

I2Connect workshop “launching the European Food Ambassador Network”

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Followed an internal training at ILVO to get familiar with the I2Connect interactive innovation tools. Aim is to apply the tools in another European project.

Position : Scientific researchers

Summary of the pilot project (Max. 1600 characters)

(Including stakeholders, problem/challenge, approach, relevant links)

The Horizon 2020 funded project [Cocoreado](#) aims to improve the position of the farmer in the value chain and reconnect farmers and consumers. Cocoreado included a group of +/- 40 [ambassadors](#), young people (such as farmers, farm advisors, entrepreneurs, ...) from rural areas across Europe with diverse expertise and a shared dream to change the current food system. Three physical [ambassador trainings](#), several online events and support were organised in order to prepare the ambassadors to evaluate existing good practices, co-create new initiatives and increase their potential to spread these good practices in their local communities. The ambassadors connected strongly with each other and expressed the desire to maintain the network after the Cocoreado project ends in June 2024. A core group of ambassadors emerged and formulated the ambition to create the ‘**European Food Ambassador Network**’. They now need to develop an action plan on how the network could grow and evolve sustainably over time. This plan needs to include a vision, a strategy with specific objectives, a financial plan, an organisational structure and pathways for ambassador renewal. The I2Connect tools are perfect to get this process started.

Together with a sub-group of 12 ambassadors it was decided that a one-day workshop would be organised, using 3 tools. We will start with identifying all the actors involved and how to reach them via a **network analysis**. Next, we will use the **circle of coherence** to reflect on the kind of interactions that emerge within the network and how we can ensure that the interactions generate positive energy. Finally, we will use the **triangle of co-creation** to discover the ambassadors’ positions within the network and how we can make these more complementary.

Motivation for this proposal to be selected as a pilot project (Max. 1000 characters)

The European Food Ambassador Network is an innovative way of connecting young farmers, and other relevant actors close to farmers. The ambition is promoting a sustainable food system that benefits farmers, SMEs, consumers, and the environment. The network will collaborate with policy makers, industry leaders and other stakeholders to develop policy positions and initiatives that support their mission. Developing such a network requires a strong group of motivated people who are willing to invest their free time. The fact that the first connection between the ambassadors has already been

made, is a strong starting position for this project to succeed. To be able to move it further, different kinds of support are needed and the I2Connect tools are perfectly suited for this purpose. The main challenge for the group is to be able to meet physically to feel a strong sense of engagement and create a common vision. The I2Connect budget will be used mainly to cover transport costs.

The 12 ambassadors (AL, BE, DE, EE, IE, LV, NL, RO) that will participate in this workshop have very diverse backgrounds. Many of them are either farmers themselves or closely linked to a farmer. Others are entrepreneurs in different food related sectors, farm advisor, agricultural journalist, fermentation specialist, landscape conservation specialist, researcher and engaged citizens.