

Innovate UK

Technology Strategy Board

AGRICULTURE & FOOD COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

**DRAFT- VERSION 7
MARCH 2015**

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AGRITCH & FOOD EXEC SUMMARY

Innovate UK's communications vision is to be recognised and respected as the innovation organisation uniquely positioned to accelerate UK economic growth. This strategy set's out how we plan to deliver on the specific aim of positioning Innovate UK as a leading player in the agriculture and food ecosystem.

It is estimated by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) that at current consumption levels, 60% more food will need to be produced globally by 2050. Simply put, there are huge pressures to increase the amount of food produced owing to growing populations, whilst resources are dwindling, and the climate is changing.

The Agriculture and Food thematic is focused on identifying innovative solutions to providing food to our societies that are both sustainable and resilient. Communication activity will primarily focus on supporting the launch of the six informatics centres and consult with the business community on the 2016 strategy. We will also deliver a streamlined and improved level of marketing support for all competition launches.

AUDIENCES

This communications strategy focuses on the following audience groups:

Business

- Farm businesses and their advisors (agronomists, consultants etc).
- Agrochem and Seeds industry e.g. Syngenta, Dupont (Pioneer), Monsanto, Bayer, BASF, KWS UK and Limagrain (Nickerson).
- Livestock breeding industry e.g. Genus, Aviagen, Cherry Valley, JSR and APMC.
- Food and drink processors e.g. Associated British Foods plc, Premier Foods plc, Northern Foods and Unilever plc.
- Food retail, e.g. Tesco, Sainsburys, ASDA, Morrisons, M&S and Waitrose.
- Machinery and instrumentation manufacturers.
- Digital and ICT
- Healthcare

Government

- Central government departments (e.g. Defra, DIFID and the Food Standards Agency).
- Government bodies and regional development agencies.
- Devolved administrations .
- The Research Councils (BBSC, NERC, EPSRC, ESRC).
- The Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB).

Industry bodies

- The Food and Drink Federation (FDF).
- WRAP.
- Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD).
- Cross-funder Stakeholder Forum
- Food Research Partnership.
- Global Food Security Programme.

Throughout 15/16 we will continue to develop a comprehensive suite of insights around the agriculture and food customer and key stakeholders.

COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

To achieve the aim of positioning Innovate UK as leading player in the agriculture and food ecosystem our intent is to deliver increased numbers of the right businesses who know who we are and how we can help them, and are actively engaged with our organisation.

We have set the following objectives:

1. Deliver a X% increase in the number of good quality applications to agriculture and food competitions by the end of quarter four 2015
2. Drive a X% increase in dialogue across Innovate UK owned channels by Q4 2015/16 to reconnect the fragmented food production innovation landscape
3. Deliver three/ four integrated communication campaigns that begins to position Innovate UK as thought leaders in the agriculture and food ecosystem by Q4 2015
4. Benchmark our share of voice across the sector by the end of quarter four 2015

DRAFT AGRICULTURE AND FOOD MESSAGING

We are strengthening the agriculture and food sector along the entire supply chain from farm to fork, increasing support to develop, adopt and exploit new technologies and processes and increasing UK export and inward investment potential.

We are working to reconnect the fragmented food production ecosystem, bridging the gap between academia, businesses, third sector and professional bodies to deliver economic value for all stakeholders.

We will address the barriers that prevent organisations collaborating for mutual benefit, and cross working between sectors.

We are making it easier for agri-food businesses to access support, funding and finance for innovation and commercialisation.

In Q1 we will review and finalise the messaging we use for the agriculture and food challenge area.

STRATEGY & PLAN

Our strategic approach to the agriculture and food challenge areas is broken down into three areas:

1. Competitions
2. Lead campaigns
3. 'Bronze' activity

1. COMPETITIONS

Standardised competition support

We approach competitions using our 'right' strategy- the aim of which is to deliver the right message, to the right person, at the right time. In order to deliver this a standard package of support is provided to all competitions:

- Marketing brief – the technologist and marketing team consult on audiences, past performance, objectives, key timings and activities
- Generation of the competition scope
- Publishing of scope in print & online – GOV.UK and 'interact' [add web address]
- Delivery of competition events & webinars – specifically competition briefings, stage 2 webinars, and the new project workshop
- Promotion of the funding opportunity and events through media and digital channels – web, social, and email – targeting a segment of our 150,000 contacts

Details of the competitions for the challenge areas in 15/16 can be found in the appendices.

2. LEAD CAMPAIGNS- PRIORITY COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

Our lead campaigns are the prioritised strategic communications activity for the year, focused on the agriculture and food programme priorities in 15/16. We often refer to these as our anchor activities or anchor campaigns. The lead campaigns will be focused on:

- A) Strategy refresh & consultation on the draft strategy
- B) Nationwide agri-tech centre launches
- C) Collaboration Nation

These campaigns have been developed in consultation with the challenge-area team and the communications team. They are strategically important for our positioning as innovation architects within the sector and regardless of budget growth or decline they will remain the prioritised activity in year.

The activities within the campaigns are designed to drive dialogue and engagement with our target audiences and inspiring people with innovative ideas; demonstrating how ideas can be turned into reality for sustainable change across the agriculture and food ecosystem, thereby helping to position Innovate UK as thought leaders in this space.

A. Strategy refresh & consultation on the draft strategy

The Agriculture and Food strategy will be launched in 2016/17. We aim to consult with our audiences on the key areas of focus within the strategy to ensure it meets the needs of the agriculture and food ecosystem including:

- Precision technologies in remote sensing, telemetry & food manufacturing (cross over with digital economy and enabling technologies [Robotics])
- Food production within the circular economy (cross over with resource efficiency and biosciences)
- Developing, protecting and nurturing food production Systems - enhancing yields and protecting from losses (cross over with biosciences)
- Enhanced Food Quality - connecting trait development, with processing and manufacturing to end uses along the whole food chain (cross over with health and biosciences)

Lead campaign overview: Strategy consultation and refresh		
Timing	Q2	Q3
Campaign	Strategy Refresh, consultation on the draft strategy (Phase 1)	Strategy Refresh, consultation on the draft strategy (Phase2)
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft Strategy• Success story• Blogs - the need for innovation• Opinion Editorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opinion editorial: importance of whole food chain approach• Infographic -precision ag & food quality
Marketing channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy consultation event/ round table	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Themed workshops• Digital advertising and social

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish survey results • Hosted debate via LinkedIn • Digital advertising and social engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> engagement • Survey on the strategy • Hosted debate via LinkedIn
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B. Nationwide agri-tech centre launches

Up to six centres will be launched this financial year. We will deliver one high profile nationwide launch of the centre to deliver widespread awareness. This will then be followed by regional launches to facilitate engagement at the local level with the agriculture and food community.

The agri-tech centres are funded by the Cabinet office and BIS and they will lead on standard press activity. As delivery partners Innovate UK will focus on a series of 'thought-pieces' about what these centres will mean for the innovation landscape.

Lead campaign overview: Nationwide agri-tech centre launches		
Timing	Q1	Q4
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market insight report • Survey • Opinion Editorial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thought pieces aligned to new centres • Success story • Blog
Marketing channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media Partnership with Farmers weekly • Media tour - how will the infomatic centre benefit the UK economy • Press release • Webinar: capitalising on the opportunity • Digital advertising and social engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Media tours • Regional press release • Targeted trade journal articles

C. Collaboration Nation

Collaboration Nation is an event that brings together all the agriculture and food businesses that have already received Innovate UK funding, offering the opportunity to connect with potential partners and investors. The high level theme of this collaboration nation will be new approaches to crop protection. By networking and connecting with businesses from different areas within this theme, organisations can identify new market opportunities.

Lead campaign overview: Crop Protection Collaboration Nation	
Timing	Q1
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opinion Editorial
Marketing channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media Partnership with Farmers weekly Digital advertising and social engagement

A full range of communication tactics can be found in the appendices.

3. BRONZE LEVEL ACTIVITY - STANDARDISED SUPPORT FOR OTHER COMMUNICATIONS RELATED ACTIVITY

A standardised communications support package will be developed for non-campaign related activities enabling us to manage budget and resource.

These activities are largely industry events where we have the opportunity to attend, speak, exhibit & sponsor. In Q1 we will agree, and categorise, these bronze level activities, and the support for each.

Events that we plan to support in 15/16 are

- Oxford farming conference, 6-8 Jan
- Precision Farming Event, 4th March
- National Farmers Union Conference, 24-25th February
- Crop Tech – 24th -25th Nov

EVALUATION & CONTROL

We will measure communications activity against the following KPI's on a monthly/annual basis to ensure we are on track to deliver against our objectives:

- X% increase on reach to new audiences who haven't engaged with Innovate UK before.
- X% decrease in non eligible applications
- Improved customer satisfaction
- X% growth in applications achieving the quality threshold, fulfilling the funders panel criteria

We will measure activity delivered, outputs and outcomes on a monthly basis, in so far as they contribute to meeting the four KPI's above.

To provide control for the strategy we will create a high-level activity summary dashboard. This will enable iprog and communications team members to see the status of competitions, lead campaigns, and non-campaign activities, the associated budget and the performance against KPIs.

A draft dashboard can be found in the appendices.

TEST AND LEARN

We will adopt a test and learn approach in all aspect of the strategy and communications plan. We will continually review the tools and tactics within the strategy, benchmarking against previous performance where the information is available and capturing data for future analysis when the information is not.

WAYS OF WORKING

We will strive for a one-team approach to the delivery of the communications strategy working in close consultation with Iprog. The whole of the communications team will work together to deliver the plan. Iprog teams will be kept abreast of progress on a monthly basis through the dissemination of status reports. The Strategy and Planning Managers will be the main point of contact for any queries arising from the overarching strategy, general status updates or evaluation. With inflight communications activity, Iprog team should work directly with channel owners (media relations, digital, content etc) on granular issues within the plan.

BUDGET

We will provide an estimate budget spend to deliver the 2015/16 communications strategy. This will be divided into three large post comprising; competitions communications, lead campaigns and bronze level activity. The budget will be monitored on a monthly basis against actual spend and the plan revised accordingly in consultation with the Agriculture and Food team.

APPENDICES

Removed for reasons of confidentiality.