



A 2.1 - CALL FOR THE SELECTION OF 30 LOCAL STARTUPS OPERATING IN THE AGRIFOOD SECTOR

IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PROGRAMME “SUPPORT AGRI-FOOD COOP NETWORK IN PALESTINE (SANET)”

This Regulation shall gather all the information on the conditions of participation and registration procedure of the Call for the Selection of 30 Local startups operating in the agrifood sector, in the framework of the programme “SUPPORT AGRI-FOOD COOP NETWORK IN PALESTINE (SANET)”.

Article 1. SANET programme and definitions

1.1. Programme

The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) has financed a programme entitled “**SUPPORT AGRI-FOOD COOP NETWORK IN PALESTINE (SANET)**”. CIHEAM Bari, as implementing body of the Result 3 named **Agri-food sector inclusiveness improved to provide access to women and youth**, and in partnership with Ministry of Agriculture of Palestine, will be responsible for its execution until September 2025.

The Result 3 of Sanet programme aims to cooperate with existing incubators in supporting their capacities to support young entrepreneur (business plan development, entrepreneurship training, mentoring) and to achieve a relevant impact, that is reaching and triggering the active role of a vital actor in the field of innovation. By building the capacity of business incubators (implementing partners of the programme) the project aims to encourage the development of local start-ups operating in the agri-food sectors and involved in digitalization processes.

CIHEAM Bari is the organizing body of the present call whose aim is to select 30 startups. This group can include young entrepreneurs running an already well-established company, to younger groups active since at least 3 years with a convincing innovative business idea, revolving around the agribusiness and sustainable use of natural resources. The youth groups selected according to a



public call will be offered a comprehensive and tailored training course and incubation services which will permit to the best ideas (pilot projects) to become, with the adequate technical and financial support, a concrete business.

1.2. Definitions

The term “call for applications” refers to the procedure by which the partners of the SANET programme present an offer of participation in the SANET programme to potential startups.

The “applicant(s)”, the “candidate(s)” or the “project leader” means the persons responding to the call for applications in the name of the startup.

The “project” refers to the entrepreneurial project (innovative product/service) submitted to the call for applications.

The “startup” refers to a young company newly established by one or more entrepreneurs to create unique and irreplaceable products or services.

The “path” means the path of coaching offered by SANET.

Article 2. Purpose of the call for applications

The Sanet call for applications aims at selecting 30 startups. It allows:

- The selected 30 start-ups for an intensive remote training course, being held shortly after the selection. These young people will attend a 10-day intensive course to enhance their capacity to master the entire cycle from the first concept to the sale and post-sale service (if applicable), passing through the idea development, the business plan, the search of partners and funds, the marketing strategy and so on.
- Following the intensive training, the 30 start-ups will have the opportunity to have dedicated support (each start-up will have an Innovation manager available) which will allow them to concretely develop their project idea by following up on the theoretical concepts addressed during the plenary course.
- the best 10 ideas (start-ups) will be selected to participate in the 6-month incubation period.
- The best 10 replies to this challenge, evaluated by the same commission that made the first selection, will receive, during a local event, a grant (10.000,00 €)

supporting one strategic part of their development plan such as tools, training, coaching, services, and equipment to be validated, together with the Coordination team of CIHEAM Bari. The grant will be made available for immediate use. Its use will be described by the young entrepreneurs at the end of the brokering event.

These Rules define the rules applicable to the call for applications (hereinafter the «Rules»).

Article 3. Call for applications

To participate, please visit CIHEAM Bari website and follow the relative instructions.

The call for applications closes **on 13/06/2024 at 23:59 Minutes (CET time)**. After this deadline, no applications can be considered.

If you have any questions about the call for applications, applicants can send an email to the below email address: youth&innovation@iamb.it.

No evaluation of the applications may be communicated outside the Selection Committee.

Article 4. Conditions of participation and eligibility

4.1 Terms of Application

Participation in the call for applications is free of charge.

The application form must be drafted in English language.

For each application, the applicant must be a member of the company, either a founder, co-founder, majority partner or a person with power of representation and decision within the startup.

Participation is strictly nominative. It is strictly forbidden to submit your application under several usernames, with several email addresses or on behalf of other participants. Any submission duplicated by the same person (same name, same first name, same IP address), under different company names will result in the cancellation of the participation of the candidate and the teams concerned.



By accepting the rules of the call for applications, the applicant authorizes the implementing body concerned (CIHEAM Bari) to make all necessary checks regarding identity and contact details.

Every candidate who refuses to provide supporting documents will be excluded. Any erroneous, incomplete or fraudulent information will result in the cancellation of participation in the call for applications.

4.2 Eligibility criteria

Applications are done in the name of a Start up. Personal applications will not be accepted. To apply to the present call, companies must be formally registered **since at least 1 year** from the deadline of the present call in the country where it operates.

The Start up must commit to the Sanet call by indicating in the application form the names of the team members who will participate in the program and their roles in the Start up.

To be selected the Start up needs to demonstrate that it is bringing an **innovative and feasible project in the field of Agri-food sector**, with a particular focus on at least one of the following topics:

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES: innovative models and tools for the management of water, soil, land, animals, trees.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE: Adoption of agricultural practices that minimize the use of harmful chemicals, preserve biodiversity and promote environmental sustainability.

SMART FARMING: the broad range of decision support software and high-performance hardware technologies, that include sensors, cameras, drones and UAVs, image processing, AI, and data-analytics., used for precision irrigation, integrated pest management, yield forecasting, and farm management.

CROP PROTECTION & FERTILIZERS: New technology helping farmers for protecting the crops from pests & diseases, non-toxic and environmentally friendly.

BIOTECH: Genetics & Breeding Agricultural science including genetic engineering, molecular markers, molecular diagnostics, vaccines, and tissue culture, to modify living organisms (Breeding): plants, animals, and microorganisms.



LIVESTOCK & POULTRY: technologies that enhance the management, welfare, and value of livestock and poultry, covering applications from breeding and feeding systems to animal health and cattle monitoring.

FARMING & ROBOTICS: Building robotics, machinery, and equipment used to automate farm work, harvest crops and to sort it.

INNOVATIVE FOOD PRODUCTS: new food products or production processes in order to find more nutritious and healthy food.

VALORIZATION OF NEGLECTED AND UNDERUTILIZED CROPS (NUS) : crops that have been prioritized as “Future Smart Foods” because they are nutritionally dense, climate-resilient, economically viable, and locally available or adaptable food crops.

NOVEL FARMING SYSTEMS: Solutions utilizing space, light, soil, and water in non-traditional ways to grow crops in places and conditions that were hitherto impossible, as vertical and indoor farming systems, based on aero, aqua or hydroponic systems.

POST HARVEST: solutions that handle cleaning, sorting, processing, packing and storing of produce to secure, improve or maintain the quality of the produce following harvest, including freezing and thawing, biodegradable packaging and environmentally friendly coverings.

FARM TO CONSUMER: New business models to shorten and simplify the supply chain by connecting the farm to the end consumer.

RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT: Strategies to reduce waste, promote recycling and implement sustainable waste management practices.

IRRIGATION & WATER MANAGEMENT: smart systems optimizing irrigation by utilizing sensors, data and sophisticated software.

RENEWABLE ENERGY, ENERGY EFFICIENCY: Development and adoption of clean energy sources such as solar, wind, hydroelectric and geothermal waves and tides; implementation of technologies and practices aimed at reducing energy consumption.

ICT: digital business transition and digital support to the agri – food sector

Start up who are already trading in their markets and that can demonstrate **active sales** of their project **are encouraged to apply**.

If the Start up has not gone to market yet, the start up must prove that it has validated their project (product/service) and their markets by showing concrete steps undertaken and their results.

For participation in the call Sanet is not eligible any illegal activity under international regulations, conventions and/ or agreements and in particular:

- Production or trade of any illegal product or activity under the laws of the host country or international regulations, conventions and/or agreements.
- Production or activity involving forced or child labour.
- Trade in animals, plants or any natural products which do not comply with the legal provisions.
- Any operation involving or requiring the destruction of critical habitat, and any forestry project not implementing a sustainable management plan.
- Production, use or trade of pharmaceuticals, pesticides/herbicides, ozone depleting products or any other hazardous product subject to international prohibition or phase-out.
- Production and distribution or participation in racist, anti-democratic or discriminatory media.

Article 5. Evaluation of projects

5.1 Selection Criteria

The selection of winners is based on the following main criteria:

1. Startup health (in terms of years of activity, active sales, n° of staff): *max 20 points*
2. Skills, entrepreneurial spirit and motivation of the Team: *max 20 points*
3. Relevance of products/services: *max 60 points*, divided in
 - a. Positive impact on the environment and response to the Sustainable Development Goals: *max 20 points*
 - b. Technical and financial feasibility: *max 10 points*.
 - c. Market knowledge and project viability: *max 10 points*.
 - d. Innovative dimension: *max 10 points*



5.2 Selection Process

Step 1: Evaluating Applications

Based on the above criteria, a list of 30 applications will be made by a Selection Committee. An email notification will be sent to applicants within ten (10) days of the selection committee's decision.

A commission composed by a group of 3 experts appointed by Sanet partners and the final selection will be done in agreement with CIHEAM Bari Coordination team.

Step 2: Pitch and final selection

The listed projects will follow the programme mentioned in Article 2, an intensive 10-day course to strengthen their ability to master the entire product ideation cycle, and they will have the opportunity to receive dedicated support (each start-up will have an Innovation Manager available) which will allow them to concretely develop the own project idea.

The best 10 replies to this challenge, evaluated by the same commission that made the first selection, will receive, during a local event, a grant (10.000,00 €) supporting one strategic part of their development plan. The award will be made available for immediate use. Its use will be described by the young entrepreneurs at the end of the brokering event.

In addition to the grant, the start-ups awarded will be offered an incubator service, for six months, aiming at giving substantial help to the take-off of their ideas. One of the previously empowered local ISOs will deliver this mid-term incubator service. The incubators will provide technical assistance accompanying the start-up to refine, set up and validate its innovative solution.

Step 3: Grant

The winners, the best 10 ideas (start-ups), will be informed by email. The grant consists in a sum of € 10.000,00 to be used in the form of support tools, training, coaching, services, and equipment according to the choice of the winners (as mentioned in the Art. 2).

5.3 Unsuccessful Applicants

Non-selected candidates will be informed by email.

Article 6. Decision of the final selection committee and publication of results

The selection committee is sovereign. All decisions of the final selection committee are final and indisputable.

The results of the pre-selection and final selection will be communicated:

- On CIHEAM Bari website.
- By email to all candidates.

Article 7. Commitments of candidates

7.1 Commitments during the call for applications

Participants in the call for applications undertake to:

- Demonstrate sincerity and good faith by completing their application form and presenting their project;
- Respond to all requests for additional information during the selection process.

7.2 Commitments of Sanet winners

The selected Start-ups undertake to:

- Guarantee the participation of the Start ups to the 6-months Incubator Program.
- Deploy the necessary means to carry out their project to achieve the objectives within the framework of support.
- Make themselves available and participate in activities and events implemented during the 6-months Incubator Program.
- Submit the deliverables requested by the Coordination team of CIHEAM Bari.

Article 8. Withdrawal from the programme

Each selected Start up who wishes to leave the SANET programme before its closure, must send a letter to CIHEAM Bari Coordination team.

Any absence corresponding to 25% of the total time of participation in the training and coaching program will not allow participation in the pitch.

Article 9. Intellectual Property

The intellectual property of the projects/technologies/solutions submitted in the application lies with the participants who developed and submitted them. Each candidate assumes the obligation and full responsibility for the protection of the inventive and/or original aspects through the means he/she deems most appropriate.

Candidates, by submitting the Application, grant CIHEAM Bari, free of charge and for an unlimited period of time, for the entire duration of the Initiative and/or of any subsequent term agreed upon in the arrangements between the applicant and/or CIHEAM Bari, without any further communication being required, the authorisation to use its name, corporate name, image and identifying marks of the Start-up or of the Project, for information and divulgation purposes.

Each candidate declares and guarantees, under penalty of exclusion, that the Project applying for the SANET program call for selection:

- i. is an original work, of which the participant holds the relevant intellectual property and economic exploitation rights.
- ii. does not contain any brands, logos or other elements protected by industrial property rights or copyright owned by third parties, or that, where third-party rights exist, the participant has obtained all necessary authorisations and licences from the relevant owner in advance.
- iii. does not infringe other rights of third parties, including, inter alia, patents, trade secrets, rights arising from contracts or licences, rights of publicity or rights relating to privacy, moral rights or any other right worthy of protection.

- iv. is not the subject of a contract with a third party.
- v. does not contain any defamatory content, representations, outrageous remarks or any other content that could damage the name, honour or reputation of CIHEAM Bari and or any other person or company.
- vi. does not contain any pornographic or sexual content, or content of a discriminatory nature in any way (including specifically discrimination based on race, sex, sexual orientation, religion and/or political beliefs of individuals or groups), or content promoting violence or injury against any living being, or any other content that is offensive, obscene or inappropriate.
- vii. does not contain any threats or any content intended to intimidate, harass, or abuse the private life of any individual.
- viii. does not constitute a violation of applicable laws and does not contain content that encourages unlawful conduct.

Candidates expressly declare, on their own behalf and on behalf of their assignees, to fully indemnify and hold harmless CIHEAM Bari from any claim, demand for compensation or request for damages made by any third party, due to the infringement of any of the provisions hereinabove.

In the event of failure by a candidate to comply with the Rules, CIHEAM Bari reserves the right to automatically exclude any candidate from the selection, without any right of the candidate to claim anything.

Article 10. Acceptance and limitation of liability

Participation in the call for applications implies the unconditional acceptance by the candidates of these Rules in its entirety.

CIHEAM Bari will not be held liable for applications that are incorrect, inaccurate, incomplete, damaged, lost, delayed, misdirected, or for applications that are submitted or received incorrectly, or are illegible, damaged, lost, delayed, misdirected. CIHEAM Bari will not be held responsible, moreover, for applications that, for any reason, are not received, or that are delayed due to electronic or



communication issues, or for other technical problems related to the sending and uploading of content under this initiative.

Applicants shall therefore not be entitled to make any claims for compensation or damages on any grounds in relation to the aforementioned events.

CIHEAM Bari is also exonerated from any liability regarding any damage to property and/or persons that may be caused, directly or indirectly, by the participants or by their employees, collaborators and auxiliaries in general during the performance of the various phases of the Initiative.

There can be no liability of CIHEAM Bari if, for a case of force majeure or beyond its control, the call for applications should be modified, shortened or cancelled.

CIHEAM Bari Coordination team reserves the right in any case to extend the participation period and to postpone any date announced, in writing.

Article 11. Processing of Personal Data

By submitting their application, candidates explicitly and fully accept and consent to the use of their personal data by CIHEAM Bari for the purposes set out in this Selection Procedure.

All documents submitted by candidates for the purposes of participating in this initiative will be treated in full respect of the protection of confidential information and personal data.

Personal data provided by the candidate for the participation in the Selection will be processed by CIHEAM Bari.