

Global competition invites startups, enterprises to change the face of food systems

The UN Food Systems Summit has announced a competition to identify the best small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from across the world who are transforming food systems for a better tomorrow.



Image via [UN Food Systems Summit](#)

The summit has launched the competition, named *Best Small Business: Good Food for All*, which will surface and name 50 small and medium-sized businesses worldwide whose work best exemplifies the summit's aim of delivering all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by providing healthy, sustainable food and livelihoods for all.

The competition recognises those playing a key role in "building back better" from the pandemic while calling attention to the challenges they have been battling to overcome. The pandemic has disproportionately affected smaller businesses across the globe, especially those led by women. For example, the revenues of European SMEs alone saw reductions by as much as 70%, according to one [survey](#), while the World Bank estimates that businesses in developing countries were especially hard hit, with revenues down [70% at the peak of the crisis, compared to only 45% in OECD countries](#).

Strengthening global food systems

The summit will celebrate those playing their part to transform through innovation the way small businesses produce, consume and dispose of food, offering lessons for building greater economic resilience and sustainability.

"All around the world, leaders need to pay attention to the 'hidden' contribution of the smaller businesses that are nourishing communities, creating jobs and regenerating nature," says Dr Agnes Kalibata, special envoy of the UN Secretary-General for the 2021 Food Systems Summit.

"These everyday businesses and their employees are the vanguards of efforts to strengthen our food systems and the small business competition aims to celebrate these efforts and to showcase their inspirational stories. In line with the Summit that is open to people everywhere and leaving no one behind, we encourage such enterprises to raise their voices and help us understand what support they need in order to flourish."

Sustainability and inclusivity

The competition will provide an opportunity for the summit to showcase the best small businesses at the pre-summit to be held in Rome in July 2021.

Listening to the diverse voices of small businesses – from veterinary surgeries to cafes, producer cooperatives and digital start-ups – is a key component of the summit process to identify bold, new solutions for improving food systems. The competition will uncover not only the small businesses leading the charge for more sustainable, inclusive and resilient food systems but also ways in which they can be supported to scale up their trades sustainably.

Enterprises around the world that help provide healthy food to their communities and create jobs for local people are invited to apply and share ideas and suggestions for how their countries and economies can maximise their positive impact. Each submission will help inform global leaders with the priorities and resources these businesses need to thrive, and all applicants will be invited to future Food Systems Summit events.

[View further details about the competition and application process.](#)

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