the ranking would go as follows: if Organisation X has four proposals ranked, only the three highest ranked proposals will be proposed for grant award, as long as the other placement criteria (maximum 5 fellows per hosting country) are also met.

In the latter case, each proposal will be evaluated individually and separately, given a score and ranked as above indicated, but always subject to the already mentioned limitations of maximum number of fellows per country.

**Please indicate clearly in Annex 6 how many fellows are proposed to be sent for training and fellowship placements.**

*Countries with more than one fellow hosting site ranked:*

There is a maximum limit of five placements per country. For example, if country X, from all submissions received from different consortium with fellow hosting site within that country, has seven placements ranked on the reserve list, only the first five ranked will be awarded an EFSA grant. Should it not be possible to conclude the grant agreement with one of those five ranked placements, the 6<sup>th</sup> placement within country X would become eligible for grant award.

**Applicants are reminded:**

- That consortia must be made of only two Art. 36 organisations from two different EU countries, Norway or Iceland, one acting as the Applicant (leading entity of the consortium and the hosting site in charge of the working programme and training of the fellow) and the other organisation as the Partner (the institution of origin of the fellow). There can only be one applicant and one partner per application.
- To indicate clearly in the template (Annex 6 for award criteria) how many fellows are proposed to participate in the fellowship programme from the same fellow sending organisation.
- That a single hosting site can train more than one fellow, e.g. via participation in more than one different consortium or in a consortium where more than one fellow is identified by the fellow sending organisation.
- That the maximum number of fellows to be trained in a hosting site **under the same work programme** is (3) fellows.
- That the number of fellows to be trained in the same hosting country is a maximum of five (5) fellows per country.



- That the minimum stay of the fellow at the hosting site is of 3 months<sup>36</sup>, no maximum prescribed. **EFSA will not increase the grant amount** in any case and the length of the stay (if longer than the minimum required) will not be considered an award criterion.

## 2.6 PROCESS FOLLOWING THE ASSESSMENT AGAINST AWARD CRITERIA

The applicant(s) will be notified, once the evaluation has been finalized, whether they are placed on the reserve list or not.

Following their ranking on the reserve list, EFSA reserves the right to invite applicants to adapt their proposal based on the evaluators' comments, in accordance with article 200(5) EU FR. The number of applicants invited to adjust their proposals and ultimately awarded an EFSA grant will be decided based on the value of grants requested compared to the overall available budget of EFSA for this Call.

Following the successful conclusion of the adaptation phase, the award decision will be taken by EFSA. Subsequently, the grant agreement will be prepared.

In case some applicants fail to adapt the proposal, EFSA reserves the right to reject the proposal. The budget made available in this way may be used for projects of next applicants on the reserve lists. EFSA may repeat the adaptation process until the available budget of the call is assigned to other applicants on the reserve list.

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<sup>36</sup> See footnote 9.



### 3. SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

#### 3.1 SUBMISSION MODALITIES

You must submit your proposal electronically via the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#) before the time limit for receipt of proposals (indicated on page 2 of this call). A webinar showing step-by-step the use of the EU funding and Tender Portal for Grant submission on a pilot EFSA call is available at [this link](#) (from minute 15:39 to minute 45:55).

##### **Registration in the Participant Register**

Applicants submitting a proposal must be registered in the Participant Register - an online register of organisations and natural persons participating in European Commission's calls for tenders or proposals.

On registering, each participant obtains a Participant Identification Code (PIC, 9 - digit number) which acts as its unique identifier in the Participant Register. A participant needs to register only once – the information provided can be further updated or re-used by the participant in other European Commission's calls for tenders or calls for proposals.

At any moment during the grant procedure the Research Executive Agency Validation Services (hereafter the EU Validation Services) may contact the participant and ask for supporting documents on legal existence and status.

The requests will be made through the register's messaging system to the e-mail address of the participant's contact person indicated in the register. It is the responsibility of the participant to provide a valid e-mail address and to check it regularly.

The documents that may be requested by the EU Validation Services are listed in the [EU Grants and Tenders Rules on Legal Entity Validation, LEAR appointment and Financial Capacity assessment](#). Please note that a request for supporting documents by the EU Validation Services in no way implies that the grant application has been successful.

##### **Submitting your proposal**

The EU Funding & Tenders Portal allows applicants to respond to calls for proposals by preparing applications electronically in a structured and secured way and submitting proposals electronically.

To find more information on submitting your proposal, please read carefully the information on the page [Submit a proposal – electronic submission system](#). On the same page useful links to the [User guide of the submission system](#) and an [FAQ on proposal submission](#) are provided.

Make sure you submit your application on time: you are advised to start completing your application early. To avoid any complications with regard to late receipt/non-receipt of applications within the deadline, please ensure that you submit your application several hours before the deadline. It is not possible to submit an application after the deadline.



### **3.2 LANGUAGE OF THE PROPOSAL AND THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Proposals may be submitted in any official language of the European Union. However, as EFSA's working language is English, the submission of proposals in English would speed up the evaluation process.

Please note that some supporting documents (e.g. CVs) are required. These supporting documents are an integral part of the proposal. If these supporting documents are in a language other than English, in order to facilitate and speed up the evaluation, it would be appreciated if a reliable translation of the relevant parts of the documents into English is provided with the proposal.

### **3.3 EXPECTED DURATION OF PROCEDURE**

In accordance with Article 194(2) of the Financial Regulation, the maximum time-limits for the procedure are as follows:

- All applicants will be informed of the decision regarding their application within 6 months of the deadline for submission of proposals.
- Signature of the grant agreement will take place within 3 months from the date the successful applicant/s has/have been informed of the decision on their application.



## Appendix: Note on the processing of personal data in the context of the EU-FORA Fellowship Programme

Regulation (EU) 2018/1725<sup>37</sup> regarding the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies ('the EUDPR'), is applicable in the context of the EU-FORA Fellowship Programme. In accordance with Article 15 and 16 of the Regulation, the following information is provided:

- Information on the controller and data protection officer:
  - ✓ The Engagement & External Relations (ENREL) Unit of EFSA is the controller of the processing operation. The Unit can be contacted writing to: [EU-FORA@efsa.europa.eu](mailto:EU-FORA@efsa.europa.eu)
  - ✓ EFSA's data protection officer can be contacted writing to [DataProtectionOfficer@efsa.europa.eu](mailto:DataProtectionOfficer@efsa.europa.eu)
- Purpose:
  - ✓ The Fellowship Programme aims at strengthening Europe's food safety risk assessment capacity and at building the risk assessment knowledge community. The Programme is intended for 'mid-career' scientists and is designed to offer them a 12-month, learning-by-doing fellowship placement accompanied by a specific Food Risk Assessment training programme. The personal data processing will concretely happen in the context of the grant application, submitted by the employer of the fellow (fellow sending institution) in consortium with a fellow hosting site which is prepared to offer a fellowship placement to the individual proposed.
- Legal basis:
  - ✓ EFSA's Founding Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, i.e. Articles 22 and 23 thereof.
- Categories of personal data processed:
  - ✓ Data provided by the candidate in the context of the annual Fellowship application and selection process, including the candidate's results against the evaluation of the selection criteria for the fellowship proposed;
  - ✓ Personally identifiable information on the fellow acquired in the course of the implementation of their one-year Fellowship programme.
- Recipients of personal data:
  - ✓ The EFSA Evaluation Committee responsible for evaluating the proposals received from the consortium (fellow sending institution and fellow hosting site);

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<sup>37</sup> Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC



- ✓ ENREL Unit staff in charge of the implementation of the Programme, the Head of ENGAGE Department, the Executive Director of EFSA;
  - ✓ Fellow Hosting Organisations in EU Member States operating in fields within EFSA's mission in accordance with Article 36 of the EFSA Founding Regulation;
  - ✓ On a need-to-know-basis only and under strict confidentiality obligations, a training service provider (contractor) assisting EFSA in the delivery of training to fellows under the EU FORA fellowship scheme;
  - ✓ Institutions or bodies having a legitimate purpose of audit, of the exercise of supervisory tasks or in charge of judicial proceedings: the Internal Audit Service, the EU Court of Auditors, the EU Ombudsman, OLAF, the EU Court of Justice, the European Data Protection Supervisor.
- Data subject's right of access and rectification:
    - ✓ Candidates for the Fellowship and selected Fellows can contact the ENREL Unit to exercise their rights as a data subject pursuant to the EUDPR, namely their right of access, rectification and related other rights, using the above controller contact details. They have a possibility at any time to update or correct their identification data. On the other hand, data demonstrating compliance with the eligibility and selection criteria for the Fellowship cannot be modified after the closing date of the relevant call for expressions of interest.
  - Information security:
    - ✓ Upon receipt, applications submitted from the fellow sending institution will be stored in EFSA's Document Management System, complying with state-of-the-art security standards that ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the information it contains with access restrictions to authorised EFSA staff only;
    - ✓ Individuals having authorised access to the data are subject to specific confidentiality requirements.



- Retention period of personal data:
  - ✓ EFSA maintains an annually updated Fellowship Alumni list which is shared among the alumni target group as long as it serves the purpose of the EU-FORA Programme;
  - ✓ The data of successful Fellows will be kept for 10 years after the end date of the Fellowship in EFSA and at the Hosting Organisations;
  - ✓ The data of unsuccessful candidates will be kept for 5 years after the completion of the annual Fellowship selection process;
  - ✓ Hosting Organisations will retain personal data on the Fellowship Programme in accordance with the rules and policies applicable to them.
- Right to lodge a complaint:
  - ✓ In their capacity as data subjects, fellows have the right to lodge a complaint on the processing of their personal data in the context of the EU-FORA Fellowship Programme with the European Data Protection Supervisor - [edps@edps.europa.eu](mailto:edps@edps.europa.eu).