

Foodtech Innovation Awards 2026 Open Call for Projects Shaping the Future of Food

Companies, associations, startups, and research centers may submit their applications until April 6, 2026

Each year, the awards recognize companies and projects that stand out for their ability to drive innovation, competitiveness and sustainability in the food industry

Madrid, January 21, 2026 – The most prestigious awards about in the foodtech field return once again to Bilbao, Spain, with the simultaneous celebration of [F4F – Expo Foodtech 2026](#) and [Pick&Pack for Food Industry](#), the leading technology event for the food and beverage sector, which will take place on **May 27 and 28** at the Bilbao Exhibition Center (BEC). The awards recognize each year the most innovative and disruptive proposals contributing to a more technological, efficient industry aligned with today's sustainability challenges.

To this end, Expo Foodtech has launched a new call for entries for the **Foodtech Innovation Awards 2026**, inviting all companies, associations, startups, universities, research centers and science and technology parks with projects, proposals or initiatives that promote innovation, competitiveness and sustainability in the food industry [to submit their applications](#) by April 6, 2026.

This year, the Foodtech Innovation Awards 2026 will recognize the best projects in the following categories:

- **Innovative solution on digitalization for the food and beverage industry:** seeks to recognize the work and effort of a company, platform, solution or technological application which is impacting and transforming the food and beverage industry. This can be done through its sales model, production, process, consumer contact or value proposition through a solution linked to the digital and technological field. Applications of technologies such as IoT, cloud, artificial intelligence, digital twins or biotechnology, among others, applied to the food and beverage industry will be considered.
- **Sustainability project:** aims to highlight the work and effort of projects that generate a positive impact as an alternative to an environmental problem and contribute to the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This includes initiatives related to reducing packaging waste, actions to combat climate change, more sustainable agricultural practices, science and research applied to improving environmental impact, the circular economy and sustainability awareness programs, among others.
- **Healthy Food:** recognizes the work and effort of the company, project or platform that promotes an innovative and/or scientific solution that encourages healthy eating. This award contributes to the promotion of innovative projects developed throughout the food industry value chain, as well as initiatives within the framework of Foodtech whose solutions have a direct impact on healthy eating.

- **Automation and robotics solutions for the food value chain:** this category focuses on the use of automation and robotics applied to the food industry to improve the competitiveness of companies and their production processes. Projects focused on innovation, research and development (R&D&I) between industrial companies, technology centers or robotics manufacturers, may also be submitted.
- **Disruptive solutions for the packaging industry:** rewards advances in innovation in a sector undergoing rapid transformation, such as packaging in the food industry.
- **Innovative startup:** aimed at the most innovative startups with the greatest impact on digitization, sustainability, and health in the Foodtech sector, whether they are in a very early stage or more advanced.
- **Spanish startup with the greatest international projection:** recognizes the Spanish startup with the greatest global impact, so candidates must demonstrate that their foodtech solution has a clearly defined international projection by addressing some of the main challenges facing the food and beverage industry.

The winners will be announced on May 28 during F4F – Expo Foodtech and Pick&Pack for Food Industry.

[About Expo FoodTech](#) (May 27 and 28, 2026, BEC-Bilbao): this is the leading innovation event for professionals across the entire value chain of the food and beverage sector. Over two days, F4F – Expo Foodtech will bring together food industry professionals at the Bilbao Exhibition Centre (BEC) to learn about the latest solutions in foodtech, robotics and automation, processing and packaging machinery for different segments of the food industry, as well as food safety and science. It will also host the Food 4 Future World Summit, the largest European congress where you can discover the latest trends, success stories, and tools to transform the food and beverage industry. F4F - Expo Foodtech, organized by NEBEXT and AZTI, will be held simultaneously with [Pick&Pack for Food Industry](#), the only event in Spain specializing in packaging and logistics solutions for the food industry.

[About NEBEXT](#): Next Business Exhibitions (NEBEXT) is Spain's largest private organizer of professional events specializing in technology, innovation, and sustainability for various industries.

[About AZTI](#): AZTI is a science and technology center that develops high-impact transformation projects and businesses with organizations aligned with the 2030 SDGs. Specializing in the marine environment and food, it provides cutting-edge, value-added products and technologies based on solid science and research.