



D1.16: Define criteria and procedures for new CCs and the connection of CCs to the DIHs

WPI – Competence Centers and Technical Expertise Management

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Table of Contents

Executive summary	6
1 Entities entering the agROBOfood network	7
1.1 Introduction to agROBOfood network and framework.....	7
1.2 New coming CC members.....	9
2 Relationship of DIHs and CCs in agROBOfood	11
2.1 Current relationship of DIHs and CCs	11
2.2 The regional cluster approach.....	12
2.3 Relationship of new CCs with DIH.....	13
3 Procedure to enter the network.....	14
3.1 Attracting a CC	14
3.2 Application	15
3.3 Analysis and validation	16
3.3.1 Pool of criteria to measure	16
3.3.2 Validation process	19
3.4 Link to DIH (Regional cluster leader).....	20
3.5 Internal management and communication	20
4 Value proposition of being a member of agROBOfood network.....	22
4.1 Added value for a new CC	22
4.2 Rights and duties for a new CC.....	22
5 References.....	25
6 Annexes.....	26
6.1 Annex I: AgROBOfood membership and roles definition	26
6.2 Annex II: CCs Application Form.....	27

Table of Figures

<i>Figure 1 – DIH structure. Source: EU Handbook for DIH.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Figure 2 – agROBOfood network membership structure.....</i>	<i>11</i>

Table of Tables

Table 1 – Steps, entities involved and roles in the procedure to enter the agROBOfood network.....	21
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Executive summary

Project summary

This document is presenting deliverable D1.16 which will contribute to the latest version of D.1.17. Thanks to D.1.3, D.1.4, D.1.5 and this present document, the consortium has done a huge effort to provide the last version of the identification of existing CCs and DIH network building on D. 1.17. Thus, the present document represents just a sampling of the discussion to the final D.1.17 in which the CCs interactions will appear more extensively.

AgROBOfood is dedicated to accelerating the digital transformation of the European agri-food sector through the adoption of robotic technologies. It will consolidate, extend, and strengthen the current ecosystem by establishing a sustainable network of Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) and connecting myriad stakeholders (innovative companies, universities, research centres, etc). The network is oriented to foster the sharing of information facilities and best practices for an **effective adoption of tech robotic concepts in the agri-food sector** and demonstrating their applicability under practical circumstances, in order to increase the sector's productivity and sustainability.

AgROBOfood is characterized by a multi-stakeholder ecosystem. The consortium has 38 partners from 19 different countries, led by Wageningen University & Research.

Deliverable summary

AgROBOfood is establishing a network of excellence of Competence Centres (CCs) associated with DIHs to provide robotics technical expertise, demonstration, testing and validation facilities and training content to SMEs and end users. In agROBOfood, CCs can be either local or located outside the region, providing distinctive technologies and solutions not widely available inside a specific region.

To ensure the sustainability of the agROBOfood network towards the future, it is crucial that CCs with distinct capabilities and advanced technological service offering join the network.

CCs already part of the network are supported to evolve, mature and enhance their portfolio of services. Consequently, allowing SMEs to get access to innovative robotic technologies and technical services as well as testing and validation facilities required for the agri-food sector in Europe.

A specific project work package (WP1) focuses on mapping and managing the network of CCs and shaping/channelling technological support. The first step to achieve this goal is to structure this process.

According to WP1 overall objective, the purpose of this deliverable is to define the criteria for new CC designation and participation intended to guide the engagement of novel CCs in the network.

This deliverable could be considered a "living document". Specific procedures included in it (e.g. communication mechanisms, fine-tuned criteria, etc) may be further defined throughout the lifespan of the project to constantly improve based on best practises gained and better adapt to new coming members needs and requirements.

1 Entities entering the agROBOfood network

1.1 Introduction to agROBOfood network and framework

AgROBOfood aims to connect the different layers and agents active in the agri-food robotics sector in order to accelerate the sector’s digital transformation. **agROBOfood already starts with a strong ecosystem.** It is built on an initial consortium of 39 partners across 19 countries (including research centres, universities and enterprises, amongst other entities).

The goal of agROBOfood is to become a solid and consolidated network of Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) by becoming self-sustaining and expanding across Europe, ensuring that agri-food and robotic SMEs including their customers (farmers), have access to valuable DIHs services. Since the beginning of agROBOfood the network has expanded considerably: relevant entities have already joined the network through industrial challenges, open calls and individual applications.



Figure 1 – DIH structure. Source: EU Handbook for DIH

The type of entities that can be part of agROBOfood are:

 **Members: service and technology providers**, consisting of DIHs and CCs. DIH members offering at least one Eco-System or Business service and CC members offering at least one Technology service. These are registered by the agROBOfood administrator¹ upon advice from the Regional Cluster Leaders.

- **CC-members:** A member delivering technical services.
- **DIH-members:** A member delivering eco-system and business services.
- **DIH-Node (Orchestrator):** A DIH-member that coordinates a local network.

 **Business members: service receivers**, which consist mainly of SMEs but also Mid-caps and LSEs (Large Scale Enterprises) or even other stakeholders (e.g. end-user organisations, universities, etc) using the agROBOfood network facilities. These enterprises are registered by the Regional Cluster Leaders, are linked somehow to a CC or DIH-node and that receive(d) (or intend to receive in future) a service from this DIH/CC.

- **SME/LSE:** Sells products in the agri-food domain or is supplier of sub-products for this domain and is linked to a DIH/CC or DIH-node to some extent.
- **Other stakeholders** (f.i. end-user associations), entities actively engaged and supporting the agROBOfood network.

 **Other type of entities** that may be involved in agROBOfood include:

- **Followers** (Other stakeholders interested to follow and/or support the agROBOfood network. They will not be registered in our DIH-catalogue. They are put on an e-mail list to receive our Newsletter or are using our social media).
- **General Public** (Everybody else, all entitled to view our website but not registered in any way).

The aforementioned members' classification is aligned with RODIN categorization. The RODIN project is a pan-European network of networks aiming to bring together European Digital Innovation Hubs in robotics (more information can be found on: www.rodin-robotics.eu).

An updated list (status Aug 2020) of all data regarding members that are at present part of the agROBOfood network is included in *Deliverable 6.4. DIH Observatory – 1st version*. All DIHs and CCs can be found on the agROBOfood website: www.agrobofood.eu.

To maximize its impact, agROBOfood aims to expand even further its network. On the one hand, encouraging DIHs and CCs with distinctive and cutting-edge capacities to join the agROBOfood ecosystem and on the other hand, building stronger partnerships to do projects in collaboration with companies that are willing to invest in technology and innovation as well as to buy the solution.

A list of all members is maintained by the agROBOfood administrator and available for all DIHs and CCs members in the network.

The present deliverable, as part of WP1-Competence Centres and Technical Expertise Management, is focused on CCs. Therefore, **the present document only includes information, procedures and criteria on the incorporation of novel Competence Centres.**

¹ The project coordinator (Wageningen Research) currently takes the role of Administrator.

1.2 New coming CC members

This section provides an overview of foreseen vision, role and naming clarification of novel CC members. The concrete criterion of acceptance is defined in section 3.3.1 *Pool of criteria to measure*.



CC vision:

-  CCs believing in the **potential that robotics technology can have** to transform Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and drive economic growth across the European Union agrifood sector.
-  CCs **agreeing to cooperate within the Regional Clusters** (see *The cluster approach in section 2.1*) with other members of the innovation chain to support businesses in their digital transformation.
-  The entrance of the CCs has two main objectives: (i) **to cover the white spots** at technical and/or geographical level of the Regional Cluster with which it collaborates or (ii) **to provide differential technical capacities** which can be offered at network level as well.
-  At core of the organisation having a dual requirement: research/expertise on technological development as well as **transfer of research**.



CC Roles:

-  The role of the newcomer CC will be as **service provider delivering technical services** to the agROBOfood network. It will be coordinated through the **Regional Clusters** in which they will be embedded.
-  In some specific cases, the CC can have two roles: **acting as Digital Innovation Hub (DIH-node) but also offering services as a CC. Both roles can coexist**. If an SME/LSE directly contacts them for specific services, they will offer the service as if they were a CC (for technical services) or as a DIH (for business or ecosystem services).



- When the CC is also acting as a DIH, it is expected to **derive potential service requests to third parties** (other CCs or DIHs) if: (i) The SME requires so, (ii) If the CC does not have the necessary skills, resources or infrastructure to conduct the service, or (iii) If the member aims to collaborate with another CC to provide the service (complementing their knowledge or expertise in a specific area, accessing another CC's distinctive infrastructure or technological expertise, etc).



Clarification on associated vs. consortium CC members:

- agROBOfood's initial network resources and foundation departs from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation project under Grant Agreement No 825395. For the time being during the EU-project, novel CCs will be classified as registered associated partners (non-consortium entities) in the agROBOfood network delivering technical services. When the EU-project finishes a formal agROBOfood entity will be created. At that moment, all active members will automatically become member of the agROBOfood official network (eliminating **naming differences between consortium and non-consortium CC members**).

2 Relationship of DIHs and CCs in agROBOfood

2.1 Current relationship of DIHs and CCs

All partners joining the agROBOfood network support the network growth, in numbers, quality and services.

The core of the **agROBOfood network structure is based on multiple layers**: a local network of CCs (one or multiple CCs) is able to connect to adjacent DIHs that orchestrate technical, ecosystem and business services at regional level. In turn, these DIHs connect together around geographical clusters, which orchestrate (in the management bureau together with the orchestrator) services at European level.

The graph below depicts agROBOfood’s network structure:

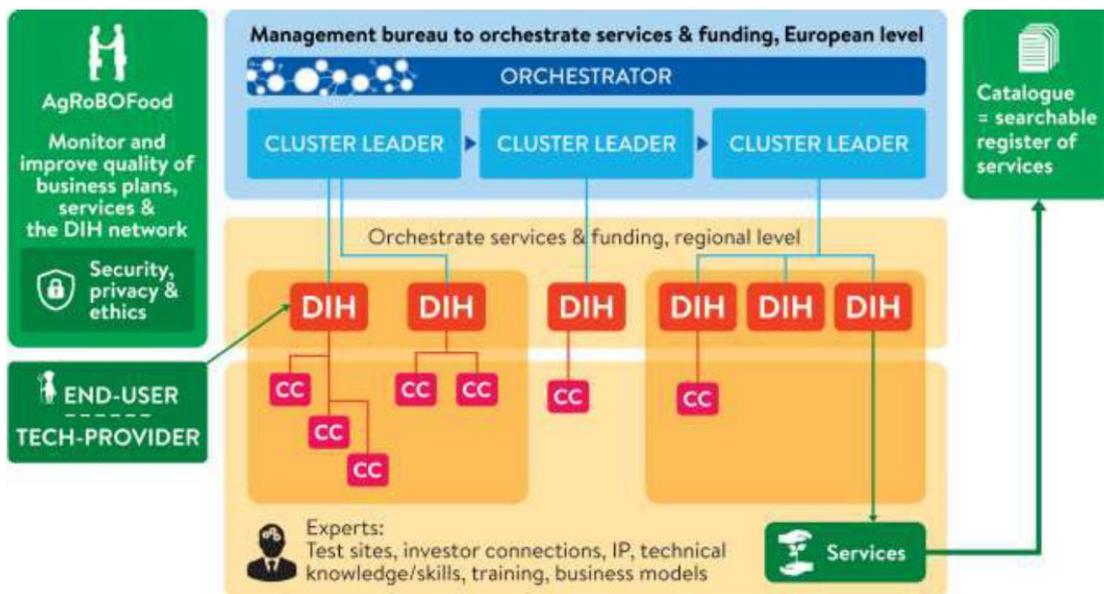


Figure 2 – agROBOfood network membership structure

Members of the CC network are encouraged to connect one another based on their interests, informed decisions and geographic proximity (**horizontal connectedness**), in principle following the Regional Clusters already established to facilitate the connexion.

Forming these alliances with other entities is important to expand technical and commercialisation potential of CCs. Moreover, these alliances enable CCs to participate in the promotion and contribute to international standards in the field of agro-robotics as well as to a more harmonized service provision and technology usage.

No single competence centre can be excellent in all fields. Hence, there is a need to build strong links between competence centres (within and between DIHs) with complementary disciplines to

strengthen the local ecosystem. Alliances also enable CCs to participate in integrated sets of service provision, as a “one-stop-shop”, covering at its maximum the need of the SMEs, LSEs and other agri-food sector stakeholders.

Competence centres (one or multiple) are the core of the Digital Innovation Hubs. **Synergies and collaboration between relevant competence centres and network DIHs** is in turn, the basis of agROBOfood network value creation.

Through the networking of DIHs, competences not available within a regional DIH may be found in another DIH. This mechanism leads to **specialisation and excellence** and avoids that every region needs to invest in all competences necessary for the digital transformation. For the CCs, this means that their **services are expected to be offered not only in their specific region but also to the other regions** that compose agROBOfood network.

CCs are not static organisations and can also evolve and mature. In specific cases, CCs can be upgraded or transformed into Digital Innovation Hubs covering technology service offering as well as finance, skill and/or business growth services. Improvement of CCs is pursued in the agROBOfood network.

2.2 The regional cluster approach

At present, agROBOfood network entities (including CCs) are organised around regional clusters, based on their geographical location. After all, it is expected that end users are inclined to search for robotics activities and services close to home. **New CCs will become a linked member to a regional cluster.**

Seven strategically chosen regional clusters have been identified and will serve as contact points covering the whole of Europe. These regional clusters are **represented by a Cluster Leader**:

- **North East Europe (NEE)**, cluster leader: DTI - Danish Technological Institute,
- **North West Europe (NWE)**, cluster leader: WR - Wageningen Research,
- **France and Italy (F&I)**, cluster leader: CEA - Commissariat a l'énergie atomique et aux énergies alternatives.
- **Iberia (IBE)**, cluster leader: EUT- Eurecat Technology Centre.
- **Central Eastern Europe (CEE)**, cluster leader: BIOS - BioSense Institute,
- **Central Northern Europe (CNE)**, cluster leader: Fraunhofer - Fraunhofer Gesellschaft,
- **East Med (EM)** (including associated countries such as Israel and Turkey), cluster leader: AUA - Agricultural University of Athens.

Regional cluster leaders are organisations that have consolidated experience and are closely related to national or regional digitization initiatives, funds and entities. During the project execution, to orchestrate services and funding on European Level the Cluster Leader forms together with the Orchestrator, the Management Bureau to orchestrate services and funding on a European level. In the upcoming deliverables and public guidelines, further information will be provided on the foreseen long-term management entity, structure and procedures.

The regional clusters are the “eyes and ears” of the network on the Market ground. The cluster approach allows a broad, pan-European coverage and helps to intensify the outreach of technological transformation.

At present, decisions regarding the way of operating of regional clusters (including communication, joint decision making, regular meeting plans, negotiations, etc) are encouraged to be made “locally” by the Regional Cluster Leaders, the CCs and their partners. Thus, agROBOfood aims to bet on light bureaucracy and rules whenever possible. Nonetheless, agROBOfood facilitates and supports regional clusters through the basecamp portal, guidelines, supporting materials and online webinars.

2.3 Relationship of new CCs with DIH

As stated in section 2.2. The regional cluster approach, **new CCs will become a linked member to a regional cluster**. The regional cluster and specifically the regional cluster leader will be the main reference of the CC to establish contacts and network with other network members.

Once the CC has been validated by the internal procedure detailed in section 3 *Procedure to enter the network*, the Administrator at Stitching Wageningen Research will introduce the new CC to the Regional cluster leader, who from now on will take the responsibility to make the contacts within the agROBOfood network and welcome the novel CCs to the network. Apart from making the contact with the regional cluster leader, the Administrator will also set up regular general welcome meetings to briefly present agROBOfood to new CCs and other newcomers of the network.

The regional cluster leader will include the new CCs in the regular activities that are running within the regional cluster, such as internal meetings or dissemination and engagement actions. The main relationship that will be forged through the incorporation of new CCs in the network will be the regional one. The CCs will be able to showcase their capacities at regional level so that the regional cluster members can benefit from those capacities when implementing services in the region.

In order to better understand the offering of those CCs the regional cluster leaders will ask the newcomer CCs to clarify the technical capacities that they can bring to the network at two levels:

- Those capacities that are more common and could cover regional white spots
- Those capacities that are more unique and singular along Europe and that could be offered to the network members apart from the regional members.

Those unique and singular capacities of newcomer CCs will be presented to the network through the regional cluster leaders. The regional cluster leaders will transfer the capacities to the other regional cluster leaders of the network, so that they can transmit this information to their own regional cluster members. Besides, the new CCs will have the chance to present themselves and their capacities in the general consortium meetings that will be held annually.

3 Procedure to enter the network

The following section includes the guidelines set-up to welcome new coming CC members and provides an overview of the agROBOfood approach.

3.1 Attracting a CC

agROBOfood brings forth a shift towards diversified and decentralized innovation, locally applicable knowledge and open access robotics technologies. New CCs may join agROBOfood network aiming to (1) explore AgROBOfood network benefits as well as (2) becoming service providers of the network by offering valuable competences. CCs may be attracted to join the network via **three different routes**:

Option 1: Approach CCs from Regional clusters and DIH-node-orchestrators.

To attract novel CCs in the network, the main driving force are the national DIH-node orchestrators and a stimulating and coordinating role of the Regional Cluster Leaders. Regional clusters have a key role to energize the network and are in charge of the identification and integration of new CCs to the network, and specifically to the Regional cluster. capabilities analysing white spots and needs in the network (regions and services) trying to fill the gaps by engaging, fostering contacts and incorporating novel CCs.

Option 2: The CC comes directly to agROBOfood.

The CC may take an active approach to become a new member. The CC may have been aware of agROBOfood network through open workshops, webinars, newsletters, website info, contacts or word of mouth, etc. After getting to know the network opportunities, the CC itself may decide to contact cluster leaders or directly fill in the online application form available on the agROBOfood website.

Option 3: The CCs coming from the Industrial challenges and open Calls.

In the context of agROBOfood, a number of Innovation Experiments (selected through Open Calls) are planned. In fact, an important part of agROBOfood are the Open Calls, for which a reservation of 8.000.000€ is included in the project budget and thus, a large number of applicants are expected.

SMEs involved in the Open Calls receive services from network members most suited to their needs. Those responsible for providing services are CCs (and DIHs) that become involved in agROBOfood. In this context, novel CCs may join the network to become service providers. CCs selected during open calls are expected to add value to robotics in agri-food systems.

To conduct those services CCs could obtain budget through open call budget as supporting service providers. Consequently, the open calls will also be used in fact to attract more CCs to the agROBOfood network. Before provision of those services,

new coming CCs will be expected to be linked to the AgROBOfood network and therefore, become members. If an SME is interested in other services not foreseen in the context of the Innovation Experiments financed activities, the CC will have its normal market approach.

3.2 Application

The agROBOfood application process aims to be simple and involve light bureaucracy when possible. Otherwise, the administration process will take a lot of time and be limiting the network growth.

To become part of the network and register as a new member, CCs will fill-in an online application form. The application form consists of a short questionnaire to gather a brief introduction of the entity and check its eligibility for becoming a member of the agROBOfood network.

For that, a link to this form is available on the website (“Join”). After filling in, automatically a message is sent to the agROBOfood Administrator (WR) and the Webmaster (DRAXIS). The applicant will have signed and agreed with GDPR regulations when filling the form. The webmaster will register the application, archive the application form, add the applicant to the newsletter e-mail list. The Administrator will register the new member as “Requested” into the DIH-catalogue and will further check and validate together with the relevant Regional Cluster Leader (RCL) the role of the CC applicant for the agROBOfood network (eligibility based on the criteria described on the following sections). In case of doubt of the eligibility of a new applicant, the RCL or Administrator may consult the applicant, or engage another RCL in the decision process. This in order to assure uniformity, transparency and fairness in the approval process.

The application form will contain:

-  Basic information regarding the **organisation identification** (full name, short name, address, country, website, contact person with name, e-mail and phone). + Profit/non-profit, public/private
-  What **domains** they mainly work for: agriculture production (arable, fruit, vegetable, greenhouse, livestock (meat/eggs/wool), dairy, aquaculture, insect farming), food processing, agri-food logistics, agri-food retail, other.
-  Main robotics **competencies** that they have:
 - Data collection/acquisition: sensors, detection, vision.
 - Analytics and decision making: Big Data, Data interpretation, Artificial Intelligence, Visualisation.
 - Automation and control: actuation, manipulation, handling, hard automation.
 - Other.

-  Which technology **services they are able to deliver** (e.g. strategic research and development, contract research, technical support on scale-up, provision of tech infrastructure, testing and validation) and if they are able to deliver other type of services too (*Business services* such as accelerator support, access to finance, project development, *Skills training* or *Ecosystem services* such as representation and promotion, community building, etc).
-  Sign the form and agree with **GDPR** issues/ regulations.
-  Application forms must be filled in by the entities themselves and must be submitted in English following the templates provided.
-  Requesting CC may be asked to provide a concrete description of one technical service example to demonstrate its capacity and previous experience conducting those services. Additional information from the incorporated CC will be obtained later on with targeted questionnaires if required.

The application form of the procedure can be found in **Annex II** to the present document.

Joining the agROBOfood network is free of charge until June 1st 2023 (during the EU grant project duration). A membership fee might be applied from June 1st, 2023 onwards once we reach the post-grant phase, depending on the long-term sustainability strategy to be agreed by the project partners.

3.3 Analysis and validation

3.3.1 Pool of criteria to measure

All applicants will have to abide by all general requirements described in the present document in order to be considered eligible to be incorporated as novel CC members of the agROBOfood network. Concrete Criteria for new member's designation to join the agROBOfood network include:



CC domain:

-  Primarily focus on **CCs active in the agri-food domain** with focus on robotics skills needed in that domain.
-  Nevertheless, the criteria for new **CCs acceptance is broad, general and inclusive**. Newer members can also be entities from other domains that might want to enter the robotics or the agricultural domain in future, widening their own scope.

- Although the CCs do not need to be directly connected to robotics or agri-food sector, they should **offer services in relevant areas** that could be applied to the agri-food sector.



CC location:

- The CC must be established in the following eligible territories/country list:
 - Based in an **EU 28 Member State or Horizon 2020** associated countries.²
 - The Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU), including their outermost regions;
 - The Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to the Member States: Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, French Polynesia, French Southern and Antarctic Territories, Greenland, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles (Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten), New Caledonia and Dependencies, Pitcairn, Saint Barthélemy, Saint Helena, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, Wallis and Futuna Islands.
 - The associated countries (AC): Iceland, Norway, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Israel, Moldova, Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Ukraine, Tunisia, Georgia and Armenia.



Type of entities as CC:

- There is **not a sole ideal type** of Competence Centre. The organisational set up, mandate, size and resources of Competence Centres can vary considerably.
- The acceptance of novel CCs in the network will **depend more on their role** in the network and their technical service provision characterisation rather than the entity structure itself.
 - For instance, universities, public research technology organisations (RTOs), private consultancy organisations, private research organisations and Key Enabling Technologies (KETs) Technology Centres/Pilot Lines may all be involved in competence centres.
 - To be accepted as a novel network CC, the entity competencies and demonstrated capacity to offer technical services should be properly described (following application templates).
 - CC needs to be an entity that has not only an integrator role (implementing commercially available solutions) but rather has a considerable focus on R&D and technology transfer.

² At the time of writing the present document, UK-based legal entities are fully eligible to participate and be part of the AgROBOfood network. Nevertheless, this criteria may be updated in the upcoming months (particularly as the project ends) and as the withdrawal agreement between the European Union and the United Kingdom enters fully into force.

-  The organization (CCs) can be either a **for-profit or a not-for-profit** organization. We expect most entities working on a non-for profit basis. However, as long as the role of CCs and service provision is properly defined for-profit entities may be also accepted.
-  Both **private and public** entities are welcome.



Services offered by the CC:

-  To join the network, it will be required that the new CC member should offer a **minimum set of one technology service** relevant to the needs of the agri-food sector.
 - Notwithstanding, the technology **services that CCs offer can be very diverse**. Examples of services CC could be offered to be considered as part of technology services include: supporting the creation of new prototypes, experimentation in real-life environment, testing and validation, up-scaling, etc.
 - Moreover, CCs can provide **advanced specialised expertise facilities** (labs, infrastructures, pilot lines for production, etc.).
-  To be accepted as an agROBOfood member, it is not required that the new member should cover **specific demands and white spots** in their region/ country (derived from agROBOfood continuous needs assessment analysis).
-  agROBOfood network will try to be as inclusive as possible, so not refusing organizations offering services that already are being offered in the network. Each CC has specific competences but also specific capacities. agROBOfood will **allow for overlaps** and rely on redundancy for delivering services in the regions. If they find business in our domain, they have added value and deserve a place in the ecosystem.
-  To fill-in **white spots**, DIH-node orchestrators (Regional cluster leaders) should strive to engage with strategic CCs and ensure a good coverage for all local unmet services demanded.



Capacity

-  CC has the **required capacities** to deploy the proposed services (in terms of personnel, technical know-how and infrastructure).
-  If required, CC **should demonstrate previous experiences** providing technical services and provide real case examples to proof its competency. They have the ability to bring in **showcases** that will be presented on the website.
-  CC is a consolidated entity. To be admitted as a novel member the requesting CC entity should have been **established at least one year before the application request** (if possible, having at least one closed account on annual basis).



Application

-  CC has to complete the application following the **templates provided** and procedures.
-  If the CC is **removed from the group** (e.g. due to bad reviews from service receivers, after a long non-responsive period not answering network information requests) the CC will not be able to apply again to become member of the network within the next 6 months.
-  If an entity applies to become a CC and is not accepted as a CC (because it has not demonstrated valid experience providing technical services, etc). The entity will not be able to apply to become CC within the next 6 months.

3.3.2 Validation process

Final validation regarding the acceptance or not of a novel CC is made according to results of the analysis of criteria described in section 3.3.1 *Pool of criteria to measure*. Decisions to accept a new CC's (eligibility check) are done by the regional cluster leaders coordinated by the Wageningen, responsible for growing the network, and supervised by Fraunhofer IPA, responsible for mapping the technical capacity of agROBOfood network (so that they have overview of new members, overall regional capacity and coordinate periodic information requests). In case there is any misalignment, the regional cluster leader will have the final say.

The CCs validation process will have three key steps:

- 1) General eligibility check:**
Validate that CC is aligned with vision and roles described in *section 1.2 New coming CC members* of the present report. Therefore, validate that the entity falls into the Competence Centre (CC) category and the CC vision is aligned with agROBOfood network growth.
- 2) Evaluation according to selection criteria:**
Validate that the CC complies with all the criterion described in *section 3.3.1 Pool of criteria to measure* of the present report.
- 3) Final selection of results:**
Once the evaluation process is completed, whether successful or unsuccessful, applicants will receive through an email notice on the outcome of the evaluation. If accepted, and after approval by the applicant of the "membership terms"³, applicants will get an official document (e-mail) that they are a member.

Appeal procedure

If, at any stage, the CC applicant considers that a mistake has been made or that the evaluators have acted unfairly, and that his/her interests have been prejudiced as a result, an appeal procedure

³ Membership terms are found on our website at the point "JOIN" where applicants do register.

can be made. A complaint should be submitted by email to agROBOfood administrator (for the moment *kees.lokhorst@wur.nl* from Wageningen Research, performing this role until it might be otherwise stated once the formal agROBOfood entity is in place).

including contact details, subject and evidence of the complaint. Anonymous complaints will not be reviewed. AgROBOfood will investigate the complaints and inform the complainant by email about the case revision.

3.4 Link to DIH (Regional cluster leader)

Once the CC has the approval to be part of the agROBOfood network and has signed the agreement, the Administrator (at present, representative from Stichting Wageningen Research, the coordinator of agROBOfood project), will establish the contact with the Regional cluster leader of which the CC will be part.

Moreover, the Administrator will set up regular welcome meetings to briefly inform agROBOfood new CCs. This will help new members, among them CCs, to better understand the aim and philosophy of agROBOfood network, as well as expectations from both the network and the CCs. Informative sessions arranged by the Administrator will be complemented with the welcoming sessions arranged by RCLs.

From this moment on, the reference of the new CC will be the regional cluster leader. In section 3.4. *Relationship of new CCs with DIH* it is explained how the relationship among the new CC and the regional cluster leader is set, considering as well the relation of the CC with other members of the regional cluster and the relation with the other members of the network.

3.5 Internal management and communication

The procedure to enter the network involves different entities of the agROBOfood network in the steps described in section 3. To facilitate the understanding of the whole process and the entities involved from de CC perspective the following table summarises the steps, the entities involved and their role in the step.

STEP	ENTITIES INVOLVED AND ROLES
Attracting a CC	<u>Regional Cluster Leaders and Regional cluster members</u> : Contact the potential CCs to be part of agROBOfood network
Application	<p><u>The Administrator</u> (Wageningen): As coordinator of agROBOfood it will receive the application form from CCs.</p> <p><u>Webmaster</u> (Draxis): it will receive the application, register the application, archive the application form, add the applicant to the newsletter e-mail list.</p>



Analysis and validation	<p><u>The Administrator (Wageningen)</u>: Analyse the application according to pool of criteria and validate the candidate if the criteria are accomplished.</p> <p><u>Responsible for mapping the technical capacity of agROBOfood network (Fraunhofer IPA)</u>: Analyse the application according to pool of criteria and validate the candidate if the criteria are accomplished.</p> <p><u>Regional Cluster Leaders</u>: Be informed</p>
Link to DIH (regional cluster leader)	<p><u>The Administrator (Wageningen)</u>: Link the new CC with the regional cluster leader. Invite the new CC to the next welcome session for new members.</p> <p><u>Regional Cluster Leader</u>: To present the new CC to the regional cluster members and include it to the regular regional cluster activities</p>

Table 1 – Steps, entities involved and roles in the procedure to enter the agROBOfood network

For further clarification on the roles of entities mentioned before, here it is a short profile that those entities perform in the framework of the project:

-  **Regional cluster leaders:** Coordinators of the regional clusters in which the members of agROBOfood are organised (see section 2.2 *The regional cluster approach* for more information).
-  **Wageningen:** Project coordinator and responsible for growing the agROBOfood network.
-  **Draxis:** Responsible for the communication and dissemination in agROBOfood and webmaster.
-  **Fraunhofer IPA:** Responsible for the mapping of the technical capacity of agROBOfood network.

In reference to the communication among the CC and the different entities involved in the process to enter the network, it will be made through email, always having in consideration the GDPR rules. After the entrance of the CC to the network, communications will continue by email, although some announcements can reach the new CCs by BaseCamp (the project management platform that it is used during the agROBOfood project execution) which the new CC will have access to (only the general folder and their relevant Regional Cluster folder).

4 Value proposition of being a member of agROBOfood network

4.1 Added value for a new CC

For a novel CC to get on-board and keep engaged to the agROBOfood network it should be convincingly clear the value that the CC will get out of the membership. In other words, the Member Value Proposition (MVP) to prospective (and even current) members should be clearly defined. New CC may be interested to become part of the agROBOfood ecosystem due to myriad reasons. Key reasons identified are listed below:

-  Opportunity to market themselves and be able to **access novel customers**. Opportunity to showcase their competences and offering through agROBOfood network and portal.
-  To increase the **competitiveness and presence** of the organisation in the specific region they operate.
-  Be **brokered by a pan-European entity** (agROBOfood network) that is independent and unbiased. That aims to connect the needs of the agri-food sector to relevant technology providers.
-  To achieve higher **interconnectivity and networking** among different agents in the agri-tech ecosystem and increased opportunities for transfer of knowledge and research and be involved in other R&D activities.
-  To have the possibility to be federating into **larger initiatives**, market offering and contracts.
-  Access to **skills, training and all-round support** from the agROBOfood network.
-  Ability to **share experiences, knowledge and co-create** solutions with multiple partners in order to grow as CC or even a DIH.
-  Ability to understand **emerging needs** of farmers and their businesses. Access other channels to stay up to date with market trends (through agROBOfood cluster meetings, webinars, newsletters, etc)
-  To **be represented** in the EU agri-food and robotics strategy and policy realm.
-  To have transparent access to potential **financing opportunities**.

4.2 Rights and duties for a new CC

As a novel member of agROBOfood network the new coming CCs have several rights and obligations, described below:



Rights:

-  CC will have **contact to the agROBOfood network**.
-  CC will have access to the **password protected area** on the agROBOfood management portal (now Basecamp).
-  CC will have access to both the general agROBOfood and Regional Cluster folder (they belong to) in the **management folder** (now Basecamp).
-  CC will have **access to all contacts** within the agROBOfood network (by being able to check which members are part of the management portal. At present, basecamp site).
-  CC will have the right to be at the **general meetings and joined activities** (at own cost or supported by RCL).
-  When the CC wants to **withdraw itself** from the network, it will have the right to get out as a member and to be deleted from the e-mail lists. To do so, the CC must send a request to the agROBOfood administrator (coordinator).
-  Novel CC can **make use of the open calls** (as non-consortium members).
-  CC will have **access to valuable tools** to be developed within the network.
-  Novel CCs will have access to agROBOfood **training and services** at own cost.
-  CCs are entitled to **deliver technology services**, defined as services from CCs to SMEs.
-  CC general service activities description will be **registered** and made available to all network members.
-  In specific cases, CC may have both a **CC and DIH role** in the network.
-  CCs may be able to promote itself through posting **Show Cases** on the agROBOfood website.



Duties:

-  CCs should be **active and respond** to agROBOfood network messages (from cluster leader, coordinator and other network members). After a long period without active communication (1 year) the CC may be deleted from the catalogue, website and its membership may be cancelled (after prior notice).
-  The CC should **accept to brokered** between the needs of agri-food end users and relevant technology providers in an independent and unbiased way by agROBOfood.
-  By registering it doesn't mean that novel CC members will receive "payments" from the project, it is on a **voluntary basis**. Funds for work performed must be recovered from the entities own market (clients, subsidies ...). There is a limited budget to pay for attending of meetings, but it will be supplied on decisions by the consortium members (to support enterprises strategically filling in white spots, etc)



-  The member is expected to **collaborate in gathering data** upon request. In particular, CC members may be required to answer short evaluation tools and monitoring procedures.
-  Every year the agROBOfood network will perform a simple check on their performance (to be defined), for which the member must **co-operate in supplying information**. This check is needed to find in-active (ghosts) CCs that should be removed from the network.
-  Candidates and accepted new members are responsible for the **accuracy and correctness** of the information provided to the network administrators.
-  The member must **collaborate in disseminating** agROBOfood content throughout its own networks (client newsletters etc).
-  The member must respect **GDPR policies** for itself and its clients.
-  As service providers, CCs should offer services with the **best quality level possible** and contribute to ensure customers' satisfaction and overall positive operation of the hub they are involved.
-  CCs can voluntary upload **Best Practices** (Show Cases or other content) onto the website so clients may choose the most appealing CC to service them
-  If the network decides to have voting ranking system related to the quality of the services delivered (yet to be decided), the CC should accept to be subject to that voting system.



5 References

-  Link to agROBOfood general website: <https://agrobofood.eu/>
-  Link to online application: <https://form.jotformeu.com/91832730723355>
-  Link to online webinars, informative sessions and agROBOfood videos: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCosQLDFzC6Zh-Xrpxm2xYFg>
-  Link to agROBOfood deliverables available online: <https://agrobofood.eu/deliverable/>

6 Annexes

Index of Annexes:

Annex I: Membership and roles definition

Annex II: CCs Application form

6.1 Annex I: AgROBOfood membership and roles definition

In the following annex a clarification of membership roles of current and prospective agROBOfood members is presented:

I) Definition of roles of eco-system members (until EU Grant project ending):

Definition of roles of the eco-system members. Understanding DIH and CC terminology within the AgROBOfood project development (aligned with RODIN definitions):

-  **(Consortium) Partners**⁴: All partners that did sign the AgROBOfood EU project Grant Agreement (39). Our DIH/CC and SMEs mentioned in the project plan.
-  **Associated Partners**: Non-consortium partners involved in the agROBOfood network and mentioned in the Annexes of the AgROBOfood EU Project description of action.
-  **Core Partners**: Core partners are a subset of “(Consortium) Partners” and refer to the group of entities that either are the WP-leaders, co-leaders or leaders a Regional Cluster.

II) agROBOfood Membership definition:

Definition used for new members, and at least from project ending onwards for all project partners.

-  **Members** of the agROBOfood network (Services providers):
 - **CC-members**: A member delivering technical services.
 - **DIH-members**: A member delivering eco-system and business services.
 - **DIH-Node (Orchestrator)**: A DIH-member that coordinates a local network (see RODIN).
-  **Business Members** (Service receivers):
 - **SME/LSE**: Sells products in the agri-food domain or is supplier of sub-products for this domain and is linked to a DIH/CC or DIH-node to some extent.
 - **Other stakeholders** (f.i. end-user associations), entities actively engaged and supporting the agRoboFood network.

⁴ The terms Consortium, Core and Associated Partners will not be used after 4 years (project ending).

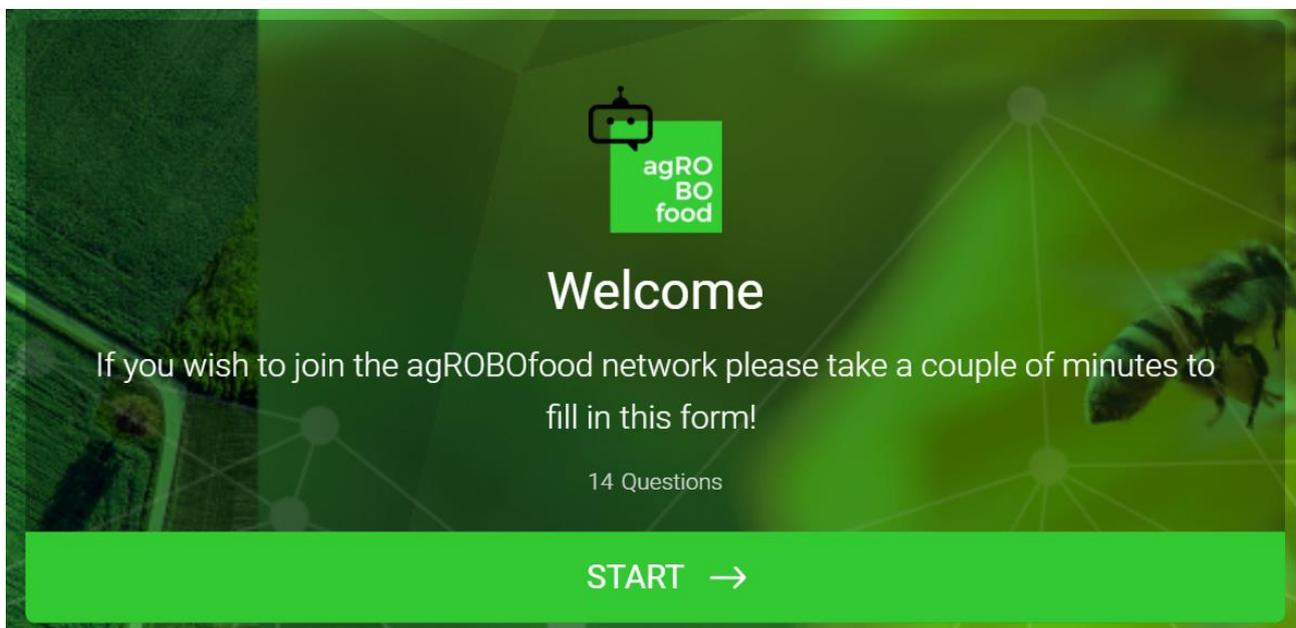
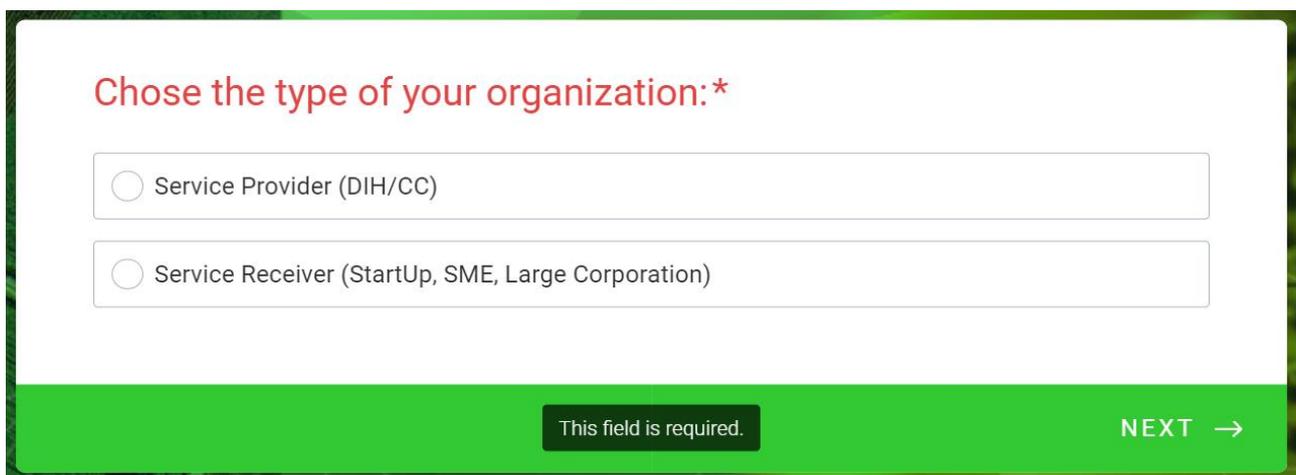
Followers: Other stakeholders, entities interested to follow and/or support the agRoboFood network. Not being registered in our DIH-catalogue. They are put on an e-mail list to receive our Newsletter or are using our social media.

General Public:

- Everybody else, all entitled to view our website but not registered in any way.

6.2 Annex II: CCs Application Form

The form to be filled includes the requesting information as follows (14 questions, taking only a few minutes to complete):



Name of organization*

Please type full name and short name

Please indicate the full name of the organization, as well as a short name (if applicable).

← PREVIOUS

NEXT →

Country*

Please select from drop down list

← PREVIOUS

NEXT →

Contact person*

Please indicate the contact person and the respective contact details

Please indicate the full name of the contact person

← PREVIOUS

NEXT →



Technology services*

Please check the services provided or wish to be received

Collaborative R&D

Contract Research

Data and Interface Standards

Provision of tech infrastructure

Technical Support on Scale-up

Testing and Validation

None

Other

← PREVIOUS

This field is required.

NEXT →

Business services*

Please check the services provided or wish to receive

Access to finance and funding

Incubator/accelerator support

Offering housing

Project Development

Strategy Development

None

Other

← PREVIOUS

This field is required.

NEXT →



Ecosystem services*

Please check the services provided or wish to receive

<input type="checkbox"/> Community Building	<input type="checkbox"/> Ecosystem Learning
<input type="checkbox"/> Representation/Promotion	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy Development
<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

← PREVIOUS

This field is required.

NEXT →

Training Services*

Please check the services provided or wish to receive

<input type="checkbox"/> Skills training and education	<input type="checkbox"/> None
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

← PREVIOUS

This field is required.

NEXT →

Main Agri-Food sector(s) served*

Please check the main sectors served

<input type="checkbox"/> Arable Farming	<input type="checkbox"/> Fruits
<input type="checkbox"/> Livestock	<input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouses
<input type="checkbox"/> Aquaculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Dairy
<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/> Food processing
<input type="checkbox"/> Agri-food logistics	<input type="checkbox"/> Agri-food retail
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

← PREVIOUS

This field is required.

NEXT →



Robotics competencies already available*

Data collection/ Acquisition

<input type="checkbox"/> Sensors	<input type="checkbox"/> Data interpretation
<input type="checkbox"/> Artificial intelligence	<input type="checkbox"/> None
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

← PREVIOUS

This field is required.

NEXT →

Robotics competencies already available*

Analytics and decision making

<input type="checkbox"/> Big Data	<input type="checkbox"/> Data interpretation
<input type="checkbox"/> Artificial intelligence	<input type="checkbox"/> None
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

← PREVIOUS

This field is required.

NEXT →

Robotics competencies already available*

Automation and control

<input type="checkbox"/> Actuation	<input type="checkbox"/> Manipulation
<input type="checkbox"/> Handling	<input type="checkbox"/> None
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

← PREVIOUS

This field is required.

NEXT →



*

By submitting this form we hereby state that: i) we support the agROBOfood initiative for developing a network of Robotics Digital Innovation Hubs throughout Europe; and ii) we are joining the arROBOfood Network and the details provided above can be used for the purposes of the project (Catalogue, Innovation Portal, etc). Thank you very much for filling in our form. We will contact you as soon as possible about your eligibility. If in the meantime you have questions, you can contact us on info@agrobofood.eu.

I agree to [terms & conditions](#). *

← PREVIOUS

NEXT →



END OF DOCUMENT

