



ISTITUTO AGRONOMICO MEDITERRANEO DI BARI

## CALL FOR INTEREST (Cfi)

*for the submission of project proposals by private sector entities*

### **for the establishment of a Pilot Olive Products Shop/Hub in Islamabad**

*in the framework of the OliveCulture Scale-Up Project*

Financed by the Italian Development Cooperation — AICS Islamabad

## 1. Background and Rationale

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The International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies – CIHEAM Bari, within the framework of the project:

**OliveCulture Scale Up “Scaling Up OliveCulture Value Chain and Promoting Climate-Resilient Rural Development in Pakistan”** (hereinafter referred to as the “Project”) financed by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)- Islamabad Office, is launching the present Call for Interest (Cfi) to identify a qualified private sector partner for the establishment and management of a **Pilot Olive Products Shop/Hub in Islamabad**.

The Project (20 August 2024 – 19 July 2027) builds upon the achievements of the OliveCulture Project (2022–2024), which established the foundational platform for the development of Pakistan’s olive value chain.

Pakistan’s olive sector has experienced rapid expansion in cultivated area and production capacity. However, downstream components, including branding, structured commercialization, consumer awareness, and value addition, remain underdeveloped. Strengthening market access and consumer engagement is therefore a strategic priority.

The Pilot Olive Products Shop/Hub will:

- Serve as a central commercialization and visibility platform for certified Pakistani olive products;
- Facilitate market linkages between producers and consumers;
- Act as an educational and promotional space for olive-based products and Mediterranean diet principles.

The official language of this procedure is English.

## 2. Objective of the Call

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The purpose of this Cfi is to select **one (1) private sector entity** capable of establishing and operating the Pilot Olive Products Shop/Hub in Islamabad in compliance with:

- **Full regulatory and quality compliance**, including adherence to applicable national and provincial laws, official permits and licenses, food safety regulations, certification standards, and health, safety, and environmental requirements.
- **Effective operational and financial management**, transparent procurement and inventory systems, reporting obligations, and performance monitoring mechanisms.
- **Strong branding, marketing, and commercial sustainability**, aligned with the project’s strategic objectives to ensure long-term viability and market competitiveness.
- **Inclusive value chain development**, promoting and supporting local olive growers, processors, and relevant stakeholders through fair and transparent business practices.

### 3. Available Financial Support

Lot	Location	Maximum Proposals	Maximum Contribution (EUR)	Total Budget (EUR)
1	Islamabad, F6 or F7 or Blue Area	1	18,000	18,000

The contribution from CIHEAM Bari represents **co-financing only**. The selected entity must provide additional financial and/or in-kind contributions.

The Project support duration shall not exceed in any case beyond 19<sup>th</sup> July 2027.

### 4. Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet the following conditions at the date of publication of this Cfi:

#### 4.1 Legal Status

Applicants must:

1. Be legally registered in Pakistan for at least two (2) years;
2. Have operational presence in Islamabad/National Capital Territory;
3. Be legally authorized to conduct commercial food-related activities.

#### 4.2 Exclusion Criteria

Applicants must not:

- Be in bankruptcy, insolvency or liquidation;
- Be convicted of fraud, corruption, criminal organization, money laundering, child labour or human trafficking;
- Be listed under UN, EU, or Government of Pakistan sanctions;
- Have serious professional misconduct records;
- Have conflicts of interest with CIHEAM Bari, AICS, or Project partners.

#### 4.3 Financial and Operational Capacity

Applicants must demonstrate:

- Minimum 2 years’ experience in food retail/distribution;
- Proven capacity in branding, marketing, and consumer engagement;

- Capacity to manage a commercial initiative related to food retail/distribution of at least PKR 5,000,000 value;
- Identified suitable premises in a F6 or F7 or Blue Area in Islamabad;
- Availability of qualified staff.

A Shop/Hub Manager with minimum two (2) years relevant experience is mandatory.

Compliance must be documented through Annexes and supporting evidence.

## 5. Scope of the Initiative

### 5.1 Mandatory Functional Components

The Shop/Hub must include:

1. **Retail Area**
  - Sale of certified olive oil, table olives, olive leaf products, and cosmetic derivatives.
2. **Educational and Reading Area**
  - Display cabinets and distribution of Project publications and technical materials.
3. **Events Programme**
  - Monthly structured events including:
    - Nutritional awareness sessions
    - Showcooking demonstrations
    - Product presentation sessions
    - Cultural engagement activities

## 6. Proposal Requirements

Applicants must submit a complete proposal dossier composed exclusively of the documents listed below. Proposals must strictly follow the templates provided in the annexes to this Call for Interest.

Failure to submit any of the mandatory components may result in exclusion during the administrative verification phase.

### 6.1 Annex 1 – Applicant Identification Form

Applicants must complete and submit Annex 1 in its entirety.

### 6.2 Annex 2 – Business Plan Template

1. **Technical Proposal**, including:
  - Concept and operational model of the Shop/Hub;
  - Description of premises and layout;
  - Staffing and management structure;
  - Marketing and consumer engagement strategy;
  - Programme of educational and promotional activities;
  - Environmental and social sustainability measures;

- Risk analysis and mitigation measures.
- 2. **Business and Sustainability Plan**, including:
  - Market positioning strategy;
  - Financial projections (minimum three years);
  - Break-even analysis;
  - Exit strategy ensuring operational continuity beyond Project support.
- 3. **Logical Framework and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**, clearly defining:
  - Expected outputs and results;
  - Measurable indicators;
  - Means of verification;
  - Assumptions and risks.
- 4. **Financial Plan**
  - Financial contribution from CIHEAM Bari;
  - Detailed cost breakdown by category;
  - Estimated cash flow, where applicable.

### 6.3 Annex 3 – Administrative & Legal Declarations

Applicants must complete, sign, and submit Annex 3, which includes:

- Declaration on Honour (Exclusion Criteria);
- Conflict of Interest Declaration;
- Sanctions List Confirmation;
- Financial and Operational Capacity Declaration.

The declarations must be signed by the duly authorised legal representative.

### 6.4 Supporting Documentation

In addition to the above annexes, Applicants must submit the following supporting documents:

- Certificate of business registration/incorporation;
- Latest available financial statements or equivalent financial documentation;
- Curriculum Vitae of the proposed Shop/Hub Manager;
- Evidence of ownership, lease agreement, or letter of intent concerning the proposed premises in Islamabad.

CIHEAM Bari reserves the right to request additional documentation for verification purposes at any stage of the evaluation process.

## 7. Eligible and Non-Eligible Costs

### 7.1 Eligible Costs

- Shop fit-out and display equipment
- Branding and communication materials

- Initial product procurement for demonstration
- Marketing activities

## 7.2 Non-Eligible Costs

- Rent or lease payments
- Utilities
- Taxes and licenses
- Fines or penalties
- Luxury expenses
- Cash payments
- Expenses outside agreement period

All costs must be:

- Incurred during agreement period
- Supported by accounting documentation
- Traceable and compliant with Pakistani regulations

## 8. Submission Modalities

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Applications may be submitted either:

- **By electronic mail** ([info@oliveculture.org](mailto:info@oliveculture.org)) OR
- **By physical delivery (hand delivery or courier service)**, Address: House No.12, Street 56, F-8/4, Islamabad, applications submitted in hard copy must be delivered in a sealed envelope clearly marked: “Pilot Shop/Hub Cfl – OliveCulture Scale-Up”

### Documentation to be Submitted

Applicants must submit a complete application dossier consisting of the following documents:

1. Annex 1 – Application Identification Information (completed and signed);
2. Annex 2 – Business Plan (completed and signed);
3. Annex 3 – Administrative and Legal Declarations (completed and signed);
4. Curriculum Vitae of the proposed Shop/Hub Manager;
5. Certificate of business registration/incorporation;
6. Latest available financial statements or equivalent financial documentation;
7. Evidence of ownership, lease agreement, or letter of intent concerning the proposed premises in Islamabad.

Applications that are incomplete or do not include all mandatory documentation may be rejected during the administrative verification phase.

### Submission deadline:

**April 13, 2026, at 16:00 PM Pakistan Standard Time**

Late submissions will not be accepted.

## 9. Evaluation Procedure

An especially appointed Evaluation Committee will carry out the evaluation of every application. The evaluation will be carried out in three phases:

1. Administrative check
2. Technical and Financial evaluation

The final result of the evaluation will be communicated via email

### 9.1 Administrative Check

Verification of completeness and eligibility.

### 9.2 Technical and Financial Evaluation

The Evaluation Grid below is provided for information purposes only.

It outlines the evaluation criteria and scoring methodology that will be applied by the Evaluation Committee. Applicants are encouraged to carefully review the Evaluation Grid to ensure alignment of their proposal with the assessment criteria.

Maximum score: 100 points

Criteria	Max Points
1 Relevance and alignment with Project scope of the initiative (point 5 – Scope of the initiative)	15
2 Quality and feasibility of the operational plan (location, setup, staffing, sourcing)	10
3 Marketing and consumer engagement strategy	10
4 Sustainability and exit strategy/business model viability	15
5 Technical experience	20
6 Monitoring framework	10
7 Financial Plan	20

Minimum threshold:

- 70/100 overall
- Minimum 55/100 on criteria 1–7 combined

## 10. Data Protection

Applicants undertake to adopt data processing based on the principles of lawfulness and fairness while respecting the confidentiality requirements, in recognition that on 5 July 2019 the CIHEAM adopted the “Security of the Information and Personal Data Protection Policy”, inspired by the same principles stated in the EU Regulation 679/2016 – General Data Protection Regulation and subsequent amendments and additions.

## 11. Final Provisions

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- Participation does not guarantee funding.
- CIHEAM Bari reserves the right to modify or cancel this Cfl.
- Applicants bear all proposal preparation costs.
- Selected partner will sign a formal Partnership Agreement.

## 12. ANNEXES

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**Annex 1 – Application Identification Form**

**Annex 2 – Business Plan**

**Annex 3 – Administrative & Legal Declarations**