



Call for Side Events

HOST A SIDE EVENT AT THE
2026 WORLD FOOD FORUM
FLAGSHIP EVENT

Advance agrifood systems transformation through youth leadership, science and innovation and investment.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: 24 MAY 2025, 23:59 CEST

Overview

The World Food Forum (WFF) invites Members of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The World Food Forum (WFF) Secretariat invites Members of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and partners of the Forum to apply to organize **in person (hybrid) side events** for the sixth annual WFF flagship event to be held from **8 to 16 October** at the FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy.

These side events aim to provide a platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange and partnership-building across stakeholders, while amplifying youth leadership, showcasing science and innovation and advancing agrifood investment. Side events are expected to enrich discussions on agrifood systems transformation through interactive and solution-oriented formats, fostering collaboration and action across sectors and generations.

The WFF flagship event offers a global convening space for young people, policymakers, scientists, innovators, investors and partners to connect, exchange perspectives and contribute concrete solutions aligned with the 2026 theme: *"Innovate today. Nourish tomorrow."*. Selected side events must demonstrate clear alignment with and integration across the three pillars of the Forum: Global Youth Action, Science and Innovation, and Hand-in-Hand Investment.

Format

- ✓ Side events will be held **in-person** (hybrid) during the WFF flagship event from **13 to 16 October** at the FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy. All side events will be featured on the WFF virtual platform (zoom events), allowing hybrid modality.
- ✓ Each event will have a maximum duration of 60 minutes and is to be independently organized (the venue and virtual broadcasting will be provided by FAO, but the logistics of the side event are the responsibility of its organizers).
- ✓ Side events may be designed using a wide range of interactive and innovative formats, including panel discussions, masterclasses, workshops, demonstrations, dialogues or other participatory approaches. Regardless of the format, side events are expected to be crosscutting in nature, fostering meaningful exchanges among diverse stakeholders and integrating perspectives from youth leadership, science and innovation, and investment. Events should create inclusive spaces that encourage new ways of thinking and acting, facilitate knowledge sharing, bring together diverse and emerging viewpoints, stimulate dialogue, and support collaboration and action toward agrifood systems transformation.

Conceptualization



- Side events can be proposed by any entity. The WFF Secretariat encourages organizers to partner in the organization of side events. **Multistakeholder sessions will be prioritized.**
- Side event organizers are responsible for developing the concept note, planning and structuring the event, promoting the event, executing the event and covering any expenses.
- Side events should be crosscutting and closely linked to the work of the WFF pillars – Global Youth Action, Science and Innovation, and Hand-in-Hand Investment – and should connect to topics related to the 2026 WFF flagship event's theme "**Innovate today. Nourish tomorrow.**".
- Side events should be founded in the non-discriminatory respect for all persons. In addition, they should aim to be **gender-balanced, diverse in perspectives and inclusive for all**, reflecting the WFF's commitment to fostering a multicultural platform that firmly values diversity and inclusion.
- The WFF encourages events focusing on different regions and organized in different languages. Interpretation may be possible at an additional cost, and details will be communicated to selected side events. All associated costs are the responsibility of the event organizers.
- **Only complete applications that follow all criteria will be considered.**

Successful proposals must meet the following criteria:

Pillar 1: Global Youth Action

In alignment with the Global Youth Forum, side events must address one or more of the following:

- Amplify the **voices and leadership of young people**, building on youth contributions to agrifood systems transformation.
- Provide a platform for youth to **share their ideas, innovations and initiatives**.
- Promote **intergenerational dialogue** for agrifood systems action.
- Offer **direct support to young people**, such as capacity- development, opportunities to connect with global leaders, partners or investors, and platforms to strengthen youth impact and visibility.

Pillar 2: Science and Innovation

Aligned to the 2026 WFF focus on “*Innovating today*” and the WFF’s second pillar, the Science and Innovation Forum (SIF), Side Events provide a platform for structured dialogue, knowledge exchange and collaboration on science, technology and innovation, among scientists, innovators, policymakers, farmers’ organizations, youth, and a broad range of partners. The side events will tackle inter- and transdisciplinary subjects in science, technology and innovation focusing on partnerships, role of youth and women in transforming agrifood systems, investment in research for development, access to a range of innovations and services by the most vulnerable stakeholders, strengthened science-policy interfaces for informed decision-making, youth-led innovation, science communication, and evidence synthesis.

Side Events must address one or more of the following:

- Be grounded in robust science and evidence for informed policymaking.
- Demonstrate how accessible innovations, technologies, and forward-looking solutions, combined with traditional knowledge, can shape a more resilient and equitable food future.

- Address ethical and responsible innovation considerations.
- Promote the role of women scientists in shaping agrifood systems research agenda.
- Engagement of young scientists and innovators.
- May include innovation pitches, demonstrations or dialogues.
- Demonstrate cross-disciplinary and cross-regional exchanges.
- Strengthen connections among scientists, innovators, policymakers, and partners to accelerate agrifood systems transformation.

Pillar 3: Hand-in-Hand Investment

Underscoring the critical need for investment for agrifood systems transformation, side events aim to **broaden and deepen multi-stakeholder engagement** around agrifood investment, complementing the high-level investment presentations delivered by national governments and Regional Initiatives under the Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Initiative Investment Forum.

Side eEvents must address one or more of the following:

- Provide a **unique space for Agrifood Investors, IFI's, Private Sector Partners, Youth, Non-State Actors, Civil Society, Indigenous Peoples, Philanthropic Entities, and Academia** to organize interactive sessions on agrifood investment.
- Facilitate dialogue and strategic partnership opportunities aligned with the agrifood investment priorities showcased by governments during the HIH Initiative Investment Forum.
- Support knowledge exchange on inclusive, climate-smart and evidence-based investment.
- Foster multi-stakeholder collaboration to address identified agrifood investment gaps in a coordinated manner, through innovative financing mechanisms and strengthen country-led agrifood systems transformation.

Side Events will provide an inclusive platform for all actors to collaborate towards agrifood systems transformation, solutions aligned with the theme ***“Innovate today. Nourish tomorrow.”***

Logistics and promotion

- **All costs related to side events, including travel, visas and logistical arrangements will be the responsibility of the organizers.**
- WFF will provide the space for the side event to take place. Basic materials such as tables and chairs will be provided. Rooms will include a projector, microphones and will be equipped to stream to the WFF virtual platform. All other costs are the responsibility of the organizers.
- To cover the administrative costs of the side event organization, room and technology services, side event organizers will be charged a flat fee of **USD 1 750.**
- Side event organizers are responsible for the promotion of the event on their own channels.
- The WFF Secretariat will provide branding guidelines and materials.
- Approved side events will be displayed on the full WFF flagship event agenda and in the virtual platform.
- To further support the promotion and amplification of the events, side event organizers may also apply for additional packages:

PACKAGE 1

Pre-event Promotion Support

Includes promotion of the side event on the WFF social media channels – **USD 1 000** (in addition to the USD 1 750 administrative fee).

PACKAGE 2

Post-event Outcome Dissemination

Includes one post-event article on WFF Youth Initiative's website – **USD 1 000** (in addition to the USD 1 750 administrative fee).

Application process

1. Use the online form to submit a side event proposal. Note that incomplete applications will not be accepted.
2. The deadline to submit side event proposals is **24 May, 23:59 PM CEST**.
3. The WFF Selection Committee will be responsible for reviewing all proposals and selecting the events based on the criteria listed above.
4. Organizers will be contacted after the submission and will receive a notification regarding the acceptance of their proposal **in June**.
5. Once accepted, side event organizers will be requested to submit a detailed concept note, — using a provided template, — including the confirmed title, event description, detailed agenda and confirmed speakers **within two weeks of notification**.
6. The full schedule of side events will be posted on the WFF website after the acceptance of the detailed concept notes of all selected proposals.
7. All queries regarding side events should be addressed to side-events@world-food-forum.org.

Disclaimer

By submitting the application form, you acknowledge and agree to the following:

- The WFF Selection Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any application at its discretion.
- Incomplete applications or those not meeting the specified criteria will not be considered for selection.
- The submission of this application does not guarantee selection to host a side event at the WFF World Food Forum flagship event. The WFF can accommodate a **limited number of side events** and **only selected applicants will have the opportunity to host sessions during the WFF flagship event.**
- Selected applicants must adhere to all guidelines and requirements outlined by the WFF Secretariat for organizing and hosting a youth side event, including providing a detailed concept note and collaborating with multiple partners.
- The WFF Secretariat may modify the format or scheduling of the flagship event, including the mode of delivery for side events, based on logistical considerations and space limitations.
- All side events hosted during the WFF flagship event are expected to take place in-person. However, **due to space limitations, the WFF Secretariat may not be able to guarantee an in-person format for all selected side events.** In such cases, some side events may have the option to be conducted virtually.
- All information provided in this application must be accurate and truthful to the best of your knowledge.
- The WFF Secretariat and its affiliated partners are not liable for any expenses incurred by applicants in relation to their participation in the flagship event.
- Adherence to the established process is required throughout. Failure to do so may result in the cancellation of the side event.
- By submitting this application, you consent to the collection and processing of your personal data for the purpose of evaluating and selecting side event hosts, in accordance with applicable data protection policies and regulations.
- The WFF reserves the right to amend or update these terms and conditions at any time without prior notice.