

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR FOOD & BEVERAGE VENDORS
DURING THE FIFTH EDITION OF THE
VALLETTA LOCAL FOOD FESTIVAL 2026**

1. INTRODUCTION

Building on the success of the past four editions of the Valletta Local Food Festival, the Valletta Cultural Agency (hereinafter referred to as "**the Agency**") in collaboration with the Malta Food Agency is proud to present the Fifth Edition of the Valletta Local Food Festival. This 3-day culinary event is designed to celebrate and promote local food, ingredients, producers, and businesses within the gastronomy sector.

The Valletta Cultural Agency and the Malta Food Agency warmly invite food and beverage vendors to submit their proposals and express their interest in showcasing their local cuisine during this year's festival. Proposals offering high-quality and innovative culinary contributions will be selected, giving the chosen vendors the opportunity to sell their products from a designated stall provided by the Agency.

The Valletta Local Food Festival seeks to raise awareness about the richness and creativity of Malta's culinary scene by highlighting local delicacies and proving that our homegrown products can compete on an international level. The Festival will feature local guest chefs who will host live demonstrations and talks, along with entertainment and live music to create an engaging atmosphere.

Taking place at Pjazza San Gorg, the Festival aims to connect with the public through a variety of food and drink stalls, each offering unique local products.

The Event schedule is as follows:

- **Friday, 3rd July 2026:** 7:00 p.m. – 00:00 a.m. (Midnight)
- **Saturday, 4th July 2026:** 7:00 p.m. – 00:00 a.m. (Midnight)
- **Sunday, 5th July 2026:** 7:00 p.m. – 00:00 a.m. (Midnight)

In the eventuality of changes to the above-mentioned schedule, the selected applicants shall be given two (2) weeks prior notice.

Disclaimer:

Prospective applicants are to note that by submitting an application as specified below, they are confirming agreement with all the terms and conditions set out in this Expression of Interest.

Applicants should also note that the Agency will respect any restrictions published by the local Health Authorities on the organisation of public events.

2. GUIDELINES

2.1 CREATION AND SALE OF DISHES/PACKAGED PRODUCTS AND BEVERAGES

Applicants must provide a proposal which includes a list of **traditional Maltese dishes and/or edible packaged products and beverages** to be offered. The emphasis shall be on **local traditional Maltese cuisine**. The use of **locally sourced ingredients is encouraged and preferred**, but it is **not a mandatory requirement**, provided the dishes themselves are Maltese in nature and tradition.

The successful applicant, as a local food and/or beverage manufacturer, shall provide a detailed proposal of the edible packaged products and/or dishes including ingredients, presentation, etc. These dishes may be further developed together with the Agency following the signing of the contract agreement. Any amendments to the content of the proposal should also be presented to the Agency for prior approval and must be in accordance with its vision for the Festival. Unless otherwise stated throughout the execution of the contract, each dish is to contain the equivalent of a starter portion and must be reasonably priced to encourage the public to purchase **traditional Maltese dishes**.

The Agency will provide successful applicants with a designated stall free of charge at Pjazza San Gorg.

The food and beverage products and dishes offered in the stalls may include *but shall not limited to*, the following:

- Stuffat tal-Bebbx, Fenek (Rabbit and Snails)
- Local Honey, ġulepp tal-ħarrub and other jar products
- Local Liquers, Wines
- Soppa tal-Armila (Widow's soup), Minestra, Kusksu etc
- Maltese Dairy Products (Gbejniet, cheeselets and cheeses)
- Local desserts, sweets and snacks (Maltese chocolate, marmurat, kannoli, Imqaret, pastries, Bamboloni, Pastini, Pasti Roza, fried doughs etc)
- Pies (Pumpkin, Lampuki, Ricotta)
- Pastizzi, Qassat
- Ftira Ghawdxija (Gozitan Ftira)
- Ftira Biz-Zejt (Tuna Ftira)
- Hobz tal-Malti (Maltese Bread)
- Timpana, Ghagin il-Form (Baked pasta), Ravjul (ravioloi), Ross il-Form (Baked rice), Tarja (Fried Spaghetti)
- Maltese Deli & Dips (Bigilla, Stuffed olives, sundried tomatoes, caponata etc)
- Anchovy and Cod Fritters (Sfineg)
- Traditional meat dishes (roast pork, horsemeat, steamed minute steak, bragioli, pork kidneys, liver, pulpetti)
- Maltese sausage, blood sausage (mazzit)
- Lampuki, Stuffed calamari, Fried octopus

The successful applicants shall retain all income generated from sales.

2.2 INSTRUCTIONS TO PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS

- Prospective applicants are to submit a duly filled in and endorsed Application Form that includes all requested details and documents.
- Prospective applicants are to ensure that the contact's name on the Application Form is that of the individual or organisation who, if successful, shall enter into an agreement with the Agency for participation during the Valletta Local Food Festival.
- By submitting the Application Form, it is understood that the applicant has read and is in agreement with the terms and conditions of this Expression of Interest and affirms all

declarations. No conditions and alterations to the requirements listed in this document shall be introduced / imposed by the applicant on the Agency.

- Multiple offers may be accepted as long as separate submissions are effected.
- Collaborations with other chefs / producers are permitted, however the Applicant shall remain the sole responsible party related to this application and any subsequent communication / agreement. Collaborators cannot submit Application Forms as an individual / separate Applicant to avoid Conflict of Interest.
- Each applicant must be at least 18 years of age at the time of application.
- Each applicant must have a valid VAT number.
- By submitting an application, prospective applicants shall be confirming that their submissions shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the submission deadline of this Expression of Interest.

2.3 APPLICATION TIMETABLE

Expression of Interest for participation opens on	26/01/2026 at 12:00 hours
Clarification requests may be submitted via email by not later than	14/03/2026 at 17:00 hours
Deadline for clarification responses as issued by the Agency	18/03/2026 at 17:00 hours
Applications are to be submitted via email by not later than	25/03/2026 at 17:00 hours

The deadline for submission of applications is **Saturday 2nd May 2026**. Applications are to be submitted via email to applications@vca.gov.mt.

Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Nonetheless, the Agency reserves the right to extend the deadline for the submission of Application at its own discretion.

An opening schedule shall be affixed on the noticeboard of the Agency in the sequence of how applications are received based on the time stamp on the email.

2.4 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants are to fill in and submit the Application Form included in Annex I of this Expression of Interest. As part of the Application Form, each applicant is to submit the following information and documentation:

SECTION A: Applicant's Details

SECTION B: Collaborators' Details (if applicable)

SECTION C: Proposal

SECTION D: Declaration

SECTION E: Checklist and Additional Documentation

N.B. Should one or more of the listed requirements or fields be missing or incomplete, the submitted application shall be immediately disqualified and will not be considered.

Note 1: Applicants are to submit the relevant documents in PDF format via email or file transfer links (e.g. wetransfer.com). Links to cloud storage systems such as Google Drive or One Drive will not be considered.

2.5 SELECTION AND EVALUATION

2.5.1 Selection Guidelines

Each application will be treated in strict confidence by the Evaluation Committee. The Agency reserves the right to select and/or reject any or all the submitted applications at its discretion. Should none of the applicants be considered satisfactory in line with the vision of the festival and requirements of this Expression of Interest, the Agency reserves the right to assign the designated stalls to other economic operators (who may or may not have been necessarily involved in this Expression of Interest).

The Agency also reserves the right to put some applications on a reserve list and contact them at a later date. In this case, no alterations to the contents of the applications as submitted by the respective economic operator shall be entertained. If the Agency contacts such applicants after the 90-day validity period of the offer, such applicants may rediscuss the contents of their proposal with the Agency.

The Selection Process shall be based on the following criteria:

- The applicant is to be a local food / beverage economic operator.
- The Agency is seeking food and beverage vendors who can contribute to a celebration of local produce and creativity during the Valletta Local Food Festival; an event dedicated to the uniqueness of Maltese gastronomy through the promotion of genuine local and creative food, and drinks. This is to be reflected in the contents of the application, proposal and supporting documentation submitted by the applicants.
- The Agency shall determine which are the most suited applicants at its discretion and in line with the vision it has of the Valletta Food Festival 2026 depending on the concept proposed by the applicants.

Agreements will be entered into with the applicants whose proposals best reflect the vision that the Agency has for this Festival. Should more than one applicant propose the same concept, the spaces may be awarded by the Agency on a first-come-first-served basis according to the timestamp of the email submitted containing the application form and related documents.

2.5.2 Evaluation Grid

The prospective applicants are to submit the following documentation as part of their submission. Points shall be allocated based on the criteria listed adjacent to the points. The criteria marked as mandatory require the submission of a compulsory document thus a response to each criterion is to be provided for the technical compliance of the submission.

Any information regarding third parties is to be greyed out in line with the GDPR			
Criteria	Maximum points: 100		
1. Proposed Dishes/Packaged Products/Beverages			
a. Provide a proposal of a minimum of 3 different local dishes/packaged products Or	10 points or 15 points		Mandatory
b. Provide a proposal of more than 3 different local dishes/packaged products			
2. Ingredients: Provide a description of the key ingredients to be used in the preparation of the dishes and/or products.	15 points		Mandatory
3. The use of locally sourced ingredients is encouraged and preferred , but it is not a mandatory requirement , provided the dishes themselves are Maltese in nature and tradition Marks for this criterion shall be allocated to the submission of those applicants who are able to submit a declaration which confirms that all ingredients shall be locally sourced.	10 points		Optional
4. Provide a reasonable pricelist of all the products which are being proposed to feature and be sold in the Festival.	15 points		Mandatory
5. Confirm that prospective applicant shall be in possession of a valid Food Handlers Certificate, if applicable. A declaration is to be submitted. A copy of the Food Handlers Certificate may be required at contract stage.	10 points		Mandatory
6. The prospective applicant has all the necessary permits and licenses to sell/trade. A declaration confirming this requirement is to be submitted outlining all relevant and valid permits / licences in hand. All applicants must be in possession of a valid VAT certificate as per venue conditions. <i>A copy of the permits / licences to sell/trade <u>may be</u> required at contract stage.</i>	10 points		Mandatory
7. The prospective applicant has to be available throughout the 3 days of the festival. A declaration confirming this requirement is to be submitted.	5 points		Mandatory
8. The prospective applicant will adhere to all the terms and conditions. A declaration confirming this requirement is to be submitted.	5 points		Mandatory
9. The prospective applicant shall provide photos and visuals of the proposed dishes/packaged products.	Maximum of 15		

	points (points shall be allocated based on artistic merit)	Optional
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Pass mark: 60 Total marks: 100

3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

3.1 PRODUCTS AND STALLS

- Only locally manufactured and produced products and dishes are to be sold at the Valletta Local Food Festival;
- Successful applicants are to attend a preparatory briefing session in Valletta to be confirmed in due course by the Agency;
- Successful applicants are to participate on all Festival dates, specifically on the 3rd, 4th, 5th July 2026 between 7:00 p.m. and 00:00 a.m. (Midnight) at Pjazza San Gorg.
- Successful applicants are to produce and make available the culinary dish/es and/or drink/s agreed upon with the Agency on all the Festival dates. Any changes to the culinary dish/es and/or drink/s proposed, including the pricing, need to be approved beforehand by the Agency to ensure adherence to the Festival's concept;
- Successful applicants are to provide all the ingredients necessary to prepare the dish/es and / or drink/s proposed and approved by the Agency;
- Successful applicants are required to provide their own equipment for the preparation of food and/or beverages. The Agency shall provide sinks, hot plates, and electric ovens where applicable. Should the selected applicants opt to use the equipment provided by the Agency, they shall assume full responsibility for its proper use and maintenance. They shall also ensure that all equipment is returned in a clean and undamaged condition. Failure to maintain and return the equipment in an acceptable state shall render the applicant liable to a financial penalty.
- Successful applicants shall be responsible for adequately covering their stalls and the equipment provided by the Agency during festival off-hours.
- The successful applicants must comply with the Event Sustainability Policy
- <https://www.vca.gov.mt/en/resources/>;
- The following conditions governing the use of the venue must be observed:
 - Catering activities must be conducted on an impermeable sheet to prevent accidental spillage on pavements. Any food waste or liquid waste must be collected in suitable containers and shall not be disposed of in soft landscaped areas.
 - Digging of holes for the purpose of fixing poles is strictly prohibited.
 - The lighting of candles, fireworks, or fires of any kind is prohibited, except for low-level flames used for catering purposes. No open-fire equipment is permissible at the venue.
 - No items shall be affixed or attached to trees or monuments.
 - Additional waste disposal bins will be provided by the Agency to facilitate cleanliness within the venue. All applicants are required to ensure that waste is disposed of appropriately, maintaining the venue in a clean and orderly condition throughout the event.
- All stalls and related equipment must be cleaned and dismantled by not later than **02:00 AM on Monday, 6th July 2026**, immediately following the conclusion of the Festival. Any equipment provided by the Agency must be left clean and in its designated location.
- Successful applicants must maintain their stalls and the surrounding area in a clean and hygienic condition at all times.
- The successful applicants shall retain all income generated from sales. No financial compensation shall be requested by the Agency for the provision of this service.
- The selected applicants shall have all the necessary insurance policies including public liability; which covers any form of risks including damage, loss, bodily harm, death in relation to third parties. The Agency shall not be involved in any legal dispute as result of the economic operator(s)' operations in connection with event. A copy of a valid public liability insurance policy shall be submitted to the Agency upon contract endorsement. In addition, it is recommended that the selected economic operator possesses adequate insurance coverage to cater for any loss, damage or theft of equipment which is valid throughout the entire duration of the contract; a copy of which may be requested at contract implementation stage. The Agency shall not be held liable or be involved in any dispute or litigation related to the loss, damage or theft of any equipment left unattended by the selected economic operator(s) onsite.

3.2 FEES

No application fees apply.

3.3 SETUP AND DISMANTLING

- A detailed setup and dismantling schedule for the Valletta Local Food Festival will be provided to the successful applicants, along with the contract agreement. Successful applicants are required to strictly adhere to the schedule as outlined.
- Successful applicants shall be responsible for supplying their own equipment for the preparation and operation of their stalls. The Agency shall provide the stalls with sinks, electric hot plates, and ovens for heating purposes, if needed. Any damages or malfunctions to the equipment provided by the Agency must be reported immediately to the Production Team for appropriate action.
- The Agency will provide electricity and water supply necessary for the operation of the stalls during the festival.

3.4 PERMITS AND LICENSES

- The selected applicant shall conform to local Health and Safety regulations, the regulations and legislation of the Maltese catering industry, any licenses and permits necessary to be eligible to sell/trade and the VAT Department. All food and beverages for sale must conform to the local sanitary regulations set by authorities and the successful applicants must have all the necessary (valid) licenses and permits so as to sell the product. Such permits may be requested at any time by the Agency.
- The selected applicant shall be in possession of a valid Food Handlers Certificate, if applicable.
- The selected applicants selling alcohol must be in possession of a valid Licence for selling alcohol and all sales are the responsibility of the applicant;
- The selected applicants must be in possession of all necessary licences and permits to sell/trade upon submission of the application. (Such permits may be requested by the Agency upon signing of the Contract;
- All food and beverages for sale must conform to local sanitary regulations set by the authorities;
- All those serving / handling food and drinks shall wear the necessary protective clothing, disposable gloves and any other form of protective hygienic gear;
- All items for sale must conform to local regulations and legislation;
- If the selected economic operator(s) is caught breaking any regulation, he/she may be requested by the Agency and/or other competent local authorities to close the stall and discontinue the sales with immediate effect. The economic operator(s) will not be entitled to any compensation and shall be liable to settle any fines incurred by the competent local authorities. Any fines incurred or Court proceedings resulting from such actions shall be entirely borne by / be the responsibility of the economic operator(s). In addition, any request for reimbursement shall not be entertained.
- All Maltese Laws relevant to the activity are to be observed in their entirety by the selected economic operator(s);

The Agency will not be liable for any action or fines incurred as a result of non-compliance with local regulations.

Annex 1: Application Form and Declaration

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A. APPLICANT'S DETAILS

Name	
Surname	
Address	
ID Card Number	
Mobile Number	
Email Address	
VAT Number	
Name of Company (if applicable)	
Company Number (if applicable)	
Portfolio Website (if applicable)	

B. COLLABORATORS' DETAILS (OPTIONAL)

Collaborator No. 1 (if applicable)

<u>Name</u>	
<u>Surname</u>	
<u>ID Card Number</u>	

Collaborator No. 2 (if applicable)

<u>Name</u>	
<u>Surname</u>	
<u>ID Card Number</u>	

Collaborator No. 3 (if applicable)

<u>Name</u>	
<u>Surname</u>	
<u>ID Card Number</u>	

C. PROPOSAL

Requirements	Mandatory / Optional	To be filled in by the Bidder
<p>1. Proposed Dishes/Packaged Products/Beverages</p> <p>a. Provide a proposal of a minimum of 3 different local dishes/packaged products</p> <p>Or</p> <p>b. Provide a proposal of more than 3 different local dishes/packaged products</p>	Mandatory	
<p>2. Ingredients:</p> <p>Provide a description of the key ingredients to be used in the preparation of the dishes and/or products.</p>	Mandatory	
<p>3. The use of locally sourced ingredients is encouraged and preferred, but it is not a mandatory requirement, provided the dishes themselves are Maltese in nature and tradition</p> <p>Marks for this criterion shall be allocated to the submission of those applicants who are able to submit a declaration which confirms that all ingredients shall be locally sourced.</p>	Optional	
<p>4. Provide a reasonable pricelist of all the products which are being proposed to feature and be sold in the Festival.</p>	Mandatory	

<p>5. Confirm that prospective applicant shall be in possession of a valid Food Handlers Certificate, if applicable. A declaration is to be submitted.</p> <p><i>A copy of the Food Handlers Certificate <u>may be required at contract stage.</u></i></p>	Mandatory	<input type="checkbox"/> Submitted (attached) <input type="checkbox"/> Not Submitted
<p>6. The prospective applicant has all the necessary permits and licenses to sell/trade. A declaration confirming this requirement is to be submitted outlining all relevant and valid permits / licences in hand. All applicants must be in possession of a valid VAT certificate as per venue conditions.</p> <p><i>A copy of the permits / licences <u>may be required at contract signing stage.</u></i></p>	Mandatory	<input type="checkbox"/> Submitted (attached) <input type="checkbox"/> Not Submitted
<p>7. The prospective applicant has to be available throughout the 3 days of the festival. A declaration confirming this requirement is to be submitted.</p>	Mandatory	
<p>8. The prospective applicant will adhere to all the terms and conditions. A declaration confirming this requirement is to be submitted.</p>	Mandatory	
<p>9. The prospective applicant is to provide photos and visuals of the proposed dishes/packaged products.</p>	Optional	<input type="checkbox"/> Submitted (attached) <input type="checkbox"/> Not Submitted

D. DECLARATION

I/we hereby agree to all of the terms and conditions stipulated in the Expression of Interest for Food & Beverage Vendors during the Fifth Edition of the Valletta Local Food Festival 2026 as listed in this document.

I/we hereby declare that I do not fall under any of the grounds listed under Part VI of LN352/2016 – Exclusion Grounds.

I/we declare that no subcontracting in connection with this Expression of Interest shall take place unless prior written consent of the Valletta Cultural Agency is obtained. I/we shall be solely responsible for the execution of the contract and for the delivery of service as requested by the Agency in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Expression of Interest. The Agency reserves the right to request additional documentation and justification for subcontracting requests and may at its discretion accept or reject such requests.

I/we shall not assign this contract or any part of the operation / delivery of service pertaining to this Expression of interest without prior written consent of the Agency. An assignment is understood to mean any agreement by which the Contractor transfers its contract or part thereof to a third party. The Agency reserves the right to request additional documentation and justification for assignment requests and may at its discretion accept or reject such requests.

I/we declare that all information and documentation submitted as part of this Expression of Interest are true and correct. The application shall be declared null if after any information provided is incorrect, falsified and not verified. The Agency reserves the right to instigate legal proceedings against the applicant in case of submission of false declarations and documentation.

I/we declare to submit the application form, checklist, list of items to be sold, price lists as well as any documentation as requested in this Expression of Interest at submission stage.

Name and surname of applicant (BLOCK LETTERS)

Signature of Applicant

Date

Annex 2: Checklist

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E. CHECKLIST

The applicant confirms that he/she has submitted the following as part of the application form:

- Duly filled in and endorsed Application Form
- Copy of ID Card of Applicant
- Copy of ID of Collaborator(s)
- VAT Certificate of Applicant
- Food Server/Handling License (if applicable)
- License to sell alcohol (if applicable)
- Proposed Food Menu
- Itemised Pricelist for Food
- Itemised Pricelist for Beverages
- Applicant's portfolio (if applicable)
- Declaration

Signature:

Date: