



Africa-Europe International Research Consortium Platform

A long-term Platform for connecting research and innovation institutions, private sector, funders, policy makers and other actors for Food Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture

Highlights



Why the Africa–Europe International Research Consortium



Food and Nutrition Security and the Sustainability of Agriculture (FNSSA) are top priorities in the ‘Green Transition’ in Europe and Africa. However, there exist a number of differentiated FNSSA actors/ initiatives/ strategies/ programmes at national, sub-regional and continental level. It has therefore been challenging to implement some of the FNSSA goals as laid out in the 10-year roadmap and see the impact and paradigm shifts, because the efforts, actions and networks within this sector are highly fragmented. This fragmentation can be attributed to two main causes; Absence of a coordination infrastructure and Lack of knowledge management mechanisms. The overall objective of the IRC therefore, is to improve coordination and create synergy between the many R&I programmes, initiatives, and actors with the aim of improving the FNSSA agenda in Africa and Europe.

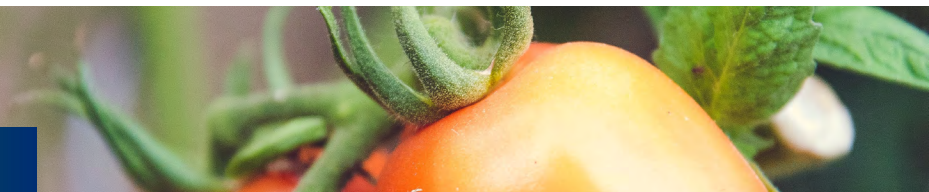
By addressing the fragmentation issue, the IRC aims to achieve four main objectives; 1) reducing the hassle of identifying partners in R&I and finding appropriate funding opportunities, 2) Boosting innovation by showcasing solutions that work, supporting creativity and expertise of all FNSSA stakeholders at national, sub-regional, and continental level. 3) facilitating the liaison between, on one side, all these many R&I programmes, initiatives, projects and actors, and, on the other side, the specific STI policy dialogue (known as the HLPD) between the AU and the EU.

What kind of Platform is the IRC and which stakeholders can opt for membership / criteria



The IRC is a network of networks meant to catalyse improved coordination of research and innovation for increased scaling and impact. IRC membership is open to all public and private stakeholders involved in either funding, implementing or applying research and innovation (R&I) in an AU-EU context. These stakeholders encompass academia and research organisations, national and international R&I funders, policy makers, private sector, SMEs, and farmer and civil society organisations. Members support an enhanced coordination of the activities. A well-balanced representation of youth and women is aimed at.

As the IRC is meant to be a long-term partnership, members will sign a membership declaration and be willing to engage in a long-term membership for the duration of 5 years+ starting end 2023 and be willing to pay a minimum fee (to be decided by the founding members).



What value will the IRC add to existing R & I landscape



By being part of the FNSSA Platform, it will be easier to:

- interact with R&I partners from both Europe and Africa;
- enhance the impact of R&I investments, and scaling-up through alignment and synergies;
- gain access to a Database of Projects, tailored information and relevant knowledge, to adapt it and build on it;
- find the right partner(s), who may have the resources, knowledge and network connections, to take your ideas one step further;
- increase the visibility of what you are doing and what you are planning to do by connecting to a high-level AU-EU initiative.

What are the IRC thematic priorities and Functions and services?



The activities of the IRC are focused on the priorities of the FNSSA Roadmap. This includes; 1. Sustainable intensification 2. Agriculture and food systems for nutrition 3. Expansion and improvement of agricultural markets and trade 4. Cross-cutting issues include improving coordination between projects, supporting innovation processes and strengthening collaborative capacities of R&I communities, etc.

The functions and services include;

1. Increase synergies and coherence between actors; - Identification of priorities for R&I, Alignment of the many R&I programmes, initiatives, and actors, Showcase solutions that work, 2. Develop a learning environment and knowledge base including a long-term MEL concept - Regular update on projects, programmes, and national, regional, and continental policies, Facilitating finding appropriate funding opportunities in line with relevant policy developments, Successive growing of an AU-EU Knowledge Management and Communication Framework, 3. Establish a long-term and sustainable governance and funding mechanism for the IRC - A sustainable and inclusive structure of governance and funding, 4. Liaison with the AU-EU HLPD Bureau - Organisation and institutionalization of a regular dialogues with the AU-EU HLPD institutions 5. Capacity development in FNSSA domain - capacity audits and situation analysis to be conducted for relevant stakeholder categories from various administrative and geographic scales in the FNSSA domain in Africa and Europe, to propose capacity development agendas in the roadmaps

How will the IRC be set up and Funded



The IRC is proposed to have a light governance structure including a 4 functional levels; strategic– General Assembly and council, Advisory – External Advisory Committee, Operational – Working Groups and Support – Secretariat with a rotational coordination structure.

The IRC will work to trigger funds into the research and innovation actions. Two types of funding are envisaged through 1. Acquisition of funds to fuel partnership and coordination and 2. Acquisition of funders, who join the network with their funding schemes. The IRC strategically aims at attracting funders' networks

IRC development process & principles– Want to Join the Process



The IRC development process has been based on principles of Inclusiveness, commitment, pragmatism and co-creation. So far, the IRC has engaged over 2,500 individuals and organisations through LEAP4FNSSA stakeholder engagements and eConsultations. About 300 Expressions of Interests have been received from 77 institutions (34 African countries and 17 European countries). Expressions of interest is ongoing. This will be followed by substantive declaration of membership at institutional level to establish founding members before the upcoming launch of the IRC in September 14-16, 2022.

Use the following links to:

Express your interest to join the IRC - <https://www.research.net/r/LEAP4FNSSA>

LEAP4FNSSA Writeshop and GA

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwtce6sqjgvGNYvI12Un2p4MXInNcXMYqK7>

Participation will enable you contribute in the co-creation process and join in the decisions on the functions and services, membership criteria, governance, funding strategies, organisation and activities of the IRC

Want to know more?

For more information, please contact the LEAP4FNSSA Coordinator: Irene Annor-Frempong leap4fnssacoordination@faraafrica.org or visit the following websites; www.leap4fnssa.eu.

