



Founders Day

Connecting the agrifood industry in Southern Europe

Agenda

19 June | Bilbao, Spain



Next Bite: Founders Day

The **Next Bite: Founders Day**, is EIT Food South's flagship event for the entrepreneurial ecosystem. This second edition of the Founders Day (the 7th if we count the former FUN&FAN event) where, for several years, we've been gathering the entrepreneurship and investment ecosystem in Bilbao (Spain).

In this 2025 edition, we invite you once more to come and meet the **latest trends** in the agrifood sector firsthand from **renowned speakers** working in the field. You'll also have the chance to connect with over **150 entrepreneurs** from across Europe that are taking part in EIT Food's programmes and will be ready to **network**, share **knowledge** and **create new possible synergies!**

Join us to learn how to grow your startup from the people who actually did it! Understand what investors and corporates are looking for when connecting with startups and how you as a founder can navigate this complexity.



Master of Ceremonies (MC) 

Dr. Adela Balderas

Associate Professor Deusto Business School / Research Fellow Oxford University - Oxford Institute of Population Ageing - / Speaker. Affiliate at the MIT Media Lab City Science & RCC Harvard University

About EIT Food

EIT Food is Europe's leading food innovation initiative, working to make the food system more sustainable, healthy and trusted. The initiative is made up of a consortium of key industry players, startups, research centres and universities from across Europe. It is one of nine Innovation Communities established by the European Institute for Innovation & Technology (EIT), an independent EU body set up in 2008 to drive innovation and entrepreneurship across Europe.

EIT Food collaborates closely with consumers to develop new knowledge and technology-based products and services that will ultimately deliver a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle for all European citizens.

With the collaboration of:



19 JUNE | TORRE IBERDROLA | BILBAO, SPAIN

08.45 -
09.15

Registration & Coffee ☕

09.15 -
09.30

Welcome & Opening Presentation

EIT Food South has been improving and revolutionising the food sector in Southern Europe for seven years. Come and learn during the day about the entrepreneurship projects and the challenges that we face across the value chain of the agrifood sector.

- **Begoña Pérez Villarreal**, Director at EIT Food South
- **Amaia Barredo**, Food, Rural Development, Agriculture and Fisheries Minister at Basque Government
- **Joseba Mariezkurrena**, Entrepreneurship and Business Competitiveness General Director at Bizkaia Provincial Council-Bizkaiko Foru Aldundia

09.30 -
10.15

Round Table | How to create startups out of deeptech

- **Jesús Juárez Molina**, President at Nostrum Simul
- **Emre Yemisken**, Co-Founder at Tetis Biotechnology Ltd
- **Josep Casas**, Co-Founder at Naturitas, Real Ventures and Food For Joe
- **Zac Austin**, CEO at Pacifico Biolabs
- **Moderator: Juan I. Zaffora**, Regional Programme Manager at EIT Food

10:15 -
10:25

EIT Governing Board Vision for a Competitive Europe: Scaling Impact in Southern Europe

- **Introduction by Richard Zaltzman**, CEO at EIT Food
- **Heinrich Arnold**, Board member - European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), Atreus, Bekaert S.A., Connected Living GmbH, Max Planck Institute

10.25 -
10.55

Keynote | What is the State of FoodTech in 2025, and are there still opportunities?

- **Matthieu Vincent**, CEO at Digital Food Lab

10.55 -
11.20

Coffee break & Networking time ☕

11.20 -
12.00

Round table | Only Shooting Stars Break the Mold

- **Introduction and moderator: Addy Polet**, Gender Mainstreaming Expert
- **Alba Rocafort**, Co-founder of FABBRIC and Supernovas Alumni
- **Fraçoise de Valera**, Co-founder at Pack2Earth and FAN Alumni
- **Natalia Gálvez**, CMO and co-founder of GrodiTech and Women TechEU Cohort Winner

12.00 -
12.40

Round table | Early Stage Investment

- **Almudena Trigo**, Founding Partner and Chairwoman at Beable
- **Marta Laorden**, Investor at McWin
- **Davide Bassani**, Founding Partner at Maia Ventures
- **Matteo Leonardi**, Investment Management at Grey Silo Ventures

Moderator: Amparo San José, Head of Network and Business Development at EIT Food

12.40 -
12.50

BEAZ | Bizkaia: a startup ecosystem you shouldn't overlook

- **Ander Muñoz**, Director of Strategic Initiatives at BEAZ
-

12.50 -
13.05

Fireside chat | How to Connect with Corporates

- **Jason Hill**, Strategy Lead at Vertical Innovations
-

13.05 -
14.00

From 13.05 to 13.10 short explanation of the session.

13.10 - 14.00 | Networking Dynamic for Startups & Corporates

Circularity
(Grupo Nabeiro)

**Sustainable
Packaging**
(Unilever)

**Future of
Functional
Foods**
(Hijos de Rivera)

**Alternative
Proteins**
(KERRY)

13.10 - 14.00 | Cocktail & Networking Time

14.00 -
14.20

Round table | Functional Food Revolution: How Startups & Corporates Are Shaping the Future of Nutrition

- **Francisco Álvarez**, Innovation Manager at Hijos de Rivera
- **Eric Puro**, CEO at KÄÄPÄ Biotech

Moderator: Belen Moscoso, Corporate Venturing Manager at EIT Food

14.20 -
14.40

Success Story: Straight to Market

- **Ainara Llona**, Innovation and R&D&I Funding Senior Manager at Eroski
- **Jean Pierre Lannou**, CEO and co-Founder at Gundo

14.40 -
14.50

Success Story: Zetrack

- **Carlos Bergera**, Partner and CEO at Zetrack

14.50 -
15.20

Inspiring Keynote: GAstrophysics

- **Eneko Axpe**, Dr. in Materials Physics



15.20 -
15.25

Closure & Wrap-up

- **Begoña Pérez Villarreal**, Director at EIT Food South

15.25 -
17.00

Cocktail and Networking time



Conversation Starter



Browse participants and send **meeting invitations in advance** with Conversation Starter!
The platform will be available **during networking hours** and in the **afternoon (from 15.25 to 17.00)**, **after the event has ended**.

- The cutting-edge Conversation Starter recommendation engine screens all networking profiles of participants to find the most relevant ones.
- With a single click, participants invite each other to meet during the event.
- When an invitation is accepted, Conversation Starter finds the ideal location and time to meet.
- At the start of the event, participants receive their personal schedule of meetings via SMS.
- During the event, participants meet at numbered meeting point tables.
- After the event, participants have an overview of all the people they met.

[Join the Conversation Starter](#)



SPEAKERS & MODERATORS

Speakers

Richard Zaltzmann, Director at EIT Food South



Richard is an experienced board member and executive with a proven track record of business transformation and leadership through innovation, focussed on addressing the global challenges we face today. For the past five years, Richard has held different roles in the European innovation arena, and is now Chief Executive of EIT Food, Europe's largest food innovation community.

Begoña Perez-Villarreal, Director at EIT Food South



Director of the EIT Food for Southern Europe aimed to boost innovation involving stakeholders from the Mediterranean area, from Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, Turkey up till Israel. Main activity is related to building a dynamic ecosystem developing collaborative projects and activities in business creation, education, innovation and communication programs to develop products and services contributing to a healthy lifestyle and a sustainable circular bio-economy.

Jesús Juárez Molina, President at Nostrum Simul



Jesús Juárez is the Founder and Managing Partner at Nostrum Simul, a company based in Murcia, Spain. He previously co-founded Symborg, a biotechnology firm that was acquired by Corteva Agriscience. With over a decade of experience in the biotech sector, he has led innovative projects in agricultural technology. Juárez holds a degree from Universidad Politécnica de Madrid. His leadership has been pivotal in advancing sustainable agricultural solutions.

Emre Yemisken, Co-Founder at Tetis Biotechnology Ltd.



Dr. Emre Yemişken is a marine biologist and academic entrepreneur specializing in sustainable innovation and the circular bioeconomy. He is co-founder and CEO of Tetis Biyoteknoloji, a deep-tech startup in Türkiye upcycling marine by-products into bioactive ingredients. Holding a PhD in Marine Biology, he has conducted postdoctoral research on eco-innovative marine bioprocessing. He also serves as Assistant Professor at Istanbul University, bridging academia and industry.

Josep Casas, Co-Founder at Naturitas, Real Ventures and Food For Joe



CEO of Food for Joe, a company offering healthy, natural pet food. He also leads Europistachios, a sustainable agriculture venture managing over €50 million in assets and creating 20 jobs in under three years. An IESE MBA graduate and civil engineer, Josep co-founded Real Ventures Fund, supporting early-stage consumer brands in Europe. His innovative work in food and e-commerce has earned him recognition, including IESE's 40under40 award in both 2017 and 2022. He actively participates in global initiatives like Food Changemakers and events such as MWC Barcelona and Founders Forum.

Zac Austin, CEO at Pacifico Biolabs



Zac Austin is the Co-Founder and CEO of Pacifico Biolabs, a Berlin-based startup developing mycelium-based alternatives to meat and seafood. After graduating from the University of Cambridge, he began his career at McKinsey in London and later served as a senior advisor on the UK government's COVID-19 Task Force. In 2021, he joined Razor Group in Berlin as Head of Special Projects. In 2022, he co-founded Pacifico Biolabs, which has since raised \$3.3 million in pre-seed funding and won awards such as the EIT Food Net Zero Food System Award.

Juan I. Zaffora, Regional Programme Manager at EIT Food



Economist with a Master's in Entrepreneurship and Innovation. He is Regional Startups Manager at EIT Food, supporting early-stage agrifood ventures in Southern Europe. He lectures at Pompeu Fabra University and other institutions and advises several startups. With 10+ years in entrepreneurship support, he has led startup accelerators and co-founded one of the first B Corps in Latin America.

Matthieu Vincent, CEO at Digital Food Lab



Matthieu Vincent is an entrepreneur and investor specialising in FoodTech and agrifood innovation. He co-founded DigitalFoodLab, a consultancy providing insights and strategy on disruptive food technologies. Previously, he founded and sold WeCook, a food startup, in 2017. He holds an M.Eng from Télécom SudParis and an MSc in e-commerce from Dublin City University. Vincent is also a board member and investor in various FoodTech ventures, including Bolk and Paris&Co.

Addy Polet, Gender Mainstreaming Expert



Addy is an expert in gender mainstreaming who brings her curiosity, analytical skills, and enthusiasm to work on inclusion every day. She studied law at the honours college of Utrecht Law School before starting a career in gender- and LGBTQIA+ equality, first as a legal advisor and for the past 6 years as a policy advisor, both in the field of writing the subsidy rules for gender- and LGBTQIA+ equality, AI and gender, bisexual emancipation, gender and healthcare and many other fields. During this time, she was often asked to moderate panels to lead decision making processes, obtain valuable insights, to manage stakeholder agreement and input and discuss the international anti-rights movement and backlash. Currently, she works for Stichting Bi+ Netherlands, the municipality of Amsterdam and (as a co-founder) Equinox Equality Experts.

Alba Rocafort, Supernovas Alumni



Alba Rocafort Marco is the co-founder of FABBRIC, a Barcelona-based fashiontech startup that enables creators to design and launch collections in just 20 minutes. After studying Politics, Philosophy & Economics in the UK, she transitioned from consulting to entrepreneurship, co-founding FABBRIC with her childhood friend Hugo Cuesta. Under her leadership, the company secured €1.25 million in funding and achieved over €200,000 in monthly sales by late 2024. Recognized by Forbes 30 Under 30, Alba is also an active angel investor and a speaker on innovation and sustainability in fashion.

Françoise de Valera, Co-Founder of Pack2Earth and FAN Alumni



Françoise de Valera is an experienced international professional turned impact entrepreneur. After leading large-scale transformation and sustainability projects at BT, GSMA, and Balfour Beatty, she co-founded several startups, including Pack2Earth, which develops compostable materials to replace plastic, and Ultra UX, creator of the sports nutrition app Beat Best. She holds an MBA from Edinburgh Business School, an IEMA environmental certification from the University of Bath, and a degree from the University of Granada. Passionate about innovation, sustainability, and creating solutions with real-world impact.

Natalia Gálvez, CMO and Co-founder at GrodiTech



Natalia Gálvez Rodríguez is CMO and co-founder of GrodiTech, an agrotech company focused on smart greenhouses. She holds a degree in Marketing and Market Research from the University of Almería. Natalia has experience in digital communication, events, and agri-innovation. At GrodiTech, she helps lead the development of precision farming tools like the VEGA 22 robot. GrodiTech has been the winner of the Women TechEU Cohort.

Almudena Trigo, Founding Partner and Chairwoman Beable



Almudena Trigo is Founding Partner and Chairwoman at BeAble Capital, a fund specialized in Deep Science and tech transfer. She serves on the Board of SpainCap and as a jury member for the EIC Accelerator. With degrees in Telecommunications Engineering and a Ph.D. in Molecular Biology, she bridges science and venture capital. She has founded around 30 science-based companies in Spain, boosting deep tech entrepreneurship. Her scientific career spans leading centers like CNIO, CNB-CSIC, and CNES, with a focus on Synthetic Biology.

Marta Laorden, Investor at McWin



Marta specializes in the food ecosystem, managing a diverse portfolio of 1500+ restaurants. She directs her investments through the McWin Food Tech Fund, with a focus on Ag tech, Alternative proteins, clean nutrition, waste, circular economy, and restaurant tech.

Davide Bassani, Founding Partner at Maia Ventures



David I. Bassani is a seasoned professional in corporate strategy and venture capital, currently serving as Founding Partner at Maia Ventures. His prior experience includes leadership roles at ZX Ventures, the innovation arm of AB InBev, where he advanced from Portfolio Manager to Investment Partner between 2017 and 2023. He began his career in consulting with Deloitte and Virtus Partners. Academically, he holds an MBA from MIT Sloan, an MSc from ESADE Business & Law School, and a BSc in Economics and Finance from Università Bocconi.

Matteo Leonardi, Investment Management at Grey Silo Ventures



Matteo Leonardi is a VC investor specializing in foodtech and agritech, currently Investment Manager at Grey Silo Ventures. Based in Milan, he leads end-to-end investment processes and sits on the board of startups like Nosh Biofoods and Foreverland. He previously worked at Italian Angels for Growth, where he led investments across biotech, fintech, and deeptech sectors. Matteo began his career at Accenture, focusing on retail innovation and startup integration. He is also a FoodHack Ambassador, actively supporting the global foodtech community.

Amparo San José, Head of Network and Business Development at EIT Food



Amparo is Program Manager Entrepreneurship at EIT Food, where she leads a six-person team supporting startups, investors, and corporates in Southern Europe. She has directed the Business Angels Network and entrepreneurship activities at IESE Business School in Madrid. With a background in business and European politics, she has also worked at international institutions like the Inter-American Development Bank. Amparo researches startup financing and venture capital and sits on the board of the European Trade Association for Business Angels (EBAN).

Ander Muñoz, Director of Strategic Initiatives at BEAZ



He designs and leads projects to make Bizkaia a top spot for startups and entrepreneurs. Muñoz has developed the strategy to attract startups to the region and helped shape projects like the B Accelerator Tower, BEAZ international entrepreneurship hub. He often gives talks promoting Bizkaia's potential as an entrepreneurial ecosystem and has teaching experience at university level.

Jason Hill, Strategy Lead at Vertical Innovations



Jason Hill is the AI & Strategy Lead at Vertical, a leading Nordic accelerator and healthcare consultancy. With over a decade of experience in strategy, innovation, and storytelling, he has worked across Europe and Africa. Previously a partner at Motley Agency, he has also held roles at Isobar and Fruugo. He studied at the University of Minnesota and the University of Helsinki.

Francisco Álvarez, Innovation Manager at Hijos de Rivera



Francisco "Paco" Álvarez Ron is Innovation Manager at Hijos de Rivera (Estrella Galicia), specializing in sustainable food and beverage innovation. He previously worked at Future Food Institute, leading impactful projects across Europe. His focus includes functional ingredients, circular economy, and open innovation. He collaborates with institutions like EIT Food and the Basque Culinary Center. Álvarez Ron actively supports startup ecosystems and next-gen food solutions.

Eric Puro, CEO at KÄÄPÄ Biotech



Eric Puro is the founder and CEO of KÄÄPÄ Biotech, a Finland-based company specializing in functional mushroom products aimed at enhancing health and wellness. With a background in environmental science, he has pioneered sustainable methods in mushroom cultivation and extraction, focusing on varieties like Lion's Mane, Reishi, Shiitake, and Cordyceps.

Belen Moscoso, Corporate Venturing Manager at EIT Food



Combining her expertise in corporate strategy and startup ecosystem, she has successfully led initiatives that promote collaboration and growth. Passionate about identifying emerging opportunities and implementing transformative solutions, she thrives in dynamic environments. Her track record includes driving corporate venturing programs, nurturing startup ecosystems, and facilitating impactful connections.

Ainara Llona, Innovation and R&D&I Funding Senior Manager at Eroski



Ainara Llona Iraragorri is a seasoned professional with extensive experience in innovation, R&D&I funding, and customer service in the retail sector. She currently leads the innovation strategy at Grupo Eroski, driving projects in digitalisation, sustainability, packaging, health, and logistics, while coordinating both national and international consortia. With a degree in Economic Law from the University of Deusto and an MBA from ESEUNE, she stands out for her focus on open innovation, institutional relations, and the optimisation of public resources to support business development.

Jean Pierre Lannou, CEO and co-Founder at GUNDO



Co-founder and CEO of GUNDO, a smart grocery shopping app that uses AI to provide personalized nutritional recommendations based on users' carts. He holds an MBA from IE Business School and a degree in Business Administration. His career combines technology, nutrition, and sustainability, with international experience in leading social impact projects and digital transformation.

Carlos Bergera, Partner and CEO at ZETRACK



Bergera is an electrical engineer from TECNUN – University of Navarra and holds a PDG from IESE. He has over 21 years of experience at IBERDROLA, along with a solid background in both public and private sector organizations.

Keynote Speaker: Eneko Axpe, Dr. in Materials Physics



He has worked as a researcher and lecturer at the University of Cambridge and held a Marie Curie fellowship at Stanford University. He is the first Basque physicist hired by NASA, where he collaborates as a scientist. He is also a visiting scholar at Harvard and the first physicist to work at Beyond Meat and Impossible Foods. His research focuses on mathematical models, sustainability, biomaterials, and gastrophysics, using physics to tackle climate change through food. He has received several awards, including the 50 Next Science Innovators by The World's 50 Best Restaurants, and was named one of Forbes' 25 most influential people in gastronomy in 2022.

Heinrich Arnold, Board member EIT, Atreus, Bekaert S.A., Connected Living gGmbH, Max Planck Institute



Heinrich Arnold is a senior executive, investor, and board member focused on Europe's innovation transformation. He was CEO of Detecon (2016–2019) and previously led R&D at Deutsche Telekom/T-Mobile across Israel, Germany, and Silicon Valley, becoming the youngest R&D head of a German Top 20 company. He has helped shape the Berlin and Israeli innovation ecosystems and serves on various advisory boards, including Davidson Capital. Arnold began his career at Mercer (now Oliver Wyman), co-founded the biotech start-up Bicoll, and holds a MSc from Stanford and a Ph.D. in technology management. He is an honorary professor at TU Berlin.

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Co-funded by the
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With the collaboration of:



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