

Press Release

Vienna, 4th March 2019

Great hopes in small organisms

International MicrobiomeSupport Workshop is held in Vienna

Over 100 academic and industry stakeholders from 24 countries are meeting on 4-5th March 2019 in Vienna for the 'MicrobiomeSupport Common Ground Workshop' organised by the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology.

The European Union finances the project 'MicrobiomeSupport', led by AIT, to achieve sound scientific results through harmonised research methods and effectively use synergies in different areas of microbiome research. The aim is to secure the sustainable long-term production of food and feed.

Our living environment is shared by micro-organisms that influence our life significantly without even being noticeable most of the times. Nonetheless, they play a large role in our health, in the environment and food production. Micro-organisms influence the production and health of crops, their storage and are a relevant factor in hygiene.

Workshop coordinator Dr Angela Sessitsch (AIT): *'We want to connect different microbiome stakeholders and disciplines with each other, to support the development of a strategic research and innovation agenda. We are working concretely towards food security, sustainable food production and bioeconomy as well as improved human health.'*

Food security for a growing population

By 2050 an additional 60% of food is required to feed the growing world population. The microbiome can be used to improve production as well as reduce harvest or storage losses – a topic for which AIT has already some research and application successes.

The sustainability of food production has to be considered from a global view. As a result MicrobiomeSupport works with partners from over 13 European countries alongside Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand, China, India, Argentina and Brazil, most of which are members of the International Bioeconomy Forum (IBF). In November 2018 the partners met for the first time in a kick-off meeting in Ottawa (Canada) and they are now starting the groundwork for the international microbiome research work in Vienna. The project is a Coordination and Support Action running until October 2022.

Pictures:

	
<p>Picture (Sessitsch/Thomas Teskey): Dr. Angela Sessitsch, Project-Coordinator</p>	

AIT Austrian Institute of Technology

The Austrian Institute of Technology is Austria’s largest private research centrum. With 8 centres the institute is a highly specialised research and development partner for the industry. The researchers focus on central infrastructure topics of the future: Energy, Health & Bioresources, Digital Safety & Security, Vision, Automation & Control, Mobility Systems, Low-Emission Transport, Technology Experience sowie Innovation Systems & Policy.

Over 1300 employees research across the whole of Austria – with a particular focus on the main centres in Vienna, Vienna Giefinggasse, Tulln, Seibersdorf, Wiener Neustadt, Ranshofen and Leoben – on the development of those tools, technologies and solutions for the Austrian economy to ensure it continues to be fit for the future according to our motto ‘Tomorrow Today’.

International Bioeconomy Forum

The International Bio-Economy Forum (IBF) was officially launched on 30 November 2017 in Brussels. It is co-chaired by the European Commission and AgriFood Canada. Nine extra-European countries from all the five continents participated. Canada, US, Argentina, South Africa, India, China and New Zealand joined the IBF as members. Australia and South Korea joined as observers.

European Member States are also represented in the plenary through a delegate of the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR).

Other observers that participated to the plenary are the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the BIOEAST initiative.

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