

Workshop summary

Evidence-based action – building a research programme that serves your needs

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In addition to briefly outlining the SFC national evaluation framework, this workshop asked those attending to identify priority food issues for which they would like practical evidence-based guidance on how to achieve more effective change at the local level, to be developed by the Food Research Collaboration (FRC). Such guidance would allow SFC members to know “what works best” in terms of designing and implementing project, as well as help make their case to policy makers and funders.

To achieve this, FRC plans to bring together academics, local food partnerships and other specialists from NGOs, local authorities and business to review existing evidence (academic and grey) on 6 identified priority topics and then translate it into practical guidance following discussions at an FRC workshop. The aim is to complete this work before the end of 2019.

Attendees were divided into groups and asked to come up with 4 priority topics together with an explanation of why the topic has been chosen it and how the guidance will be used. Each participant then voted for their top 4 topics from the total of 17 suggested. The most popular topics have been clustered around the broad themes outlined below:

1. **Food Poverty** - How to best access, engage and effectively support those from low income families/areas of deprivation to achieve healthy and sustainable diets, including increasing fruit & veg consumption and improving cooking skills
2. **Business** - How can business be influenced to provide, use and promote sustainable food locally? -More specifically:
 - a. What interventions and regulations can be used to encourage greater access to and consumption of healthy food, such as fruit and vegetables
 - b. What replicable and measurable benchmarks could be used to assess and award local businesses in sustainable food
 - c. How can we better work with and influence supermarket employers and employees
 - d. What are the impacts of developing food entrepreneurial skills on local food economies
3. **Local authority regulation** - How can local authority planning and regulatory mechanisms be used to improve local food , e.g. business rates and alcohol licenses
4. **Skills** - How can the improvement of food related skills e.g. cookery, nutrition education in schools, food entrepreneurial be used to improve health and well-being outcomes?
5. **Taxes** - How can subsidies and levies be used to promote the sale and consumption of healthy and sustainable food at the local level.

FRC will be emailing all SFC members to ask for more topic suggestions in the coming weeks.

For more information on the project, please contact mary.atkinson.2@city.ac.uk

For more information on the FRC see www.foodresearch.org.uk