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Scientific research at the start of the 21st century is trans-national, trans-disciplinary, trans-sectoral and fun.

Trans-national: Even the richest of countries does not have all of the facilities, equipment and experts that are needed to address the challenge of providing safe, nutritious, affordable food produced in an eco-friendly manner.

Trans-disciplinary: Food is the most chemically-complex material that we come into contact with in our everyday lives. Understanding this complexity and its association with health and wellbeing requires interactions between the *natural sciences* (including chemists, biochemists, nutritionists, physiologists, microbiologists, physicists, mathematicians) and the *humanities* (consumer scientists, psychologists, socio-economists).

Trans-sectoral: Science and technology must address the needs of society and the opportunities of industry, especially those of the small, medium enterprise (SME) sector. Creating and optimising links between these three sectors is one of the greatest, and most rewarding, challenges for researchers in the 21st century. Scientists must be *good communicators*, listeners as well as speakers, and *good team players*.

Fun: The practice of science must be serious, conducted with due professional skill and within a clear ethical framework. However, it is also fun - being immensely enjoyable, creating economic and social benefits, providing training and career development opportunities and bringing together colleagues from all over the world.



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Trans-national Research

Much of IFR's research and training activities is conducted within an international context. In particular, the Institute has been very active in European research for more than 20 years.

The challenge within these trans-national research projects is to create the most effective teams and to manage them so as to deliver the science and the full benefits to society and industry in a timely and efficient manner.

The best way of doing this is to transform contacts into *colleagues*, and colleagues into *friends*, since a partnership of friends is likely to be successful because no-one wants to knowingly let their friends down.

Science is, at best, a combination of *youth and experience*, blending the enthusiasm and broad interests of the young with the experience and contacts of their older colleagues. There are many young researchers at IFR, from within the UK and beyond. Whilst working at IFR they gain professional knowledge and experience in their chosen area of science, and receive best practice in communication, management and interpersonal skills, all of which are necessary if they are to be successful.

Young people at IFR have contributed significantly to the past and present reputation of the Institute and they will undoubtedly have a large part to play in its future successes.

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FOODforce
forum for optimising research and co-operation in europe



Partnership in Europe

IFR has been instrumental in bringing together European organisations to work more closely and effectively together. For example:

- IFR established the **FOODforce** (FOOD-forum for research cooperation in Europe) network of directors of leading publicly-funded European food research institutes so as to identify opportunities for training, disseminate best practice in management and related issues and facilitate food science activities in new EU Member States and Candidate Countries of C/E Europe.

- IFR has been at the heart of the **European Technology Platform Food for Life** since its inception in 2004. ETPs are *industry-led, public/private partnerships* which bring together stakeholders (consumers, industry, SMEs, natural sciences, humanities, regulators, NGOs, policymakers and opinion formers) across Europe to develop a long-term strategy of research, communication, training and knowledge transfer designed to stimulate and underpin innovation. The proposed strategy for ETP Food for Life (www.ciaa.be) is now being considered across Europe so that it will best reflect the diverse opportunities and challenges facing the continent. A key aim of the ETP is to “add years to life” by providing safe, nutritious and affordable food and ensuring that the entire food production chain is as sustainable as possible.

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