

Consultation on the EIT

Response from the FOODforce Network

Q1. How do you perceive the mission of the EIT in the EU context? Despite notable efforts in some sectors and in a few EU Member States, *industry and the publicly-funded research sector are generally only poorly connected*. Most science and technology graduates emerge with little or no awareness of the business and entrepreneurial opportunities that could form a key part of their career development. An important aim should be to enhance the contribution of EU science and technology to economic and social development, and to spread best practices throughout the continent. It is insufficient for a relatively few pinnacles of entrepreneurial activity and innovation to be established in business areas corresponding to the themes of KICs without any dissemination to the broader horizon of European business activity.

The over-riding requirement for optimising the interaction of research, education and innovation across all disciplines and sectors is *effective communication* and this must be a priority within each element of the Knowledge Triangle and for each KIC theme. It is very important to recognise that changing the culture of European stakeholders towards entrepreneurial activity and business development will be a considerable challenge and will need medium- to long-term commitment and investment. This is particularly true in sectors such as food¹ where the make-up of the industry sector, almost exclusively SMEs and microenterprises, adds to the severity of this challenge.

The experience of the EIT and its KICs is relatively short – just three KICs and only 2 years of their development. It is, therefore, vital that the EIT focuses on consolidation and creation of critical mass, and does not expand its activities into areas such as: New business creation [Q2], Generation of new educational programmes [Q33], Foster creation of learning communities [Q38] and Supporting European stakeholders in their quest to attract international talent [Q40]. Such broadening will limit its ability to focus on its primary aim – to be a key driver of EU sustainable growth and competitiveness through the stimulation of world-leading innovation. *Whilst the EIT should not take on a leadership role in these areas*, it should certainly influence and underpin such developments so that Europe’s response to the educational, scientific and business challenges of innovation and entrepreneurial activity are aligned.

It is very important that “innovation” in the context of the EIT and its KICs is taken to mean *both technological innovation and social innovation*, and the proposals for future KICs should be evaluated in this wider context; our FOODforce responses to this consultation should be taken in this wider innovation context. It is also very important that the educational aim should be focussed around the development of people from business and research who will be braver and less risk-averse since the point has regularly been made – most recently at the June 10th conference on the Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation – *that risk-taking and step changes in innovation, as opposed to incremental innovation, go hand in hand*. The challenge to some business sectors, such as food and drink, is that such risk is not readily undertaken by SMEs that make up by far the great majority of companies.

It is rather surprising that the present consultation is separated from, and unable to feed into, the development of the EIT’s Strategic Innovation Agenda, SIA, which has been drafted, developed and submitted to the EC [in April 2011] without the extensive [external] stakeholder consultation that is now being undertaken. Openness and transparency demands that such a situation does not reoccur since it is not conducive to the development of an EIT that is based on shared trust and confidence between Board Members, staff in Budapest, CEOs of current and future KICs and their partners, and the wider EU stakeholder communities who are committed to developing and optimising innovation and entrepreneurial activities in themes which are not associated with KICs.

How relevant is it for the EIT to deliver on the following issues:

Q2. New business creation through innovation. The European Paradox, referred to in Q26e, is a barrier to Europe’s competitiveness in global markets. Europe is faced not just with competition with the Pacific Rim and North America, but increasingly with China, India and Brazil; successful competition with the latter can only result from value-addition. *However, the EIT should be a facilitator and not a business and wealth creator. RELEVANT [but as a facilitator]*.

¹ According to **Data and Trends of the European Food and Drink Industry 2010**, www.ciaa.eu, in 2007 SMEs comprised 99.1% [308,000] of EU companies, being responsible for 48.2% [€450 billion] of EU food and drink turnover and 62.8% [2.9 million] of food and drink employees.

Q3. Transfer/valorisation of higher education, research and innovation in activities in a business context.

This is very important but in many sectors there is no evidential consensus on the skill-base required of the 21st C scientist and technologist. It is very important that the socio-economic sciences are included in the higher education and research sectors since these have a key role to play in ensuring that consumers are able and willing to accept the products, services and tools that are produced as a result of effective and timely innovation. It is frequently at the interface of interdisciplinary studies that the most useful and exploitable results are obtained. Higher education should encourage and direct the scientists and technologists of the future towards these interfacial areas. *An awareness of the importance of transferring scientific discoveries to industry for the benefit of society should be stimulated during secondary education.* **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q4. Cutting edge and innovation-driven research in areas of key economic and societal interest.

More effective means should be used *to determine and respond to societal interests* rather than to “educate” society to products and services produced for them without discussion and dialogue. An arrogant assumption that scientists and technologists know best what society needs is no longer acceptable.

However, it is also important to emphasise that cutting edge research cannot always be translated into the business environment and that, in sectors such as food that are dominated by SMEs and microenterprises, it is frequently the transfer of more basic scientific knowledge that will deliver incremental innovation and drive competitiveness. The emphasis on transferring cutting edge research is clearly relevant to the development of the three existing KICs, but it should not be imposed on all business sectors. **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q5. Development of talented, skilled and entrepreneurial people through education and training activities.

It should be recognized that “training by doing” will be a crucial element of developing a flexibly workforce aware of the opportunities and benefits that accrue from entrepreneurial activity. Spreading of experience and best practices of, and enthusiasm for, innovation and entrepreneurship must involve peer groups, within SMEs, secondary and tertiary education, and science and technology.

A culture of innovation needs to be developed and nourished and prizes and publicity should be offered within EU Member States to promote young entrepreneurs and those working in SMEs. Limiting such awards too specifically to the thematic areas of current KICs is too constraining and will send out exactly the wrong message. See response to **Q6.** **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q6. Dissemination of best practices and systemic knowledge sharing. This is vital if the EU, and the ERA, is not to become divided into first and second division countries and/or regions, and into thematic areas that are considered innovative and others that are not.. See answers to **Q10** and **Q36.** **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q7. Are there any other key areas in which the EIT should aim to achieve impact?

Whilst the gender balance in universities, research centres and businesses *at the lower levels* may be satisfactory this is not the case at more elevated levels and certainly not in SME start ups. The EIT Governing Board and its individual KICs must commit to addressing this imbalance and there should be a measurable deliverable addressing this aspect.

In terms of added value, how relevant are the following characteristics of the EIT in pursuing its objectives:

Q8. The balanced approach to the Knowledge Triangle, addressing education, research and innovation simultaneously and integrally. **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q9. The focus on excellence. There are opportunities for the EIT and its KICs to benefit from the knowledge and best practice gained by the ERC in the FP7 Ideas pillar which also focuses on *excellence*. However, “excellence” and “cutting edge” are not synonymous and the key aspect is that innovation [like policy] must be underpinned by reliable and robust scientific and technological data

[see Q4]. The overall partnership within a KIC may have a high threshold of success and significant impact even if not all of its partners have the strongest reputations for excellence; the synergism of the partnership outweighs the record of its individual partners. Indeed, the inclusion of enthusiastic but less-experienced partners is crucial for disseminating and spreading an entrepreneurial culture. Innovation can be both incremental and step change, and both are important as indicators of the impact of the EIT and its KICs. **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q10. The co-location model, bringing people together in an innovative environment and connecting regional strengths to a global scale. The co-location model will not address the issue of *pan-European* innovation if all KICs are located in economically-advanced countries of the EU with only the EIT itself having a Central European location, in Budapest. Attention must be given to ensuring that *all regions of Europe* are able to benefit from the EIT's innovative approaches that will help their industries and SMEs to prosper, their economies to grow and their young people to develop and exploit entrepreneurial skills.

There is considerable knowledge and experience in Europe of “clustering” - for example, at Øresund, which supports regional cross-border cooperation between Denmark and Sweden, and within the French *Pôles de compétitivité* - and this should be captured and exploited by the KICs. **RELEVANT.**

Q11. The focus on people as the main driving force for innovation. There is a particular need to focus on young people, who will increasingly be the educators, scientists and technologists and entrepreneurs who will drive the EIT forward. They must be supported, encouraged and mentored by their older, more experienced and better networked colleagues. Whilst degrees and diplomas focussing on innovation and entrepreneurial activity are important in their own right and as a means of creating and promoting the EIT brand, *they should not be too closely linked to the thematic areas of individual KICs*. In addition, a much larger number of young people will play key roles in future innovative actions through less formalised training and it is important that this should also be recognised – especially where it is occurring in SMEs. See also the response to Q7. **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q12. The business-like approach to funding.

Q13. The creation of new funding and organisational models for innovation. These must complement, *rather than duplicate*, existing funding mechanisms. Consideration should be given to managing nationally-funded innovation programmes in a cross-border manner that would offer synergistic added-value [paralleling the JPI concept of funding cross-border research]. **RELEVANT.**

Q14. Are there any other characteristics the EIT should embrace to achieve its objectives? It must facilitate effective communication between the different KICs, between the critical mass of KICs and the EIT Board, and also be a timely and efficient disseminator of knowledge, experience and best practices gained within the EIT/KICs to the wider education/research/business partnerships in other thematic areas.

Q15. Within the Common Strategic Framework, the EIT has a distinctive role to play, as it links up all three sides of the Knowledge Triangle. However, it should recognise the work that has been done in ETPs and JTIs to bring the research and business communities together and should look to identify opportunities to work with these organisations to optimise delivery and impact **AGREE.**

Q16. The “societal challenges” approach will facilitate the creation of synergies and interconnections with other EU and national initiatives. It will only do so if it is actively and effectively managed, otherwise there will be considerable potential for duplication of effort and wastage of human and financial resources. **AGREE.**

Q17. The EIT should seek to actively generate synergies with other initiatives in the area of education, research and innovation, thereby creating additional value. FULLY AGREE.

Q17b. Which ones? And how can strategic coherence be achieved between them and the EIT? Exploiting and optimising the impact of innovation requires that the EIT and its KICs complement the totality of EU research and innovation funding – currently FP7, CIP and Cohesion funding [Structural Funds]. These three will be drawn together with the EIT within the Common Strategic Framework for Future Research and Innovation, CSFRI. Within the pillars of FP7, for example, there will be close interactions with the problem-driven/stakeholder-benefitting activities within the **FP7 Cooperation pillar** [and which will increase given the likely focus of the next Framework Programme on Grand Challenges – through the translation of science and technology into products, tools and services that will be competitive in the global market], the fundamental, blue-sky research of the **FP7 Ideas pillar** [much of which will have innovation or exploitation potential], the training and mobility activities of the **FP7 People pillar** and areas of the **FP7 Capacities pillar**; for example, Infrastructures and Research for SMEs (through which examples of innovation can be promoted and entrepreneurial activity increased). These aims, targets and impact of these pillars, with some modification, will be continued within the CSFRI. Regional and cohesion funds will be important for establishing innovation-targeted actions that are a key element of the “Stairway to Excellence”. See response to **Q41**.

Q18. By bridging world-class excellence and regional outreach, KICs co-location centres will contribute to the formulation and implementation of smart specialisation strategies. See answer to **Q10**. **SOMEWHAT AGREE.**

Q19. How relevant is the bottom-up approach of the KIC model, i.e. autonomy and flexibility in defining the governance model and structure in order to adapt to specificities of the priority theme and the market linked thereto? **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q20. How relevant is the participation of the private sector to the success of KICs? The EIT has been established with the mission of “*being the catalyst for a step change in the EU’s innovation capacity and impact*” and the objective of bringing together the three elements of the Triangle of Knowledge, which includes the private sector. Innovative ways to engage with private sector organisations that do not traditionally support science and technology and innovation, such as insurance companies should be developed and exploited. **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q20b. What are the main preconditions for high private sector participation in a KIC? Better communication between the research community and industry, and mutual understanding that both sectors must work together to deliver significant returns on investment. It would appear from the three KICs already underway that the initial stimulus for their development came from universities and research organisations that were already strongly networked and interactive, and that the role of industry became more significant as the proposals developed. As with any cross-border, interdisciplinary and multi-sector activity, there needs to be an initial period when confidence and trust are developed and instilled amongst the partners – something which cannot be rushed if impact is to be optimised.

Q21. How relevant is the focus on measurable deliverables for the success of the KICs? Benchmarking success and impact is crucial to identify best [and less-good] practices and spread these across the EIT and its KICs, to regions and Member States of the EU, and their business, education and research stakeholders. Historically, too many projects supported by EU Framework Programmes and national funds have been poorly managed and monitored so that deliverables and impact that were included in the original proposal and the DoW never materialised. *This is, particularly for the industry partners, very frustrating and leads to their opinion that too many scientists and technologists only pay lip service to knowledge transfer and its benefits.*

Such deliverables might include submission of interdisciplinary proposals or prototypes, business growth, new ventures and development of public/private partnerships. Benchmarking innovation is a global requirement and criteria developed in highly innovative Third Countries and regions must be identified, captured and adapted for use in Europe. EIT degrees and diplomas must place a high priority on the selection and use of tangible bench-marks to measure impact. **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q22. Are there any other features that EIT should embrace in order to further enhance the KIC model? If yes, which ones? Attention needs to be given, before the number of KICs grows too large, to consider how best to exchange experience, best practice, novel funding mechanisms and leverage that have been gained between KICs and between co-location centres. Once again, optimum impact will depend on clear, targeted and timely communication. Synergy between research and innovation leads not only to societal and economic benefits but also to the creation of increased opportunities for further developments.

The question posed here describes “the KIC model” [singular] but given the diversity of European business sectors it is surely better to admit that these are heterogeneous and so require “KIC models”. The EIT’s mission, referred to in answer to **Q20**, is *to be the catalyst for a step change in the EU’s innovation capacity and impact*. One class of catalyst, enzymes, brings about only certain, specific reactions and, hence, shows specificity. This concept of specificity should also be recognised by the EIT. Business sectors are different and the adoption of a one-size-fits-all approach will be unable to deliver the impact that is sought. Such diversity explains the differences between the impacts of European Technology Platforms and their qualitative difference to Joint Technology Initiatives. *The EIT should, as a matter of urgency, conduct an analysis of the characteristics of the major European business sectors so as to cluster them and subsequently develop relevant “kic” models for each.*

Q23. How relevant are the co-location centres to the success of the KICs? See answer to **Q10. RELEVANT.**

Q24. What can be the potential benefits of co-location centres for the country/region in which they are located? They will act as a focus for the dissemination of knowledge and best practice nationally and regionally, and will also stimulate other organisations across the business, research, education spectrum to become more aware of the opportunities and benefits of innovation.

Q25. Are there any other measures the EIT should promote in order to maximise the benefits of co-location across Europe? External evaluation of the EIT² suggested a lack of clarity in guidance about co-location offered to applicants which, perhaps, reflects differences of interpretation amongst EIT personnel and assessors. This must be resolved before the 2011 round of KIC proposal submissions. The co-location concept reinforces the importance of knowledge, experience and best practice being effectively disseminated from the KIC to other EU Member States and regions of Europe.

How relevant are the following criteria for selecting KIC themes with a true innovation potential? A more relevant question would be to accept these criteria and to rank them in order of importance for the thematic areas of the three funded KICs and for those being submitted in the second round of submissions. Either each sector is different or they are all substantially the same. In either case, the knowledge gained is useful. To ask these questions across all business sectors in the absence of any prioritisation does not seem to be very useful. It might be expected that the diversity of business sectors, mentioned in response to **Q22**, would lead to different rankings of these criteria.

Q26. Address major societal challenges which Europe faces today, to contribute to the delivery of the EU 2020 Agenda. It is, in general, the major societal challenges that provide a driver for innovative products, services and tools which will, in turn, deliver the greatest benefits to industry, consumers and other stakeholders. **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q26b. Economic and societal relevance, expressed for example in % of the EU GDP or the research intensity. **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q26c. Bring about sustainable and systemic impact; measured in terms of, for example, new educated, entrepreneurial people, new technologies, new business creation and/or social value creation. **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

² External Evaluation of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology – Final Report on Evaluation, May 2011.

Q26d. Blend a critical mass of excellent research, education and innovation stakeholders, which would not otherwise unite, in new, long-term configurations. RELEVANT.

Q26e. Address the European Paradox, i.e. select themes where Europe has a strong research base but a weak innovation performance, to boost market translation. This describes the European food and drink sector perfectly. **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q26f. Be able to mobilise investment and long-term commitment from the business sectors; have an existing market for its products or services or be able to create new ones. HIGHLY RELEVANT.

Q26g. Require trans-disciplinary approaches and the development of new types of education across the boundaries of disciplines. e-Learning must become an essential tool for further developing this potential so that the knowledge, experience and contacts of the best educational, academic, scientific and entrepreneurial professionals in Europe can be widely spread and, hence, optimise overall impact. The broader educational base should still be given in many teaching institutions to keep up the internal competition within Europe. However, opportunities to introduce innovation and entrepreneurial elements into the curricula should be sought and supported. **RELEVANT.**

Q26h. Offer potential for impact on the global scale and engaging in international cooperation with excellent partners from Third Countries. RELEVANT.

Q27. Are there any other criteria you would consider relevant for selecting the KIC themes? In the face of global competition with countries and regions that have significantly lower labour and/or raw material costs, the EU's ability to compete must be based on value-addition. The Lead Market Initiative concept, having a focus on demand-side innovation, is one that is particularly well suited to exploitation through the EIT/KIC structures.

It is stated¹ that the process of KIC application requires an investment of €0.3-1million which, although a relatively small figure compared to the potential outcome of successful innovation, is significant for business sectors dominated by SMEs. In addition, this investment demands that calls for future KICs are targeted in a manner that does not lead to many unsuccessful bids. *Mechanisms should be devised to enable partnerships involved in unsuccessful KIC bids to secure effective communication with KICs that have already been established* since the former will have established links between the educational, research and business sectors, developed the necessary bonds of confidence and trust and have the enthusiasm which will have the potential to stimulate and underpin innovation in that business sector. *It must be recognised by the EIT that a business sector that fails to fulfil all the requirements and conditions of a KIC does not mean that it has no potential for, or interest in, innovation and in delivering the benefits of that innovation to stakeholders.*

How suitable are the following themes to be treated in a KIC? It is obvious that the industry-based Board Members of the EIT cannot reflect the totality of EU business interests. This will be even more so should the EIT Board be reduced in line with the recommendations of the External Evaluation¹ which would mean only 8 independent members. If the EIT is not to be regarded as an inward-looking club that addresses the interests of its KICs [which will be drawn from sectors that already understand the importance, opportunities and impacts of innovation] then it must establish effective communication and dissemination measures that will encourage and stimulate incremental innovation change in other business sectors. Such changes will require well-trained and flexible personnel, scientific [including the social sciences and humanities] and technological excellence, and entrepreneurial skills as well as all the other characteristics identified by KICs, albeit in lesser numbers.

Q28a. Health

Q28b. Ageing population. See answer to Q31.

Q28c. Healthy childhood. See answer to Q31.

Q28d. Food. The EU food and drink industry is the largest manufacturing sector in Europe with a turnover of €65 billion in 2009. *It is a sector which has impact on every European citizen: on their health, on the environment, on the economy as the major employer and also on the cultural diversity and national and regional identity.* The European food industry is facing more and more competition, for example from the BRIC countries. From 1999 to 2007 the European market share of global food production *decreased from 25% to 18%.* However, the Grand Societal Challenges such as Food Security, Health, Food Safety, Climate Change and Sustainability will give the European Food industry opportunities to enhance its global competitiveness. A focus on enhancing the value of the food chain and optimising its overall sustainability, rather than focussing too narrowly on any of its many individual stages is also becoming increasingly important

The EU food and drink industry cannot hope to compete with the new economies of Brazil, India and China on the costs of raw materials or labour and must, therefore, compete by *adding value.* Attracting, developing and keeping talent will increasingly be the major driving force for innovation. Future students need to be able to answer to the future needs of the food business, consumers and policymakers. To do this they will need to possess cutting-edge knowledge, have an understanding of knowledge-based innovation, be more flexible and entrepreneurial than current students and be effective communicators. *A Food KIC focus on multidisciplinary education will be indispensable for exploring interdisciplinary commercial opportunities.*

A Food KIC will encourage better coordination between universities in the European food science and technology educational system, and encourage “entrepreneurial courses” that are specially designed for the food sector and which demonstrate the larger role that the concept and practice of innovation must play in higher education and in retraining. These broader curricula should be developed in collaboration with food businesses. Increased student and staff mobility is a key factor that will internationalise both food education and future students. Greater mobility of students and professionals within and beyond Europe will provide the food industry with more innovative and entrepreneurial human resources. A Food KIC will stimulate mobility among both professionals and students, between industry and universities, and will facilitate interactions between the broader stakeholder communities.

World-class best practices, professional and complementary skills, new models of entrepreneurial education and innovative tools that are developed within KICs should be effectively transmitted to academic and research centres in EU Member States using established channels [for example, in the food area these could include the ETP Food for Life and its 34 National Food Platforms, the Confederation of Food and Drink Industries of the EU (CIAA), the European Federation of Food Science and Technology (EFFoST) and relevant FP7 KBBE thematic projects. As with Q2, above, it is important to stress that the EIT should act as a facilitator in this area.

An external perspective suggests that, within The Netherlands, there are significant interactions between the education of students, the practice of science and technology and a culture of innovation and entrepreneurial activity. Moreover, this country has recognized the need for public/private partnerships that support and fund research that is relevant to industry, consumers, policymakers and other stakeholders. The development and operation of such PPPs in prioritised business areas [Technological Top Institutes, TTIs, including the Top Institute of Food and Nutrition located in Wageningen] will further promote a national innovation landscape, strengthen the brand image of a Technological Top Institute and stimulate young people to choose rewarding and challenging careers in food chain science and technology. *TTIs precede the EIT by almost a decade. Dutch universities, Top Institutes and industries played a significant role in the development of European Technology Platforms and Joint Technology Initiatives, and their involvement at the centre of a prospective FOOD KIC provides very considerable advantages and experience.* Whilst several other EU Member States, including Denmark and France have established strong education/research/business activities, none has had as much experience as The Netherlands.

The enthusiasm and commitment of stakeholders in the food chain industries is represented in the Foodbest network, www.foodbestoresund.eu, which is designed to prepare the way for a proposal on a Food KIC. **HIGHLY SUITABLE.**

Q28e. Sustainable cities.

Q28f. Natural resources.

Q28g. Biotechnology.

Q28h. Safe societies.

Q28i. Added value manufacturing.

Q28j. Human learning and learning environments.

Q29. Are there any other themes that you would suggest be treated in a KIC?

Manufacturing sectors that have a relatively short time-to-market will be particularly attractive to venture capitalists and to the EIT as evidence of its ability to stimulate and underpin European competitiveness. Particular consideration must be given to the interfaces between different KICs, for example between those addressing Health, Food and Biotechnology. The increasing impact of ICT on these and other thematic areas should also be considered since this will facilitate networking of KICs and less-formal innovation clusters.

The correlation between step change innovation and execution of science and technology that is not risk averse has an important consequence for business sectors that are made up of SME who are unable to engage in such risky activities to the same extent as multinationals. This situation should provide a stimulus for the EIT to develop alternative innovation models for businesses with industry sectors dominated by SMEs.

Q30. What is the ideal scope for a KIC theme? How much leeway should KICs have in defining the specific topic within a broader theme? This should be primarily determined by the KIC but there is a pressing need to ensure that proposals are considered by the EIT Board and other KICs so that potential for duplication/synergy can be identified.

Q31. Would it make sense to establish several KICs in one and the same theme? Not initially; the three that have already been established, Climate KIC (*Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation*), KIC Innoenergy (*Sustainable energy*) and EIT-ICT Labs (*Future ICT*) are all clearly distinguishable and the next round of selection should focus on similarly well-defined and well-differentiated thematic areas. Since KICs will be introduced relatively slowly to subdivide existing KICs would simply reduce the coverage of business sectors. Thus it is suggested, that within the listing in **Q28**, *Healthy childhood* and *Ageing population* initially be included within a broad Health theme.

As experience in the EIT and its KICs develops and the concept of public/private partnerships become part of mainstream EU thinking it might be possible for *some of the individual KICs to become clusters of mini-KICs*. There would, of course, have to be very effective management and monitoring of such clusters to ensure no duplication of effort or development of gaps. However, caution is advised, especially as the critical mass of the EIT has been identified as 6-9 KICs¹ and it is still only 2 years since the first three were established.

Q32. How relevant is it for the EIT to promote entrepreneurial attitudes and creative thinking? This is particularly important for sectors where innovation poses a particular challenge and opportunity. It will be vital to capture, adapt and exploit novel entrepreneurial and innovation models, and also to ensure that consumer-driven innovations are particularly to the fore. **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q33. How relevant is it for the EIT to generate new educational programmes that create new profiles of entrepreneurial and knowledgeable talent? The EIT/KIC role should be to support and facilitate, rather than to lead. **RELEVANT [but as a facilitator].**

Q34. How relevant is it for the EIT to promote EIT-labelled degrees and diplomas? *Such degrees and diplomas should be based upon a criterion of excellence rather than being awarded for average or good performance.* Only in this way can the EIT brand have optimal impact internationally. Academic, research and business organisations demonstrating consistent innovative responses to global and societal challenges (assessed by relevant medium-term performance indicators) should be awarded prestigious Innovation Flags which can be flown and promoted (in a similar manner to the Blue Flags indicating Beach Quality). The possibility and practice of bureaucratic systems and committees, which has been known to occur in tertiary education, supporting the award of diplomas and degrees must be avoided.

However, “degrees and diplomas” as mentioned in the question, would be most relevant to academics and analogous awards should be considered for industry and SMEs, and for their staff who have undergone retraining and, as a result, demonstrate entrepreneurial mindsets. Given the requirement for the education, research and business sectors to be fully committed and aligned in support of innovation and entrepreneurial activity, particular attention must be given to ensure that “diplomas” and “degrees” awarded within an academic setting *are not, and are not perceived to be, of lesser value and importance* than their equivalents awarded within the business sector. Different education/research/business cultures within Europe might imply that such awards would be differently regarded in different EU Member States. On balance the possibility of such awards resulting in “two tiers” of activity within a KIC suggests that this should only be introduced after pilot studies. **OF SOME RELEVANCE.**

Q35. Are there any other elements the EIT should foster in order to unleash the innovative and entrepreneurial potential of people? A culture of innovation and entrepreneurial activity needs to be established in Europe and steps should first be taken in secondary education. This would benefit all business sectors and so could be addressed through activities funded through the Science and Society, or analogous CSFRI theme involving educationalists, [young] entrepreneurs and scientists (including social scientists) and technologists.

Q36. The EIT should actively promote excellence and new models of knowledge sharing and open innovation, and ensure this knowledge remains accessible over time?

At the present time, three KICs have been established and over the next 12-18 months three more will be identified and will be required to establish the necessary legal entity, appoint a CEO and engage in the required negotiations with the EIT. The experience and knowledge gained from the first tranche of KICs will, it is to be hoped, facilitate these processes. The EIT and its KICs are unique and so their development will take account of their acquired knowledge. This must be shared within the network of KICs and between the EIT and the individual KICs.

Since the next 2-4 years will need to be a period of consolidation and dissemination, it is likely that the business sectors covered by the EIT will be no more than 6. There are, however, a greater number of areas where innovation is vital for the EU [see **Q28**] but it is unclear how these areas which will not be represented by KICs will develop. *Knowledge, experience and best practices need to be translated effectively and efficiently from the KICs to these other sectors if Europe’s innovation landscape is not to be divided between a first division [reflected in the KICs] and others which, for a variety of reasons are unlikely ever to become KICs.* Such a situation would perpetuate the differences in innovation potential and delivery which currently exist. **FULLY AGREE.**

Q37. The EIT should provide a number of concrete support measures for the dissemination of results from its activities to European innovation stakeholders. It would be better to facilitate the development of common dissemination measures directed towards the stakeholders of innovation (recognising that different communities will require different strategies) across the Common Strategic Framework otherwise there is a likelihood of incomplete information reaching the target audiences. **STRONGLY DISAGREE.**

Q37b. What could these support measures be?

Q38. The EIT should actively foster the creation of learning communities across the EU. This is not the role of the EIT. It should facilitate and underpin, but not lead. **STRONGLY DISAGREE.**

Q38b. How could the EIT do so? It should not do so.

Q39. Should the EIT support European stakeholders in enhancing their international competitiveness? The role of the EIT must remain tightly focussed on the integration of the elements of the Knowledge Triangle. **SOMEWHAT AGREE.**

Q40. The EIT should support European stakeholders in their quest for attracting international talent. This is not the role of the EIT. **STRONGLY DISAGREE.**

Q41. Which other measures should the EIT take in order to enhance international competitiveness and attractiveness? *The EIT must do a great deal more to promote itself.* This was a comment in the final report of the External Evaluation team¹ and more effective communication is central to its roles of enhancing international competitiveness and of attracting a diversity of potential KICs. Of the core elements of the CSFRI [the next Framework Programme, the Competitiveness and Innovation (Framework) Programme, Structural Funds and the EIT] the latter is the least well known to the outside world of educators, scientists and technologists, business and society. *It is insufficient to be known to participants in the three already-established KICs.*

At the June 10th conference that was held to present the response to the CSFRI consultation, the presentations included extensive comments about FP7 and its relationship to the next Framework Programme, and also on the CIP and its role in strengthening the competitiveness of SMEs but there was scarcely a word about the EIT, its KICs or its forward strategy³. It may be that, until recently, the EIT was insufficiently staffed with people capable of presenting a narrative of the EIT and its KICs, and the roles that they must play in new business creation through innovation. However, this must change and *a communication strategy must be developed to describe the EIT, its aims and processes, and the benefits that will accrue to its stakeholders* very widely across the EU, business sectors, universities and research centres, and organisations involved in secondary and tertiary education [paying particular attention to the importance of women at the highest levels in industry, education, science and technology. *It will be insufficient to focus such activities within the existing KICs or those that will be identified from the second round.*

Q42. How relevant are autonomy and flexibility for the EIT to fulfil its mission and have an impact on the EU innovation landscape? Awareness of innovation and entrepreneurial activity varies across the regions and countries of the EU which suggests that no single EU-wide mechanism to promote and publicise these will be possible. Whilst the EIT is, and must remain, autonomous in developing and implementing its strategy, there is a tension in that it must adhere to common financial and staff regulations. It must be hoped that, with time, such tension would be productive and positive. **HIGHLY RELEVANT.**

Q43. Flexibility is essential for the KICs to attract participation from the private sector. **FULLY AGREE.**

Q44. The concept of EIT funding to KICs that act as leverage should be maintained. **DON'T KNOW.**

Q45. Are there any other incentives the EIT shall put forward to KICs in order to achieve growth, impact and sustainability?

14/6/2011.

³ A comparison might be made between this and the inspirational presentation on the ERC delivered by Professor Helga Nowotny at this conference and also her comments and those of the ERC Board since its inception.

FOODforce, www.foodforce.org

The FOODforce network brings together the Directors and senior staff of leading European research organisations active in the areas of food and nutrition. It identifies common interests and activities which can be fed into the European Commission, directly, and through the European Technology Platform Food for Life as suggestions for call topics. Networked organisations identify and exchange best practice in issues relating to research policy, strategy, management of research, training, knowledge exchange and transfer, and foresight. FOODforce has a particular focus on *food production/technology/manufacturing, consumption of healthy diets and nutrition, and sustainable use of renewable resources from small scale to large scale.*

It addresses research and innovation, interfaces with society and consumers, industry [and especially SMEs], and policymakers. It promotes the activities and opportunities for PhD students and early-stage researchers, has an impact reflecting its unique network structure [research providers; transnational] and its well balanced regional and multi-national approach to food research and development.

FOODforce links fundamental research to business development (and *vice versa*), from public to private R&D (and *vice versa*), and links national and international research (and *vice versa*). It operates an effective dissemination of information and intelligence and operates independently of the ETP Food for Life. Key activities of FOODforce partners include:

- exchanging information especially concerning DG Research as is done now,
- engaging in strategic activities; for example, ETP Food for Life - of which it was one of the core founders,
- supporting and exchanging information about ETP Food for Life/JPIs/EIT-KICs, including regional and multi-national involvement,
- linking with Third Countries and preferred non-EU countries,
- supporting involvement of regional SME and SME associations in European research projects > deliverables,
- exchanging best practices in managing food science in Europe, with particular emphasis on SME involvement > deliverables,
- benchmarking research to improve quality and productivity (peer reviews, customer satisfaction models, contract models, etc.),
- influencing policy at national and regional levels,
- collaboration (exchange of personnel, outsourcing strategies, IPR etc.)
- supporting Large Initiatives (incl. sharing risks, facility sharing) and Infrastructures, and
- supporting management development (HRM issues, training of young scientists, financial tools, etc.)