

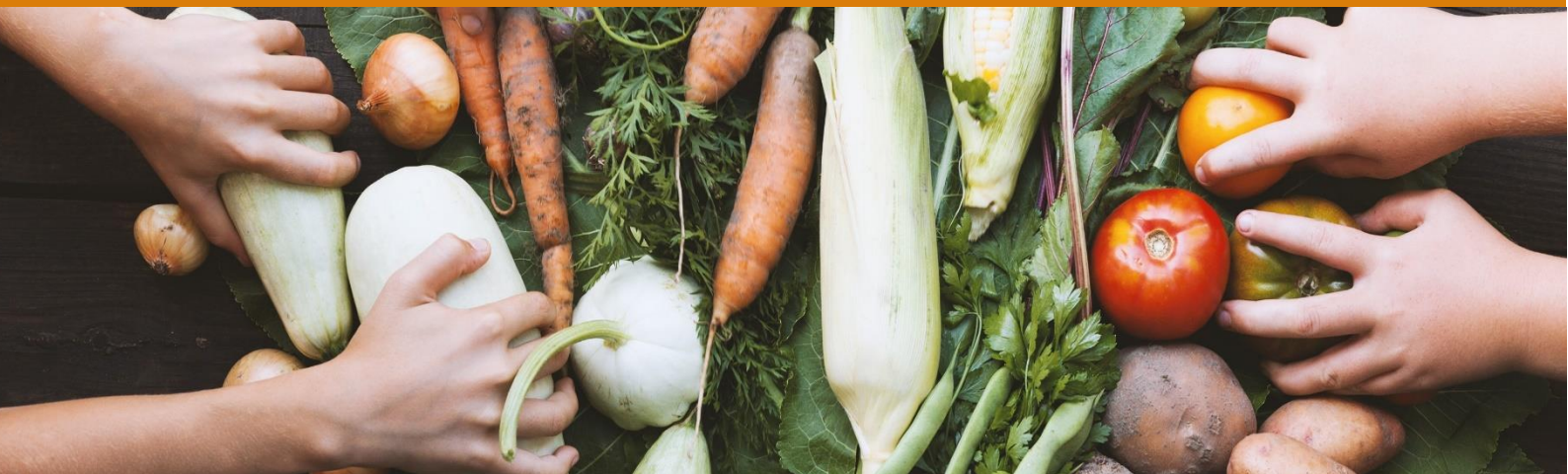
# agro BRIDGES

**“Building bridges between consumers and producers  
by supporting short food supply chains through a  
systemic, holistic, multi-actor approach-based Toolbox”**

*(Grant Agreement 101000788)*

**Coordination and Support Action**

**“Let’s Build our SFSC”  
Event Validation Report  
Responsible Partner: MTU**



*This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under Grant Agreement N° 101000788.*



## "Let's Build our SFSC!" Event Validation Report – Ireland

**Issued by:** MTU  
**Issue date:** 17/03/2023  
**Due date:** 30/04/2023  
**Work Package Leader:** MTU (Task Leader: Q-PLAN)

**Start date of project:** 01 January 2021

**Duration:** 36 months

### Document History

Version	Date	Changes
1.0	17/03/2023	Draft version
2.0	21/03/2023	Final version

### Dissemination Level

<b>PU</b>	Public	X
<b>PP</b>	Restricted to other programme participants (including the EC Services)	
<b>RE</b>	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the EC Services)	
<b>CO</b>	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the EC)	



Main authors	
Name	Organisation
Jennifer Attard, David Barry, James Gaffey	MTU

Quality reviewers	
Name	Organisation
George Malliopoulos, Eirini Ethymiadou	Q-PLAN

#### LEGAL NOTICE

The information and views set out in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Neither the European Union institutions and bodies nor any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.

© agroBRIDGES Consortium, 2022 - 2023

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.



## Table of Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>“LET’S BUILD OUR SFSC” EVENT ORGANISATION DETAILS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
2.1	Event programme / agenda .....	6
2.2	Personnel involved in the organisation of the event.....	8
2.3	Event material .....	9
2.4	Invitation of attendees and promotional activities implementation .....	9
<b>3.</b>	<b>EVENT IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOMES</b> .....	<b>12</b>
3.1	Event implementation .....	12
3.2	Event participation.....	14
<b>4.</b>	<b>EVENT VALIDATION</b> .....	<b>15</b>
4.1.1	<i>Validation of event by participants</i> .....	15
4.1.2	<i>Validation of the “Let’s build our SFSC” event by the organising partner</i> .....	16
4.1.3	<i>Limitations and barriers of the organising partner</i> .....	16
<b>5.</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS</b> .....	<b>16</b>

## List of figures

Figure 1: Promotional materials used (a) event agenda, (b) event cover image and (c) example of one of the speaker announcements. ....	9
Figure 2: (a) Eventbrite page used for ticketing (b) Eventbrite registration form, (c) example of social media post for event promotion, and (d) an automatic personal invitation from Brella to invite guests onto the platform.....	10
Figure 3: Screenshot of Brella (a) event home page and (b) schedule .....	13

## List of tables

Table 1: Event programme .....	7
Table 2: Estimated effort and expertise needed for the event.....	8
Table 3: Event organisation timeline.....	12
Table 4: Event participation.....	14
Table 5: Event feedback .....	15



## 1. Introduction

The present report summarises the activities of MTU for the organisation and validation of the **“Let’s build our SFSC” event in Ireland** organised on **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023**. This event is an online brokerage and networking event, to bring stakeholders of the local agri-food sector to present their products, meet others and negotiate partnerships based on the concept of Short Food Supply Chains. The event was organised using the Brella matchmaking platform that was selected as the most appropriate for the needs of the agorBRIDGES consortium, based on market research and negotiations with the sales departments of various candidate providers, in the frame of task 3.4.

The present report outlines all steps taken for the design, planning and implementation of the regional event, as well as the outcomes and evaluation of the event by the participants and the organising agorBRIDGES partner, to produce suggestions for the improvement of the “Let’s build our SFSC!” tool and measure its impact to the agrifood sector at local level. The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 1** – Introducing the event report
- **Chapter 2** – Describing the concept selection, design, organisation and implementation of the Let’s Build Our SFSC event in Ireland.
- **Chapter 3** – Outlining the validation results for the events by participants and the value found in the “Let’s meet!” guidelines by the organising partners when creating and launching their event.
- **Chapter 4** – Concluding remarks for the event and suggestions for improvement of the “Let’s meet!” tool.



## 2. “Let’s build our SFSC” event organisation details

### 2.1 Event programme / agenda

“Let’s build our SFSC” is an online networking and matchmaking event to promote collaborations among food producers, food processors and food service businesses, and aid with the presence of food business support organisations. The event started at 7pm on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Before the event kicked off however, a practice room was set up for all speakers to test and practice using Brella before giving their talks.

To support collaborations and inspire discussions, the event was split into three sections. Talks were given by the agroBRIDGES project team to explain the concept of SFSCs and the purpose of the event, as well as by food business support organisations and examples of different types of successful SFSC food service businesses. The talks were 10 mins each. Some of the talks were held in parallel in separate breakout rooms so that audience members could choose which talk was more relevant for them. One room focused on food processing and one focused on food service. After this, discussion sessions were held in two separate breakout rooms, one for food processing and one for food service.

Following the talks and discussions, the networking sessions were opened, and kept open for 75 minutes. Each networking slot was 15 minutes long and the attendees and speakers were able to book one-to-one meetings with other attendees.

The even programme is listed in Table 1 below. To set up the event, each speaker session was set up in its own breakout room. The breakout room speaker link was then used to create a stream, and each stream was put into the schedule page for guests to enter through.



**Table 1: Event programme**

Title of activity	Topic / Short description	Date & Time (local)	Speakers	Location
Practice Room	A space for speakers to practice sharing their screen and to ensure no technical difficulties during the event	12:00 – 19:00	Anyone	Central stage
Welcome + The agroBRIDGES project	Toolbox overview and project progress	19.00 - 19.15	Jennifer Attard	Central stage
Teagasc support for SFSCs	Facilities & services available to SFSC businesses	19.15 - 19.25	Ciara McDonagh	Central stage
BIA Innovator Campus	Facilities & services available to SFSC businesses	19.25 - 19.35	Sandra Regan	Breakout room #1
Murphy's Ice-cream	Sourcing Local ingredients for a local project	19.25 - 19.35	Seán Murphy	Breakout room #2
Kerry Food Hub	Facilities & services available to SFSC businesses	19.35 - 19.45	Martin Brosnan	Breakout room #1
Drumanilra Organic Farm	A farms journey to local food service	19.35 - 19.45	Justina Gavin	Breakout room #2
Breakout Room	Local Food Processing	19.45 - 20.10	David Barry	Breakout Room #1
Breakout Room	Local Food service	19.45 - 20.10	Jennifer Attard	Breakout room #2
Closing	Event summary and closing comments	20.10 - 20.15	Meave Henchion	Central stage
Post event Networking	15-min networking sessions for one-to-one meetings	20.15 - 21.30	N/A	Networking meetings



## 2.2 Personnel involved in the organisation of the event

The event preparation and organisation required the involvement of two people from the MTU project team, with some support from one person from the Teagasc project team. There was no need for the involvement of specialised employees, however a strong computer literacy is advised. The effort spent per activity is provided in Table 2 below.

*Table 2: Estimated effort and expertise needed for the event*

Specialisation	Number of employees	Expected role	In-house / External	Estimated effort (person days)
Brella set-up	2	Preparing the Brella event pages	In-house	10
Graphic designers	1	Development of promo material	In-house	2
Session moderator	2	Coordination of the online session	In-house	2
Marketing & Ticket sales	3	Posting material	In-house	10
Session speakers	7	Presenting information and case studies to the attendees	In-house & external	3





## 2.3 Event material

The provided templates for the agenda, cover photo and speaker announcement were used for the Irish event. See Figure 1 below for screenshot examples of the Irish event materials. The agenda (Fig. 1a) was used when promoting the event by email, while the cover image (Fig. 1b) and speaker announcements (Fig. 1c) were used when promoting the event on social media.

**Figure 1: Promotional materials used (a) event agenda, (b) event cover image and (c) example of one of the speaker announcements.**



## 2.4 Invitation of attendees and promotional activities implementation

Invitations were first sent to Irish agroBRIDGES MAP members to give them first priority to book seats due to the efforts they have put into the project. Following this, MTU and Teagasc shared the event on their social media accounts. Each of the speakers was asked to share the event to their own networks too since they are very involved with small food businesses.

An Eventbrite page was created and shared for event registration (Figs. 2a and 2b). The registration form included questions related to attendee contact details, demographic information and provision of consent for collecting and processing their data. The project Privacy Policy and an informed consent form were linked to the form. Eventbrite was chosen as it is the most common platform used in Ireland for booking events. Once the Eventbrite page was created, it was shared as explained above and in Table 3 below. An example of a social media post used to promote the event is shown in Fig. 2c below.



As people registered on Eventbrite, their name, surname, company, role and email address were manually added to the Brella platform since the upload template did not seem to work. The day before the event, an invitation was directly from Brella to the added email addresses. This email included a unique join link for each registrant (Fig. 2d).

**Figure 2: (a) Eventbrite page used for ticketing (b) Eventbrite registration form, (c) example of social media post for event promotion, and (d) an automatic personal invitation from Brella to invite guests onto the platform.**

The image shows two parts of an Eventbrite event page. Part (a) is the event listing for 'Let's Build Our Short Food Supply Chain!' on March 14th. The event is online, from 19:00 to 20:30 GMT. It is organized by agroBRIDGES. The description states it is a networking and brokerage event for Irish food producers, businesses, and support organizations. It lists confirmed speakers: Dr Jennifer Attard, Ciara McDonagh, Sandra Regan, Martin Brosnan, Justina Gavin, and Seán Murphy. The event is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme. Part (b) is the registration form, which includes contact information (name, surname, email), a 'Keep me updated' checkbox, a 'Ticket 1 - General Admission' section with fields for name, surname, email, mobile phone, job title, and company, a gender selection, and several consent checkboxes regarding data processing and newsletter subscriptions. A 'Register' button is at the bottom right.



**Jennifer Attard** · You  
Research Project Manager - Circular Bioeconomy Research Group, Shanno...  
5d · 🌐

Online event announcement for small #LocalFood businesses!

An opportunity for small #Irish food businesses to get together and discuss #collaborations.

🕒 Tuesday 14th March 7pm - 8:15pm

The event will include a few short talks from a number of speakers, as well as time for group discussions, networking and one-to-one meetings via the Brella platform.

Confirmed speakers so far:  
**Ciara McDonagh** - Teagasc supports for short food supply chains (SFSCs).  
**Sandra Regan** (BIA Innovator Campus) - Facilities and services available to SFSC businesses.  
**Martin Brosnan** - Kerry Food Hub: Facilities and Services available to short food supply chain businesses.  
**Justina Gavin** - Drumanilra Organic Farm and Farm Kitchens: A farm's journey to local food service.  
**Seán Murphy** - **Murphy's Ice Cream**: Sourcing local ingredients for a local product.

Following the event, the platform will remain open until 9:30pm for you to have the opportunity to book one-to-one meetings with the speakers and other participants.

Book your free tickets here: <https://lnkd.in/eue5anMV>

AgroBridges Project 2021-2023, David Barry, James Gaffey, Maeve Henchion, Circular Bioeconomy Research Group (CIRC BIO), Shannon Applied Biotechnology Centre, Munster Technological University, Teagasc



Let's Build Our Short Food Supply Chain!  
eventbrite.ie · 1 min read

(c)

👍👍 Pat Doody and 30 others · 2 comments · 4 reposts

(d)



### agroBRIDGES has invited you to join Let's build our SFSC - Ireland



#### Your invite

Event starts on: **14 March 2023**

Available seats: **1**  
If you've purchased multiple seats, your colleagues can join using the same code.

**JOIN THE EVENT**

If the button above doesn't work, please, copy and paste this link into your browser: <https://next.brella.io/join/NUPZCV>

Or open the app, click join new event, and paste the following code to join:

**NUPZCV**

If you have questions about joining the event, please read our [Help Center Article](#). For questions regarding the event content, please reach out to the event organizer.



*Table 3: Event organisation timeline*

Task	Date (2023)	Timing (weeks before/ after the event)
Select and reserve date	7 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-5
Confirm availability of Speakers	20 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-3
Ticketing + event promotion by email and social media	20 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-3
Invitations to Brella	13 <sup>th</sup> March	-1 day
Hosting event	14 <sup>th</sup> March	0
Collect event feedback and event reporting	14 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> March	0 / +1 day

### 3. Event implementation and outcomes

#### 3.1 Event implementation

None of the registrants joined Brella until a couple of minutes before the start of the event. This is likely because of online event fatigue / overload, as well as miscommunication from the event organisers in emphasising the usefulness of logging in in advance the event. This miscommunication may have occurred due to efforts to not overload guests and speakers with emails and instructions.

Nonetheless, the event itself went well as there was good and mixed attendance at each of the talks, as well as a healthy discussion afterwards, with follow-up one-to-one meetings and emailed questions. During the discussion, it was clear that the attendees were happy to have a chance to share their thoughts with each other. The event definitely served as a good experience sharing event, as well as promotion of services available to small businesses. It is uncertain whether any collaborations developed as a result of the event as of yet.

Discussions centred around time management of small businesses, particularly around their ability to go through lengthy application procedures for grants that would support their business, with one participant even saying that they would pay for some potentially fundable work themselves because they had no time available for grant processes. Attendees also had questions about training programmes that would be available for new product development (shelf-life determination etc.). Seasonality was a big topic on the day too, with many asking how others are able to overcome this hurdle, and how they sustain their business throughout the year.



Figure 3: Screenshot of Brella (a) event home page and (b) schedule

(a)

Let's build our SFSC - Ireland

AGROBRIDGES

Watch on YouTube

Promoting dialog and collaborative learning

Event Home

People

Schedule

Breakout Rooms

Speakers

Event hosted by

Stream

Powered by Brella

Jennifer Attard  
Munster Technological University,...

Research Project Panager with the Circular Bioeconomy Research Group at MTU Kerry. I am one of the organisers of this event, which is part of the agrobridges.eu project. Drop me a message here with any questions related to the event, or to food sustainability research in general.

Edit your profile →

Latest Announcement 21 hours

Next up

Following Justina's presentation you can remain in this room for any questions and closing comments

Event Info

Yes you cant! - SFSC example businesses

Event Feedback

Past Sessions Most Popular

07:00 PM 14 Mar 2023 Past Welcome to the event

07:15 PM 14 Mar 2023 Past Teagasc facilities for SFSC actors

07:25 PM 14 M. BIA Innovatc Facilities and Se businesses

View full Schedule

Networking about Sustainable Development

See all

(b)

Welcome to the event

Toolbox overview and project progress agroBRIDGES overview + let's meet summary

Jennifer Attard  
Research Project Manager • Munster Technological University, Kerry

15min

Kerry Food Hub

Martin Brosnan  
Project Manager • Kerry Food Hub & Artisanmarket.ie

10min

Teagasc facilities for SFSC actors

Ciara McDonagh (Head of Food Industry Development)  
Research Officer • Teagasc

10min

Murphy's Ice-Cream

Seán Murphy  
Food service business owner • Murphy's Ice-cream

10min

BIA Innovator Campus

Sandra Regan  
Food Sector Project Manager • BIA Innovator Campus

10min

Breakout room for food processing discussion

25min

Breakout room for food service discussion

25min

Drumanilra Organic Farm & Honestly Kitchens

A farm's journey to food service

Justina Gavin  
Producer and restaurant owner • Drumanilra Organic Farm & Honestly Kitchens

10min

Closing

Maeve Henchion  
Head of Dept. • Teagasc

5min



### 3.2 Event participation

Registration was done via Eventbrite and 33 registrations were received. In the end, 24 of these actually registered to Brella (see breakdown below). One-to-one meetings were organised by 5 people and a sixth person organised meetings after the event via email.

*Table 4: Event participation*

Audience type	No. of participants
Producers	4
Retailers and Wholesalers	2
Research and education	10
Business support + Development organisations	6
Other / unknown	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>



## 4. Event Validation

Google forms was used to collect feedback from the participants. The form was shared on the event homepage (0 responses), in the chat during the closing of the event (3 responses), and by email 3 days after the event (4 responses). A participant pointed out that the platform did not work on their iPad.

### 4.1.1 Validation of event by participants

*Table 5: Event feedback*

Question	Answers					
Were you familiar with the concept of Short Food Supply Chains before this event?	Yes		No		Not sure	
Attendee answers	3		0		1	
Did you find this event helpful to meet professionals and businesses you can collaborate with?	Very helpful	Helpful	Neutral	Not very Helpful	Not Helpful at all	I prefer not to answer
Attendee answers	2	2	0	0	0	0
Did you find this event helped you see Short Food Supply Chains as a promising business alternative?	Very useful	Useful	Neutral	Not very useful	Not useful at all	I prefer not to answer
Attendee answers	0	2	2	0	0	0
Did you find the matchmaking and booking of one-to-one meetings with other people useful to identify and negotiate collaborations?	Very useful	Useful	Neutral	Not very useful	Not useful at all	I prefer not to answer
Attendee answers	0	3	1	0	0	0
Was the event useful in supporting you to find interesting opportunities to collaborate with other businesses of Short Food Supply Chains?	Very useful	Useful	Neutral	Not very useful	Not useful at all	I prefer not to answer



Attendee answers	1	2	1	0	0	0
Would you like another similar event to be organised in your region? How often?	Monthly or more often	3-4 times a year	Twice a year	Once a year	Never	I prefer not to answer
Attendee answers	0	1	0	3	0	0

#### 4.1.2 Validation of the “Let’s build our SFSC” event by the organising partner

##### Question #1: Did you find the event relevant to your local agri-food ecosystem and organization?

Somewhat. The platform, and the need for double registration is time-consuming and not very simple in terms of logging back in. Attendees and speakers needed a lot of instructions to understand how to navigate the platform. As an academic, and someone who is very computer literate, I still found it difficult to set up the event. I cannot imagine that local food businesses will have an easy time using the platform.

##### Question #2: Would you organise the same event again in your region? If yes, would you make any adjustments? If not, please explain your thinking.

Maybe. Local connections can often be made in person, and therefore online meetings are more useful for experience sharing and learning, rather than for collaboration. For this to work with a collaborative outcome, the stakeholders will need to be very familiar with the software. This is a significant time commitment for them when it might be easier to just meet in person.

#### 4.1.3 Limitations and barriers of the organising partner

The double registration process did not seem interesting for attendees. They had no interest in signing up in advance of the event, and they all signed up a few minutes before it started. Having said this, if our team potentially did not have the Let’s meet! Event in the same month, maybe it would have been easier to focus our efforts before the event. Lastly, the team at MTU do not have strong connections with small food businesses other than producers and support organisations, so it was tricky to engage retailers and distributors for just one event.

## 5. Conclusions

Overall, the event was positive and successful. Attendees found the event meaningful and seemed happy to have lengthy discussions with each other and arrange meetings. Having said this, the platform chosen might not be perfectly fit for purpose unless it is made simpler.