GRANT CALL FOR PROPOSALS

AND GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

CORRIGENDUM 1

Call reference: EUBA-EFSA-2026-BIOHAW-01
Call title: Support to EFSA in the risk assessment of alternative methods for the use and disposal of animal by-products and derived products
Budget Line: 3210-RASC
Project/process code: EPA.02.02.01

This call is 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.

Applicants must check if they are included in the Art.36 list of competent organisations before submitting an application.

To understand more about EFSA's grants:

- Watch this video which explains the difference between procurement and grants;
- Consult this infographic;
- To find out more about becoming an Art.36 organisation, consult the EFSA webpage 'Competent organisations in Member States'.

Brief description of the call objectives and key messages: Support the evaluations carried out by the EFSA Scientific BIOHAZ Panel and the ad hoc Working Group on applications for alternative methods of use or disposal of animal by-products or derived products, performing work related to the development of the draft scientific opinions.

INDICATIVE PROCEDURE TIMETABLE

Milestone	Date[1]	Comments
Launch date	08/10/2026	Date of call publication on EFSA's website and Funding & Tender portal.
Deadline for applicants to raise clarification questions to EFSA	02/12/2026	If, after having read this Call for proposals and guide for applicants, you have any questions, you may address them to EFSAProcurement@efsa.europa.eu by indicating the Call reference.
Deadline for EFSA to reply to clarification questions	04/12/2026	Question and answers will be published with the Call documents in the Funding & Tender portal, which the applicants are requested to consult regularly.
Deadline for submission of proposals	**10/12/2026 At 17:00 EFSA Local Time**	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. **Hard copy paper applications will not be accepted.**
Notification of the evaluation results	February 2027	Estimated *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.*
Grant agreement(s) signature	March 2027	Estimated

[1] All times are in the time zone of the country of the EFSA.

Table of Contents

1. GRANT OPPORTUNITY AND CONDITIONS 5

1.1 LEGAL FRAMEWORK 5

1.2 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL 6

1.3 TASKS, DELIVERABLES, TIMELINES, MEETINGS, AND PAYMENTS 7

1.4 INFORMATION ON THE GRANT AGREEMENT 14

1.5 ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS 15

1.6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 16

1.7 IMPLEMENTING CONTRACTS AND SUBCONTRACTING 17

1.8 GRANT PRINCIPLES 17

1.9 ESTIMATED BUDGET AND ELIGIBLE COSTS 18

1.10 PUBLICITY 18

1.11 PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA IN RELATION TO GRANT PROCEDURES AND ANTIFRAUD STRATEGY 18

1.12 PUBLIC ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS 19

1.13 OPEN ACCESS 19

1.14 HUNGARIAN PUBLIC INTEREST TRUSTS ESTABLISHED UNDER HUNGARIAN ACT IX OF 2021 19

1.15 USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS AND MODELS FOR DRAFTING THE OFFER AND IN DELIVERING SERVICES 20

INTRODUCTION OF NEW AI SYSTEMS/MODELS DURING GRANT IMPLEMENTATION 21

2. SELECTING PROPOSALS 23

2.1 VERIFICATION OF SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS 23

2.2 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA 23

2.3 EXCLUSION CRITERIA 23

2.4 SELECTION CRITERIA 24

2.5 AWARD CRITERIA 27

2.6 PROCESS FOLLOWING THE ASSESSMENT AGAINST AWARD CRITERIA 28

3. SUBMITTING PROPOSALS 29

3.1 SUBMISSION MODALITIES 29

3.2 LANGUAGE OF THE PROPOSAL AND THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS 29

3.3 EXPECTED DURATION OF PROCEDURE 30

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Draft framework partnership agreement (including Confidentiality declaration) and model specific 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

Annex 6: Award criteria template

1. GRANT OPPORTUNITY AND CONDITIONS[2]

1.1 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Article 36 (1) of the Regulation (EC) 178/2002[3] 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[4], 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. producing scientific data or works contributing to the risk assessment tasks, including assessment tasks in the field of human nutrition in relation to Community legislation, for which the Authority is responsible; this type of task must correspond to precise problems identified in the course of the work of the Authority, and in particular that of its Committee and permanent Scientific Panels, and must not duplicate Community research projects or data or contributions which it is the industry's duty to provide, especially in the context of authorisation procedures;
3. preparing the Authority's scientific opinions, including preparatory work relating to the assessment of authorisation dossiers;
4. preparing the harmonisation of risk assessment methods;
5. sharing data of common interest, e.g. the establishing of databases.

Article 5(2) of the Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004[5] 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) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024[6]).

[2] 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.

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

[4] Project is frequently referred to in this Call as "action", in line with EU Financial Regulation terminology.

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

[6] http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj

This call is based on EFSA Founding regulation[7] and EFSA's applicable annual Work Programme for grants and operational procurements as presented in the Annex of the applicable Programming Document, available on the EFSA's website[8].

1.2 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

BACKGROUND

EFSA is responsible for the safety in the food chain from farm to fork in the EU by delivering independent and transparent scientific advice to policy makers.

EFSA plays an important role in conducting risk assessments of the use of **animal by-products** (thereinafter referred to as **ABPs**) for feed and other purposes as well in the evaluation of alternative methods for the processing of ABPs, contributing to their safe use. With this Call for Proposals, EFSA is exploring a new opportunity to involve Article 36 organisations in the preparatory work of these risk assessments.

Evaluations of alternative methods for the use or disposal of ABPs or derived products are carried out by EFSA Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ Panel) and its Working Group (WG) on applications for alternative methods of use or disposal of animal by-products or derived products, coordinated by the Biological Hazards Team of EFSA's BIOHAW Unit and following the EU Regulatory framework (Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009[9] and Commission Regulation (EU) No 142/2011[10]). General recommendations on the format of the applications are included in the Statement on technical assistance on the format for applications for new alternative methods for ABPs (EFSA BIOHAZ Panel, 2010[11]), transposed to Annex VII of Commission Regulation (EU) No 142/2011. ABP applications can be triggered by the European Commission (EC) or by any interested party via the competent authorities and the evaluation procedure follows a standardized workflow[12].

The Workflow for the "Application procedure for alternative processing methods of animal by - products" is published in the EFSA web (link).

The EC Scientific Steering Committee (thereinafter referred to as SSC) until May 2003 and, since then EFSA, have provided scientific advice in the area of ABPs in the form of multiple reports and scientific opinions that in many instances have resulted in legislative amendments over the years, in the form of the current standards and alternative methods for the processing of ABPs. The criteria followed in mandates submitted by the EC under Article 29 of Reg. 178/2002 and in evaluations under Article 20 of Regulation (EC) 1069/2009 have been varied and applied to different materials and processes with multiple end uses.

The EU Green Deal agenda promoting circular economy practices, the recycling and reuse of waste and ABPs and the deficit in basic raw food and feed materials in the EU are generating an interest in developing new and alternative methods for the processing of ABPs, and the increase of the throughput using the methods already approved. It is expected that the demand for regulatory risk assessments on alternative methods for the processing of ABPs by EFSA will increase in the next few years, along with mandates requested by the EC.

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[7] 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

[8] All Programming Documents are available at this website: https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/corporate-pubs/programming-documents

[9] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02009R1069-20191214&from=EN

[10] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2011:054:FULL&from=EN

[11] https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/j.efsa.2009.1680

[12] https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-05/apdeskapplworlflowanimalbyprod.pdf

OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

The objective of the call is **the identification of one or several partners among Article 36 organisations** who will carry out preparatory work in relation to the assessment of applications for alternative methods for the use or disposal of ABPs or derived products as described in Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 and Commission Regulation (EU) No 142/2011. The call for proposals will result in the signature of one Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) to entrust at any time during the next 4 years **tasks to support EFSA's evaluation of applications for alternative methods for the use and disposal of animal by-products (ABPs) or derived products**. The detailed description of the activities is provided in section 1.3.

Only Article 36 organisations are eligible to apply to this Call (see section 1.5). Proposals can be submitted by a single Article 36 organisation or by a consortium of several Article 36 organisations. Roles and responsibilities of involved organisations are defined in Section 1.6.

1.3 TASKS, DELIVERABLES, TIMELINES, MEETINGS, AND PAYMENTS

The aim is to select beneficiary(ies) able to support EFSA's evaluation of applications for alternative methods for the use or disposal of animal by-products (ABPs) or derived products.

Overview of application procedure for alternative processing methods of animal by – products in EFSA

- Once an ABPs application is submitted to EFSA, the Front-Desk and Workforce Planning Unit (thereinafter referred to as FDP Unit) conducts the validation of the dossier in what is called "completeness check". This process is done in consultation with the scientific matter unit (hereafter referred to as SMU), which in this case is the BIOHAW Unit, in particular, the BIOHAZ team of this unit. If either BIOHAW or FDP consider there is missing information in the dossier, the request/s to applicants are drafted jointly and submitted by FDP in an iterative process until the dossier is considered complete.

- Once the dossier has been validated, the evaluation of the application starts with the legal deadline to deliver the scientific opinion within six months, according to Article 20 of Regulation (EU) 1069/2009. From that point onwards, FDP is not involved anymore and BIOHAZ team is fully responsible for the evaluation process.

- Upon validation of the dossier, the responsible SMU scientific officer ensures that full access to the dossier, specific section(s) or studies is granted to the contractor, ensuring that any information claimed confidential or granted confidential status is identified.

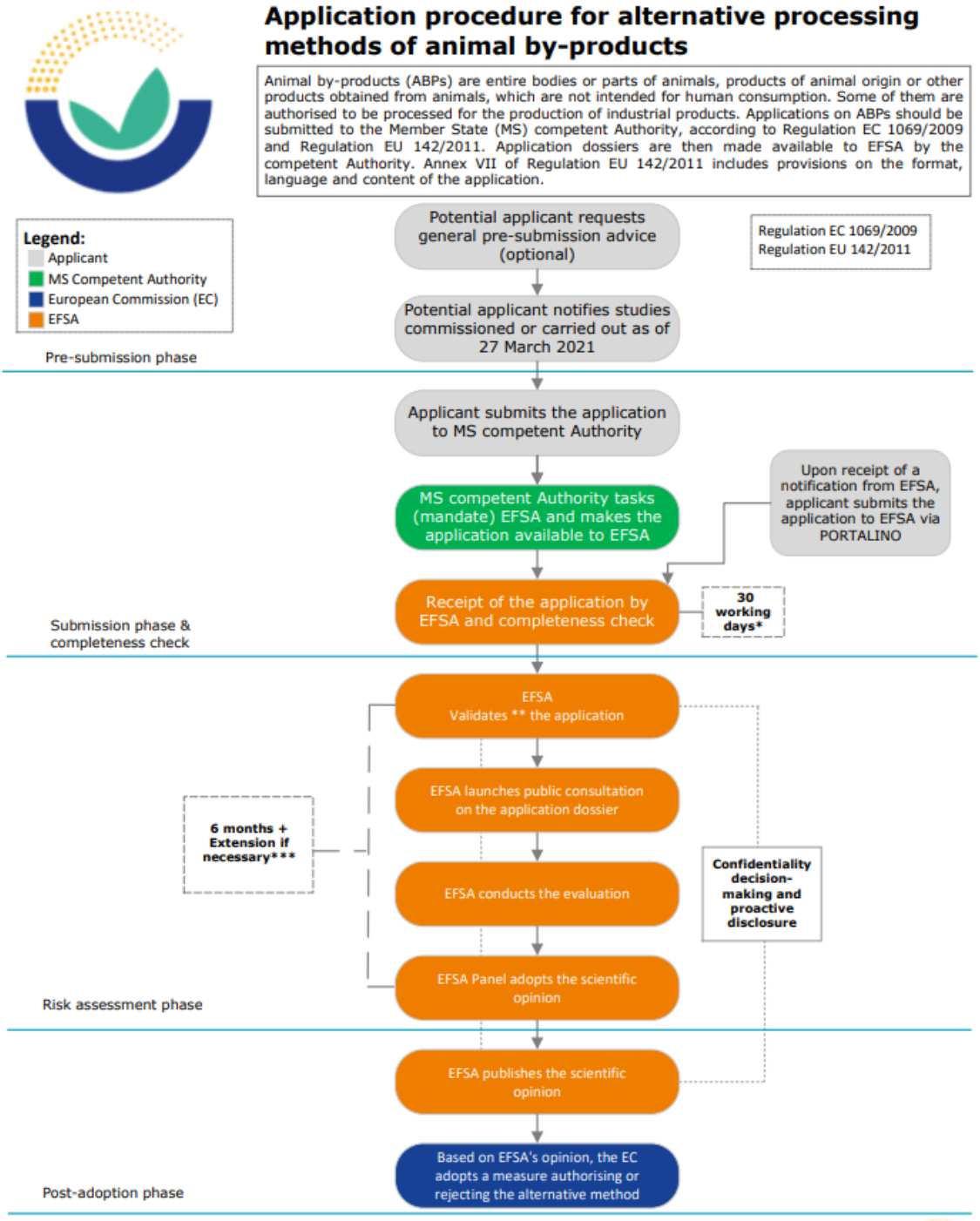
  The tasks that BIOHAZ team implements at that stage are:
  - to establish the *ad-hoc* working group (WG) that will evaluate the ABP application;
  - to organize the meetings of the *ad-hoc* WG;
  - to liaise with the EFSA BIOHAZ Panel;
  - to pre-populate the scientific opinion with the sections of the dossier that are relevant using a standard template;
  - to process and agree confidentiality claims.

During the entire process, EFSA's role includes overall supervision of the production of the scientific opinion in accordance with EFSA Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and internal quality procedures (including working instructions -WINs). It is also the responsibility of EFSA BIOHAZ Team to engage with the chair of the WG and internally to ensure the draft opinion is presented at regular intervals to the BIOHAZ Panel for their review, comments and possible adoption. This review of the scientific opinion by the BIOHAZ Panel members includes its discussion at the BIOHAZ Panel Plenary meetings, including the so called "first reading" of the scientific opinion (done at the 2nd Panel Plenary

meeting before planned adoption Plenary), the "thorough reading" (done at the Panel Plenary before planned adoption Plenary), and "adoption" (usually done at the Panel Plenary closest to the deadline for adoption).

- The process ends with the publication in the EFSA Journal of a scientific opinion of the EFSA BIOHAZ Panel assessing the alternative method submitted in the application.

Figure 1 below shows the application procedure for alternative processing methods of animal by-products to EFSA



Link: https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-05/apdeskapplworlflowanimalbyprod.pdf

Table 1 below shows the structure of a scientific opinion for the ABP regulatory domain. Depending on the nature of the application, different areas of expertise could be required to evaluate the data and draft the corresponding parts of the scientific opinion.

1. Introduction 2. Data and Methodologies 3. Assessment 3.1 Full description of the process 3.2 Full description of the material to be treated 3.3 Hazard identification 3.4 Level of risk reduction 3.5 HACCP Plan 3.6 Risk associated with interdependent process 3.7 Risk associated with the intended end use of the products 4. Conclusions 5. Recommendations

Entrusted tasks to be performed by the FPA beneficiary(ies)

The FPA beneficiary(ies) will be asked to perform the tasks related to the development of the scientific opinion for the evaluation of the ABP application, including data analysis and integration of data and information.

The support of the beneficiary(ies) can be requested for:

a) a **full assessment** of the ABPs application (option 1)
b) a **partial assessment** of the ABPs application (option 2).

The time frame to conduct the task and comply with the timeline for the deliverables is bound to the legal requirements. According to point 5, Article 20 of Regulation (EC) 1069/2009, "*EFSA shall assess, within six months following receipt of a complete application, whether the method submitted ensures that risks to public or animal health are: a) controlled […], b) reduced […]. EFSA shall issue an opinion on the application submitted*".

Thus, the timeline to deliver the intermediate deliverables indicated in the table below (e.g. Task 2, Deliverable 4) is needed to ensure that time is available for the subsequent steps of the risk assessment process and to deliver the corresponding scientific opinion within the **legal deadline of 6 months**.

The tasks are linked to the lifecycle of an application and foreseen to be included in corresponding Specific Agreements. Specific Agreements may relate to one or several dossiers/applications. An overview of the FPA and specific grants agreements for each application process is shown in Figure 2 below.

Regular reporting to EFSA counterparts is needed to keep track of progresses.

Considering the sensitivity of the tasks outsourced, subcontracting is not allowed for any of the tasks.

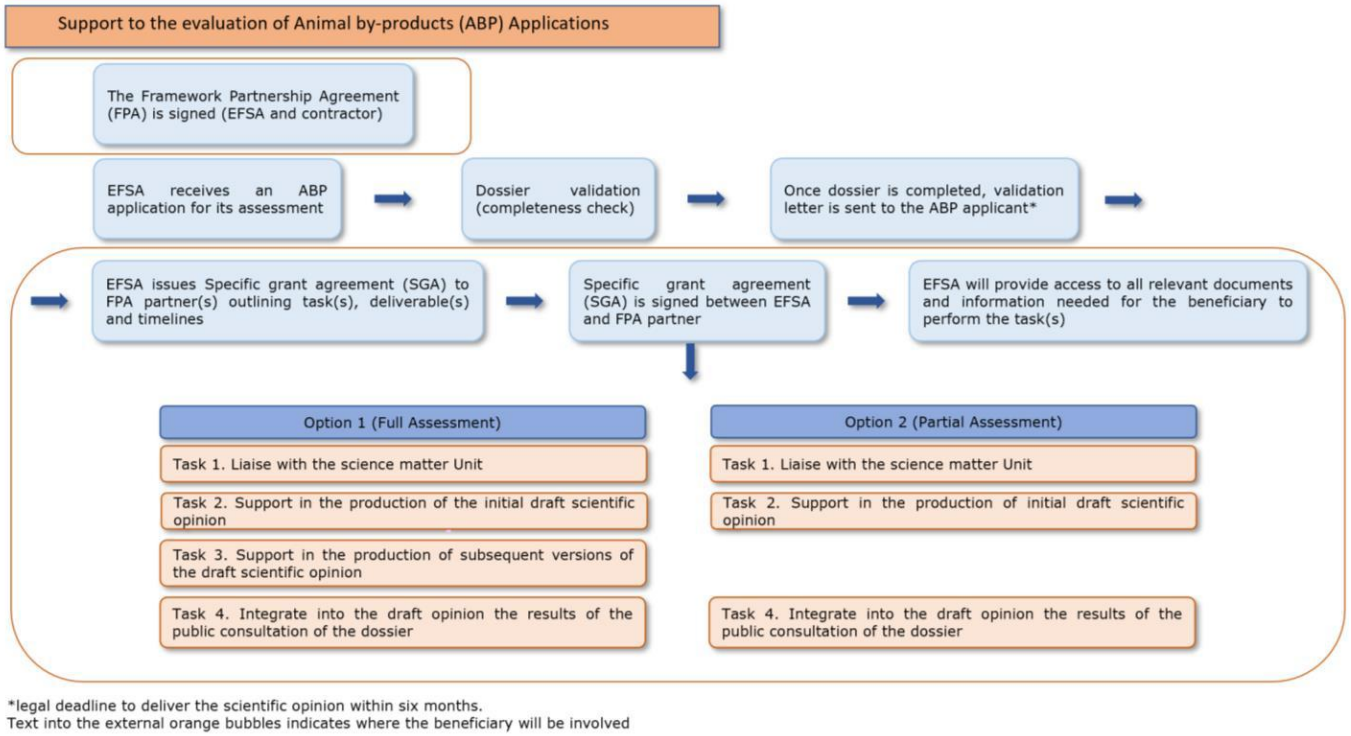


Figure 2. Framework partnership agreement process for the support to the evaluation of ABP applications

More detailed information on the different **tasks** requested, timelines and deliverables is shown below.

a) Support for a full assessment of the ABPs application (Option 1)

In this case, the tasks to be entrusted to the beneficiary(ies) are:

- **Task 1. Liaise with the science matter Unit** (SMU) throughout the entire assessment phase providing regular updates.

- **Task 2**. **Support in the production of the initial draft scientific opinion** in coordination and agreement of the SMU/following guidelines from the SMU, using the output template provided by EFSA, and following the text structure shown in Table 1 in a collaboration platform (e.g., Microsoft Teams) including:

    - Populate the initial draft opinion with introductory sections and those related to the description of the relevant sections of the dossier submitted by the ABP applicant.
    - If the contractor identifies any missing data, liaise with the SMU and the WG to agree the request to the contractor for additional data and information.
    - If additional data and information have been provided by the ABP applicant during the evaluation period, amend the relevant descriptive sections of the scientific opinion accordingly.

- **Task 3: Support in the production of subsequent versions of the draft scientific opinion** in coordination and agreement of the SMU/following guidelines from the SMU, including:

    - the scientific evaluation of the alternative method in the sections related to the BIOHAZ Panel assessment, based on the data available in the application, the expertise of the beneficiary and inputs by the WG and the BIOHAZ Panel experts.

- Amend the relevant sections of the assessment in the scientific opinion based on new data provided by the applicant, and comments and suggestions of the WG, BIOHAZ Panel and/or the SMU, until the final draft is ready for submission to the BIOHAZ Panel for adoption.
- Edit and format the scientific opinion according to EFSA journal template, and populate it with supplementary sections as agreed with the WG and SMU: recommendations, references, documentation received, glossary, etc.
- If needed, participation of the FPA partner(s) in one or more WGs or BIOHAZ Plenary meetings to provide clarifications on the draft opinion(s)

- **Task 4.** If the non-confidential parts of the dossier were submitted to public consultation:

  - Update the draft opinion according to the comments received via public consultations (phase 3 of Figure 1) in agreement with EFSA and the WG.
  - Contribute to address the comments received and produce the report with the addressed comments as an Annex of the scientific opinion.

b) Support for a partial assessment of the ABPs application (Option 2)

On an *ad hoc* basis, the support only for a partial assessment (Option 2) may be asked by EFSA. In this case, the Tasks to be entrusted will be Task 1, 2, and Task 4.

The beneficiary will be put in contact with the relevant EFSA Unit involved in the evaluation process and experts from the ABP WG and the BIOHAZ Panel. EFSA will provide to the beneficiary templates, repository links, and any additional information needed (including applicable SOPs and WINs) and will inform on the legal deadlines.
At the kick-off meeting, the science matter unit will inform the beneficiary of the planned dates for the ad hoc Working Group (WG) meetings, during which the ABP scientific opinion will be evaluated, as well as the dates of the EFSA BIOHAZ Panel meetings, including the plenaries for the first reading, thorough reading and adoption of the scientific opinion prepared. EFSA will make sure that any updates to the dates are promptly communicated to the beneficiary. Continuous interaction between the EFSA science matter unit and the beneficiary will support the timely completion of the tasks and deliverables.

The summary of the tasks, deliverables, timelines and planned meetings is shown in Table below. In general, all task foreseen below will be carried out online.

Support to assessment of the ABPs applications – applicable to each Specific Agreement		
Tasks	**Deliverables**	**Deadline**
Task 1: Liaise with the science matter unit (SMU)	**Deliverable 1**: Minutes of kick off meeting agreed and provided to EFSA.	One week after the day of the kick off meeting of the Specific Grant Agreement.
	Deliverable 2: Minutes of ad hoc meetings agreed and provided to EFSA.	One week after each meeting with EFSA SMU. *EFSA will communicate the dates of SMU meetings.*
	Deliverable 3: Minutes of final meeting agreed and provided to EFSA, including lessons learnt.	One week after the day of the final meeting of the Specific Grant Agreement .

Task 2: Support in the production of the initial draft scientific opinion (populate initial draft and amend based on information contained in dossier submissions)	**Deliverable 4:** Initial version of the draft scientific opinion shared with EFSA and WG and filed.	At least two weeks before the date of the first WG. *EFSA will communicate the dates of WG. Indicatively, there are at least two WG meeting per opinion.* As stated in section 1.3 above, the respect of this deadline is critical to ensure that the legal deadline of 6 months to deliver the corresponding scientific opinion is respected.
	Deliverable 5: Amended version if additional data are provided by the applicant.	One week after reception of the additional data.
Task 3: Support in the production of subsequent versions of the draft scientific opinion with the assessment. *This task may include passive online participation to WG meeting.* ***(Task 3 is not applicable in case of partial assessment)***	**Deliverable 6:** Subsequent versions (one per WG meeting) of the scientific opinion shared with EFSA and WG and filed.	At least two weeks before the date of the WG meeting. *EFSA will communicate the dates of WG.*
	Deliverable 7: Draft version for first reading by the BIOHAZ Panel shared with EFSA and WG and filed.	Two weeks before the BIOHAZ Panel Plenary for first reading. *EFSA will communicate the dates of BIOHAZ Panel Plenary.*
	Deliverable 8: Draft version for thorough reading by the BIOHAZ Panel shared with EFSA and WG and filed.	Two weeks before the BIOHAZ Panel Plenary for thorough reading *EFSA will communicate the dates of BIOHAZ Panel Plenary.*
	Deliverable 9: Final draft version for adoption by the BIOHAZ Panel shared with EFSA and WG and filed.	Two weeks before the BIOHAZ Panel Plenary for adoption *EFSA will communicate the dates of BIOHAZ Panel Plenary.*
Task 4: Integrate into the draft opinion the results of the public consultation of the dossier.	**Deliverable 10:** Report of the public consultation with comments addressed submitted as an Annex of the scientific opinion and filed.	One week before submission of the opinion for publication

Meetings

No.	Meeting at the level of Framework Partnership Agreement	Deadline for finalisation
1	General Framework Partnership Agreement Kick-off meeting – online or in presence at EFSA – max one half day [13] The kick-off meeting is regarded as the start of the project and must take place no later than two weeks after the signature of the Framework Partnership Agreement. This kick off is not linked to the signature of any Specific Grant Agreement and any costs incurred by the beneficiary will not be reimbursed by EFSA. At this meeting, details of the project will be discussed and the objectives, tasks to be implemented, deliverables, and timeframe will be clarified, as well as the final report structure. Meeting is to be organised by the beneficiary and minutes of the meeting shall be taken and provided to EFSA by the beneficiary within two weeks from the meeting itself. The presence at the kick-off meeting of a beneficiary's staff member responsible for administrative/finance issues of the project is advised as this will facilitate understanding by the beneficiary of the grant principles, related financial reporting requirements and significantly ease the financial management of the grant agreement, both for EFSA and the beneficiary.	Within two weeks from entry into force of the Framework Partnership Agreement
No.	**Meetings at the level of Specific Agreement (once ABP Application received)**	**Deadline for finalisation**
1	Kick-off meeting for each Specific Agreement – max one half day - online. The purpose of the kick-off meeting for a specific agreement is to perform the evaluation of a received ABP application. It is regarded as the start of the evaluation process and must take place no later than one week from the entry into force of the specific agreement. At this meeting, details of the evaluation process of a received ABP application will be discussed and the objectives, the expected deliverables and timeframes will be clarified. Minutes of the meeting shall be taken and provided to EFSA by the beneficiary within 5 working days from the meeting.	Within one week from the entry into force of each Specific Agreement
2	Ad hoc meetings – estimated 6 half days for each specific agreement – online The purpose of these one-hour teleconference meetings is to discuss the development of the work and solve any problem encountered. The number of meetings is at discretion of EFSA and according to the needs (indicatively six meetings for each specific agreement). Minutes of the meeting shall be taken and provided to EFSA by the beneficiary within 5 working days from the meeting.	Ad hoc
3	Final meeting per Specific Agreement – max half day - online The purpose of the meeting is to evaluate the specific grant agreement: quality of the outcome, the communication with EFSA, contractor and WG, lesson learnt for future SGAs, etc.	Within expiration of each specific agreement

[13] One day = 8 hours, half day = 4 hours

	Minutes of the meeting shall be taken and provided to EFSA by the beneficiary within 5 working days from the meeting.	
No.	**Payments**	
The payment modalities applicable to each specific agreement are detailed in the Data Sheet section 4.2 Periodic reporting and payment of the **draft specific agreement** published under the framework partnership agreement (Annex 1 of the call for Proposals).		

Deliverables must be drafted in English and may be subject to publication at EFSA's discretion.

Please note that all reporting, minutes, outcome of the discussions could be submitted at EFSA's discretion to EFSA's Panel and Working Group members. 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.

The total envelope EFSA has available to award grants under this call for proposals is € 300.000,00.

Applicants should note that in the Funding and Tender opportunities portal submission service under Administrative Form (Part A) there is an obligatory field regarding the budget (section 3). Applicants must insert the total envelope in the 'Requested grant amount' field.

1.4.1 Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) and implementation modalities

This call for proposals aims to conclude one Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) for the performance of the tasks described in these specifications.

An FPA is a long-term cooperation between the Authority and one or several partners. It sets out the framework conditions and is subsequently implemented through Specific Agreements. The specific agreements will set out the specific conditions for performing the respective assignments.

The financial ceiling available for specific agreements under the framework partnership agreement is 300.000,00 €.

The maximum duration of this Framework Partnership Agreement is **4 years**.

The duration of the specific agreements will be maximum 8 months. The FPA continues to apply to specific agreements after its expiry. The services relating to such specific agreements must be performed no later than 8 months after the expiry of the FPA.

EFSA reserves the right to award Specific Agreements under the FPA during its period of validity for the provision of support for full assessment or partial assessment of ABPs applications.

Based on the expert judgement of EFSA, the cost of the two different types of support per application is as follows:

- **37.000,00 €** for the support for the **full assessment of one ABPs application (Option 1)**
- **13.500,00 €** for the support for the **partial assessment of one ABPs application (Option 2)**

The value of each Specific Agreement will be established based on the type of support requested by EFSA, according to prices indicated above.

The number of applications received per year can vary, going from none up to three per year according to the experience of the last 8 years, and as explained in the background section, it might be that the demand for regulatory risk assessments on alternative methods for the processing of ABPs can increase in the future. However, at the time of launch of this call for proposals, the estimation is of 2 applications per year, therefore the payments per year could be as shown in the Table below, which is to be considered as purely indicative:

	Estimation Year 1	Estimation Year 2	Estimation Year 3	Estimation Year 4
Option 1 – full assessment of one application	1 application = 37.000 €	1 application = 37.000 €	1 application = 37.000 €	1 application = 37.000 €
Option 2 – partial assessment of one application	1application = 13.500 €	1 application =13.500 €	1 application = 13.500 €	1 application = 13.500 €

Where possible, in order to facilitate the planning of the beneficiaries, EFSA will share periodically the plan of the upcoming expected specific agreements and/or inform of the foreseen income of an ABP application as soon as we are aware of it.

EFSA further reserves the right not to award Specific Agreements under the FPAs without any compensation to be paid to the applicants.

The working language for performance of tasks will be English.

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. This list is regularly updated by EFSA Management Board and is available for consultation using this link:
https://efsa.my.site.com/competentorganisations/s/competentorganisation/CompetentOrganisation_c/00B1v000009LqfIEAS

In order to achieve the main objective of the call, proposals can be submitted by **one eligible organisation or by a consortium of eligible organisations.** In case of a consortium, 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).**

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 a sole applicant:

- **The Applicant** submits the proposal to EFSA. There can be only one applicant in the proposal.

As soon as the grant agreement is signed, the applicant becomes the beneficiary. The beneficiary is liable for the technical implementation of the project as described in the proposal which becomes Annex 1 of the grant agreement.

The beneficiary:

- Communicates with EFSA;
- Receives and answers all claims EFSA might have in relation to the 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 of any event that is likely to substantially affect the implementation of the project;
- Submits the deliverables and reports to EFSA;
- Requests and receives payments from EFSA.

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.

- **The Partner** is the other entity in the consortium. There can be a minimum of one partner or more partners.

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

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/s become co-beneficiary/ies. The coordinator and co-beneficiary/ies 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;
- 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 partner/s without unjustified delays.

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

The other beneficiary/ies:

- Take part in implementing the project;
- Forward to the coordinator the data needed to draw up reports, financial statements and other documents required under the grant agreement;
- Inform 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[14] must comply with the applicable national public procurement rules.

Sub-contracting:

Please note that subcontracting is not allowed for any of the tasks.

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. Accordingly, the grant awarded following this Call must comply with the following principles:

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

[14] 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)

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.

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 196 of the Financial Regulation. The tasks entrusted by EFSA should not be performed before the signature of the grant Agreement.

Article 183(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 193 of the Financial Regulation, grants shall involve co-financing.
- **No-profit**: In accordance with Article 195(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 194(3) of the Financial Regulation, in no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice from the EU budget.

1.9 ESTIMATED BUDGET AND ELIGIBLE COSTS

For the submission of a proposal under this Call for proposals, no estimated budget is required.

1.10 PUBLICITY

All beneficiaries are expected to follow the rules on visibility of EFSA funding set out in Article 17 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

With regards to publications of EFSA outputs that are integrating the preparatory work delivered in the context of this grant., ~~the beneficiary could be acknowledged indicating the affiliation to its organisation .~~ Depending on the nature of their contribution, beneficiaries may be included in the author/contributor list published in the EFSA Journal; this is also subject to the provision of a valid declaration of interests.

1.11 PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA IN RELATION TO GRANT PROCEDURES AND ANTIFRAUD STRATEGY

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 15 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.[15]

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 138 of the Financial Regulation. For more information see the Privacy Statement on: 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 15 of the Grant Agreement (Annex 1) as a data processor of EFSA.

Antifraud Strategy
Frauds involving EU funds have a particularly high impact on EFSA's and the EU's reputation. The current EFSA Anti-Fraud Strategy ("the Strategy") was adopted on 11 December 2025. In case of award of an EFSA contract, it is obligatory for the Project Manager to follow the EFSA Anti-Fraud Module. It is the responsibility of the contractor to make sure the training has been followed before start of contract implementation.
IT support for access to the module please contact: servicedesk@efsa.europa.eu
Request on the topic of anti-fraud please contact: ethics-integrity@efsa.europa.eu

1.12 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.

1.13 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.

1.14 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 case of multi-beneficiary grant calls, co-applicants will be invited to remove or replace that entity. Tasks and budget may be redistributed accordingly.

[15] 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

1.15 USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS AND MODELS FOR DRAFTING THE OFFER AND IN DELIVERING SERVICES

Applicants must clearly indicate in their application whether Large Language Models, such as ChatGPT, were utilised in the preparation of their proposal.

The use of the AI systems/models in the frame of implementation of this grant is allowed, however the applicant must specify such intention in their proposal in the description of the proposed methodology.

The contractor shall not use personal data or EFSA content for the training or improvement of AI systems unless EFSA has given prior written authorisation. Moreover, sensitive and confidential information must be safeguarded and cannot be uploaded in AI tools.

1. Requirements for AI system/model, in case those are proposed by the applicant:

The beneficiary using AI system/model in the implementation of this grant must adhere to Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 (hereafter: 'the AI Act')[16] . This regulation is already in force, however it becomes applicable in a gradual way. This regulation also stipulates the obligations of deployers of high-risk AI systems (Article 26). Under no circumstances may the prohibited AI practices (outlined in article 5 of the AI Act) be applied during the implementation of this grant.

A mandatory requirement for the use of AI system / model, and irrespective when relevant provisions of the AI Act become applicable, must be the compliance of the applicant/beneficiary with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data. In particular, Art. 24 of the EUDPR and Art. 22 of the GDPR provide data subjects with the right not to be subject to decisions based solely on automatic processing including profiling, hence confirming the need for ensuring human oversight and validation for all activities and deliverables under the present contract.

2. Information required for award criteria:

EFSA, as the contracting authority, is committed to ensuring that the quality of outsourced outputs/deliverables is not compromised by the use of Artificial Intelligence systems/models. As you prepare your proposal, please note that EFSA requires assurance that your reliance on AI technologies will not jeopardize the quality of outputs/deliverables to be provided to EFSA in the future in case your proposal is selected.

Due to the inherent risks associated with AI technologies, EFSA must have confidence in the ability of applicants to manage these risks effectively and in a trustworthy manner. To this end, applicants are requested to provide evidence that the use of AI systems/models will not only maintain, but ideally enhance, the quality of outputs/deliverables provided to EFSA.

By addressing this requirement, you will help EFSA to assess your ability to deliver high-quality outputs/deliverables while leveraging AI technologies in a responsible and controlled manner.

[16] Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence and amending Regulations (EC) No 300/2008, (EU) No 167/2013, (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2019/2144 and Directives 2014/90/EU, (EU) 2016/797 and (EU) 2020/1828 (Artificial Intelligence Act), OJ L, 2024/1689, 12.7.2024 - https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj

Accordingly, if the applicant intends to use AI system/model in grant implementation, the proposal must specify the following information:

- The purpose of the use of AI system/model;
- At which stage / for which output/deliverable AI system/model is to be used;
- The added value expected from the use of AI system/model compared to relying on traditional IT systems;
- The risks linked with the use of AI system/model and the mitigating measures put in place by the applicant;
- The indication on how the human oversight and quality validation will be guaranteed.

This information will be assessed in section 2.5 award criteria, under methodology, risk management and measures to guarantee quality of deliverables.

3. Other transparency requirements in use of AI:

For the sake of transparency, should generative AI systems/models such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT) have been employed in producing deliverables for EFSA, EFSA requires that the beneficiary inserts in the deliverable an explicit mention acknowledging the use of such AI systems/models and confirming human oversight and validation. This requirement applies to all deliverables in written or audio-visual formats, including but not limited to reports, images, videos and soundtracks.

The applicant must clearly indicate in their proposal whether generative AI systems/models such as Large Language Models (e.g. ChatGPT), were utilised in the preparation of their proposals.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW AI SYSTEMS/MODELS DURING GRANT IMPLEMENTATION

Introducing AI systems/ models into the grant implementation, if it was not part of the initial methodology explicitly foreseen in the call for proposals or in the application submitted by the beneficiary, equals to a change of the agreed delivery methodology. Therefore, any change is treated as any other methodology change: the beneficiary, **before starting to use such AI systems/models in the grant implementation** must first inform EFSA in writing of its intention to use AI systems/models. The beneficiary shall provide EFSA with the following information:

- The purpose of the use of AI system/model and of the added-value compared to initially proposed implementation method;
- At which stage of the process and/or for which specific tasks the AI system/model is to be used;
- The risks linked with the use of AI system/model and the mitigating measures put in place by the beneficiary;
- The indication on how the beneficiary will guarantee the human oversight and quality validation.

Only if EFSA agrees in writing to such a change of methodology, the beneficiary can start to use AI system/model for the implementation of the grant.

EFSA will only endorse request if the following conditions are met:

- EFSA receives convincing reassurance that the change of methodology will not have negative effect on quality of the outputs/deliverables;

- The change does not substantially alter the initial proposal.

EFSA reserves the right to refuse beneficiary's requests to use AI systems/models.

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
1	**Eligibility criteria**
	The following requirements will be verified:
	• 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; • Applicant and in case of consortium also its partner/s are involved in the execution of the project.
	Requested evidence:
	ADMINISTRATIVE DECLARATION Annex 2, available in the Funding and Tenders Portal (click on Start submission and download the document under part B templates). The applicant and partner(s) (if applicable) must complete and sign the form. The applicant must upload the signed form in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Electronic Submission Service.

2.3 EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Criterion No. 2.3	Requirements and requested evidence
2	**Exclusion criteria**

	The following requirements will be verified:
	The applicant and partner/s must sign a declaration on their honour certifying they are not in one of the exclusion situations referred to in the Articles 138(1) of EU Financial Regulation.
	Requested evidence:
	THE DECLARATION ON HONOUR ON EXCLUSION CRITERIA Annex 3, available in the Funding and Tenders Portal (click on Start submission and download the document under part B templates). The applicant, the partner(s) must complete and sign separate forms (**section A**). The applicant must upload the **Declaration on Honour** in the relevant field under *Part B and Annexes* of the Electronic Submission Service. If applying in consortium, the consortium leader must convert all 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 Electronic Submission Service.

2.4 SELECTION CRITERIA

A) Financial capacity

Criterion No. **2.4A**	Requirements and requested evidence
1	**Financial capacity**
	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 in case of consortium also its partner/s must have stable and sufficient financial resources to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out. If the Authority considers that financial capacity is weak, it may: – request further information; – decide not to give pre-financing; – decide to give pre-financing paid in instalments; – decide to give pre-financing covered by a bank guarantee; – where applicable, require the joint and several financial liability of all the co-beneficiaries. If the EFSA Authorising Officer considers that the financial capacity is insufficient, the application may be rejected.
	Requested evidence:
	Documents to be provided by the applicant: **DECLARATION ON HONOUR ON SELECTION CRITERIA** Annex 4, available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal (click on Start submission and download the document under part B templates). Only the applicant (or consortium leader if applicable) is required to complete and sign the form. The applicant must upload the form in the relevant field under *Part B and Annexes* of the Electronic Submission Service. • **SIMPLIFIED FINANCIAL STATEMENT** available here only required for private bodies if the grant requested from EFSA is >60.000 €. The template published with the Call should be completed for at least the last two closed financial years.

	• **LETTER OF COMMITMENT:** applicable only when another public body financially contributes to the project (body other than EFSA, applicant or in case of consortium, its partners); to be signed by the contributing public body; it serves to confirm its commitment to financially contribute to the project; no template is provided by EFSA. The applicant must convert the **Declaration on honour on selection criteria, the Simplified Financial statement (if applicable) and the letter of commitment** (if applicable) into one single pdf and upload the single document in the relevant field under *Part B and Annexes* of the Electronic Submission Service.

B) Professional and operational capacity

Criterion No. **2.4.B**	Requirements and requested evidence
1	**Professional and operational capacity:**
	Requirements and requested evidence:
	The applicant or in case of a consortium, the consortium as a whole, must have the professional resources, competencies and qualifications necessary to complete the proposed project: **1) Requirements for the organisation:** The applicant overall as organisation must have extensive and demonstrable experience in all the following field: - Basic and applied scientific research relevant to food microbiology and food technology (for example in relation to heat treatments, heat resistance, mechanisms of resistance/inactivation of biological hazards related to topics of this grant) risk assessment and/or risk management in the area of biological hazards; - Project formulation and project management: preparation of technical and scientific reports; monitoring of project progress and deliverables; and effective collaboration with multiple partners. **EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 1:** Evidence of at least one recent (within the last 7 years) research project carried out (concluded or ongoing) by your organization that is relevant to the scientific domains mentioned above. Applicants must provide details on the research project, in particular dates, title and topic, clear description of tasks and responsibilities, links to any public result (report, publications, patents) if available. **2) Requirements for the team of experts - Team of experts involved in the specific grant agreements:** At least **4 experts** must be proposed. One of the proposed experts must be appointed as coordinator. Each of the proposed experts must have: a. a Master degree (minimum 5 years of university) and b. Demonstrable post-graduate experience in drafting scientific reports/publications, to be proven with at least 3 publications as author or co-author in the past 3 years and c. At least 3 years post-graduate working experience (PHD is accepted as post graduate experience) covering one or more of the following scientific fields: 1) Risk assessment methodologies 2) Knowledge on animal by-products 3) Knowledge on transformation, processing, use, and disposal of animal by-products 4) Knowledge on transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, microbiology, virology, and parasitology

5) Knowledge on the principles of inactivation of prions, bacteria, virus, and parasites via thermal and chemical processes
6) General knowledge of HACCP principles

Overall, the above scientific fields 1) to 6) must be covered by at least one of the proposed experts. One expert can cover more than one scientific field.

EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 2:

Detailed CVs of the Project team members proposed for the assignment, showing evidence of requirement 2 (a), 2 (b) and 2 (c) above, including clear dates, a brief but comprehensive description of the expertise and a list of relevant publications/projects for each person proposed.

Please include this information clearly in the CVs. If individual team members are not yet assigned for the proposed project, applicants should provide details of the staff profiles necessary for the project.
EFSA strongly recommends submitting the CVs in the EU CV format which can be accessed here.

LIST OF PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS NAMES –the applicant should also summarise in one page, the names of the proposed individual project team members and the profile covered.

3) Requirements for the team of experts:
Each expert must have individually an excellent level of spoken and written English. For non-native speakers, this should be demonstrated by an Official certificate of English proving a B2 level or higher OR at least 3 years of work in an English-speaking environment OR at least 3 scientific publications in English;

EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 3:

- Detailed CVs of the Project team members proposed for the assignment, showing evidence of requirement 3 above. EFSA strongly recommends submitting the CVs in the EU CV format which can be accessed here.

- Official certificate or list of at least 3 scientific publications in English

When submitting CVs applicants are requested not to submit photographs of staff representatives or consultants, in application of the data minimisation principle (Art. 4.1.c of the EUDPR).

4) Environmental management (the answers to this section are for information purposes and will not be considered under any criteria, neither selection nor award criteria):
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.

For this reason, we are asking you some information on the environmental management of your activities, to be provided filling in **Annex 5 (Selection criteria - Information on environmental management).**

EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 4:
Annex 5 – Selection criteria, Information on environmental management

For requirements 1-3 a template (Annex 5) is available in the Funding and Tenders Portal (click on Start submission to download part B templates). 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 Electronic Submission Service.

	DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (DoIs) The beneficiary will provide **Individual Declaration of Interests (DoIs)** of: • Members of the project team having influence and/or control over scientific outputs (partners' staff and individual subcontractors) **prior to the signature of each Specific Agreement**. The Individual Declarations of Interests (applicable to procedures launched from June 2025 and concerning EFSA's risk assessment work equivalent to that performed by EFSA's Working Groups) is available here (LINK UPDATED). Please refer to EFSA's Independence policy and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management for more detailed information. **DoIs do not need to be provided with your proposal at this stage.**

2.5 AWARD CRITERIA

If any part of the technical proposal has been drafted using artificial intelligence or in case artificial intelligence is foreseen for implementation of services, kindly describe this in the relevant award criteria, as deemed appropriate. Please refer to section 1.15 of this call for proposals.

The recommended maximum length of the technical proposal is 30 pages in total, covering the below 3 award criteria.

Criterion No. **2.5**	**For the award criteria a template (Annex 6) is available in the Funding and Tenders Portal (click on Start submission to download part B templates). The applicant must upload the completed template (a single pdf document of all criteria) in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of Electronic Submission Service.** 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.
1	**Understanding the assignment and the tasks and methodology proposed for the implementation – MAX 40 points (minimum threshold: 60% - 24 points)** This is intended to assess the extent to which the applicant demonstrates a clear understanding of the assignments and the tasks required to **achieve the objectives of this call** and to deliver output that will be useful. All aspects of the call for proposals need to be covered. The applicant shall: **a.** describe how they propose to provide the services described in the call for proposals and to perform the work necessary for achieving the objectives requested in the field of alternative methods for the use or disposal of animal-by-products, their derived products, and their risk assessment. If the applicant proposed the use of AI, the purpose and the added value of the technological solution/software/AI model or AI system proposed must be explained. **b.** provide a logical and well-structured step by step explanation of methodology for addressing all objectives. **c.** specify and justify the selection of information sources such as databases.
2	**Project management and organisation of the tasks within the project team to ensure respect of timelines - MAX 40 points (minimum threshold: 60% - 24 points)** This is to assess the extent to which the proposed set-up is suitable for the effective implementation of the assignment and capable of ensuring the **completion and the timely delivery of all agreed deliverables**. The applicant shall:

	a. Provide a clear and coherent project structure through the definition of work packages, including project phases, timelines, milestones for each task, expected outcomes, and deliverables, accompanied by a chart that illustrate the schedule. **20 points** b. Provide clear and detailed information on the frequency and type of communication with EFSA, the role of coordinator in the coordination and tasks allocation in relation to the methodology and tools proposed; **20 points**
3	**Risk Management and measures to guarantee quality of deliverables - MAX 20 points** This is to assess the extent to which the applicant is aware of any **potential risks**, able to identify any potential risks to the achievement of the project objectives, able to describe and assess their impact and likelihood to occur, and able to foresee effective mitigation actions, as well as the extent to which the tender is able to provide a detailed description of the specific **quality assurance mechanisms** proposed for the project to guarantee the high quality of deliverables. The applicant shall: a. Identify and describe potential risks associated with the proposed methodology and project management issues (e.g., measures to ensure delivery deadlines, and mitigation strategies for continuity of the service in case of absence of the member of the team), which might appear during the implementation of the assignment; how will the tenderer manage output deficiencies. If applicable, describe how you manage risks and related mitigating action connected to the technological solution/software/AI system or AI model proposed for the implementation of the service, including how you ensure human oversight, quality validation and respect of confidentiality. **Max 10 points** b. Describe specific quality assurance mechanisms proposed for the project to guarantee the high quality of deliverables (e.g. role of coordinator, language check). **Max 10 points**

In order to be considered for a reserve list, the proposal must:

- for criteria 1 and 2, score at least 60% of the points attributed to that criterion; and
- score a minimum of 70 points out of maximum possible 100 points;

Proposals which have satisfied these quality thresholds will be ranked in a reserve list. The reserve list will be valid for six months from the signature of the feedback letter.

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.

EFSA reserves the right to invite the 1st ranked applicant on the reserve list, to adapt its proposal based on the evaluators' comments in accordance with article 203(5) EU FR.

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

If the 1st ranked applicant fails to adapt its proposal, EFSA reserves the right to reject the proposal. The budget made available in this way may be used for a project of the next ranked applicant on the reserve list.

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 197(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.