



# WELCOME

TO OUR 3<sup>rd</sup> FITR E-ZINE!

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### Introduction

The FITR project is entering its final stage. Currently the main focus is on preparing the pilot tests of the training course 'The Essential Toolkit to develop a successful Food Incubator' in the different partner countries. Meanwhile, partners are continuing the development of their regional partnerships and action plans. Mid-January the 4<sup>th</sup> partnership meeting took place at the offices of Canice Consulting in Lisburn, the UK. And as the project is in its final stage, the project results will be launched and promoted during the final FITR event in Roscommon on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June.

Read about it in this FITR e-zine!

Test our training course and explore how to set up and manage your own Food Incubator!



Soon we will start testing our course curriculum for **'The Essential Toolkit to develop a successful Food Incubator'**.

The course consists of 6 modules that guides change makers in local government, development agencies, communities, businesses, not-for profits and others interested on the topics and skills most needed to set up and manage a Food Incubator. The content of the modules are built on a logical sequence starting with **research and feasibility** in Module 1. Then Module 2 presents you **different models of food incubators**. Module 3 concerns the **business strategy**. Module 4 is about **creating and stimulating demand**. **Accessing resources and financing** is the main topic of Module 5 and finally in Module 6 you will learn about **collaboration & communities**.

Are you interested? We need your opinion on the materials! Get involved in the pilot test and let us know what you think. Sign up by sending an email to Ciaran Cunningham, manager at Banbridge District Enterprise Ltd.

Email address: [ciaran@bdelonline.com](mailto:ciaran@bdelonline.com)

## FITR Goals

We aim to forge an effective & replicable model to provide the learning and structure to develop kitchens & incubators in local communities. In this project we will:

- Establish 4 Regional Partnerships to study and capture best practice in the development of Food incubators;
- Create & publish "The Food Incubator Guide" to facilitate the replication of these Regional Partnerships across Europe;
- Develop a course curriculum, guiding Vocational Education and business development practitioners on how to establish a Food incubator;
- Publish an online toolkit focusing on "how-to" strategies for food hub establishment and operation;
- Trial and publish the toolkit and curriculum online for free and widely publicise it to encourage usage in other regions;
- Organise four National & International events to evangelise our work and ensure widespread uptake.

## FITR Benefits

Management and staff from business development agencies, local community groups, VET & HEI providers, chambers of commerce and enterprise centres will benefit from:

- An improved understanding of the potential of food incubators and their role as a driver for regional entrepreneurship in a fast growing sector;
- Direct professional development, organizational learning and an increase in professional reputation;
- The development of a robust regional partnership formula for use in the food sector which can also prove useful in other sector in community development;
- Improved network links to food enterprises, and other support agencies and stakeholders throughout Europe;
- Access to unique proven tools and operational strategies enabling you to further the development of food businesses and maximise their contribution to regional growth.

## Canice Consulting hosts 4th partnership meeting

Mid-January Canice Consulting welcomed the FITR partnership in Lisburn to host the **4th partnership meeting**. Main items on the agenda for this meeting were the FITR course curriculum, the delivery of the pilot test and the planning of the final FITR event in Roscommon. It was a very productive meeting with valuable discussions. Orla Casey from Momentum Marketing Services, responsible for the **development of the course**, presented the modules upon which partners were asked to provide input and feedback. Partners also presented and shared their **ideas and plans for the pilot test**. Amanda Mee from Roscommon LEADER Partnership informed the FITR partners about the **concluding event** which will take place on the 2nd of June in Roscommon, Ireland. Read on for more information!

## Final FITR event during All Ireland and All Nations Sheep Shearing and Wool Handling Championships 2017!

The project results will be launched and celebrated during the final FITR event in Roscommon on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June. The programme starts with a **visit to Castlemine Farm** before setting up the **Final EU Showcase event** in Kiltoom where Mairead McGuinness, MEP and **Vice President of the European Parliament** will launch the event. Partners will present the **FITR project results** to a large invited audience including the toolkit, regional partnership, action plans and the course. The different modules of the course will be discussed via a **panel discussion** with prominent participants including Brendan Allen, leading food entrepreneur, Louise Ward, Head of Enterprise, Local Enterprise Office, Mena Doherty, Senior Commercial Manager at Bank of Ireland and Jonathan Keane, Head Chef at the Lodge at Ashford Castle and international food company KEPAK. Jonathan Keane will prepare a local feast in a **live Demo Kitchen on site** which will display what a “virtual timeshared Kitchen” would actually look like. And last but certainly not least, this will happen as a fringe event during the “All Ireland and All Nations **Sheep Shearing and Wool Handling Championships 2017**”. All in all this promises to be a great closure of the FITR project!

To attend – email [amee@ridc.ie](mailto:amee@ridc.ie)

