

# Next FOOD

EDUCATING THE NEXT GENERATION  
OF PROFESSIONALS IN THE AGRIFOOD SYSTEM

## D8.3-Third countries

WP8 – Ethics



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## 1.1 Executive summary

This document covers ethical concerns in relation to third partner countries as one of totally three parts of the Nextfood Ethics policy. The overall aim of NEXTFOOD is to generate an innovative European science and education road map for sustainable agriculture along the value chain from research via fabrication into application. Within NEXTFOOD we will employ systems approaches, in which the farmers and other supply chain actors involved are seen as important actors and co-creators of

knowledge. This will challenge the linear view of knowledge transfer as a top-down process from researchers down to advisors and practitioners. The project will involve several phases of research, each of which will be planned in accordance with high standards of research ethics. This document reports how potential ethical issues in the NextFood project will be identified and taken into consideration by the partners involved in the research activities and the data collection and storage.

## 1.2 Introduction

NEXTFOOD will employ case-based action research to develop relevant and effective education and training programs for a transition to more sustainable agrifood and forestry systems. Research will be performed on qualitative and quantitative data generated during the case development process. In addition, we will analyze data collected in a broader context by using data from questionnaires. Key ethical issues concerning the planned research activities are recruitment of participants, information to participants and informed consent during the planned research activities. Moreover, fair benefit sharing with non-EU low and middle income partners and protection of personal data is taken into consideration. This document reflects the commitment of the NextFood research group to conduct responsible and socially acceptable research. It describes how we deal with ethical issues that will or may arise while completing the different tasks of the project and demonstrates how our research is in line with international, EU and national laws. The Management Team will be responsible for overseeing ethical issues throughout the project, and will consult institutional ethics committees whenever necessary.

Compliance with research ethics is an integral part of the research in the NEXTFOOD project. Project partners are bound by the requirements to adhere to best practice regarding ethical standards and contemporary processes as they may evolve over the period of the project (c. 2018 to 2023). The processes and approach to ethical clearance in NEXTFOOD comply with the guidance in Regulation (EU) 1291/2013, 11 December 2013, establishing the Horizon 2020, Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), as set out by in the Official Journal of the European Union, Article 19 on ethical principles (European Parliament, 2013). Of particular relevance to NEXTFOOD are the principles of:

- proportionality,
- the right to privacy,
- the right to the protection of personal data,
- the right to the physical and mental integrity of a person,
- the right to non-discrimination,
- the need to ensure high levels of human health protection.

Research activities will be required to meet the following:

1. Research will be designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency.
2. Research participants and staff will be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved.

3. The confidentiality of information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents will always be respected.
4. The independence of the research will be clearly set out, and any conflicts of interest or partiality will be made explicit.

The NEXTFOOD Consortium Agreement includes a requirement for all Partners to strictly adhere to the ethical standards and guidelines of Horizon2020, regardless of the country in which the research is carried out. It includes reference to processes for the collection of personal data.

The Project Plans for each Task in the Project Management Plan will identify whether there is a likelihood of requiring ethical clearance for the activities proposed. The assessments will be reviewed as the project evolves, and monitored by the Executive Board, through the WPLs. For those activities for which ethical clearance will be required the responsibility for the conduct of the research rests with the lead investigator of the activity. The relevant Task and WP Leaders will ensure that the activity has the appropriate ethical clearance. Such clearance will normally be through a partner's institutional ethical procedures. If there are no such procedures, those of the most relevant Task or WP Leader will be followed. In the absence of a relevant procedure, the process of the Coordinating organisation, SLU, will be used. Guidelines on best practice will be followed, as published by the most relevant professional body or public agency. As a general guide, NEXTFOOD partners will follow the UK Economic and Social Research Council Research Ethics Guidebook ([www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk/Consent-72](http://www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk/Consent-72)). The project Data Management Plan will set out the principles, processes and requirements for ensuring data protection, whilst pursuant of a general project policy of research being Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR).

### 1.3 Application area

The procedures and criteria specified in this document shall be applied by all partners in NextFood and for all procedures of data acquisition involving subjects external to the Project Consortium in a non-anonymous form. Each partner supervises and checks the work performed by its own staff in accordance with this document.

### 1.4 Third party countries

#### 1.4.1 Fair benefit-sharing arrangements

Benefits-sharing especially for non-EU low and middle income countries means ensuring fair sharing of new values produced from the research activities in these countries. Stakeholders in these countries, including researchers, businesses, farmers, advisers and students should see that benefits rising from NextFood is shared in a fair way between all parties. NextFood promotes openness and co-ownership of the research and its outcomes, e.g. teaching and training methods, curricula, and toolboxes for teaching practitioners. Co-creation is a key element of the project, as each work package requires inputs from partners both in and outside EU, especially for developing the new education and training system and for the inventory of skills. All EU partners, as well as partners from non-EU low and middle income countries, have a budget for travel and accommodation to be able to participate in partner

meetings. The budget allows for at least one person and sometimes two persons to visit the meetings.

They will be invited to participate in consortium conferences. Non-EU low and middle income countries will also have full access to the research results produced in other country case studies, which can be a valuable source of lesson learning for all partner institutions. Research results such as the master manual, and policy briefs will be promoted in non-EU countries through the respective partner organisation. NextFood will also provide support to carry out stakeholder workshops in the non-EU countries.

Researchers from non-EU low and middle income countries will also be participating in knowledge creation through participation in developing and/or implementing the research methods and co-authoring publications.

#### 1.4.2 Transfer of data between EU and non-EU countries

Chile, Egypt, Ethiopia and Norway are partner countries in Nextfood. In addition, we will manage cases studies in India via the German partner WHH. These partners will collect data for work packages 1, 2 and 3, and it may include personal data such as names and addresses of farm locations. Data will be imported from Chile, Egypt, Ethiopia and Norway and there will be a transfer of data to, in particular, the non-EU country Norway. However, all personal data will be de-identified before transfer of any data between countries. This means that no personal data will be transferred to or from non-EU countries.

#### 1.4.3 Risk mitigation

Due to the outbreak of Covid19 there is an increased risk for participating in physical meetings. All Nextfood members follow the recommendations and travel restrictions of the authorities in each country. During the outbreak we will organize on-line meetings as far as that is being possible in order to prevent spreading of the disease and still be able to fulfill our obligations in the project.