

Project Inspire

Step up for skills and careers in the food sector

IFST is launching an ambitious project to transform the image of food technical careers and to attract the next generation of food professionals into the sector.



Why are we contacting you now?

This is a request for your support from **Helen Munday, President of IFST** and **Alastair MacGregor, Chair of IFST's Education Committee**.

We are contacting organisations across the food sector (industry, education and government) to request their support and engagement. Our aim is to create a sustainable and lasting solution to ensure the food sector is seen as a careers destination of choice for school pupils, their parents, and young people looking for career and higher education options.

Background to Project Inspire

This project results from research findings by IFST and KTN in 2021¹ and the Food and Drink Sector Council in 2019.

Anyone who works in and around the food industry understands its importance to the UK economy. The agri-food chain is the largest employment sector contributing £128bn to UK Gross Added Value (GVA) in 2019 and employed 14% of the national workforce².

The desperate skills and employment shortages that are damaging the industry due to various historical and current factors have also been well reported³.

These are:

1. Demographics – ageing workforce
2. EU exit – reduced ability to attract overseas employees into the UK to fill skills gaps
3. Lack of food sector visibility for school leavers – abolition of the food technology A level
4. Perceived unattractiveness of the sector

What we will achieve

1



Love Food Love Science portal

- A new interactive and engaging online careers and educational resources portal
- ALL educational routes referenced (A-level, T-level, Apprenticeships, graduate) all 4-nations

2



Develop careers maps

- Clarity over current and future food sector technical needs
- Design and development of careers maps is highly attractive, engaging, and logically laid out

Outline role competencies

- More in-depth research into competency requirements
- Analyse future skills needs
- Extend beyond core roles
- In-depth and specialist research expertise required



¹<https://ktn-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/What-Technical-Skills-does-the-UK-Food-Drink-Sector-Need-.pdf>

²www.gov.uk/government/statistics/food-statistics-pocketbook/food-statistics-in-your-pocket

³www.fdf.org.uk/globalassets/resources/publications/fdsc-workforce-skills-report.pdf

What we need from you

1. Funding

IFST is providing £20,000 of seed funding to this project as evidence of our commitment.

We will use this funding to achieve the development of the Love Food Love Science portal due to be relaunched in September 2022.

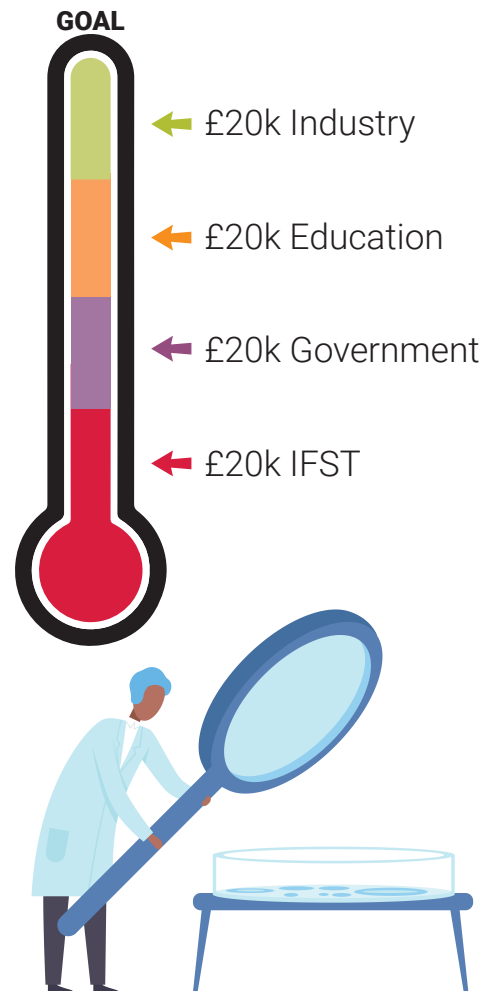
This is an appeal for you to donate a realistic sum (£1-2k) now and to pledge a regular contribution for maintenance and development of the portal going forward. Without this future commitment, and the regular updates needed, this portal could, like other comparator projects; become an unloved and outdated website that loses its significance and relevance.

By requesting your future contribution at this time, we hope this will enable you to secure funding from your Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) budget from a future financial year's budget. All donors will be recognised by inclusion on the Project Inspire webpage and the new Love Food Love Science Portal when it is launched in September with all donors given equal prominence.


2. Project governance and oversight


To ensure robust project management and governance, IFST is assembling a project steering group and is looking to include representatives from across the food sector.

Being a member of the steering group will involve no more than four meetings a year (three virtual and one face to face) and will involve scrutinising the progress of the project against a predetermined project plan and providing considered and pragmatic input, steering the direction of the project.



To donate your contribution or to indicate your interest in being a member of the project steering group please email: president@ifst.org


Helen Munday
President, IFST


Alastair MacGregor
Chair of IFST Education Committee

Now is the time to act on an increasingly concerning food sector skills shortage. *'Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much'* - Helen Keller

Institute of Food Science and Technology

IFST is the UK's leading professional body for those involved in all aspects of food science and technology. We are an internationally respected independent membership body, supporting food professionals through knowledge sharing and professional recognition.

www.ifst.org/inspire

