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D5.4 Match-funding action programme for a collaborative platform to support CRFS



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Abbreviations

CRFS	City Region Food System
EU	European Union
ECCP	European Cluster Collaboration Platform
AI	Artificial Intelligence
DACP	DIH AGRIFOOD Cooperation Platform
DIH AGRIFOOD	Digital Innovation Hub for Agriculture and Food Production
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
AioD	AI-on-Demand Platform
PPP	Public-Private partnership
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
EIP AGRI	The European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural productivity and Sustainability
SFSC	Short Food Supply Chain
ITC	ITC - Innovation Technology Cluster Murska Sobota
MAA	Multi-Actor Approach
S2CP	Single Click CRFS Platform
SSRI	Social Spaces for Research and Innovation
DIM	Data Integration and Management
CKAN	Comprehensive Knowledge Archive Network
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
MUFPP	Milan Urban Food Policy Pact
LAG	Local Action Groups
OG	Operational Groups
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
MF	Match-Funding
VC	Venture Capitals
KIC	Knowledge and Innovation Community
SEDIA	Single Electronic Data Interchange Area
KPI	Key performance indicators
EEN	Enterprise Europe Network

Executive Summary

This executive summary provides an overview of the key chapters in the deliverable, "Match-funding action programme for a collaborative platform to support CRFS." The deliverable delves into various platforms and collaboration initiatives within the European Union (EU) landscape, with a particular focus on those related to City Region Food Systems (CRFS) and agri-food systems.

Chapter 1: EU Landscape of Platforms

In this chapter, we explore various platforms central to EU collaboration efforts. It begins with an examination of the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) and its role in fostering cooperation among diverse clusters. We also delve into the EU Commission Regional Policy's InfoRegio platform and the crucial information it provides for regional development. Furthermore, the chapter discusses "AI on Demand" and "Big Data Value" initiatives, highlighting their significance in advancing technology-driven solutions within the EU.

Chapter 2: Platforms for CRFS and Agri-food Systems

Chapter 2 narrows the focus to collaboration platforms specifically designed for City Region Food Systems (CRFS) and agri-food systems. "Smart Agri Hubs" takes center stage in this section, showcasing the innovative approaches and technology integration aimed at improving sustainability and efficiency in agriculture and food production.

Chapter 3: Platforms Built Within the Project Cities2030

This chapter provides insights into platforms developed as part of the Cities2030 project. It offers an in-depth look at the initiatives and solutions conceived within this project, emphasizing their potential to drive positive change in urban environments.

Chapter 4: Transitioning from Cooperation to Collaboration: Key Steps for Success

Chapter 4 is dedicated to the essential steps required for transitioning from mere cooperation to true collaboration within these platforms. It outlines the key strategies and best practices to ensure the success and sustainability of collaborative efforts.

Chapter 5: Fuelling innovations: the match-funding framework for sustainable growth in CRFS Collaborative platforms

This chapter explores different type of funding opportunities from private to public and platforms that are build to support such initiatives. At the end of the chapter we start to explore possibilities on how to move forward with DIH AGRIFOOD COOPERATION platform.

Chapter 6: Charting the Path Forward: Advancing Collaboration Platforms Beyond Cities2030

In the final chapter, the document looks to the future, outlining a roadmap for advancing collaboration platforms beyond the scope of the Cities2030 project. It considers the broader implications of these platforms and their potential to drive innovation and sustainability across various sectors within the EU.

In summary, this report provides a comprehensive overview of the EU landscape of collaboration platforms, with a particular emphasis on CRFS and agri-food systems. It explores existing platforms, strategies for successful collaboration, and the way forward to ensure continued progress and innovation in this crucial domain. By leveraging these platforms and advancing collaboration, the EU is poised to make significant strides toward a more sustainable and technologically advanced future.

Introduction

In an era marked by rapid urbanization, climate change, and shifting demographics, the importance of resilient, sustainable, and equitable food systems for city regions cannot be overstated. As populations grow and become increasingly concentrated in urban areas, the ability to ensure food security, reduce food waste, and promote healthier diets becomes a paramount concern. This blueprint outlines a comprehensive strategy for the development of a collaborative platform to support the City Region Food System (CRFS), a multifaceted approach to addressing these challenges.

The CRFS encompasses the entire spectrum of activities related to food production, distribution, consumption, and waste management within the context of a city and its surrounding region. It acknowledges the interdependence of urban and rural areas and recognizes that food does not stop at city limits. Rather, it flows through a complex network of farmers, producers, distributors, retailers, consumers, and waste handlers. Ensuring that this system functions efficiently, sustainably, and equitably is a pressing issue for city regions worldwide.

The aim of this document is to provide a roadmap for creating a collaborative platform that will empower stakeholders in the CRFS to work together seamlessly, share information, make data-driven decisions, and ultimately transform the food system for the better. It is a call to action for governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), businesses, community organizations, and individuals to come together in pursuit of a common goal: a resilient, sustainable, and equitable food system that meets the needs of all city region residents.

Purpose of the document

This document serves as a guide for stakeholders interested in developing a collaborative platform for the CRFS. It is intended for a diverse audience, including policymakers, urban planners, technology developers, agricultural experts, community leaders, and anyone passionate about food system transformation. The document outlines the key components and considerations necessary for successfully designing, implementing, and maintaining a collaborative platform tailored to the unique needs and challenges of a specific city region.

The document is organized into distinct sections, each addressing a crucial aspect of the collaborative platform development process:

- **EU landscape of platforms:** This section provides context for the document by discussing the global trends at creation of different collaboration or cooperation platforms.
- **Platforms for CRFS and agri-food systems:** Here, we deep dive into the CRFS concept, and research the platforms that are built for the CRFS and agri-food systems.
- **Platforms built within the project Cities2030:** Examples of platforms developed within the project and example of a cooperation platform for the agri-food system as an example of best practice in the project.
- **How to build a collaborative platform:** We emphasize why collaboration is vital for transforming the CRFS and achieving its sustainability and equity goals and how to move from a Cooperation platform to the Collaboration platform.
- **Fuelling innovation with match-funding:** What type of fundings are available to support the CRFS and what already exists within the project hat could be used.
- **Recommendations on how to use collaborative platforms:** How we can move forward and what aspects needs to be taken into consideration when building such a tool.



Why a Collaborative Platform?

Creating a collaborative platform is not just an option; it's a strategic imperative. The challenges facing city regions regarding food systems are multifaceted and interconnected, making a siloed approach ineffective. A collaborative platform acts as a unifying force, bringing together stakeholders who may have traditionally worked in isolation.

This platform can serve as a digital ecosystem where data is collected, shared, and analyzed. It will enable stakeholders to coordinate efforts, respond to crises, identify opportunities for innovation, and, most importantly, prioritize the well-being of their communities. It will harness the power of technology to make the CRFS more transparent, efficient, and adaptable to changing circumstances.

1 EU landscape of platforms

In an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, the need for effective cooperation platforms has never been more critical. Whether at the local, national, or international level, cooperation platforms serve as the backbone of collaboration, enabling individuals, organizations, and nations to address complex challenges, seize opportunities, and achieve collective goals. This chapter explores the multifaceted reasons why we need cooperation platforms and their pivotal role in shaping our modern society.

The 21st century has brought forth a host of global challenges that are too complex for any single entity to address alone. Issues like climate change, pandemics, cyber threats, and poverty require coordinated efforts on a global scale. Cooperation platforms provide the necessary infrastructure for diverse stakeholders to come together, share resources, expertise, and data, and work towards sustainable solutions.

Cooperation platforms promote resource efficiency by enabling the pooling of resources, reducing duplication of efforts, and optimizing resource allocation. Whether it's in business, research, or humanitarian efforts, collaboration through platforms ensures that resources are used more effectively, leading to cost savings and better outcomes.

Many contemporary challenges span multiple sectors and industries. Cooperation platforms facilitate cross-sector collaboration, bridging the gap between governments, businesses, academia, and civil society. This cross-pollination of ideas and expertise often results in innovative solutions that would be difficult to achieve within isolated silos.

The rapid pace of technological advancement demands continuous learning and adaptation. This is why Cooperation platforms serve as hubs for knowledge sharing, enabling individuals and organizations to stay up-to-date with the latest developments in their field. This collective learning accelerates progress and promotes innovation. Whereas in the business world, cooperation platforms play a vital role in fostering innovation and economic growth. Open innovation platforms, for instance, encourage collaboration between companies, startups, and research institutions, leading to the development of new products and services.

Such platforms also emphasize inclusivity and diversity, ensuring that a wide range of perspectives and voices are considered in decision-making processes. This inclusivity fosters fairness, equity, and social cohesion, leading to more sustainable and acceptable outcomes.

The following chapter showcases different cooperation platforms on the EU level which are mainly being built through EU funded projects and are usually addressing specific industry or topic.

1.1 European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP)

ECCP mission is to be the European online hub for cluster stakeholders (cluster organisations, policymakers and other related stakeholders from the cluster ecosystem) and the reference one-stop-shop for stakeholders in third countries aiming to set up partnerships with European counterparts. (1)



The services of the ECCP include:

- Dynamic mapping of over 1,400 profiled cluster organisations worldwide
- The largest information hub for clusters offering the latest news and open calls to a broad community via the ECCP newsletter
- A variety of events (webinars, capacity building seminars, conferences) organised by the ECCP, European Cluster Partnerships and the cluster community to foster capacity building and peer discussion
- Matchmaking events supporting the development of cooperation between clusters in Europe and beyond
- An extensive knowledge database featuring a mapping of regional, national, international and sectoral cluster networks, toolkits and publications developed by the ECCP, European Commission, academia and the larger community.
- Detailed information on the European Cluster Partnerships and a dedicated Partnership forum for members
- Another forum for Cluster Associations and Networks to foster mutual learning and the exchange of information on activities and funding opportunities
- A partner search facility, where cluster organisations can find potential partners and a ClusterXchange facility for them to exchange offer and demand directly through private messaging
- The ECCP Trend Universe, a tool that allows you to get a deeper understanding of future trends and their impact on your cluster organisation.
- Dedicated pages supporting international cooperation including profiles of selected countries of strategic interest and a technical assistance facility (SMEs Go International)
- The most up-to-date information on key policy areas of the European Commission: green and digital policy, social economy, economy resilience and industrial ecosystems (in focus sections)

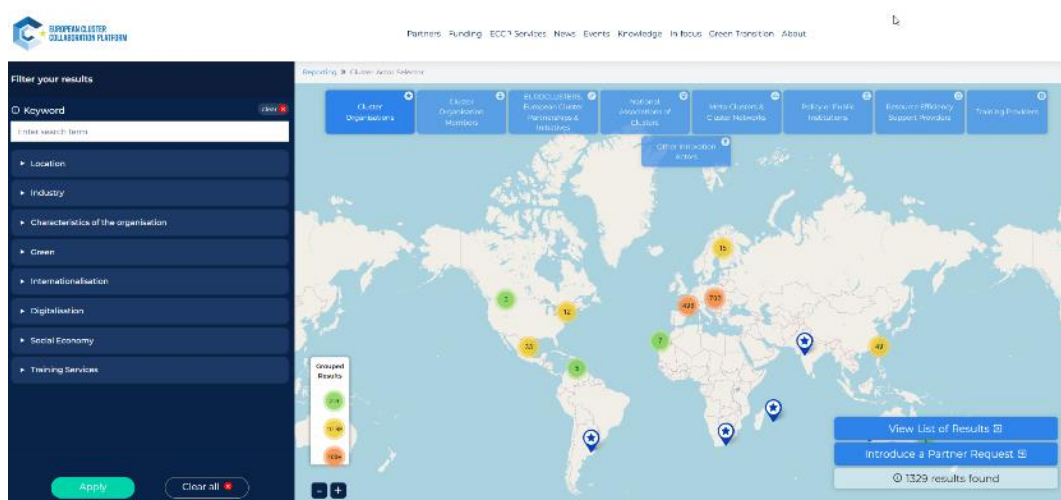


Figure 1: European Cluster Collaboration Platform

1.2 EU Commission Regional Policy – InfoRegio

The usage of the EU Commission Regional Policy – InfoRegio is a crucial resource for understanding and accessing information related to the European Union’s regional policy initiatives. InfoRegio is a platform and portal that provides a wealth of information and tools designed to support regional development, cohesion policy, and the implementation of EU funds across the European regions.

InfoRegio is a versatile and indispensable tool for anyone involved in EU regional policy, regional development, and the implementation of EU funds. It promotes transparency, collaboration, and informed decision-making, ultimately contributing to the economic and social development of European regions.

This map shows a small selection of the millions of regional projects that have received support from the EU. (2)

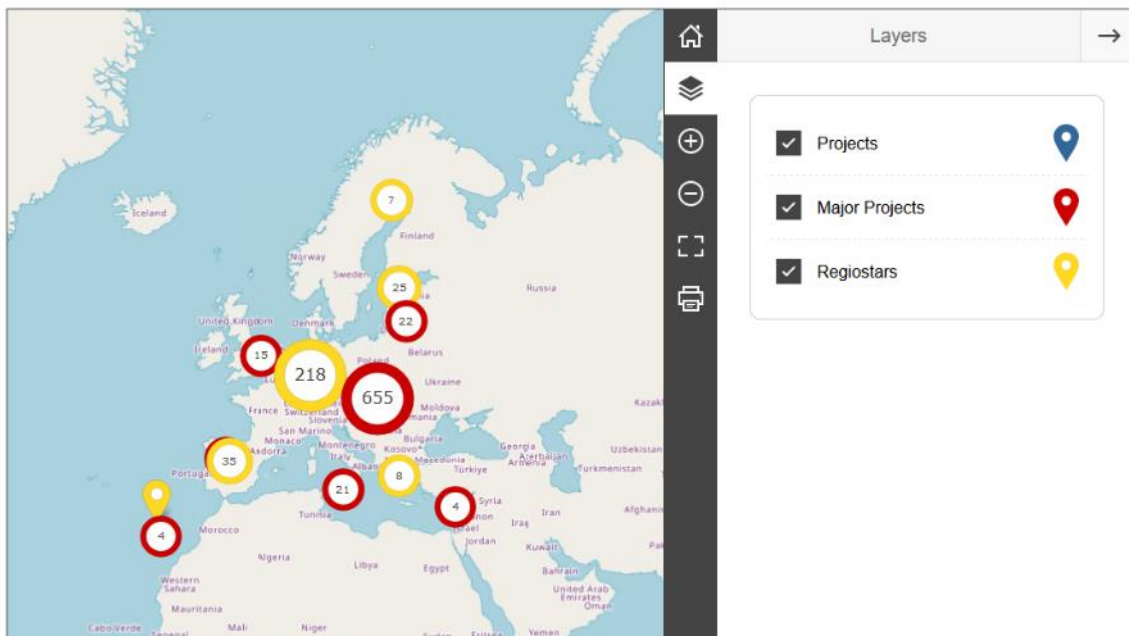


Figure 2: EU Commission Regional Policy – InfoRegio

1.3 AI on Demand

The AI-on-Demand Platform (AioD) is a community-driven channel designed to empower European research and innovation in Artificial Intelligence (AI), while ensuring the European seal of quality, trustworthiness and explainability. (3)

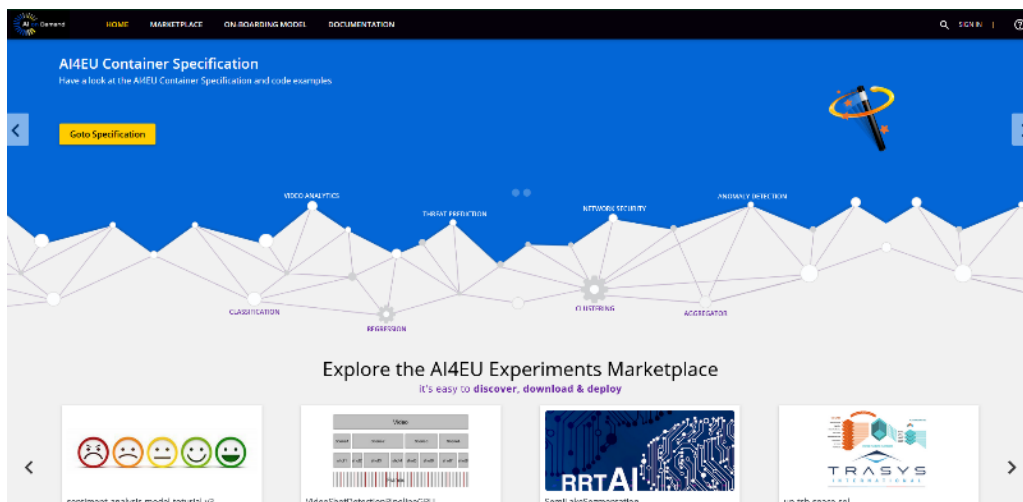


Figure 3: AI on Demand platform

AioD facilitates knowledge sharing, research experimentation and development of state-of-the-art solutions and technologies related with AI and AI-based robotics.

AioD operates on the principles of inclusivity and knowledge dissemination. It is an environment that champions the open exchange of AI wisdom, an incubator of innovative concepts, and a fertile ground for cross-pollination of ideas. Here's how AioD enriches the AI community:

1. **Fostering AI Knowledge Contribution:** AioD provides a dynamic platform for individuals and entities to share their wealth of AI knowledge, assets, services, and tools. It is a collaborative space where research findings, open-source AI models, and inventive AI solutions can be freely exchanged, promoting a thriving knowledge repository.
2. **A Treasury of Educational Resources:** AioD unlocks a trove of resources, including educational courses, datasets, code libraries, and academic papers. These invaluable resources empower continuous learning, skill development, and creative problem-solving within the AI domain.
3. **Illuminating AI's Boundless Potential:** AioD stands as an educational beacon, illuminating the vast potential and opportunities that AI applications hold. It acts as a guiding light for AI enthusiasts, revealing the multitude of possibilities AI brings to various industries and domains.
4. **Connecting with Peers and Experts:** At the heart of AioD lies its ability to forge connections within the AI community. Users can interact with peers, partake in collaborative projects, share insights, and seek guidance from experts, thus nurturing a vibrant AI network.

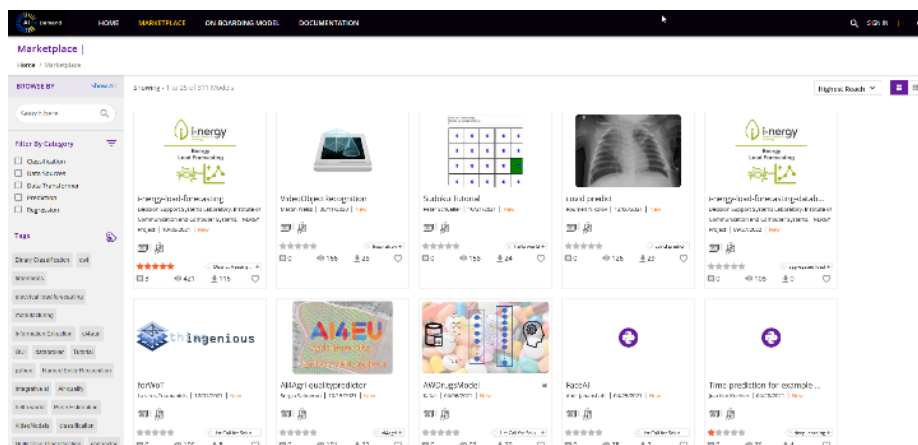


Figure 4: AI on Demand marketplace

1.4 Big Data Value

“In pursuit of a dynamic and globally competitive data-driven economy in the European Union (EU), the Big Data Value Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is diligently uniting a diverse yet harmonized ecosystem, empowering a spectrum of stakeholders. This coalition includes Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), large enterprises, academic and research institutions, pilot projects, and data incubators. (4)

The platform provides two distinct avenues for exploring the Big Data ecosystem:

- 1.) **Landscape Mapping:** This feature serves as a comprehensive map, illustrating the concerted efforts of various entities, such as industry, academia, the public sector, and other key actors, as they collectively strive to maintain European technological leadership and address the societal challenges inherent in leveraging Big Data across critical sectors.”

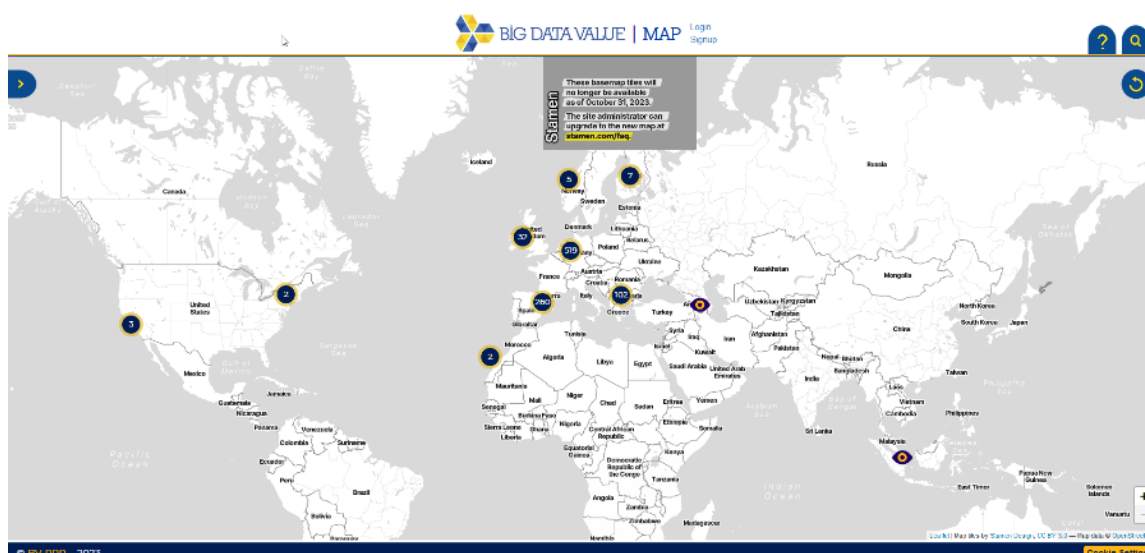


Figure 5: Big Data Value Map

- 2.) **Marketplace:** This serves as the one-stop destination where platforms, cutting-edge technologies, and innovative solutions converge. It's the marketplace where the supply and demand for products and services in the realm of Big Data in Europe intersect. Rooted in research and innovation activities, this marketplace fosters collaboration on aspects like interoperability and standardization, ensuring a thriving ecosystem for the entire Big Data community.

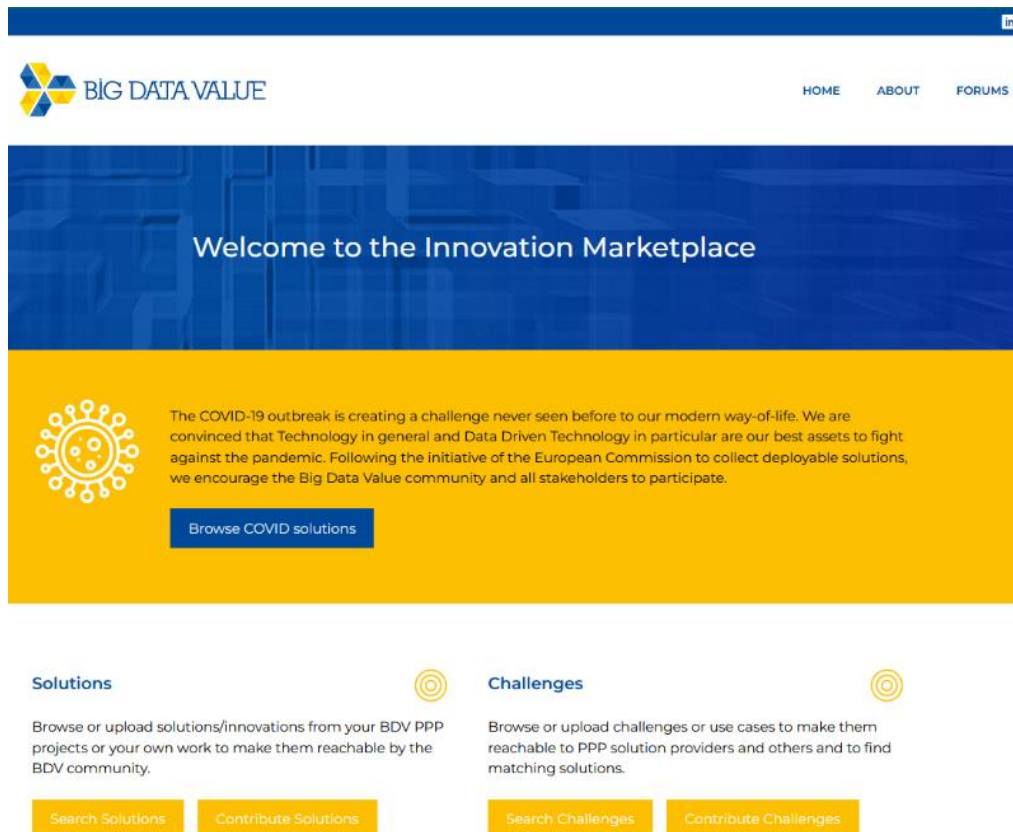


Figure 6: Big Data Value Marketplace

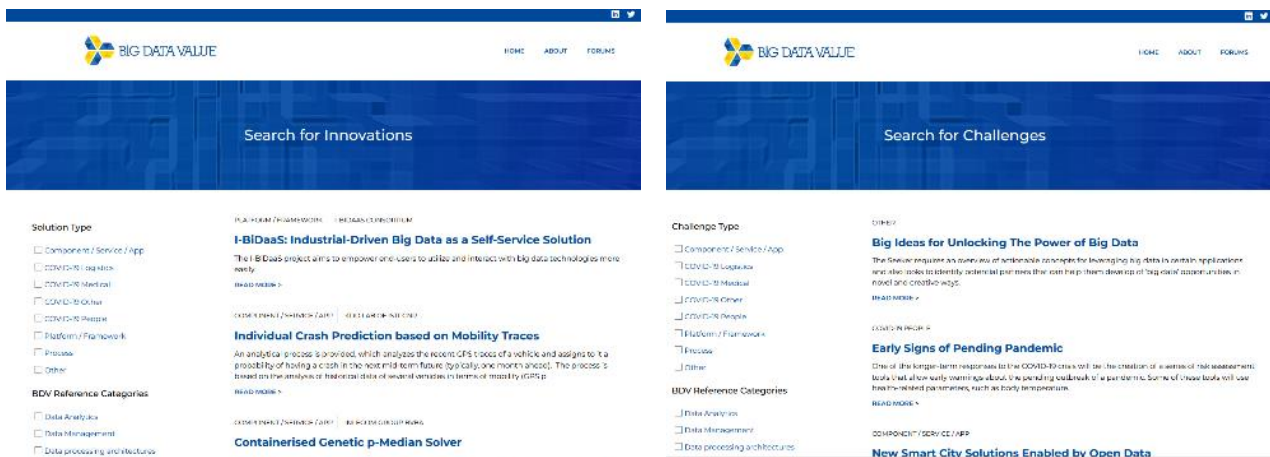


Figure 7: Big Data Value search for innovations and challenges

1.5 EIP AGRI

The European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI) has been launched in 2012 to contribute to the European Union's strategy 'Europe 2020' for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. This strategy sets the strengthening of research and innovation as one of its five main objectives and supports a new interactive approach to innovation: European Innovation Partnerships.

The agricultural European Innovation Partnership (EIP-AGRI) works to foster competitive and sustainable farming and forestry that 'achieves more and better from less'. It contributes to ensuring a steady supply of food, feed and biomaterials, developing its work in harmony with the essential natural resources on which farming depends. (5)

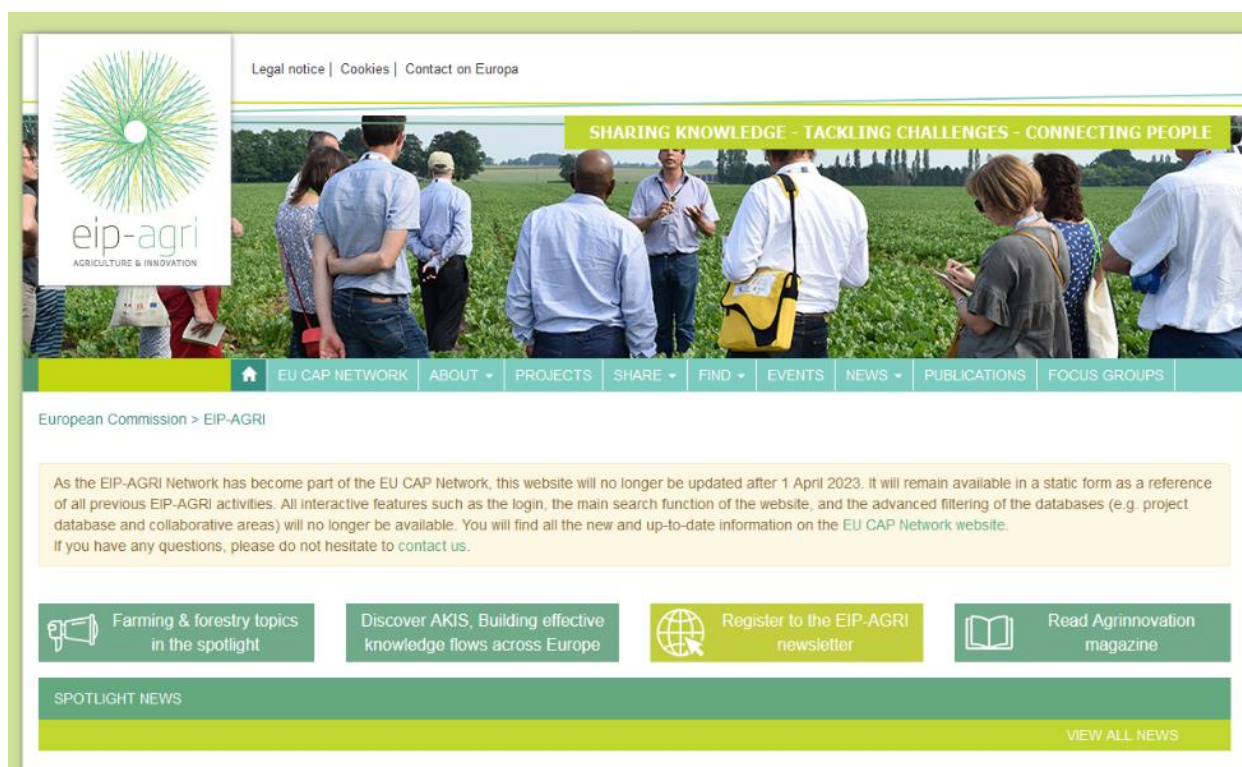


Figure 8: The Agricultural European Innovation Partnership (EIP AGRI)

The EIP-AGRI brings together innovation actors (farmers, advisers, researchers, businesses, NGOs and others) in agriculture and forestry, at EU level. Together they form an EU-wide EIP network. Within this network, Operational Groups, Multi-actor projects and Thematic Networks are all key building blocks. While Operational Groups are funded under the Rural Development Programmes, Multi-Actor projects and Thematic Networks are supported by the Horizon Programme. EIP-AGRI Operational Groups are project-based and tackle a certain (practical) problem or opportunity which may lead to an innovation. The Operational Group approach makes the best use of different types of knowledge (practical, scientific, technical, organisational, etc.) in an interactive way. An Operational Group is composed of those key actors that are in the best position to realise the project's goals, to share implementation experiences and to disseminate the outcomes broadly. Operational Groups are currently being set up in several EU countries and regions.

The EIP-AGRI website has exciting and interactive features. All visitors can voice their research needs, discover funding opportunities for innovation projects and look for partners to connect with. Through the website's interactive functions, users can share innovative project ideas and practices, information about

research and innovation projects, including projects' results, by filling in the available easy-to-use e-forms. Various EIP-AGRI-related publications are available for download on the website, providing visitors with information on a wide range of interesting topics.

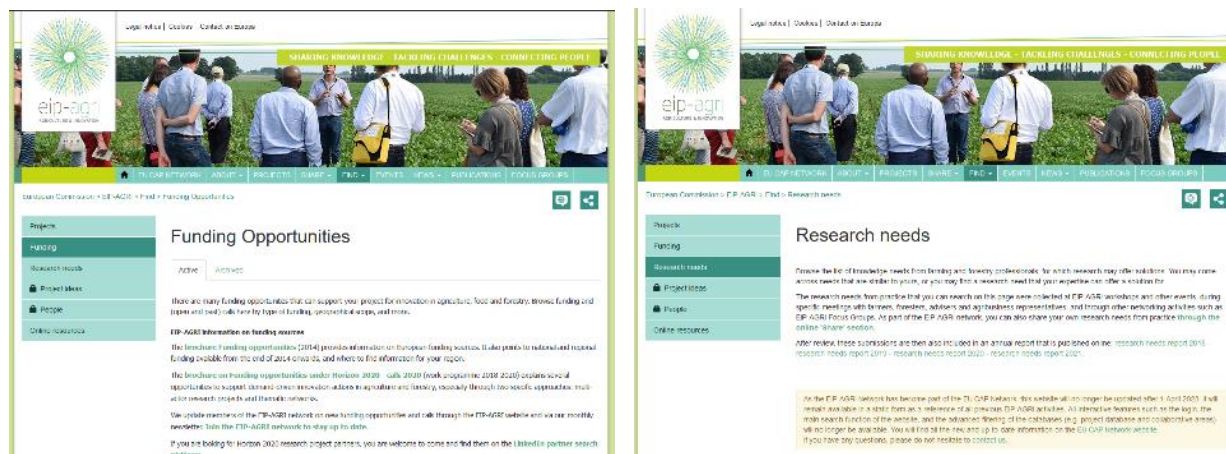


Figure 9: Funding opportunities and research needs within the EIP AGRI portal

2 Platforms for CRFS and agri-food systems

Our world is undergoing an urban revolution. Cities are expanding at an unprecedented rate, and with them comes a profound shift in the way we grow, distribute, and consume our food. As the global population becomes increasingly urbanized, the world between rural agriculture and urban sustenance is evolving into what we now recognize as CRFS. This transformation is not just an adaptation to urbanization, but a fundamental reimagining of how we nourish ourselves in an era characterized by both challenges and opportunities.

This chapter embarks on a compelling exploration of Platforms for CRFS and the broader landscape of agri-food systems. These platforms are the digital orchestrators of a revolution, where agriculture and technology converge to create resilient, sustainable, and interconnected systems for nourishing urban populations. They serve as the central nervous system of a new era in food production, where digital technologies and data-driven solutions play an essential role in addressing the pressing issues of food security, sustainability, and equitable access to nourishment.

In this narrative, we journey through the ever-evolving terrain of CRFS and agri-food systems, unearthing the transformative potential of digital platforms. From smart urban agriculture and local food supply chains to innovative distribution networks and consumer engagement, these platforms are redefining how cities and their surrounding regions feed their inhabitants. They also have the power to mend the disconnect between rural and urban, local and global, and tradition and innovation, forging a path towards a more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive future.

2.1 Smart Agri Hubs

SmartAgriHubs is a €20 M EU project under the Horizon 2020 instrument, and brings together a consortium of well over 164 partners in the European agri-food sector. The project aims to realise the digitisation of European agriculture by fostering an agricultural innovation ecosystem dedicated to excellence, sustainability and success.

To this end, SmartAgriHubs employs a multi-stakeholder approach and covers a broad value-chain network across all EU member states. The consortium includes a diverse network of start-ups, SMEs, business and service providers, technology experts and end-users. The end-users form the core of the project and are the driving force behind digital transformation. The development and adoption of digital solutions is achieved by a tight ecosystem of 140 Digital Innovation Hubs embedded within 9 Regional Clusters, which are led by organisations that are closely involved in regional digitisation initiatives and funds. (6)



Figure 10: SmartAgriHubs network

Moreover, this network of Digital Innovation Hubs consists of 2000 Competence Centers and 28 Flagship Innovation Experiments where ideas and prototypes are developed and introduced into the market. The key to the interconnectivity and knowledge-sharing of this network of European innovation in agri-food is SmartAgriHubs, which leverages, strengthens and connects all the different dots.

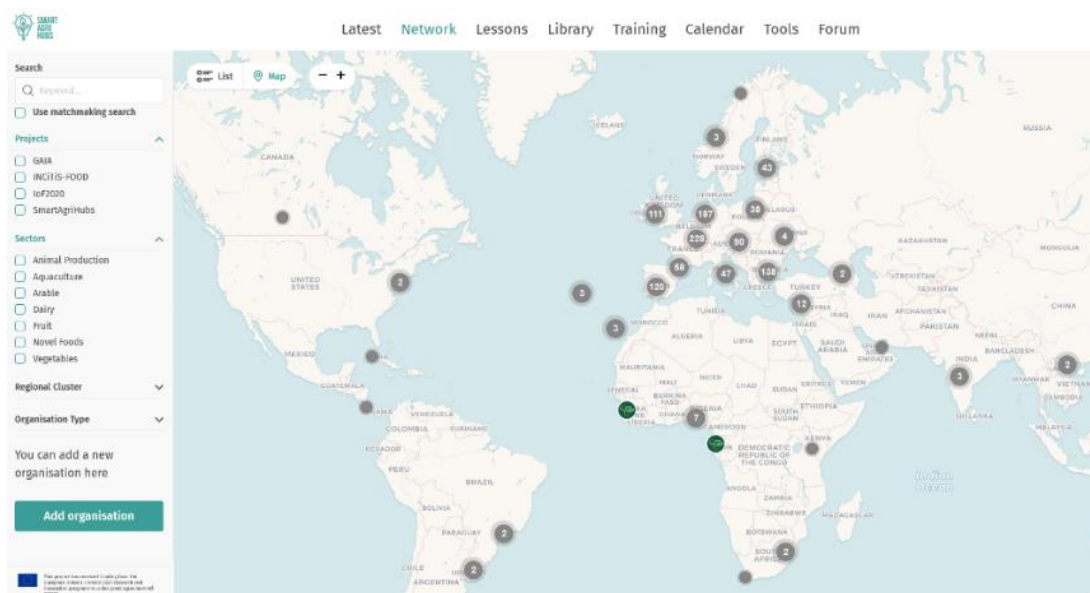


Figure 11: SmartAgriHubs network tool

2.2 Nefertiti

The overall objective of NEFERTITI is to establish an EU-wide highly connected network of demonstration and pilot farms designed to enhance knowledge exchanges, cross fertilization among actors and efficient innovation uptake in the farming sector through peer-to-peer demonstration of techniques on 10 major agricultural challenges in Europe. (7)



Figure 12: Nefertiti Farm Demo project

10 interactive thematic networks have been created, bringing together 45 regional clusters (hubs) of demo-farmers and innovations actors: advisors, education, NGOs, researchers, industry and policy makers. The themes have been selected based on the feasibility of the demonstration, the expected impact, the effectiveness of the demo-activities and the innovation potential. Together they cover a balanced range of topics in the three main agricultural sectors: animal production, arable farming and horticultural production. So far, over 450 demo-farmers and innovation actors have been involved in the regional and national hubs. In 2019, they have organized and/or connected to Nefertiti project, 267 demonstration events focused on the 10 thematic of the networks.

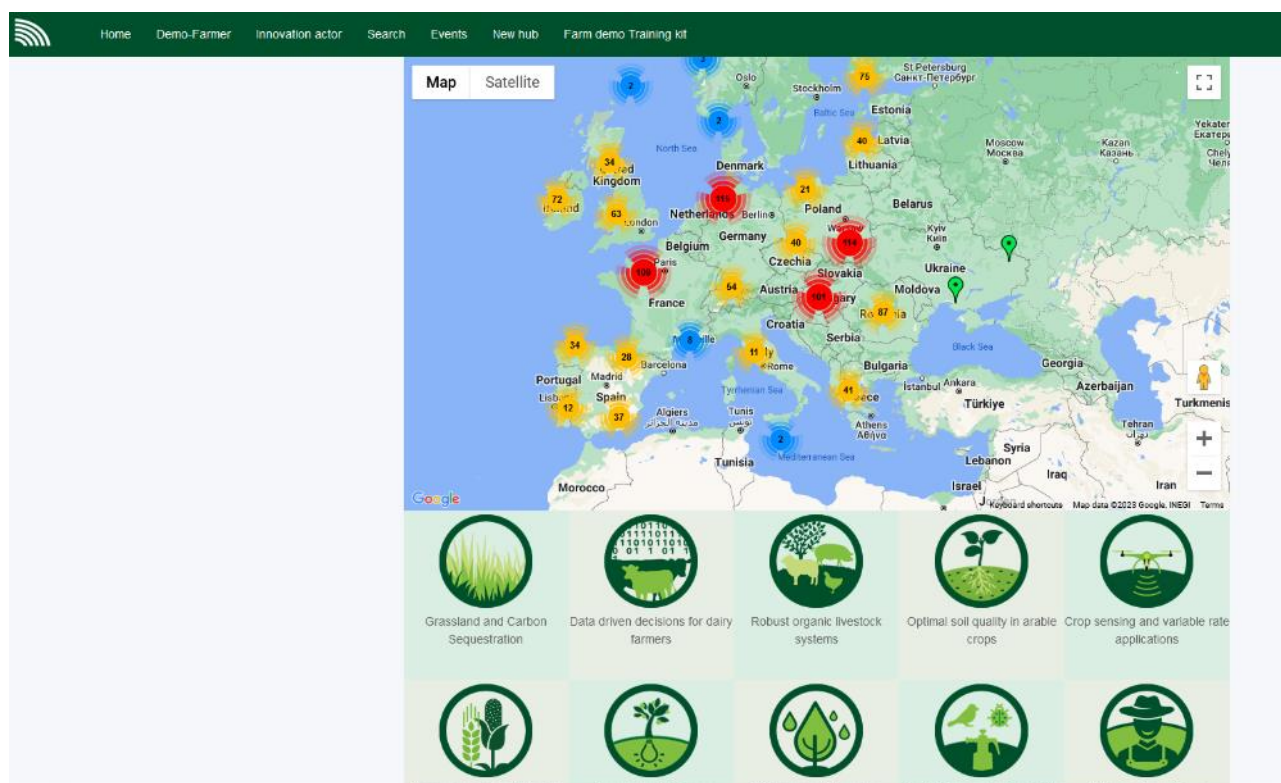


Figure 13: Interactive thematic networks in Nefertiti project

2.3 Short Food Chain

CoreNet is a European Union (EU)-funded initiative dedicated to systematically improving the effectiveness of advising on Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC) through a continent-wide peer-to-peer learning network tailored for SFSC practitioners. Building upon the foundation laid by the Horizon 2020 project “SKIN,” CoreNet carries forward the mission initiated by “SKIN,” which was primarily comprised of its partner organizations. “SKIN” was a pioneer in advocating for the establishment of a dedicated EU network for SFSC advisors, and CoreNet’s primary objective is to further elevate the performance and impact of SFSCs by nurturing essential support services and facilitating the exchange of valuable materials and knowledge.

At the heart of CoreNet’s approach is the engagement of SFSCs and their advisors in diverse countries, where the focus is on enabling peer-to-peer learning and fostering ‘sense-making’ rather than imposing a rigid definition of success or best practices. CoreNet recognizes that the intricacies of the food market can vary significantly from one country to another. This understanding leads us to explore multiple avenues for promoting mutual learning and support among SFSC practitioners. (8)

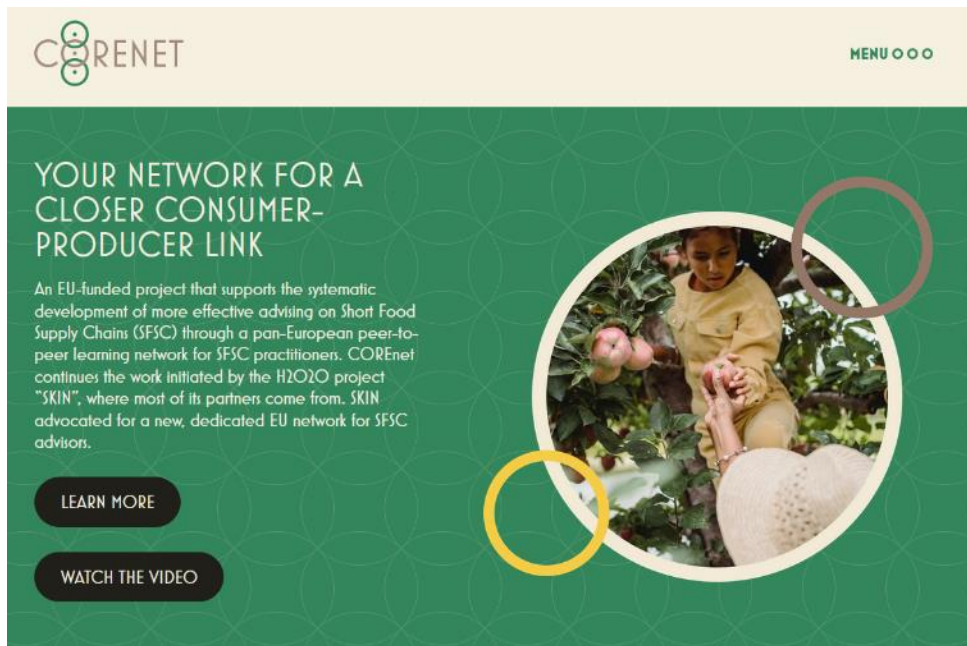


Figure 14: Short food Chain project – COREnet

Furthermore, CoreNet aims to fortify the connections between research, education, and a range of advisors from the public, private, and civil society sectors, all working in harmony with farming practices that span from the initial stages at the farm to the final stages at the consumer’s table. As part of our commitment to enhancing the SFSC landscape, we will also examine existing gaps in skills and knowledge. Additionally, we will identify institutional and regulatory challenges and opportunities, addressing them at both the local and EU levels.

In summary, CoreNet is dedicated to propelling the SFSC advising network forward, fostering knowledge exchange, and overcoming the challenges associated with SFSCs, in alignment with the varied and dynamic European food market.

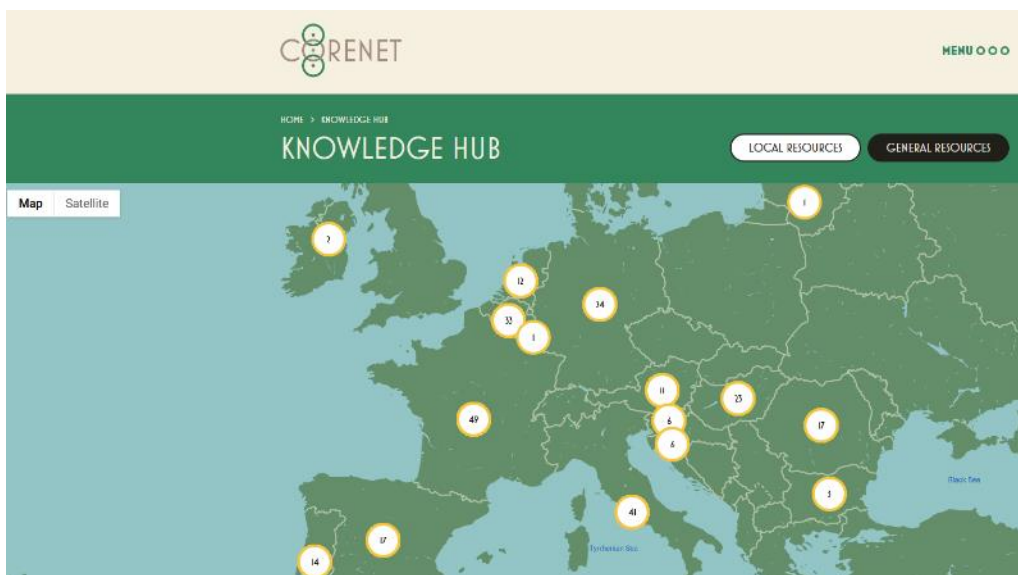
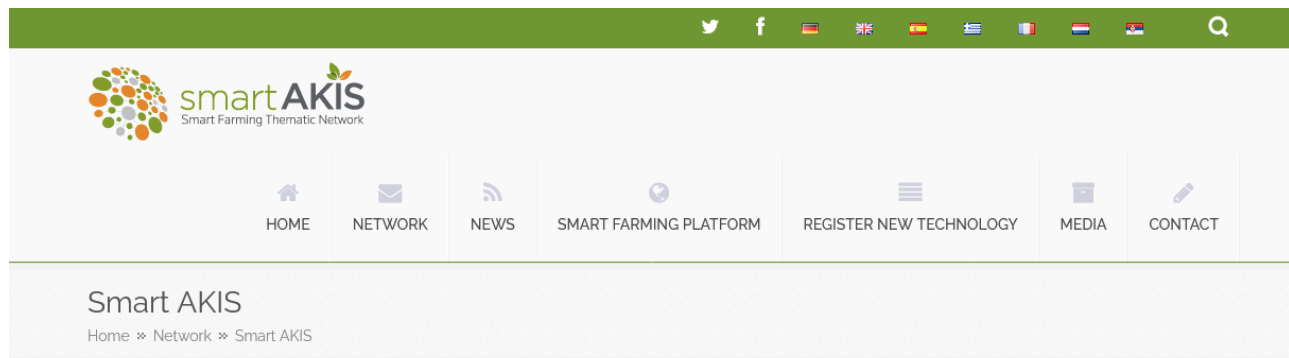


Figure 15: Short food Chain project – COREnet Knowledge Hub

2.4 Smart AKIS

Smart-AKIS is a European Network mainstreaming Smart Farming Technologies among the European farmer community and bridging the gap between practitioners and research on the identification and delivery of new Smart Farming solutions to fit the farmers' needs. (9)



Smart-AKIS is a European Network mainstreaming Smart Farming Technologies among the European farmer community and bridging the gap between practitioners and research on the identification and delivery of new Smart Farming solutions to fit the farmers' needs.

Why a Network on Smart Farming?

Response to the global food challenge of feeding more than 9 billion people in 2050 and the sustainability and competitiveness challenges of the European agricultural sector, demands a wider adoption of Smart Farming Technologies allowing for a more sustainable, resource efficient and more productive EU agriculture.

Adoption of Smart Farming technologies allows for increases in the sustainability, resource efficiency and yield of agricultural production. However, a number of technological, social, regulatory and economic factors have hindered the widespread adoption of these technologies, both in large but also in small and medium scale farms. Amongst these factors, the gap between the needs, interests and expectations of the research and the farming communities has greatly contributed to the low adoption of these technologies, preventing fully tapping their potential for a more productive, resource efficient and sustainable EU agriculture.

A call for mainstreaming Smart Farming in Europe was made in 2015 by the European Innovation Partnership 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability' (EIP-AGRI), a challenge responded to by the Smart-AKIS Thematic Network.

Figure 16: Smart AKIS project

The Smart-AKIS Network is committed to achieving several key objectives to elevate the field of Smart Farming in Europe. These objectives are outlined below:

- 1.) **Unlocking Practical Solutions:** Smart-AKIS will curate and share an inventory of readily applicable solutions derived from the extensive repository of research findings and commercial applications in Smart Farming throughout Europe. These solutions are tailored to address the specific requirements of farmers.
- 2.) **Fostering Collaboration:** The network will actively encourage collaboration between the farming community, extension and advisory services, research institutions, and Smart Farming technology providers. By nurturing these connections, Smart-AKIS seeks to stimulate new innovative projects and processes that will lead to the development of novel Smart Farming solutions, with a keen focus on addressing the needs and interests of end-users.

Smart AKIS operates as a Thematic Network, a specialized format within the multi-actor projects endorsed by the European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI). It receives support through funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 program.

Enriching Practical Knowledge for Farmers:

As a Thematic Network specializing in Smart Farming, Smart-AKIS acts as a bridge to harness underutilized scientific knowledge and best practices. It transforms these valuable resources into accessible, user-friendly

materials, resources, and tools that will expand the EIP-AGRI database with tangible solutions that farmers can seamlessly implement in their daily practices.

Key Objectives of the Network:

- Curate Practical Solutions: Develop an inventory of immediately applicable solutions, drawing from a vast pool of research outcomes and commercial applications.
- Assess End-User Needs: Investigate the specific requirements and preferences of end-users and consider factors that influence the adoption of Smart Farming practices, taking into account regional and national nuances.
- Cultivate Collaborations: Facilitate innovation-focused collaborations that involve diverse stakeholders, fostering the exchange of ideas and knowledge
- Online Assessment Tool: Implement an online tool to evaluate Smart Farming Technology solutions and encourage grassroots-level input and feedback.
- Liaison with EIP-AGRI: Establish a close relationship with the European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI) and its associated structures.

Smart-AKIS Network is dedicated to propelling the adoption of Smart Farming solutions and practices, enriching the agricultural landscape, and empowering farmers to thrive in an era of innovation.

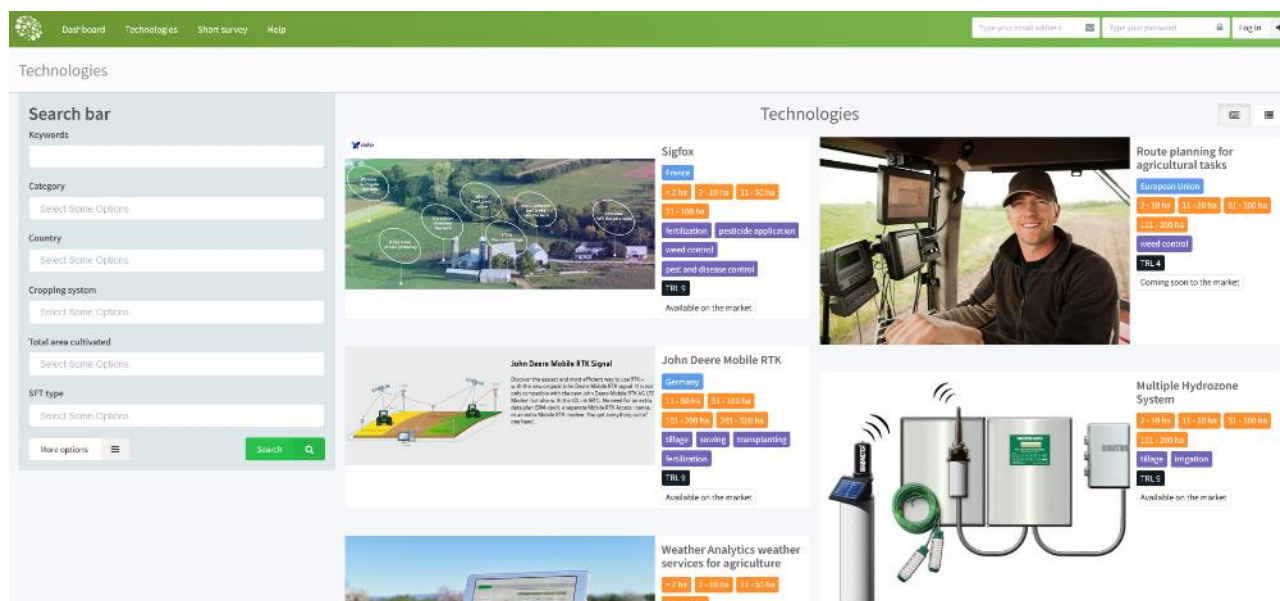


Figure 17: Smart AKIS database of technologies for smart farming

2.5 I2Connect

Connecting advisers to boost interactive innovation in agriculture and forestry – i2connect project aims to fuel the competencies of advisers who will support and facilitate interactive innovation processes. The strategy in i2connect is to use the existing advisor networks and the experiences of success to create a broader network and momentum of change enabling a new culture of bottom-up led innovation support. This resource of over 40,000 advisers are critical to support agriculture and forestry on the ground and must be influenced in this project to support innovation with emphasis on EIP-Agri 2020. (10)

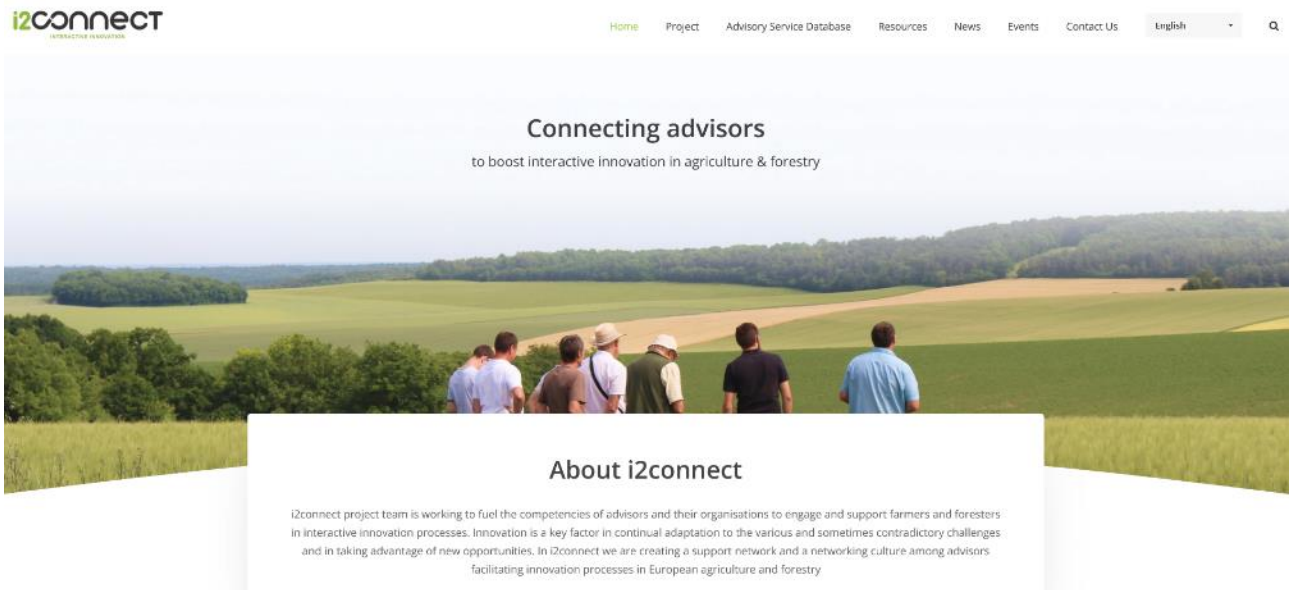


Figure 18: i2connect project

The i2connect Advisory Service database is an EU-wide directory of professional organisations and individual actors that provide knowledge services to actors in agriculture, forestry, horticulture and related fields along the agro-food value chain, as well as to other related actors in rural areas. Through the database, you can either search for an advisor or advisory organization in the EU or register yourself or your organization.

Full name	Type	Organisation	Country	City	Scale of intervention	Sector related fields of expertise	Actions
Asge Tymersma	Advisor within an organization	Couritus accountants + adviseurs	Netherlands	Zwolle	Regional	Arabic crops, Fruits, Vegetables, Dairy cattle, Beef cattle, Sheep, goat, P	[Icons]
Aelt vando Kamp	Advisor within an organization	Roschland Accountants & Adviseurs	Netherlands	Hongelo	Regional	Arabic crops, Fruits, Vegetables, Dairy cattle, Beef cattle, Sheep, goat, P	[Icons]
Achille Pavoni	Self employed advisor		Italy	Rome	National	Agriculture in general	[Icons]
Ad van Spijk	Advisor within an organization	Advies Van Spijk BV - Financieel en Fiscaal	Netherlands	Veghel	Regional	Horticulture, Dairy cattle, Beef cattle, Sheep, goat, Pig, Poultry	[Icons]
Ada Kicht	Advisor within an organization	CUMFLA Nederland	Netherlands	Nijmegen	Regional	Arabic crops, Fruits, Vegetables	[Icons]
Adin van de Plas	Advisor within an organization	Arvois (Zeeland Brabant Gelderland B.V.)	Netherlands	Den Bosch	Regional	Arabic crops, Fruits, Vegetables, Dairy cattle, Beef cattle, Sheep, goat, P	[Icons]
Adriaan Dubbeldam	Advisor within an organization	DLV Rundvee Advies BV	Netherlands	Uden	Regional	Dairy cattle, Beef cattle, Sheep, goat	[Icons]
Adriaan Nooijen	Advisor within an organization	Nooijen advies	Netherlands	Liessel	Regional	Dairy cattle, Beef cattle, Sheep, goat, Pig, Poultry	[Icons]
Adriaan Harvat	Advisor within an organization	Ministry of agriculture	Croatia	Čakovec	Regional	Horticulture, Viticulture	[Icons]

Figure 19: i2connect Advisory Service database

2.6 Forward Fooding

Forward Fooding is a global platform that connects and supports food and beverage innovators. It's like a hub for startups, corporations, and investors in the food industry to collaborate, share ideas, and stay updated on the latest trends and innovations. They're all about driving positive change in the food ecosystem. (11)



Figure 20: Forward Fooding platform

Forward Fooding also offers an option of the Foodtech data navigator, which is the world's first data intelligence platform that helps track the key players of the global FoodTech ecosystem including startup and scaleup companies, international accelerators, incubators, investment funds and private investors. (12)

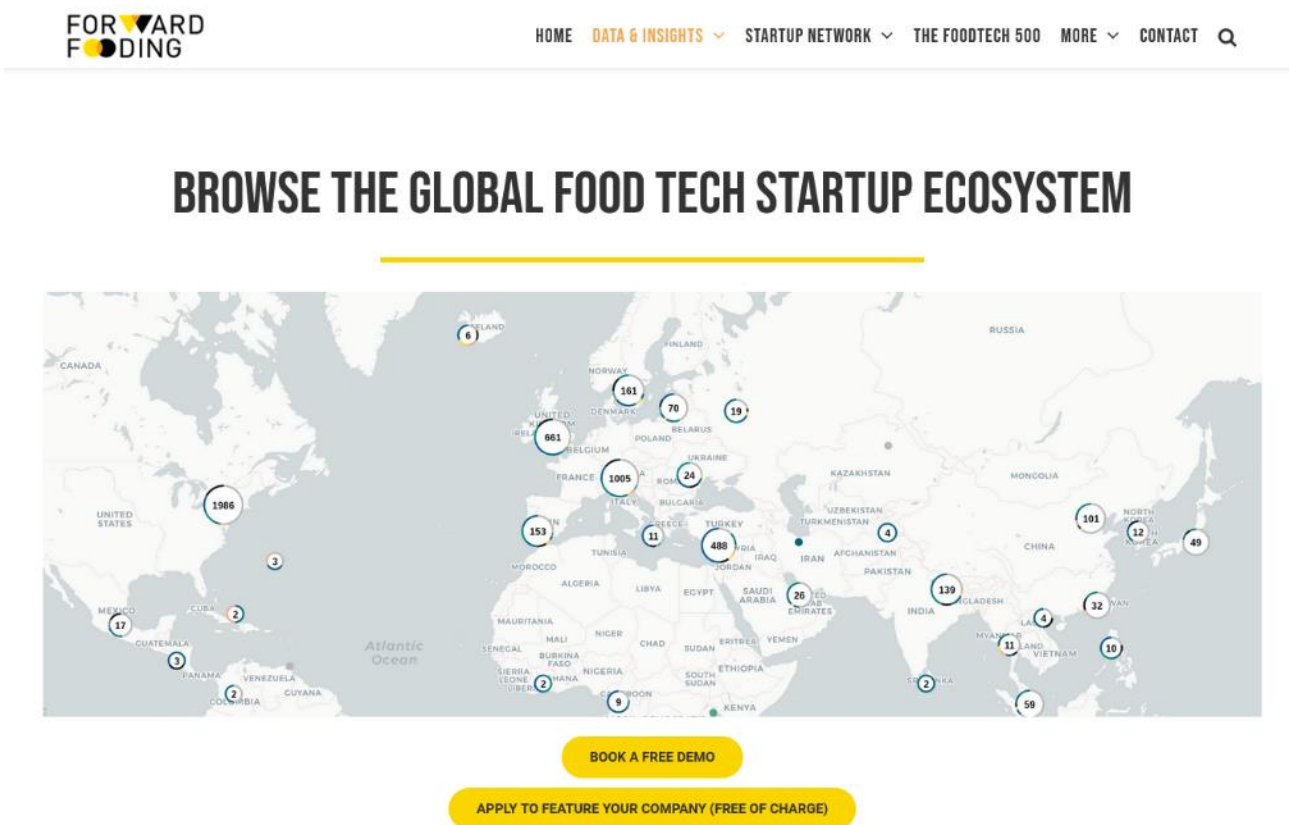


Figure 21: FoodTech data navigator from Forward Fooding

3 Platforms built within the project Cities2030

Within the multifaceted Cities2030 project, the development of a CRFS was recognized as a fundamental pillar in the quest for sustainable urban development. Project has setup a dedicated tasks in order to create the CRFS environment. From creation of the alliance to the mapping of good practices and influence of the multi-actor approach on the CRFS. In order to support all this, different platforms, tools and services have been developed or used. We are listing the most important ones, which has the option to be advanced as they allow cooperation/collaboration among different actors in the CRFS environment.

3.1 DIH AGRIFOOD COOPERATION PLATFORM

ITC – Innovation Technology Cluster Murska Sobota (ITC) is a non-profit Business Support Organisation located in the North-Eastern part of Slovenia. The Cluster was established in 2011, with its vision to foster cross-sectoral innovation and implementation of novel technologies and ICT in rural-based sectors. ITC's main focus is to bring together target groups (such as SMEs, food system actors, farmers and other rural actors) and turn them into being "Smart", thus creating a unique Europe-wide innovation-based eco-system, supporting the shift towards more resilient, healthy and environmentally, socially, economically sustainable rural areas.

ITC cluster is a founder and main administrative office of the European Digital Innovation Hub – DIH AGRIFOOD, bringing together Slovenian and European research and development expertise in the field of Agriculture, Food production & processing and food supply. DIH AGRIFOOD represents a One-Stop-Shop, providing services to organisations through a Multi-Actor Approach (MAA) cooperation, providing safe, sustainable and quality food while considering economic, environmental and social aspects and implications of food production and delivery. DIH AGRIFOOD network includes 1000+ organisations (reaching more than 30.000 European organisations), involving the eco-system of 50+ projects, 5 Innovation Networks (Europe wide), 25+ Living labs, 100+ European DIHs and 200+ Business Support Organisations. Altogether, DIH AGRIFOOD is based on the strong facilitation of 40 trained facilitators from 13 countries.



Figure 22: Digital Innovation Hub for Agriculture and Food production – DIH AGRIFOOD



DIH AGRIFOOD network and its facilitators are supported with the tool called DIH AGRIFOOD COOPERATION PLATFORM (<https://mapping.dih-agrifood.com/>). This is a networking platform and database of a carefully selected type of data that allows DIH AGRIFOOD members to search, present and use the asset of DIH AGRIFOOD for meeting the "supply" and "demand" in the agrifood sector. In addition, the platform is used as a communication channel to all registered organisations and is supporting DIH dissemination and promotion activities. The platform is based on Facilitators, representatives of DIH AGRIFOOD who are trained

to support DIH members in meeting their needs connected to digital transformation and act as Technology transfer managers. The platform hosts: Organisations, Projects, Innovation Networks, Products and services, Living labs, DIHs, Business Support Organisations and Facilitators. (13)



Figure 23: DIH AGRIFOOD Cooperation Platform

Within the Cities2030 project, the tool is used to support the implementation of the task 3.1. The main aim of Task 3.1 is to engage agents and stakeholders of the food system arena to generate the "CRFS Alliance", the project network or "Community of Practice" gathering all the project's participants who are part of the project's co-creation processes. This activity is performed throughout project life to extend the "Alliance" to meet the project KPI of reaching 500+ stakeholders engaged in all partner countries.

Project partners are therefore using the DIH AGRIFOOD COOPERATION PLATFORM to showcase their stakeholders and make the CRFS alliance visible. To facilitate the registration process, partners are using the JOTFORM tool in order to provide all necessary details about the stakeholder, which is where the entries are then transformed to the Cooperation platform.

3.2 Cities2030 Observatory¹

The Cities 2030 Observatory is an open knowledge repository where users can gather insights on food-related policies, research, official statistics, and EU projects. Launched in October 2022, this repository will be regularly updated with new content until the end of the project.

Cities2030 Observatory content is grouped in four main categories that can be explored in matter of clicks:

- Policies: Shows a detailed overview of food-related policies and policy briefs within the EU and beyond
- Scientific Literature: Provides a comprehensive collection of peer-reviewed academic papers from top journals and universities.
- EU Projects insights: Includes a repository of food-related European Projects funded by the EC.

¹ <https://cities2030.quantitas.it/>

- Official statistics: Represents a set of data visualizations displaying trends and indicators from Eurostat, FAE, and official bureaus of statistics.

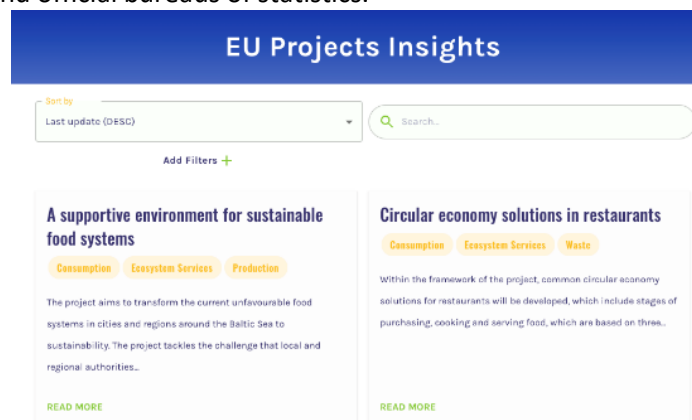


Figure 24 EU projects insights in Cities2030 observatory



Figure 25 Official statistics in Cities2030 observatory

3.3 Single Click CRFS Platform

S2CP is a CRFS management platform for data collection, analysis and representation in multiple interfaces. This platform will be used as a data-driven tool for decision support and will include various components, which are detailed below:

- Cities2030 Community: Cities2030 Community is an open collaboration space used by Cities2030 participants to improve their multi-stakeholder dialogue processes.
- CRFS Good Practices: Allows the introduction of innovation activities by any Cities2030 partner, so that a catalog of information can be compiled, for filtering, searching and consulting (considering FAO pillars and MUFPP indicators).
- SSRI Multi-Actor Approach: SSRI-MAA is a social space monitoring tool. This provides key functionality to manage Social Spaces for Research and Innovation (SSRI) and their stakeholders, working groups and actions. It also provides KPIs and data acquisition tools.
- S2CP Dashboard: S2CP Web interface for a decision support system allowing users to query project data, apply data analytics operations and monitor the performance of their solutions.

- Blockchain for SFSC: Employs blockchain to provide some proof of concepts of monetization processes, in a reliable and transparent way, in Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC). Thus, ensuring transparency, traceability and trust of the local food production.
- Data Integration and Management: The DIM component will provide a unified view of the data collected in Cities2030, to facilitate its analysis and representation in graphical interfaces, ensuring data security and privacy aspects of the S2CP platform
- Sentiment analysis for Twitter: Helps the involved labs to understand if citizens support or not various actions and active programs in place. To achieve it, the component will perform sentiment analysis of the data from social networks, in particular Twitter. The results can be useful for evaluation and action planning.
- Geospatial CRFS web services: Allows cities' CRFS information can be published in OGC standardized services and cartography. This will allow the generation of maps with different visualizations (heat maps, clusters, filtering by categories) to obtain a spatial vision of the distribution and relevance of locations or points of interest.
- Cities2030 repository: Cities2030 data repository is an open-source solution based on the well-known Open Data Publication network CKAN (Comprehensive Knowledge Archive Network), most widely used by cities, public authorities, and organizations.
- Blockchain food supply chain digital twin: The platform enables to prove that products are sustainable, original, safety and ethically sourced. The architecture of the system enables data capturing and monitoring from all parts of the supply chain.
- Blockchain tools for private communications: Privately is a decentralized blockchain-based app that allows Private communications, Group communications and Secret communications between actors, with the maxims of anonymity and integrity.

Among these components we want to highlight the following three: Cities2030 Community, Good practices and SSRI Multi-Actor Approach tool. In the following subsections we will describe them in detail.

3.3.1 Cities2030 Community

Cities2030 Community component is the open collaboration space used by Cities2030 participants to improve their multi-stakeholder dialogue processes. The information used for the creation of this component comes mainly from the processes established in WP4 and WP5 to create an open innovation structure around the CRFS Labs objectives and capabilities. The absence of tools in the project to improve communication between the labs, together with user requirements about the advantages of having a communication space, have been the triggers for the design of this component. (14)

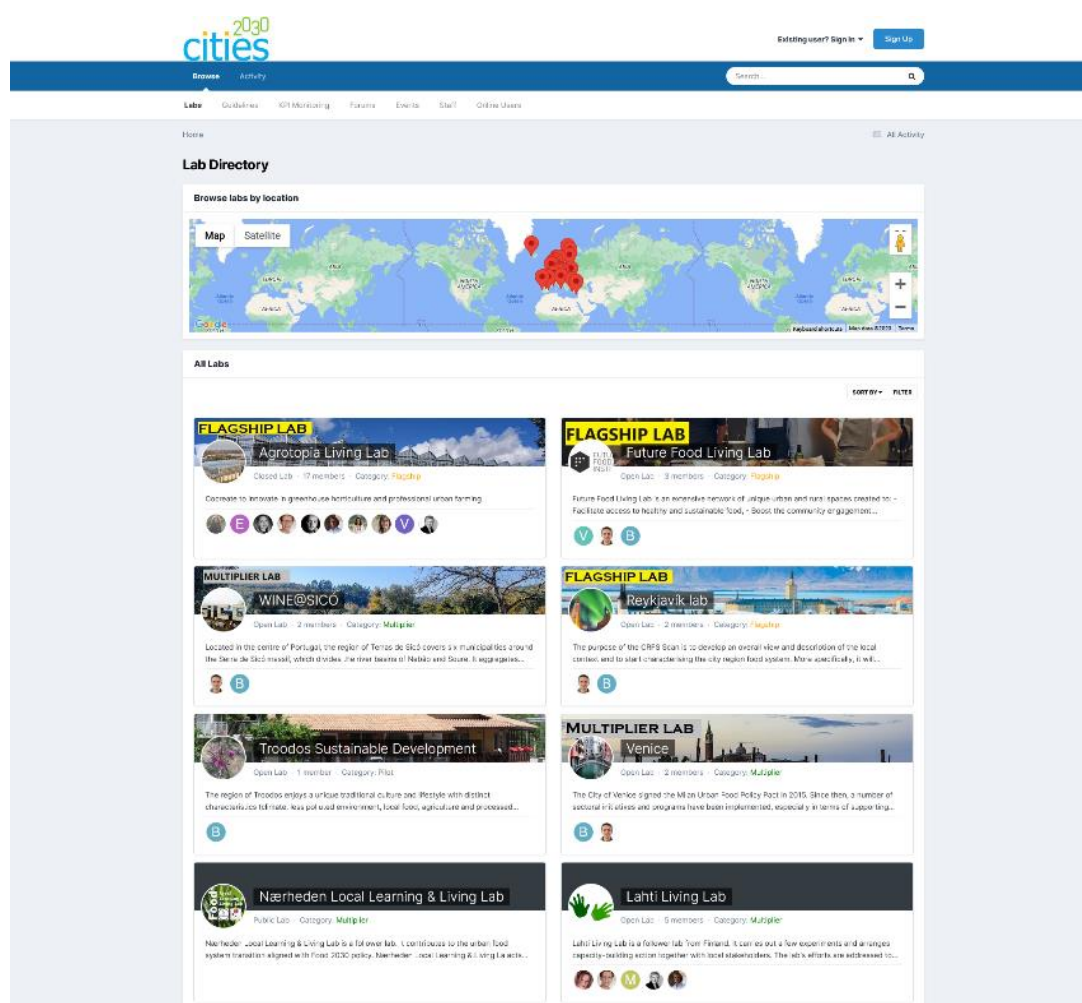


Figure 26: Cities2030 lab community pages

The lab community pages allow the CRFS lab to create a social network profile and manage the provision and access to content. Lab owners and their delegates have administration permissions, and can accept invitations, structure their lab sections, and post calendar events, forum posts, and graphic evidence of innovation activities.

Apart from hosting lab activities, the Communities platform is also used to support the WP3 CRFS Alliance, for which the Forum functionality is used. This already allows some sort of collaboration between the users/stakeholders/citizens.

3.3.2 Good practices

Good Practices component is a map-based platform to allow the introduction of innovation activities by any Cities2030 partner, so that a catalog of information can be compiled, for filtering, searching and consulting (considering FAO pillars and MUFPP indicators). Good practice tool has collected 140+ innovations and good practices from more than 20 countries (e.g., the EU countries, Iceland, North Macedonia, Turkey, the USA, Canada and other). Innovations were clustered in Cities2030's 10 key thematic: food production, processing, distribution, markets, consumption, waste, food security, social inclusion & equality, ecosystem services, and livelihood & growth. (15)

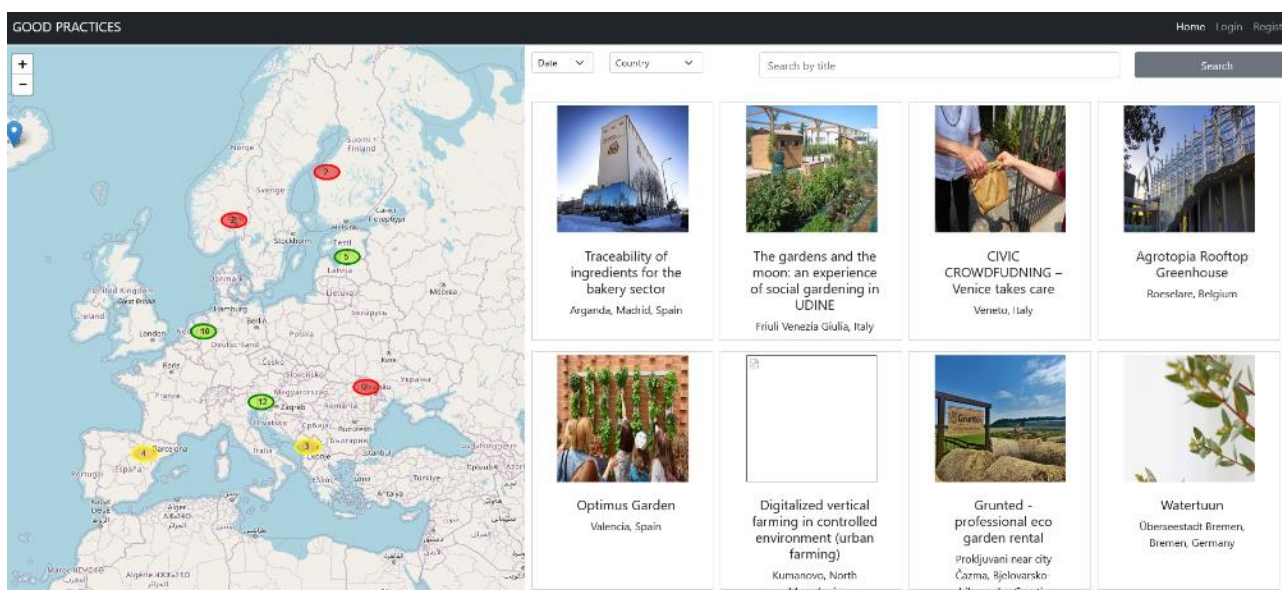


Figure 27: Good practices component developed within CITIES2030 project

This tool is very similar and it provides similar functionalities to the DIH AGRIFOOD COOPERATION PLATFORM (DACP). But since good practices tool needed to include all 10 key thematic topics of the Cities2030 project it was not possible to use only DACP to map all the good practices, since DACP is focusing more only on agri-food sector and not that much in supporting thematic.

3.3.3 SSRI-MAA tool

EIP-AGRI fosters an iterative innovation model for the development of research into practical applications and the creation of new ideas thanks to interactions between actors ("cross-fertilization") and the sharing of knowledge. The interactive innovation model is implemented through the SSRI-MAA (Social Space for Research and Innovation – Multi Actor Approach) tool. This methodology is fully aligned with Open Innovation Methodologies and Living labs promoted by Europe since 2010 and with the experiences and lessons learnt for Rural Development Policies through Local Action Groups, (LAG). Operational Groups (OG).

SSRI-MAA is a Web-based tool that aims to register and monitor the innovation at a well-defined Social Space. The main objectives of SSRI-MAA tool are:

- Catalog and monitoring of SSRI actions and action plans.
- Catalog and monitoring of stakeholders and their representativeness.
- Monitoring of SSRI maturity levels and progress.
- Context, Policy & Performance indicators catalog and monitoring (KPIs).

SSRI-MAA tool is not intended to be a networking nor collaborative platform, it is a tool for individual partner to manage the impact of the stakeholder in five different pillars: Social, Policy-Government, ICT and Infrastructures, Training/Education and Market-Economical. (16)

4 Transitioning from Cooperation to Collaboration: Key Steps for Success

The CRFS is a complex web of interconnected components, from agricultural production and food processing to distribution, consumption, and waste management. These components are influenced by a multitude of factors, including climate, economic conditions, urban planning, and consumer preferences. The intricate nature of the CRFS demands a multifaceted and coordinated approach. (17)



Figure 28: CRFS as a complex web of interconnected components

One of the key reasons collaboration is crucial is the inherent interdependence within the CRFS. For example, urban consumers depend on rural producers for their food supply, while rural producers rely on urban markets for their livelihoods. Any disruptions in this delicate balance can have far-reaching consequences. Collaborative efforts can help manage this interdependence more effectively. The CRFS faces systemic challenges such as food waste, inequality in food access, and environmental degradation. These challenges are not isolated issues; they are interconnected. For instance, reducing food waste requires coordinated efforts from producers, distributors, retailers, and consumers. Collaboration can address these systemic challenges comprehensively.

Collaboration brings together diverse perspectives, expertise, and resources, fostering innovation and problem-solving. In the context of the CRFS, harnessing collective intelligence can lead to transformative changes. Collaboration facilitates the exchange of knowledge and best practices. Farmers can learn from each other about sustainable farming techniques, while urban planners can share insights on creating food-friendly urban spaces. This knowledge exchange is vital for continuous improvement. By pooling resources and ideas, stakeholders can drive innovation in the CRFS. Collaborative platforms can serve as hubs for experimentation, allowing for the development of new solutions to longstanding challenges.

In the European Union's agri-food landscape, it's evident that a multitude of tools and resources have been developed to support the various stakeholders in the industry. These tools serve as valuable assets for cooperation and information-sharing, enabling the diverse range of actors in the agri-food sector to come together for common goals. However, a critical aspect that seems to be lacking in many of these tools is genuine collaboration. True collaboration goes beyond mere cooperation; it involves the active engagement and interaction of all relevant parties, fostering a dynamic environment for innovation and progress.

In essence, while many of the existing tools facilitate cooperation, they often fall short of nurturing the true spirit of collaboration that could significantly enhance the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and catalyse the transformation of the agri-food sector. These tools primarily focus on providing platforms for stakeholders to map out their respective interests, share good practices, and outline their objectives. Example of such platforms are ECCP, Neferiti, Short Food Chain, Smart AKIS and I2Connect. While mapping stakeholders and sharing good practice is undoubtedly important, it's equally crucial to create spaces where meaningful communication and idea-sharing can take place among the participants of these platforms. This direction has been followed in some ways by platforms of EIP AGRI, Smart Agri Hubs and Forward Fooding, but still true collaboration is missing.

Genuine collaboration within the agri-food sector should encompass a holistic approach that encourages open dialogue, knowledge exchange, and innovative thinking. It should facilitate the cross-pollination of ideas and experiences among farmers, producers, policymakers, researchers, and other key players, ultimately driving the industry towards more sustainable and efficient practices.

To bridge this gap and propel the agri-food sector forward, it is essential to develop tools and platforms that not only promote cooperation but also emphasize the active involvement of all stakeholders. These platforms should be designed to foster rich communication, enabling participants to engage in discussions, debates, and idea-sharing. By facilitating this exchange of insights and experiences, we can harness the collective wisdom of the agri-food community and leverage it to address the complex challenges facing the industry.

5 Fuelling Innovation: The Match-Funding Framework for Sustainable Growth in CRFS Collaborative Platforms

Match Funding (MF) is defined as when funding is paid in proportion to funding being paid from other sources. It refers to a financial model where an organization, typically a grant-making body or investor, commits to providing funds on the condition that the recipient (individual, organization, or project) raises an equal or specified amount of money. This model is often used in philanthropy, public funding, and investment scenarios to leverage resources and encourage broader support for a cause or initiative.

Indeed, Match-funding can be structured in various ways, such as 1:1 matching (where the funding entity matches each dollar raised), challenge grants (where the funder matches funds after a certain target is reached), or ratio-based matches (where the funder may match at a different ratio, such as 2:1 or 3:1). Match-funding serves as a strategic approach to encourage collaboration, diversify funding sources, and maximize the impact of financial contributions for a particular cause or project.

Within the project Cities2030 we will not only look at the match funding from the perspective and definition provided above, but we will look at it in broader aspect of funding the innovation through different channels and financial sources. Here we can speak about private and public funding.

5.1 Private funding

Private funding is a crucial component of the financial landscape, playing a pivotal role in supporting a wide array of endeavours ranging from startups and small businesses to established enterprises. Unlike public funding, which is sourced from government agencies or publicly traded markets, private funding is obtained from non-governmental entities and individuals. This form of financing is known for its flexibility, diverse sources, and potential for fostering innovation.

Private funding refers to the capital injection into businesses, projects, or ventures by private entities rather than governmental or public sources. This type of funding comes from various channels, including individuals, angel investors, venture capitalists, private equity firms, and other non-public sources. Private funding is typically sought by businesses looking to expand operations, launch new products, conduct research and development, or navigate through challenging financial periods.

Sources of Private Funding:

1) Angel Investors:

Angel investors are affluent individuals who provide capital for a business start-up, usually in exchange for convertible debt or ownership equity. They often bring not only financial support but also valuable industry experience and mentorship.

2) Venture Capital:

Venture capital (VC) firms invest in early-stage, high-potential companies in exchange for equity. VC funding is common in technology, biotech, and other industries where rapid growth and innovation are paramount.

3) Private Equity:

Private equity involves investments made by firms into established companies with the goal of restructuring, revitalizing, or scaling them for increased profitability. This form of funding is often sought during mergers and acquisitions.

4) Crowdfunding:

While crowdfunding can also involve public contributions, certain platforms facilitate private crowdfunding campaigns where a select group of backers fund projects or ventures.

5.2 Public funding

Unlike private funding, which originates from non-governmental sources, public funding is derived from government agencies at various levels, both national and local. It plays a pivotal role in addressing public needs, promoting welfare, and fostering economic stability.

The definition of public funding refers to money that the public sector invests in the economy. It is distributed by the government based on its analysis of the economy. If a certain sector or industry lacks production, the government can consider injecting public funds into that sector or industry. (17)

Sources of Public Funding:

1) EU/Government Grants:

EU and Governments allocate funds through grants to support specific projects or programs. These can include research grants, community development grants, and grants for non-profit organizations. Grants could be non-refundable, loans, guarantees, equity or non-financial type.

2) Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):

PPPs involve collaboration between government bodies and private entities to finance and operate public projects. This approach leverages both public and private resources.

5.3 Networking in match-funding activities

Networking among organizations is fundamental for match-funding success. It allows organizations to tap into a wider pool of resources. By connecting with other entities, they gain access to potential donors, investors, or funding bodies that they might not have reached otherwise. These connections increase the chances of finding suitable matches for funding. Building relationships with various organizations diversifies the support base. Different entities might have varying interests, priorities, or resources to contribute. This diversity increases the likelihood of finding matches for specific funding requirements.

Furthermore, networking facilitates the sharing of expertise, experiences, and knowledge. Collaborating with other organizations provides insights into successful fundraising strategies, grant applications, and effective approaches for securing funding, enhancing an organization's capacity to meet match-funding criteria. Collaborating with reputable organizations can enhance an entity's credibility. When seeking match funding, having partnerships or endorsements from established and respected organizations can lend credibility to the recipient's cause, making it more attractive to potential funders.

Networking often leads to partnerships and collaborations. When organizations work together on similar causes or projects, they can combine their strengths, resources, and networks. This collaboration can create a more compelling case for match funding by demonstrating a unified and coordinated effort toward a common goal. Through networking, organizations can leverage each other's resources. For instance, one organization might have access to in-kind contributions, volunteer networks, or specific expertise that can complement another's fundraising efforts, strengthening the overall match-funding proposition. Networking expands an organization's visibility and reach within the community or sector. This increased visibility can attract attention from potential funders who may be interested in supporting causes that have a broader impact or are well-connected within the community.

But how to network in the digitalized world, one way is through different collaborative platforms we have listed in chapter 2, while following sub-chapter provides a glance of true match-funding platforms.

5.4 Collaborative platforms for match-funding

Collaborative platforms are necessary to create a sound effective ecosystem where entities can support each other, share resources and knowledge, and collaborate toward common goals. This interconnectedness significantly enhances the prospects of successfully securing match funding by widening the scope of potential funding sources and strengthening the overall funding proposal.

There are several web platforms that support match funding or matching donations. Some platforms facilitate fundraising campaigns where donations are matched by corporate sponsors, individual donors, or foundations, while others are dedicated to venture capitals and angel investors. Public funding is often supported by different governmental platforms and websites, while EU has its own platform for different funds provided on a transnational scale.

Here are some examples of private platforms, while we won't be presenting public ones, since they are known to the readers of this document:

1) [VC Platform](#)

Vision of VC Platform is to collaboratively elevate the venture capital platform profession globally by recognizing and propagating standards of excellence in portfolio and firm management to benefit the member community, the portfolio companies they serve and the venture capital industry at large. (18)

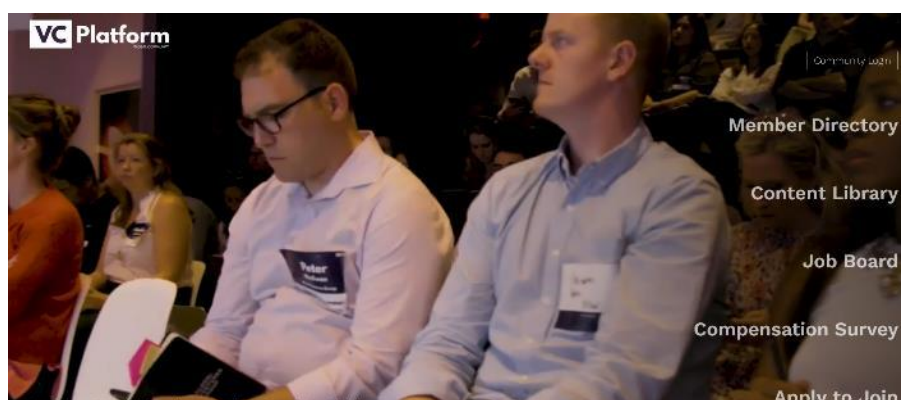


Figure 29: VC platform

2) [Angel investment Network](#)

This website has over 300,000 investors and has helped entrepreneurs raise over \$300 million. In addition, entrepreneurs can search for investors by location and industry. A large number of investors makes it ideal for businesses of all industries and markets to join. This website is different from others because it also provides resources such as a blog, forum, and articles on how to raise capital. They also offer fundraising courses that help entrepreneurs learn more about the process of obtaining an angel investor. (19)



Figure 30: Angel Investment Network

3) [Leapfunder](#)

Leapfunder aims to introduce startups to an extensive European Angel list and help find financing. They offer support and financial tools. Leapfunder financial products aim to enhance a direct relationship between the startup and the investor. (20)

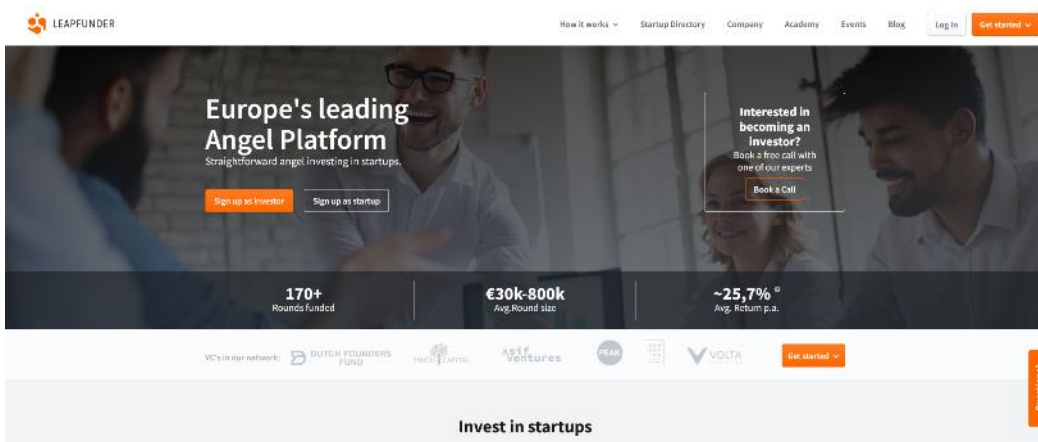


Figure 31: Leapfunder

4) [Kickstarter](#)

Kickstarter is the most trusted platform for crowdfunding creative projects—everything from films, games, and music to art, design, and technology. Their mission is to help bring creative projects to life. Since their launch, on April 28, 2009, 23 million people have backed a project, \$7.722.473.340 has been pledged, and 250.080 projects have been successfully funded. (21)

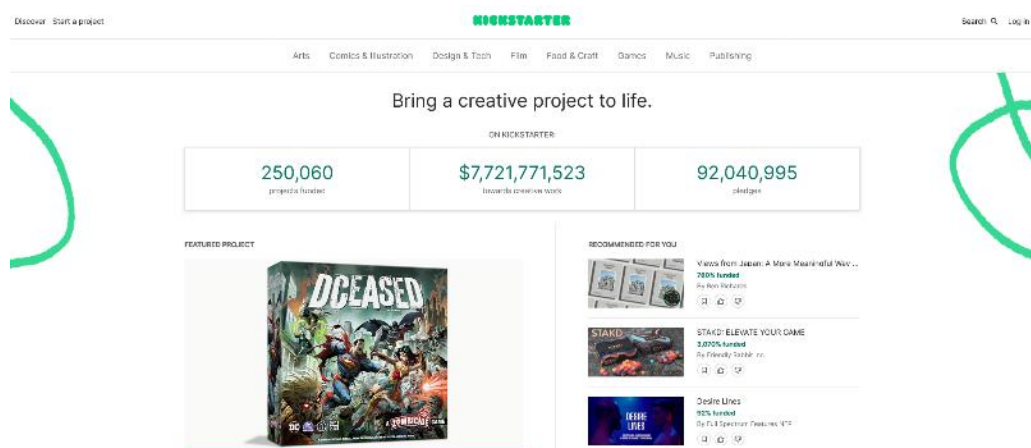


Figure 32: Kickstarter

5) [Indiegogo](https://www.indiegogo.com/)

Similar to Kickstarter, Indiegogo allows creators to raise funds for their projects, and sometimes matching funds are available. Millions of people around the world visit Indiegogo to find clever and unconventional things that solve everyday problems large and small. By giving entrepreneurs everywhere a platform to launch new and groundbreaking products, Indiegogo help surface innovations in tech, design, and much more, all before they go mainstream. (22)



Figure 33: Indiegogo

5.5 Collaborative platforms for match-funding in food System

Match funding can be a powerful financial mechanism to support innovation in sustainable food systems, including CRFS, and contribute to sustainable development. It can incentivize innovation by providing a financial incentive for organizations, startups, or research projects to develop and implement innovative solutions in sustainable food systems. This might include technologies for efficient food production, distribution, waste reduction, or sustainable farming practices.

MF could also support and encourage collaboration among various stakeholders such as governments, private sector entities, NGOs, and research institutions. By pooling resources, it enables larger investments in research and development efforts aimed at creating sustainable food systems and improving CRFS. It can

support pilot projects and demonstrations of innovative approaches within CRFS. This financial support helps these initiatives get off the ground, providing proof of concept and data to attract further investment and scaling opportunities. As well as the MF frame can encourage partnerships between public and private sectors. Public funding matched by private investments can accelerate innovation by bringing together different expertise, resources, and perspectives needed to tackle complex issues in food systems.

Example of platforms dedicated to the Agri-food or food system:

1) [AgFunder](#)

AgFunder is a venture capital and private equity firm investing in agrifood technology companies that is headquartered in San Francisco, California and was founded in 2013. The company invests through proprietary funds and invites investors on the platform to co-invest through co-investment funds of Special Purpose Deals on a deal-by-deal basis. AgFunder has over 50.000 members and subscribers on their online venture capital platform. Their investment platform makes seed to series B investments. (23)



Figure 34: AgFunder

2) [FoodShot global](#)

FoodShot is a unique platform, which is catalyzing food system innovation. FoodShot Global brings together a powerful partnership of world-class, mission-aligned venture funds, banks, corporations, foundations, universities and non-profits. FoodShot Global's leadership provides a long-term vision for our global food future, and they work collaboratively with their partners to invest in that future. (24)



Figure 35: FoodShot Global

3) [EIT FOOD](#)

EIT Food is a European Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) that aims to transform the food sector. It provides different services and funding opportunities for various initiatives and startups. (25)

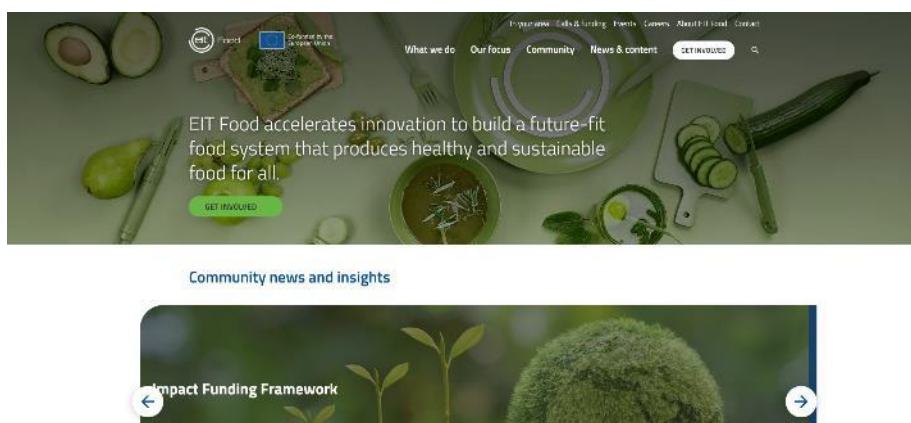


Figure 36: EIT FOOD

4) [EU Funding & Tender opportunities](#)

The Funding & Tenders Portal is the entry point (the Single Electronic Data Interchange Area) for participants and experts in funding programmes and tenders managed by the European Commission and other EU bodies. It provides for the electronic management of EU programmes and tenders and facilitates the related interactions with the EU Institutions. (26)

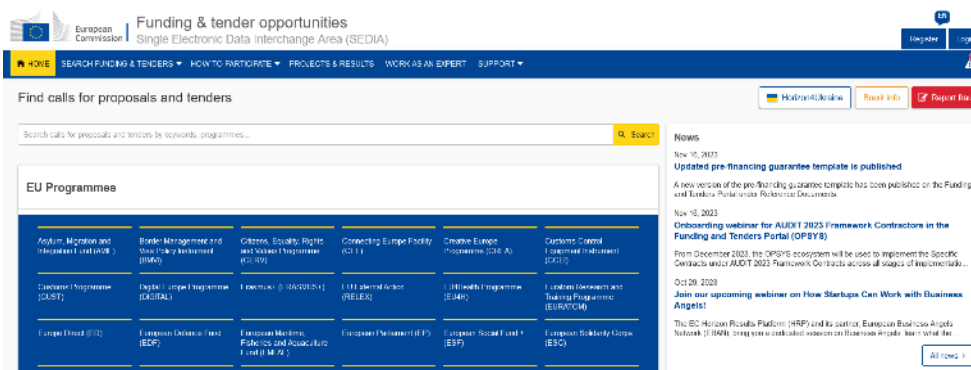


Figure 37: SEDIA portal for EU funding

5.6 Elevating Collaboration and Financial Innovation: Strengthening DIH AGRIFOOD COOPERATION PLATFORM

By taking everything together that has been analysed and presented throughout the document, there are some ways on how to move forward and find a platform that could be a catalyst for innovation in sustainable food systems and CRFS by providing the necessary financial support, fostering collaboration, addressing funding gaps, and enabling the scaling of successful solutions.

With all this in mind we return back to DACP, which already has lots of these resources and services established. The platform itself is supported by facilitators which are people/experts you can rely on, and they are the source of information that reaches locally while connecting globally. They are also a source of information regarding technical solutions, and at the same time they have knowledge regarding various financial sources. Through the network of facilitators and the global connection between them, organizations

can find their contact, whereby the facilitators help in the so-called supply-demand connection, whether it is private financing of projects/innovations or public financing, where the facilitators know different forms of EU funding, from research programs to cascade funds that enable the development of certain solutions in individual projects.

For this reason, the idea is to upgrade the DACP platform and provide facilitators with additional solutions for collaboration. This would enable them to have direct contact through the platform, and at the same time, for example, also enable them to conduct various workshops directly on the platform. One such workshop can be linked to the acquisition of financial resources, where facilitators through so-called funding clinics connect organizations with financial resources that are available at a given time. At the same time, they also enable networking between the organizations themselves and the search for synergies between them for integration in new research projects.

What's next? The next chapter explores the options and further development of such a platform even after the end of the CITIES2030 project.

6 Charting the Path Forward: Advancing Collaboration Platforms Beyond Cities2030

The Cities2030 project has already identified and developed a range of valuable tools to assist the CRFS in tackling its challenges. The responsibility now lies with our project partners to assess the effectiveness and utilization of these tools and to chart a course for the development of a common tool that can truly stand as a flagship resource in the EU, supporting the transition of CRFS towards greater sustainability.

As we delve into the tools created by the project, we discover several opportunities for synergy and integration. For example:

- 1) **DACP and the Good Practice Tool:** These tools are a natural fit for seamless collaboration. Enhancing DACP to comprehensively encompass all aspects of CRFS will allow for the smooth transfer of identified best practices to the DACP tool. This integration will greatly enhance the sharing and dissemination of valuable insights and approaches.
- 2) **CITIES2030 Community Tool:** This tool serves as an exemplary model for showcasing the living lab environment, complete with its focus, strategies, and the latest news. Given that the DACP platform also offers features for visualizing and mapping living labs, integrating this solution will provide an enriched environment for highlighting living labs within the DACP platform. Currently, living labs are only presented with basic data and images of different demonstration sites in the field. This integration promises to significantly enhance the experience.
- 3) **DACP Platform and SSRI-MAA TOOL:** The DACP platform primarily caters to facilitators of the DIH AGRIFOOD, aiding them in mapping their networks and connecting supply and demand in the market. An exciting possibility arises when we consider the addition of the SSRI-MAA tool. This upgrade would empower facilitators to track the progress of their often complex, multi-actor networks. Facilitators could then thoroughly analyze their network dynamics, monitor their influence, and track key performance indicators (KPIs) and action plans. Such capabilities would greatly enhance the effectiveness of facilitators in promoting and advancing CRFS.

To evolve from a basic cooperation or mapping tool, partners must work towards comprehensive collaboration support. Achieving effective collaboration is a formidable challenge, as exemplified by highly popular platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and their counterparts. These platforms thrive on community engagement and enjoy widespread popularity. It would be truly remarkable if we could provide a similar platform for the CRFS or Agri-food community.

- 1) **Forum future:** One approach is to incorporate a forum feature, which has already been developed within the CITIES2030 community. This forum is a prime illustration of a collaboration and community-driven platform, where stakeholders, experts, and even citizens can openly express their opinions on various CRFS-related topics.

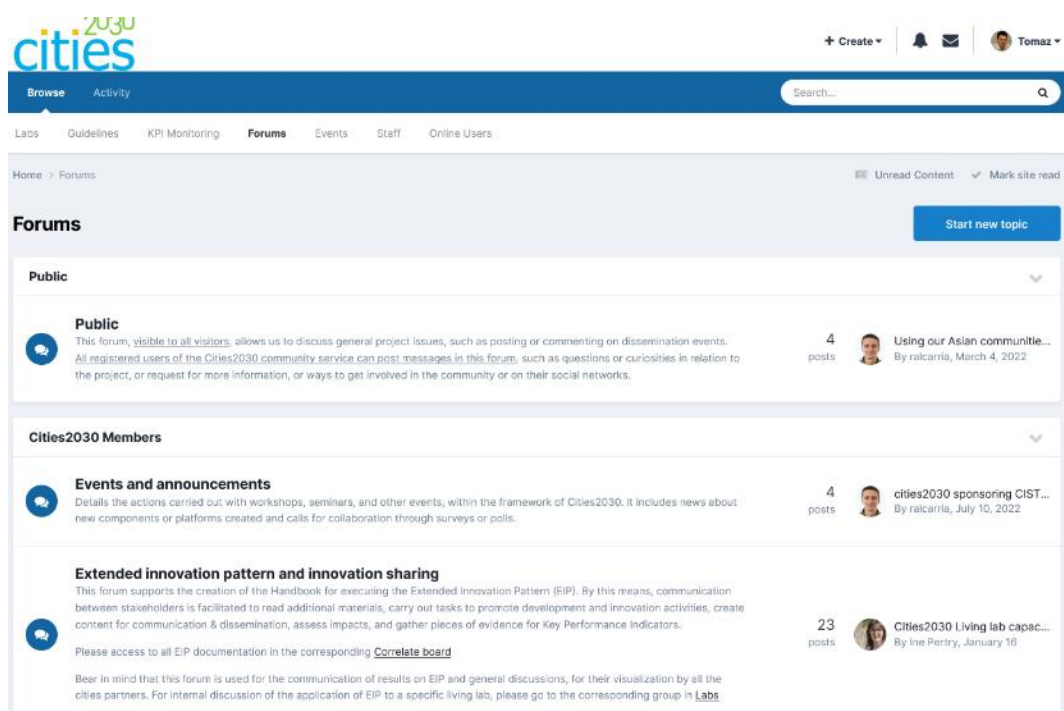


Figure 38: CITIES2030 Community forum feature

- 2) Another avenue is to integrate external tools with the Cities2030 tools. For instance, LinkedIn serves as a hub for experts and the business community. Enabling seamless navigation to a dedicated LinkedIn group section through the Cities2030 tool would foster collaboration within the familiar LinkedIn environment. Below is an example of the Short Food Chain project, which created a community of more than 600 members on LinkedIn, where they can share good practices, ideas or simply news from events that are happening around EU. (27)

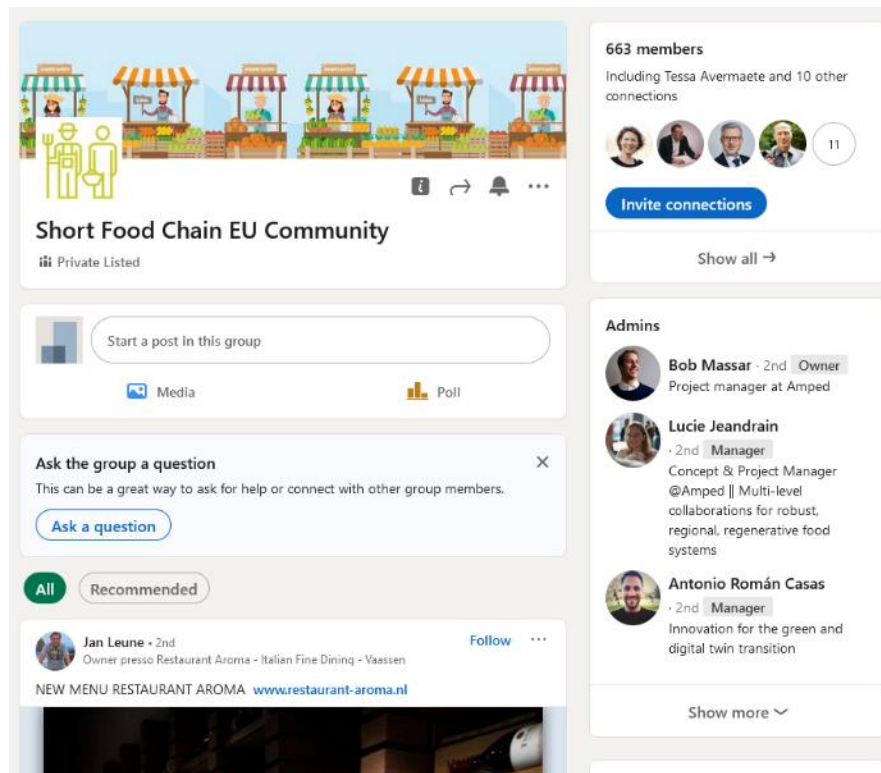


Figure 39: Example of community build within LinkedIn environment

- 3) Furthermore, to enhance collaboration within the DACP tool, consider the inclusion of a chat function. This would empower facilitators to interact, reach out to other members, and invite them to dedicated meetings or matchmakings. Similar functionality has been successfully implemented in tools like B2Match, widely utilized by the Enterprise Europe Network. (28) One option that B2Match offers is following:
- mapping of companies,
 - dedicated facilitators or contact persons (participants)
 - marketplace of solutions/services
 - creation of meetings
 - conversations among participants of the platform

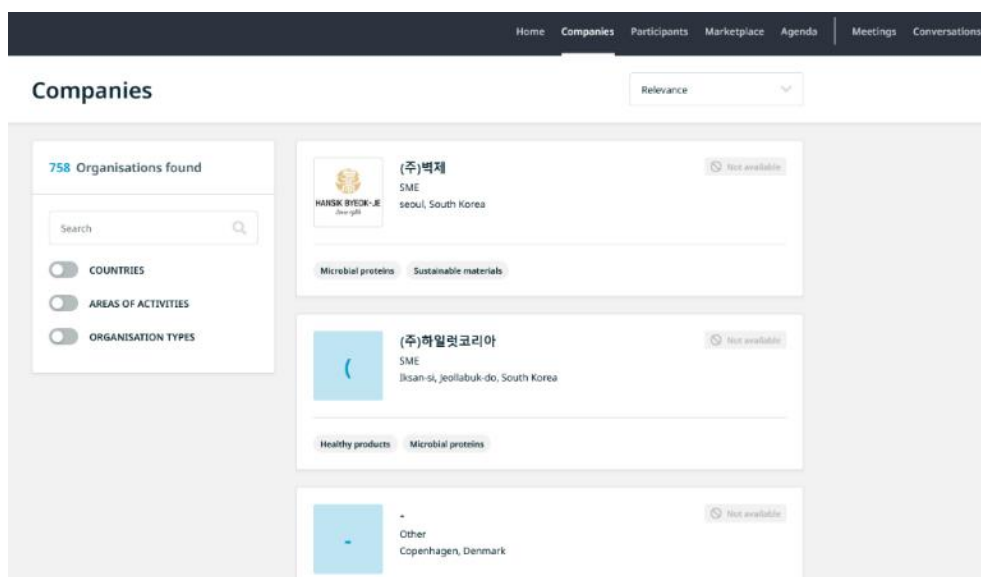


Figure 40: B2Match platform used by EEN services

In summary, the transition to a robust collaboration platform for CRFS and the Agri-food community necessitates innovative features, drawing inspiration from successful social media platforms and other specialized tools. These enhancements will foster deeper engagement and more effective collaboration among stakeholders.

The project will use its final year to fully exploit his tools and services developed, especially DACP platform and Single Click CRFS Platform. Experts or facilitators of the project will also implement so called “funding clinics” in order to support regional stakeholders in finding additional investments and funding opportunities at national, EU and global level for their digital and green transition – in short, to enable access to funding. Those online workshop will be supporting the match-funding initiatives of the project on a regional level, while opportunities will be tracked by platforms created in the project.

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