

Cook for Change!

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change!**

THE SUSTAINABLE CHEF CHALLENGE

The Sustainable
Chef Challenge

2026 Press kit



sodexo



Cook for Change! is more than a culinary competition.

It is both a celebration of the passion, creativity, and commitment of Sodexo's chefs, and a powerful illustration of how our food service offer can deliver great taste while serving a greater purpose.

Across all our markets, food plays a central role in people's daily lives - in their health, well-being, and sense of connection. It also plays an increasingly strategic role for our clients. Today, organizations are looking for partners who can help them address rising expectations around nutrition, taste, sustainability, and affordability. At Sodexo, we believe our chefs are one of our greatest strengths in meeting that challenge.

By reimagining recipes, experimenting with ingredients, and leading change from the kitchen they are showing that it is possible to offer outstanding food experiences while positively contributing to the health of people and the planet. Cook for Change! brings this ambition to life.

This year's edition, held during Sodexo's 60th anniversary, is particularly symbolic. It shows how far we have come, and how committed we remain to advancing culinary excellence while supporting the food transition alongside our clients through concrete action. I am proud of what this challenge says about our company, and I am even prouder of the people who bring it to life."



Thierry Delaporte,
Chief Executive Officer of Sodexo



What is Cook for Change!

Cook for Change! – organized in partnership with Rational - is Sodexo's global culinary competition, **designed to spotlight the creativity and expertise of its chefs and their central role in driving more sustainable and healthier food practices.**

Since its creation in 2022, the challenge has become a showcase of Sodexo's culinary ambition: to offer tasty and delicious food that is better for people and the planet.

More than a competition, Cook for Change! is a concrete expression of Sodexo's vision of food as a powerful lever for positive impact. It encourages chefs to explore new ways of cooking - with more plant-based ingredients, less waste, and better nutritional profiles and empowers them to **act as ambassadors of a new food culture:** one that supports pleasure on every plate, well-being and environmental responsibility.

Now in its fourth edition, the challenge continues to grow and evolve. What began as an internal contest has turned into **a global platform for dialogue, inspiration and change** - both within Sodexo and beyond.

Chefs from every region are invited to reimagine the future of food, through one dish of their own choice, in line with evolving expectations around health, sustainability and affordability.

2026: A Landmark Edition

This year's edition of Cook for Change! coincides with **Sodexo's 60th anniversary.** It introduced a **renewed competition format**, with the addition of three regional semi-finals last November in Chicago, Shanghai and Wittenheim (France). Over several months, **more than 500 chefs from 30 countries** took part in the challenge. After successive rounds of selection, only nine finalists now remain in the running for the title - earning their place in the Grand Finale in London on March 24, 2026.

The finalists - hailing from Australia, Brazil, Chile, France, India, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States - will compete in a one-day cook-off in front of a high-level jury composed of renowned chefs and sustainability experts.

Their mission: create nutritious and flavorful plant-forward, low-carbon, dishes that embody the spirit of the challenge. The competition follows strict criteria, first and foremost focused on taste and culinary creativity, while encouraging the use of sustainably sourced ingredients and innovative approaches to reducing food waste.

The event will culminate in an awards ceremony held in London, in the presence of Sodexo leaders, clients and partners. The finale will also be streamed live on YouTube, ensuring that everyone can take part in this global celebration of culinary excellence.



A High-level Jury

The Grand Finale will be judged by a panel of five distinguished chefs and culinary experts. The jury notably includes Michelin-starred chef Frédéric Anton and the Irish Chef and presenter Anna Haugh, alongside Sodexo Executive Chefs and representative from its partner Rational.

At the end of the competition, the jury will award three prizes:

- **the Cook for Change! Chef of the Year**, the highest distinction of the competition, awarded to the chef who

best embodies culinary excellence, creativity and sustainability;

- **the Culinary Innovation Award**, celebrating the dish that delivers a memorable taste experience while embracing innovative and sustainable approaches;
- **the Impact at Scale Award**, honoring the recipe that best demonstrates how sustainable cuisine can be successfully integrated into Sodexo's operations and menus.



Frédéric ANTON

Chef Frédéric Anton, Meilleur Ouvrier de France, is widely regarded as one of the defining chefs of his generation.

At the helm of Le Pré Catelan, a three-Michelin-starred restaurant, Le Jules Verne at the Eiffel Tower, awarded two Michelin stars, and Don Juan II, which holds one Michelin star, he has helped make

each of these venues a benchmark of French culinary excellence.

Passionate about seasonal ingredients and committed to a warm, generous approach to cooking, he continually brings a spirit of innovation to his work, creating dishes that are both visually striking and unmistakably original.



Anna HAUGH

Chef and presenter, Anna Haugh is the chef patron of *Myrtle Restaurant* and *The Wee Sister Wine Bar* in Chelsea, London. Anna's apprenticeship took place at *L'Ecrivain* in Dublin, and she went on to work in Paris for Gualtiero Marchesi.

When Anna first moved to London, she worked at *Pied à Terre* under Shane Osborne, then at *The Square* under Philip Howard. She was a director of foods and head chef for *Rocket Food* before becoming head chef at *London House* for Gordon Ramsey. Anna opened *Myrtle* in 2019. One of her ambitions was to introduce the people of London to a sophisticated taste of Ireland - Irish produce is the heartbeat of the menu.

Anna has an extensive broadcast career being a familiar face across a range of well-known TV programmes as both a resident and guest chef, she has also hosted her own show for the BBC.



Lloyd MANN

Lloyd Mann is Sodexo's Vice President, Culinary & Global Executive Chef.

With over 30 years of experience in professional kitchens and senior leadership roles across the UK and international foodservice, he previously held multiple high-level culinary positions before joining Sodexo

As Sodexo's Global Executive Chef, Lloyd champions chefs across the world and played a central role in shaping Cook for Change into the global sustainable culinary challenge it is today.



Sinead MCLAUGHLIN

Sinead McLaughlin is regional Corporate Chef at RATIONAL UK. With over 15 years of experience across fine dining, central production kitchens, and street food trucks, Sinead McLaughlin brings a dynamic and versatile approach to food production & catering.

A Head Chef by the age of 21, she went on to lead the Kitchen at the National Theatre for four years, where she focused on delivering high volume & high-quality products. Now a Regional Corporate Chef at Rational UK, Sinead draws on her familiarity with the cooking systems, the iCombi Pro and iVario Pro, gained throughout her career, to host academies and training sessions that demonstrate how to streamline kitchen operations.



Jessie SOMMARSTRÖM

Jessie Sommarström is a Sodexo Executive Chef in Sweden. She has long career and experience from renowned fine-dining establishments such as Esperanto in Stockholm.

In 2022 she won Chef of the Year in Sweden and in 2023 she was awarded the Gastronomic Academy's gold medal and the Chef's Chef award. In 2024, she was appointed honorary doctor for her work in sustainable gastronomy. She has also written a recipe book about climate-smart food for children and worked in several collaborative projects for sustainable food.

The assignment to create the menu for the Nobel prize celebration has been given to her outside of her work at Sodexo.

Meet the Finalists

Peter Brass - Australia



"We need to be forward-thinking and start building the momentum, because it starts with us - the chefs who really need to make that change."

Curried Sweet Potato & Lentil Croquette with Herbal Tea-Infused Cauliflower Leaves and Cauliflower Purée, Finished with Sweet Potato Chips.



Ricardo Machado - Brazil



"Working at Sodexo allows us to make the difference, through the impact the company creates."

Tian of Root to Stem Beets, Mushrooms and Squash, Beetroot Reduction and Root Granola.



Faustine Germain - France



"To be a chef at Sodexo is belonging to a family that pushes you to move forward. This is what led me toward sustainable cuisine."

Perfect poached egg, Creamed Polenta, Tomme de Savoie, Glazed Asparagus with a Crispy Quinoa and Sauce Vierge.



Denisse Galvez - Chile



"We as chefs, have the responsibility, to educate the world, so that this cuisine is the cuisine of the future and can help future generations."

Slow cooked Cochayuyo (seaweed) Confit Vegetables, Potato Mille-Feuille and Young Sprouting Shoots.



Pravin Nanaware - India



"As a chef, sustainability starts with the food. We do that for our future generation. It's not about winning, it's about taking part. Small action can create a big impact. As a sustainable chef, I'll do my part."

"Sustainable Sea & Root" Grilled Watermelon Sweet Potato Crisps and Candid Watermelon Marmalade.



Gordon Carberry - Ireland



"It's a huge responsibility for chefs to ensure that every ingredient we use is utilized to its absolute maximum, and that we reduce the waste we generate in our kitchens."

Miso Roasted Parsnip with Textures of Parsnip, Wild Rice, Crispy Chickpeas and Aquafaba Mayonnaise.



Robert Janse - Netherlands



"It's wonderful to work with colleagues from all over the world, all sharing a same goal: to provide excellent service with fantastic and innovative dishes."

Smoked Kohlrabi with Miso, White Bean Cream and Kombucha Beurre Blanc.



Randall Prudden – United States



"What inspires me to be a sustainable chef is fully aligned with my cooking ethos: terroir, seasonality and local ingredients. They tell the story of time and place — and sustainability naturally flows from that."

The Whole Pumpkin with Roasted Maitake Mushroom & Mole Negro



Joel Ryan – United States



"Sustainability is definitely the future of the work that we do. We are in a situation where we have to think progressively and make changes."

Vegan Panisse "Poutine" with Maitake Mushroom Hemp Gravy and Cashew Curds.





Supporting Clients Through Food Innovation

Beyond the competition itself, Cook for Change! demonstrates how Sodexo's culinary expertise translates into tangible value for its clients. As organizations face growing expectations from employees, students, patients and communities, food is increasingly seen as a strategic lever, not only to enhance experience and well-being, but also to support sustainability commitments and performance objectives.

Through Cook for Change!, Sodexo showcases its ability to co-create food offers that respond to these evolving needs. The recipes developed as part of the competition illustrate how menus can be both appealing and aligned with clients' sustainability goals, while remaining accessible and suited to real operational environments. By promoting more plant-based meals, optimizing ingredient use and encouraging waste-reducing practices, Sodexo also contributes to reducing clients' indirect emissions, particularly Scope 3.

In this sense, Cook for Change! embodies Sodexo's ambition to make food a driver of positive transformation for its clients: offering innovative, nutritious and delicious solutions that meet consumer expectations, strengthen client value propositions, and support long-term environmental progress.

In Sweden, Sodexo's client **Cytiva**, a pharmaceutical company, is committed to reducing their carbon footprint. Sodexo and Cytiva aligned on this during contracting. Since 2019, Sodexo's chefs have adapted meal offerings to reduce carbon emissions for this client. Provided with the opportunity to experiment with lower impact ingredients, the chefs have successfully crafted menus that has reduced the average carbon footprint of food served by 59% from 1.5 kg CO₂e to 0.6 kg CO₂e per serving.

*"Food production and waste are major contributors to global emissions and resource use. By offering seasonal, plant-forward meals, reducing food waste, and sourcing responsibly, the Sodexo staff restaurant becomes a living example of our sustainability goals in action." Gustav Schultz, Sustainability Specialist, **Cytiva Uppsala**.*



A Culinary Vision That Serves a Purpose

At Sodexo, chefs play a central role in shaping the future of food. Every day, through their choice of ingredients, their cooking techniques, their creativity and the way they present and talk about food, they have the power to influence eating habits at scale. In workplaces, universities, hospitals or public institutions, they have the unique opportunity to guide consumers toward meals that are healthier, more balanced and more responsible - without ever compromising on pleasure and taste.

Cook for Change! brings this dynamic into the spotlight. By challenging chefs to reimagine recipes with plant-forward ingredients, a lower carbon footprint and a stronger nutritional profile, the competition promotes a modern approach to cooking - one that is as inspiring as it is actionable. It celebrates culinary excellence while proving that healthier and more sustainable dishes can be bold, desirable and full of flavor.

The challenge also highlights Sodexo's commitment to empowering its chefs. Behind the competition lies a broader culture of learning and continuous improvement, supported by training programs, tools, and a global culinary community where chefs share best practices and inspire one another.

Cook for Change! is therefore both a showcase and a catalyst: it gives visibility to Sodexo's culinary talent while accelerating the transformation already underway across its kitchens worldwide.

To equip Sodexo chefs and catering teams with the skills to design delicious, plant-forward meals that accelerate the shift toward low-carbon diets, Sodexo launched the **"Vegetalizing" Masterclasses** in Continental Europe in 2023.

In partnership with the Lenôtre Culinary Arts School and Humane World for Animals, these masterclasses aim not only to provide new recipes but also to inspire chefs to become sustainability champions, sharing their knowledge with colleagues, clients, and consumers, and multiplying the impact of each training session.

Since their launch, the program has been **deployed across eight countries and has already brought together more than 1,800 participants.**

Media Contact

Domitille Lecasble
domitille.lecasble.sodexo.com

