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EIT announces a Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) on Food

A new leading partnership will drive a transformation towards a consumer-centric and resource-efficient food sector

21.11.2016

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) has announced the winner of a pan-European competition on the Food4Future call: EIT Food. EIT Food will build sustainable end-to-end food supply chains realized through transformative innovation and education initiatives, with a central role for the consumer. EIT Food has broad coverage in EU member states and associated countries and is a unique partnership of 50 leading companies, universities, and scientific partners covering the entire food value chain. With the consumers as change agents, each of them is committed to jointly transform the way in which we currently produce, distribute and consume our food. Over the next seven years, the partners will invest close to 1.200 million euros matched with up to 400 million euros financed by the EIT.

As the future of food is high on the European Commission's agenda, EIT Food will deliver cutting-edge European skills to rebuild a healthy and sustainable food system in Europe and beyond. The "knowledge triangle" of research, education and entrepreneurship will sharpen the global competitiveness of the European economy. Peter van Bladeren, Vice President Nestec, Global head Regulatory and Scientific Affairs for Nestlé and Chair of the Interim Supervisory Board of EIT Food: "EIT Food is committed to create the future curriculum for students and food professionals as a driving force for innovation and business creation; it will give the food manufacturing sector, which accounts for 44 million jobs in Europe, a unique competitive edge."

EIT Food as Innovation community will become a consumer-driven innovation engine for all actors covering the food value chain. EIT Food will build a trusted food innovation ecosystem that supports consumers in their right to a healthy and more environmentally sustainable diet. Dr. Ellen de Brabander, Senior Vice President Global R&D Nutrition PepsiCo, and interim CEO of

EIT Food: *“By involving the consumer as change agents in all our activities, we will rebuild their trust in the food system. 60% of European consumers will achieve intake levels of positive nutrition including fruits and vegetables, whole grains and proteins by 2030 as well as reduce the levels of salt, sugar and saturated fat as recommended by WHO (World Health Organization) and European authorities. And we will cut food waste by 50% within 10 years.”*

EIT Food will organize international exchange programmes for students, and develop a unique interdisciplinary EIT labelled Food System M.Sc. for graduates. EIT Food will train thousands of students and food professionals via workshops, summer schools and online educational programmes like MOOCS (Massive Open Online Courses) and SPOCS (Specialized Private Online Courses).

EIT Food will set up 4 Innovation programmes targeting societal challenges:

1. personalized healthy food (FoodConnects Assistant),
2. the digitalization of the food system (The Web of Food),
3. consumer-driven supply chain development and new technology adoption in farming, processing & retail (Your Fork2Farm),
4. resource-efficient processes, turning the food sector into the spearhead for transforming the currently linear “produce-use-dispose” model into a circular bio-economy (The Zero Waste Agenda).

“EIT Food will collaborate with adjacent sectors to accelerate the adoption of new technologies in the food production scene, while stimulating start-ups via dedicated coaching and investment programmes such as our unique innovation vehicle RisingFoodStars and the investment fund SeedInvest”, says Prof. Thomas Hofmann, Senior Vice President of the Technical University of Munich, who acted as the co-ordinator submitting the proposal.

This large-scale initiative headquartered in Belgium is leveraged by five so-called Co-Location Centres, which stimulate innovation, talent development and consumer involvement at the regional level. They are based in Leuven (Belgium, France, Switzerland), Munich (Germany, Netherlands), Reading (United Kingdom, Iceland, Ireland), Warsaw (Poland, Finland) and Madrid (Spain, Italy, Israel). EIT Food works with a large group of network partners and will be very active in Central and Eastern European countries, including Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania and Slovenia.

Interim Director of CLC North-East, Prof. Krzysztof Klincewicz from Faculty of Management, University of Warsaw: *“Warsaw was selected for the CLC location as one of the fastest developing business hubs in Europe and a major academic centre located in the new EU member states. EIT Food will explore innovative opportunities in other countries of this region, while also leveraging the dynamic innovation ecosystems in Finland, Sweden and Denmark”*.

The CLC North-East partners include the leading regional companies (Valio, Maspex Wadowice Group and Raben Group) and impactful higher education and research institutions (University of Helsinki, University of Warsaw, VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland, Polish Academy of Sciences).

MORE INFORMATION:

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<http://eit.europa.eu/newsroom/eit-selects-winning-innovation-partnership-food>

<https://eit.europa.eu/eit-community/eit-food>



Partners EIT Food:

Transforming our food system together



Members Interim Supervisory Board and Management Team EIT Food

Interim Supervisory Board



Peter
Prof. Dr. van Bladeren
Chair Board

Current Position
Vice President Nestec S.A,
Global Regulatory &
Scientific Affairs

Christine
Prof. Dr. Williams
CLC North-West

Current Position
Professor of Human
Nutrition,
Director Food,
Agriculture and Health,
University of Reading

Jan
Prof. Dr. Delcour
CLC West

Current Position
Chair of the Leuven
Food Science and
Nutrition Research
Centre,
Head of the Division
Feed, Food & Health

Interim Supervisory Board



Bogdan
Tyrybon
CLC North-East

Current Position
COO Maspex
Wadowice Group

Thomas
Prof. Dr. Hofmann
CLC Centrum

Current Position
Senior Vice President
Research &
Innovation, TUM

David
Shem Tov
CLC South

Current Position
CEO of the T-Factor,
Technion's
(Israel Institute of Technology)
accelerator

Interim Management Team



Frank
Segebarth
CFO

Main Responsibilities
Financial planning and reporting, financial sustainability, third party funding

Last Position
Group Director of Finance, IT and Legal Affairs, Puratos (retired), Belgium

Ellen
Dr. De Brabander
CEO

Main Responsibilities
Management of the KIC and its operations, high level representative, external relations

Current Position
Senior Vice President R&D Global Nutrition, PepsiCo, Switzerland

Klaus
Beetz
COO

Main Responsibilities
Operational execution, business planning and project selection

Current Position
Senior Management, Head of external cooperation EU, Siemens, Germany



Jochen
Prof. Dr. Weiß.
Director of Education

Main Responsibilities
Implementation of the education strategy and programmes as well as of the academic network within the KIC and beyond

Current Position
Head of Department Food Physics and Meat Science, VP Research, University of Hohenheim, Germany

Begoña
Perez-Villarreal
Director of Innovation

Main Responsibilities
Implementation of the innovation strategy and calls for proposals, management of cooperation with and complementarity to relevant initiatives

Current Position
Business Director Food Research, AZTI Tecnalia, Spain

Mieke
Vercaeren
Director of Communication

Main Responsibilities
Communication strategy development, set-up and maintenance of communication infrastructure/ maintenance

Current Position
Advisor Public Affairs and Sustainability Colruyt Group, Belgium

Thorsten
Dr. Koenig
Director of Business Creation

Main Responsibilities
Implementation of the business creation strategy and programmes, management of the involvement of RisingFoodStars, management of the network to European and global entrepreneurial initiatives

Current Position
Vice President Flavour Science, Givaudan, The Netherlands