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Guide for Applicants: Industrial Challenges

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Table of Contents

1 Introduction 5
1.1 About agROBOfood 5
1.2 agROBOfood Approach 6
1.3 agROBOfood Open Calls 7
2 Industrial Challenges – Open Call 10
2.1 General Information 10
2.2 Topics for Industrial Challenges 10
2.3 Submission Procedure 11
2.4 Language 11
2.5 Documentation Formats 11
2.6 Origin of the Funds 12
3 Proposal Submission and Selection 13
3.1 Open Call Publication 13
3.2 Eligibility Criteria 13
3.3 Eligible Costs 15
3.4 Application Process 15
3.5 Evaluation Process 16
4 Implementation of Industrial Challenges 20
4.1 Implementation Timeline 20
4.2 Implementation Activities 20
5 Applicants' Responsibilities 22
5.1 Intellectual Property Rights 22
5.2 Conflict of Interest 22
5.3 Data Protection & Maintaining Confidentiality 23
5.4 Promoting the Action and Giving Visibility to the EU Funding 23
6 Checklist 25
7 Points of Contact 26

List of Abbreviations

AWU	Annual Work Unit
CC	Competence Center
CET	Central European Time
DIH	Digital Innovation Hub
EC	European Commission
ESR	Evaluation Summary Report
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IC	Industrial Challenges
IE	Innovation Experiments
MVP	Minimum Viable Product
Q&A	Questions and Answers
RTD	Research and Technological Development
SME	Small and Medium-sized enterprises (including start-ups)
TRL	Technology Readiness Level
UN	United Nations
VAT	Value Added Tax
VC	Venture Capital
WEF	World Economic Forum

1 Introduction

This document provides a full set of information regarding the Open Call for Industrial Challenges. The aim of this document is to give applicants specific information about the application process.

1.1 About agROBOfood

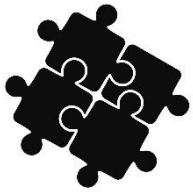
agROBOfood aims at boosting the adoption of robotic technologies in the European agri-food sector. There are many excellent organisations working in agri-food robotics across Europe, and many of them are gathered into this agROBOfood consortium as partners or associated partners. Some have roots in agriculture 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 automation options for food producers and wider markets for technology providers. The project takes on the challenge of **bridging the gap** between the need to **increase food production** to satisfy global needs and using **robotic technologies**.

Agri-food Challenge

The agri-food sector is a dominant and vital component in the European economy, but under pressure to produce more food on less suitable land and for lower cost – and increasingly to protect the environment too. The workforce is also under pressure, as fewer seasonal workers are available for labour-intensive seasons such as harvest. One way to combine these contradictory pressures is to increase the use of robotic sensing and automation in the agri-food industry. This facilitates precision and organic farming methods with their reduced environmental footprint, automates the heavier and more repetitive jobs e.g. in the food processing industry, reduces the need for seasonal workers, can supply 24/7 vigilance against pests and disease, increases food hygiene and improves food traceability. More food is available at a lower cost, to feed the increasing population. Successful robotics applications are for instance used commercially for milking, cultivating, spraying, harvesting, food processing, picking and placing food items, packaging and palletizing.

Situation in Robotics

The agri-food sector is partially automated but the level of adoption of robotics varies across the segments and the EU member states. The number of agricultural robots is increasing each year; the global agricultural robot market is anticipated to reach USD 8.82 billion by 2025. Europeans produce innovative technologies that could take a good share of this international market as well as benefitting European food producers. However, broad uptake of even established technologies is not common. One reason is that the majority of agri-food companies are not aware of the current abilities of modern robots, nor the advantages that they bring. And if they are both aware and interested, they often do not have the skills, knowledge and business models to apply robotics in a way that best fits their needs. Agri-food robotics expertise is fragmented, which means both that it can be hard for a potential user to find the right support and that each supporting organisation is limited by the experience and expertise of its members.



Envisioned Solution

To overcome these challenges, agROBOfood will network existing robotics DIHs working in agri-food and provide a single united access portal, a “one-stop shop” which provides various expertise online and guides users to their local member organisation. It also enables the connected competence centers (CC) to access expertise across the whole network and thereby provide a better service to their customers. In this way local organisations can apply a pan-European breadth and depth of expertise to their challenges, creating better and more cost-effective solutions.

1.2 agROBOfood Approach

The **agROBOfood** vision is to ensure that, by the end of the project, every stakeholder from farmers and agribusinesses to robotic SMEs and investors will have access to the services of a nearby DIH connected with our network.

In order to achieve its vision, agROBOfood will develop a pan-European network of Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) to stimulate implementation of high-tech robotic concepts for the agri-food sector and to demonstrate their applicability under practical circumstances. The DIHs in this network act as centres of gravity, where various stakeholders such as developers, users, consultants and investors can interact and ensure synergy and cross-pollination of ideas.

The main DIH network structure is based on their geographical location. After all, end users are inclined to search for robotics activities and services close to home. In the agROBOfood project, 7 regional clusters have been identified and will serve as contact points:

North East Europe (NEE), cluster leader: DTI - Danish Technological Institute,

North West Europe (NWE), cluster leader: WR - Stichting Wageningen Research,

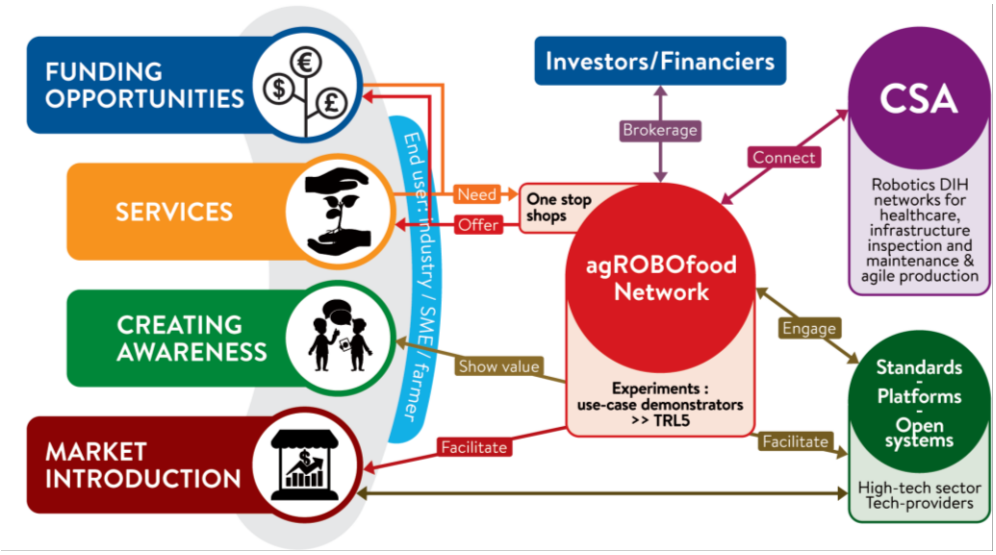
Iberia (IBE), cluster leader: EUT- Eurecat Technology Centre,

France and Italy (F&I), cluster leader: CEA - Commissariat a l'Energie Atomique et aux Energies Alternatives,

Central Eastern Europe (CEE), cluster leader: BIOS - BioSense Institute,

Central North Europe (CNE), cluster leader: Fraunhofer - Fraunhofer Gesellschaft,

East Med (EM) (including associated countries such as Israel and Turkey), cluster leader: AUA - Agricultural University of Athens.



The main components of the agROBOfood approach are:

- increasing the end user awareness of what robotics can do for them by actually demonstrating robotics solutions. Show the technology added value through Innovation Experiments (IEs),
- a one-stop shop both online and physically within reasonable working distance, providing access to appropriate services on a pan-European level,
- facilitating market introduction of new robotic technologies by maturing research prototypes to TRL 8,
- advising end users how to fund the digital transformation of their company,
- engaging in standardization activities and promote open standards and platforms,
- connecting to other robotics networks and projects through direct links and the RODIN Network.

1.3 agROBOfood Open Calls

The aim for all agROBOfood Open Calls is to stimulate, inspire and support innovation experiments and industrial challenges that meet user needs and have clear market potential with important benefits for EU economy and society.

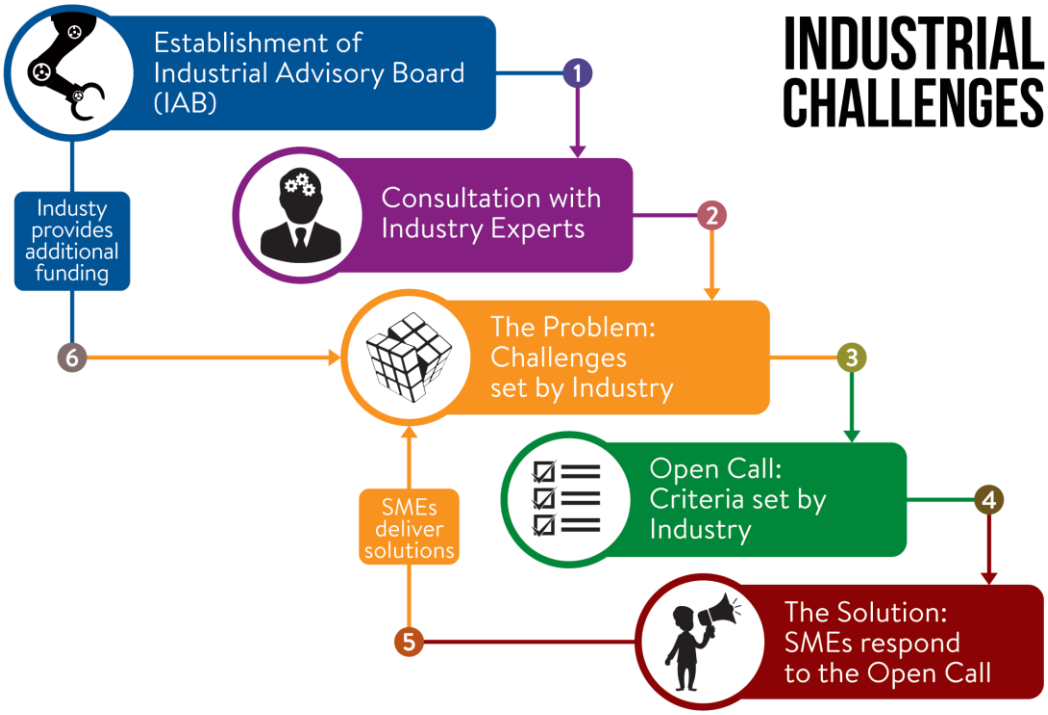
The agROBOfood consortium builds upon an existing network and ecosystem and aims to use the mechanism of Open Calls providing financial support to third parties as a mechanism that will accelerate network expansion, driven by the robotics community and the European agri-food sector. Under this framework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

- support industry, in particular SMEs of the agri-food sector, in their digital transformation, through demonstrators and platforms 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 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.

1.3.1 Industrial Challenges

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.


INDUSTRIAL CHALLENGES
Establishment of Industrial Advisory Board (IAB)
1
Consultation with Industry Experts
2
The Problem: Challenges set by Industry
3
Open Call: Criteria set by Industry
4
The Solution: SMEs respond to the Open Call
5
SMEs deliver solutions
6
Industy provides additional funding

1.3.1.1 Timeline

Important notice 1: The opening and closing dates of each phase can be subject to change in case of any modifications in the project's schedule.

Activity	Date
Open for Submissions	October 20th, 2020
Deadline for Submissions	January 20th, 2021, 17:00 CET
Information about Selection	April 2021
Contracting	April 2021
Implementation	From May 1st, 2021 until September 30th, 2022

1.3.1.2 Funding Schema of the Open Call for Industrial Challenges

Allocated budget for the Open Call for Industrial Challenges is described in the table below:

	Total Amount	Project Size	Number of Projects	Number of Partners per project	Budget per Partner
Industrial Challenges	2.7 M EUR	Up to 300k	8-10	1	up to 300k EUR

2 Industrial Challenges – Open Call

Open Call for Industrial Challenges aims at identifying real tech solutions for real industry problems. This Open Call is therefore conceptualized in such a way that engaged some of the most important stakeholders in the agri-food and robotics industry and asked them to define real industry challenges. The SMEs selected through the Open Call will get the opportunity to both work on developing a solution to the most pressing industrial challenges and gain access to financing and technical services.

2.1 General Information

Open Call for Industrial Challenges aims at selecting eight to ten (8-10) sub-projects that tackle a commercial need within agri-food and offer a solution based around robot technologies. Selected SMEs will receive up to 300 thousand euros. Chosen Challenges will go through a 17-month process that consists of three phases where each is followed by financial support (see section 4).

	Phase	Date
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)**

2.2 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 is composed 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 assessments 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.

The Open Call aims to select a minimum of one project per each challenge.

The topics for the challenges are:

Challenge 1	**Can optimized spraying lead to improved environmental conditions?**
Technical component	Robots for spot spraying
Complementary component	Analysis of environmental benefits of spot spraying solutions compared to existing options as well as alternative growing possibilities

Challenge 2	**Can robots improve working conditions in the labour force in the fresh and processed food industry?**
Technical component	Robots for logistics picking, packing and palletizing
Complementary component	Analysis of the impact of robotics in the field of food logistics on the reduction of labour force or generation of new job opportunities

Challenge 3	**Are robots in the livestock industry posing ethical challenges by replacing human labour with machines?**
Technical component	Robots for livestock feeding
Complementary component	Analysis of the ethical challenges and their perception when human labour is replaced by machines

Challenge 4	**What added value can harvesting robots bring compared to existing machinery solutions?**
Technical component	Robots for selective harvesting
Complementary component	Analysis and assessment of the exact benefits of robotic technologies compared to already existing agricultural machinery

Challenge 5	**What new business opportunities do robots for cleaning livestock farms bring?**
Technical component	Robots for cleaning
Complementary component	Analysis and projections of new business models including service-based business models

2.3 Submission Procedure

The entry point for the submission of all proposals to agROBOfood Open Calls is the agROBOfood website: https://evaluation.agrobofood.eu/apply Submissions received by any other channel will be automatically discarded.

Documents required in subsequent phases will be submitted via dedicated channels, which will be indicated by the agROBOfood consortium in the contracting phase.

2.4 Language

English is the official language for agROBOfood Open Calls. Submissions done in any other language will not be evaluated. English is also the only official language during the whole execution of the agROBOfood project. This means any requested submission of deliverable will be done in English in order to be eligible.

2.5 Documentation Formats

Any document requested in any of the phases must be submitted electronically in PDF format without restrictions for printing.

Please note, when filling in the proposal template, make sure to keep set formatting of the document, including margins, font size and do not exceed the defined maximum of 30 pages.

2.6 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-Grantee Funding Agreement with the agROBOfood consortium.

3 Proposal Submission and Selection

The aim of Open Call is to stimulate, inspire and support innovation experiments and industrial challenges that meet user needs and have clear market potential with important benefits for EU economy and society.

3.1 Open Call Publication

Open Call will be published on the agROBOfood website: https://agrobofood.eu/ on October 20th, 2020 and will be supported by:

- ***Call Fiche***, which provides the scope and objectives of the open call,
- ***Guidelines for Applicants***, this document.
- ***Proposal Template,*** word document to be submitted as a PDF in the application phase.
- ***Declaration of Honour,*** which declares that all conditions of the Open Call are accepted by an SME legal representative.
- ***SME Declaration,*** *which declares that the applicant is an SME according to EC standards.*
- ***Data Privacy Policy,*** which addresses the aspect of data privacy.
- ***Frequently Asked Questions & Answers*** published at the agROBOfood website.

3.2 Eligibility Criteria

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

- Applicants need to be SMEs (see 3.2.1).
- 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.

3.2.1 Definition of an SME eligible for agROBOfood Open Calls:

An SME will be considered as such if complying with the European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC[1], and the SME user guide[2]. Furthermore, slightly bigger SMEs fulfilling the criteria defined by RODIN are also eligible for this Open Call. As a summary, the criteria which define an SME are:

[1] European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:124:0036:0041:en:PDF
[2] SME definition: https://op.europa.eu/s/ouL1

- Independent, partner or linked enterprises, with financial and staff figures calculated in accordance with instructions given by Recommendation 2003/361/EC[3].
- It is a legal entity established and based in one of the EU Member States or an H2020 Associated country as defined in H2020 rules for participation[4] (see section 3.2.2).
- Headcount in Annual Work Unit (AWU) less than 500.
- Annual turnover less or equal to €100 million.

If applicants are **not sure whether they comply with the SME criteria**, an online SME self-assessment questionnaire is provided by the EC, for these purposes, on this link: SME self-assessment questionnaire.

For British applicants: Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project. In that case, the rules of H2020 grants will apply.

3.2.2 Definition of eligible countries

Participants, SMEs, established in the following countries and territories will be eligible to receive funding through agROBOfood Open Calls:

- The Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU), including their outermost regions;
- The Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to the Member States: Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, French Polynesia, French Southern and Antarctic Territories, Greenland, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles (Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten), New Caledonia and Dependencies, Pitcairn, Saint Barthélemy, Saint Helena, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, Wallis and Futuna Islands.
- The associated countries (AC): Iceland, Norway, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Israel, Moldova, Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Ukraine, Tunisia, Georgia and Armenia.

3.2.3 Proposal eligibility criteria

In order to be eligible for agROBOfood Open Call applicants and their proposed solutions must:

- Offer a solution that uses robotic technology to address an identified challenge in the agri-food sector.
- Respond to both technical and complementary components of the selected challenge.
- Respond to one of the 5 defined Challenges.
- Agree to actively support Project's dissemination activities.
- Demonstrate a plan and an approach for testing, prototyping and demonstrating the products in cooperation with Digital Innovation Hubs and/or Competence Centers.
- Establish contact with one of the (associated) DIH in their country in order to ensure transfer of information and collaboration in the network (the list of DIHs is available at the agROBOfood website – https://agrobofood.eu/).

In addition, proposals must fulfil following technical criteria:

[3] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:124:0036:0041:en:PDF
[4] Association to Horizon 2020 is governed by Article 7 of the Horizon 2020 Regulation. The list of associated countries is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/3cpart/h2020-hi-list-ac_en.pdf

- Be submitted before the deadline,
- Contain all signed documents that are part of the Open Call,
- Be submitted by actors defined earlier in this section, and
- Must be submitted in the correct format, following the formatting rules defined in the Project Proposal Template, in terms of font size, margins, maximum number of pages. Proposals that fail to follow these rules will be penalized.

3.3 Eligible Costs

1. **Personnel Cost**
   Costs of the personnel realizing the deliverables. Calculate personnel costs according to the rules and regulations of your country and real labour market data regarding the relevant positions. For the proposal template, only the final amount allocated to personnel costs is necessary. Personnel costs are considered direct costs and can't be managed as indirect cost.

2. **Travel Cost**
   Travel costs necessary for the execution of the challenge.

3. **Equipment Cost**
   Borrowing or loaning of the necessary equipment is not eligible, only depreciation costs for purchased equipment are eligible.

4. **Other goods/services**
   Other goods and services include, for instance, consumables and supplies, dissemination (including open access), protection of results, certificates on the methodology, translations and publications.

5. **Subcontracting**
   Subcontracting should be clearly justified. Costs must be reasonable and comply with the principle of sound financial management. Coordination tasks cannot be subcontracted. You should ensure that there are sufficient details for: the action tasks, the estimated budget, the procedure that will be followed to ensure best value-for-money. Any kind of organization (DIHs, CCs, Large Companies, Midcaps etc.) could be subcontracted, provided that they are not part of the core agROBOfood consortium. The evaluators will assess the scope and value-for-money aspects of subcontracting and their assessment will be reflected in the score of each proposal. Subcontracting is allowed for up to maximum of 25% of the proposed budget when properly justified. When submitting the proposal applicants should only write the total amount for subcontracting. Selected consortia should follow the standards for subcontracting set by the European Commission, ensuring best value for money and absence of conflict of interest, during the project implementation. Procurement should be done according to the national and European regulation that is applied to your institution.

6. **Indirect costs**
   Indirect costs (overheads) could be up to 25% of the direct cost. Subcontracting is not included in indirect cost calculation.

3.4 Application Process

Interested applicants should register at the agROBOfood website: https://evaluation.agrobofood.eu/apply – a software platform that provides all necessary information about the Open Call and the registration process. The platform will be the entry point for all applications in the Open Call.

The application for this Open Call will consist of a template (detailed template is a separate document) with different sections:

- General Information (title of the proposal, the challenge it addresses, information about the applicant)
- Information about the proposal (objectives, workplan, activities, expected results and deliverables)
- Information about the business impact and scalability – business challenge and socio-economic challenge
- Information about the technology impact and adoption of standards, as well as the starting and target TRL level.
- Sustainability impact, systemic relevance and financial impact
- Information on multi - actors' involvement
- Connection with Digital Innovation Hubs/Competence Centers and utilization of their services
- Costs justification and funding

Applicants may submit **up to three additional documents** of their choice, these documents are optional, they can serve as additional material to support the application. Additional documents should be submitted using the designated section on the application page.

Total size of all submitted documents **may not exceed 100 MB**, and they must be submitted in a format explained in the tooltip on the application page.

Applicants who wish to upload a video as an additional material can do that by providing a valid YouTube or Vimeo link, (public or unlisted) without restrictions for reviewing, in the designated field within the project proposal template.

Please note that evaluators may choose not to pay attention to additional documents or video links, and give points only based on the proposal template and official Open Call documentation.

Please note that technical issues may occur with large documents in different formats. agROBOfood project does not bare responsibility for technical problems at any stage. Make sure to check and test upload on time. If technical issues do arise, applicants may contact agROBOfood team for support, via email: **evaluation@agrobofood.eu**, up to January 18th at 17:00 CET.

All proposals must be submitted by **January 20th, 2020 at 17:00 CET**. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration.

3.5 Evaluation Process

The evaluation will be done by a carefully selected pool of external reviewers. Each proposal will be reviewed by three different reviewers, each offering a specific expertise – business development, agri-food and robotic technologies.

The evaluation process consists of two phases – (I) a remote application review and (II) an interview with short listed proposals. In both phases, each proposal will be reviewed by a minimum of three external evaluators. Interviews with shortlisted proposals will also include Industry Advisory Board members as evaluators.

Written proposals submitted through the agROBOfood website will be ranked based on overall score. The top ranked proposals will be invited to interviews with external evaluators. After the two-stage evaluation process all proposals will be ranked based on their scores. The list of

accepted proposals at stage-1 and stage-2 will be published as well as the information about the non-eligible proposals. All applicants will be informed about the evaluation results.

Evaluators will rate each proposal under specific evaluation criteria. Key points for evaluation include:

Criterion	Description	Weighing	Scores	Max points
Suitability of the proposal in regard to the selected challenge	The general fitness of the proposal concerning the topic selected, the background of the company executing the experiment and what will be delivered for the requested budget.	15%	0-5	15
Technology impact and adoption of standards	The proposed solution must address the selected challenge offering an innovative and feasible technical solution based on robotic technologies. The innovative step, compared to the current state of the art, will be taken into consideration. Starting and target TRL will be taken into account as well, with a preference for a higher starting TRL, above 6.	25%	0-5	25
Socio-economic impact	The proposed solution must address the complementary task of the selected challenge offering a detailed explanation of how desired goals will be achieved.	25%	0-5	25
Business impact: business plan and scalability	The proposed product or service should be accompanied by a viable business model that is scalable in the future. Proposals need to confirm that they will provide access to their lessons learnt, best practices, tutorials, guidelines and an overview of the realised solution.	25%	0-5	25
Sustainability impact	agROBOfood has committed itself to improvement of sustainability, e.g. by achieving UN Sustainable Development Goals. It should be indicated how the proposal contributes to improving sustainability in a realistic manner.	10%	0-5	10
Systemic relevance and Financial Impact	This demonstrates the overall connection with local/regional innovation ecosystems, as well as connection and impact on agROBOfood network. Proposals	Additional Points	0-5	20

	should describe any relevant implication and support (both financial and non-financial) from public or private entities either from outside or within the proposing consortium.			
		Total points max		120

3.5.1 Redress procedure

Within 2 working days of the reception of the ESR, applicant may submit a request for redress if they believe that there has been a shortcoming in the way their proposal has been evaluated that may affect the final decision on whether they are selected as beneficiary or not, or if they believe the results of the eligibility checks are incorrect.

A designated internal review committee of the agROBOfood project will examine requests for redress. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of such requests, and equal treatment of all applicants.

Requests for redress must be:

• Related to the evaluation process or eligibility checks.

• Clearly describe the complaint and reasons for potential consideration.

• Received within the time limit (2 working days) from the ESR information letter delivered.

• Sent by the same SME legal representative that has submitted the proposal.

The committee will review the complaint and will recommend an appropriate course of action. If there is a clear evidence that a shortcoming(s) could have affected the eventual funding decision, it is possible that all or part of the proposal will be re-evaluated by the internal review committee.

Please note:

• This procedure is concerned with the evaluation and/or eligibility checking process. The committee will not call into question the scientific or technical judgement of appropriately qualified experts.

• Any redress request that calls into question the scientific or technical judgement of appropriately qualified experts will be automatically rejected.

• A re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that could have affected the final decision on whether to fund it or not. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on other criteria.

• The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. This score could be lower than the original score.

Only one request for redress per proposal will be considered by the committee. All requests for redress will be treated in confidence and must be sent to the official agROBOfood email: **evaluation@agrobofood.eu**

Important notice 2: By applying to the agROBOfood Open Call, the applicant automatically accepts all the rules and conditions set in Guideline for Applicants.

Please note: Applicants bare sole responsibility for all technical aspects during the application and submission procedure. The agROBOfood team will not consider requests for redress based on technical issues faced during submission. If technical issues arise, applicants can contact agROBOfood for support via **evaluation@agrobofood.eu** until January 18th at 17:00 CET.

4 Implementation of Industrial Challenges

Once the selection and contracting process is finished, selected beneficiaries will start implementing the industrial challenges. Implementation consists of three phases, where each phase is followed by reporting requirements that lead to a release of a designated part of the payment.

4.1 Implementation Timeline

Implementation of Industrial Challenges starts on **May 1st, 2021** and finishes on **September 30th, 2022**. Timeline split by phases is presented below.

Implementation	**Phase 1 - Design**	**May 1st – 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)**

4.2 Implementation Activities

By entering the agROBOfood Open Call, applicants agree to comply with the program outline and deliver results expected in each phase. Only after proof of successful implementation has been provided will the predefined amount of the funding granted be released.

Phase 1 – Design

Description	Expected outcome and report	Funding
Within this stage sub-projects are to be planned and detailed, jointly - beneficiary and Digital Innovation Hub representative - design a work plan of the different activities and resources to be executed along the duration of the challenge.	Beneficiaries will produce a report/deliverable that summarizes the plan for the implementation of the challenge	30%

Phase 2 – Develop

Description	Expected outcome and report	Funding
Within this stage, the sub-projects perform their technical developments, socio-economic analysis/assessments and realise the work plan.	Beneficiaries will produce a report/deliverable that summarizes the results of the challenge development.	40%

Phase 3 – Market

Description	Expected outcome and report	Funding
Within this stage sub-projects focus on exploitation of the results/ achievements (preparation and performance of demonstrations; contacts with potential partners, investors, customers; be present at	Beneficiaries will produce a report/deliverable that summarizes the market associated activities (even the ones performed along the challenge development)	30%

conferences/ events to promote and sell challenge achievements/ results).		

4.2.1 Reviews

Each project will go through 3 reviews, each one highlighting the end of a phase. The reviews will be organized by the agROBOfood consortium. The sub-project coordinator should deliver at least 1 week in advance the deliverable, so that the reviewers will be able to read it. During the review, the sub-project representatives should present their work, answer questions and demonstrate their challenge. The tentative timeline of reviews is depicted below and may be subject to changes in accordance with reviewers' availability.

Review	**Phase 1 - Design**	**August 2021**
	Phase 2 - Develop	**May 2022**
	Phase 3 - Market	**October 2023**

4.2.2 Payments

Each challenge will receive the funding on a lump sum scheme and according to the terms of the contract signed between agROBOfood consortium and the selected project representative. In more details, each challenge deliverable will be associated with a specific cost of relevant phase.

After each challenge review and successful evaluation of each deliverable, its cost will become eligible. Deliverables that are not accepted will be re-evaluated at next review. If this is the last review, the cost of these deliverables will not be paid to the beneficiary and their cost will be automatically reduced from the subcontract.

As soon as a deliverable cost becomes eligible, the sub-project coordinator should provide a Financial Statement to the agROBOfood coordinator. The funding per each phase (i.e. Design, Develop and Market), should not exceed the Open Call funding scheme (up to 40%, 30% and 30% respectively).

4.2.3 Questionnaires

agROBOfood as a network is still being built and we want to learn and improve. Each experiment funded through this call provides information to help build the network. For this reason, each beneficiary is requested to fill out questionnaires on project progress, value of network interactions, etc. Project progress must be reported on a monthly basis. Information on network interactions and services required is to be reported twice – during the Phase 2 'Develop' and at the close of Phase 3 'Market'. Questionnaires are not 'reporting tools' – instead, a review of the collected data will be used to build 'best practice' – for others to be inspired, share, learn – for the benefit of the network.

5 Applicants' Responsibilities

Applicants implementing Industrial Challenges (sub-projects) are indirectly beneficiaries of European Commission funding. As such, they are responsible for the proper use of the funding and ensure that the recipients comply with obligations under H2020 specific requirements as described in Horizon 2020 - the Framework Program for Research and Innovation (2014-2020). The obligations that are applicable to the recipients include:

5.1 Intellectual Property Rights

The following Intellectual property Rights conditions should be followed:

- The proposals submitted should be solely based on original works by the applicants and their foreseen developments are free from third party rights, or they are clearly stated.

- All IPR created by the applicants via the agROBOfood funding will remain to the applicants, who will be the unique owners of the technologies created within the framework of their sub-granted projects.

- Any communication or publication by the funded applicants shall clearly indicate that the project has received funding from the European Union, and agROBOfood project displaying the EU logo and H2020 logo on all printed and digital material, including websites and press releases.

- Parts of the projects selected for funding (including the publishable summary of the proposal) will be used for agROBOfood dissemination purposes.

- Selected applicants shall, throughout the duration of the Project, take appropriate measures to engage with the public and the media about the project and to highlight the financial support of the EC. Moreover, all measurements of the project experiments should be published as open data (unless an exception it is fully justified), respecting agROBOfood Data Management Plan and any Ethical issues defined by the European Commission and National Regulations.

  Any publicity made by the project consortium in respect of the project, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, must specify:
  a) that it is funded by the European Commission via the agROBOfood project and
  b) that it reflects only the author's views and that the EC and agROBOfood is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

  Moreover, the EC and the agROBOfood consortium shall be authorized to publish, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, information related to the project.

5.2 Conflict of Interest

Selected applicants must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the sub-project is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests').

They must formally notify to the Commission (via the agROBOfood coordinator) without delay any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. The agROBOfood coordinator may verify that the

measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

If the sub-contract beneficiary breaches any of its obligations, the sub-contract may be automatically terminated. Moreover, if case costs are not explicitly included in the sub-project, they may be rejected. Finally, the cost of the deliverables, which are clearly specified in the sub-project and are accepted during a review process, becomes eligible. Deliverables that are not accepted will be re-evaluated at next review. If this is the last review, the cost of these deliverables will not be paid to the sub-project.

5.3 Data Protection & Maintaining Confidentiality

During implementation of the sub-project and for five years after the end of the sub-project, the parties must keep confidential any data, documents or other material (in any form) that is identified as confidential at sub-contract signing time ('confidential information').

If a beneficiary SME requests, the Commission and the agROBOfood consortium may agree to keep such information confidential for an additional period beyond the initial five years. This will be explicitly stated at the sub-contract.

If information has been identified as confidential during the sub-project execution or only orally, it will be considered as confidential only if this is accepted by the agROBOfood coordinator and confirmed in writing within 15 days of the oral disclosure. Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, they may use confidential information only to implement the Agreement.

The sub-project consortium may disclose confidential information to the agROBOfood consortium and to the selected reviewers, who will be bounded by a specific Non-Disclosure Agreement.

5.4 Promoting the Action and Giving Visibility to the EU Funding

The 3rd parties (sub-contract recipients) must promote the sub-project, agROBOfood project and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner and to highlight the financial support of the EC.

Unless the European Commission or the agROBOfood coordinator requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any communication activity related to the action (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.), any publicity, including at a conference or seminar or any type of information or promotional material (brochure, leaflet, poster, presentation etc.), and any infrastructure, equipment and major results funded by the grant must:

- display the EU emblem
- display the agROBOfood logo and
- include the following text:

For communication activities: "This project has indirectly received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program, via an Open Call issued and executed under project agROBOfood (grant agreement No 825395)".

For infrastructure, equipment and major results: "This [infrastructure][equipment][insert type of result] is part of a sub-project that has indirectly received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program via an Open Call issued and executed under project agROBOfood (grant agreement No 825395)".

When displayed in association with a logo, the European emblem should be given appropriate prominence. This obligation to use the European emblem in respect of projects to which the EC contributes implies no right of exclusive use. It is subject to general third-party use restrictions which do not permit the appropriation of the emblem, or of any similar trademark or logo, whether by registration or by any other means. Under these conditions, the Beneficiary is exempted from the obligation to obtain prior permission from the EC to use the emblem. Further detailed information on the EU emblem can be found on the Europa web page.

Any publicity made by the Beneficiary in respect of the project, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, must specify that it reflects only the author's views and that the EC or agROBOfood project is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

The EC and the agROBOfood consortium shall be authorized to publish, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, the following information:

- the name of the sub-project coordinator and the beneficiary SME
- contact address of the sub-project coordinator and the beneficiary SME
- the general purpose of the project
- the amount of the financial contribution foreseen for the project; after the final payment, the amount of the financial contribution actually received by the sub-project
- the geographic location of the activities carried out;
- the list of dissemination activities and/or of patent (applications) relating to foreground;
- the details/references and the abstracts of scientific publications relating to foreground and, if funded within the sub-project, the published version or the final manuscript accepted for publication;
- the publishable reports submitted to agROBOfood;
- any picture or any audio-visual or web material provided to the EC and agROBOfood in the framework of the project.

The sub-project coordinator shall ensure that all necessary authorizations for such publication have been obtained and that the publication of the information by the EC and agROBOfood does not infringe any rights of third parties.

Upon a duly substantiated request by the sub-project coordinator, the agROBOfood consortium, if such permission is provided by the EC, may agree to forego such publicity if disclosure of the information indicated above would risk compromising the beneficiary's security, academic or commercial interests.

6 Checklist

1) **Does your planned work fit with Open Call for Industrial Challenges?** Check that your proposed work does indeed address one of the topics open in this call.
2) **Does your proposal address robotic technology in agriculture?** Check that your proposed work does indeed address robotic technologies in the target sector.
3) **Does your proposal address the socio-economic aspect of the Challenge?** Check that your proposed work does indeed address the socio-economic aspect defined in the Challenge.
4) **Is your proposal eligible?** The eligibility criteria are given in chapter 3 “Proposal ”. Make sure that you satisfy the minimum participation requirements (entity from eligible countries).
5) **Is your proposal complete?** Have you completed all mandatory questions?
6) **Have you checked all technical details related to submission?** Difficulties with application and submission arising from technical aspects will not be taken into consideration by agROBOfood project. Applicants should do test rounds and make sure to submit everything on time.
7) **Does your proposal fulfil questions requests/ comments?** Proposals should be precise, concise and must answer to requested questions, which are designed to correspond to the applied evaluation. Omitting requested information will almost certainly lead to lower scores and possible rejection.
8) **Have you maximised your chances?** There will be strong competition. Therefore, edit your proposal tightly, strengthen or eliminate weak points.
9) **Have you submitted your proposal before the deadline?** It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the proposal. Failure of the proposal to arrive in time for any reason, including network communications delays, is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. The time of receipt of the message as recorded by the submission system will be definitive.
10) **Have you provided the necessary annexes?**
11) **Do you need further advice and support?** You can reach out to the Open Call team via **evaluation@agrobofood.eu.** Technical team can provide assistance to the extent possible, **up to January 18th at 17:00 CET.**

Do not forget that it is mandatory for the SME to have a valid VAT number during contract preparation time.

7 Points of Contact

Digital Innovation Hub by Region	Countries	Name	Contact
Regional Cluster Network Coordinator		Erik Pekkeriet	erik.pekkeriet@wur.nl
North West Europe – WR	The Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, United Kingdom, Ireland	Erik Pekkeriet	erik.pekkeriet@wur.nl
North East Europe - DTI	Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus	Jacob Kortbek	jkk@teknologisk.dk
France and Italy - CEA	France, Italy	Frédéric Colledani	frederic.colledani@cea.fr
Iberia - EURECAT	Spain, Portugal	Jesús Pablo González	jesuspablo.gonzalez@eurecat.org
Central Eastern Europe - BIOS	Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro	Marko Prokin	prokin.marko@biosense.rs
Central North Europe - Fraunhofer	Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Czechia, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary	Ahmad Issa	ahmad.issa@ipa.fraunhofer.de
East Med - AUA	Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Israel	Michael Koutsiaras	mgkoutsiaras@aua.gr