

UK Food Systems Centre for Doctoral Training

Overview Presentation – 20 January 2020

Andrew Westby

Chris Turner

June Po

This is a new and unique opportunity, funded by the UKRI and is part of the UK Strategic Priorities Fund programme on [Transforming the UK Food System](#).

Objectives



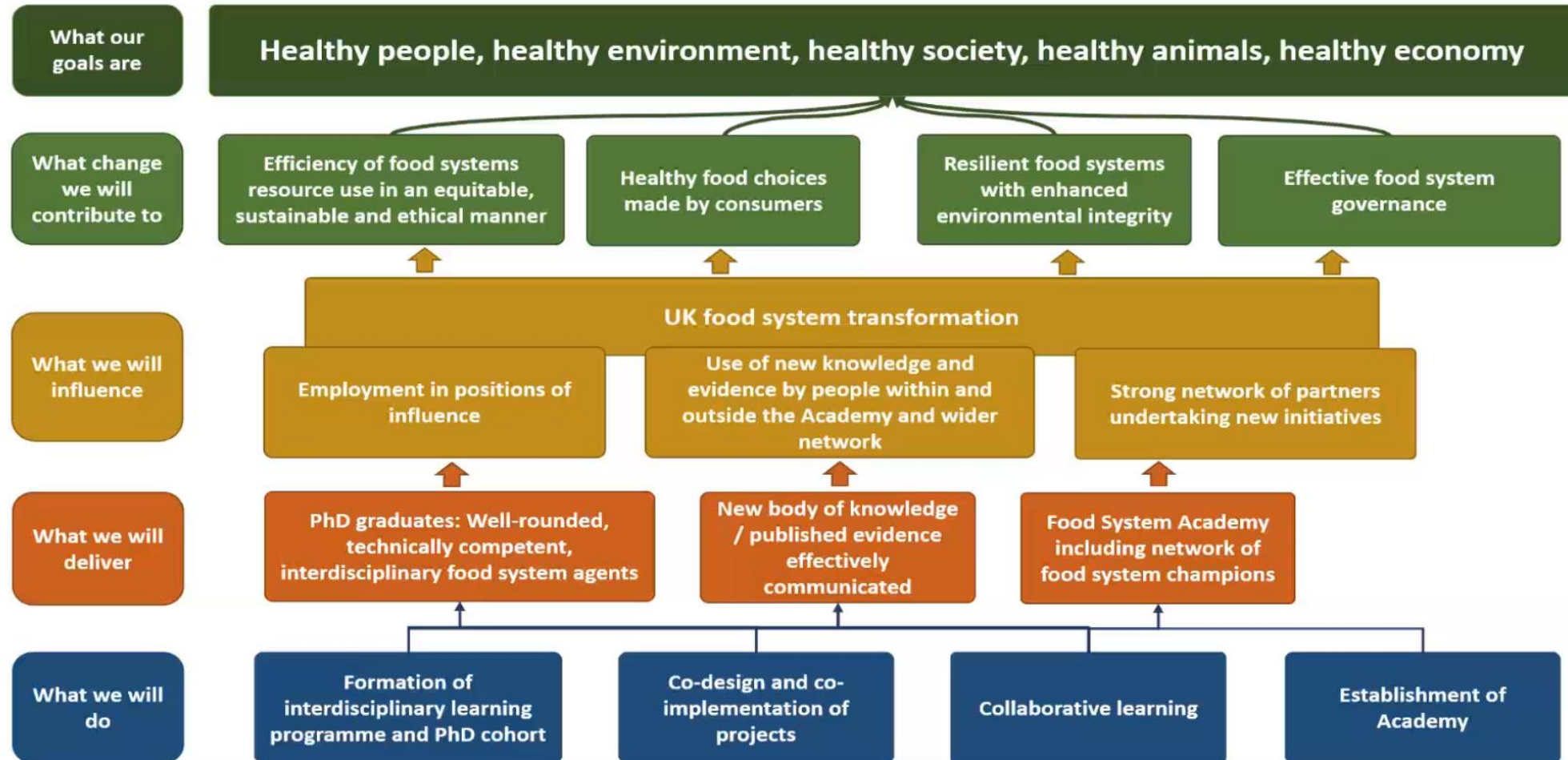
- To train >60 doctoral researchers and future food system transformation leaders (42 CDT funded and 20 partner funded).
- To co-create and disseminate a body of knowledge
- To create a food systems community (**Food Systems Academy**)

Funding

£5 million: Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF) 'Transforming the UK Food System for Healthy People and a Healthy Environment Programme', delivered by UKRI, in partnership with the Global Food Security Programme, BBSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, Defra, DHSC, PHE, Innovate UK and FSA



CDT Logframe



Academic and Research Partners



Potential pool of more than **350 supervisors** from:

- University of Greenwich
- University College London
- Royal Veterinary College
- Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences (IBERS), Aberystwyth University
- Centre for Food Policy, City University
- University of Sussex
- Brunel University, London
- NIAB-EMR
- Rothamsted Research



Key issues for potential supervisors



- Aiming for an equal split of UKRI studentships between partners
 - Three annual cohorts starting in Sept/Oct 2021
 - Four-year programme
 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is a high priority
 - Students will register Year 1 with NRI/UoG and then transfer to lead supervisor's university for Year 2
 - All projects will be interdisciplinary with one natural science and one social science supervisor
 - Supervisors likely to be from different institutions
-

Key issues for potential supervisors



- Applicants don't submit a project outline with their application.
 - Student projects developed on core project ideas from potential supervisors (**project kernels**).
 - Students/Supervisors/non-academic partners co-design/co-implement project in Year 1.
 - Year 1: taught courses (food systems thinking/ social/ natural science research skills, rotations based on project kernels [2-3 for ca. 4 months]).
 - All students have placements (not related to the programme of study).
-

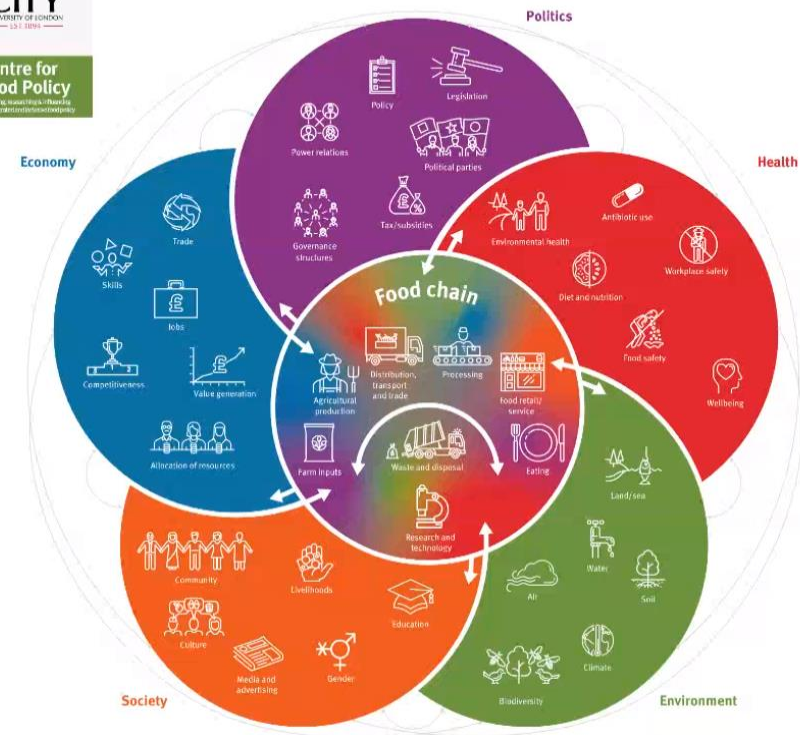
Food Systems Research

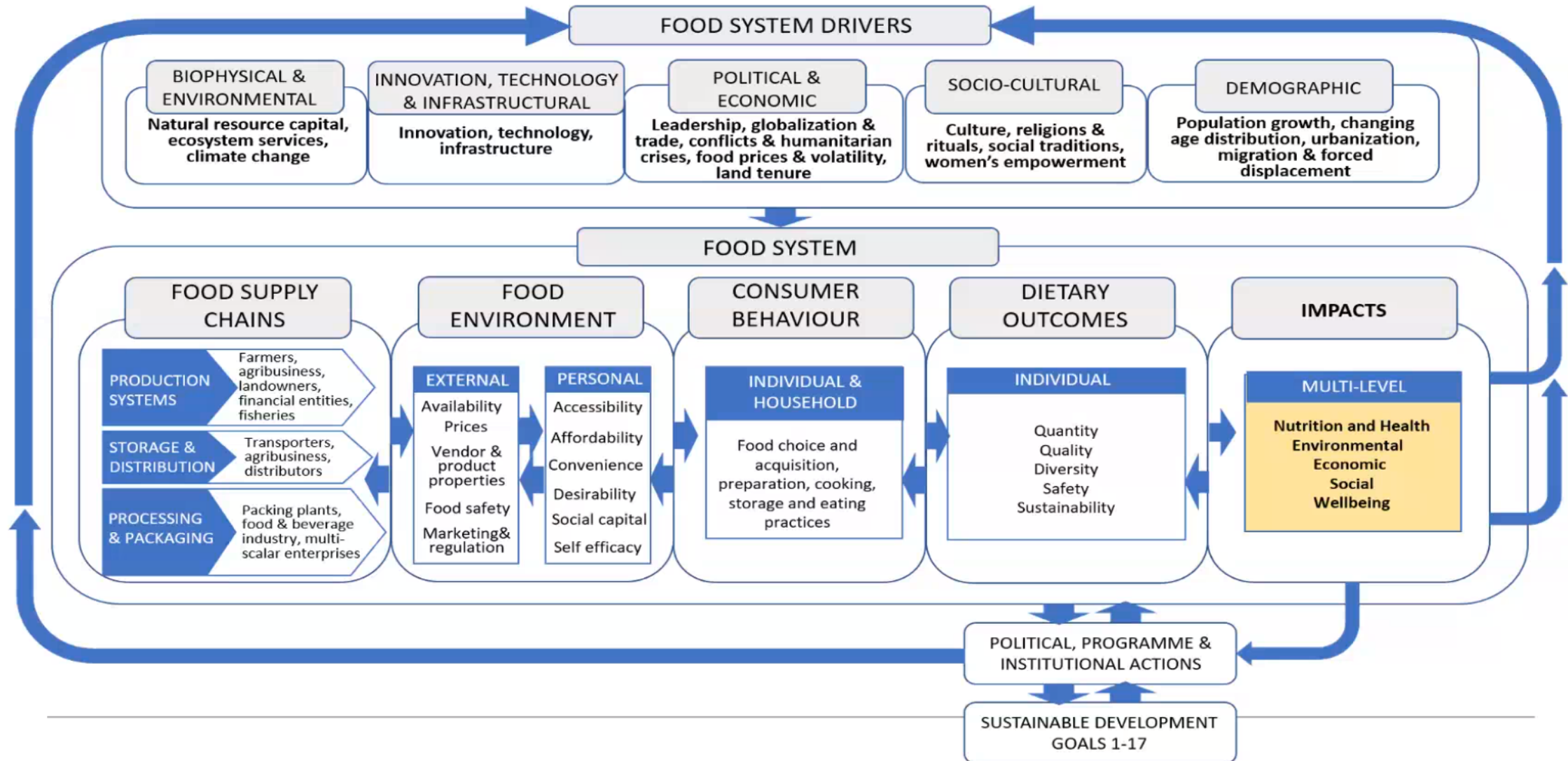
- UKFS-CDT takes a “systems approach” – which frames the holistic context in which people acquire and consume foods, and the associated impacts and influences.

- Healthy People
- Healthy Environment
- Healthy Animals
- Healthy Economy
- Healthy Society



The food system





CDT Research Themes for the positioning of interdisciplinary challenge-led doctoral programmes



UK FOOD SYSTEMS
CENTRE FOR DOCTORAL TRAINING

Healthy People

- Understanding and influencing consumer behaviour change for improved diets.
- Healthy food environments and access to healthy dietary choices.
- Basic science of nutrition and diet-related health outcomes.
- Food safety and sanitation

Healthy Animals

- Livestock in sustainable food systems.
- Livestock welfare, animal ethics.
- Livestock and environmental impacts.
- Animal-sourced foods and nutrition security.

Healthy Environment

- Environmental sustainability of food systems from production to consumption (e.g., efficient production and processing, plastic packaging, planetary dietary patterns).
- Impact of climate change and variability on food systems.
- Biodiversity, ecosystem services and food systems.
- Urban farming (e.g., vertical farming, community gardens, rooftop gardens, sack gardens).
- Low-carbon food systems (e.g., reduced emissions and sustainable and circular economy of production and consumption).

Healthy Economy

- Food production, distribution, manufacturing and waste
- Efficient and equitable resource use in the food system (e.g., sustainable agricultural intensification, labour in food systems, conservation of natural resources).
- Transformative food innovations via novel product and process technologies (e.g., innovations in design-led manufacturing, automation, packaging, storage, distribution and marketing).
- Reducing and upcycling food loss and waste.

Healthy Society

- Food system governance and policies (e.g., global food trade, Brexit, UK food imports).
- Food system resilience (e.g., zoonotic epidemics, antimicrobial use and resistance, uncertainties and consequence of changes).
- Food culture and diets (e.g., intergenerational differences, food heritage, multicultural exchanges, traditional knowledge transfers, migration and transfer of food practices).
- Food poverty, social and health inequities, and the role of food charities in UK's food system.
- Social protection/Responsible business practices / Equitable labour reform (e.g., workers' rights & wellbeing, informal & unpaid/unrecognised labour, employment impacts of robotics and automation).
- Political ecology and geography of food (e.g., social and ecological impacts of new and emerging technologies)
- Social movements (e.g., food sovereignty, Indigenous hunting and fishing rights).
- History of food systems (e.g., past lessons to prepare for the common food future)

Food Systems Academy

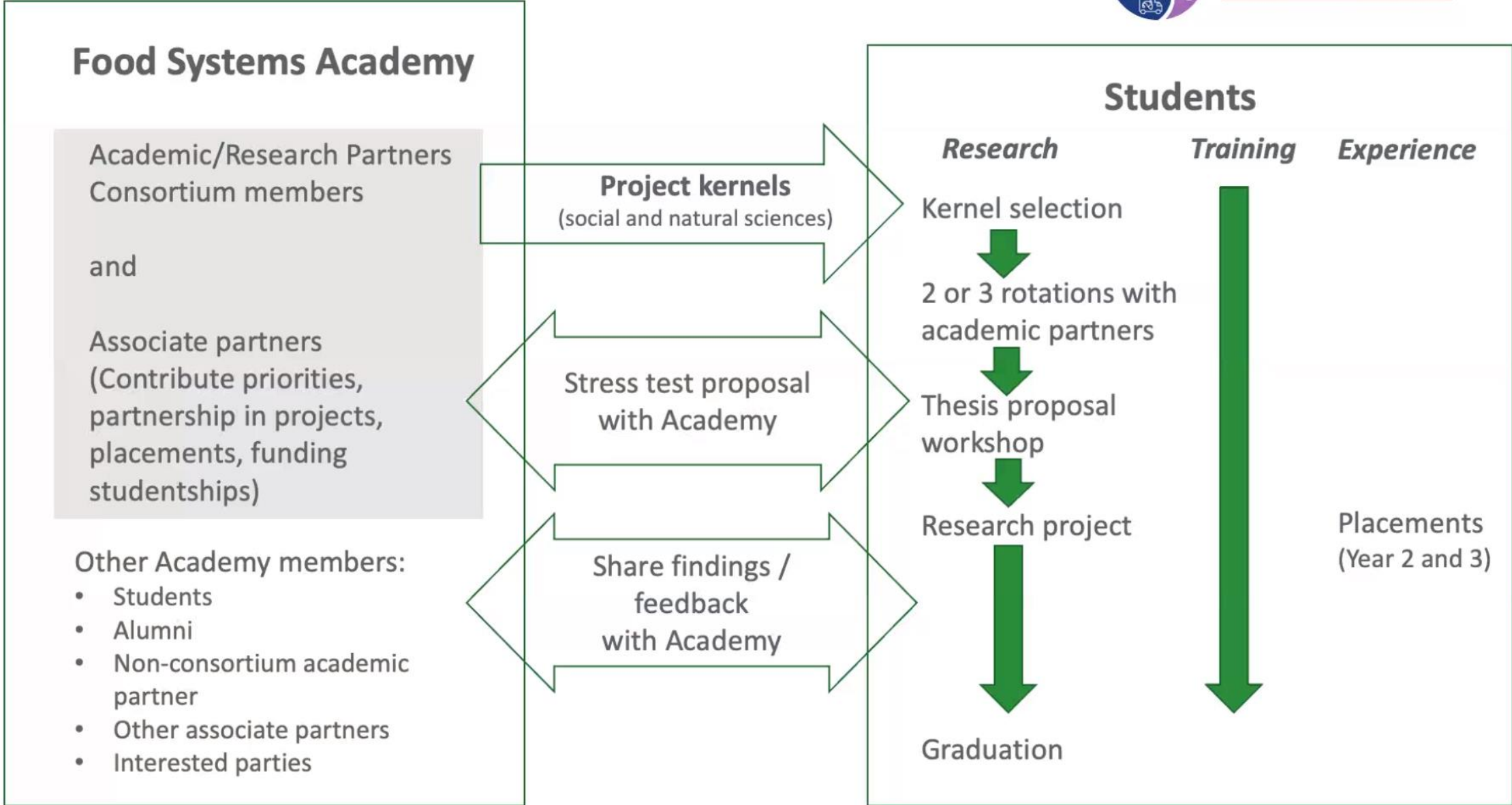


Brings together representatives of all food system players (students, academics, business, government and civil society):

A forum for:

- Setting research priorities
- Co-design of doctoral projects with students and academic and non-academic partners
- Exchange of research findings in a way that maximises their impact potential
- Networking, especially for improving the job prospects of graduates
- Cohort building
- Supporting the transition of doctoral graduates into work
- Interaction with the Strategic Priorities Fund - Food Systems Programme.

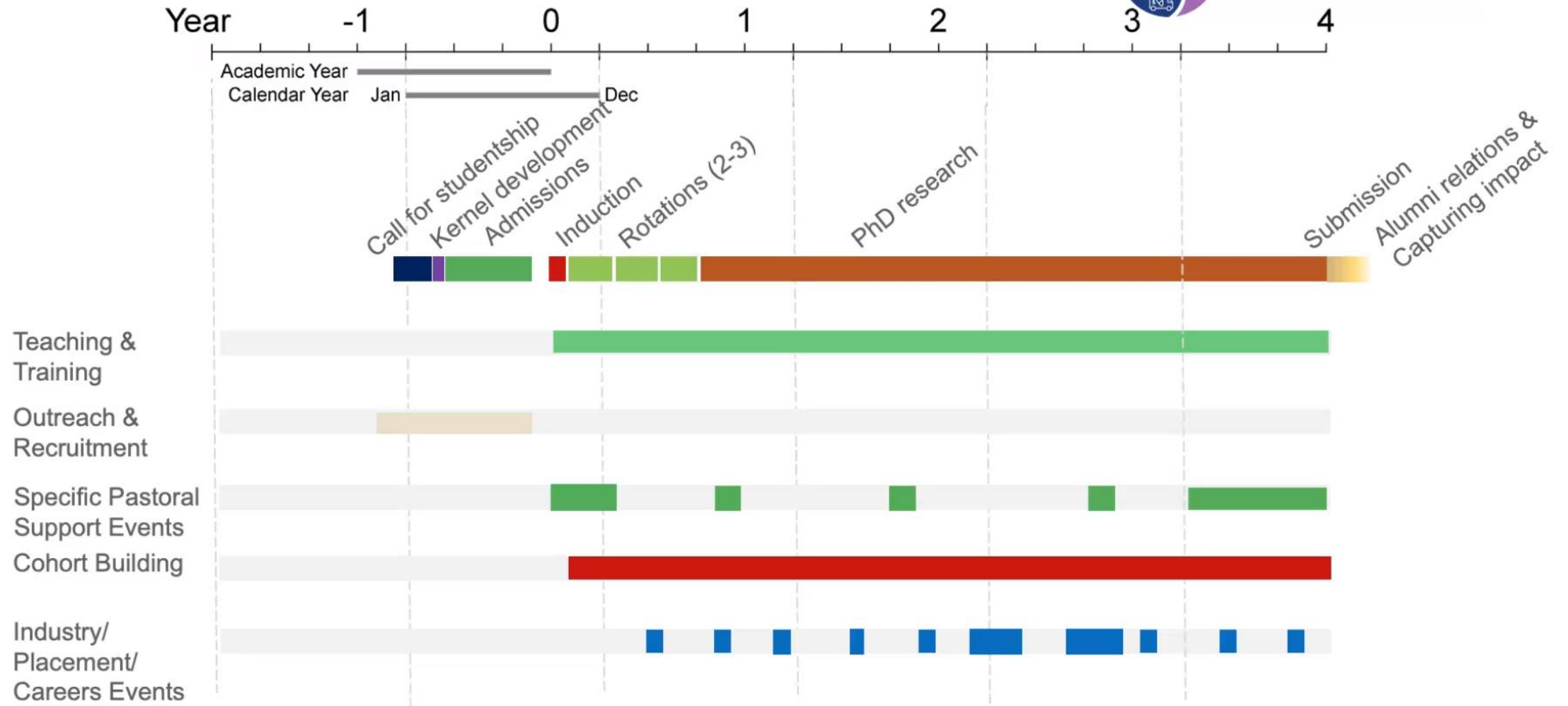
Co-Designing Projects



The Student Journey



UK FOOD SYSTEMS
CENTRE FOR DOCTORAL TRAINING





Key CDT activities to induction of Cohort 1

- First call for applications 7 January – 15 February 2021
- Partner information Events (January)
- Soft Academy launch (29 January 2021)
- Expansion of Academy membership (January/February 2021)
- Development of Year 1 materials (February 2021-September 2021)
- Research priorities from Academy (February 2021)
- Development of UK Food Systems Academy (March 2021 then on-going)
- First selection of applicants (March/April 2021)
- Call for project kernels from partners (April/May 2021)
- ? Second call for applications (May 2021)
- ? Second selection of applicants (June/July 2021)
- Development of project kernels catalogue (June/July 2021)
- Induction of Cohort 1 (September/October 2021)



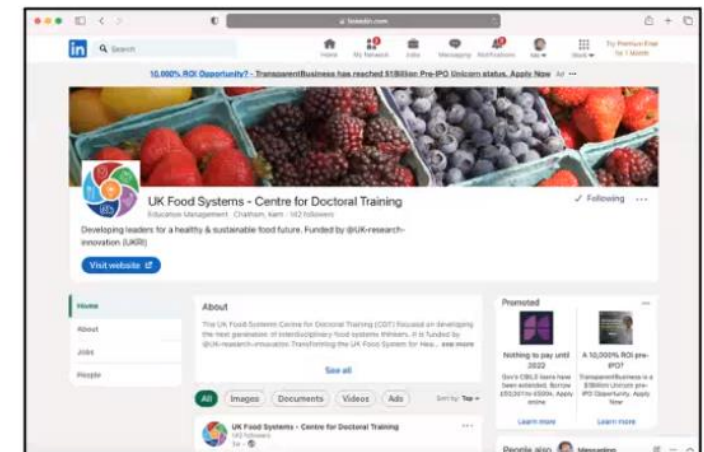
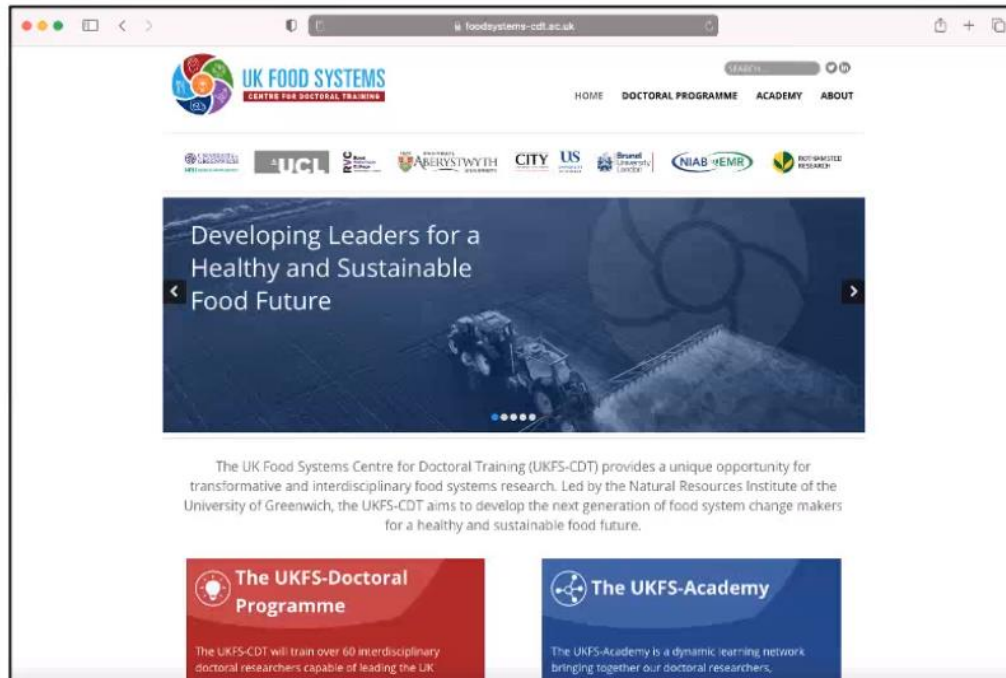
How to get involved:

- Promote the CDT through your networks (web, Twitter, LinkedIn) (now).
- Promote first call for applications to students and through network (now).
- Promote second call for applications to students and through network (May 2021)
- Support development of academic materials (through Research and Training Committee)
- Support development of Academy, including new partners (through Academy Working Group).
- Contribute project kernels (April/May 2021).
- Engage in Academy events.
- Engage in Induction events for Cohort 1.

UKFS-CDT contacts



- Website: www.foodsystems-cdt.ac.uk
- LinkedIn: [UK Food Systems - Centre for Doctoral Training](#)
- Twitter: [@UKFS_CDT](#)



Issues that we are working through:

- International students (up to 30% of cohort)
- Part time students
- Students at a distance

Questions?

Q&A

1. Project kernels? – core project ideas provided by research supervisors to students; will bring together two supervisors
2. Candidates? – can be students graduating this year or people already in work. Seeking greatest diversity of student intake.
3. Financial support through kernel phase to students? Yes, there is a registration fee and research support – will go to partners
4. How does confidentiality work btwn industrial partners who may be competitors? – most work will be precompetitive. Working to finalise arrangements on IP issues. New UKRI toolkit on academic and business partner collaboration (to be published soon)
5. Foreign students? Yes, even those outside UK/EEA – up to 30% of cohort; must come to work on UK food system – can work on international issues affecting UK FS
6. What support for students with other caring responsibilities? – Yes, seeking inclusion; sharing best practices from other CDTs; Greenwich EOI office assisting with training
7. How do we set up a project application? – Will not be application process *per se*. If you want to get involve, suggest project kernel and engage with FS Academy (collaboration with other universities, etc)
8. Do you need partners from other universities? – Studentships will be equally shared out among partners. Students will receive training at two partner institutions

Q&A

9. Does research have to be UK based – e.g. chocolate production overseas? Yes, if it can be shown to relate directly to UK food system
10. Form for project kernels? – Yes, will be a standard form – under development
11. Membership for Academy? – Open membership structure. Write to NRI to make case for membership.
12. Are there qualifications required to be considered for studentships? – Yes, there are English IL standards (7.0 score – equates to standards of Open University); in application form there is also expectation of UK Bachelors equivalent; also in application seeking interest and capacity to work in interdisciplinary manner, to think outside the box
13. Would sustainability of food crops overseas be linked to sustainability of UK food system – Only if there is a tangible link to the UK food system
14. Can current Ph.D. students already involved in a food systems research in partner institutions be involved in the CDT? – Yes, should be scope for their involvement in the Academy; will be a tiered membership arrangement, details still being worked out.
15. Who are the 50 partners who will be involved in the Academy? – They are in the proposal, but modalities still being finalised. Still need to firm up their roles and responsibilities – what they will contribute to the CDT. Is a negotiated process to be agreed, including the level of visibility they would like to have or their level of contribution.
16. Will students who received BA/BSc or MA/MSc in UK, will they be exempt from providing language certificate – Yes, if they meet requirements or have clear documented academic record in UK or other programme, but will be dealt with on case by case basis.
17. Does interdisciplinarity require the social sciences? – Yes, probably, call for proposals required social and physical sciences. UKRI wants to see clear social science input related to food system transformation.
18. Preparing for transition to work? – Key part of the Academy – working with Associate Partners; students will gain contacts through two placements and working in collaboration with partners. There will be other events planned to help with transition to world of work.
19. Vision of success? – Create leaders who will become head of the Food Standards Agency, etc.