

EIT selects winning innovation partnership in Food

European Commission hails great opportunity to attract the best entrepreneurs, students and researchers

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) announced the winning team selected to set up *EIT Food*, a new pan-European partnership bringing together leading businesses, universities and research organisations. Its mission: to boost innovation, growth and job creation and put Europe at the centre of a global revolution in food.

FoodConnects – winner of *EIT Food* (Sustainable Supply Chain from Resources to Consumers) – is a consortium of 50 partners from 13 countries, including PepsiCo Inc., Fraunhofer, the University of Cambridge, the Polish Academy of Science, Robert Bosch GmbH, the Autonomous University of Madrid and Sodexo SA. Thomas Hofmann from the Technical University of Munich, the key coordinating partner, said *'We are thrilled to win. Our partnership will put Europe at the centre of a global revolution in food innovation and production. We will do this by delivering products, services and ideas that will contribute to the safety and sustainability of food across Europe. EIT Food will support the creation of 350 start-ups in the next seven years to help us achieve our goals.'*

Critical challenge

Tibor Navracsics, EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, responsible for the EIT, welcomed the announcement:

'Innovation and education have a crucial role in helping us tackle the big societal challenges of today and tomorrow and keeping Europe competitive in the global race. Ensuring that Europe's citizens have access to safe, high-quality, sustainably produced food is one of these big challenges. I am therefore very pleased to see the EIT getting this strategic partnership underway. With the support and funding of the EIT, EIT Food has a great opportunity to attract the best researchers, students and entrepreneurs.'

The winning team was selected following a competition launched in January 2016 and a thorough evaluation by external experts and the EIT Governing Board.

'The main factor behind the decision was the potential to create innovations needed to address critical challenges for today's societies. EIT Food is an excellent partnership that will generate growth and job creation, the top priority for President Jean-Claude Juncker's Commission. Our task now is to rapidly launch this partnership so that they can boost innovation,' said Peter Olesen, Chairman of the EIT Governing Board.

EIT to boost set up in the first year

To facilitate *EIT Food's* launch, the EIT will provide the winning partnerships with a start-up grant of up to EUR 4 million to ensure that it is fully operational as soon as possible. Provided that they achieve the expected results, *EIT Food* could receive funding in the range of EUR 400 million from the EIT over the coming years. In addition, it is expected to attract significant funding from other sources of private and public sector investment, multiplying the investments made by the EIT.

The EIT did not select a Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) in the area of Added-value Manufacturing. After a thorough evaluation procedure and Hearings with the EIT Governing Board, it was unanimously decided a Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) could not be designated in this area.

Media contact: Magdalena Gryzko,

T: +36 30 7889 975

E: press@eit.europa.eu

Background

EIT – Europe’s largest innovation community

The EIT is an independent EU body set up to power innovation and entrepreneurship across Europe to overcome some of its greatest challenges in the areas of climate (EIT Climate-KIC), digitisation (EIT Digital), energy (EIT InnoEnergy), health (EIT Health) and raw materials (EIT Raw Materials). As an integral part of the EU’s Horizon 2020 framework programme for research and innovation, the EIT brings together leading companies, universities and research labs to form dynamic cross-border partnerships – innovation communities – that develop innovative products and services, start new companies, and train a new generation of entrepreneurs.

EIT Food joins Europe’s largest innovation community, which currently brings together more than 800 excellent partners from business, higher education and research, working in 30 innovation hubs across Europe. The EIT Community helps entrepreneurs across Europe to turn their best ideas into products, services and jobs. To date, it has supported the creation of more than 200 innovative start-ups and entrepreneurship training for 2 000 students and graduates.

The EIT is planning to launch its next call for innovation communities’ proposals in 2018, focusing on urban mobility.

More information: eit.europa.eu Twitter: [@EITeu](https://twitter.com/EITeu)

Information on the winner: <https://eit.europa.eu/interact/bookshelf/eit-food-factsheet>

Media Contact:

Magdalena Gryzko: press@eit.europa.eu
+36 30 7889 875

