

Web Summit Impact Startup HealthBlok Recruits 500 Beta Testers to Improve Dining for Millions Living with Food Restrictions

Austrian founder turns personal lactose-intolerance struggle into a mission to make restaurants allergy-friendly and inclusive.

LISBON, PORTUGAL – November 2025 — *HealthBlok*, an Austrian HealthTech startup selected as an **Impact Startup** at **Web Summit 2025**, has announced the launch of its **beta testing program in Lisbon**, inviting **500 early adopters** to help shape the future of safe, transparent dining.

The platform, designed to make eating out stress-free for people with **food allergies, intolerances, and dietary preferences**, is partnering with a curated selection of **Lisbon restaurants** to pilot its **real-time allergen filtering system** during the conference week.

Unlike existing apps that charge users, **HealthBlok is free for diners**, while helping restaurants manage allergen compliance, reduce liability, and attract the **30% of customers** who are often excluded from dining out due to dietary concerns.

"I spent years avoiding social dinners and leaving conferences hungry because I couldn't verify lactose-free options," said Shideh Heravi, Founder & CEO of HealthBlok. "When staff have to run back and forth to the kitchen to check allergens, it's stressful for everyone. HealthBlok makes that communication instant, safe, and reliable — for both guests and restaurants."

The Web Summit Testing Ground

As part of **Web Summit's Impact Startup program**, HealthBlokK will leverage the event's **70,000 international attendees** to test its allergen-filtering features, gather insights on user behavior, and analyze dietary patterns across cultures.

"Web Summit is the perfect testing environment — tens of thousands of people eating out every day, under time pressure, in an unfamiliar city," added Heravi. "If we can make dining seamless here, we can make it seamless anywhere."

Pilot restaurants in Austria have already reported tangible results: up to **three hours saved per day** on allergen-related inquiries and improved guest satisfaction.

Addressing a Growing European Challenge

HealthBlokK tackles one of Europe's most under-addressed issues — **safe dining for people with food restrictions**:

- Around **20–30% of allergic reactions** occur in restaurant settings.
- Only **one in five restaurants** provides clear written allergen information.
- EU food labeling regulations require allergen disclosure, with **fines of up to €40,000** for non-compliance (depending on the country).
- Over **130 million Europeans** live with allergies, intolerances, or dietary preferences that affect how they eat.

HealthBlokK's solution is simple yet powerful: diners set their preferences once and instantly see **compatible dishes** at participating restaurants. Restaurants, in turn, get automated **allergen management, digital compliance tools**, and access to a **previously underserved customer base**.

Beta Testing Program Details

The participating **Lisbon restaurants** cover a mix of cuisines and are located near the **Altice Arena** and **Web Summit's main venues**.

Through real-world testing, beta users will help HealthBlokK evaluate:

- Most-used allergen and diet filters

- Navigation and usability feedback
- Cross-cultural food preferences and needs
- New feature requests for future versions

Try the app: healthblokk.com/map

From Personal Experience to Platform

HealthBlok emerged from **Shideh Heravi's personal frustration** navigating restaurants with lactose intolerance.

Through **80 user surveys** and **25 in-depth interviews**, she found her experience was shared by many — anxiety, isolation, and limited food options.

“One person told us, ‘I always end up with salad and fries because it feels safest.’ Another said, ‘I prefer cooking myself because at least I know what’s inside.’ This isn’t just about food — it’s about inclusion, safety, and quality of life,” said Heravi.

The Path Forward

Following Web Summit, HealthBlok plans to:

- Analyze beta data to refine its app and dashboard,
- Launch in additional European cities, and
- Build partnerships with **restaurant chains** and **delivery platforms**.

The startup recently secured **€50,000 in angel investment** to accelerate development and hiring.

About HealthBlok

HealthBlok is a two-sided platform making dining out safe and enjoyable for people with food allergies, intolerances, and dietary preferences.

The free consumer web app helps diners instantly find suitable restaurants and menu items, while the B2B platform enables restaurants to manage allergen

compliance, reduce liability, and reach new customers.

Founded in Austria in 2025, HealthBlok is active in Austria and Switzerland and expanding across Europe.

Web Summit Impact Startup Program

HealthBlok was selected as one of **Web Summit's Impact Startups 2025**, recognizing early-stage companies driving positive environmental or social change. The program offers visibility, mentorship, and connections with global investors and media.

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Try the App

Web Summit attendees can already explore HealthBlok's **live beta** and discover allergy-friendly restaurants ("Lokale") in Lisbon:

 healthblokk.com/map