European Innovation Partnership projects

Project objective

To implement innovation-oriented projects in the agriculture, forestry and agro-processing sector, supporting the implementation of projects which provide for innovative solutions in the sector and the creation of new products, methods, processes and new technologies in the sector, covering a wide range of final beneficiaries, or at farm level.

Innovation projects at sectoral level should develop innovative solutions at national and sectoral level as well as the creation of new products, methods, processes and new technologies at national and sectoral level.

Priority for intervention support in the areas agreed by the Strategic Steering Board for Knowledge and Innovation in Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Forestry (link in the end).

The main beneficiaries of the project implementation are primary producers in the agriculture and forestry sector.

Eligibility conditions

- ✔ The applicant (EIP operational group) shall establish a new cooperation between at least 3 different persons, at least one of whom is a farmer or forester and who are not related to each other;
- ✔ the project of the EIP operational group is related to agriculture, forestry or the processing of agricultural products;
- ✔ a cooperation agreement has been concluded between the partners;
- ✔ the EIP operational group has an internal decision-making procedure that ensures transparency of decision-making and avoids conflicts of interest.

No support shall be granted for intervention

- ✔ the implementation of projects already under way;
- ✔ individual research projects carried out by a single research promoter;
- ✔ intellectual property rights projects;
- ✔ fundamental research, which is experimental or theoretical work carried out with the aim of acquiring new knowledge about things

and phenomena without any direct commercial application or exploitation;
- ✔ feasibility studies.

Maximum eligible costs

- ✔ For innovation projects at sectoral level, the total amount of eligible costs per EIP operational group shall not exceed EUR 300 000.
- ✔ For innovation projects at sectoral level, up to 90% of the eligible costs approved for the project.
- ✔ Where the applicant acquires or invests capital in productive investments (machinery, plant and equipment used in the economic activity and directly linked to the generation of profits or to the production of products) as part of the project, an aid intensity of up to 40 % will be applied.

The eligible costs of the intervention are those necessary and directly linked to the activities carried out under the project, such as remuneration, publicity and information dissemination, travel and mission expenses, miscellaneous material and outsourcing costs, as well as indirect costs not directly linked to the achievement of the project results but ensuring appropriate conditions for the implementation of the supported activities and the achievement of the results (point 53 of Regulation No 613 of the Cabinet of Ministers).

For example, construction costs, maintenance costs, costs of purchasing tractors and costs connected with the day-to-day running of the business are **not eligible for intervention** (point 58 of Regulation No 613).

Project evaluation

Submitted projects are ranked according to the project evaluation criteria. The project evaluation criteria are:

- Composition of the partners in the operational group,

- Operational Capacity,

- Relevance of the project to the priority area,

- Impact of the project on the production cycle,

- Economic impact of the project,

- Amount of eligible costs of the project,

- Requested funding intensity,

- Dissemination of results.

Projects are also evaluated by independent experts and have separate evaluation criteria:

- Innovation,

- Potential for practical implementation and sustainability,

- Quality of the assessment of the identified issues to be addressed (needs or problems) and their logical link to the project objectives and activities,

- Impact assessment on primary producers,

- Benefit to the sector and industry,

- Risk analysis,

- Total estimated funding covering all activities and their costs to achieve the project objectives, including the distribution of funding between partners.

Allocation of EIP Operational group points to priority themes:

- Applying for the first priority topic, the EIP operational group receives 5 points.
- Applying for the third topic, 3 points are awarded.
- The EIP operational group can also apply for other topics defined in the CAP specific objectives (according to Regulation 2021/2115, Article 6, Paragraphs 1 and 2). For this, they receive 1 point.

Advance payment

The EIP operational group may use a pre-financing of 10 % of the eligible costs for the implementation of the project.

Maximum duration of the project

Five years from the date of adoption of the decision to grant aid, but no longer than 30 June 2029.

Project publicity and results

After approval of the project, the EIP operational group shall submit a summary of the project, including in English, to the Paying Agency (Rural Support Service).

After project implementation, the EIP operational group shall:

- ✔ prepare a description of the project results, including the material from the research carried out during the project, and publish it on the website of the European Innovation Partnership Network Secretariat (www.laukutikls.lv). The results of the project shall be described and disseminated by the EIP operational group without exclusivity or discrimination;
- ✔ present publicly the results of the project within one month. The lead partner shall announce the public disclosure event publicly and notify the Rural Support Service and the European Innovation Partnership Network Secretariat at least 10 working days before the event;
- ✔ the new product, practice, process or technology created may be used for commercial purposes. Information on the results of the project must be freely accessible to all interested parties. The digital solutions produced by the project shall be freely available to users and may be freely distributed without exclusivity or discrimination and shall not be profitable.

Project monitoring period

A five-year monitoring period is applied to projects involving the acquisition of machinery, plant, equipment or productive investments.

- More information on the website of the Rural Support Service (Lauku atbalsta dienests) (in Latvian) https://www.lad.gov.lv/lv/katalogs/la-16-atbalsts-eiropas-inovaciju-partneribas-darba-grupu-projektu-istenosanai

- National regulation (in Latvian) https://likumi.lv/ta/id/346827-valsts-un-eiropas-savienibas-atbalsta-pieskirsanas-kartiba-eiropas-lauksaimniecibas-fonda-lauku-attistibai-intervence-atbalsts

- Project selection criteria (in Latvian) https://www.zm.gov.lv/lv/media/16577/download?attachment

- Priority topics for the implementation of innovation projects "Support for the implementation of European Innovation Partnership operational group projects" of the Strategic Plan for the Common Agricultural Policy of Latvia 2023-2027.

Priority 1 - Crop/horticulture sector areas in the following priority order:

Topic 1.1.

- Options for reducing the use of chemical plant protection products in integrated crop production/horticulture systems, including economic evaluation.
- Carbon footprint and GHG emission reduction actions based on real data.

Topic 1.2

- Practice-based solutions to improve soil fertility and the efficient use of plant nutrients in different farming systems and to reduce nutrient leaching, including economic evaluation of solutions.

Topic 1.3

- Innovative agro-technological solutions for increasing productivity in crop production/horticulture.
- Production of new food products with high functional value, including the promotion of a circular bio-economy (development of technologies for the use of production by-products).

Priority 2 - Livestock sector areas in the following order of priority:

Topic 2.1

- Solutions for the ruminant feeding system to achieve climate neutrality objectives, preserving biodiversity and using forage produced in Latvia's climatic conditions.

Topic 2.2

- Obtaining up-to-date grassland productivity data using digital solutions.

Topic 2.3

- Innovative technologies in livestock processing, in particular using local breeds of livestock products.

Priority 3 - Forestry sector areas in the following priority order:

Topic 3.1

- Land management options for economically viable integration of agriculture and forestry to improve biodiversity, carbon sequestration, climate change adaptation and soil health and yields.

Topic 3.2

- Promoting a circular bio-economy, creating new forest products and services, sustainable use of renewable materials and bio-energy in forest management.

Topic 3.3

- Technological solutions in forest data acquisition and processing to improve the efficiency of forest management, including the development of forest inventory information.