Open Innovation in Agrifood

2016 Edition
Scaling Social Roots

EXPO 2015 in Milan has represented a concrete opportunity to showcase innovation on a strategic sector and with a positive message “Nourishing the planet, energy for life”.

Within that context, FGB promoted an international platform Social Roots with the aim to accelerate a number of innovations in the agrifood sector. More than 100 projects were submitted from 20 countries, illuminating an innovation offer that rarely gets the chance to connect to global players and value chains and scale.

From the success of that experience, FGB has decided to be a driving force in fostering innovation, by creating new and useful interactions between actors with different needs that will turn ideas into new market innovations, models, services and products.

Today businesses of all sizes, global and local NGOs, universities and governments are increasingly open to the idea of advancing innovation in agriculture, but more work has to be done in supporting institutions and developing international platforms that will match demand and supply of innovation and accelerate its implementation. The capacity to generate effective processes that foster innovation is a key factor in order to rapidly test and adopt new solutions that can respond to current social, economic and environmental challenges.

Open Innovation nowadays is a mature concept that calls for innovation processes that span the boundaries between organisations and sectors and allows for cross-fertilisation of ideas and contamination of solutions.

This is why the Open Innovation in Agrifood programme builds on the previous experience of Social Roots and intends to scale it both in terms of geographical reach than in terms of the size of community of innovators that it will attract.

The programme aims to match demand and supply of innovation in the agrifood sector by engaging a global community of innovators on specific Call for Solutions around emerging need and trends in the agrifood sector.

The community of innovators and the Call for Solutions will be managed through an online platform that will offer functionalities such as: submit projects and ideas, interact with other members of the community, profile innovation opportunities, connect to potential partners that can help start up and scale those innovation opportunities.

Each year, winners of the Call for Solutions will be invited to attend a one-week Global Innovation Camp offering opportunities like training, networking and attending business meetings with interested parties. Each year the programme will organise the Global Innovation Camp in a different location through co-promoters in 10 local innovation ecosystems in the 5 continents:

- Ankara, Turkey
- Barcelona, Spain
- Belo Horizonte, Brasil
- Cape Town, South Africa
- Dubai, UAE
- New York City, USA
- Singapore, Republic of Singapore
- Stockholm, Sweden
- Turin, Italy
- Wellington, New Zealand

*Note: the list is open and subject to changes*

After the Global Innovation Camp, a match will occur between the best solutions presented and partners that can provide acceleration services and can help to capitalise on opportunities raised through the programme.
The expected outcomes of the programme are:

- promote and foster innovation by matching demand and supply of innovation and by brokering new relationships between innovators and implementation partners;
- grow an international community of innovators by profiling their innovations and opening up opportunities to start and scale their operations;
- connect local innovation ecosystems transnationally by creating synergies between new and existing initiatives and a diverse range of actors;
- support established private sector actors to seek and meet innovations that can help them transform and thrive in local and international markets;
- support public actors to have access to a range of innovations and solutions that can inform public policy innovations and local economic development.

The programme will connect and engage the following type of individuals and organisations:

**Steering committee (SC):**

FGB plus one representative for each co-promoter.

The SC provides input to the development of the project focusing, in particular, on the planning of the Innovation Week.

The SC identifies the priorities in the project together with potential risk, monitors timelines and assess the quality of the project.

**Co-promoters**

They are the organizations and institutions driving the program globally.

Their role encompasses: building the community of innovators by engaging them at the local level, promoting the call for solutions and making sure good quality applications are submitted from their local innovation ecosystems, engaging partners for the program, possibility to host a Global Innovation Camp. The co-promoters help find resources to keep the programme sustainable. Project co-promoter have access to full data. Co-promoters participate as advisory group in focus group and bilateral meeting in preparation of the Innovation week.

**Partners**

They are our Innovation seekers: Public administration, companies, organisations and institutions supporting the programme locally or globally and aiming to establish a relationship with the innovators and the location of the project. Our open innovation programme allows innovation seekers to receive innovative solutions to their challenges.

**Supporters**

They are companies, organisations and institutions providing specific/technical contribution to the programme. (cash or in kind sponsorships)
Ambassadors

Those are previous participants of the programme selected for their capacity and network.

They are individuals helping the programme to identify and engage innovators, grow and nurture the community and promote the call for solutions through their networks. They act as link between the innovation givers and FGB. They can plan micro-events locally to disseminate calls and activity of the project.

Each ambassador is in charge of a specific section of the platform and animate it according to the project guidelines.

Innovators (Innovation givers)

They are individuals or teams with an innovation offer seeking opportunities to start up or scale. They submit their ideas and solutions through the online platform and participate to the call for solutions.

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Destination Ankara

Why Turkey

Turkey is booming with an entrepreneurial spirit, with SMEs accounting for more than 99% of all businesses and 78% of employment. Compared to a decade ago, there is now a much more positive and supportive environment for entrepreneurs who wish to transform their business ideas into reality.

Why Ankara

With a population of 5.15 million people, of which 50% are under 30 years old, Ankara has the highest number of higher education graduates in the country (around 15% of the total regional population has bachelor’s or post-graduate degrees). The city hosts 18 research and development centers, 6 techno-parks with more than 240,000 students and 18,000 academics, 111 embassies and more than 20 international organizations. A vibrant international community working on innovation. With a foreign trade volume of 25 billion dollars, and more than 2,300 foreign capital and international companies, Ankara realised approximately 9% of Turkey’s overall foreign trade volume as of year 2014. A place for international business.

In May 3-4 2016 Ankara will host the next Turkey Innovation Week. Twenty six thousand people attended the first Turkey Innovation Week held in Istanbul on November 2013. More than 20 thousand people followed the event on the event website and web TVs. More than 500 R&D and design projects were exhibited during the event, 54 R&D centres and 16 techno parks got involved. The Turkey Innovation Week in Ankara will be the perfect context for the programme’s Global Innovation Camp.

The 2016 Call for Solutions

The programme has identified three main themes for the 2016 Call for Solutions:

(a) Sustainable food supply chains
(b) Food security and equal access to resources
(c) Shared value across food networks
The Call will be open to both new and established projects from all over the world. Innovations submitted can be new technologies, prototypes, products, services, models.

**The 2016 Global Innovation Camp**

The 10 best solutions will be invited to attend the Global Innovation Camp in Ankara during the Turkey Innovation Week. The Innovation Camp will pull together a variety of actors: project partners and stakeholders, innovators, entrepreneurs, established companies.

The objective of the Camp will be to explore ways in which solutions & ideas collected could be best implemented in order to rapidly transform companies, supply chains or market sectors. The end result will be the commitment of different actors to adopt these ideas and turn them into prototypes or scale them up.

The Camp will consist of:

- Interactive roundtables and workshops on identified challenges, social innovations and ecosystems development.
- Technical networking/partnering meetings. Participants will have the opportunity to meet and discuss with innovators in the course of pre-arranged bi-lateral meetings.
- Mentoring and validation sessions - including training on building successful innovation solutions in the agrifood sector.

The final event at the Camp will include pitching from participants in order to showcase progress and gain visibility on front of an audience of potential partners.

After the Camp there will be a match between the winners and potential partners for implementation, after which a two-month acceleration process will take place in different co-promoter’s locations.

**Timeline**

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<tr>
<th>end of FEB</th>
<th>end of MAR</th>
<th>mid APR</th>
<th>3 - 4 MAY</th>
<th>JUN - SEPT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Launch of the Call for Solutions</td>
<td>Deadline for applications</td>
<td>Selection of best solutions</td>
<td>Global Innovation Camp</td>
<td>Acceleration programme</td>
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Social Roots has been the social innovation platform in the agrifood sector. It was targeted at businesses, associations, start-ups, and would-be entrepreneurs with the aim of facilitating the matching between demand for, and supply of social innovation in the agrifood sector. Social Roots was aimed at developing and supporting a new way of conceiving and working in the agrifood sector through the involvement and participation of innovators and operators from the same sector. The Social Roots platform was promoted in the framework of EXPO Milano 2015 – within the Italian Pavilion and the Civil Society Pavilion – and was supported by the Ministry for Agricultural, Food, and Forestry Policies (MIPAAF).

**SOCIAL ROOTS activities**

**Harvesting of Ideas**

The digital platform [www.socialroots.eu](http://www.socialroots.eu), since its launch in 2014, hosts the ‘Harvesting of Ideas’, a section that lists and displays best practices and business cases pertaining to the agrifood sector, with specific focus on their vocation to sustainability and positive social impacts.

**Call for Solutions**

The main driver of Social Roots has been the international Call for Solutions on Social Innovation in the agrifood sector, which called upon people, entrepreneurs, NGOs, co-operatives, companies, and public organisations to submit their proposals. More than 100 proposal have been received from 12 countries all over the world. 20 proposals were selected to participate to EXPO CAMP.

**Social Roots Days**

Social Roots days, thematic workshops on the social innovation in the agrifood sector have been organized in Turin and Rome in 2015 gathering together innovation givers and seekers and have strongly contributed to build an international network of social innovators.

**The EXPO Camp**

Over 40 social innovators has been invited to take part to the EXPO Camp, a training event aimed at fostering and catalysing the development of the best selected ideas through 16 sessions organized together with our partner such as USA Pavilion, Forum for the future etc. The EXPO Camp, hold in Milan during EXPO, lasted for one week and has been an itinerant lab moving around different social innovation sites such as: the Civil Society Pavilion hosted in Cascina Triulza, the Italian Pavilion, FabriQ – Social Innovation Incubator, and Alimenta – Agrifood Innovation Incubator.

**Incubating and Catalising**

The top three projects among those taking part in the EXPO Camp have been awarded a three-month training in the FabriQ and Alimenta incubators, where they are being incubated and catalysed.