



FNH-RI Newsletter

Edition 1 | May 2020

The European Commission has postponed the final submission date for the ESFRI Roadmap applications until September 2020. To keep our partners of the FNH-RI community and everyone else involved in the project informed and connected during this interlude from May till 9 September 2020, the initiative has been taken to edit this newsletter containing news and information about FNH-RI and the PROSPECT-proposal. This temporarily newsletter will contain all the latest news from the FNH-RI Board, keeps you updated about the community building activities which are still ongoing, and will inform you in more detail about the next phase(s) in the process. In addition each of the four monthly issues of this newsletter will highlight a specific subject of the proposal.

On behalf of the FNH-RI coordination team we wish you all the best in these difficult times and hope to meet you again in good health after the summer period.

FNH-RI NEWS

FNH-RI BOARD

On the 8th of June 2020 a next Board meeting of the FNH-RI Foundation is scheduled.

The FNH-RI Foundation was established in 2018 to create and maintain a research infrastructure on Food, Nutrition and Health. The foundation forms the formal governing body of the FNH-RI community. According to the statutes the aim of the foundation is: *“ to support scientific analysis of the relations between the food supply chain and food innovation, dietary behaviour and its determinants, and food consumption as related to intake of nutrients, food constituents and nutritional health in terms of bodily functions, risk factors and underlying mechanisms. This scientific analysis is targeted to increasing knowledge on healthy diets and lifestyles enabling health maintenance and disease prevention, and to the corresponding fallbacks on policy and industry”.*

The Board of the FNH-RI foundation meets six times a year and consists of representatives of seven member states and is chaired by Pieter van 't Veer of Wageningen University in the Netherlands.

Other Board members are: Sabato D'Auria (vice-chair, IT), Karin Zimmermann (NL, secretary), Paul Finglas (UK, treasurer), Bent Egberg Mikkelsen (DK), Adriana Kolesárová (SR), Igor Spiroski (MKD) and Biotza Gutierrez Arechederra (ES).

Aspiring Board members are: Duarte Torres (PT), Angel Angelof Bulgaria (BG) and Barbara Korousic Seljak (SL).

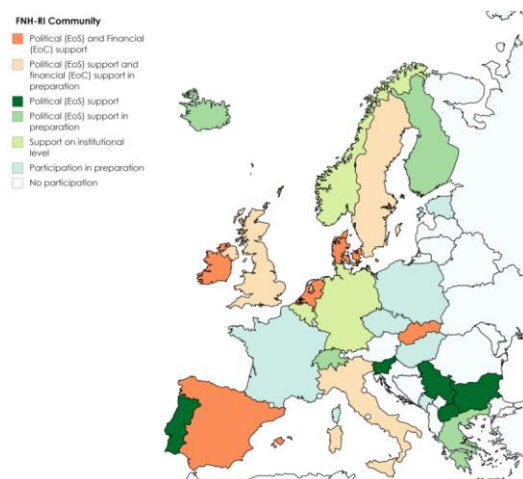
WEBSITE FNH-RI

We are happy to announce the launch of our joint FNH-RI website (www.FNH-RI.eu). In May this website will be online.

Currently we are working on the information of the various national nodes and the participating institutes. This website will play an important role in sharing information between partners, stakeholders and everyone else interested in FNH-RI.

FNH-RI COMMUNITY

The state of affairs regarding the FNH-RI Community building is as follows: the community includes one hundred and twenty (120) institutes from nineteen (19) national nodes in thirteen (13) EU Members States and six (6) non-EU Member States. Eight (8) nodes (seven (7) from EU Member States and one (1) from an Associated Country) have expressed their financial support to FNH-RI by 2025 (implementation phase) and six (6) countries are committed to financially support FNH-RI once an ERIC status is achieved. The current state is visualized in the map below.





Currently talks are in progress for participation by Poland, the Czech Republic, Montenegro and Hungary. With Hungary these talks are in an advanced stage and we hope to receive an Expression of Political Commitment (EoS) soon.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

- We already informed you earlier on the FNH-RI (PROSPECT) application for the ESFRI Roadmap 2021. Meanwhile the draft proposal has been sent to the Dutch Research Council (NWO) to perform a formal review on the proposal. The review results were mainly positive and the PROSPECT- writing team will proceed with their task to fine tune the proposal.
- The European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) has extended the deadline for the proposal submission for the FNH-RI project to the ESFRI Roadmap 2021 in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Originally intended for 5 May 2020, the new deadline for this proposal will be 9 September 2020. In response, the coordinating team has decided that the new (internal) deadline will be set on mid-August.

INTRODUCING A NATIONAL NODE



*National Platform AgroBioFood
Nitra as the Slovak Node*

(by: Adriana Kolesárová)

An important step of the Slovak Republic (SR) for gaining political (EoS) and financial (EoC) commitment for FNH-RI was the approval of the National Platform AgroBioFood Nitra as the Slovak National Node for the participation in FNH-RI by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (ministry) on July 28, 2016. The Platform was concluded between the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra (SUA) as a lead, National Agricultural and Food Centre (NPPC) and Bioeconomy Cluster (BEC) in cooperation with the Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information (CVTI) and strongly supported by a wide range of other stakeholders including ministries, state authorities, relevant universities, research institutes and SMEs.

AgroBioFood Platform initiated the process of participation of the Slovak Republic in FNH-RI in close cooperation and support of the ministries. The government of the SR approved the proposal for the participation of the Slovak Republic in FNH-RI on February 19, 2020. Once FNH-RI will become an official part of ESFRI, the ministry shall submit a proposal to the government of the SR in order to ensure the membership of the SR through financial contributions and other complementary activities, expected to be established as of 2021. In addition, the ministry is in the process of preparation of a National Roadmap of Research Infrastructures.

As the representative of the SUA and the AgroBioFood Platform, I became a member of the Commission for the Coordination of Activities of the Slovak Republic in ESFRI Research Infrastructures in the Field of Health, Food and the Environment for the support of the National Roadmap.



The main goal of the Platform is to achieve the biological and technological integrity of the “agricultural product – food system” through improving the health of the population, halting environmental degradation and introducing sustainable management to ensure food security and the production of renewable resources for the green economy. Key focus areas are Sustainable food & Consumption. The Platform links education, research and business through a knowledge triangle in order to contribute to fostering of the development, innovation and knowledge transfer. The SUA is the only agricultural university and EIT Food Hub in the Slovak Republic. The name “Green University” has become a part of the identity of the SUA. The university provides education and research in the field of agriculture, food science, agribusiness, and related studies at its six faculties. The relevant internal infrastructure of the university focused on food includes the Faculty of Biotechnology and Food Sciences and the AgroBioTech Research Centre with its Transfer Centre. NPPC provides a complex research, innovations and knowledge transfer in sustainable use and protection of natural resources, along with productive and non-productive impacts of agriculture on the environment and rural development. BEC creates an innovation ecosystem for the knowledge and technology transfer between research and agri-food industry (SMEs) including relevant policies through mutual cooperation. CVTI operates the national R&D Data Centre providing a unique ICT research infrastructure comprehensively covering life science areas like bioinformatics and biostatistics.

Within the European ESFRI Roadmap the AgroBioFood Platform is expected to serve as an interdisciplinary tool of cooperation between partners and stakeholders. In the Preparatory phase the Slovak Republic will participate in the development and enhancing the DATA, FACT and TED services and assist and support the involvement of other EU Member States during the Implementation phase until the fully operational Operation phase.



HIGHLIGHTED PROSPECT

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

(by: Krijn Poppe)

Under the code name Prospect the project for the roadmap application comes nearly to an end. As the submission date has been moved to September we still have some time for finishing touches. One of the important parts, in addition to the description of the consortium and the science case, is the feasibility of the FNH-RI. In the design project Richfields important building stones for the feasibility has been created: proposals for its services, the governance of the RI, its financial operation (cost book) and its access policy.

Feasibility of a proposal implies in essence that you are able to bring the implementation to a successful end. We therefore started to think about the implementation phase that follows once ESFRI has recognised us on their roadmap. This will ask for a detailed project proposal, but it is good to think now already about the feasibility of the FNH-RI in terms of the problems we might encounter in the implementation and how we mitigate risks.

The implementation phase is not a research project, and it is not yet the construction of the RI. No new services will come directly available for researchers. Like a design project provides you with an “artist’ impression” of your new building, the implementation phase provides you with a detailed plan for construction. That detailed plan provides you first of all with contracts and standard operation procedures for the organisation with the legal ERIC status, contacts between hub and nodes, financial management etc.

At the same time the services (DATA-sharing & connectivity, FACT-Facilities & Tools, TED-Training, Education & Dissemination) of the RI have to be detailed and rules for seamless access to each other’s services. However in our current thinking this should be developed in an agile way by learning what works and what does not work in creating a minimum viable product. The science case would of course be leading.

The work in the implementation phase will have to be done by the FNH-RI consortium as a whole, as much as possible with the current (and future) governance of the hub and nodes under the management of the Foundation FNH-RI that includes representatives of nodes that have formal governmental backing in their own country. At the end of the implementation phase that will be succeeded in the ERIC’ Assembly of Member States.

Many working groups with experts from institutes organised in their national node, or still developing a node, will be active to make detailed operating rules for the FNH-RI on how our vocabulary will be harmonised in ontologies, which facilities and laboratories are needed for advanced science and how researcher will get access and how joint trainings will be organised.

With these proposals, that incorporate the results of the design study RICHFIELDS, we hope to convince the ESFRI evaluators that the implementation phase and the follow up construction is feasible.

This newsletter is also available online: (www.FNH-RI.eu)

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