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Call Fiche: Industrial Challenges

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About agROBOfood

This document provides the most important information regarding the agROBOfood Open Call for Industrial Challenges. The aim of this document is to give applicants brief information about the Open Call. The detailed information about application, evaluation process and conditions of the call can be found in **Guide for Applicants – Industrial Challenges**.

agROBOfood (https://agrobofood.eu/) aims at boosting the adoption of robotic technologies in the European agrifood sector. There are many excellent organisations working in agri-food robotics across Europe, and many of them are gathered into this agROBOfood consortium. Some have roots in agriculture or food and are moving into robotics, others are experts in robots and want to apply these robots in agri-food. The agROBOfood project will establish a network of robotics Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) in the agri-food domain, each bringing their own ecosystem of Competence Centres (CCs). By connecting these actors with their different strengths, each will contribute to an overall service offer providing a more joined-up set of options for producers and wider markets for technology providers in robotic applications.

The project takes on the challenge of bridging the gap between the need to increase food production to satisfy global needs and the availability of farmland and human labour by using robotic technologies

agROBOfood Open Calls

The aim for all agROBOfood Open Calls is to stimulate, inspire and financially support Innovation Experiments and Industrial Challenges that meet user needs and have clear market potential with important benefits for EU economy and society.

The agROBOfood consortium builds upon an existing network and ecosystem and aims to use the mechanism of Open Calls providing financial support to third parties as a mechanism that will accelerate network expansion, driven by the robotics community and the European agri-food sector. Under this framework the Open Calls aim to:

- Support industry, in particular SMEs and start-ups of the agri-food sector, in their robotic transformation, through demonstrators and platform development, technology transfer experiments and other services;
- Allow the European automation industry (agricultural machinery, material handling, etc) to benefit from the opportunities of guiding, supporting and teaming up with start-ups and SMEs from the robotics sector; and
- Mobilize private matching funds (e.g. acquisitions by big industrial players, corporate Venture Capitalist (VC) investments, that will support the scale-up of robotic technologies and accelerate the digital transformation of the agri-food sector.

To achieve these objectives, two types of Open Calls are foreseen – two Open Calls for Innovation Experiments and one Open Call for Industrial Challenges. In total 8 M Euro budget is allocated on financial support to third parties.

Open Calls funding

Each of the Open Calls has a predefined budget described in the table below:

	Total Amount	Project Size	Number of Projects	Number of Partners	Budget per Partner
Industrial Challenges Open Call	**2.7 M EUR**	**Up to 300k**	**±8**	**1**	**up to 300k EUR**
Open Call 1 (now closed)	2.65 M EUR	300k-500k	±6	2-5	50k EUR-300k EUR
Open Call 2	2.65 M EUR	300k-500k	±6	2-5	50k EUR-300k EUR

Industrial Challenges Open Call

The overall concept of the Industrial Challenges is that real industry problems, seek real tech solutions. In this context, the agri-food and robotics consortium partners together with the Industrial Advisory Board have defined real industry challenges/problems stemming from their portfolio. The challenge is open for all European SMEs and startups. The Industrial Challenge will be based upon the principle that the interaction between start-ups/SMEs and big corporates can yield mutually beneficial value-for-money innovation. The industry will have the opportunity to coach the solution or invest in the SMEs which elaborated it. On the other hand, the SMEs will gain access to funding though the call, utilize and test DIHs services, as well as have the opportunity to mobilize private resources either in the form of contracts with big customers (a crucial factor for the growth of a start-up) or in the form of equity investment/takeover.

General Information

Industrial Challenges Open Call aims at selecting approximately eight (8) Industrial Challenges that tackle a commercial need within agri-food and offer a solution based on robotic technologies. Selected SMEs will receive up to 300 thousand euros. Chosen sub-projects will go through a 17-month process that consists of three phases. After positive evaluation, each phase is followed by financial support.

Application and Selection	Launch of Open Call 1	October 20th, 2020
	Deadline for submitting proposals	January 20th, 2021
	Evaluation and selection	February – April 2021
	Evaluation results and contracting	April 2021

Implementation	Phase 1 - Design	May 1st, 2021 – July 31st, 2021 (3 months)
	Phase 2 - Develop	August 1st, 2021 – March 31st, 2022 (8 months)
	Phase 3 - Market	April 1st, 2022 – September 30th, 2022 (6 months)

Important notice: The opening and closing dates of each phase can be subject to change in case of any modifications in the project's schedule.

Topics for Industrial Challenges

Topics for Industrial Challenges have been selected through a collaboration with the agROBOfood Industrial Advisory Board. Working with leading industry actors, the goal of selecting topics for this Open Call was to address needs of the industry and connect innovative entrepreneurs with large industry players through future collaborations.

Each challenge comprises of a technical component and a complementary component. The technical component demands the development or improvement of (existing) robotic technology-based solutions. The complementary component requires a socio-economic analysis or assessment of complementary social, economic, environmental, or ethical aspect of the newly designed solution. In order to successfully apply, all interested applicants must **address the full challenge** as defined.

Specific information about the topics of all 5 challenges can be found in the Guide for Applicants – Industrial Challenges.

Eligibility Criteria

agROBOfood Open Calls are aimed at European SMEs working in the field of agri-food and robotics. Detailed eligibility criteria are described in Guide for Applicants. Overall eligibility criteria for the agROBOfood Open Calls are:

- Applicants need to be SMEs (see 3.2.1. in the Guide for Applicants – Industrial Challenges)
- SMEs need to apply independently, not in consortium with others.
- The proposal is delivered before the defined deadline, applying the requested submission procedure.
- Proposals shall only ask for funding for that part of the work that is not yet accomplished and will be carried out after once having been selected for funding. Of course, this does not exclude the usage of e.g. results, IP, infrastructures or approaches already hold by the proposers.
- Current agROBOfood beneficiaries (Open Call 1 beneficiaries), IAB members and agROBOfood partners are not eligible.
- SMEs are encouraged to apply to all 3 Open Calls. However, only one proposal per beneficiary can be selected for funding. SMEs that receive funding within one Open Call, either as consortium leaders or as partners are not eligible to apply for additional funding in other agROBOfood Open Calls.

Submission Procedure

The entry point for the submission of all proposals to agROBOfood Open Calls will be the agROBOfood website: https://evaluation.agrobofood.eu/apply

Submissions received by any other channel will not be accepted. In case multiple versions of an application are submitted, only the last version will be evaluated.

Origin of the Funds

The funds provided through the Open Calls come directly from the funds of the European Project agROBOfood funded itself by the European Commission under Grant Agreement Number 825395.

In order to receive funding, any selected proposer will sign a dedicated Sub-Grant Agreement with the agROBOfood consortium.

More details on obligations of beneficiaries can be found in Chapter 5 of Guide for Applicants – Industrial Challenges.

Points of Contact

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