Food Systems Science Network

Call on a "Knowledge Hub on Food Systems Science"

Submission Deadline: **28th November 2025**

Link to submission tool:

https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/fossnet-knowledgehub-eoi

Call secretariat:
Federal Office for Agriculture and Food
Deichmanns Aue 29
53179 Bonn

Date: 3rd November 2025

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UK Research and Innovation

1 Introduction and background

The FoSSNet network is pleased to launch the call for the "Knowledge Hub on Food Systems Science".

This Knowledge Hub provides the unique opportunity to connect researchers from public organisations as well as from the private sector, civil society, and policy with the existing Food Systems Science (FSS) Network of the RIA FoSSNet (Research and Innovation Action: Food Systems Science Network) on selected topics.

The EU-funded RIA FoSSNet aims to advance FSS and education as well as to establish and strengthen a solid and sustainable academic network throughout Europe. The development of the network and advancement of Food Systems Science and education is based on an inclusive approach to ensure participation from all relevant disciplines, researchers and non-academic actors.

To support the development of evidence-based and transdisciplinary food systems transition pathways FoSSNet has initiated three Territorial Laboratories (Labs) for FSS, in which academics collaborate with different food systems stakeholders to identify high-priority research needs and develop collaborative responses to them.
The Systemic Laboratory (Lab) of FoSSNET is dealing with new heuristic methods and tools for interdisciplinary FSS, and, among others, defining scientific and regulatory questions which support a more integrative understanding of the true cost of food.

The identified research needs and scientific questions were translated into topics of the Knowledge Hub (KH) (see section 3).

2 Knowledge Hub

A KH has the aim to establish a network of researchers and professionals with different scientific backgrounds and expertise in a defined thematic setting to leverage synergies through data and knowledge sharing and build better research capacity.
The objectives of the FoSSNet KH are to address research gaps in the context of FSS, to expand the existing network, and to address shortcomings[1] in its composition. The members of the topic-driven KH will provide complementary contributions and solutions to the scientific challenges and knowledge gaps identified so far within the first activities of FoSSNet.

We are looking for members providing strong interest in thinking and solving food system challenges as well as expertise in FSS and in the topic for which they have applied. Applicants can come from universities and academic research centres, from the

[1] Milestone report: "Social network analysis of the European network of FSS – initial results" identified 6 gaps within the network.

private sector, civil society, and government or non-academic organisations. Self-employed and unemployed researchers and professionals are also welcome.

We especially encourage early career researchers and professionals, experts from Eastern and Southern European countries, researchers and professionals with a background beyond social and food sciences, and applicants from the private sector, civil society, and government or non-academic organisations to apply to the KH.

3 Added value for the members of the Knowledge Hub

A participation in the KH provides for members not only the opportunity for networking, but it also:

- allows researchers to learn more about the activities within FoSSNet,
- fosters knowledge exchange and transfer across countries and research disciplines,
- creates opportunities for networking and personal connection with the European FSS community at the 2nd FoSSNet Conference in Lund (Sweden) in June 2026,
- and provides experience in trans-European cooperation and opportunities for collaboration in future projects.
- For early career researcher: it grants access to capacity building activities and reinforces their integration in transnational networks.

After the fulfilment of the requested commitment, participants will receive a certificate recognising their contributions within their respective working group.

4 Topics of the Knowledge Hub

The topics[2] of the KH were developed by the different labs of FoSSNet research questions and gaps:

- **Riga Territorial Lab and the FoSSNet research task on inclusion:** Leverage points for an inclusive food-oriented knowledge and innovation (K&I) system.
- **Catalan Territorial Lab:** Scalability of agroecological initiatives for Food System Transformation (FST).

[2] A detailed description of the topics can be found in the Annex 1.

- **Polish Territorial Lab:** Sustainable food systems in Central-Eastern Europe: exploring the role of intermediaries.
- **Systemic Lab:** Using pricing and rewarding guided by True Cost Accounting to manage hidden social and environmental sustainability impacts in the food system.

For each of the topics, a working group will be established, find details hereunder.

5 Members of the Knowledge Hub

The Knowledge Hub will be composed of 20 experts, divided into four working groups (5 experts per topic). The KH strives to maintain a good balance among the members regarding gender, work experience, geographical origin, and their different expertise to ensure the objectives of the KH can be achieved.

Membership

The membership lasts 15 months, divided into 12 months of commitment to one of the working groups and 3 months of reporting activities.

Composition

The composition of the Knowledge Hub should comprise early career and experienced researchers and professionals from EU and EU-associated countries.

Senior and mid-career researchers and professionals should have proven experience and expertise in the field of FSS and in the specific areas of the four working groups, as demonstrated by relevant publications and/or work experience.

Early Career Researchers (ECR) are researchers with 2-7 years of experience (full-time equivalent research experience) after receiving their highest academic degree (MSc, PhD or equivalent).

Mandatory requirements for participation

Researchers and professionals interested in applying to the Knowledge Hub must fulfil the following eligibility criteria:

- Current country of residence in the European Union or associated countries[3].

[3] https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-research-and-innovation/europe-world/international-cooperation/association-horizon-europe_en

- Minimum of 2 years of experience (full-time equivalent) after receiving the highest certificate (MSc, PhD, or equivalent).

Selection criteria

Researchers and professionals interested in applying to the Knowledge Hub will be selected based on the following eligibility criteria:

- Senior/medior researchers and professionals: expertise in FSS, relevant research projects, publications and/or work experience.
- ECR: Proof of relevant qualifications and work experience related to the topics of interest.
- Relevant ideas and suggestions for the activities within the working groups are of advantage.
- Relevance of the intended contribution and suggested activities to the topic.
- Experience working within inter- and transdisciplinary teams is of advantage.
- A good balance between the members and their different expertise within each working group, to ensure the objectives outlined in the respective topic can be achieved.

6 Working procedure and meetings

The KH will be active for a period of 15 months, divided to 12 months of research work lasting from February 2026 until January 2027, followed by a three-month reporting period.

The KH members will be assigned to one of the four thematic working groups based on their expertise, experience, and interest. Each working group will be chaired by a FoSSNet partner. The chairs will provide information on the topic and its background, explain the central research questions, and accompany the working groups throughout the process. Together with the working group members, a strategy including working steps, a timeline, responsibilities, the organisation of regular exchange meetings, and the process for reporting and publishing will be developed.

The members of the KH will meet at least four times (mandatory, see timetable below).

- **Kick-off meeting (February 2026, online)**
  - Background information on the KH and its topics
  - Introduction of the working groups, their members, and assigned chairs
  - Exchange within the working groups to gather information about members' experiences and ideas, supporting literature, etc.

  - Development of a 12-month work plan, including milestones and expected results
- **Working group meetings (April 2026)** The chairs of each working group will invite their group to visit the city/region of the associated lab
  - First in-person meeting to deepen networking
  - Discussion of the first two months of collaboration, feedback, adjustment of the work plan (if necessary)
  - Preparation of the next steps
- **Midterm Meeting (June 2026, Lund, Sweden)**
  - Presentation of work progress and initial findings
  - Reporting on changes to the work plan or time schedule
  - Networking with all KH members and conference participants (FoSSNet partners and guests)
- **Final meeting (January 2027, in person, location tbd)**
  - Presentation of results
  - Reporting on any changes (work plan, time schedule, expected results
  - Description of the planned activities within the reporting period
  - Feedback on the process

Meeting	Date	Location
Kick-off meeting	2nd week of February 2026	Online
Working groups meeting	April 2026	City/region of the associated lab
Midterm meeting	2nd week of June 2026	Lund, Sweden (back-to-back with the 2nd FoSSNet conference)[4]
Final meeting	2nd half of January 2027	tbd

In addition, the chairs and/or members of the working group will organise regular online meetings to exchange about work progress and next steps.

7 Budget and expected commitment

Each member of the Knowledge Hub will receive a payment allowance of 17.500 € for their contribution to the working groups, for their travel and subsistence to participate in three in-person meetings (working group meeting, midterm meeting, and final meeting), as well as for reporting activities.

[4] https://fossnet.eu/conferences/

Participation in the three in-person and the online kick-off meeting is obligatory.

A commitment equivalent to 30 working days is expected.

8 Expression of Interest

Interested candidates must submit an Expression of Interest (EoI) using the online survey-management system EU Survey:

https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/fossnet-knowledgehub-eoi
By 28th November, 15:00 CET.

Only applications submitted via the EU Survey system will be considered.

In their Expression of Interest, applicants must explain their:

- Motivation to apply for the Knowledge Hub
- Added value they bring to the Knowledge Hub
- Scientific expertise and/or professional experience related to FSS, particularly in relation to the topics of interest
- First ideas and suggestions on how and by what means and activities the research questions/objectives described for each topic of interest can be achieved
- Willingness to work inter- and transdisciplinary
- Confirmation to participate in the three in-person meetings listed above

All work and activities within the Knowledge Hub will be carried out in English.

FoSSNet takes all reasonable steps to ensure that information provided in the application is treated as confidential, subject to submission to the members of its committees and merit review, and to any obligations under the law.

9 Selection process

The final selection of members will be carried out at the beginning of December 2025. Four committees, one for each topic, composed of FoSSNet members, will decide on the composition of the four working groups according to the criteria listed in section 5.

From 15th-17th December, notification letters with the selection results will be sent to all applicants. Successful applicants will receive additional information, including the contract modalities.

10 Timeline

Date	Action
3rd November 2025	**Launch of the call** and opening of the submission tool for applications
28th November 2025, 15:00 CET	Deadline of the expression of interest
1st-12th December 2025	Selection of KH members
15th-17th December 2025	Communication of results to applicants
09th-13th February 2026	Kick-off meeting (online, tba)
April 2026	In person meeting in the city/region of the associated lab
09th-12th June 2026	Mid-term meeting (Lund, Sweden)
January 2027	Final meeting
1st February-30th April 2027	Reporting period

11 Contact

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12 Annex 1: Topic description

Topic 1 - Leverage Points for an Inclusive Food-Oriented Knowledge & Innovation System

Riga Territorial Lab (contact: stroha@ruc.dk)

Topic description

Addressing the complexities of food systems transformation demands a reimagined knowledge and innovation (K&I) system for food, one that embraces inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration, and that is inclusive of a range of voices and knowledges. Such diversity enhances the legitimacy of the process and fosters greater ownership and accountability for both the challenges and the solutions involved. Yet, integration is not neutral: without explicit attention to power dynamics and power structures – between individuals as well as between knowledge systems broadly – it can reproduce mechanisms of knowledge exclusion, appropriation, and subjugation. Thus, building an inclusive inter- and transdisciplinary food-oriented K&I system requires systemic unlearning of deeply ingrained structures and norms.

FoSSNet has conducted a deep exploration in current food system collaborative environments, examining mechanisms that lead to both in- and exclusion, and developed a concept for a toolbox with methods and tools for inclusive inter- and transdisciplinary collaborations. Furthermore, territorial labs on city, region and national levels are undergoing in Riga, Catalonia and Poland that aim to foster place-based inter- and transdisciplinary collaborations where diverse community members, local authorities, scientists, and other stakeholders collaboratively generate data, insights, and actions towards food systems transformation. Specifically, the lab in Riga has highlighted the need for improved approaches to facilitate inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration, aimed at advancing local urban food systems transformation initiatives. Furthermore, given the historical and ongoing power asymmetries between Western and Eastern European research institutions, and the Riga lab's position at this intersection, understanding and addressing East/West European collaboration dynamics is particularly critical for building truly inclusive K&I systems.

Along with knowledge about power imbalances and unequal participation in research processes broadly, and food systems research specifically, the insights from the territorial lab in Riga will form the basis for the development of roadmaps that identify leverage points and key conditions for an inclusive K&I system for food, as well as propose pathways to scale – deep, up and out - examples of inclusive practices.

To support the co-construction of the such roadmaps, we invite researchers and stakeholders with deep insight into one or more of the following areas: (i) power dynamics in K&I systems (broadly) and food systems (specifically); (ii) inclusive science–

policy–practice interfaces in food; (iii) participatory, inter- and transdisciplinary methods with safeguards against exclusion and epistemic injustice; (iv) scaling methodologies for case-based knowledge to policy without erasing plurality and situated knowledge; (v) reflexive evaluation & transformative learning approaches, and (vi) East/West European collaboration dynamics and bridge-building.

Related research questions

- What are the key leverage points for transforming current food-related K&I systems towards inclusive inter- and transdisciplinarity?
- What are the lessons to be learned from existing initiatives addressing specific power imbalances (such as gender mainstreaming, or working across North/South knowledge hierarchies) in research governance and K&I systems broadly?
- How can case insights travel (deep/out/up) while retaining situated specificity and normative orientation (e.g., justice, equality), using the FoSSNet territorial lab in Riga as an example?
- What tools and methods can be used to support inter- and transdisciplinarity in food systems science, especially to overcome differences in disciplinary language and epistemology?

Methods to be considered (e.g. Theory of Change)

- Evidence synthesis
- Co-created theory of change
- Participatory and co-creation methods
- Scenario planning for scaling pathways

Documents & materials to be used[5]

- 3.1 (Due Jan 2026, thus not yet written)
- D3.2: A concept of a toolkit for supporting researchers and societal actors in carrying out inter- and transdisciplinary research, outlining the structure, content and a minimum of three examples of key methods/tools.
- MS7 – A monitoring and evaluation framework for assessing inclusivity and inter- and
- Transdisciplinary co-learning (indicator set)

Expected outcomes (content-related)

- Safeguard & design principles for inclusive Food-oriented K&I policy and practice
- Analysis of leverage points for transforming current K&I structures for food

[5] The documents will be provided to the working group members at the start of the Knowledge Hub

- Roadmaps to scale inclusive practices — Deep (changing mindsets and values), Out (replicating in new contexts), and Up (influencing policy and institutions)
- Methods and tools to support inter- and transdisciplinarity in food systems science.

Expected outcomes (material)

- Report and/or white paper
- Visualisation of leverage points and ToC

Topic 2 - Scalability of Agroecological Initiatives for Food Systems Transformation

Catalan Territorial Lab (contact: pati.homs@ub.edu)

Topic description

Food systems are currently under pressure from severe economic, environmental, social, and political challenges, requiring systemic transformation. Agroecology has emerged as a key pathway for responding to these challenges by fostering resilience, sustainability, and social justice in food systems. Initially focused on ecological principles that reduce reliance on chemical inputs and external resources, agroecology has since evolved to encompass social, cultural, political, and economic dimensions, positioning itself as both a scientific framework and a movement for food system redesign. Despite growing institutional recognition of agroecology as a pathway for sustainable transition and the proliferation of initiatives across the globe, significant challenges remain in scaling them up, out, and deep to achieve transformative impacts on food systems that deliver lasting social, economic, and environmental benefits.

Scaling agroecological practices thus requires a systemic food systems perspective. Transitions are rarely linear but instead reflect complex, multidimensional and multiscale processes involving multiple actors, shifting practices, and new organizational forms. Understanding these transitions and contributions to food system transformation remains a challenge due to their diversity, embeddedness in territorial contexts, and the broadening scope of agroecology as it connects environmental, social, and economic goals. The need for more robust frameworks to assess barriers, enablers, and impacts of scaling agroecology has been highlighted at the international level, but also locally.

Within the FoSSNet project, this gap has been identified in Catalonia (Spain) through a territorial lab that explores pathways for food system transformation towards sustainability, justice, and health. The Catalan case reflects broader European concerns: while numerous agroecological initiatives exist, their long-term sustainability and capacity to scale remain limited. Small-scale food networks, farmer cooperatives, consumer groups, and local food policy initiatives demonstrate the potential of agroecology, but systematic knowledge on their impacts and scalability is lacking. Generating evidence on scaling processes, enablers and barriers is crucial for strengthening public policies and ensuring that agroecology contributes meaningfully to food system transformation across Europe.

This call topic therefore seeks to advance the knowledge base on the scalability of agroecological initiatives, with a particular emphasis on their systemic impacts and

policy relevance, adopting a food system perspective and building on a recent scholarship that links agroecological scaling as a multidimensional and context-specific process contributing to food system transformation.

Related research questions

- What relevant cases of agroecological rescaling exist in Europe? What have been the key factors behind their success? What have been their main challenges when scaling up, out and deep?
- What are the social, economic and environmental impacts of these initiatives and rescaling processes?
- What role have public policies played in the development and rescaling of these initiatives?
- Which indicators are most useful for evaluating scaling trajectories in agroecology?
- How can evidence be systematized and made comparable across cases to support the development of impactful public policies in the field of sustainable food systems?

Methods to be considered (e.g. Theory of Change)

Applicants should adopt a food systems perspective, integrating ecological, social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions of agroecology. Proposals may draw on:

- Literature review (academic and grey literature)
- Secondary data analysis, to map and document local experiences of scaling agroecology.
- Comparative case study analysis, which can combine qualitative and quantitative approaches, to identify common success factors and challenges
- Fieldwork in selected case studies (participant observation, interviews, surveys, etc.)
- Definition and application of indicators
- Theory of Change to map expected pathways and leverage points for agroecological transitions

Documents & materials to be used

- Literature on agroecology, food systems transformation, and scaling-up processes
- Case study documentation and reports from local governments
- Policy documents and food strategy plans at municipal, regional, and EU levels
- Quantitative and qualitative data from existing evaluations or public databases
- Interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders (farmers, policymakers, social entities, etc.)
- Fieldwork materials

Expected outcomes (content-related)

- A comparative analysis of successful agroecological scaling-up cases in Europe
- Identification of key success factors and challenges across different territorial contexts
- A set of indicators for evaluating the social and environmental impacts of agroecological initiatives
- Policy recommendations based on empirical evidence to support sustainable food systems and agroecological transition
- A systematization methodology for impact assessment applicable in another region

Expected outcomes (material)

- Research reports on each case study
- Set of indicators for evaluating the social, economic and environmental impacts of agroecological rescaling processes
- Methodological guide for assessing and systematizing agroecological initiatives, adaptable to other territories
- Comparative synthesis report highlighting cross-cutting success factors and challenges across the case studies
- Visual summary materials (e.g., infographics or policy briefs) to communicate findings to non-academic audiences

Topic 3 - Sustainable Food Systems in Central-Eastern Europe: Exploring the Role of Intermediaries

Polish National Lab (contact: pchmielinski@irwirpan.waw.pl, jkufel@irwirpan.waw.pl)

Topic description

The transition to sustainable food systems in Central-Eastern Europe (CEE) is in the take-off stage (coalition building). Many authors highlight that underdeveloped intermediation is one of the reasons for delays in these transformation processes. Intermediaries are organizations or bodies that act as agents or brokers in any aspect of the innovation processes between two or more parties (Howels, 2006), facilitating transitions by bridging multiple actors and their processes. Thus, the role of intermediaries and intermediation have received increased research attention in transitions studies in the last years, which resulted in a better understanding of the types, roles, mechanisms, influence, and evolution of intermediaries. However, this mainly applies to the Western/Southern/Northern European countries and less to the CEEC. Synthesized knowledge on intermediaries in the Western/Southern/Northern Europe food system transformation could help accelerate CEEC food system transformation.

Intermediaries have been categorised depending on their structure, context, spatial scope, as well as in relation to the stage or level of the system they act upon. Categories such as systemic, regime-based, niche, process, and user intermediaries are distinguished, each differing in terms of their level of action, emergence, interests, and position relative to the niche. Intermediaries also differ based on their goals. For example, systemic intermediation is set on a system level to disrupt it, while regime-based intermediation is realised through incremental solutions or political aims. Moreover, niche intermediation is pursued from an innovation niche perspective. Process intermediaries implement context-specific priorities, whereas user intermediaries act as facilitators, representatives, or end-users.

This call topic seeks to advance the knowledge base on the role of intermediaries in the food systems transition, particularly in the different spatial contexts (especially between countries of Western/Southern/Northern and Central-Eastern Europe), on the importance of representatives from different sectors, on the nature of links and cooperation, as well as the legislative context. This evaluation should be done by comparing the structure and context of intermediation in CEE and Western/Southern/Northern European countries. Building on learnings from Western/Southern/Northern European national efforts and assessing their relevance for CEEC could accelerate the transformation processes in this region. Expert knowledge on similar efforts from other European regions is considered valuable for comparison and cross-learning.

The working group of the knowledge hub that will be established under this call will develop guidance and policy recommendations for shaping effective intermediaries in CEEC. Specifically, the call benefits the initiation of the Polish Food System Lab, also organised under the FoSSNet project. The aim of the Lab is to give recommendations that contribute to supporting national policy and strategic approaches for transforming the Polish food system. It seeks to enhance knowledge exchange within Central-Eastern European networks, but also with the rest of the European community, promote business innovation, and strengthen research and development. Therefore, a better understanding of the role of intermediaries in this process is considered crucial, as was identified by the Lab‘s action.

Related research questions

- What are the main differences in functioning intermediaries in Western/Southern/Northern and Central-Eastern Europe regarding structure, context, spatial scope, levels of the system or phases of the transition?
- What are the main success factors in both regions? Do they differ?
- Are there conflicts, self-interests and power struggles based on e.g. divergent values, visions among intermediaries in Central-Eastern Europe that slow down transition processes?
- How can intermediaries accelerate the transition? What are the leverage points?
- Under what circumstances do intermediaries in the region hamper the transition? Under which contexts and cases do they hinder transitions?
- How could European intermediaries join efforts and bridge actors, networks, networks of networks, and institutions in food system transition?

Methods to be considered (e.g. Theory of Change)

Proposals should adopt food system perspective. They may draw on:

- Literature review (academic and grey literature)
- Secondary data analysis, to map and document experiences with intermediation in Western/Southern/Northern and Central-Eastern Europe
- Comparative case study analysis, which can combine qualitative and quantitative approaches, to identify common success factors and challenges
- Fieldwork in selected case studies (participant observation, interviews, surveys, etc.)
- Proposal for the indicators to assess the impact of the intermediation on level of FS development
- Theory of Change to map expected pathways and leverage points for intermediation development in Central-Eastern Europe

Documents & materials to be used

- Literature on intermediation, food systems transformation, and development processes convergence

- Case study documentation and reports
- Policy documents and food strategy plans at municipal, regional, and EU levels
- Quantitative and qualitative data from existing evaluations or public databases
- Fieldwork materials
- Additional literature (see below)

Expected outcomes (content-related)

- A comparative analysis of successful intermediation in Western/Southern/Northern and Central-Eastern Europe
- Identification of key success factors and challenges
- A set of indicators for evaluating the social and environmental impacts of intermediation initiatives
- Policy recommendations based on empirical evidence to support sustainable food systems transition
- A systematization methodology for intermediation impact assessment applicable in other regions

Expected outcomes (material)

- Research reports on each case study
- Set of indicators for evaluating the social, economic and environmental impacts of intermediation initiatives
- Methodological guide for assessing and systematizing intermediation initiatives, adaptable to other territories
- Comparative synthesis report highlighting cross-cutting success factors and challenges across the case studies
- Visual summary materials (e.g., infographics or policy briefs) to communicate findings to non-academic audiences

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Topic 4 - Using Pricing and Rewarding Guided by True Cost Accounting to Manage Hidden Social and Environmental Sustainability Impacts in the Food System

Systemic Lab (contact: scarlett.wang@wur.nl)

Topic description

Agri-food systems play a crucial role in society by providing the food we rely on and supporting the livelihoods of over a billion people worldwide. At the same time, prevailing unsustainable practices are driving significant negative impacts, including accelerating climate change, depleting natural resources, and making healthy diets increasingly unaffordable. Tackling these challenges is complex. A better understanding of the hidden costs from uncounted economic, social, and environmental sustainability issues in the current market price will empower individuals, businesses, governments and communities to act on these challenges, as opportunities for change.

True Cost Accounting (TCA) is a method in systems research that looks beyond the price tags of food products by including hidden costs and positive externalities. Up to now, most efforts in TCA research have centered around the monetization of negative environmental and social externalities. In academia, TCA is still a new method, and it belongs to sustainability assessment methods. To date, there have been only a few efforts to estimate the true costs of the global food system, some national estimates and only sparse estimations at product level. The application of TCA in food systems research is a further novelty, and this requires collaboration among multiple disciplines.

To expand the use of TCA in food systems research, we invite applications from experts, practitioners, researchers and educators in: life cycle analysis (LCA), true cost accounting, food and marketing policy, food-based dietary guidelines for sustainable healthy diets, stakeholder engagement, public procurement and contracting, gastronomy, and food services (especially catering providers for school and canteen meals).

The objective is to develop a dashboard, strategic action plan, and knowledge agenda for using pricing and rewarding guided by TCA to manage hidden social and environmental sustainability impacts in the food system. In a short cycle of dashboard building, case study, and engagement with practice, the work within this topic will raise awareness on hidden costs for selected key products. Research activities will also be rooted in a transition management approach.

These objectives will be delivered through the following steps:

1. **Dashboard building.** Building on the advances and increasing availability in life cycle impact assessment databases for agri-food products at country level, we aim to create the first interactive dashboard showcasing the true price of several agri-food products. Country coverage of the dashboard is driven by availability of reliable national data and will include France, the Netherlands, and Germany. We invite (LCA) expert contributions to add national data for other EU member states, with a particular interest in Estonia, Poland and Spain.
2. **Internalization of externalities testing in case studies.** We will investigate internalization tools and mechanisms in policy tools and business practices using literature reviews and expert interviews. Case studies related to public procurement and/or food service will be defined to enable in-depth and targeted evaluations and to prioritise solutions that prevent or manage externalities. Building on a framework for transition management in market setting (TransMission), ambitions are set to lower the hidden social and environmental costs through combined interventions, e.g. plate composition and consumption (planetary health diet), sustainable agricultural production, waste prevention, supply chain operations and contract management, pricing, etc.
3. **Strategic planning.** As a final step, we aim to involve food system actors in a strategic planning exercise, using the dashboards and internalization tools in the practical context of the food system. In the systemic lab - and optionally in the territorial labs held in Barcelona, Riga, and Warsaw - participants will discuss key priorities for implementing the internalization tools. The discussions will also address potential challenges that may arise, such as issues related to food affordability, insufficient government action, and other context-specific barriers.

Related research questions

- Can we create a dashboard for the true prices of selected agri-food items per country using the latest scientific advancements in TCA?
- What policy and business internalization tools and mechanisms are available for food system actors?
- How will stakeholders react to internalization tools in addressing externalities? Where are the priorities?

Methods to be considered (e.g. Theory of Change)

- True cost accounting on economic, social and environmental costs and benefits of selected food items at country level, potentially also health impacts
- Using the LCA databases and recommended TCA monetization factors
- Literature review
- Expert interviews
- Case studies
- Stakeholder engagement in a systemic lab

- Stakeholder engagement in eliciting behavioural responses towards internalization tools in addressing externalities in territorial labs (optional)

Documents & materials to be used

- Baker, L., Castilleja, G., De Groot Ruiz, A., & Jones, A. (2020). Prospects for the true cost accounting of food systems. *Nature Food*, *1*(12), 765-767.
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- Snoek, J., P. Sinke, E. Oosterkamp, N. Odenhoven, 2024. External costs of locally produced cultivated meat compared with three conventional Dutch meat products. Wageningen, Wageningen Economic Research, Report 2024-029. 72 pp.; 14 fig.; 31 tab.; 76 ref.
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Expected outcomes (content-related)

- Dashboard showcasing the true price of several agri-food products for selected EU countries.
- A list of Internalization tools and mechanisms for managing hidden social and environmental impacts based on TCA
- Case studies on applying TCA in public procurement and/or food service (catering)
- Stakeholder engagement workshop for strategic planning

Expected outcomes (material)

- Report
- Paper showcasing research results
- Interactive dashboard
- Position paper: research agenda and future directions of applying TCA in food systems research

13 Annex 2: Expression of Interest (EoI) - template

Part 1 - Personal and contact information

Surname*: _____

Name*: _____

Title: _____

Which gender do you identify with*: [Female/Male/Non-Binary/gender diverse/Prefer not to say]

Your age*: [18-35/36-50/51-65/65+]

Please provide your personal e-mail address*: _____

If applicable, please also provide your professional/institutional e-mail address: _____

Please provide your personal or professional/institutional phone number*: _____

Your current country of residence*: [List: EU and associated countries]

Your current employment status*: [Employed/Self-employed/Unemployed]

Name of your organisation: _____

What is the legal status of your organisation? (e.g., private company, NGO, public university, society, ...)*: _____

Website of your organisation*: _____

Address of your organisation*: _____

Country of your organisation*: [List: EU and associated countries + other]

If you selected “Other" above, please specify*: _____

Your department*: _____

Your function / role*: _____

Are you active in any other organisation, network, or society related to FSS?* Yes/No

If yes, name(s) of the organisation/network/society*: _____

Website(s) of the organisation/network/society *: _____

Part 2 - Professional background and expertise

With which of the following professional categories do you identify the most? *

- Scientist
- Policy maker
- Public administrator
- Private sector representative
- Civil society representative
- Other

If you selected "Other" above, please specify*: _____

Are you currently pursuing an academic degree? * Yes/No

What is the highest academic degree you have obtained*: _____

How many years have passed since the completion of your highest degree?* _____

What are your fields of expertise? (multiple choices possible)*:

- Social Sciences
- Humanities
- Environmental Sciences
- Food Sciences
- Formal Science
- Life Science
- Physical Sciences
- Applied Sciences
- Applied Systems Science
- Education Innovation
- Business Creation
- Agricultural Sciences
- Economics
- Political Sciences
- Nutrition & Health
- Science Communication
- Other

If you selected "Other" above, please specify*: _____

Please rank how active you currently are in the following professional areas in the context of FSS*:

Professional area	Not at all active	Somewhat active	Very active
Academic Research			
Private Sector			
Civil Society			
Government			
Non-academic Research			
Other			

If you selected "other" above, please specify*: _____

How many years of experience related to FSS do you have in the following prof. areas?*

Professional area	Years of experience
Academic Research	
Private Sector	
Civil Society	
Government	
Non-academic Research	
Other	

If you entered experience under "Other" above, please specify*: _____

Please rank your level of collaboration and how well connected you are within the following professional areas in the context of FSS*:

Professional area	Not at all connected	Somewhat connected	Well connected
Academic Research			
Private Sector			
Civil Society			
Government			
Non-academic Research			
Other			

If you selected "other" above, please specify*: _____

Part 3 - Participation in the Knowledge Hub

For which topic of the Knowledge Hub are you applying? Please select only one preferred topic.

Please also indicate if you are interested in one other topic and willing to join their working group if we cannot meet your first choice*.

Topic 1: Leverage Points for an Inclusive Food-Oriented Knowledge & Innovation System.
[Link to topic]

Topic 2: Scalability of Agroecological Initiatives for Food Systems Transformation. [Link to topic]

Topic 3: Sustainable Food Systems in Central-Eastern Europe: Exploring the Role of Intermediaries.
[Link to topic]

Topic 4: Using Pricing and Rewarding Guided by True Cost Accounting to Manage Hidden Social and Environmental Sustainability Impacts in the Food System. [Link to topic]

Please select **only one preferred topic***.

Additionally, you can indicate your **interest for up to one other topic**:

Knowledge Hub topic	Preferred topic (1)	Also interested (1)	Not interested
Topic 1			
Topic 2			
Topic 3			
Topic 4			

Please describe your expertise and scientific, academic, and/or professional experience regarding your preferred topic*: *(max. 2000 characters)*

Regarding the topic you are also interested in: Please describe your expertise and scientific, academic, and/or professional experience regarding this additional topic of interest*: *(max. 2000 characters)*

Regarding your preferred topic, what are your initial ideas and approaches for achieving its objectives? * *(max. 3000 characters)*

Regarding the topic you are also interested in, what are your initial ideas and approaches for achieving its objectives? * *(max. 3000 characters)*

What would you like to learn to expand your understanding of FSS through the Knowledge Hub? * *(max. 2000 characters)*

Please list ongoing projects you are involved in that can contribute (in kind) to the establishment of the Knowledge Hub and to the work on your preferred topic*: *(max. 2000 characters)*

Regarding the topic you are also interested in: Please list ongoing projects you are involved in that can contribute (in kind) to the work on this additional topic of interest*: *(max. 2000 characters)*

Are you active in communicating content-based knowledge related to Food Systems Science? (e.g. peer reviewed publications, conference presentations, other types of publications) *Please share up to 5.*

Please provide a statement about your motivation to participate in the Knowledge Hub and the added value of your proposed contribution*: *(max. 1000 characters)*

Part 4 - Additional points

Participation in mandatory meetings of the Knowledge Hub:

O I confirm that I will join the **Kick-off Meeting online** in February 2026 and **travel to the in-person meetings** of the Knowledge Hub (3 occasions between March 2026 and January 2027) *.

Please briefly elaborate on your experience and/or willingness to work in inter- and transdisciplinary contexts*: *(max. 1000 characters)*

How did you become aware of the FoSSNet Knowledge Hub? *

Do you have any additional comments or remarks regarding your expression of interest?