EU-FORA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM – AN INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY FOR SCIENTISTS: HOW TO APPLY, WHAT IT OFFERS AND WHAT YOU CAN ACHIEVE

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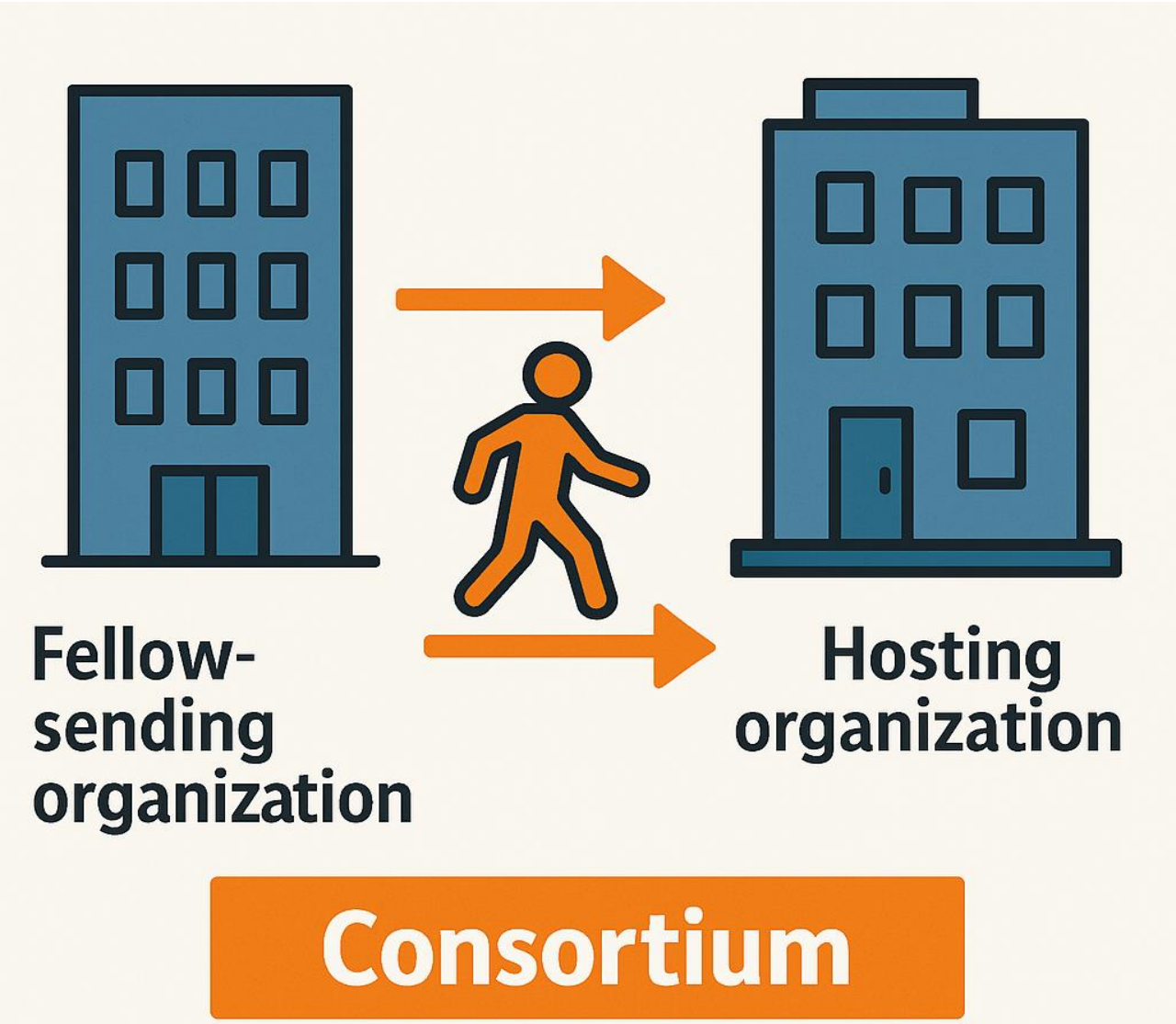
MSc Olga Sęczkowska

EUFORA
EUROPEAN FOOD RISK ASSESSMENT FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

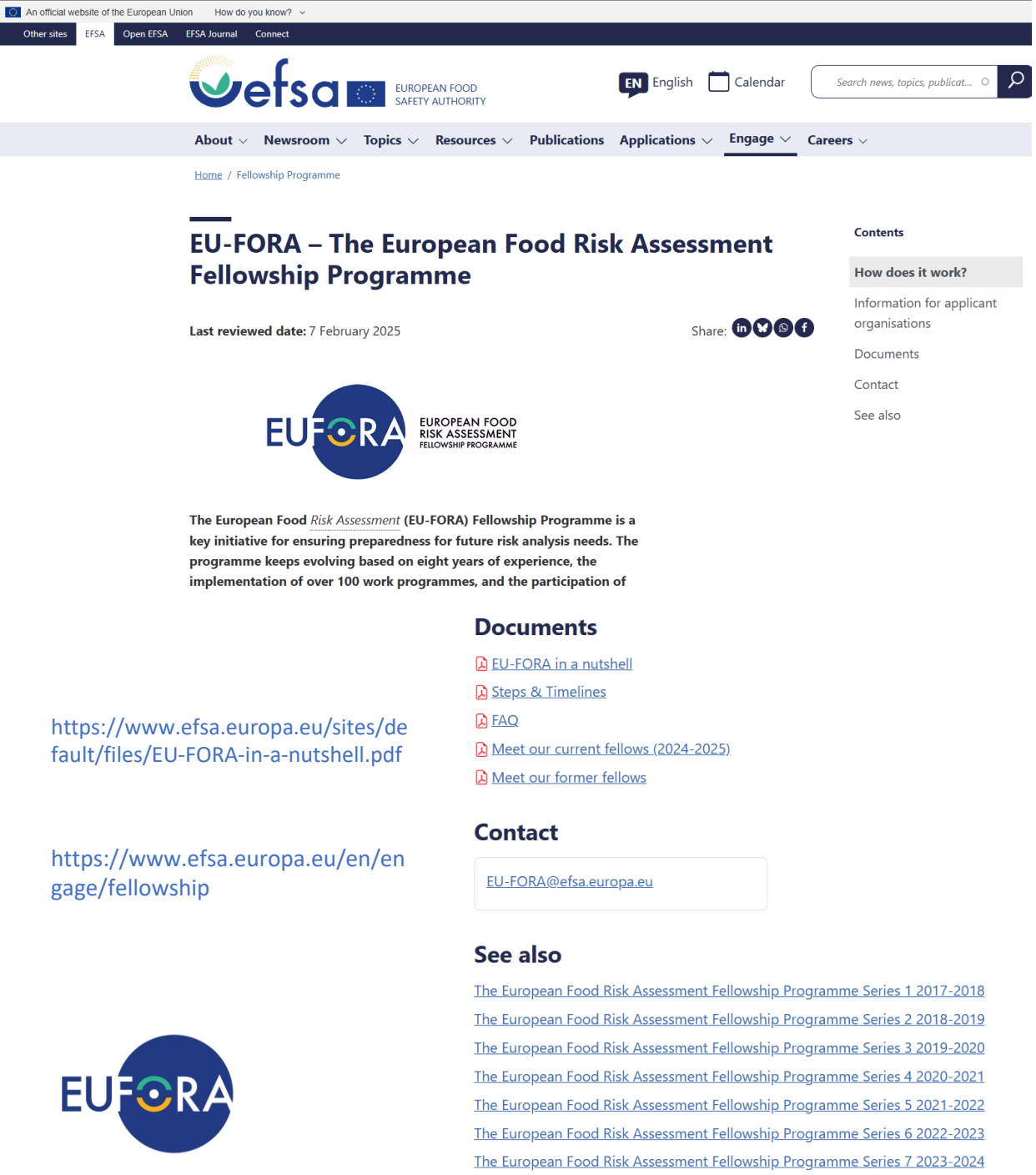
EU-FORA - WHAT'S IT REALLY ABOUT?

- The main goal of EU-FORA is to strengthen cooperation between European food safety organisations across Europe.
- The EU-FORA Fellowship Programme is a key initiative to ensure preparedness for future risk analysis needs in the food sector. The programme aims to increase the pool of food safety risk assessment experts in Europe and to stimulate the involvement of Member States in risk assessment work, all with the aim of developing common EU risk assessment guidelines and procedures.



How does it work?

- The sending and hosting organizations apply together as a consortium.
- They nominate the fellow and propose the fellowship programme.
- The fellowship period is for 12 months.
- During this time, the fellow is released from regular duties to follow the host's work programme.



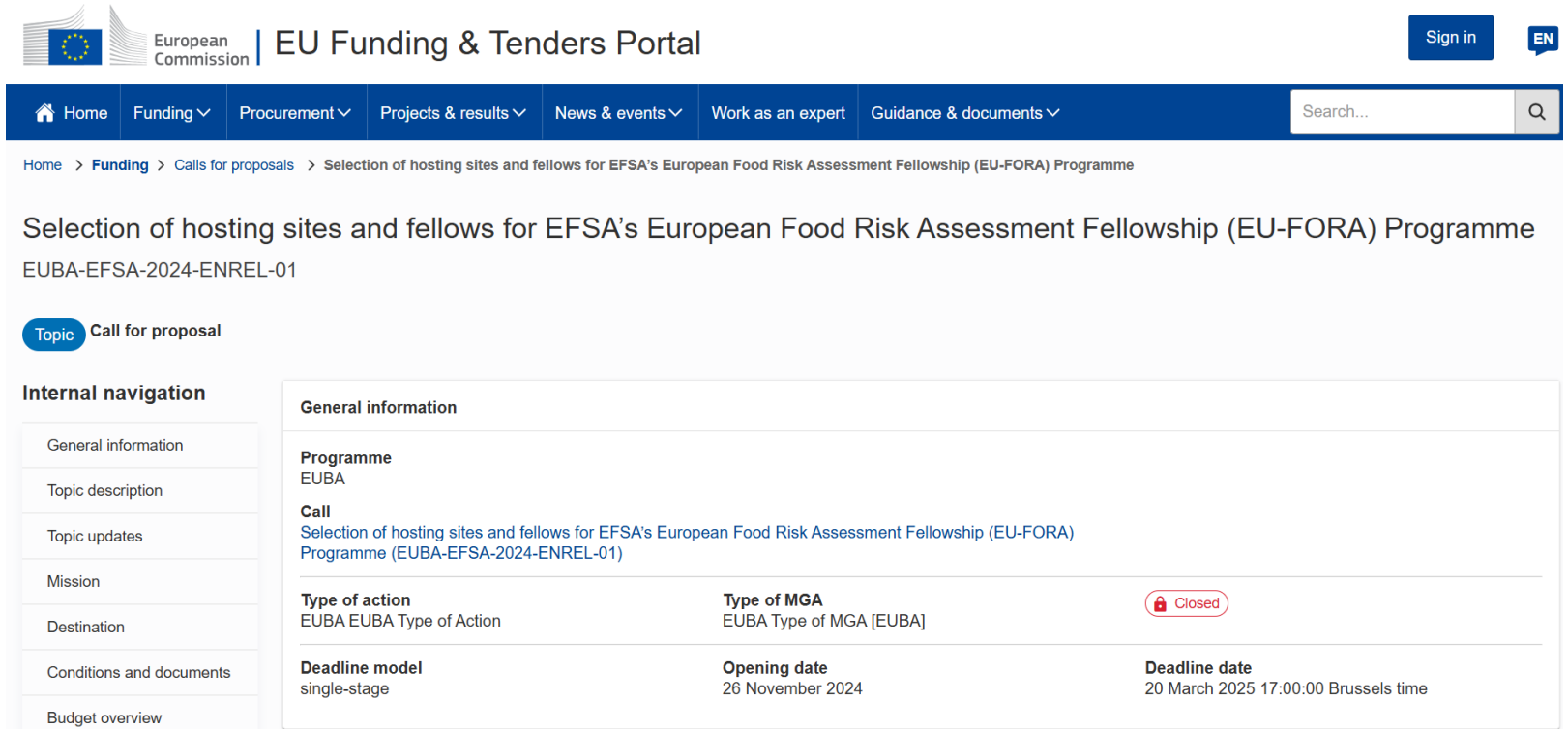
https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EU-FORA-in-a-nutshell.pdf

https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/engage/fellowship

HOW TO JOIN?

- By visiting the EFSA website, we can find out about ongoing calls for different projects.
- The website contains all the necessary information on how to participate, what the process is like and what documents are required.
- Once we have identified an organization that we are interested in, we contact them and, once we have successfully established a relationship, we prepare and submit an application.

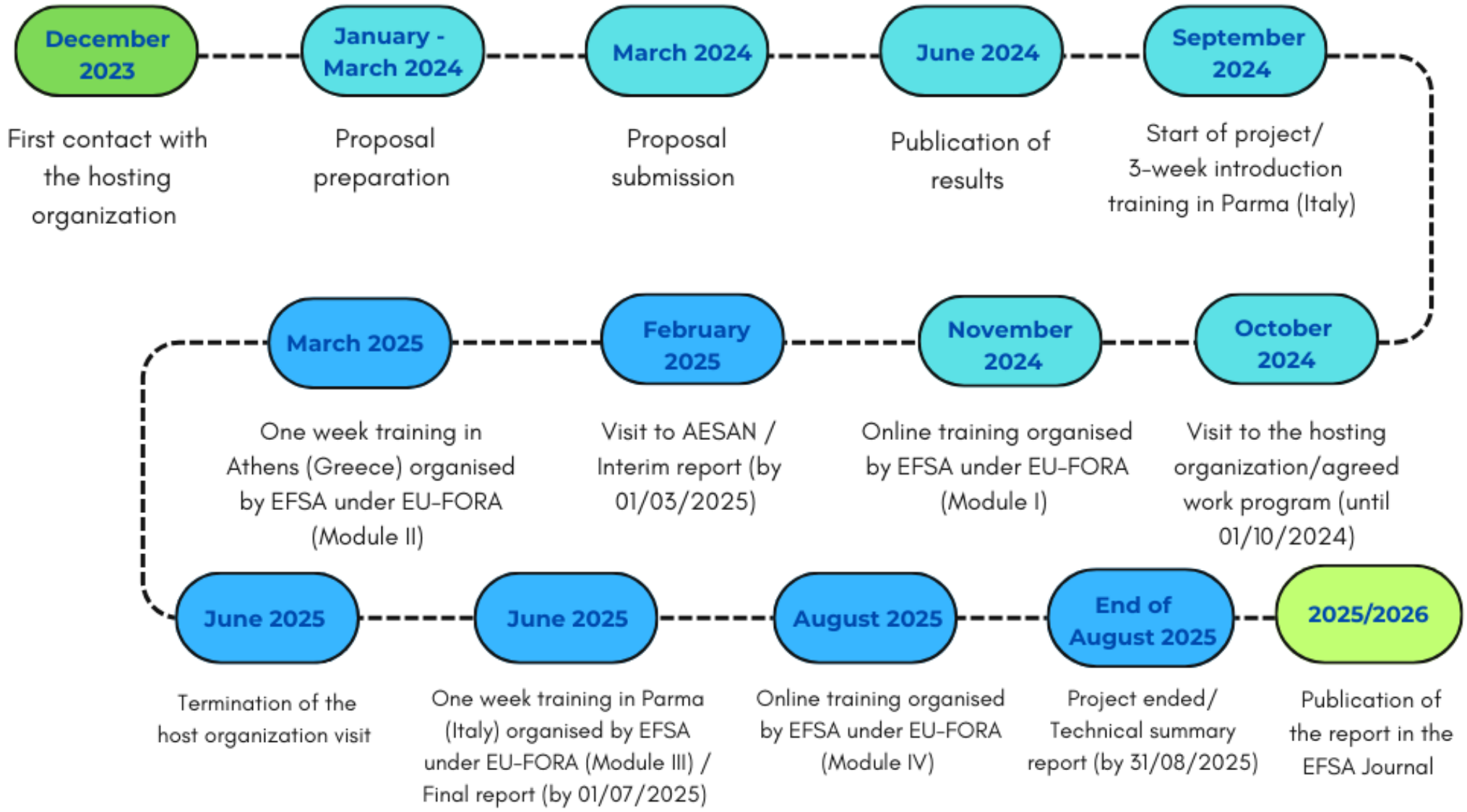
WHAT'S NEXT - WHERE TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION



- After preparing the application, we submit it to the EU Funding & Tenders Portal (a link to the portal can also be found on EFSA's official website).
- The next step is to wait for the results.

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/EUBA-EFSA-2024-ENREL-01?order=DESC&pageNumber=1&pageSize=50&sortBy=relevance&keywords=efsa&isExactMatch=true&status=31094501,31094502

My path in EU-FORA



WHAT'S MORE?

- The Fellowship Programme lasts 12 months, during which the Fellow attends five training modules: two face-to-face in Parma, one face-to-face in Athens and two online modules.

- The course is aimed at teaching the following topics:
  - Risk assessment
  - Hazard identification in food
  - Microbiological Risk Assessment (MRA)
  - Chemical Risk Assessment (CRA)
  - Environmental Risk Assessment (ERA)

WHAT'S MORE?

- In addition, participants will have the opportunity to visit the premises of two food producers operating in the province of Parma:

  Consorzio Parmigiano Reggiano and Mutti

Varios evaluadores de riesgos del programa EU-FORA de la Autoridad Europea de Seguridad Alimentaria (EFSA) visitan la AESAN

Publica: Agencia Española de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutrición
Fecha: 18 y 19 Febrero 2025
Sección: Seguridad Alimentaria

Visita a la AESAN de evaluadores de riesgos becados por el programa EU-FORA de la Autoridad Europea de Seguridad Alimentaria (EFSA) 2024-2025

AESAN

- On February 18 and 19, 2025, eight risk assessment experts from Slovenia, Greece, Poland, Portugal and Spain, participating in the European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) EU-FORA program, visited AESAN.

- During the visit, participants had the opportunity to learn about AESAN's risk assessment, management and communication activities, as well as the activities of the AESAN National Food Centre, which serves as the National Reference Laboratory.

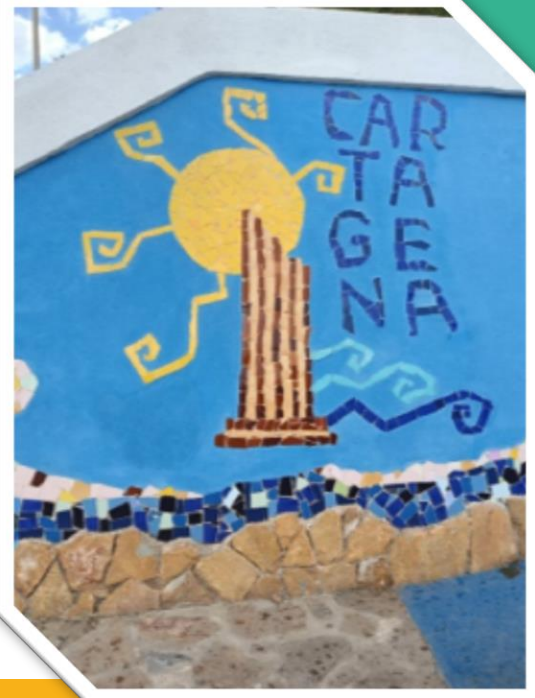
https://www.aesan.gob.es/AECOSAN/web/noticias_y_actualizaciones/noticias/2025/EU_FORA_2025.htm

My hosting site

- **Hosting organisation**: Polytechnic University of Cartagena (UPCT)
- **Supervisor:** Dr Alberto Garre
- **Fellow:** MSc Olga Sęczkowska

Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena

PROF. WACLAW DABROWSKI
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD BIOTECHNOLOGY
STATE RESEARCH INSTITUTE



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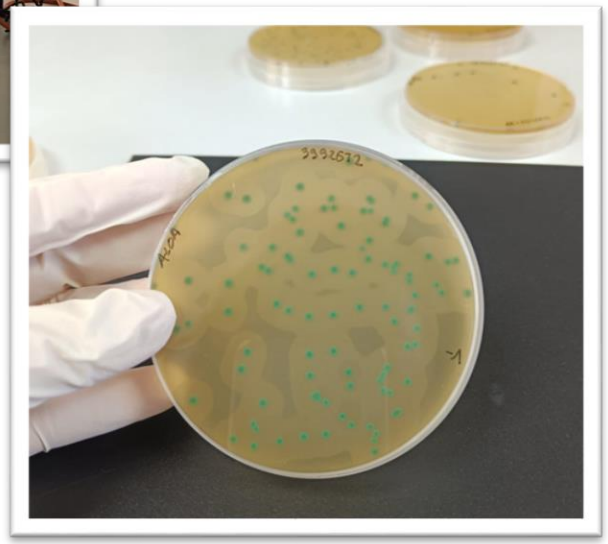
MY EU-FORA TRAINING IN HOSTING SITE

Training in tools and modelling to develop Risk ranking and Qualitative microbial risk assessment for cheese along the Polish and Spanish food chains

- The programme, which involves working on a case study focused on the microbiological safety of artisanal cheese, covers all steps of QMRA, including hazard identification, exposure assessment, hazard characterization and risk characterization.



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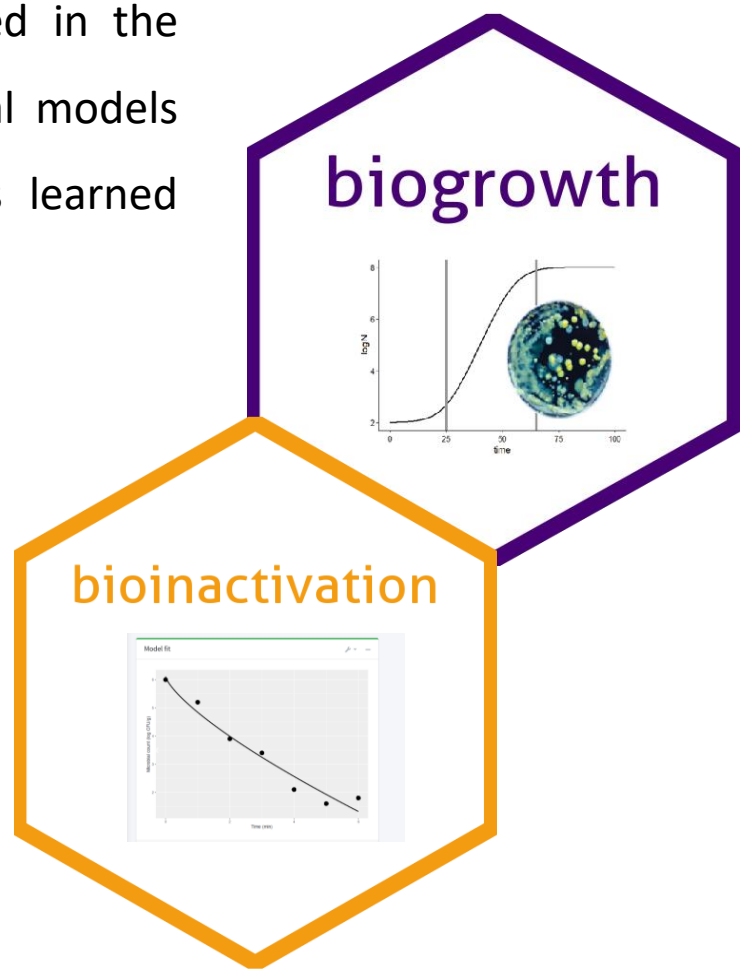
MY EU-FORA TRAINING IN HOSTING SITE

- During this stay, the scholarship holder carries out research indicated in the application, develops their risk assessment skills, creates mathematical models based on the obtained research results using appropriate programs learned during the training.



REPORTS, PUBLICATIONS

- During the project, the fellow and the hosting organization will prepare two reports: an interim report (after 6 months) and a final report (one month before the end of the project).

- At the end of the project, the fellow and the host organization will prepare a technical report which, if accepted, can be published in the EFSA Journal.

https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/18314732/2025/23/4

MORE THAN JUST SCIENCE

Questions?

Don't hesitate to ask!

Thank you for your attention!

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