

A Partnership of:



Shaping the Future of **INNOVATION**

Presents
The Innovation Challenge Facility (grant funding)
managed by:



News

Issue 5, May 2022

Welcome to the fifth issue of the Shaping the Future of Innovation newsletter. Our aim is to contribute to building a culture of innovation and an innovation eco system by sharing news of the project as well as information from Partner programmes and relevant topics around innovation. We hope the content will inspire the local community to put creativity to work for a better quality of life for all.

Innovation must lead to a better quality of life for all. It must be inclusive.

The Innovation Challenge Facility Project Update

CALL 1 – Update

After a two stage application process that involved applicants presenting their project concepts which were evaluated; then with shortlisted applicants presenting detailed implementation plans, budgets, investments, impact on financials and business models – ***we finally have a shortlist to recommend to the Steering Committee for final vetting.***

Announcements of the grant awardees will be made in June within the next two weeks.

Agricultural Technology (Agtech Or Agritech)



Shaping the Future of Innovation and the Innovation Challenge Facility (grant fund)

Partners - Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the European Union (EU) and IDB LAB in collaboration with the Caribbean Industrial Research Institute (CARIRI) as the executing agency.

Aim: to contribute to a diversified economic base in Trinidad and Tobago.

Actions: **Component 1:** The Innovation Challenge Facility (grant fund for business innovation); **Component 2:** Building Industry and Academic Linkages (support for further research and development towards commercialization); **Component 3:** Building the Innovation Network (towards a sustainable innovation eco system).

Funding: over Euro 8 million provided by the European Union and the IDB LAB to support this innovation programme in Trinidad and Tobago.

The impact expected: job creation, new skills, increased efficiency / productivity and competitiveness, new markets, export growth, business growth / profit potential and positive environmental, social and inclusive impacts.

Visit: Shaping the Future of Innovation website at: <http://future.cariri4.com/> .

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With food price inflation accelerating (according to the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago 2021 Annual Economic Survey - food inflation accelerated to 4.4 per cent in 2021, compared to 2.8 per cent in 2020) and a food import bill of over 6 billion TT annually, agriculture and food processing (as well as food security) remain priorities for the country. At the same time, the challenges have not changed. Farmers continue to face difficulties to attract and retain labour, pay competitive wages compared to other sectors. They battle with pests including new ones such as the locusts found in Moruga, climate and environmental challenges, coupled with the need to control pests with sustainable approaches due to heightened demands of consumers for more natural and sustainably grown food. These all lead to the conclusion for emphasis to be placed on technology and more controlled agricultural systems.

Agricultural technology leverages everything from sensors, devices, machines, and AI to grow more productively, efficiently, and often to a higher standard of safety. Examples include:

Drones: to survey lands and monitor crops;

Internet of Things (IoT): internet-enabled sensors that can report for example, soil conditions such as temperature, humidity and pH in real time back to farmers by utilizing sensors that are placed in the ground.

Wireless and remote monitoring systems: for water management.

Controlled- environmental agriculture (CEA), including green houses, vertical farming, aquaponics and hydroponics, which are growing in popularity. They are high technology driven utilising computers to monitor dozens of parameters. For example, in greenhouses, parameters to monitor

may include: temperature, relative humidity, vapor pressure deficit, light intensity, electrical conductivity (feed and drain), pH (feed and drain), carbon dioxide concentrations, wind speed and direction, and even whether or not it is raining.

For the farmers in Trinidad and Tobago who are applying technology to their operations and feel a need to connect and converse with a community which they may not find in Trinidad and Tobago, have a look at the Agri-TechE website.

Agri-TechE is a business focused membership organisation, supporting the growth of a world-leading network of innovative farmers, producers, scientists, technologists and entrepreneurs who share a vision of increasing the productivity, profitability and sustainability of agriculture. Visit:

[Agri-TechE supporting agri-tech innovation - Agri-TechE \(agri-tech-e.co.uk\)](https://www.agri-tech-e.co.uk) for more on Agri-techE.

About Clusters



Did you know that Clusters can also apply for support from the Innovative Challenge Facility for a cluster-owned innovation project. The Cluster will need to meet all the usual administrative requirements such as having a legal and financial identity and being up to date on tax and company



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compliance. This can be done via an NGO, company or Non-Profit company structure.

Clusters can serve their members in many ways such as facilitating collaboration in research, innovation, new production capacities, market access to new international markets among other types of services. The members of the cluster may also be the operators of these services. For example: a cocoa and chocolate cluster may comprise the research and innovation centre, farmers, processors and chocolate makers all collaborating as an eco-system to meet the cluster objectives.

Clusters with good governance can be useful by allowing access to resources and markets which otherwise may be difficult for one company to do on its own.

Network News

Farmers and entrepreneurs have a need to converse, share stories, compare and find solutions and for this reason, we are pleased to provide the following headlines.

Innovate UK - Women in Innovation: Let's talk about...The Power of Storytelling



Innovate UK hosted a webinar on Wed 25 May 2022, 10.00 - 11.00 entitled, " Women in Innovation: Let's talk about...The Power of Storytelling." Visit: <https://ktn-uk.org/events/women-in-innovation-lets-talk-aboutthe-power-of-storytelling/> for more information.

The "Let's Talk About..." webinar series started in 2020 and is designed to drive powerful conversations, share stories, and provide inspirational advice from women and male allies at the heart of the discussion.

COMPETE CARIBBEAN



Compete Caribbean (a partnership of the IDB, UK Government, Caribbean Development Bank and Government of Canada) is also seeking stories of innovation & resilience. This was published on 24th May 2022. Visit the link below for the questionnaire.

<https://www.competecaribbean.org/contentcreator/s/> to see more about the initiative.



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EU and European Development Days (EDD)

<https://eudevdays.eu/about-edd>

The European Development Days (EDD) is an event that brings the development community together each year to share ideas and experiences in ways that inspire new partnerships and innovative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges. It will take place this year on the 21 -22 June 2022 in Brussels and online.

The overall theme this year is 'Global Gateway: building sustainable partnerships for a connected world'. Sessions are organised under the following topics:

- [Digital theme](#)
- [Climate and energy theme](#)
- [Transport theme](#)
- [Health theme](#)
- [Education and research theme](#)

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Management Firm

The Consortium led by Beta Technology Limited and EUROCHAMTT have been contracted by CARIRI to support in the management of components 1 and 2.

Working closely with CARIRI, who are leading the initiative, the ethos of the team is to build capacity for the future and deliver high quality support to businesses, academia and other stakeholders, to unlock the innovation potential in Trinidad and Tobago.

Beta Technology Limited (Beta) is a small innovation company based and registered in the UK. Beta was founded in 1984 by an entrepreneur as a spin out from the University of Sheffield. Its mission is to connect people and knowledge to promote innovation. Beta has worked for over 35 years supporting innovative SMEs across Europe on their innovation journey – from making grant applications to commercialisation and market development.

www.betatechnology.co.uk



EUROCHAMTT was established in February 2013 as a non-profit company and supports companies in three main areas: (i). advocacy (ii). trade support and (iii). promoting and supporting its members and partners in climate action initiatives. EUROCHAMTT is part of a worldwide network of European Business Organisations (EBO Worldwide Network) and is in close contact with other European networks facilitating access to expertise, benchmarking and market.

<https://eurochamtt.org/>



EUROCHAMTT

The Management Team is available to support businesses with queries about the facilities and have set up a dedicated email address for this purpose: innovationchallengefacility@gmail.com