

SMART FOOD PROJECT **INTERREG VI – A ITALIA MALTA**

<i>Programme Priority</i>	<i>1 - A smarter cooperation area to promote research and innovation and skills development for smart specialization</i>
<i>Specific objective pertaining to the priority</i>	<i>1.1 - Develop and strengthen research and innovation capacities and the adoption of advanced technologies in the cross-border area (RSO1.1)</i>

PUBLIC NOTICE NO. 5

***For the selection of companies for the pilot group of WP4 –
Pilot testing of service delivery***

SMART FOOD – ITALIA MALTA CUP G73B24000010007

HAVING REGARD TO THE FOLLOWING LEGAL BASIS

Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund, the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund, and financial rules for those Funds and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy;

Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on specific provisions for the “European Territorial Cooperation” goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments;

Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund;

Commission Regulation (EU) 2021/1237 of 23 July 2021 amending Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market pursuant to Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty;

Commission Regulation (EU) No 240/2014 of 7 January 2014 on a European code of conduct on partnership within the framework of the European Structural and Investment Funds;

Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013, as subsequently amended and supplemented, on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid;

Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement, repealing Directive 2004/18/EC, published in OJ EU L 94/65 of 28 March 2014;

Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/75 of 17 January 2022 establishing the list of Interreg programme areas to receive support from the European Regional Development Fund and the Union’s external financing instruments, broken down by component and by Interreg programme under the “European Territorial Cooperation” objective;

Commission Decision C(2022) 9624 of 13 December 2022 approving the INTERREG VI-A Italy–Malta Programme for the 2021–2027 programming period with a financial allocation of €57,604,032 (ERDF + National co-financing), of which €4,393,486.25 is allocated to technical assistance resources of the programme;

Resolution No. 170 of 26 April 2023 of the Regional Government of the Sicilian Region adopting the INTERREG VI-A Italy-Malta Programme for the 2021-2027 programming period, approved by Decision C(2022)9624 of 13 December 2022;

Note No. 8980 of 30/06/2023 of the Managing Authority transmitting to the Programme Audit Authority the first version of the document "Description of functions and procedures in place for the Managing Authority" in accordance with Article 69(11) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021;

CIPESS Resolution No. 78 of 22/12/2021 establishing that, for European territorial cooperation programmes in which the Italian Republic participates, national co-financing is set, overall, at a maximum of 24% of total public expenditure (EU contribution plus national public co-financing);

Law No. 241/1990 laying down general provisions on administrative action, published in the Official Gazette of 18 August 1990 No. 192, as last coordinated and updated by Legislative Decree No. 104 of 16 June 2017;

Legislative Decree No. 36 of 31 March 2023, Public Contracts Code implementing Article 1 of Law No. 78 of 21 June 2022, delegating the Government in matters of public procurement;

Decree approving the project DRA No. 976/A7 of 31/12/2024;

Having regard to the reporting manual "Manual on expenditure reporting procedures and management verifications – INTERREG VI-A ITALY-MALTA".

HEREBY ANNOUNCES

a public call for the selection of agri-food enterprises to be involved in the pilot group of the SMART FOOD – Italy-Malta project, within the framework of the activities envisaged under WP4 – Pilot testing of service delivery.

INTRODUCTION

The SMART FOOD project aims to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of agri-food enterprises through the use of advanced digital technologies (AI, blockchain, traceability).

WP4 involves testing the services developed in the project through the direct involvement of a pilot group of companies.

This call is aimed at selecting at least 20 SMEs, of which:

- at least 10 with an operational headquarters in Sicily;*

- at least 10 with an operational headquarters in Malta.

The selected enterprises will participate in the pilot testing of the SMART FOOD platform services.

The selected enterprises will benefit from:

- coaching and mentoring activities;
- access to the SMART FOOD digital platform;
- support for product traceability and valorisation;
- participation in networking and supply chain cooperation activities;
- testing of tools for data analysis and suggestions for alternative crops.

Enterprises must primarily belong to one of the following agri-food supply chains:

Main value chains

- Wheat / bakery products and pasta
- Tomato / processed products
- Olives / olive oil
- Fruit / processed products
- Milk / dairy products
- Meat / Processed products (cured meats, meat processing)

Complementary value chains

- Grapes / wine
- Legumes / processed products
- Fresh-cut fruit and vegetables (fourth range products)
- Dried fruit / processed products
- Aromatic herbs

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR SELECTION

The call is open to enterprises that:

- are SMEs operating in the agri-food sector;
- have an operational headquarters in Sicily or Malta;
- are engaged in production, processing, or marketing activities;
- are duly registered with the Chamber of Commerce or an equivalent register;
- are not subject to any exclusion conditions as provided for under applicable legislation.

DURATION OF ACTIVITIES

Participation in the pilot group will have an indicative duration of 6 months, starting from the launch date of the activities, tentatively scheduled for the period June 2026 – November 2026, subject to any extensions related to the implementation of the project.

REPORTING

The selected enterprises undertake to cooperate in the monitoring and evaluation activities envisaged under the SMART FOOD project.

In particular, the enterprises undertake to:

- *provide, upon request of the beneficiary, information and data useful for monitoring the progress of activities and the results of the pilot testing;*
- *participate in the completion of questionnaires, data collection forms and feedback tools, including in digital format;*
- *contribute to the collection of elements useful for the qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the services tested;*
- *take part, where required, in periodic review activities (meetings, interviews, follow-up sessions);*
- *authorise the use, in aggregated and anonymous form, of the information collected for reporting, communication and dissemination of the project results.*

Reporting and monitoring activities do not entail administrative or accounting burdens for the enterprises, but are limited to the provision of information and data related to participation in the project activities.

METHODS AND DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION. GROUNDS FOR EXCLUSION

Under penalty of exclusion, the application for participation, attached to this call (ANNEX A), must be duly signed and must include the applicant's identification details and all elements necessary to clearly and unequivocally demonstrate the fulfilment of all eligibility and evaluation requirements.

You can attach the following to the application:

- *Company presentation (brochure or brief document)*
- *Any additional informational material*

The application must be submitted either by registered mail with return receipt or delivered by hand to the offices of the Contracting Authority: CNA SERVIZI ENNA, via Emilia Romagna 3, Enna, in a sealed envelope bearing the wording "SMART FOOD

Project – Call No. 5/2026”, or sent via certified email (PEC) to the following address:
cnaservienna@cert.cna.it

The deadline for receiving the application is May 21, 2026 at 12:00 PM. In the case of submission by post, the postmark will not be considered valid.

Statements made and signed in the application form and in the curriculum vitae shall be considered as self-declarations; therefore, supporting documentation is not required at this stage but may be requested by the Contracting Authority if deemed necessary.

Applications shall be excluded in the following cases:

- incomplete or unsigned application;
- failure to submit the required attachments;
- submission after the deadline;
- lack of eligibility requirements.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

The evaluation of applicants will be carried out by a dedicated committee appointed by the Managing Director of CNA Servizi Enna. The committee will convene after the deadline for submission of applications and will proceed with the selection and awarding of the assignment.

The committee will verify the eligibility requirements and assess the curricula and technical proposals in accordance with the criteria specified below.

The operator obtaining the highest score will be awarded the assignment for the provision of the services covered by this call.

The selected economic operator will be notified of the positive outcome within 30 days from the deadline for submitting applications.

If, by the deadline set in the call, an insufficient number of applications has been received to fill the available positions, applicants who submitted their applications after the deadline may be admitted—subject to verification of the minimum eligibility requirements—in chronological order.

AWARD CRITERIA FOR THE SERVICE

The selection of enterprises will be carried out by a dedicated Committee appointed by the beneficiary, based on the evaluation of the submitted documentation and a subsequent interview.

The selection procedure is structured in two phases:

- *document-based evaluation;*
- *interview.*

The maximum score that can be awarded is 100 points, allocated as follows:

- *up to 60 points for the document-based evaluation;*
- *up to 40 points for the interview.*

Scores will be assigned on the basis of the following table for the document-based evaluation phase:

INDICATOR	SCORE	EVALUATION CRITERIA	POINTS AWARDED
A) <i>Consistency with the project and the value chain</i>	MAX 25 points	<i>Membership in the value chain</i>	Max 10 points - 10 pts: <i>main value chain</i> - 5 pts: <i>complementary value chain</i>
		<i>Role of the enterprise within the value chain</i>	Max 10 points - 10 pts: <i>processing enterprise (including those with own production) that sources or declares willingness to source from third parties</i> - 8 pts: <i>primary production enterprise</i> - 6 pts: <i>integrated enterprise (production and processing mainly based on own products)</i>

			<p>- 4 pts: commercial/distribution enterprise</p>
		Operational location	<p>Max 5 points</p> <p>- 5 pts: operational headquarters in Sicily or Malta, consistent with the objectives of the project</p>
B) Company characteristics	MAX 20 points	Company size	<p>Max 10 points</p> <p>- 10 points: company within the target size range of the project (Turnover exceeding €500,000; Agriculture exceeding €100,000)</p> <p>- 6 pts: enterprise outside the target range but still consistent</p> <p>- 2 pts: enterprise marginally aligned with the target</p>
		Organisational structure	<p>Max 10 points</p> <p>- 10 pts: well-structured organisation with operational continuity</p> <p>- 6 pts: average structure</p> <p>- 2 pts: weak organisational structure</p>

C) Level of digitalisation	MAX 15 points	Use of digital tools	<p>Max 15 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15 pts: advanced use (management systems, traceability, integrated digital tools) - 10 pts: intermediate use - 5 pts: basic use - 0 pts: no use
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Total score for document-based evaluation: 60 points

Scores for the interview phase will be assigned on the basis of the following table:

INDICATOR	SCORE	EVALUATION CRITERIA	POINTS AWARDED
D) Motivation and availability to participate	MAX 15 points	Motivation and commitment	<p>Max 15 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15 pts: high level of motivation and operational availability - 10 pts: good level of motivation - 5 pts: limited motivation
E) Strategic role within the value chain	MAX 15 points	Position within the value chain	<p>Max 15 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15 pts: key role with active relationships - 10 pts: relevant role - 5 pts: marginal role

<p>F) Openness to cooperation and the cross-border context</p>	<p>MAX 10 points</p>	<p>Willingness to cooperate</p>	<p>Max 10 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10 pts: strong openness and willingness - 5 pts: potential openness - 0 pts: not available
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Total score for the interview: 40 points

In order to ensure the pilot testing of value chain dynamics, the project *предусматривает* the possibility of ensuring a minimum presence of enterprises belonging to the identified priority value chains.

In the final composition of the pilot group, the following may be ensured, where possible:

- the presence of at least 3 enterprises per territory (Sicily and Malta) within the same value chain;
- the participation of at least 3 enterprises operating in primary production and 3 in processing.

Should these conditions not be met based on the ranking, the Administration may proceed with the scrolling of the ranking list, limited to enterprises belonging to the relevant value chain, in compliance with a minimum eligibility threshold.

PUBLICITY

This call is published on the following websites:

www.cnaenna.eu, partner of the SMART FOOD project;

www.italiamalta.eu (official website of the Italy–Malta Programme).

PERSON IN CHARGE OF THE PROCEDURE AND DATA PROCESSING

By signing the application for participation in the selection procedure, applicants accept and authorise CNA Servizi Enna, represented by its legal representative pro tempore, to process their personal data exclusively for the purposes of the selection procedure.



The data will be processed by CNA Servizi Enna in compliance with the applicable legislation, including Legislative Decree No. 196 of 2003 and Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR).

The Data Controller is Dr. Stefano Rizzo.

Pursuant to Article 13 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679, the personal data provided by applicants will be collected by CNA Servizi Enna and processed for the purposes of managing the selection procedure and, where applicable, subsequently used for purposes related to the management of the collaboration.

Data subjects are entitled to the rights set out in the aforementioned legislation, including the right to access their personal data, as well as additional rights such as the right to request rectification, updating, completion or erasure of data that are inaccurate, incomplete, or processed in breach of the law.

Enna, 20/04/2026

The Managing Director

Stefano Rizzo



ANNEX A

**APPLICATION FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE SELECTION OF
COMPANIES FOR THE PILOT GROUP
SMART FOOD Project – ITALY MALTA**

CUP G73B24000010007

1. COMPANY IDENTIFICATION DETAILS

Company name: _____

Legal form: _____ VAT number: _____

Registered office: _____ Operational headquarters (involved in the project):

Sicily

Malta

Municipality: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Certified Email (PEC): _____

Contact person (name and surname): _____

Position in the company: _____

2. COMPANY CLASSIFICATION

Main business activity:

Primary production (agriculture)

Processing

Production and processing

Marketing / distribution



3. SUPPLY CHAIN (multiple answers allowed)

- Wheat / bakery products and pasta
- Tomato / processed products
- Olives / oil
- Fruit / processed products
- Milk / dairy products
- Meat / processed products (cold cuts, meat processing)
- Grapes / wine
- Legumes / processed products
- Fruit and vegetables / fresh-cut (IV range)
- Dried fruit / processed products
- Aromatic herbs
- Other (please specify): _____

4. ROLE IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN

The company (tick one option only):

- Produces raw materials
- Processes products
- Produces and mainly processes its own products
- Markets products

5. SUPPLY CHAIN RELATIONSHIPS

The company currently:

- Already sources from other operators in the supply chain*
- Is willing to source from other operators*
- Does not source from other operators*

6. COMPANY SIZE

Number of employees:

- 1-5*
- 6-10*
- 11-20*
- >20*

Annual turnover (range):

- < €100,000*
- €100,000 – €500,000*
- €500,000 – €2,000,000*
- > €2,000,000*

7. LEVEL OF DIGITALIZATION

The company uses:

- No digital tools*
- Basic tools (email, social media, spreadsheets)*
- Management / traceability software*
- Advanced integrated digital systems*

8. INTEREST IN PARTICIPATION

The company is interested in:

Collaborating with other companies in the supply chain:

Yes

No

Collaborating with companies from other territories (Sicily/Malta):

Yes

No

To be evaluated

9. BRIEF COMPANY DESCRIPTION (max 1,000 characters)

Briefly describe activities, products, and role in the supply chain:

10. DECLARATIONS

- The undersigned declares:
- to meet the requirements set out in the call;
- that the information provided is true and accurate;
- to have read and fully accepted the call;
- to authorize the processing of personal data in accordance with GDPR 679/2016.

Place and date: _____

Signature of the legal representative: _____

Attachments (optional):

- Company presentation (brochure or brief document)
- Any additional informational material
