

## **Technical University of Munich and the University of Cambridge as proud hosts of the EIT Food Entrepreneurship Winter School**

„How might we produce more nutritious food? How might we make food production more sustainable for the environment? How might we decrease millions of tons of food waste every year?“



These questions and around 100 more were elaborated by 26 participants from 20 different countries in the beginning of the Winter School. Over the course of the two-week program, 5 teams continuously worked on coming up with solutions to a key question. The first EIT Food Winter School furthermore, gave participants from all over the world a chance to enjoy a true winter experience in Munich and Cambridge including snow, mulled wine (“Glühwein”) and Christmas markets.

### **But back to the start – what is the EIT Food Entrepreneurship Winter School all about?**

During the Winter School 26 students from many different study backgrounds and countries came together to tackle the challenges Europe’s food system will face in the future. The program is organised by EIT Food (European Institute for Innovation and Technology) as well as the partner universities CDTM/TUM, the University of Cambridge and Queen’s University of Belfast. Over the course of 2 weeks, participants worked in interdisciplinary teams, identifying problems, prototyping viable solutions with a validated value proposition and finally pitching their results in front of a panel of experts.

### **...and what did that look like in practice?**



All along the way, the 5 teams were supported by coaches with experience in entrepreneurship methodologies. The teams each tackled a specific problem, with a high impact on Europe's future food systems. Additionally, entrepreneurship as well as food industry experts provided the participants with highly valuable insights. One example is Jaideep Prahbu, co-author of the book 'Jugaad Innovation', who encouraged the students to think about innovation in new ways – specifically focusing on a frugality approach.

*“The whole approach is designed for you to find problems that surround you in your community – problems that affect you and people like you, and then to take resources that you have access to and solve those problems.” - Jaideep Prahbu*

Additionally, a lot of input about current problems and movements in the food sphere was given. During these discussions, many researchers emphasized the necessity of closing the gap between science and society in order to make an impact:

*‘We must be sure that our work is acceptable to society. If there's an understanding of what science is trying to do then we can make better connections and deliver more effective solutions together.’ - Prof. Nigel Scollan, Director of the Institute for Global Food Security, Queen's University of Belfast*

Next to these research and industry experts, the students had the pleasure of meeting several entrepreneurs from both Munich and Cambridge operating in the area of food. They shared their hands-on experience as well as practical advice with the participants. The personal contact was not only an outstanding opportunity to validate first ideas, but for some the start of connecting and keeping in touch for ongoing personal projects.

## A strong bond and bold steps into the future

Last but not least, the students could also learn a lot from each other. Coming from very diverse cultural as well as study backgrounds, the intense two weeks resulted in an alumni network built upon good memories and friendships. Furthermore, the EIT Food community offers opportunities for further engagement and development of the start-up ideas, such as their accelerator program.



*“The winter school has been the most inspiring experience in my life thus far. Meeting like-minded souls who have the same vision as I do makes me aspire to work hard for a better world for our children”,* says Jane Fu Jing Hui from Malaysia, Medical Graduate.

If you would like to participate in the EIT Food Summer School program as a student, young professional, start-up or would simply like to obtain further information, feel free to visit <http://www.cdtm.de/eit-food-winter-school2017/> or [https://www.instagram.com/eit\\_food\\_winter\\_school/](https://www.instagram.com/eit_food_winter_school/)