

NTNU signature to the EU Code of Conduct on responsible food business and marketing practices

Providing multidisciplinary expertise for sustainable food systems

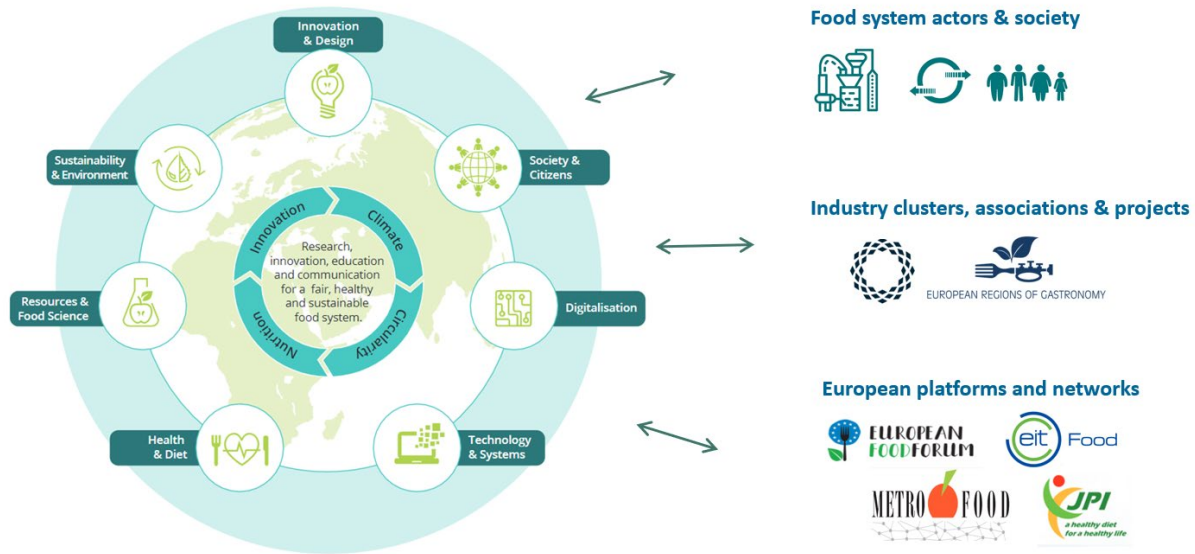
I am writing to express the interest of NTNU, through its NTNU Food Forum initiative to become a collaborative supporter of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices.

Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Norway's largest university with 42 000 students and 9 000 employees, has major ambitions in the actions towards a sustainable food system. The university, therefore, wants to commit to delivering on the aspirational objectives and become a collaborative supporter of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Businesses and Marketing Practises.

In this context, the university's key roles are: (1) providing students with the relevant expertise, skills, and motivation, (2) developing successful models of collaboration with different actors in the food systems, (3) sharing knowledge and co-creating with food actors and society and (4) developing research, innovation, and collaboration methods to equip the society with a well-functioning toolbox for a successful and measurable change.

During the last two years, NTNU has initiated a collaboration model (NTNU Food Forum) that aims to mobilize its experts from different disciplines and faculties to maximize the societal impact on the transformation of the food system. Comprising more than 100 experts from all 9 faculties, the NTNU Food Forum operates in research, education, innovation and communication for a fair, healthy and sustainable food system. The forum covers the following key areas: Society & Citizens, Digitalization, Technology & Systems, Health & Diet, Resources & Food Science, Sustainability & Environment, and Innovation & Design (see illustration).

The NTNU Food Forum is an active member of the sustainable food debates through engagement in regional, national, and European platforms and networks and is closely collaborating with a range of strategic food actors (Large companies, SMEs, governmental actors, NGOs, consumers, R&I and education stakeholders).



Through the NTNU Food Forum, NTNU is already engaged in fulfilling most of the aspirational objectives of the Code of Conduct through specific co-creation activities with the industry, other actors in the food system and society. Particular attention is given to those dealing with the UN SDG 12 (responsible production and consumption) represented by improvement of the resource utilization (objective 4), food loss (objective 2) and improvement of future diets (objective 1). The impact is achieved through industry collaboration, student education, research, and innovation projects and by engaging in the regional and national food systems.

One of the main deliveries that the university can provide to the Code of conduct is represented by knowledge creation, which is achieved by supplying qualified and motivated students. The aim is to create future game-changers capable to contribute to the abovementioned Code of Conduct objectives. Taking all of these into account, our study programs and courses are developed to equip students with the expertise, skills, and networks needed to improve the future food system.

The food systems are dynamic environments requiring a lot of effort to keep up to date knowledge and consciousness about the latest challenges and trends. To properly address these, NTNU continuously develops arenas of co-creation and knowledge sharing between students, industry, and other players in the food system on different levels. This approach also ensures that educators are aware and constantly updated.

Thanks to the described activities and approaches, NTNU, through NTNU Food Forum commits to contribute to the Code of Conduct objectives through the activities listed below:

	Knowledge sharing arena	Description	Relevant for objective
Education	Food industry Framework (Course)	Annual co-creation workshops between students and the food industry (mainly SMEs) on targeted sustainable food topics (resource utilization, food loss, climate footprint etc.) as part of a teaching module. The students participate with their expertise in food science and food policy and the industry bring their industry challenges and experience to the table. Before joining these workshops, the students have participated in 3 days of digital classrooms with dialogue on food policy with EC, EFSA, JRC, and the Norwegian delegation in Brussels. The course also includes guest lecturers representing different food actors that may be their potential future employers. The model was launched in 2017.	1,2,3,4
	Experts in team (Mandatory course for all master students).	Annual cross-disciplinary teamwork for master students from all university faculties where the students together work out solutions and approaches to complex challenges. We have included topics such as sustainable aquaculture, circular industries, waste etc., and in 2023 we will relaunch the topic "future meals" that will include several of the Code objectives. This teaching module is in close collaboration with actors of the food system.	1,2,3,4
	Student internship in the food industry (5 months).	Bachelor students are being trained in relevant jobs in the food businesses with a set of deliverables and learning outcomes. They are supervised by both company representatives and university supervisors. During the internship period, the students meet digitally with other students and their supervisors and discuss relevant challenging topics. More than 100 Norwegian businesses are a part of this internship concept.	1,2,3,4,5
	Brohode havbruk (Project)	Annual arrangements between students (Bachelor, Masters, PhDs, lower grade) meet aquaculture actors on relevant topics such as sustainable aquaculture.	1, 3
	Industry PhDs	NTNU educate industry PhDs who are doing most of their PhD-work in the food and biotechnology industry on industry challenges with supervision from the university. One example is a PhD on utilizing side streams from the aquaculture sector.	1-4
	The industry involved in existing and new study programs.	Continuously developing the portfolio and content of relevant study programs (in collaboration with food actors): Some relevant examples: (1) Bachelor and master studies in food science, technology, and sustainability, (2) Biotechnology, (3) Industrial chemistry, (4) Biology, (5) Master in Ocean resources (6) Bachelor in Aquaculture engineering (new), (7) Bachelor in Bio-marine resources etc., and a wide portfolio of targeted courses. Guest lecturers from industrial areas are widely used in these study programs. NTNUs food education will apply for becoming a national centre of educational expertise.	1-6
Regional and national engagement	Regional engagement	Active involvement in the project Trondheim and Trøndelag European Region of Gastronomy 2022 (strategy group with multi-actors) and particularly in the research project on regional sustainable food systems. Our role is to develop successful collaboration models and meeting arenas between the region's knowledge providers and representatives from all food actors (including society and consumers). NTNU is using Design thinking methodology to find targeted measures. Other projects that are exploring the university's role in regional food systems are (1) collaboration between local restaurants and research laboratories for a gastronomy lab, (2) the regional and national food bank, (3) company clusters dealing with circular food systems, (4) New distribution channels for reducing food loss (start-ups) and (5) arranging seminars, workshops, and lifelong learning for industry actors etc.	1-6 1-4
	Strategic collaboration with food actors	Memberships and active participation in dialogue arenas for industry : Industry clusters; NCE Aquatech cluster (SMEs and large companies within the aquaculture sector), NCE Blue Legasea (SMEs and large companies within the marine ingredients sector), Agritech Research (cluster of primary producers, steering committee), NTNU has shares in company representing local food actors, food and brewery festival and NTNU is also co-hosting national food competitions (arranged by seafood association and NTNU) etc.	1-6
	Arrangement of meeting arenas	Regional, national, and international collaboration on events such as Annual Food Festival with >250 000 guests (consumers, local producers...), Annual Brewery festival, >10 food seminars events (sustainable food, biotechnology and circular systems, food loss etc.), and NTNU is planning 1 st Annual Nordic Food Forum with Nordic partners.	1-6
Research projects	Specific targeted research projects	OPTiMAT – Optimal utilization of seafood resource - NTNU financed program education ca 10 PhDs.	1, 2,3,4
		SUPREME – National project with seafood industry aiming to increase utilization of marine food resources	1,2,4
		OMEGA – National project aiming to increase the use of processing side streams for use as healthy food ingredients (circularity and food fortification)	1,2,4
		iFOODNet – International collaboration including developing a model for student innovation training school (launched autumn 2021)	1-6
		MEATigation – Mitigating climate change through meat - a national project	1,4
European platform	Membership, strategic positions, actively involved in debates on European Level	Enough –H2020 project that will identify how the food industry can become net-zero by 2050	3
		European Food Forum University membership, Vice-chair Management Board and member of Steering committee EiT Food , New associate member (from 2021) JPI A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life – Member of Scientific Advisory Board Metrofood , EU-project on food infrastructure – developing a national node for Norway	1-6

	<p>IDF International Dairy federation, an active member</p> <p>EATIP – European Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Platform, University member and position as senior advisor</p> <p>UnLiON – Board member and active member</p> <p>Several networks and strategic European and Nordic partners e.g. VUB Multidisciplinary Program on Sustainable Food and Biomass Systems – an active member of the network</p> <p>NTNU Food Forum actively engages in most events and debates and respond to strategic documents.</p>	
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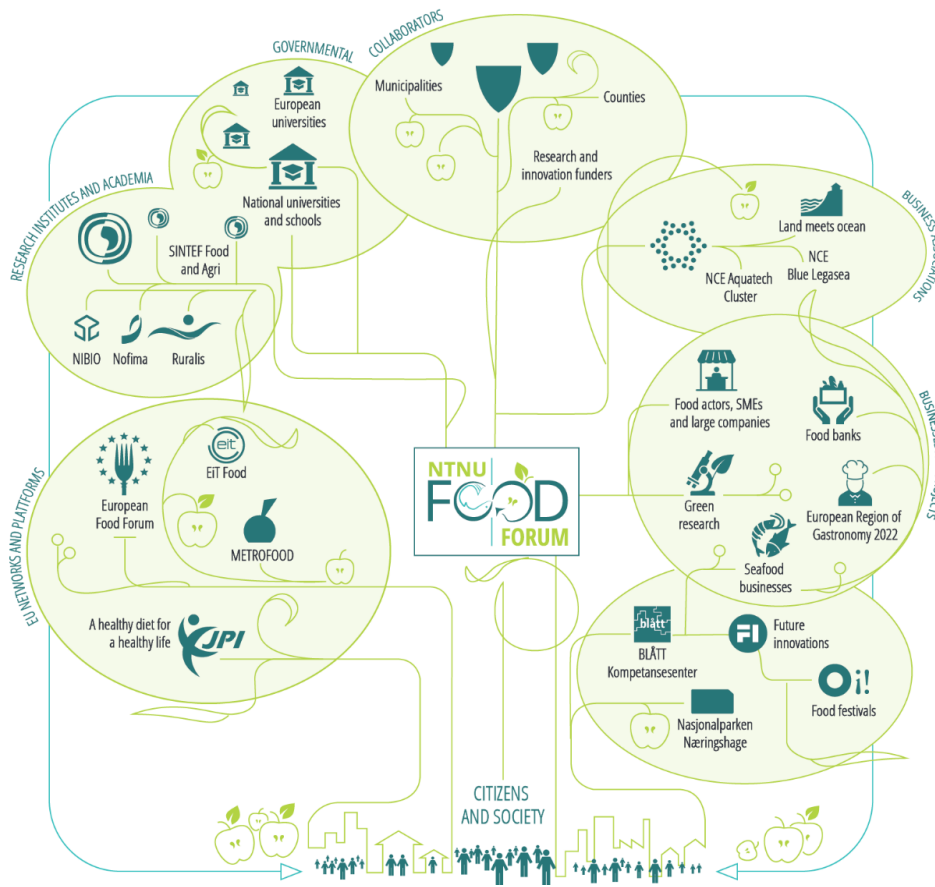
NTNU will commit to continue developing these collaboration models to fulfil the objectives of the Code of Conduct.

In particular:

- I. Organize one course in European food policy for students every year
- II. Organize at least 3 workshops about sustainable food systems with industry actors every year
- III. Develop successful forms of collaboration between food system actors
- IV. Keep the Code of conduct in focus (where relevant) in debates arranged by the European Food Forum, EiT Food, UnLiON, and other relevant initiatives
- V. Organize two annual food events at the regional level targeted to civil society
- VI. Organize specialized courses for food actors in innovation and design thinking where appropriate
- VII. Further develop the network of collaborative partners (see illustration below)
- VIII. Continuously nurture our food system expertise (at the university and related partners level) to guarantee constant contribution to the food system transformation.

Finally, NTNU will also promote the Code among the stakeholders, the industry and other food actors. NTNU will also motivate them to align their sustainability actions and business practices to the aspirational objectives of the Code as well as adhere to it.

COLLABORATING PARTNERS



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We look forward to fostering closer collaboration with the signatories of the Code.

Trondheim, 02 February 2022

Tor Grande

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