



**GET
TOGETHERS**

Bringing people together through food

My Food Community

A network for good food champions to learn, connect and take action.

**Information and Guidance
2021/22**

We see good food as food that's good for climate, nature and health.

- Do you use good food as a way to get people together and connect?
- Do you organise and support community activities and skills around good food? Like working with your local food bank or organising a community fridge?
- Do you champion food that is good for people and the planet?
- Are you passionate about taking action and creating positive change in your community around good food?
- Would you like to increase your impact in the next year to improve the lives of people in your community and their experience of food?

If so, then you're a good food champion. And My Food Community could be for you.

What is My Food Community?

My Food Community is a programme of activities from Food for Life Get Togethers (to bring together people who champion good food – food that is good for climate, nature and health).

My Food Community is designed to inspire, enable and support you to:

1. Build your knowledge, access networks and gain resources to organise impactful good food activities
2. Connect with others who champion good food – in your community and across the UK
3. Take action to lead positive change around good food in your community

Launching in September 2021 and running until summer 2022, we are looking for people to join our first cohort of 50 good food champions from across the UK. You will take part in a mixture of mostly online group meetups and self-guided learning and peer support, for approximately 8 hours per month.

There is no cost for you to take part in My Food Community. We only ask that you commit to participating in the programme and have an openness to learn and share with others in the cohort.

As a founding member of My Food Community you will have the chance to co-produce and develop parts of the programme to meet your and your community's needs. You will get support where you need it most and play a vital role in helping to shape the programme for future cohorts.

Read on to find out about who My Food Community is for, what it involves and how to register your interest.

Who is My Food Community for?

My Food Community is for you if you want to, or already, champion food that is good for people and the planet. You could be a good food champion without realising it.

My Food Community is open to professionals and formal or informal volunteers from across the UK who lead others in their community to take action around good food. This could mean anything from organising activities that bring people together around good food (like growing, cooking, and sharing food), to campaigning to improve the lives of people in your community and their experience of food.

To name just a few, you might be involved in a mutual aid food distribution group, work with your local food bank or organise a community fridge. You may have organised an activity or received a small grant through Food for Life Get Togethers. Or you could be involved in food related activities through Food for Life Served Here, our national partners or the Sustainable Food Places network.

My Food Community aims to bring people together from different places and with different backgrounds, who represent a range of organisations, community groups and settings. It is essential to be open and willing to share your own point of view, and to listen to and learn from others with different experiences and perspectives.

We welcome and support people with different levels of experience in leading others to take action around good food. We know that many people who create positive change in their communities may not see themselves as 'leaders' or 'champions'. So long as you have the desire, passion and commitment to take action, and are open and willing to learn and share with others, then My Food Community could be for you.

Please see below for details of who is eligible and what you need to demonstrate to take part.

What is included in My Food Community?

My Food Community focuses on learning and personal development, 'networking' to connect with others, and 'championing good food' to take community action on food that's good for climate, nature and health. It is a programme of activities which includes:

Learning together as a cohort and in smaller groups

- Whole cohort training workshops and masterclasses on topics ranging from food citizenship to values-based leadership
- Expert-led sessions to learn about relevant topics
- A practical toolkit of resources, curated by Food for Life and our partners, to help you learn and grow

Connecting as a cohort and to the wider good food movement

- Online platform to make connections and share learning
- Spaces for discussion and collaboration to share and build ideas together
- Peer support within your cohort to learn from each other
- Support to connect with people in the wider good food movement

Learning individually and through self-reflection

- Understand your strengths and set goals for your personal development
- Activities outside of sessions for individual learning and reflection
- Support to grow your impact as a leader

Taking action with your community

- Support and resources to lead a good food project with your community
- Opportunity to apply for grant funding to support a project
- Opportunity to share learning and raise the profile of your community action, project or issue

We are working with our national partners and Koreo – a learning consultancy specialising in leadership for social change – to bring My Food Community to you.

Through the programme you will benefit from the expertise and networks of our national partners: Eden Project Communities; Food Sense Wales; The Royal Voluntary Service; Linking Generations; and Generations Working Together.

In partnership with Koreo, we will support you to explore your own leadership and the many different ways of making things happen in communities. Working with other people on the programme, you will consider your own strengths, motivations and

ambitions, and what they might mean for the change you want to see. In summary, you will be supported to lead change around good food, and will explore how to support other people in your community to do the same.

Your involvement in My Food Community will continue beyond the programme of activities. All participants who complete the programme will get a certificate of completion and become members of the My Food Community alumni network. Through this you can continue to inspire, share learning, connect with and support other good food champions in the UK.

What will My Food Community involve?

Launching in September 2021 and running until summer 2022, the programme will take place virtually to bring people from across the UK together. This will involve:

- Monthly meetups in a predominantly virtual programme – around 5 hours per month
- Self-guided learning and peer support outside of group meetups – around 3 hours per month

We understand how busy life can be with lots of competing priorities. So the programme is designed to be flexible to make it as easy as possible to take part. There are core parts which you really need to take part in to get the most out of the programme. There are also optional parts for you to match to your interests and personal learning and development needs. But don't worry if these are not known to you just yet, we'll guide you through this as part of My Food Community.

You will need to commit to completing the core parts of My Food Community as a minimum, around 5 hours per month, and be ready to use what you learn to take action in your community. After completing the core parts of the programme you will be provided with a certificate of completion as a founding member of My Food Community and become part of the My Food Community alumni network.

Am I eligible to take part?

Read the 'Who is My Food Community for?' section above for details of who could take part. If that sounds like you, then you will need to demonstrate the following to be eligible for My Food Community:

- Passion and commitment to being a good food champion and creating positive change in your community through good food. This could be a community of people based on where you live or work or what you're interested in.
- Experience or desire to lead or organise others in your community to take action around good food in the next year.
- Desire and ability to put what you learn into practice, to increase your reach and impact as a good food champion in the next year.
- Open and willing to learn and share with and from others in My Food Community.
- Willing and able to participate in a mainly virtual/online programme which requires active participation and engagement.
- Commitment to dedicating at least 5 hours per month to group activity and self-guided learning, from September 2021 to June 2022.
- You must be aged 18 or above to take part.

We want to make sure the application process is equal and fair for everyone who registers their interest. We will assess all applications against the criteria above, so make sure you keep them in mind when completing the application and give examples of how you meet them.

We aim to bring together a diverse cohort of committed good food champions from across the UK who represent a range of organisations, community groups and settings. Up to 50 places are available and we will use the criteria above to assess all applications.

We welcome more than one individual from the same organisation to register their interest to take part, but we can't guarantee that all those people will be successful in getting a place. Personal development and building your leadership are such important parts of My Food Community, so places can't be shared between more than one person.

Applications open in June 2021 (see below for details) and we aim to offer places in early August 2021. We will contact everyone who registers their interest.

How can I register my interest?

There are two ways for people to join My Food Community. You can register your interest directly or you can nominate someone else that you think would be suitable.

You can do either of these through this online form:

<https://forms.office.com/r/dY4YBtBTrL>

Register your interest for My Food Community

You can register your interest through the online form in the link above This asks for your details and short answers to a few questions. Please complete the form as soon as you can and before 9am on Monday 12th July 2021.

Nominate somebody for My Food Community

Do you know someone you think would be a great fit for My Food Community? If you want to nominate someone to take part, please give your details and the details of the person you want to nominate through the online form in the link above. We will contact them to see if they want to register their interest in taking part. Please nominate as soon as you can, and before 9am on Friday 2nd July 2021, so that the person you nominate can decide if this is for them and has time to register their interest.

Please contact us at myfoodcommunity@soilassociation.org if you have any questions.

We accept applications in Welsh and where resources are specifically relevant to Wales they will be provided in Welsh. As we are working with a range of partners from across the UK to deliver My Food Community, we are not able to guarantee that all programme materials will be available in Welsh.

What do I need to take part?

At the moment many of us are keeping in contact online. My Food Community will be the same, with most of the programme being held virtually through video-calls. This will also help to bring good food champions from across the UK together.

You'll need the following to be able to take part:

- Access to a computer, laptop, tablet or a phone with video and a microphone.
- Access to the internet – the programme will mostly be held virtually.

- Video-calling platform – we will use video-calls for group meetups. We will provide guidance and support on how to use these to anybody who might be unsure.

We want you to be able to take part, so if you don't have any of the above please let us know. Contact myfoodcommunity@soilassociation.org to see how we can support.

There is no cost for you to take part in My Food Community. We only ask that you commit to participating in the programme and have an openness to learn and share with others in the cohort.

What is Food for Life Get Togethers?

My Food Community is a programme from Food for Life Get Togethers.

Food for Life Get Togethers is a 4 year, UK-wide multi-partner Food for Life programme. It strengthens communities by connecting different generations through cooking, growing and sharing food. This will bring people together to improve their physical and mental wellbeing and tackle loneliness and isolation by building new friendships between people of all ages and from all walks of life.

A Food for Life Get Together is any event, big or small where different generations come together to grow, share or cook. Food for Life Get Togethers are about people coming together and giving people of all ages and backgrounds the chance to connect while enjoying good, healthy food.