

SIN brokers a UK-India £10m Collaborative R&D Partnership in Food Processing and Post-Harvest Technologies

India has a population of 1.3 billion people and a very diverse agricultural sector. However, although India ranks as a top global food producer, it has a shortfall in domestic food supply partly a result of farmers losing up to 40% of their produce after harvest. A solution is to establish integrated supply chains to harvest, pack, store and transport food more efficiently to extend shelf life, along with nutritional and economic value. In addition, food processing is a top priority for the Indian government to maximise food reserves, tackle hunger and under-nourishment, limit price rises and stimulate development in rural communities. SIN India built a programme of activities to bring UK and Indian agri-experts together to tackle the challenge of post-harvest food loss, and the opportunity of new processing technologies.



Finding the Right Ingredients

SIN India's programme involved organising site visits, roundtables and workshops in UK and India. We secured involvement from leading research centres including from the UK and worked closely with members of the Confederation of Indian Industries to integrate the business perspective. The experts used these events to propose a research programme and resulted in Innovate UK, RCUK and India's Department of Biotechnology agreeing a £10 million joint programme to tackle post-harvest loss under our flagship Newton-Bhabha Programme.



Recipe to Success

The involvement of industry in this programme will help develop real-world solutions to help improve agricultural value chains in India. Examples of such solutions include: eco-friendly packaging, post-harvest processing technologies, clean cold technologies and distribution technologies.

The joint programme will help UK companies and academia bring their research and innovative technologies closer to commercialisation, with applications in India and potentially other markets. It also showcases the strengths of science and innovation capabilities in both countries. The call went out in late 2015¹ and results should be known by September 2016, so watch this space!

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¹ https://interact.innovateuk.org/competition-display-page/-/asset_publisher/RqEt2AKmEBhi/content/india%E2%80%93uk-research-and-innovation-bridges-competition-agri-food