

## **Barilla and Plug and Play search for ideas and talents for the future of food: applications are open for Good Food Makers 2024, the global open innovation programme for ag-tech and food-tech start-ups**

*From 23 May to 30 June, start-ups active in the world of food can apply for an eight-week collaboration programme managed by Barilla.*

*This year, the solutions sought for the future of the food industry involve artificial intelligence, digital technologies at the service of interaction with people, sustainable production systems and ingredients to improve people's well-being.*

*The initiative provides 10,000 euros to be used for the validation of the solutions with the possibility of future collaborations with the company.*

23 May 2024 – Applications are now open for [Good Food Makers](#), [Barilla's](#) global open innovation programme for food start-ups launched in 2019 with the aim of stimulating the development of new sustainable food solutions.

Now in its sixth year, the initiative is supported by [Plug and Play](#), the world's largest open innovation platform, with a network of more than 78,000 start-ups, more than 570 leading global companies and hundreds of venture capital firms, universities and government agencies.

This year's **call is aimed at identifying four start-ups** whose ideas **want to improve at least one of four areas of the agri-food sector**:

- **AI for consumer insights**, whose aim is to evaluate digital solutions to quickly and efficiently collect and analyze consumer insights.
- **Tasty and Healthy**, looking for innovative ingredients to further improve the nutritional profile of products while maintaining the sensory profile and consumer acceptance.
- **Energy Shift**, whose aim is to identify new technologies for even more efficient and sustainable energy production.
- **Smart Start**, which aims to identify digital solutions to optimize and simplify the integration of new professionals in production departments.

For eight weeks, the winners selected on the basis of their uniqueness and value will develop new solutions together with Barilla's managers and their realization will be supported through the distribution of **10,000 euros** with the possibility of creating future collaborations with the company.

Faced with more than 800 applications from over 25 countries, including France, Germany, Netherlands and the United States, **Good Food Makers has already promoted to date projects with 22 international companies.**

*"Good Food Makers proves to be a virtuous and effective path for our teams to face important innovation challenges. With its structured and well-established approach, it makes it possible to intercept new solutions, get in touch with competent and prepared entrepreneurs, work together on a common goal, and achieve concrete results in just a few weeks"* says **Claudia Berti**, Barilla Global Open Innovation Senior Manager.

*"In three years, Plug and Play has already connected more than 60 startups with the Barilla ecosystem, which can count on the experience accumulated by our Food&Beverage Program that has accelerated more than 200 startups globally - says **Tommaso Maschera, Director Plug and Play Italy** - This year, our research will focus mainly on artificial intelligence, an innovative technology that Barilla has also paid attention to, offering the right tools to improve processes involving the food sector, from production to distribution.*

To participate in the programme, start-ups must submit their applications by June 30th. For more information, please visit the [official website](#).

#### The Barilla Group

Barilla is a family business, not listed on the Stock Exchange, chaired by the brothers Guido, Luca and Paolo Barilla. It was founded by their great-grandfather Pietro Barilla, who opened a bakery in Parma in 1877. Today, Barilla is renowned in Italy and around the world for the quality of its food products. With its brands – Barilla, Mulino Bianco, Pan di Stelle, Gran Cereale, Harrys, Pavesi, Wasa, Filiz, Yemina, Misko, Voiello,

Accademia Barilla, First, Catelli, Lancia, Splendor, Tolerant, Pasta Evangelists and Back to Nature – it advocates tasty, hearty and wholesome nutrition, inspired by the Mediterranean Diet and the Italian lifestyle.

When Pietro opened his shop more than 145 years ago, the main aim was to make good food. That principle has now become the Barilla way of doing business, with over 9,000 people working for the company and a supply chain that shares its values and passion for quality.

The Group's commitment is to offer people the joy that good, well-made food can bring them, produced with selected ingredients from, as far as possible, responsible supply chains, to contribute to a better present and future.

Since 1987, a historical archive has been collecting and preserving the company's over 145-year history, now a resource open to all via the portal-museum [www.archivistoricobarilla.com](http://www.archivistoricobarilla.com).

For further info, visit: [www.barillagroup.com](http://www.barillagroup.com); Twitter: [@barillagroup](#); LinkedIn: [Barilla Group](#); Instagram: [@barillapeople](#)

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#### Plug and Play

Plug and Play is the world's largest Open Innovation platform: on one hand, it connects start-ups with major corporations, on the other hand, it invests and facilitates investments to help start-ups grow, all with a global approach that facilitates internationalization and relations with Silicon Valley. Launched in 2006 and co-founded by Saeed Amidi in the legendary Lucky Building in Silicon Valley, which saw Google, Paypal and Dropbox take their first steps, today Plug and Play is present in more than 50 cities around the world and is a leading innovation platform with over 550 corporate partners,

68,000 start-ups in its proprietary database, and a total investment value of over USD 12 billion in companies such as Dropbox, PayPal, N26 and Hippo.

In Italy, local offices (with associated acceleration programmes) are currently concentrated in the Food & Beverage, Fintech, Sustainability, Automotive and Aerospace sectors. In April 2019, Plug and Play opened its first Italian office in Milan, focused on the Food & Beverage (together with Tetra Pak and Barilla) and Fintech (with UniCredit) sectors, later joined by Sustainability (with A2A, Poste Italiane); in July 2021, the Modena office dedicated to Automotive was opened with the launch of Motor Valley Accelerator (in partnership with CDP Venture Capital, CRIT, Fondazione Modena and UniCredit and Corporate Partners STMicroelectronics, Dallara, Sabelt, Unipol and OMR). In April 2022, a new location dedicated to Aerospace and Advanced Hardware was inaugurated in Turin, Takeoff Accelerator - an initiative of CDP Venture Capital, promoted by programme co-investors UniCredit and Fondazione CRT, with OGR Turin as Innovation and Networking Partners, Leonardo, AVIO and Unione Industriali Torino as Corporate Partners and the European Space Agency and the Italian Space Agency as Scientific Council members. DualTech by Takeoff, the Turin-based accelerator programme part of the DIANA network created by NATO, was launched in 2024 to accelerate the development of cutting-edge dual-use technologies for defence and trade.

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