



Transparency solutions for transforming the food system



Annex 2: Open Call Guidelines for Applicants



TITAN is a project that has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme under Grant Agreement No 101060739

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1. Introduction

This document provides guidance information regarding the TITAN Open Call. Including this document, all associated Annexes must be read carefully for the submission of an Application.

TITAN Project is a 4-year Horizon Europe R&I project with the ambition to build transparency in food supply chains via the implementation of innovative (mainly digital) technologies to boost health, sustainability and safety of products, processes, and diets. The TITAN project will demonstrate the latest transparency-related solutions to help drive the formation of a demand-driven European economy based on the production and consumption of healthy, sustainable, and affordable food. As such, the project will provide an extensive platform for the development of a wide range of innovations that aid transparency and address key challenges identified in the European Green Deal (EGD).

In order to contribute to creating a rich and vibrant ecosystem in the food supply chain domain, TITAN will organize an Open Call for innovative solutions in order to select and fund eight of the most innovative and ambitious pilots that will enhance the value of food supply chains through increased transparency. For applicants to be selected for funding via the TITAN Open Call, their solutions must be under the domain of activities of one of three TITAN pilot groups:

1. Food Safety - The main goal of TITAN Food Safety Pilot group is to **showcase the potential of innovative technologies**, including **rapid detection methods and digital tools**, primarily designed for SMEs. These technologies aim to enhance **transparency within the food chain**, thereby **boosting both food safety and authenticity**. This initiative benefits **producers** by **identifying market options** and **buyers** by **enabling diversified procurement based on quality and ethical considerations**. This pilot group seeks to **facilitate data and information exchange across food chain participants, particularly between producers and buyers, transcending commodities, and international boundaries**. The **central challenge** that TITAN Food Safety Pilot group addresses is the **need for increased transparency and improved safety throughout the entire food chain**. This is achieved through the strategic deployment of advanced technologies, which not only empower SMEs but also contribute to the overall enhancement of the sector's integrity. In summary, Food Safety Pilot group stands as a testament to the TITAN's commitment to integrating innovation at every level of the food supply chain. By leveraging state-of-the-art technologies and methodologies, these activities enhance transparency, traceability, and safety, ultimately driving the industry forward while ensuring the well-being of producers, buyers, and consumers.

2. Sustainability - The main objective of TITAN Sustainability Pilot group is to show the potential of innovative digital technologies developed by and for SMEs to increase transparency in the food chain and stimulate sustainability for the different actors. All pilots within this group must **improve access to clear and trustable information and data about the food production conditions and quality control requirements** that add value for actors in the food supply chain, and possibly to end users, in terms of sustainability. As the **most fundamental principle of traceability is data and information exchange across the actors of the supply chain, data interoperability** is of vital importance for all the pilots within this group. Subgrantees who will be funded in this Open Call are expected to contribute with **technologies that check and substantiate the physical data and/or claims** that are made in agricultural supply chains, for instance: pesticide/fungicide/ inorganic fertilizer usage or variety/ genetic identification would complement pilots in this group already present in TITAN and overall benefit the Pilot group. Other partners that could be beneficial might include technologies that monitor storage conditions across supply chains.

3. Health - The overall aim of the pilots for Health is to show the potential of a set of innovative technologies to increase transparency in the food chain that will enable **consumers to make improved food choices with regard to health**. Consumers today prioritize health and sustainability in their dietary choices, driving a need for accessible and reliable food information. Education programs are pivotal in empowering all age groups. School-focused initiatives educate children about food origins, nutrition, and environmental impact, enabling them to distinguish between healthy and less nutritious options. Pilots in this group are aimed at improving consumers' purchasing and dietary decisions towards healthier alternatives and empowering consumers to make more informed and health-conscious decisions in their food purchases and dietary habits. Pilots included in this activity will aim to increase transparency in the food chain and help consumers to make improved health choices with a set of innovative technologies **focused on the environmental and nutritive values of foods and affordable technologies**. This could be achieved through a wide range of innovative technologies and approaches: focused on **both environmental and nutritive values of foods** such as: Blockchain and Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT), Smart Labels and Packaging, Food Sensors and Scanners, Mobile Apps and Platforms, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning, IoT (Internet of Things) Devices in Agriculture, Augmented Reality (AR) for In-store Information, Open Data Platforms, Citizen science approaches. Accurate labels are vital for transparency. They should comprehensively display nutritional facts, ingredients, and allergen information. Additionally, Front of Pack Labelling (FOPL) can augment packaging, offering insights into health (e.g., NutriScore) and sustainability (e.g., EnviroScore), covering factors like CO₂ impact, land use, and water consumption. QR codes have also emerged as a potent tool for sharing supplementary information, providing instant access to extensive data, encompassing product specifics, ingredient sources, and user reviews.

The TITAN Open Call will cover all three mentioned domains, where at least two winners per category will be selected for funding.

Table 1 TITAN Open Call in a nutshell

Number of selected pilots	Funding granted per Pilot	Time for implementation
8	€156,330	18 months

Background information on TITAN project

All the information about the TITAN project, approach of the Open Call and challenge definition relevant for the applicants is described in Annex 1: Open Call Text.

Funding scheme

The funding from the TITAN Open Call is deliverable based, provided in three installments, to be distributed upon successful submission of the relevant deliverable and its positive review by the TITAN Consortium. As such, there will be no need for cost justifications and getting the funding will be associated with the achievement of the relevant deliverables, which means that the administration burden of the subproject implementation will be removed from the Subgrantees. HOWEVER, the Subgrantee is required to keep all documents relating to their sub-project contract for five years after the conclusion of the TITAN project, should the EC decide to arrange a financial audit to be carried out. For more details, see Section 7 – Financial audits and controls.

The awarded applicants will receive their funding in three payments for **156,330€** approximately one month upon submitting each of the relevant deliverables, and upon receiving a positive assessment regarding their deliverables from the TITAN consortium. The structure of these deliverables will timely be made available to the winners of the TITAN Open Call, prior to the start of the implementation of their projects.

Timeline – TITAN Open Call

Submission to the TITAN Open Call will be enabled on the 2nd of October 2023 and will end on the 1st of December 2023 at 17:00 CET time (Brussels time).

The table below presents the indicative timeline during which each phase of the TITAN Open Call for will take place. The dates may change due to unforeseen events and situations. Therefore, these are an indication of what is initially expected; the dates are to be confirmed by the TITAN team along the process and are not restrictive.

The TITAN consortium reserves the right to cancel the Open Call at any point due to any unforeseen circumstances. The TITAN consortium also reserves the right to extend the call and/or launch an additional call, in case not enough applications of sufficient quality have been received via the Open Call.



Figure 1 TITAN Open Call - Tentative timeline

2. General information

Means of submission

The Open Call Hub (OCH) platform (<https://opencallhub.eu/open-call/titan-project>) will be the entry point for all Applicants' proposal submissions to TITAN Open Call. Applications received by any other channel will be automatically discarded.

Documents required in subsequent stages will be sent to the TITAN partners managing the Open Call at: titan@opencallhub.eu.

Language

Applications for TITAN Open Call must be done only in the English language. Submissions done in other languages will be considered ineligible and will be discarded in the **Eligibility check** phase.

The official language of the Project is English and all process documents which include Annex 4 (Declaration of Honour), Annex 5 (Declaration of Conducting Business) and Annex 6 (Consortium Declaration) in the **application submission stage** and Annex 7 (Bank account form), Annex 8 (Model Subgrantee Agreement for) for the **winning applicants**, are also created in English.

The deliverables that the winning applicants will submit to the TITAN consortium must also be completed in English.

Documentation format

Any additional document requested must be submitted electronically in PDF format without restrictions for printing.

Data protection

In order to process and evaluate applications, TITAN will need to collect Personal and Industrial Data. FSH, as the Open Call Manager of the project will act as Data Controller for data submitted through the OCH platform for these purposes. The OCH platform's system design and operational procedures ensure that data is managed in compliance with The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR). Each applicant will accept the OCH terms to ensure compliance. Please note that TITAN requests the minimum information needed to deliver the evaluation procedures or the support programme. Annexes 7: Bank Account Information and 8 Model Subgrantee Agreement, are provided for reference and will only be requested if the applicant is accepted in the TITAN support programme. Please refer to <https://opencallhub.eu/Home/Privacy> to check OCH platform data privacy policy and security.

Origin of the funds

All Subgrantees will sign a dedicated Subgrantee Agreement with the TITAN consortium. The funds attached to the Subgrantee Agreement come directly from the funds of the European Project TITAN funded itself by the "Farm to fork, Communities Development and Climate Action Unit" (REA.B.2), and remain therefore, property of the EU until the payment of the balance, whose management rights have been transferred to the project partners in TITAN via European Commission Grant Agreement Number 101060739. As it can be seen in the Model Subgrantee Agreement (Annex 8), this relation between the Subgrantees and the European Commission through TITAN project carries a set of obligations to the Subgrantees with the European Commission. It is the task of the Subgrantees to accomplish them, and of the TITAN consortium partners to inform about them.

3. Application Eligibility Criteria

Target Applicants

TITAN Open Call for invites **high growth FoodTech and AgriTech** SMEs/startups/scaleups – with expertise and experience in **TITAN key areas of expertise** (see Annex 1 – Open Call Text). Applications are allowed from single entities OR small consortia of up to three SMEs.

For applicants to be selected for funding via the TITAN Open Call, their solutions must be under the domain of activities of one of three TITAN pilot groups: Food Safety, Sustainability or Health (as explained in Section 1 of this document and Annex 1: Open Call Text).

Existing consortium members of TITAN project are not eligible for the Open Call of TITAN.

Definition of SME (Small or Medium sized Enterprise)

An SME will be considered as such if complying with the European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC¹ and the SME user guide. As a summary, the criteria which define an SME are:

- Headcount in Annual Work Unit (AWU) less than 250.
- Annual turnover less or equal to €50 million OR annual balance sheet total less or equal to €43 million

Applicant Eligibility Criteria

For all applicants, the following grant eligibility criteria include:

- The applicant is an SME, legally established and based in one of the EU Member States or an HE Associated Country as defined in HE rules for participation.
- The applicant participates as a single entity, OR as a part of a small consortium, consisting of up to three entities.
- Signed Declaration of Honour stipulating that the entity is eligible for financing in line with eligibility rules of HE, with the possibility for requests for additional documentation if/when required.
- The applicant's proposal addresses the TITAN Key Areas of Expertise, as presented in Annex 1 – Open Call Text.
- The applicant provides (or intends to provide) solutions in one of the three TITAN Pilot groups.

Please note that a signed version of Annex 4 Declaration of Honour and Annex 5 Declaration of Conducting Business are mandatory for application submission.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:124:0036:0041:en:PDF>

Application Eligibility Criteria

The following application eligibility criteria for the TITAN Open Call include:

- Each applicant may submit only one (1) application to the TITAN Open Call, regardless of whether they are applying as a single entity, or as a member of a small consortium of up to three entities.
- In case an applicant submits more than one application in the Open Call (as a single entity), only the last one received (timestamp of the system) will be considered, and the remaining applications will automatically be excluded from the evaluation process. In case an applicant wants to re-submit the application, they need to create a new account to do so, keeping in mind that each account has to have a unique email address, therefore another email address must be used to resubmit the application. If the last submitted application is declared as non-eligible or below the evaluation threshold upon evaluation, the other submitted applications will not be taken into consideration.
- The applicants must demonstrate that there is no risk of double funding. The fundamental principle underpinning the rules for public expenditure in the EU states that no costs for the same activity can be funded twice from the EU budget, as defined in the Article 111 of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation. In the case of applications submitted by linked SMEs, all must clearly state the differences between them, including but not limited to, technical aspects, market strategy and team composition, so that no doubt remains that there is no risk of double funding. In order to properly assess these concerns TITAN may assign all applications to the same set of evaluators and, should any doubt remain, exclude all applications. In case of applying consortia, appearance of an entity in multiple applying consortia will also be treated as a risk of double funding and consequently, all applications from consortia where this entity is present will automatically be discarded as ineligible. Similarly, if an entity applies both as a single entity and a member of a small consortium, all applications where this entity is present will be discarded as ineligible.
- The maximum amount of funding that a Pilot can receive via the TITAN Open Call is 156,330€, regardless of the fact whether they applied as a single entity, or as a small consortium of up to three entities.

Definition of eligible countries

Association with Horizon Europe is governed by the Horizon Europe Regulation 2021/6951. Legal entities from associated countries can participate under the same conditions as legal entities from the EU Member States, unless specific restrictions or conditions are set in the work programme and/or call/topic text. Such measures could include the limitation of participation in certain actions to legal entities established only in the EU, or in the EU and specified non-EU countries, in order to safeguard the EU's strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security.

Important notice:

The Open Call adheres to the **Council Implementing Decision 2022/2506** that stipulates that legal commitments must not be entered into with any public interest trusts established on the basis of the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity maintained by such a public interest trust, concerning inter alia financial support to third parties. Consequently, the concerned Hungarian entities are excluded from receiving FSTP (financial support to third parties) from this Open Call. For further information please follow this [link](#).

According to the EU Grants: List of Participating Countries (HE): V2.6 – 01.08.2023, besides the **EU Member States** (including their outermost regions, as well as **Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT)** linked to EU Member), the following **Horizon Europe associated countries** are eligible to receive funding through TITAN Open Call (listed in alphabetical order): Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Kosovo², Moldova, Montenegro, New Zealand North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Tunisia, Türkiye, and Ukraine.

Additional countries that are eligible for funding are:

1. Morocco (applicable for the entire Programme).
2. United Kingdom (UK) (applicable for the entire Programme³). UK is eligible, but this is provided that the UK signs the association agreement before the signature of the sub-grant agreement.
3. Switzerland (funded through its own funding programme and budget).

Participants (other third countries) from the following low- to middle-income countries are automatically eligible for funding, as of August 1st, 2023:

- Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Azerbaijan
- Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi
- Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Comoros, Congo (Democratic Republic), Congo (Republic), Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba
- Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic
- Ecuador, Egypt (Arab Republic), El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia
- Fiji
- Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana
- Haiti, Honduras
- Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic), Iraq
- Jamaica, Jordan
- Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Korea (Democratic People's Republic), Kyrgyz Republic
- Lao (People's Democratic Republic), Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya
- Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Micronesia (Federated States), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar
- Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria
- Pakistan, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines
- Rwanda
- Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic
- Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu
- Uganda, Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic), Vietnam
- Yemen Republic
- Zambia, Zimbabwe.

² This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

³ The UK will participate in all parts of the Horizon Europe programme with the only exception of the EIC Fund

Eligible costs

TITAN projects follow the guidelines of the European Commission in terms of cost eligibility for financing within its Open Call. Payments will follow the “General eligibility conditions for lump sum costs” according to the EU Grants: AGA — Annotated Model Grant Agreement: V1.0 DRAFT–01.04.2023⁴ and specifically Article 5. The following cost categories are considered eligible:

1. **Personnel costs** – Costs of the personnel realizing the work and preparing the deliverables/reports after each of the 3 phases. Calculate personnel costs according to the rules and regulations of your country and real labour market data regarding the relevant positions. Personnel costs are considered direct costs and can’t be managed as indirect costs.
2. **Travel costs** – Travel costs necessary for the execution of the sub-project.
3. **Equipment costs** – Borrowing or loaning of the necessary equipment is not eligible, only depreciation costs for purchased equipment are eligible.
4. **Other goods & services** – Other goods and services include, for instance, consumables and supplies, dissemination (including open access), protection of results, certificates on the methodology, translations and publications.
5. **Subcontracting** - Subcontracting should be clearly justified. Costs must be reasonable and comply with the principle of sound financial management. Coordination tasks cannot be subcontracted. You should ensure that there are sufficient details for: the action tasks, the estimated budget, the procedure that will be followed to ensure best value-for-money. Any kind of organization could be subcontracted, provided that they are not part of the TITAN consortium. The evaluators will assess the necessity of the scope and value-for-money aspects of subcontracting and their assessment will be reflected in the score of each proposal. Subcontracting is allowed for up to a maximum of 25% of the proposed budget when properly justified. Selected applicants should follow the standards for subcontracting set by the European Commission, ensuring best value for money and absence of conflict of interest, during the project implementation. Procurement should be done according to the national and European regulation that is applied to each applicant’s institution.
6. **Indirect costs** - Indirect costs (overheads) could be up to 25% of the direct costs. Subcontracting is not included in indirect cost calculation.

Applicants will be able to present the tentative budget for the implementation of their solution within the Section Work plan and activities of Annex 3: Open Call Application Form.

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/aga_en.pdf

4. Application Submission

All winners of the Open Call need to fulfil the eligibility criteria stated in Section 3, sign and submit the same documents. At the time of application, all applicants must provide: Annex 4 (Declaration of Honour) and Annex 5 (Declaration of Conducting Business). Applicants who apply as members of small consortia of up to three members must also submit the Annex 6 (Consortium Declaration).

Winning Pilots must also provide: Annex 7 (Bank account information) and three signed copies of Annex 8 (Subgrantee Agreement), which will be given to them upon being declared the winners of the TITAN Open Call. Figure 2 presents the phases that will take place for the applying Pilots of the TITAN Open Call. The activities within this process are presented in the table below, and the dates are presented in section “**Timeline – TITAN Open Call**”, however they may change due to unforeseen events and situations. Therefore, these are an indication of what is initially expected; the dates are to be confirmed by the TITAN team along the process and are not restrictive.

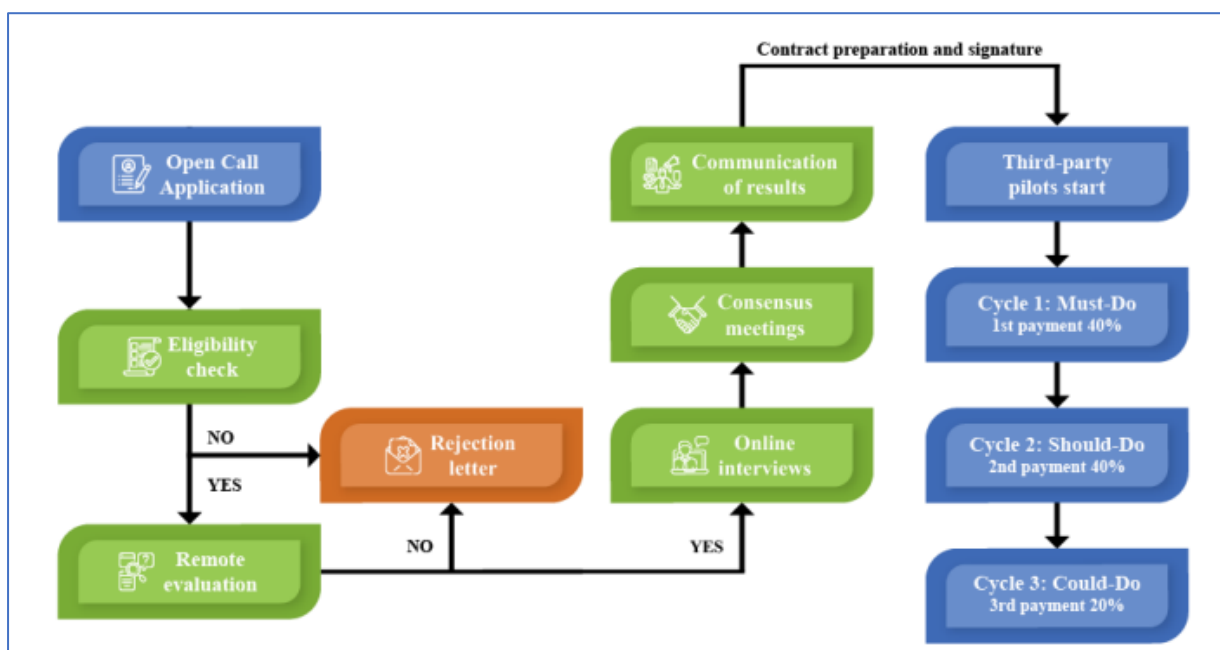


Figure 2 TITAN Open Call funnel

The TITAN Open Call will be published on 02.10.2023 and will remain open until 01.12.2023. The Open Call submission will follow the tentative steps that are listed in this section.

Open Call Publication

The Open Call will be supported by:

- **Annex 1: Open Call Text** that provides information regarding the TITAN Open Call for the respective applicants.
- **Annex 2: Open Call Guidelines for Applicants**, that set out the guidelines for participation in the TITAN Open Call for respective applicants. It also includes the eligibility and evaluation criteria.
- **Annex 3: Application Form**, application form available at (<https://titanproject.eu/open-call/>), with questions that need to be addressed by the applicants.
- **Annex 4: Declaration of Honour**, which declares that all conditions of the Open Call are accepted by the applying entities' legal representative.

- **Annex 5: Declaration of Conducting Business**, which evaluates the status of the entity applying for the TITAN Open Call.
- **Annex 6: Consortium Declaration**, document mandatory for applicants who apply as members of a small consortium of up to three entities.
- **Annex 7: Bank Account Information**, which collects information on the applicant's bank account where the TITAN payments will be transferred to. (Only for winners of the Open Call)
- **Annex 8: Model Subgrantee Agreement**, that the successful Pilots will be requested to sign. (Only for winners of the Open Call) *
- Frequently asked questions & answers published at the community feed (<https://opencallhub.eu/titan-project/Faq>).

*This document serves as a reference. The Subgrantee Agreement that will be given to the winning applicants will be finalized during the contracting phase.

Applicants Registration

Interested applicants should register at the OCH page (<https://opencallhub.eu/open-call/titan-project>). This will be the central interface for managing the proposal applications for the remainder of the Open Call.

The TITAN Open Call will also be visible at the TITAN website (www.titanproject.eu), as well as the Funding & Tenders Portal.

Application Preparation

Please follow the steps:

1. For the application preparation, the applicants are requested to register to the Open Call Hub platform, apply online and answer all mandatory questions (with no exception) at (<https://opencallhub.eu/open-call/titan-project>). It is important to note that only individuals registered on the Open Call Hub platform will be in position to apply for the TITAN Open Call, but also to submit questions on the dedicated FAQ section on the Open Call Hub platform.
2. Applicants that do not accept the terms and conditions and do not sign and upload to the OCH platform the completed Declaration of Honour (Annex 4) and the Declaration of Conducting Business (Annex 5), both in PDF format, will not be eligible. Later submissions of these documents will not be accepted. Applicants who apply as members of small consortia of up to three members must also upload the completed Consortium Declaration (Annex 6).
3. Applicants are encouraged to be concrete and concise. Please examine all the Open Call documents and attend the various events organized by the TITAN project (<https://titanproject.eu/>).
4. In case applicants have any technical difficulties, they should contact the FSH support team at titan@opencallhub.eu until November 29th at 17:00 CET.

It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the application. Failure of the application to arrive in time for any reason, including network communications delays or working from multiple browsers or multiple browser windows, is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. The time of receipt of the application as recorded by the submission system will be definitive. In case of small consortia applications, applicants are advised to carefully consider the eligibility of all members of the consortium.



Application reception

Submissions will ONLY be done via the OCH platform on (<https://opencallhub.eu/open-call/titan-project>). A full list of applicants will be drafted containing their basic information for statistical purposes and clarity (which will be also shared with the European Commission for transparency). The application reception will close at 17:00 CET (Brussels time) on 1st of December 2023.

The application reception will close at 17:00 CET (Brussels time) on 1st of December 2023.

5. Evaluation process

Procedures for the applicants to enter the TITAN Open Call

Step 1: Eligibility check

After the Open Call has been concluded, a filtering process will be carried out in order to discard non-eligible applications. This procedural part of the evaluation will verify if:

- The applicant is eligible for EC funding under the rules of Horizon Europe (HE) [Y/N]
- The applicant is a registered SME as defined in section “Target Applicants” [Y/N]
- The applicant demonstrates expertise and addresses the specifics of the TITAN Key Areas of Expertise (see Annex 1 – Open Call Text) and provides (or intends to provide) solutions in one of the three TITAN Pilot groups [Y/N]
- Is the participation rule as expressed in section “Application Eligibility Criteria” followed? [Y/N]
- Is the application written in English language [Y/N]?
- Are all required documentation: Annex 4: Declaration of Honour and Annex 5: Declaration of Conducting Business correctly submitted? [Y/N]
- Is the applicant participating as a single entity OR as a member of a small consortium (consisting of up to three entities)? [Y/N]
- In case of applying small consortia, has the applying consortium correctly submitted the Annex 6: Consortium Declaration? [Y/N]

The eligibility check will be carried out by TITAN partner managing the Open Call, Foodscale Hub, in the first days of December 2023.

TITAN partners will only forward the eligible applications to the evaluators. Please note that only complete applications will be considered, those with missing information or missing answers will be discarded.

Step 2: Remote Evaluation

Remotely each application will be evaluated by at least two field experts in relevant domains (one business expert and one technical expert) external to the TITAN Consortium. These external evaluators will be selected by the Open Call Manager (FSH) after a Call for Expression of Interest for External Evaluators has been concluded, which will run in parallel with the TITAN Open Call.

In case potential evaluators are already registered on the Open Call Hub platform, they will not need to apply again, and will be taken into consideration for selection as a TITAN evaluator, providing their expertise profile fits the TITAN Open Call needs.

Applications will be scored based on the following evaluation criteria:

Table 2 TITAN Evaluation Criteria elaboration

Criterion	Description
Criterion 1: Experiment and Excellence	Under this criterion, the analysis of the status quo of the applicant's industry will be evaluated and how their solution could improve it, alongside with the design, reliability, and novelty of their proposed solution. Under this criterion, applicants should also present the work plan of their subproject implementation.
Criterion 2: Technology and Alignment	Under this criterion, evaluators will assess the alignment of the proposed technical solution with the TITAN Key Areas of Expertise, as well as the alignment with the Pilot group selected in the application. The applicants should present the current TRL of their solution and the technical capacity and pathways to achieve at least TRL6. The technical milestones of the project should also be presented under this criterion.
Criterion 3: Impact	Applicants should identify the main stakeholders of their solution, their needs and how the stakeholders will benefit from the proposed solution. The applicants should present the social, economic, and environmental impact their proposed solution should create. Additionally, under this criterion, applicants should present the commercial milestones of the project as well as the post-project sustainability strategy for the developed solution.
Criterion 4: Team	Under this criterion, applicants should demonstrate the technical and business expertise of the Pilot. Team members should be presented and their key expertise, references and the role in the Pilot should be explained. In case of applying small consortia, the participation of each member should be highlighted.

Each criterion will have a mark between 1 and 5. Half point scores are not given. For each criterion under examination, score values will indicate the following assessments:

Table 3 Explanations of evaluation marks

1 – Fail	The application fails to address the issue under examination or provides insufficient information.
2 – Poor	The issue is addressed in an unsatisfactory manner.
3 – Average	The application addresses the issue, but there are significant weaknesses.
4 – Good	The application addresses the issue well, but there is clear room for improvement.
5 – Excellent	The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the issue in question and if there are any shortcomings, they are minor.

The threshold for all of these criteria will be three (3).

Each evaluator will record their individual opinion of each application on an Individual Evaluation Report which will be sent to the partner managing the Open Call, Foodscale Hub, who will inform the applicants of the outcome of their applications, via the Evaluation Summary Report.

The application evaluation criteria will be given the following weighing factors:

Table 4 TITAN Evaluation Criteria with weighing factors

Criterion	Weighting factor	Scoring	Threshold
Experiment and Excellence	30%	1-5	3 out of 5
Technology and Alignment	25%	1-5	3 out of 5
Impact	30%	1-5	4 out of 5
Team	15%	1-5	3 out of 5

At the end of the remote evaluation process all applications will be ranked based on the overall score.

The average for each criterion will be calculated from all reviewer evaluations. **The average mark for every single criterion must be at least 3 (with the exception of Impact which must be at least 4).** If even a single criterion is rated below the selection threshold, the application will not be selected. The sum of these averaged scores results in the total evaluation score for each application (maximum score = 5).

Step 3: Consensus meetings between External Evaluators

In case the discrepancy in the marks given to a criterion (or more) by the two evaluators is at 3 or 4, a **Consensus meeting** will be organized between the two evaluators and will be moderated by the TITAN partner managing the Open Call (Foodscale Hub). Please note that the goal of these Consensus meetings is not necessarily to align the marks given by the two evaluators, but rather to give them the opportunity to present their finding and exchange opinions. **The Consensus meetings will not be held in case the application in question has scored below the Selection threshold on a criterion where this discrepancy is not present**, even if it is present in another criterion. The external evaluators will be in the position to change the mark they have given **only for the criterion that triggered the Consensus meeting**.

After the Consensus meetings have been completed (if applicable), the Individual Evaluation Reports will be gathered for all applications that entered the TITAN Open Call and an Evaluation Summary Report will be created for each one, containing the marks given to the Evaluation criteria, as well as the Evaluator's comments for each criterion and the application as a whole. These Evaluation Summary Reports will be promptly distributed to all Open Call applicants.

Step 4: Redress procedure

Within **three working days** of the delivery of a rejection letter considering the application as non-eligible or an Evaluation Summary Report that ranks the application below the selection borderline, the applicants might submit a request for redress to the TITAN Consortium if they believe there has been a procedural shortcoming in the way their application has been evaluated or if they believe that the results of the eligibility checks are incorrect. The request for redress must be submitted in English language to the following mail address: titan@opencallhub.eu.

The redress may address the eligibility check and/or evaluation procedural activity of the application. The request for redress must clearly explain the redress points and elaborate on every stated point.

Request must be:

- Related to the evaluation procedural process or eligibility checks, for example errors like an SME (with a registered VAT number) being discarded as ineligible by accident,
- Clearly describing the complaint,
- Received within the time limit (three working days) from the reception of a rejection letter considering the application as non-eligible or an Evaluation Summary Report that ranks the application below the selection for the Online interview borderline,
- Sent by the SME legal representative, or the SME representative that has submitted the application (in case of single entity applications) OR the legal representative of the Consortium leader (in case of applications from small consortia of up to three entities) as identified in Annex 6: Consortium Declaration.

In this case, **the Redress committee** (ILSI as the Project Coordinator, partner managing the Open Call, Foodscale Hub, and the appropriate technical expert within the TITAN Consortium, with respect to the Pilot group of the application in question) will examine the request for redress within two working days and decide whether the application in question will be re-evaluated or the request for redress will be rejected. If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could affect the eventual decision to select an applicant as a winning beneficiary of the Open Call, it is possible that all or part of the application will be re-evaluated. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of such requests and equal treatment of applicants.

Please note:

- This procedure is concerned only with the evaluation procedural activities and/or eligibility checking process. The committee will not call into question the business or technical judgement of appropriately qualified experts, nor the mark given to any specific criterion.
- Any redress request that calls into question the technical/business judgement of appropriately qualified experts will automatically be rejected.
- A re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the final decision on whether to select the applicant as a winning beneficiary or not. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if an application has failed anyway on other criteria.
- The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score.

Only one request for redress per application will be considered by the Committee. If more requests for redress are submitted, only the first request sent will be taken into consideration. The application that is approved for re-evaluation will be re-evaluated timely and prior to the Online interview stage. In case an application under the redress procedure is re-evaluated and the new evaluation score is higher, it will be included in the list of applications to be invited for the Online interview.

Step 5: Online interviews

Online interviews: the top applying Pilots (up to 16 applicants) will be invited to the online interview, that aims to understand project concept, team skills and competence, capacity and willingness to exploit Pilot results. These interviews will be carried out by the TITAN Review Committee composed of at least three TITAN partner members (Coordinator, Open Call Manager, leader of the "Digital Technologies" Work Package and a partner from the relevant TITAN Pilot group the applicant has applied under). Additionally, the TITAN external Ethics Advisor will also be present at these interviews, in order to assess potential ethical issues that could stem from the applications that enter this stage. In these Online interviews, the following criteria will be assessed:

Table 5 TITAN Online interview criteria

Criterion	Weighting factor	Explanation
Concept and Technology	40%	Confirmation of proposed targets and technology fit.
Business	30%	The viability of the proposed business model and credibility of the sustainability strategy.
Exploitation	30%	Reliability to reach milestones; readiness to present to investors and corporates.

Same marks (from 1 to 5) will be used, as in Remote Evaluation. After each Online interview, the members of the TITAN Review Committee will have a Consensus meeting to present their individual reports and finalize the Evaluation Summary Report. If during the interviews applicants do not commit to what was presented in their applications, these applications will be discarded.

At the end of this process, the TITAN Review Committee will select 8 Pilots to take part in the TITAN Accelerator Programme and up to three Pilots per Pilot group will remain on the Reserves list.

It is planned that funding not allocated to a TITAN Pilot group will be moved to other Pilot groups so that all of the funding will be allocated to TITAN Pilots. This is not a binding condition, and the TITAN consortium keeps the right to modify the final distribution, so that priority will be given to the best applications.

Step 6: Notification

All applicants who took part in these Online interviews will receive an acceptance or rejection letter together with an Online Interview Summary Report of their application, containing the average score for each criterion, overall score and the synthesis of the comments from the TITAN Review Committee.

Step 7: Contract Preparation

After the Online interviews have been concluded and the winners of the TITAN Open Call have been selected, the TITAN Treasurer (Foodscale Hub), assisted by the project Coordinator (ILSI) will start the contract preparation in collaboration with the winning applications' representatives. Contract preparation will go via administrative and financial checking. A phone call or teleconference may be needed for clarification on a case-by-case approach.

The objective of the contract preparation is fulfilling the legal requirements between the TITAN consortium and every winner of the Open Call. The items covered will be:

- To validate the **legal status** of the applicant, the following documents will be required:
 - **Legal existence:** Company Register, Official Gazette or other official document per country showing the name of the organisation, the legal address and registration number and a copy of a document proving VAT registration (in case the VAT number does not show on the registration extract or its equivalent).
 - Legal proof that the applicant's organization is not under liquidation or has filed for bankruptcy.
- **Bank Account Information:** The account where the funds will be transferred will be indicated via a form signed by the legal representative and the bank representative. The account should

be a business bank account of the beneficiary. In case of applying small consortia, they will need to provide information about the Bank Account of each member of the consortium. The financial information should not be older than three months.

The Subgrantee assumes full responsibility on the bank account info they provide through Annex 7. For instance, if they provide a wrong IBAN, and the TITAN team proceeds with the transfer to that account, they will assume any costs related to the transfer (expenses with the return of the amount from the wrong bank account and/or expenses with the new transfer will be deducted from their grant transfer). Ultimately, in a worst-case scenario, if the TITAN team does not manage to recover the amount transferred to the wrong bank account, the beneficiary who provided a wrong IBAN will not be able to claim that payment.

The request, by the TITAN consortium, of the above documentation will be done within designated deadlines. The subproject contract negotiations are intended to be carried out between 20th of January and 31st of January 2023. In case negotiations have not been concluded within the above period, the application could be rejected with the next application in the reserve list to be invited.

Step 8: Contract signature

At the end of the negotiation phase, the Subgrantee agreement will be signed between the TITAN consortium represented by its Coordinator (ILSI) and the Treasurer (FSH) and the winning applicant.

6. Subproject Execution Summary

Support provided to Subgrantees

The winning Pilots will be supported by cross cutting Work Packages dedicated to stakeholder interests, implementation of digital technologies, policy recommendations, business support, management and communication and dissemination.

The business support will be given in the form of a three-cycle programme. Upon the completion of each Cycle the selected Subgrantees will submit the relevant deliverables to the TITAN consortium and receive the respective payment installments, upon positive review of the deliverables.

In case the deliverables have not been evaluated positively, the TITAN consortium will ask the Subgrantees for additional clarifications. This could have an effect on the timing of payments, as the positive review of the deliverable is the trigger for releasing the respective payment.

In case the Subgrantee does not comply with the additional request by the TITAN consortium or if the deliverables are not accepted upon receiving additional clarifications, the TITAN consortium reserves the right to terminate the contract automatically. In such case, all financial transactions made by TITAN towards the sub-grantee (if any at a designated time) have to be reimbursed within 10 calendar days upon receipt of an official contract termination.

CYCLE 1: MUST-DO

This cycle will focus on the basics about the European business environment, from a business and intellectual property perspective. Training sessions will be delivered in a form of webinars conducted by FSH experts. In total, four training sessions will be delivered to TITAN Open Call winners. Pilot partners will have a chance to choose one training from the comprehensive pool of sessions according to their organization's needs. The training sessions are grouped into the following topics: (1) Financial management, (2) Marketing and promotion, (3) International collaboration and brand image, (4) Intellectual Property. This cycle will last for three months.

CYCLE 2: SHOULD-DO

This cycle will be structured around the four topic areas introduced in the 1st cycle. The SMEs will benefit from hands-on support from a team of dedicated business mentors coming from FSH. Two trainings will be delivered per each focus topic in the period of twelve months.

CYCLE 3: COULD-DO

In this cycle a team of expert mentors will provide 1-on-1 tailor-made mentorship support over the course of three months to all organisations, members of internal and external Pilots. FSH mentors have diverse business backgrounds, focusing on specific thematic topics. Organisations will choose one FSH expert mentor according to their own needs and preferences. FSH Pool of Mentors will be defined in the upcoming period.

7. Responsibilities of the Subgrantees

The selected Subgrantees are indirectly beneficiaries of European Commission funding. As such, they are responsible for the proper use of the funding and ensure that the recipients comply with obligations under HE specific requirements as described in Horizon Europe - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) The obligations that are applicable to the recipients include:

Conflict of interest

The Subgrantee representative must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the subproject is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests'). At the same time, applicants cannot be affiliated with TITAN consortium partners, nor can they be employees of the TITAN consortium partners. All potential conflicts of interest will be assessed carefully. Please see more info [HERE](#).

They must formally notify to the TITAN consortium without delay any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. The TITAN consortium may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

If the Subgrantee representative breaches any of its obligations, the Subgrantee agreement may be automatically terminated. Moreover, if the Subgrantee agreement is terminated due to a breach made by the Subgrantee, the TITAN consortium reserves the right to claim the refunds of payments made to the Subgrantee and suspend all further payments of the subgrant.

Ethics, Data Protection & Confidentiality

During the implementation of the subproject and for five years after the end of the subproject, the parties must keep confidential any data, documents, or other material (in any form) that is identified as confidential at subcontract signing time ('confidential information').

If a Subgrantee representative requests, the Commission and the TITAN consortium may agree to keep such information confidential for an additional period beyond the initial five years. This will be explicitly stated in the Subgrantee Agreement. If information has been identified as confidential during the subproject execution or only orally, it will be considered confidential only if this is accepted by the TITAN Coordinator and confirmed in writing within 15 days of the oral disclosure. Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, they may use confidential information only to implement the Agreement.

The Subgrantee representative(s) may disclose confidential information to the TITAN consortium and to the selected reviewers, who will be bounded by a specific Non-Disclosure Agreement.

Applicants must confirm that all proposed services, including the means of their delivery and upkeep, have been reviewed to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation on data protection, privacy, and fundamental rights.

The responsibility for meeting ethics and data protection requirements rests solely with the applicants in their applications and eventual implementation of their projects (if selected). The selected Pilots could be subject to additional ethical check-ups, performed by the TITAN external ethical advisor, during application, evaluation and/ or implementation stage.

Promoting the action and giving visibility to the EU funding

The Subgrantees must promote the subproject, the TITAN project and its results, by providing the description of their project upon request from the TITAN Consortium and highlight the financial support of the EC.

Unless the European Commission or the TITAN coordinator requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any communication activity related to the action (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.), any publicity, including at a conference or seminar or any type of information or promotional material (brochure, leaflet, poster, presentation etc.), and any infrastructure, equipment and major results funded by the grant must:

- (a) display the EU emblem;
- (b) display the TITAN logo and
- (c) include the following text:

For communication activities: “This project has indirectly received funding from the European Union’s Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under project TITAN (grant agreement No 101060739)”.

For infrastructure, equipment and major results: “This [infrastructure][equipment][insert type of result] is part of a sub-project that has indirectly received funding from the European Union’s Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under project TITAN (grant agreement No 101060739)”

When displayed in association with a logo, the European emblem should be given appropriate prominence. This obligation to use the European emblem in respect of projects to which the EC contributes implies no right of exclusive use. It is subject to general third-party use restrictions which do not permit the appropriation of the emblem, or of any similar trademark or logo, whether by registration or by any other means. Under these conditions, the Subgrantee is exempted from the obligation to obtain prior permission from the EC to use the emblem. Further detailed information on the EU emblem can be found on the Europa web page.

Any publicity made by the Subgrantee in respect of the project, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, must specify that it reflects only the author’s views and that the EC or TITAN Consortium are not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

The EC and the TITAN Consortium shall be authorised to publish, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, the following information:

- the name of the Subgrantee SME;
- contact address of the Subgrantee SME;
- the general purpose of the subproject;
- the amount of the financial contribution foreseen for the subproject; after the final payment, and the amount of the financial contribution actually received;
- the geographic location of the activities carried out;
- the list of dissemination activities and/or of patent (applications) relating to foreground;
- the details/references and the abstracts of scientific publications relating to foreground and, if funded within the subproject, the published version or the final manuscript accepted for publication;
- the publishable reports submitted to TITAN;

- any picture or any audio-visual or web material provided to the EC and TITAN in the framework of the subproject.

The Subgrantee representative shall ensure that all necessary authorisations for such publication have been obtained and that the publication of the information by the EC and TITAN does not infringe any rights of third parties.

Upon a duly substantiated request by the Subgrantee representative, the TITAN consortium, if such permission is provided by the EC, may agree to forego such publicity if disclosure of the information indicated above would risk compromising the beneficiary's security, academic or commercial interests.

Financial audit and controls

The European Commission (EC) will monitor that TITAN beneficiaries and the Subgrantees comply with the conditions for financial support to third parties such as set out in Annex A of the TITAN Grant Agreement and may take any action foreseen by the Grant Agreement in case of noncompliance vis à vis the beneficiary concerned.

The TITAN project will follow the lump-sum approach, where payments are released with the acceptance of deliverables, however, all Subgrantees are strongly advised to keep detailed financial records for at least 5 years after the completion of TITAN project, in case of audits by competent EC authorities.

Moreover, the EC may at any time during the implementation of the TITAN project and up to 5 (five) years after the end of the TITAN project, arrange for financial audits to be carried out, by external auditors, or by the EC services themselves including the European Anti-Fraud office (OLAF). The audit procedure shall be deemed to be initiated on the date of receipt of the relevant letter sent by the EC. Such audits may cover financial, systemic and other aspects (such as accounting and management principles) relating to the proper execution of the grant agreement. They shall be carried out on a confidential basis.

The Subgrantee representative shall make available directly to the EC all detailed information and data that may be requested by the EC or any representative authorised by it, with a view to verifying that the grant agreement is properly managed and performed in accordance with its provisions and that costs have been charged in compliance with it. This information and data must be precise, complete and effective.

The Subgrantee shall keep all subproject deliverables and the originals or, in exceptional cases, duly authenticated copies – including electronic copies – of all documents relating to the subproject contract for up to five years from the end of the project. These shall be made available to the EC where requested during any audit under the grant agreement.

In order to carry out these audits, the Subgrantee representative shall ensure that the EC's services and any external body(ies) authorised by it have on-the-spot access at all reasonable times, notably to the subproject applicant offices, to its computer data, to its accounting data and to all the information needed to carry out those audits, including information on individual salaries of persons involved in the subproject. They shall ensure that the information is readily available on the spot at the moment of the audit and, if so requested, that data be handed over in an appropriate form.

On the basis of the findings made during the financial audit, a provisional report shall be drawn up. It shall be sent by the EC or its authorised representative to the Subgrantee concerned, which may make

observations thereon within one month of receiving it. The Commission may decide not to take into account observations conveyed or documents sent after that deadline. The final report shall be sent to the beneficiary concerned within two months of expiry of the aforesaid deadline.

On the basis of the conclusions of the audit, the EC shall take all appropriate measures which it considers necessary, including the issuing of recovery orders regarding all or part of the payments made by it and the application of any applicable sanction.

The European Court of Auditors shall have the same rights as the EC, notably right of access, for the purpose of checks and audits, without prejudice to its own rules.

In addition, the EC may carry out on-the-spot checks and inspections in accordance with Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities.

Subproject Communication of important changes

The Subgrantee representative should:

- Provide any notice be in writing to the TITAN consortium;

Notify immediately any change of persons or contact details to the TITAN Coordinator. The address list shall be accessible to all concerned.

Originality of the sub-granted projects

It is required that applications submitted are based on original works by the applicants and that their foreseen developments are free from third party rights. TITAN consortium is not obliged to verify the authenticity of the ownership of the foreseen products/ services. Any issues delivered from third party claims that arise a result of the sub-granted projects are on the sole responsibility of the applicant.

IPR Ownership of the sub-granted projects

Each Subgrantee that generates results owns the attached Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) generated during the development process and will own results that are not IPRs. Each subgrantee is responsible for the management and protection of its IPRs and bears the costs associated with this.

The Subgrantees funded within TITAN project will be the unique owners of the technologies created within the framework of their sub-granted projects. Parts of their works will be requested to be public for TITAN dissemination purposes.

Liability

TITAN consortium and the European Commission cannot be held liable for any acts or omission of the applicant in relation to the selected sub-granted project implemented by the Subgrantee. The TITAN Consortium shall not be liable for any defaults of any products, processes or services created in the sub-granted project. Including, for instance, anomalies in the functioning or performance thereof.

In case any damage is caused to a third party by the Subgrantee, the Subgrantee will assume full responsibility for the damage caused. In no way will the TITAN Consortium be responsible for any damages caused by the Subgrantee.

Subgrantees shall bear sole responsibility for ensuring that their acts within the framework of their sub-granted projects do not infringe third party rights.

Do Not Significant Harm (DNSH)

Subgrantees must always respect the 'Do Not Significant Harm Principle'. The Commission Communication on the European Green Deal introduced the green oath to 'do no harm'. The 'Do not Significant Harm' (DNSH) principle has been further specified in the EU Regulation on the establishment of a framework to facilitate sustainable investments (**Regulation (EU) 2019/2088**), commonly defined as the 'EU Taxonomy Regulation'. Six environmental objectives are listed in Article 23 of the EU Taxonomy and Article 17 specifies what can constitute a 'significant harm' for these objectives. Thus, the regulation provides that no measure should lead to significant harm to any of the six environmental objectives within the meaning of Article 17 of the Taxonomy Regulation.