CLARIFICATIONS

Call reference: EUBA-EFSA-2025-BIOHAW-01
Call title: Welfare monitoring: data driven risk assessment in fast and slower growing broilers (BROWARD)

Question 1: I understand that UK organisations are ineligible for this funding, however I wonder if it would be possible for a corresponding UK funded project to collaborate, so that the same data could be collected on UK farms? This type of synergy could be beneficial to all in extending data available.

Answer: Please kindly note the call for proposals has now been published (link).

The call sets a number of award criteria, which will be used to evaluate eligible proposals that pass the selection criteria. Among those, the approach of the proposals with regards to "dissemination and communication of the projects results" has been included, under which cooperation with Third Countries (as may be relevant) would fall.

As explained in our previous email, UK organisations are not eligible to apply under this call as participation to EFSA call for proposals is limited only to art.36 competent organisations from eligible countries. UK organisations, as well as organisations from any other third country, can join consortia as subcontractors. Cooperation with existing initiatives is encouraged by the call but is not explicitly requested. It is up to the applicants to opt for and present in their proposal any such cooperation or coordination in a way that makes their proposed project more impactful (and, thus, their proposal more competitive).

Please note that, currently, EFSA does not provide any platform where parties interested in this call can directly contact or network with each other. However, EFSA supports a network of Focal Points (link), which can assist eligible parties also with regards to networking aspects.

Question 2: Specifically concerning the number of animals required for the experiments:
- Intervention 1 "[…] to assess the impact of different stocking densities (15, 20, 33, and 42 kg/m²) in a barn with at least 10,000 broiler chickens" (p.12)
- Intervention 2 and 3 "The experiment should resemble commercial conditions as much as possible and should accommodate at least 10,000 broiler chickens" (p.12)
- "Availability of facilities to conduct experiments in at least semi-commercial conditions for running experiments with at least 10,000 broiler chickens" (p.36)

Question 2.1: Does the number of 10,000 animals concern the total amount of animals in the experiment (i.e., divided over different treatments and replicates)?

Answer 2.1: Given a certain amount of space in one stable/barn, the requirement of the minimum number of birds of 10,000 can be split into a number of groups (e.g. 4 groups per treatment or replicate). The number of birds per group should be sufficient to mimic commercial settings as much as possible. For example, in one compartment with the space of 250 m2 (with a total barn space of 1000 m2): for the scenario with lowest stocking density of 15 kg/m2, the number of birds should be around 1,442 birds assuming a final weight of 2,6 kg. This design would allow four groups in that barn

of 1000 m2. The applicant is encouraged to argument the choice for the design of the experiments to test the interventions.

Question 2.2: Do all animals for all treatments need to be jointly housed in 1 barn or is it one treatment per barn? (e.g. 2 barns for 21,600 birds at max. density 42kg/m2)

Answer 2.2: We are uncertain what you mean by 'treatment'- whether you refer to the type of intervention being tested, or to the level of intervention the call for proposals requests to test, which is only applicable for the intervention 1 (i.e. stocking density). Based on the example you provided, we assume you are referring to the second option. In the case of stocking density, all levels of stocking density can be tested in the same barn under semicommercial conditions. Please see the answer to question 1.1.

Question 2.3: Can the animals be divided in different compartments per barn? (E.g. 8 fully separated compartments with separate climate control; 2,300 broilers housed per compartment (at max. density) for a total of 18,400 birds)

- Data collected in such set-up accounts for the required replications and allows robust statistical analyses to be carried out on all data collected (including technical results and the predefined ABMs, RBMs and MBMs as per requested in the call)

Answer 2.3: Please see the answer to question 1.1

Question 3. In case the experiments are performed at a commercial farm, is it allowed to pay financial compensation to the farmer (e.g., with a significantly reduced stocking density)? Does this need to be paid by the grant or is there an option for additional financial compensation for a farmer?

Answer: This type of cost, if any, which is at charge of the beneficiary of the grant, grant under a framework agreement which is for lump sum/ financing not linked to costs.

Question 4. Concerning the interventions defined for the experimental studies (p.12). Is it required to limit experiments to testing the interventions separately or is there also an interest in assessing the effects of combined interventions, e.g. different stocking densities (Intervention 1) x use of elevated platforms (Intervention 2)

Answer: It is required to test the intervention of stocking density separately from the intervention of the use of the elevated platforms.
The objective of intervention 2 (use of elevated platforms) is to observe the impact of the provision of elevated platforms in commercial settings in terms of stocking density.

Question 5: Our consortium is somewhat unclear about the requirements for the Independent Project Coordinator as listed on p29-30 of the call for proposals. It is stated that this person "*must be fully independent from all other partners in the consortium and affiliated with a separate legal entity*". Could you kindly clarify what level of conflict of interest is considered? For example, would it be unacceptable if the coordinator is employed by a university where one of the consortium partners has been appointed as visiting professor or with whom consortium partners have collaborated with in the past/present? Also, can other researchers from the same institute or research group as the coordinator be involved in other tasks of the project or does the position as coordinator exclude other staff from the same institute participating in the project? Finally, can the project coordinator be involved in other activities of the project, and e.g. be co-author of publications or be supervisor of PhD students on the project?

Answer: EFSA would like to stress that the role of the independent project coordinator is intended to be one of coordination only, and not of execution. This separation is important to ensure impartiality and to maintain the quality and objectivity of the coordination activities. We believe that combining coordination with direct involvement (execution) in project tasks may compromise the effectiveness

of coordination efforts. The Project Coordinator can indeed be a partner in the consortium and affiliated with a separate legal entity.
For this reason, a coordinator affiliated with an institution where consortium members are employed, hold honorary or visiting positions, or maintain close collaborative ties (past or present) would meet the requirement if the coordination role (task) is not combined with execution of project tasks. Researchers from the same institute or research group as the project coordinator should not be involved in the execution of project tasks.
Finally, the project coordinator should not take on any additional roles in the project such as participating in research activities, supervising PhD students funded by the project. The project coordinator can co-author scientific publications derived from the project results.
We hope this clarifies EFSA's expectations regarding the independence of the project coordinator, which we see as essential for ensuring transparent and high-quality project coordination.

Question 6: a) In the consortium the applicant is referring to, Sweden is taking the lead as the coordinator. Could EFSA please confirms if the coordinator is unable to take on substantial content-related tasks?

b) The applicants are in the process of preparing their Europass CVs. Are there any specific elements or details they should pay extra attention to for this call?

Answer: a) The coordinator — defined as the legal entity that will coordinate the consortium — is asked to perform the roles set out in the call for proposals, Section I.6 ("Roles and Responsibilities"). In the call for proposals there is no indication that the coordinator should avoid substantial content-related tasks; on the contrary, the coordinator is generally expected to take part of the content. Please note that the division of tasks among the members of the consortium (coordinator and partners) is left to the consortium. As indicated in award criterion 1, the description of how the project will be managed, including the distribution of tasks among consortium partners and individual team members, will be assessed in the evaluation phase. Please also note that subcontractors may only perform non-core tasks.

b) The elements required for the CVs are indicated in section "Professional and operational capacity" of the call for proposals, Evidence requested for requirement 2 and 3, pages 32 and 34 of the call for proposals.

Question 7: We have a group of experts interested in the call and I am interested in coordinating a proposal, but I am a bit uncertain how to interpret two requirements set for the coordinator.

a) My first point concerns the **independence of coordinating organisation**. The person proposed for this position is currently at a research institute and is not affiliated with other entities. This person has previously given some lectures at a university (as a side activity), but he/she assumes that is not an issue when considering the independence of the coordinator.
b) The call mentions that the coordinator shall have at least 3 years of experience in coordinating EU-wide, large-scale, multidisciplinary research projects in the field of animal welfare, veterinary science, or similar. The proposed person is currently coordinating an EU-funded project, which has been ongoing for about two years now. Previously the person has also coordinated smaller projects in Europe for 3 years and large project nationally in total for more than 15 years. So we were wondering if this kind of experience is sufficient to meet the requirement of 3 years of coordination experience.

Answer:
a) We understand that at this stage you would like to understand if the proposed profile meets the requirement set in the call for proposals for the role of independent project coordinator. Please note that we will publish a corrigendum clarifying the requirements expected for this role and rephrasing the role itself, now referred to as "project manager". We think that this change will help you to clarify your doubt.

b) Please note that the selection criteria (which include the requirement for the teams of experts) as well as the award criteria will be assessed by an evaluation committee nominated for the purpose of assessing applications. We are currently not in the position of providing feedback on this at this stage.

Question 8: In Topic conditions and documents I can download "Corrigendum 1 - EUBA-EFSA-2025-BIOHAW-01-BROWARD-Annex 3_Declaration on honour on exclusion updated DoI policy". However, in "Funding: Submission Service" I can download the Part B Templates to "Annex 3_Declaration on honour on exclusion". Thus, there are two different versions in the F&T Portal. I presume that "Corrigendum 1 - EUBA-EFSA-2025-BIOHAW-01-BROWARD-Annex 3_Declaration on honour on exclusion updated DoI policy" is the correct on. Is this correct?

Answer: Yes, it is correct. Corrigendum 1 - EUBA-EFSA-2025-BIOHAW-01-BROWARD-Annex 3 should be used. We have requested the e-submission service to remove the old template of Annex 3.

Question 9: On the final page of the Annex 3 the weblink https://ec.europa.eu/cefdigital/DSS/webappdemo/validation doesn't seem to work

Answer: Please use the following link: https://ec.europa.eu/digital-building-blocks/DSS/webapp-demo/validation

Question 10: Our institute would like to participate in the project Welfare monitoring: data driven risk assessment in fast and slower growing broilers (BROWARD). This year, we launched a national-wide project to monitor the health and welfare of poultry, monitoring conditions in all small/medium/large poultry farms in Slovakia. We therefore have access to data that is also the focus of the BROWAR project. Is there anyone here who will be applying for the project and is forming or involved in a consortium, so that I can discuss the possibility of joining as a partner? We are an eligible organization under Article 36.

Answer: We advise to use the Search Tool – here at EFSA website. You can search by countries and/or competencies. You can also ask your Focal Point EFSA.focalpoint@land.gov.sk they can help you connecting you with other member states organisations.

Question 11: I'm reaching out to ask what a university needs to do to be included on EFSA's list of institutions eligible to apply for tenders, such as the Broward one. We are forming a research group that could contribute on welfare topics relates to both terrestrial and aquatic animals, so we're particularly interested in understanding the process. We would really appreciate it if you could guide us a little on this, or, if not, let us know whom we should contact.

Answer: As described in section 2.2 of the call for proposals document the call is restricted to the list of competent organisations established by the Authority's Management Board. "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. This list is regularly updated by EFSA Management Board and is available for consultation using this link https://efsa.my.site.com/competentorganisations/s/"

An organisation interested in joining the list should contact its national Focal Point, which will explain the procedure. Contact details of the Focal Points are available on the EFSA website here.

Please note that in order to achieve the main objective of the call, **proposals must be submitted by a consortium of at least two eligible organisations**. One of the partners must be identified in

the proposal as the consortium leader. The applicant (consortium leader) is responsible for identifying consortium partners. If you are searching for consortium partners, please contact your Focal Point at the following address: https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/partnersnetworks/eumembers
(section: Focal Points members and observers, click on the relevant country in the map).

Question 12:
Part 1: Is there any pathway (such as conditional participation or late registration) that would allow an organisation to participate in a consortium for this call while its Article 36 application is under evaluation, given our ongoing involvement in a contract with EFSA (procurement)?
Part 2: If not, are all entities required to be on the Article 36 list at the moment of proposal submission, or only by the time of grant signature?

Answer to Part 1: Please note that, as mentioned in the par. 2.2 on eligibility criteria "***At the day of deadline for submission of proposals***, *the applicant and in case of consortium also its partner/s 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*"

The ongoing involvement in another EFSA project (a procurement contract signed with EFSA following a call for tenders) cannot be considered a reason to waive this requirement. Unfortunately, there is no possibility to provide a different pathway such as conditional participation or late registration.

Answer to Part 2: All entities applying as consortium partners must be on Art. 36 at the day of deadline for submission of proposals.
Please note that the requirement of being include on Art. 36 only applies to consortium members and not to subcontractors – therefore organisations which are not on art. 36 can be considered as subcontractors in an application coordinated by Art. 36 entities as long as the consortium meets the requirement of consortium composition set in the call for proposals. Please note that the call for proposals details which activities can be subcontracted with an explicit reference to "core-tasks" which cannot be subcontracted.

Question 13: The hyperlink to the list of Article 36 organisations on page 5 of the Call for proposals does not work.
Answer: Please note that an updated version of the Call for proposals document has been published to adjust the hyperlink on page 5 and 21.

Question 14 : In the draft grant agreement Annex 5, Specific rules, it is not clear how the Individual DoI will be screened.
Answer: An update draft grant agreement has been published to add in Annex 5, Specific rules, the reference to the Individual DoI (highlighted in yellow).

Question 15: Table on page 8 explains specific subobjective 4.2 as follows: "Intervention 2: provide elevated platforms as indicated in the project proposal to fast-growing and slower-growing broiler chickens."
However, the more detailed explanation on page 12 says that intervention 2 involves designing and conducting an experimental study to evaluate the impact of provision of elevated platforms for fast-growing broilers.
Shall this intervention be conducted in both fast and slower growing broilers as said on page 8 or only in fast-growing bloilers as mentioned on page 12?

In addition, I would like to ask if it is possible to have two weeks extension to the submission deadline? We will conduct intervention experiments in commercial farms, but we have faced challenges that are beyond our control in ensuring some details of experimental facilities in commercial farms.

Answer: Intervention 2 involves providing elevated platforms for fast-growing and slower-growing broilers. The authorising officer is currently considering an extension of the deadline. If approved, a corrigendum to the call for proposals will be published next week.

Question 16: Is there a limitation (or recommendation) regarding the maximum number of pages for annexes of proposals sent to the BROWARD call?

Answer: There is no limit, but the proposal must be succinct.

Question 17: It is ambiguous, as the financial part is Criterion 2.4.A. And the Criterion 2.4.B would be connected Annex 5 (not Annex 4). In the Annex 4 no such amendment seems to be requested to that signed document, as described in Criterion 2.4.B.

Answer: Indeed, Annex 5 is the correct document to be provided as evidence for criterion 2.4 B. The typo error has been corrected in the call for proposals.