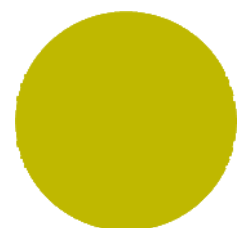


Role Specification  
CEO, EIT Food



## Role Specification

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## European Institute of Innovation and Technology - EIT

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Today we face many societal challenges (global warming, youth unemployment, an ageing population and more), but finding solutions to these challenges presents us with great opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship. Europe is perfectly placed to do this, with a wealth of top universities, strong companies, and stable and democratic institutions, along with a pool of highly educated and skilled individuals. The trick is finding a better way to get them to inspire each other, work closely together, learn, innovate and prosper – and this is precisely where the EIT comes in! EIT is about people-driven impactful innovation.

Created in 2008, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is an independent EU body. EIT wants to enhance Europe's ability to innovate by nurturing entrepreneurial talent and supporting new ideas.

### **EIT's mission is to:**

- Contribute to the competitiveness of Europe, its sustainable economic growth and job creation by promoting and strengthening synergies and cooperation among businesses, education institutions and research organisations.
- Create favourable environments for creative thoughts, to enable world-class innovation and entrepreneurship to thrive in Europe.

The EIT is an integral part of **Horizon 2020**, the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. Horizon 2020 is a key pillar of the **Innovation Union** – a Europe 2020 flagship initiative that aims to enhance Europe's global competitiveness.

To boost Europe's innovation capacity, action is needed to overcome the fragmented European innovation landscape. EIT has a pioneering role in increasing European sustainable growth and competitiveness by reinforcing Europe's innovation capacity in a dynamic global context.

The EIT brings together the 'knowledge triangle' of business, education and research to form dynamic cross-border partnerships - **Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs)** – that develop innovative products and services, start-up new companies, and train a new generation of entrepreneurs. Working closely together in the KICs, leading companies, universities and research centres, create more effective and innovative solutions for Europe.

Five EIT KICs have been launched since 2010:

- **Climate-KIC**: addressing climate change challenges (2010);
- **EIT Digital**: generating world-class ICT (2010);
- **KIC InnoEnergy**: tackling sustainable energy (2010);
- **EIT Health**: improving quality of life for European citizens and sustainability of health and social care systems (2015).
- **EIT Raw Materials**: ensuring the accessibility, availability and sustainable use of raw materials for the economy and citizens (2015).
- **EIT Food**: transforming the food sector to provide sustainable, healthy food through a connected food chain (2016)

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Each of the KICs operates through innovations hubs called ‘Co-location Centres’. The EIT’s KICs have Co-location Centres spread across the EU and work with regional centres to increase the impact of their activities.

With each of the KICs, EIT has a framework partner agreement for 7 years to start with. Each KIC submits annual business plans to the EIT and reports extensively on its initiatives and achievements.

## EIT Food

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EIT Food was selected as the sixth KIC mid November 2016. Since 2017 EIT Food is a stand-alone legal entity (an international not for profit association under Belgian law), and it is today a consortium of around 50 partners from leading businesses, research centres and universities across 13 countries (current partners can be seen at <https://www.eitfood.eu/our-partners>). To complement this partnership with additional leading institutions in the next 12-18 months is a core task of the new permanent management team of EIT Food.

EIT Food’s vision is to put Europe at the centre of a global revolution in food innovation and production, and its value in society. EIT Food will engage consumers in the change process, improve nutrition and make the food system more resource-efficient, secure, transparent and trusted.

EIT Food has **six strategic objectives**:

1. **Overcome low consumer trust**: support Europeans in the transition towards a smart food system that is inclusive and trusted.
2. **Create consumer-valued food for healthier nutrition**: enable individuals to make informed and affordable personal nutrition choices.
3. **Build a consumer-centric connected food system**: develop a digital food supply network with consumers and industry as equal partners.
4. **Enhance sustainability**: develop solutions to transform the traditional ‘produce-use-dispose’ model into a circular bio-economy.
5. **Educate to engage, innovate and advance**: Provide ‘food system’ skills for more than 10,000 students, entrepreneurs and professionals through advanced training programmes.
6. **Catalyse food entrepreneurship and innovation**: foster innovation at all stages of business creation.

EIT Food aims to boost the skills and entrepreneurial spirit in the sector and unlock the potential of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), which in turn will accelerate innovation

This will be achieved by:

- **Developing new talents:** attract and engage new talent through EIT Food education programmes with curricula designed to overcome the ‘silos’ of knowledge and skills in specific areas of the food system. EIT Food will introduce new learning methods, entrepreneurial tools, and business practices that empower students, professionals and executives at all career stages to become entrepreneurial champions in Europe’s food sector.
- **Delivering business creation and acceleration support:** boost the competitiveness of the EU food sector and ensure that Europe remains the number one global exporter of food and drink. EIT Food will proactively support entrepreneurs in transforming their ideas into businesses through the entire start-up cycle and in clearly defining their market. It will generate future entrepreneurial champions in the food sector who will fulfil their ambition to improve nutrition, achieve food security and promote resource-efficient food systems.
- **Create consumer-valued food for healthier nutrition:** develop innovative tools and technologies that support personalised diet profiles combined with the ability to self-assess the impact of customised diets through non-invasive home diagnostics, mobile devices and individual online coaching. This will help to narrow the current gap between people’s intentions and actual behaviour towards healthier foods and lead to an improvement of people’s health across Europe.

To facilitate EIT Food’s launch in 2017, the EIT provided a start-up grant of up to EUR 4 million to ensure that it is fully operational as soon as possible. Provided that EIT Food achieves the expected results, it could receive funding in the range of EUR 400 million from the EIT over the seven years. In addition, it is expected to attract significant funding from other sources of private and public sector investment, including the partners of the consortium, multiplying the investments made by the EIT. EIT’s funding will in principle continue beyond the seven year horizon, for another term of seven years, but the EIT contribution will decrease over time with EIT Food becoming financially self-sustaining.

EIT Food will have its head office in the Brussels (Leuven) region. Temporary facilities have been made available by the University of KU Leuven (Belgium), with a move to permanent offices in the next months.

EIT Food has formed five Co-location Centres (CLC) across Europe and managed by a CLC Director:

**Leuven** – CLC West (Belgium, France, Switzerland)

**Reading** – CLC North-West (UK, Ireland, Iceland)

**Madrid** – CLC South (Spain, Italy, Israel)

**Munich** – CLC Central (Germany, The Netherlands)

**Warsaw** – CLC North-East (Poland, Finland)

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EIT Food is governed by a Supervisory Board, composed of 5 representatives of the 5 CLCs and 3 independent members. The Chair role is currently being recruited and will be an independent member. The two other independent Board members have been selected and await approval by the Partner Assembly. The representatives of the 5 CLCs are:

- CLC West: Prof. Dr. Jan Delcour
- CLC North-West: Prof. Dr. Christine Williams
- CLC South: David Shem Tov
- CLC Central: Prof. Dr. Thomas Hofmann
- CLC North-East: Bogdan Tyrybon

EIT Food is led by a Management Board composed of:

CEO (currently ad interim)

COO

Director Innovation

Director Business Creation

Director Education

Director Communication

The 5 Directors of the CLCs

The whole staff of EIT Food (including the CLCs) will count around 40 people.

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Website/ <https://eit.europa.eu/eit-community/eit-food>

Articles/ [https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2016-11-17\\_eit\\_winner\\_food.pdf](https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2016-11-17_eit_winner_food.pdf)

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## The Role

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The permanent CEO of EIT Food now needs to be selected to lead the management team for the future.

### Job Purpose

The main purpose of the CEO is to develop EIT Food in accordance with its strategic objectives, delivering on the tangible results that are expected. Ensuring the financial sustainability of the consortium after the initial seven years period and securing implementation and impact of ideas are also important dimensions of the role. The CEO will have mostly an “outward facing role”, as most of the internal daily management and reporting will be done by the COO.

### Key Accountabilities

#### **Vision, Strategy and business planning:**

- Lead the development of the EIT Food Strategy and annual business plan (completed for 2018)
- Actively communicate the EIT Food vision and strategy to all stakeholders.  
Actively operate to maintain and strengthen the EIT Food partnership.
- Oversee the preparation and execution of the grant and framework agreements with the EIT and partner organizations.
- Ensure alignment and collaboration with and among regional CLC's.

#### **Leadership:**

- Support the development of a strong EIT Food culture and brand. Continue to build and manage a strong management and operations team.
- Establish effective and transparent channels of coordination, communication and reporting within the organization and with EIT.
- Chair the Management Board.

#### **Represent EIT Food Internationally:**

- Act as a spokesperson of the Management Board both internally and externally to EIT Food.
- Initiate, develop and maintain cooperative relationships with key initiatives relevant to EIT Food.
- Develop and implement effective marketing and communication activities to promote the EIT Food and EIT brand.
- Serve as a high-level representative for EIT Food towards the European Commission and the EIT and other stakeholders.
- Promote cooperation with other Knowledge and Innovation Communities.

**Operations:**

- Provide general oversight of all EIT Food activities, oversee the management day-to-day operations and assure a smoothly functioning and efficient organization.
- Oversee the further development of the selection and evaluation criteria of the projects, set internal call priorities and select projects with the Management Board for inclusion in the yearly Business Plan.
- Ensure the quality of all programs and activities and organizational stability through development, implementation and monitoring of standards and controls, systems and procedures.
- Manage effectively both human and financial resources.
- Support development of sustainable income streams including attracting and maintaining additional funding from private and public sources.
- Oversee the respect of fiscal relations at the national and European level
- including overseeing budgeting, reporting and auditing in close coordination with the CFO as appropriate.

**Role location**

The role location will be Leuven (Belgium), with regular travel to the CLCs, the partners, the EIT and other stakeholders. The CEO will need to assure a minimum presence at the head office. Having a permanent residence in Belgium is not required.

**Reporting to**

The CEO will report to the Supervisory Board of EIT Food.

**Availability**

The aim is to ensure a permanent CEO of EIT Food is in place by the end of Q4 2018 or earlier if available.



<b>Experience</b>	Nice to have	Must have
Prior CEO experience	O	
General management P&L Management / Budget Management		O
Knowledge of and experience in technology or innovation functions in agro/food sector		O
Senior leadership role in corporate environment (VP or C-level)	O	
Business development experience		O
Familiarity with start-ups	O	
Key opinion leader management	O	
Experience with fundraising and/or financial investments	O	
EU exposure	O	
Master's degree		O
Scientific background	O	
MBA / PhD	O	
Multicultural exposure		O

The future CEO will be responsible to drive the success of EIT Food, developing the organization to achieve impact and sustainability in financial terms.

He/she will be a credible leader with strong executive presence, committed, entrepreneurial, ambitious and able to create a vision. He/she will have a solid reputation, coming from the business world and having ideally also some experience in one of the other two segments (education and research). This position requires an individual with good understanding of the Agro/Food business, ideally with a track record in managing diverse functions, particularly R&D/innovation, strategic planning and business development. The future CEO shall have a solid scientific understanding and will be able to take grounded decisions on where to invest, managing a R&D funnel and a project pipeline.

The ideal candidate will be able to operate at strategic and operational level and will bring experience from both large multinational as well as smaller/start-up companies. The future CEO will ideally bring strong links with financial institutions and/or relevant experience and proven record of accomplishment of developing networks of investors with the aim of attracting additional financial resources and investment. Familiarity with and experience in working with national and European authorities is a plus. A successful experience in building communities of partners with common (but also on certain matters less aligned) interests across borders is of course an asset.

From an academic background, a scientific degree combined with a MBA degree is preferred, with a minimum of 15 years' experience in relevant industries. In addition, the candidate must be an effective communicator in English; French and other languages being a plus. Because of the focus on Europe it would be favourable if the successful candidate were from a member state country of the EU.

Furthermore, the ideal candidate will possess and demonstrate the following key competencies:

**Results Orientation:** The ideal candidate will have delivered results consistently including periods of challenging times. He/she must demonstrate the ability to build financially sustainable businesses on a solid basis, implementing ideas and plans, focusing on sustainability of results. He/she is able to understand the “win win” angle for multiple stakeholders, to articulate the value proposition of EIT Food and to anticipate possible future returns of each initiative. He/she provides clear direction and decision-making in a highly distributed organisation, based on his/her natural authority. He/she is energetic, positive and forward thinking

**Team Leadership:** The ideal candidate must be a hands-on team leader, with the proven ability to lead major business activities and build organizations. He/she will be able to inspire and engage direct reports to develop plans and resolve issues through collaborative problem solving. He/she must have the successful experience for having created a culture of performance and accountability with high ethical standards. He/she will be skilled in navigating complex governance structures.

**Collaboration and Influencing:** The ideal candidate has strong communication, interpersonal, and influencing skills. He/she must have proven ability to use formal and informal structures and dynamics. He/she understands how to engage, manage and lead people from different organisations and cultures with different (sometimes competing) requirements. He/she is able to influence others in one to one discussions, committee or large group forums. He/she must have high level of self-confidence in defending his/her position and show adaptability and flexibility in aligning objectives with those of the overall organization. He/she must have the ability to build relationships inside and outside his/her organisation, and to effectively partner with international stakeholders at all levels.

**Strategic Orientation:** The ideal candidate should be able to provide strategic direction and leadership and translate such strategic plan into prioritised action plans. He/she must have the ability to spot trends and take steps to focus business activities to capitalize on those trends. The ability to integrate a variety of information and opinions into the definition of a clear, focused, shared and long-term strategy is essential. He/she demonstrates creativity and an innovative mind



