

HACK Startup Village'22

Online hackathon requirements and guidance

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1. Scope of HACK Startup Village'22

HACK Startup Village'22 is an international online hackathon organized by AgriFood Lithuania DIH, which will be held on October 21-23. The HACK Startup Village hackathon is patroned by the European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth Maryia Gabriel.

The hackathon is dedicated to searching for novel solutions and approaches towards the concept of Startup Village which is a part of the EU's long-term vision for rural areas and the European Commission's Action Plan for Rural areas, as well as EU's digitalization and the Green Deal goals. It is the first hackathon in the EU inspired by the Startup Village conception.

HACK Startup Village'22 has two different tracks: Vision for the Startup Village and AgriFood sector challenges. These categories will have separate evaluation criteria, but participants of both tracks will fight for the same prizes. Two out of three cash prizes will be dedicated for the track with the highest number of participants. Additional sponsors' prizes are also available and will be announced on the event website. The winners of the different hackathon's tracks respectively will also have the opportunity to pitch their idea during one of the flagship forums organized by the European Commission - Startup Village Forum in October and the largest international agrifood forum in the Baltic States - AgriFood Forum 2022 - in November in Vilnius.

The first track of the HACK Startup Village'22 hackathon is aimed to inspire students, experts, thinkers, academia community and startups to create a vision for selected rural or intermediate region* in selected country. The main goal is to offer a vision how to make this selected region the best place to live, work, dream and create.

HACK Startup Village'22 AgriFood track will focus on searching for novel solutions and approaches towards digitalization and the goals of the EU Green Deal in the agriculture and food sectors. The organizers decided to organize a separate track for the agrifood sector during the HACK Startup Village hackathon, taking into account the fact that smart solutions to the challenges of the agrifood sector are one of the ways to create a high value-added economy in rural areas. All in all, according to experts and many different studies, it is the most labor-intensive sector in the regions, which has a huge potential for digital and robotics solutions.

There will be four equal winners in the hackathon. Two of them in the track Vision for Startup Village and two in the AgriFood sector track. AgriFood sector track will have two different categories (From Zero to Hero and The Most Advanced Solution).

The strategic approach of HACK Startup Village'22 AgriFood part is based on 6 key objectives:

1. Empowering the implementation of the Startup Village concept in Lithuania and throughout Europe;
2. Supporting international and cross-sectorial teams of experienced or beginner innovators, thinkers and academia community working on solutions related to the Startup Village concept or the agrifood sector;
3. Involving a wide range of local and international stakeholders to shape project outcomes in line with market and end-user needs;
4. Focusing on tangible results and delivering innovative solutions targeted on real agrifood sector challenges provided by industry players;
5. Maximizing dissemination and exposure of solutions developed during the event to end-users and other stakeholders;
6. Attracting additional support and investment for teams and their solutions developed during the event.

2. Background of the Hackathon

The main organizers of the HACK Startup Village'22 hackathon - AgriFood Lithuania DIH - has proven experience in organizing different hackathons. They are the first and the only ones in Lithuania to organize an international hackathon focused on agriculture, food and related sectors. Below is a historiography of hackathons previously organized by AgriFood Lithuania DIH.

In 2019, the first HACK AgriFood hackathon took place in a unique venue – the renaissance style Raudondvaris Manor. In 2020, HACK AgriFood was organized as an online hackathon. It was the first international six-month long hackathon in Europe. In the same year, a three-day regional hackathon for the Baltic Sea countries was also held. In 2021 and 2022, a new HACK AgriFood Challenge Lab hackathon was held for students in Lithuania. In addition, in 2021 the organizers of this hackathon, AgriFood Lithuania DIH, together with partners from Latvia and Estonia, organized the highly successful hackathon HACK Digital Sea, which focused on finding solutions to aquaculture challenges.

All these hackathons were characterized by extensive communication, strong mentors, experienced judges, a large number of participants and interesting promising solutions. You can learn more about these hackathons by visiting websites www.hackagrifood.lt and www.digitalsea.lt.

3. Topics and Challenges

Teams that are invited to participate in the hackathon will be required to choose the track and challenge they will be working on throughout the event. Teams that join the hackathon will be required to declare the challenge they seek to address during the hackathon kick-off online event, which will be held on **October 21th**. If a reasoned explanation is provided during the hackathon, teams will be allowed to change the challenge of their focus.

3.1 Challenge of Vision for the Startup Village

The first track (“Vision for the Startup Village”) will have one main challenge. Everyone who choose this track will have to create a vision for selected rural or intermediate region* in selected country. The main goal is to offer a vision how to make this selected region the best place to live, work, dream and create.

* Areas covered by concepts of rural and intermediate regions from urban-rural typology are described by the European Commission. You can find the full interactive map by [clicking this link](#).

If your team chooses this challenge, you will have to:

1. Select the rural or intermediate region from Europe (preferably from your country) that you will develop into a perfect sandbox for startups, explaining the rationale of your choice.
2. Create and support with arguments a vision for the selected region to become the best choice for start-ups and an attractive place to live for everyone (from youth and experienced professionals to seniors):
 - A. Identify the main challenges that limit the selected region from being a perfect sandbox for startups, considering economic, infrastructural, social, skills-related and other challenges.
 - B. Find solutions to the identified challenges that could empower the selected region to become the center of attraction for startups. When developing the solutions, you should consider their feasibility, intensity of funding required, as well as the need for changes in regulations.
 - C. Help the region to specialize. Identify and justify by statistical data the best startup sector for the region (IT, renewable energy, agriculture, food, transport, sustainable construction, etc.)
3. Prepare a seven-minutes pitch presenting your vision/conception.

This track will have two equal winners.

3.2 Challenge of the AgriFood sector

HACK Startup Village'22 AgriFood track proposes up to **15 challenges** – organized under **four general topics** – to teams participating in the hackathon. All challenges are highly relevant and market oriented. The challenges are formulated in close cooperation and consultancy with agriculture and food sector companies - stakeholders, and offered to hackathon teams by a consortium of international industry clusters. Each challenge is patroned by one of the clusters or companies (“Challenge Owners”). Specific challenges will be published on the event's website no later than 10 days before kick-off of the hackathon.

This track will have two winners in two different categories: The Most Advanced Solution and From Zero to Hero.

A list of general topics is outlined in the table below. The full list of challenges will be provided on the hackathon's website (www.hackstartupvillage.lt).

General topics
<p><u>1. Local Food Supply Networks</u></p> <p>Although the quarantine in Europe has ended, the war started by Russia in Ukraine once again highlighted the need for rearrangement in the usual food supply networks. The value of using, supporting and promoting locally produced supplies and foods – as well as short food supply chains that link producers directly with consumers – has become apparent. To further reinforce local food supply networks, we are looking for visionary teams that can provide solutions in domains of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting local producers directly with consumers; • Projecting demand and priority of local goods; • Community-based supply chains; • Solutions for surplus food distribution.
<p><u>2. Utilizing Food Side-Streams</u></p> <p>Food production is a wasteful process, during which between 20-40% of food is lost. Thus, utilizing the by- products and side-streams of these processes to produce value adding products is essential in our collective pursuits of sustainable environments and circular economies. Disruption of food supply chains in recent years has made the problem even more prominent. We are on the lookout for smart and easy to implement solutions that help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregating by-products; • Side-stream value discovery; • Monetizing side-streams; • Side-stream recycling or utilization.
<p><u>3. Smarter Food Packaging</u></p> <p>Disturbances related to the food supply chain in our food supply networks and consumption patterns have caused significant food waste, as well as led to major financial losses for food manufacturers, distributors and retailers. Packaging is one of the key factors at the center of all of this. We welcome all innovative solutions for food packaging that address such issues as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer-oriented traceability solutions; • Digital technology-infused packaging; • Reducing the environmental footprint of packages; • Biodegradable and recycled packaging.
<p><u>4. Solving Last Mile Delivery</u></p> <p>On-line retail and food product or meal deliveries to the consumers' doorstep have skyrocketed throughout Europe and the globe, with the end of this surge nowhere in sight. Yet alternative retail channels and the so called “last mile delivery” remain relatively open fields for novel and efficiency-increasing solutions. We are welcoming teams that offer solutions related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solving increasing demand for last mile delivery; • Controlling and monitoring conditions of last mile delivery; • Reducing the environmental footprint of last mile delivery; • Simplifying retail for food producers.

4. Application and Selection process

HACK Startup Village'22 is organized as a team-based hackathon. While individuals are invited to register for the event, all individual hackathon participants will be required to either form a team with other individual participants, or join a pre-existing team. Team formation or ascension to an existing team can be before or in the beginning of the hackathon.

Teams participating in HACK Startup Village'22 need to meet the following eligibility criteria:

- The team needs to be composed of **2-5 team members**, with at least one member fluent in English and able to represent the team throughout the duration of the hackathon.
- Teams can be composed of students, researchers, experienced innovators and/or startups, coming from the EIT Food RIS countries, or other EU countries. Teams can be international, with members coming from different eligible countries
- The team must consist of members with diverse technical and business competencies. It is recommended that at least one team member should have prior knowledge in the domain of the selected challenge.
- The team must confirm and ensure on their availability to participate throughout the entire hackathon period (described below), as well as follow the rules and requirements set out by the event organizers.

Teams or individuals interested to participate are required to **register** for the hackathon by filling out the registration form on the event website (www.hackstartupvillage.lt).

Registrations should be submitted on the event website no later than **2022 October 18th (Tuesday) 17:00 pm** (CET). The registration deadline can be extended. If such change would occur, the new date would be announced on the event website (www.hackstartupvillage.lt) and social media channels (AgriFood Lithuania DIH (Facebook and LinkedIn)).

All applications will be reviewed, and their eligibility validated by the event organizational committee. Only selected teams or individuals will be contacted via email and invited to participate in the event.

In the case a maximum of 30 teams are selected before the registration deadline, the registration process will be stopped and no new registrations will be accepted. Therefore, all interested teams are encouraged to register their intent to participate as soon as possible.

5. HACK Startup Village'22 phases

The hackathon will be carried out in several phases described in more detail below.

Team registration and selection phase – until October 18th, 2022

During this phase, an outreach campaign will be carried out to attract prospective teams to participate in the hackathon. Potential participants will be contacted both through general public communication channels, as well as through direct contact. Every team or individual interested in participating in the event will need to register on the event website. If they meet the eligibility criteria, teams (individuals) will receive a formal invitation letter (for more details, please see *4. Application and selection*).

During the hackathon, at least one representative of each team must attend the kick-off event, participate in mentoring sessions, workshops, and check points.

This phase can be prolonged, if the registration deadline is extended.

Initiation phase – from October 19th to October 21st

During this phase, the hackathon will be officially initiated. By October 20th, hackathon mentors, stakeholders and other associated partners will receive information about the hackathon kick-off event.

The official start of the hackathon (kick-off online event) is scheduled to take place on October 21. During this event, hackathon participants will be introduced to the overall goals and activities of the event, as well as to the hackathon schedule and the team of mentors. Each of the **tracks** will be presented by experts of the particular domain, and each team will be asked to conduct a brief presentation of themselves to mentors, other participants and hackathon organizers.

Teams will be asked to finalize their choice regarding the challenge they wish to address by October 21. Afterwards, the teams will be assigned to appropriate mentorship tracks.

Mentoring phase – from October 22nd to October 23rd

During this phase, teams will be engaging with mentors, developing solutions that address specific challenges and refining their value propositions.

Internationally recognized mentors with extensive expertise will provide mentorship to the teams participating in the hackathon. Mentorship will encompass both relevant technical mentorship, as well as business related mentorship to help with the adaptation of the outcomes to the market needs and business best practices. Stakeholders (the potential end-users of the solutions) will also participate in mentorship, providing teams with valuable insights regarding the issues faced by the particular challenge and practical guidance.

Finalization phase – on October 23rd

A solution and pitch finalization event will be held online on October 23rd (Sunday afternoon).

All teams will be expected to deliver their pitch presentations, which will be streamed to the panel of international jury members (see 6. *Evaluation procedure and Criteria*).

Teams that receive the highest amount of evaluation points will be announced the winners of the HACK Startup Village'22 and receive the assigned prizes (see 8. *Hackathon prizes*).

6. Evaluation procedure and Criteria

All participating teams will be able to register their solution or idea for two different tracks (each track will have two equal winners):

I – Vision for Startup Village. This track will be open to the teams that will offer a vision for selected rural or intermediate region in selected country. The goal is to make that area the best place to live, work, dream and create.

This track will have two equal winners.

II – AgriFood sector challenge. This track will be open to the teams that will offer a solution for one of

the proposed agrifood sector challenges. Teams that have already prepared a specific solution, product or prototype will be evaluated according to the different criteria than teams that will start generating their idea from the blank page during this hackathon. Teams participating in the hackathon with an already developed product/solution (or are currently in progress of developing it), must inform the organizers about such circumstances.

This track will have two winners in two different categories: The Most Advanced Solution and From Zero to Hero.

- A. **The Most Advanced Solution.** This nomination will be open to the teams that have already prepared a specific solution, product or prototype and, during the hackathon, they will prepare its presentation and a commercial exploitation plan.
- B. **From Zero to Hero.** This nomination will be open to the teams that will start generating their idea from the blank page and are focused on the technological development of it - meaning, that the team owns the necessary skills and experience to create an initial prototype or fragments of it during the event.

The teams will be evaluated separately for each tracks, according to the respective criteria.

All teams participating in the hackathon will be required to deliver a **pitch presentation** on their proposed solution/vision to one or several challenges of *HACK Startup Village '22*. The pitch will need to be delivered in the format of a video presentation (up to 3 min length) during the final event, planned on October 23rd.

Pitches will be evaluated both within the context of the specific topic and within the context of the overall hackathon.

All pitches and the solutions presented within them will be evaluated by a jury of international experts. The jury will consist of internationally recognized experts from the technology, academia, authorities and business domains, as well as representatives of the agriculture and food.

Teams will be categorized according to the pre-selected tracks and every jury member will individually score each hackathon team, according to the criteria (see table below). The scores will be aggregated, averaged and a unified list of teams and their scores will be produced. The teams with the highest scores will be announced as the winners of the hackathon.

In the case of a tie, the juries will choose the winner. The decision made by the juries will be final and unappeasable by any parties involved in the hackathon.

I – Vision for Startup Village:

Criteria	Specific aspects	Score
Comprehensiveness of identified challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified challenges are context-specific • Identified challenges are supported by solid evidence/data • Identified challenges cover different dimensions (economic, social, infrastructural, skills-related, etc.) • Challenges are ranked in order of relevance 	0-5

<p>Relevance and feasibility of proposed solutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed solutions directly address the identified challenges Proposed solutions address the prominent challenges in the region Proposed solutions link to or incorporate the existing and foreseen developments in the region Proposed solutions require a lot - minimum investment Implementation of proposed solutions require much - little time Implementation of proposed solutions require many - few interventions (decisions/regulations) from public authorities 	0-9
<p>Positive economic and social impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed solutions provide access to quality jobs Proposed solutions promote new and improved skills (incl. digital) Proposed solutions promote diversifying economic activities in the region Proposed solutions improve access to essential services (education, healthcare, etc) in the region Proposed solutions maintain or improve public transport services and connections Proposed solutions improve digital infrastructure in the region Proposed solutions increase the employment rate of women 	0-7
<p>Novelty of proposed solutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed solutions are new Proposed solutions are "wow" 	0-2
<p>Specialization of the Startup Village</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vision suggests a sector/sectors that the startups in the region could specialize in The selection of specialization is well explained and makes economic sense (for the region) 	0-3
<p>Transferability to different regions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the proposed solutions can be easily adapted by similar regions in the EU Most of the components of the concept can be applied in similar regions in the EU 	0-3

Presentation quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation is well structured and smooth • Presentation is attention-grabbing • Team's idea is clearly defined and presented with persuasive argumentation 	0-5
Extra points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selected region is rural • Proposed solutions have a positive environmental impact (promote preservation of natural resources, restoration of landscapes, the greening of farming activities, shortening supply chains, promote bio- or circular economy, etc.) • Proposed solutions involve a broad range of stakeholders and networks • Proposed solutions have a positive impact on inclusion of women and vulnerable groups in rural areas • Proposed solutions increase the involvement of local communities 	0-6
Evaluation sum:		0-40

II. AgriFood sector challenge. The Most Advanced Solution (For teams that already have a solution, product or prototype)

Criteria	Description	Score
Relevance of proposed solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed solutions directly address the identified challenges. • If proposed solutions tackle multiple challenges - extra point is given. 	0-5
Technological level of preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model of existing prototype or specific calculations and drawings is presented. 	0-5
Transferability to other sectors/fields/countries within or beyond agri-food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some elements of the proposed solution or the solution itself can be easily adapted in similar sectors or others countries. 	0-5
Positive economic, social and environmental impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed solution designates and justifies three main impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic benefits (such as reducing costs, increasing productivity, fostering access to quality jobs, promote new and improved skills, <i>what is relevant for the general topic/challenge the team tackles</i>). • Social, e.g., leads to healthier 	0-6

	<p>products/services or promote a healthy lifestyle; foster the inclusion of women or vulnerable groups; <i>what is relevant for the general topic/challenge the team tackles.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental (promote preservation of natural resources, restoration of landscapes, the greening of farming activities, shortening supply chains, promote bio- or circular economy, <i>what is relevant for the general topic/challenge the team tackles</i>). 	
Feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed solutions have potential to be developed into fully market ready products or services. Feasibility encompasses the aspects of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical achievability; • Soundness of the business model; • Scope of efforts needed for commercialization (a lot – minimum investment required; much-little time; many-few interventions (decisions/regulations) from public authorities. 	0-5
Novelty of proposed solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed solutions are novel, creative (where applicable) and innovative. This criteria includes the aspects of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technological novelty and innovativeness; • Business innovativeness and uniqueness of the value proposition. 	0-4
Commercialization and market potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief analysis of the market, existing competitors, and the advantage over them is provided. • Attention is paid to the indicative cost of developing the prototype, the selling price, and its possible payback. If possible, mentioned aspects are indicated. • Proposed solutions have potential to be reused, adapted and scaled on a European level. This includes the aspects of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technological and methodological scalability; • Functional scalability and adaptability for different use cases; • Potential to be used in different market conditions. 	0-5
Progress during hackathon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress made during the hackathon in the development of the idea that the team already had before the hackathon. 	0-5
	Evaluation sum:	0-40

III - AgriFood sector challenge. From Zero to Hero (For teams that will start generating their idea from the blank page during this hackathon)

Criteria	Description	Score
Relevance of proposed solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed solutions directly address the identified challenges. If proposed solutions tackle multiple challenges - extra point is given. 	0-3
Positive economic, social and environmental impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed solution designates and justifies three main impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic benefits (such as reducing costs, increasing productivity, fostering access to quality jobs, promote new and improved skills, <i>what is relevant for the general topic/challenge the team tackles</i>). Social, e.g., leads to healthier products/services or promote a healthy lifestyle; foster the inclusion of women or vulnerable groups; <i>what is relevant for the general topic/challenge the team tackles</i>. Environmental (promote preservation of natural resources, restoration of landscapes, the greening of farming activities, shortening supply chains, promote bio- or circular economy, <i>what is relevant for the general topic/challenge the team tackles</i>). 	0-7
Novelty of proposed solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed solutions are novel, creative (where applicable) and innovative. This criteria includes the aspects of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technological novelty and innovativeness; Business innovativeness and uniqueness of the value proposition. 	0-5
Transferability to other sectors/fields/countries within or beyond agri-food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some elements of the proposed solution or the solution itself can be easily adapted in similar sectors or others countries. 	0-6
Feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed solutions have potential to be developed into fully market ready products or services. Feasibility encompasses the aspects of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical achievability; Soundness of the business model; Scope of efforts needed for commercialization (a lot – minimum investment required; much-little time; many-few interventions (decisions/regulations) from public authorities. 	0-7

<p>Commercialization and market potential</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief analysis of the market, existing competitors, and the advantage over them is provided. • Attention is paid to the indicative cost of developing the prototype, the selling price, and its possible payback. If possible, mentioned aspects are indicated. • Proposed solutions have potential to be reused, adapted and scaled on a European level. This includes the aspects of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technological and methodological scalability; • Functional scalability and adaptability for different use cases; • Potential to be used in different market conditions. 	0-7
<p>Presentation quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solutions are clearly defined and presented with persuasive argumentation. • Presentation is well-structured, smooth and grab the attention of judges. 	0-5
<p>Evaluation sum:</p>		0-40

7. Obligations and Requirements

- ✓ Teams must confirm their availability to participate throughout the entire hackathon period, as well as follow the rules and requirements set out by the event organizers;
- ✓ Not following the rules and requirements set out by the event organizers can result to the disqualification of the team from the hackathon, at the discretion of the event organizers;
- ✓ Key technical details and know-how of the developed solutions are considered as intellectual property of the teams who developed them;
- ✓ All information presented publicly (e.g. via pitches) during the hackathon (including initial ideas, developed concepts, technical details and business models) is considered as public domain knowledge;
- ✓ The organizers have the right to edit the Requirements and guidance document (available on www.hackstartupvillage.it) until the beginning of the hackathon on October 21th;
- ✓ If less than 10 teams participate, the organizers keep the right to adjust the prize fund.

8. Hackathon Prizes

After the evaluation process is finalized and results announced, the winning teams will be awarded with prizes and additional benefits. Based on the evaluation of an international jury of experts, the top-scoring team from each of the nominations will be selected and announced as the winners of the hackathon.

The nominations and main prizes are as follows:

Nomination category	Main prize
The Best Vision for Startup Village	2 teams x 2 000 Eur.
AgriFood sector track: The Most Advanced Solution	2 000 Eur.
AgriFood sector track: From Zero to Hero	2 000 Eur.

In addition to the main prizes, teams will receive additional awards and non-monetary prizes from event organizers and partners that will be determined at the full discretion of the particular partners.

9. Contacts and Dates

HACK Startup Village'22 website – www.hackstartupvillage.it

Email for additional information and questions – hub@agrifood.it