

DRINC - The Next Phase

In 2007, the Biotechnology and Biological Science Research Council (BBSRC), in partnership with the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), established DRINC with 13 company members. Over £12M has been provided to enable high quality research into diet and health within UK universities and research institutes. This research has generated underpinning knowledge and improved skills in a research community that provides valuable precompetitive outputs for the UK food and drink industry. An evaluation of DRINC in 2011 recommended continuation of the Club to benefit UK industry by maintaining the UK's strength in diet and health research.

Research Themes supported through DRINC

Properties of active ingredients have been characterised in programmes including the use of catechins in skin health and protection applications; validation of polyphenols as dietary supplements in ageing; understanding mechanisms of action for cardioprotective flavanoids; and the impact of genetics and growing conditions on bioactive content of brassica plants.

The psychological aspects of understanding diet have featured in DRINC, with studies considering the role of portion-size decisions on energy intake and the interrelatedness of satiety, sensory qualities and nutrient content.

Essential methodological developments have also been included, such as nutrition-responsive biomarkers to offer robust surrogate endpoints against which other food components can be tested; methods for verifying claimed adjuvant properties of pre- and pro-biotic products; and generation of new models to support optimal plant processing strategies

Further details of the studies above and other DRINC-funded projects will be made available shortly as case studies

Industry Member Benefits

The Club is more than the sum of the research grants it supports, as it has established a new network of research capability from which the food industry can develop new products. Industry researchers, funded academics, and their research teams benefit from increased levels of interaction across a diverse range of disciplines. For company members the benefits are:

- Influence on research areas supported by the Club
- Up to date knowledge on the progress of research and early access to results through the Club network
- Opportunities to work with leading researchers, across multiple disciplines, all working towards healthier food
- Exchange of ideas and staff with potential of forming new collaborations
- Networking and potential for collaboration with industry research leaders
- Access to future talent pool for food health research and development
- Information and advice related to additional research activities, e.g. studentships, knowledge transfer and collaborative schemes

Workshops for Developing the Next Phase

A new five year programme is being planned by the DRINC partners to help sustain the links made between industry and academia, fund further research on diet and health, and continue to support the food industry to develop foods for consumer benefit. To initiate the discussion on research challenges for a next phase, workshops will be held for stakeholders, including existing and potential future members of DRINC, to discuss new research topics.





DRINC • DIET AND HEALTH RESEARCH INDUSTRY CLUB

Suggested Research Topics

Three suggested research topics have been generated from the evaluation of the Club and in discussion with industry and partner organisations. The topics will be considered at the workshops as a starting point for discussions with the food industry that will identify new research priorities. Research projects within these topics would extend and complement the existing project portfolio funded through DRINC. The topics are not mutually exclusive with significant linkage across the areas and, as with projects currently funded through DRINC, multidisciplinary skills and knowledge will be needed to fully deliver the project outputs.

Designing food to influence beneficial interactions between Diet, Digestion and Health

Improvement of diet has the potential to maintain wellbeing and to support individual good health throughout the life course. Continuing to develop our understanding of the interactions between what we eat and the Gastro-Intestinal (GI) tract will help industry to design new and improved products that optimise the delivery and efficacy of key micronutrient or bioactive components to support the maintenance of a healthy gut flora and immunity.

Understanding Food Choice, Eating Behaviour and Food Appreciation to gain Acceptance of Healthier Foods

A greater understanding of the interaction between behaviour and sensations of satiety, hunger and thirst and triggers for product acceptance will help the food industry to create products that both satisfy consumer expectations and optimise dietary intake.

Improving Food Processing to Optimise the Preservation and Delivery of Nutritional, Health or Energy properties of Food

Food processing has an important role to play in delivering the benefits of existing and new ingredients and food products. Research considering how to deliver nutritional benefits while, for example, maintaining or improving sensory properties would be relevant for the food industry.

Open Discussion Sessions

The suggested topics are not intended to be a final list and suggestions for other research topics are actively sought. Each workshop will include an open discussion session that will aim to generate a clearer picture of the industry's development needs and research priorities around and beyond these topics.

Next Steps

The outputs from the workshops will contribute to the research programme for the next phase of DRINC. The programme will be finalised through discussions with the company members of the next phase and a renewed Steering Group. It is intended that a call for new research proposals will open in 2013.

Workshop Venues and Dates

Campden BRI, Station Road, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, GL55 6LD
Wednesday 11th July
Lunch from 1.15; workshop 2.00-4.00pm
Attendance is free, but pre-registration is essential.

Further Information

For more information please contact: drinc@bbsrc.ac.uk or visit: bbsrc.ac.uk/drinc

