

APPLICANTS KIT

WELCOME

We are delighted to invite you to the EU Agri-Hackathon 2026 — an online innovation event organised by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI).

This hackathon brings together farmers, students, researchers, technology experts, and policymakers from across the European Union to develop innovative digital solutions that help simplify the daily work of EU farmers. You do not need to be a programmer to take part. We are looking for people with diverse skills, knowledge, and perspectives.

These guidelines explain everything you need to know before, during, and after the event. Please read them carefully before completing your registration.

WHAT IS A HACKATHON?

A hackathon is a time-limited collaborative event where mixed teams work intensively to create solutions to real-world problems. Think of it as a creative sprint: teams come together, explore a challenge, develop an idea, and present it — all within a structured timeframe.

The EU Agri-Hackathon 2026 will run fully online over 48 hours in October 2026. Teams will have access to real agricultural datasets, expert mentors, and a dedicated digital platform. No physical travel is required for the event itself.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Eligibility Criteria

To participate in the EU Agri-Hackathon, applicants must:

- Be a citizen of an EU country or legal resident or studying in a Member State of the European Union;
- be at least 18 years old at the time of registration; and
- have a sufficient command of English to actively participate in the event, including mentoring sessions and project presentations.

Applications are open to individuals and pre-formed teams across all EU member states.

Who Are We Looking For?

We welcome applicants from a wide range of backgrounds. The most successful teams combine different types of knowledge and experience: business, agriculture & environment studies, technology and data, and policy.

You can apply as an individual or as part of a pre-formed team.

*Applicants applying **individually** will be matched with other individual participants and will have the opportunity to meet each other, as well as other teams, during a virtual team-building session organised ahead of the event.*

*For **pre-formed teams**, particular attention will be given to the diversity and complementarity of profiles and skills within the team.*

TEAMS

Team Composition

Each participating team must have between 3 - 4 members. Teams should ideally be multidisciplinary — combining different backgrounds and expertise across four areas:

- **Agriculture & Environment Studies** — agronomy, agri-economics, environmental science/engineering,
- **Technology & Data** — data science, computer science/engineering, software development
- **Economics** — business strategy, statistics
- **Policy** — agricultural policy at EU, national, and regional level across Member States

Where possible, each team will include at least one agricultural expert. Multidisciplinary teams will be viewed more favourably during the selection process.

Applying as a Pre-formed Team

Pre-formed teams must designate a team leader, who will submit the application on behalf of the entire team through the [EU Survey registration form](#). The team leader is responsible for collecting the required information for each team member and completing the registration form accordingly.

All team members must individually meet the eligibility criteria. Each team member must also sign a consent form authorising the processing of their personal data for the purposes of the hackathon. The team leader shall upload the signed consent forms in the dedicated section of the EU Survey application. The consent form is available for download on the event webpage (link).

Finally, the team leader shall upload a completed Data Protection Notice (DPN) for each team member, reflecting their individual data processing preferences.

Applying as an Individual

Based on your skills, expertise, challenge preferences, and geographic diversity, you will be matched with other individual participants and will have the opportunity to meet each other, as well as the other teams, during a virtual team-building session organised ahead of the event.

THE THREE CHALLENGES

Teams will develop innovative digital solutions — such as AI-powered tools — to simplify EU farmers' activities. All three challenges share one ambition: simplification - cutting through the growing complexity that farmers face in meeting reporting obligations, managing operational data, and exchanging information across the food chain.

You may indicate your preferred challenge(s) at registration. We will do our best to take these into account when putting together the teams. This selection is non-binding and may be revised during the event.

Challenge 1: “Less time on forms, more time on farms.”

Design digital solutions that transform complex, manual, and fragmented administrative processes into simplified, automated, and integrated reporting systems, reducing bureaucratic burden and enhancing compliance.

Challenge 2: “Smarter data, simpler farming.”

Create solutions that simplify on-field operations by streamlining data collection and analysis, delivering actionable insights, and supporting informed decision-making for farmers, leveraging precision agriculture technologies such as IoT devices, sensors, and connected machinery.

Challenge 3: “Flowing data, empowered collaboration.”

Build platforms or tools that simplify information exchange among value chain actors, empowering farmers to strengthen their market position by achieving fair remuneration, better determination of product value, accessing new sales opportunities, and building effective partnerships. Farmers will stay in control of their data.

Detailed Challenge Briefs, including example problem statements and suggested approaches, will be provided in your Onboarding Pack. Further information on the Onboarding Pack itself, as well as on the datasets access, will be shared in due time.

WHAT WILL YOU BE EXPECTED TO PRODUCE?

At the end of the hackathon, each team must submit:

- **A pitch deck presenting the problem, your solution, its feasibility, and potential impact**
- **A prototype, wireframe, code, or functional demo of your solution**

We strongly encourage teams to develop solutions that are demonstrable, reusable, and released under an open-source license — this will be viewed positively during evaluation. Solutions developed during the hackathon remain the intellectual property of the creating team.

Final submissions are followed by a pitch to the jury.

KEY DATES

Date	Milestone
June 2026	Registration opens (EU Survey)
10 June – 31 August 2026 at 18:00 CEST UTC+2	Registration period open
September 2026	Applicant screening and team formation
October 2026	Team-building online session (Zoom) — approx. 2 hours

16–18 October 2026	48-hour hacking period — mentoring sessions and pitching
8-9 December 2026	Award ceremony at EU Agri-Food Days, Brussels

All dates are indicative, additional information will be published soon.

PLATFORMS AND TOOLS YOU WILL USE

The hackathon runs entirely online. All platforms below are free to use for participants.

1. EC Europa Website (ec.europa.eu)

The official European Commission page for the hackathon. Used for general information and to access the registration form. No account is needed to browse it.

2. EU Survey (Registration Only)

Used exclusively for registering for the hackathon.

3. Hackathon Hub

The main platform where the hackathon takes place. Once accepted, you will use the hub to:

- **View the event overview, timeline, rules, prizes, and FAQs**
- **Browse participants and use the matchmaking tool to form or join a team**
- **Access the full dataset catalogue and technical resources**
- **Submit your final project and showcase it publicly**

Full setup instructions will be provided in your Onboarding Pack.

4. Zoom

Used for all live sessions: team-building, onboarding, mentoring check-ins, kick-off, and final pitches. A stable internet connection and working microphone and camera are required.

5. Discord

The community and support channel for day-to-day communication, IT helpdesk, announcements, and Q&A throughout the event. You will need a free Discord account.

6. Data Platform

Datasets will be available through a secure cloud-based environment. Specific access instructions will be provided at the onboarding session.

PRACTICAL REQUIREMENTS

Language

All sessions, mentoring, platform content, and submission materials operate in English. You should be comfortable communicating in English throughout the event.

Internet Connection

A stable broadband connection is required. We recommend a minimum download speed of 10 Mbps.

Equipment

A computer (laptop or desktop) with a modern browser. A smartphone is not sufficient.

Time Commitment

- **Team Building meeting (late September)**
- **Onboarding session (October):**
- **Preparation for the Hackathon, reading materials and research – minimum 6 hours**
- **Hackathon weekend (16–18 October): up to 48 hours over a Friday evening, Saturday, and Sunday**
- **Feedback and follow-up: 1 hour**

APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Applications are reviewed through a 2+1 level process:

1. *Eligibility check (mandatory)* – EU citizenship/legal residence in an EU country or legally study in a Member State of the European Union; age 18+; English fluency. Pass/fail.
2. *Evaluation scoring (mandatory)* – scored 1–5 on: motivation to participate, area of expertise and core skills, and motivation.
3. *Diversity balancing (preferred, not mandatory)* – final list reviewed for geographic representation across EU countries and, where possible, gender balance.

Eligibility and verification

Participation in the EU Agri-Hackathon is subject to the eligibility criteria set out in the event webpage and at page 1 of this Applicants Kit.

By confirming their participation, applicants declare that they meet all applicable eligibility requirements and that the information provided as part of their application is accurate and complete.

Verification of eligibility

Eligibility will primarily be based on participants' self-declaration, with additional verification carried out for shortlisted participants and/or provisional winners.

Shortlisted participants will be invited to a short video call during which they will be asked to show the relevant supporting evidence. This may include valid ID and/or residence details or proof of enrollment to EU university.

For additional information, please refer to paragraph 4 “*Which personal data do we collect and further process?*” of the privacy statement available on the EU Agri-Hackathon event webpage at https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/overview-vision-agriculture-food/digitalisation/eu-agri-hackathon_en#documents

Participants will be informed in advance of the evidence required and the arrangements for the verification.

If a participant does not provide the requested evidence or does not take part in the verification process within the timeframe communicated, or if the evidence presented does not reasonably demonstrate compliance with the applicable eligibility criteria, the participant may be considered ineligible to join the hackathon.

Travel requirements for non-EU nationals

Winning teams will be invited to attend the EU Agri-Food Days in Brussels in December 2026. Please note that participation in the EU Agri-Hackathon, including selection as a winner, does not grant any right of entry, stay or travel within the EU or the Schengen Area. Non-EU nationals will be able to attend the EU Agri-Food Days in person only if they hold

the valid travel documents and, where applicable, visas or residence permits required to travel to Belgium at the time of the event. Participants are responsible for ensuring that they meet the applicable travel and immigration requirements.

All applicants will be notified by email.

Note for pre-formed teams: expertise and motivation scores are assessed at team level, and multidisciplinary is a positive (but non-mandatory) criterion.

WHAT CAN YOU WIN?

Award	Who receives it
Presentation of winning idea to the EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Food and other exponents of the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development	Winning team
Official Winner's Trophy	Winning team
Special mention for the Best Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based solution	Owner of the solution
Special mention for the Best Open-Source solution	Owner of the solution
Opportunity to shape EU agricultural policymaking	Winning team
Join the EU Agri-Food Days 2026, the flagship annual conference bringing together all key stakeholders of the agri-food sector, for exceptional networking and visibility opportunities. (travel and accommodation covered)	Winning team
Meet the European Commissioner for Agriculture and Food, and other exponents of the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural development	Winning team

Visibility on EC channels and partner networks	All participants
Connect with leading experts, researchers and policymakers serving as mentors and jury members throughout the event.	All participants
Access to relevant information kits and data packages	All participants
Digital completion certificate	All participants

Winners will be announced at the end of the hackathon on Sunday 18 October, with a formal ceremony at EU Agri-Food Days in Brussels in December 2026.

DATA PROTECTION AND PRIVACY

The hackathon is implemented in full compliance with GDPR and applicable EU data protection principles.

Personal Data Collected

- **Name, email address, nationality, and country of residence**
- **Area of expertise**
- **Motivation statement**
- **Challenge preference and team application details (if applicable)**

How Your Data is Used

Please refer to the privacy statement available on the EU Agri-Hackathon event webpage at https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/overview-vision-agriculture-food/digitalisation/eu-agri-hackathon_en#documents

Data Transfer to Hackathon Hub

Following the registration period, accepted participants' data will be transferred to Hackathon Hub for event management. By accepting these terms, you consent to this transfer. Please refer to the privacy statement available on the EU Agri-Hackathon event webpage at https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/overview-vision-agriculture-food/digitalisation/eu-agri-hackathon_en#documents

Your Rights

You have the right to access, correct, or request deletion of your personal data at any time by contacting us via email at EU-AGRI-HACKATHON@ec.europa.eu.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND OPEN SOURCE

Solutions developed during the hackathon remain the intellectual property of the creating team. Participants are strongly encouraged to release their work under an open-source licence — this will be viewed positively during evaluation and supports the EU's goal of promoting reusable, accessible digital solutions for the agricultural sector.

Please note that the Commission does not accept any responsibility for the use of any tools or resources (other than those specifically provided) that teams may choose to use. We recommend that each participant carefully review the terms of service and privacy information provided by any of those services before choosing to use them.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All participants, mentors, judges, and organisers must maintain respect and professionalism throughout the event. By registering, you agree to:

- **Respectful Communication** — treat all participants, mentors, judges, and organisers with respect; offensive, discriminatory, or inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated
- **Timely Participation** — attend scheduled sessions and submit required deliverables within the established deadlines
- **Teamwork Collaboration** — collaborate openly, share knowledge, and contribute actively; ensure fair participation and a supportive team environment
- **Responsible Use of Resources** — use provided tools, platforms, and datasets responsibly and in accordance with applicable terms and conditions
- **Confidentiality** — do not disclose, reproduce, or use confidential information shared during the hackathon outside the scope of the event without permission
- **Original Work** — submit only original work created during the hackathon period and declare any pre-existing code or tools used

Violations may result in warnings or disqualification. The full Terms and Conditions document covers this in detail and will be made available during registration for your review and acceptance.

QUESTIONS AND CONTACT

Visit the official event page at [EU Agri-Hackathon - Agriculture and rural development - European Commission](#) or contact the organising team through Discord (once open) or by email at EU-AGRI-HACKATHON@ec.europa.eu.

Ready to apply?

Complete the registration form on [EU Survey](#) and make sure you have read and accepted the Terms & Conditions and Privacy Notice.

We look forward to seeing what you will build.