Agri-Inno – stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship in Egypt’s agriculture sector

Call for Participants
Agri-Inno is a three-day intensive programme funded by the UK’s Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) Grand Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) to foster innovation and to support entrepreneurship in Egypt’s agricultural sector. The focus of this programme is to identify innovation and entrepreneurial opportunities in providing solutions to the significant challenges of agricultural waste in Egypt, thereby bringing potential economic and environmental benefits. Agricultural waste, such as cotton stalks or rice straw, is a by-product of primary agricultural production. An estimated 22-26 million dry tonnes of agricultural waste are produced annually in Egypt. It is often burned in the fields, or used as a primitive fuel, resulting in air pollution. However, agro-waste represents biomass with significant potential uses, including more efficient power generation than burning, or as a source of nutrients for animal feed supplements, both of which might provide financial benefit.

Agri-Inno aims to bring together Senior Academic, Early Career Researchers, Agri-Tech industry partners and entrepreneurs from both Egypt and Cambridge, UK, to:

- Share novel ideas to improve agricultural practices to reduce agricultural waste (Harvesting Waste Optimisation)
- Develop the understanding of soil in the context of agricultural and environmental sustainability
- Build collaborations to build and trial innovations in the processing of post-harvest waste
- Identify opportunities to create value through new business models that turn waste into new products (value chain development and entrepreneurship)

Format of the programme
Agri-Inno will be a three-day workshop, delivered by Cambridge Judge Business School in collaboration with the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of Cambridge. Participants will be introduced to entrepreneurial actions in order to understand better how to derive broader benefit from them, including commercialising IP resulting from their own research; and this will accelerate impact. The programme will also include a visit to the Algal Innovation Centre and the Plant Growth Facilities at the Botanic Garden where the participants will be able to see the pilot facilities for translational plant research. A key element of the programme is to provide a forum for participants to connect to both cutting edge scientific and entrepreneurial practice through participative workshops and a speed networking event.

Outputs & Impacts
- Increased understanding of Egypt’s agro-waste challenges aligned with existing BBSRC funded research in Cambridge
- Enhanced entrepreneurial and commercialisation skills for further sustainable development in Egypt
- New researchers and entrepreneurs involved in GCRF collaborations
- Support by AUC Venture Lab for potentially viable ventures that come out of Agri-Inno

Who is Agri-Inno for?
This programme is tailored for:
- Academics
- Early Career Researchers
- Agri-Tech industry partners
Entrepreneurs

Who are working in the broad remit of agricultural waste management and are keen on exploring the potential impact and commercial opportunities of their own and other showcased research. If you are interested in being part of the Agri-Inno programme please email ml745@cam.ac.uk with a completed application form no later than 3rd February, 2017.

Please note that places are limited to maximise the value of the interactive nature of the Agri-Inno. The programme has BBSRC funding for ten Egyptian and ten Cambridge participants.

Successful applicants will be notified by the 10th February 2017.

Dates and logistics

For Egyptian participants: airfare and accommodation will be provided.