

**INVESTINFISH**  
**Boosting INVESTments in INnovation of SMEs along the  
entire FISHERY and aquaculture value chain**

**“Call for Expression of Interest for Experts to supply Innovation  
Services to MSMEs in the Fishery and Aquaculture Sector”**

WP4 - Deliverables 4.2.1 – 4.2.2

JOINT OPEN TENDER SCHEME TO SELECT INNOVATION EXPERTS IN  
THE FISHERY&AQUACULTURE SECTOR

## Foreword

SVIM (Sviluppo Marche S.r.l.) is partner of INVESTINFISH project financed by the European Commission through the INTERREG ITALY-CROATIA Programme 2014-2020.

This Call falls within INVESTINFISH project, and it is meant to Short List a pool of Experts, that are willing to support MSMEs operating in the fishery and aquaculture sector for investment in innovation and willing to adopt an innovative multi-open partnership approach with their business.

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## Art. 1 – Introduction to INVESTINFISH goals

The fishery and aquaculture sector is characterized by SMEs/micro-firms generally facing difficulties in accessing to innovation due to their dimension combined with high entry costs for R&D. MSMEs have also scarce attitude to cooperate and there is substantial gap between R&D providers and MSMEs due to lack of substantive understanding of industry needs and mutual dialogue.

The INVESTINFISH project, financed by EU under the INTERREG Italy-Croatia Cooperation Programme, aims at strengthening the competitiveness of F&A (Fishery & Aquaculture) production system, through the promotion of investment programs aimed at acquisition of innovation services. After an in-depth analysis of poles of excellence able to trigger innovation in Veneto, Marche, Puglia, Istria and Zadar regions, funding schemes, innovation requirements from MSMEs and best advanced solutions, INVESTINFISH will implement pilot actions, providing a pool of F&A companies of 6 pilot areas in Italy and Croatia with a personalized plan (based on technology diagnosis and innovation scenarios) to improve competitiveness and own potential market positioning.

A total of 48 companies, 8 for each pilot area, will be selected to cooperate with the project partners in testing the benefit of the collaborative & open innovation approach to boost their innovation capacity.

INVESTINFISH is implemented by 6 partners from Italy and Croatia. SVIM (Sviluppo Marche S.r.l.) is a partner of INVESTINFISH Consortium.

Further info are available on the project website: <https://www.italy-croatia.eu/web/investinfish>.

## Art. 2 – Purpose of the present Call for EoI

**SVIM** is shortlisting and recruiting a roster of professionals, both individuals or public/private companies/entities (hereinafter referred to as “Experts”) specialized in the research and innovation area of fishery and aquaculture to support a number of 8 companies operating in the sector. The selected Experts will cooperate with SVIM and with a pool of 8 companies according to a collaborative & open innovation approach, providing ad hoc consultancy for the introduction of innovative services and/or technological products, based on the MSMEs expressed needs, including a technical feasibility analysis (Innovation Plan) to stimulate the companies to introduce technological or organizational innovations.

## Art. 3 – The goal of the service

Upon another parallel Call for expression of interest, 8 companies who expressed interest for receiving an innovation service and applied to the call, will be shortlisted according to specific technical criteria and on their own innovation propensity.

The Experts will provide them with a personalized pre-competitive consultancy, consisting in a **technical and economic feasibility analysis** in the perspective of introducing into the company layout specific innovations (such R&D-based solutions, revision of organizational or logistic patterns, definition of new market strategies).

Therefore, the service provided consists in the analysis of an innovation concept and feasibility assessment, where the goal is to support companies to explore and assess the technical feasibility and commercial potential of a breakthrough innovation in their own production and/or to recommend the implementation of specific innovations that shall improve the companies’ attitude and propensity to innovation.

The CONCEPT AND FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT shall cover the following innovation domains:

Market improvement	New production layout	Sustainability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvement of consumers perception</li> <li>Innovative traceability systems</li> <li>Market expansion and e-commerce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New materials</li> <li>Quality of aquaculture products</li> <li>New eco-friendly technologies for fresh-water aquaculture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optimization of waste disposal</li> <li>Reuse of leftovers and circular economy</li> </ul>

**Art. 4 – Matchmaking of company’s need and expert’s know-how**

The selected Experts could be requested to provide the Service to 1 or more companies, depending on the matchmaking between the innovation needs expressed by the selected MSMEs and the expert competences and know-how, in the framework of a Three Party contract signed between SVIM, the MSME and the Expert.

Upon analysis of the eligibility criteria, the Experts will be inserted and accredited in the INVESTINFISH Short List published in SVIM Web site.

The MSME can appoint/choose the Expert before applying to the dedicated EoI for MSMEs within the deadline of 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – 17.00h (CET) Brussels time, filling the relevant box in Annex 1 of the Call for Expression of Interest to select Fishery and Aquaculture MSMEs for Innovation Services awarding; this means that an agreement has been reached between the MSME and the Expert in advance.

The MSME can appoint/choose the Expert after the application to the dedicated EoI for MSMEs and if selected for approval, sending an official declaration to SVIM (free text) within 10 calendar days after SVIM notification of awarding, signed both by the Expert and the MSME declaring the common availability to sign the Three Party Contract.

MSMEs and Experts must be entirely separate entities, with no financial or other ties. Specifically, MSMEs and selected Experts must not be owned by the same parent company, share governance or have common directors.

MSMEs are required to declare any existing governance relationships between themselves and the selected Expert, including whether any of the Experts are subsidiaries or related bodies corporate; share common directors, officers or senior managers.

**Art. 5 – Expected products and results**

- *Format of the consultancy*

For each of the company assigned, the Expert shall carry out the following activities:

Step	Description
1 – background analysis	Initial matchmaking analysis (B2B meeting) between the company and the experts team to deepen the company’s organizational, logistic and technological layout as well as possible constrain, challenges or entrepreneurial ideas to optimize the production and improve the market competitiveness

2 – screening of alternatives	Identification of a set of possible technologies / organizational solutions that shall be customized according to the companies' peculiarities, and inter-comparison, with the goal of identifying the best in class option(s) and analysis of the economic, market, legal and environmental factors linked to such alternatives
3 – elaboration of an innovation plan	Elaboration of an innovation plan in the perspective of introducing into the company layout specific innovations (such R&D-based solutions, revision of organizational or logistic patterns, definition of new market strategies) to boost competitiveness and/or to optimize production (such as reducing waste, give a second life to leftovers etc..)

Beside the basic format of the consultancy, the selected Expert may decide to introduce further approaches or analytic tools to target specific peculiarities and improve the overall quality of the service.

Each phase will be characterized by a close interaction among the Expert and the awarded company, with the final goal of enhance the company innovation capacity, help align the feasibility assessment to strategic business needs and enhance the collaboration with other enterprises belonging to the fishery and aquaculture territorial system.

The expert shall line up its own methodological approach with any guidelines and/or formats provided by the project.

➤ *Results / Products*

The very final outcome of the service is a feasibility report per each analyzed company. This includes an elaborated innovation plan and specific recommendations to put the suggested investments in place as well as tailored financial supporting schemes that shall support the implementation of the envisaged solutions.

**Art. 6 – Value of the service**

The MSME proposal is evaluated by a Selection Committee composed by Local experts appointed by SVIM.

The maximum amount that can be awarded per MSME with the dedicated Call is 8.000,00 Euro, for a maximum total of 64.000,00 Euro for 8 companies awarded. The amount is funded 100%, no co-financing scheme is foreseen. Each Expert involved - successfully concluding the innovative service - will receive the

final payment by SVIM for the service provided after issuing a valid invoice – or equivalent document - of 8.000,00 Euro.

Investinfish project foresees a unique type of Service with a value of 8.000,00 Euro. Services of less than 8.000,00 Euro will not be eligible. If application concerns only part of a comprehensive project with a total spending forecast that exceeds 8.000,00 Euro, the activities to be financed by the Investinfish project should be part of a distinct sub project with a value of 8.000,00 Euro that should be clearly described in the application, for purpose of evaluation.

The total above mentioned amount includes VAT if the Expert selected by the MSME has its operative head office in the Country of the pilot partner (SVIM). VAT is zero – according to the national tax law- in the case the Expert selected by the MSME has its operative head office in a place outside the Country of the pilot Partner involved (SVIM).

The invoice – or equivalent document - of the Expert is issued directly to SVIM and not to the MSME (a copy of the invoice can be sent by the partner to the MSME) following art. IV of the Three Party Contract: “After the complete and correct Request for Payment is submitted to the pilot partner and its acceptance by the latter is communicated to the Expert and the MSME Beneficiary, the Expert is obliged to issue the invoice directly to the pilot project partner (SVIM), making reference to the performed activities as described in detail in the project submitted and in the final report with reference to the “Investinfish Innovation Services awarding” by the MSME Beneficiary.

In case of need, the Expert shall be invited to participate to the INVESTINFISH official Transnational project meetings. In this case, the costs of travel and accommodation for the participation to the events will be reimbursed separately by SVIM.

## **Art. 7 – Eligibility and requirements for participation**

To be accredited and inserted in the INVESTINFISH Short List, applicants shall:

### General Requirements:

1. Be an economic operator legally recognized or duly authorized to render professional services in a Interreg Italy-Croatia eligible area<sup>1</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> • In Italy - administrative units (province) of Teramo, Pescara, Chieti (Abruzzo), Campobasso (Molise), Brindisi, Lecce, Foggia, Bari, EN 7 EN Barletta-Andria-Trani (Puglia), Venezia, Padova, Rovigo (Veneto), Pordenone, Udine, Gorizia, Trieste (Friuli Venezia Giulia), Ferrara, Ravenna, Forli-Cesena, Rimini (Emilia Romagna), Pesaro e Urbino, Ancona, Macerata, Ascoli Piceno, Fermo (Marche); • In Croatia - administrative units (županija) Primorsko-goranska, Ličko-senjska, Zadarska, Šibensko-kninska, Splitsko-dalmatinska, Istarska, Dubrovačko-neretvanska (Adriatic Croatia region), Karlovačka (Continental Croatia region). This means that the Service will be dedicated and implemented for the MSME based in Marche Region, the Expert is in position to render the Service in the eligible area, but can be based in any other Country.

2. Be a natural person /single expert legally recognized or duly authorized to render professional services in a Interreg Italy-Croatia eligible area<sup>2</sup>;
3. Be a public private Research Organization (University, technological Research Centre, other research organization) legally recognized or duly authorized to render professional services in a Interreg Italy-Croatia eligible area<sup>3</sup>.

Specific Requirements:

- a) Entities mentioned in points 1,2,3, must have a high level of professional experience in one or more of the innovation domains of the F&A sector listed in Art.3 of this Call;
- b) Entities mentioned in points 1,2,3, cannot be entities in financial difficulty within the meaning of EU States aid rules, in particular Commission Regulation (EU) n.651/2014.

The above mentioned Entities will be chosen on the basis of skills, experience and knowledge, appropriate to carry out the tasks assigned. Potential independent experts are expected to have specific and largely recognized competences in the field / topic of the INVESTINFISH project.

### **Art. 8 – Submission of the request of participation**

The interested candidates shall submit:

- the Application Form (Annex 1) duly filled and signed;
- the Declaration of Honour (Annex 2) duly filled and signed;
- a CV/Company/Organisation Resume in English or Italian, which is significant with respect to the skills and activities described in art.3 and art. 9 of this call, adding if necessary a description of criteria a), b) c) of art.9;
- *For Public or Private Research Organisations only:* a scanned copy of the Establishment Act/Statute (which can be submitted in original language);
- a copy of a valid ID document of the signatory person.

The submission of the request of participation must be sent via registered e-mail (PEC) to the following address: [svimspa@emarche.it](mailto:svimspa@emarche.it) **by the 10 of May 2020 - 17:00 h (CET) Brussels time** adding in the object: "INVESTINFISH EoI for Experts".

### **Art. 9 – Selection criteria and shortlisting procedure**

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<sup>2</sup> Idem

<sup>3</sup> Idem



SVIM reserves the right to reject any application that fails to comply with the specification of this Call for EoI.

Candidates Experts will be notified about evaluation results by e-mail. In particular, each Expert will be informed by SVIM if the application has been accepted or not, not later than 30 days from the submission of the application. If an application is rejected SVIM will explain the reasons of rejection.

Upon verification of the criteria stated in art. 7, SVIM and the eventual Selection Committee shall be balanced in terms of thematic expertise so as to cover the three innovation domains of relevance for this call listed in the Art. 3. As a result of the assessment process, a Short List will be defined and published in SVIM web site.

The criteria that will be applied to shortlist the Experts that will be eligible to provide the services are:

- a) In depth knowledge (academic and/or based on practical experience) of the Fish & Aquaculture topics of relevance for the INVESTINFISH project;
- b) Direct experience of the economic and financial challenges for MSMEs in the F&A sector as well as of the potential for experimentation of innovative solutions;
- c) Pre-existing practices is essential: proven track record in similar works including innovative solutions to F&A industry;

If one of the above a) b) c) fails to be met, the candidate will not be inserted in the Short List.

There won't be any ranking between eligible shortlisted Experts.

#### **Art. 10 – Publicity and information**

The present Call for EoI is published in the following Media:

Project website: <https://www.italy-croatia.eu/web/investinfish>

Institutional partner's website: <https://www.svim.eu/>

For any information please contact: SVIM - Phone: +39.071.8064513 (9 am - 12 am) - email: [investinfish@svim.eu](mailto:investinfish@svim.eu)

#### **Art. 11 – Confidentiality and Privacy**

All information exchanged are confidential, in line with the 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.

All information exchanged are used only for the purpose of the project.

The Expert applying and undersigning the Applicant's Declaration of Honour gives its permission to SVIM to process the data given only for management (including publishing of general information) and statistic purposes even through digital devices respecting the security and privacy within the law. In particular, data processing by INVESTINFISH Project Partners will be made in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and the subsequent transposing laws (jointly, the "GDPR"). The realization of the project implies processing of the following personal data: name of the organization, address, VAT number, telephone number, e-mail, web site, name of the legal representative of the organization, surname, position, telephone number, e-mail. During project's implementation personal data will be processed exclusively by persons authorized by project partners. As an interested party the applicant can require SVIM to exercise the rights described in the art. 15 of GDPR and in particular: access to relevant personal data rectification, integration, deletion, limitation of processing that concerns them or to oppose their processing. Pursuant to art. 17, paragraph 3, let. d), the right to cancellation does not exist for data which must be processed for the purposes of scientific research if the objective of the research itself cannot be obtained without them.

#### **Art. 12 - Disclaimer**

Italy- Croatia Programme makes no representation, warranty or undertaking of any kind in relation to the accuracy or completeness of any Information.

Italy- Croatia Programme will not be liable or responsible to any person in relation to any inaccuracy, error, omission or misleading statements contained in the Information.

Italy- Croatia Programme will not be liable or responsible to any person in relation to any failure to inform any person of inaccuracy, error, omission or misleading statement contained in such Information of which it becomes aware after the date of release of that Information.

Italy- Croatia Programme shall not be liable to any person for any damages, losses, costs, liabilities or expenses of any kind which it may suffer as a consequence of relying upon such Information.

Under no circumstances will Italy- Croatia Programme be liable for any costs or expenses born by applicants in this process.

#### **Art. 13 – Conflict of interest**

Applicant Experts must have no conflict of interest with INVESTINFISH Project Partners, MSMEs or the members of the Selection Committee that may affect the potential performance of the innovation project.



## Annex 1 – Application Form to apply to the INVESTINFISH Call for EoI for Experts to supply Innovation Services to MSMEs in the Fishery and Aquaculture Sector

I, the undersigned, \_\_\_\_\_ [name of Expert] or as Legal Representative of \_\_\_\_\_ [name of the Company or Organisation] – (erase where not applicable), with Official Registered Office Address in (Street-City-Province) \_\_\_\_\_ and Operational Office in (Street-City-Province) \_\_\_\_\_ and registered VAT number \_\_\_\_\_ at the Chamber of Commerce of \_\_\_\_\_, hereby express the interest to participate in INVESTINFISH Call for EoI in order to provide a technical feasibility analysis and innovation plan to develop innovative and R&D-based solutions to boost the competitiveness of MSMEs of Fishery and Aquaculture sector.

### 1. Contact Information

Name:

Surname:

Nationality/ies:

Country:

Email address:

Phone number:

**2. Innovation domain applying for:**

*Select at least one topic listed in art. 3 of the tender for which you can provide expertise*

- Market improvement
- New production
- Layout Sustainability

**3. Knowledge and experience in the Fishery and Aquaculture sector:**

*Please shortly provide information on educational and professional background related to one or more of the topics listed in art. 3 of the call for EoI and the capacity to provide Service for innovation solution within the topics.*

- Market improvement

New production

Layout Sustainability

Upon my request to participate in the collaborative & open innovation environment in the framework of INVESTINFISH project, I, the undersigned, accept all the provisions included in the announcement and – in case of selection - I commit myself to cooperate proactively with SVIM and the F&A companies for the successful implementation of the project.

.....

Signature

.....

Name and Surname

.....

Date and place

.....

Official Stamp (if in use)

## Annex 2 - DECLARATION OF HONOUR

By submitting this EoI, the applicant declares that:

1. The applicant is fully aware that resources of the INVESTINFISH project aim to finance Innovation actions-plans, are part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) – Italy Croatia Programme and that all resources are therefore subject to the EU Structural Funds Regulations;
2. The applicant is fully aware that the participation as Expert automatically excludes the possibility for the entity representing the Expert to present an EoI as MSMEs;
3. The information provided in the application form of this is accurate, sincere, complete and correct in all its elements;
4. The applicant or any of the persons involved in the knowledge providing does not have any conflict of interest that may affect the potential performance of the Innovation plans-project;
5. The applicant declares that holds all the eligibility requirements;
6. The applicant is not in one of the following situations:
  - a. is in bankrupt or being wound up, is having its affairs administered by the courts, has entered into an arrangement with creditors, has suspended business activities, is the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
  - b. they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of res judicata;
  - c. is not in compliance with all its obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions and the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which it is established, with those of the country of the contracting authority and those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
  - d. has been the subject of a judgement which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such activity is detrimental to the financial interests of INVESTINFISH project partners;
  - e. is a subject of an administrative penalty for being guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in a procurement procedure or failing to supply this information, or having been declared to be in serious breach of its obligations;
  - f. has shown significant deficiencies in complying with the main obligations in the performance of a contract financed by the Union's budget, which has led to its early termination or to the application of liquidated damages or other contractual penalties, or which has been discovered following checks, audits or investigations by an Authorising Officer, OLAF or the Court of Auditors;

7. The applicant will inform SVIM, without delay, of any situation considered a conflict of interest or which could give rise to a conflict of interest.

Yours faithfully,

.....

Signature

.....

Name and Surname

.....

Date and place

.....

Official Stamp (if in use)