



Report Template for EU Events at EXPO

Event Title :	Educating the Young Professionals to Feed the Planet & Provide for the Sustainable Bioeconomy	Date:	22 and 23 October 2015
Event Organiser:	Association of European Life Science Universities (ICA)		
Event Target Group:	Rectors, Vice Rectors and Deans, or persons of equivalent status in their life science university, college, school or faculty being responsible for education, research and innovation		
Rapporteur:	Dr Simon B Heath Email ICAsecretariat@ica-europe.org		
Event Concept			
<p>Our universities must deliver graduates, who have the knowledge, skills and competences for careers in industry, NGOs and government to address the challenges of the transition towards the bioeconomy of the 21stC. These challenges include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Climate change• Food and nutritional security for an ever increasing world population• Soil and Water resource management• Biomass supply for the non food value chain• Risk assumptions (GMO, nanotech etc.)• Environmental sustainability <p>The bioeconomy encompasses the food and non-food value chains, the production of renewable biological resources and the conversion of these resources and waste streams into value added products, such as food, feed, bio-based products and bioenergy. The bioeconomy must be managed with due regard to environmental sustainability.</p> <p>The Forum exchanged ideas and views on three of these challenges - nutritional security, sustainable natural resource management, and climate change - with a view to asking whether our life science degree programmes are fit for purpose to deliver graduates who are qualified to address these challenges. 12 keynote speakers and 50 rectors and deans from agricultural and life science universities participated in the discussion and came up with lessons and recommendations for preparing graduates for the challenges identified.</p>			
Expected Outcomes			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflection on the challenges facing society in 21stC in the value food and non-food chains of the bioeconomy• Defining the expectations for interdisciplinary knowledge, skills and competences of graduates to meet the challenges of 21stC• Implications for the development of higher education institutions in the field of Life Sciences			

Main Conclusions

Keynote speakers focused on the challenges of nutritional security, the sustainable environment and climate changes. Academic respondents addressed the need for curriculum enhancement to ensure we provide the leaders of the future with the knowledge skills and competences to address these challenges. Particular emphasis was placed on the need for curricula with a social science perspective as well as a foundation in the natural and technical sciences. The conclusion is clearly that we need more than ever interdisciplinary curricula in the agricultural and life sciences. [See the presentations](#)

What follow-up actions emerged from this event?

The ICA Bioeconomy Task Force plan an event in 2016 to promote the contribution of life science universities as partners in developing the workforce for the sustainable bioeconomy.