

# SHARE IT: Challenges and opportunities in co-designing a sustainability assessment framework for urban food sharing initiatives

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Grant  
Agreement  
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# SHARECITY

SHARECITY is a 5-year research project funded by the **European Research Council** which is exploring the practice and sustainability potential of city-based food sharing economies.

## Aims & Objectives

To establish the **significance** and **potential** of food sharing economies to transform cities onto more sustainable pathways

- 1) Develop **deeper theoretical** understanding of contemporary food sharing
- 2) Generate **comparative international empirical** data about food sharing activities within cities
- 3) Assess the **impact** of food sharing activities on urban food sustainability
- 4) Explore how food sharing in cities might **evolve** in the future

Food sharing definition used - having a portion [of food] with another or others; giving a portion [of food] to others; using, occupying or enjoying [food and food related spaces to include the growing, cooking and/or eating of food] jointly; possessing an interest [in food] in common; or telling someone about [food]" (Davies and Legg, 2018: 237)



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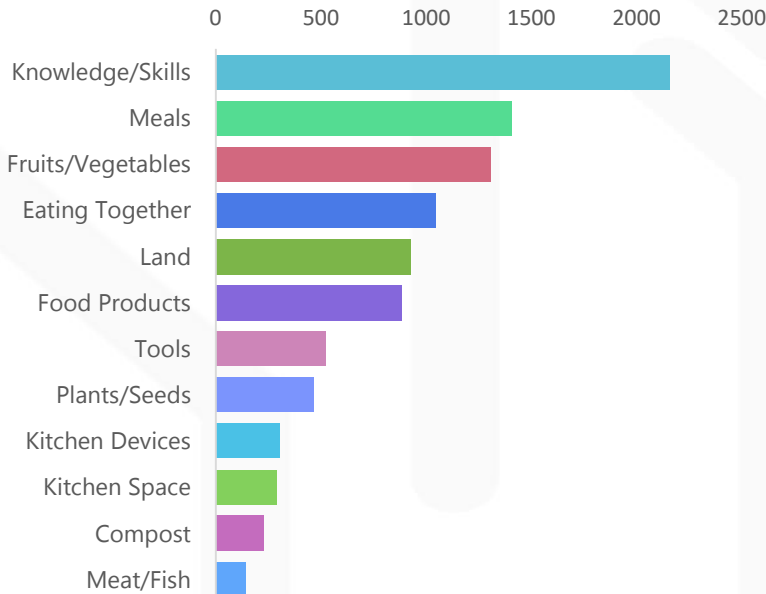
Horizon 2020  
European Union funding  
for Research & Innovation



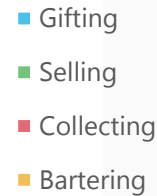
# Food sharing - very diverse

- 70 % of initiatives share multiple food related stuff, spaces or skills
- 53 % of initiatives share via multiple methods
- 21 % of initiatives use multiple organisational structures

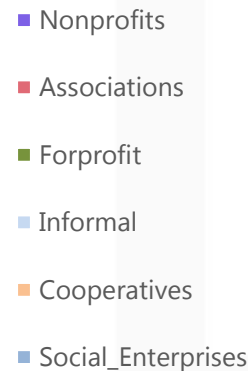
## WHAT IS SHARED



## HOW IT IS SHARED



## SHARING ORGANISATION



# Why focus on food sharing & urban food sustainability?



~ 70% of global population living in cities by 2050

## Issues for Urban Food Systems

### Social

- Increased Isolation (dining alone), Food Poverty, Detachment from Food and Nature

### Environmental

- Land Use Change, Food Waste, Carbon Footprint of Food system

### Economic

- Fair Returns to Farmers, Affordability and Accessibility of Nutritious Food, New & Diverse Food Economies



SHARECITY BRIEFING NOTE 3

## GOALS & IMPACTS

Communicating goals and impacts of food sharing in online spaces



In analysis of 37 case studies from 9 cities we found less than half of impact statements were quantitative and in >30% of cases stated goals relating to food sustainability were not accompanied by any impact reporting

Many initiatives would like to improve the analysis and/or communication of their impacts



# Developing SHARE IT

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- The objective of SHARE IT - to create an open access online tool which will allow food sharing initiatives around the world to understand and communicate their impact on the sustainability of urban food systems.
- We also hope it will be a space where food sharing initiatives can learn from each other
- Developed using a co-design process over 4 phases 2018-2019:

**Phase 1 – Establish the fundamental concepts and structure of the toolkit by co-designing with 6 initiatives from 3 cities (London, Dublin and Singapore) to develop a framework**

**Phase 2 – Work with developers to create an open access online version of this toolkit**

Phase 3 – Open the toolkit out to much wider number of initiatives in the SHARECITY100 database for beta-testing – **June/July 2019**

Phase 4 – Public launch of the open access toolkit online



# Co-design partner example: Be Enriched

**Name:** Be Enriched    **Focus:** Eating; Redistribution     

**Summary:** Be Enriched is a charity sharing food, knowledge and skills through gifting.

**Stated Goals:** *"Be Enriched is a **youth and community** charity set up in 2013 focused on supporting and developing the community. . . . [W]e develop **programs which balance inequalities whilst building community cohesion and developing skills in young people.**" "We believe in **enriching local life through connecting people through community activities and cultivating respect over a bite.**"*

**Impacts:** There are some limited quantitative figures included on the website and references to community building.



## Summary of Be- Enriched activities:

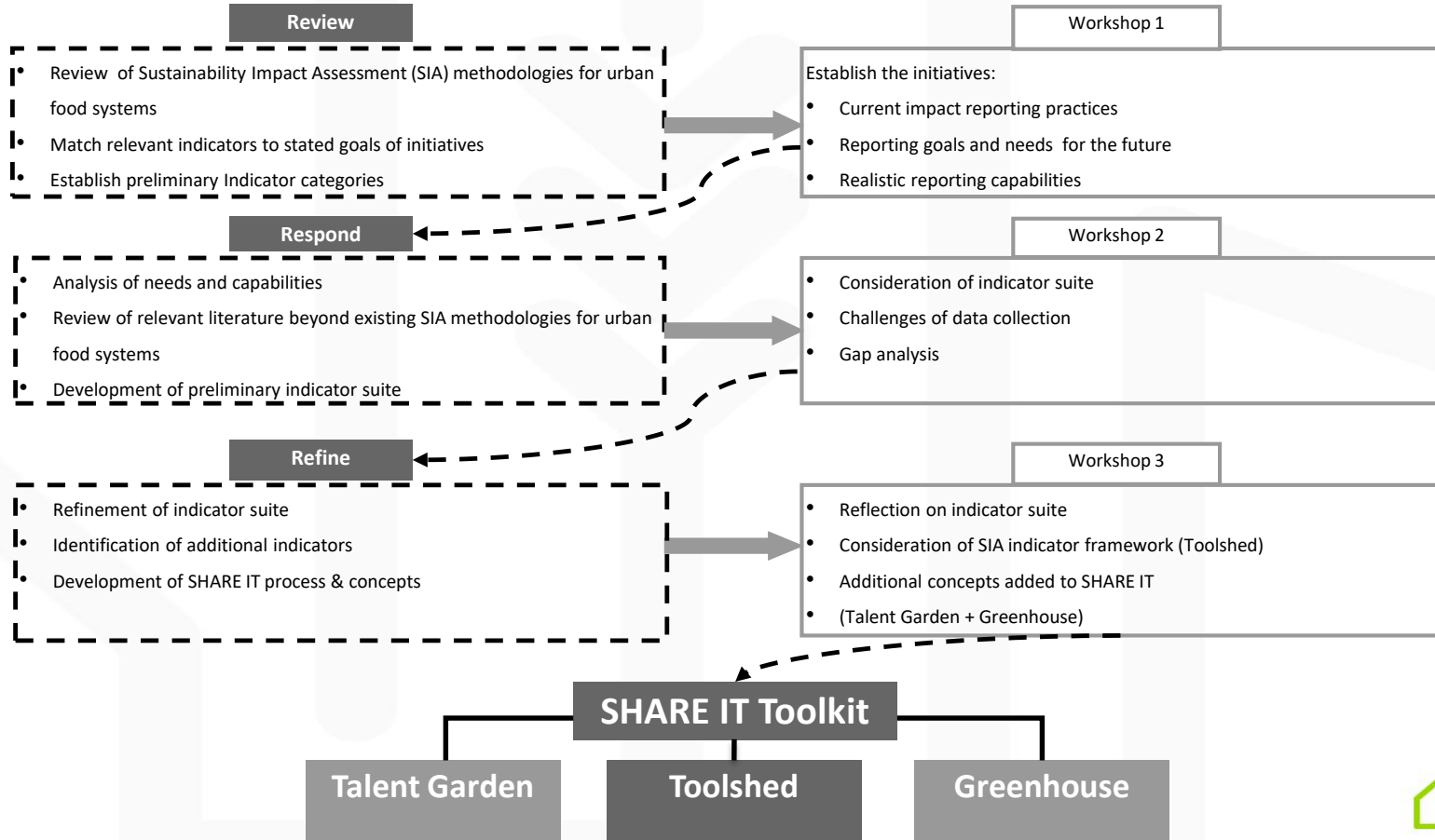
- Provide important shared eating experiences to those who may otherwise not have them
- Provide weekly access to balanced cooked meals using fresh ingredients for those who otherwise may get them
- Provide education on food safety, nutrition, cooking skills and food budgeting for youth groups and broader audiences in the form of cooking classes and take home educational materials
- Use platform (particularly online) to engage in activism to promote changes in food policy and increase access to healthy, affordable food for everyone through grassroots campaigns



# The Co-design process

Direct co-design with initiatives

Desk based research



# Feedback from co-design interviews

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- **No more paperwork** Partners are very interested in increased impact reporting but DO NOT want to increase it...
- **Developing knowledge and skills** Urban growing initiatives feel there can be too much focus on the reporting the physical aspect of their activities (food produced etc.) and not enough on their educational value
- **A fleeting impact?** Initiatives are interested in the temporal aspect of reporting and consider it important that they demonstrate long term impact, but this is difficult!
- **Is anybody out there?;** Initiatives would be interested in a resource where they can also connect and see best practice from others around the world





# SHARE IT - FUNCTIONS



## The Toolshed

A resource where initiatives can create a full Sustainability Impact Assessment report of their activities.

Also produces a 2 page summary report of impacts as a communication tool for potential funders etc.

## The Talent Garden

The Talent Garden is a space for food sharing initiatives around the world to share stories about their activities and impacts.

These can be written stories, images, videos or even reports that are generated in the Toolshed.

## The Greenhouse

A space where food sharing initiatives can connect with others around the world to share experiences and learn from each other



# The Toolshed

- Driving the Toolshed is a sustainability impact assessment (SIA) framework developed specifically for food sharing initiatives
- The framework contains 34 indicators across 4 pillars of sustainability: Economic, Environmental, Governance and Social
- This framework was developed based on existing SIA frameworks for urban food systems as well as novel indicators specific to the activities of food sharing initiatives
- The tool links reported impact areas directly to the relevant UN sustainable development goals
- The framework is designed to consider impact at the organisational level which is rare for SIA of urban food systems

## Impact Summary Survey

Social Environmental Economic Political/Governance MORE >



Lorem Ipsum is simply dummy text of the printing and typesetting industry. Lorem Ipsum has been the industry's standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when an unknown printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen book. It has survived not only five centuries, but also the leap into electronic typesetting.

It is a long established fact that a reader will be distracted by the readable content of a page when looking at its layout. The point of using Lorem Ipsum is that it has a more-or-less normal distribution of letters, as opposed to using 'Content here, content here', making it look like readable English. Many desktop publishing packages and web page editors now use Lorem Ipsum as their default model text, and a search for 'Lorem Ipsum' will uncover many web sites still in their infancy. Lorem Ipsum is simply dummy text of the printing and typesetting industry. Lorem Ipsum has been the industry's standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when an unknown printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen book. It has survived not only five centuries, but also the leap into electronic typesetting.

### Community Integration and Sharing

Increasing levels of appreciation across cultures and within communities 42 questions 0 responses 1	Improving communication skills 06 questions 22 responses 2	Fostering a wider urban food culture 15 questions 0 responses 3
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### Access and Affordability of Food

Increasing access to fresh fruit and vegetables 55 questions 05 responses *Last Added 4	Increasing access to fresh or freshly prepared food 85 questions 12 responses 5
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### Health and Well-being

Connecting and creating new support networks within urban communities 15 questions 08 responses 6	Boosting levels of meal sharing 42 questions 0 responses 7	Well-being benefits for volunteers 89 questions 12 responses 8
Improving the resilience and aspiration through food 42 questions 0 responses 9	Increasing movement and exercise 56 questions 0 responses 10	Facilitating access to services for improved health and well-being 42 questions 0 responses 11

[SEE 1 MORE](#)

### Access and Affordability of Food

Increasing access to fresh fruit and vegetables 97 questions 0 responses 12	Increasing access to fresh or freshly prepared food 65 questions 0 responses 13
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# Impact areas not traditionally considered

The Toolshed integrated a number of impact areas beyond those traditionally considered in SIA of food systems to account for the activities of food sharing initiatives and some of the known benefits including:

- Increasing levels of meal sharing
- Increasing the friendship/support network of participants
- Increasing levels of self-efficacy amongst participants
- Increasing appreciation of different cultures across and within communities
- Increasing well-being through volunteering
- The potential of involvement with food sharing initiatives to influence the choices and values of participants with respect to food

The screenshot shows a digital report titled 'SHARE IT Sustainability Impact Summary'. It features a navigation menu on the left with icons for Home, Dashboard, Profile, and Report. The main content area includes a header with the date 'Wed 04/10/20' and a 'SHARE IT' logo. Below this is a 'SHARE IT' profile card with details: Name: Food Share Fighters, City: London, Goal: Red on the amount of food being wasted, and Activities: Hub activities. A 'SHARE IMPACTS' section contains a circular sunburst chart and a text box explaining that the report shows impact areas for the year, with a full explanation available in the 'SHARE IT' framework. A 'SHARE IT RESULTS' section lists three key findings: 1) 1/3 of all food produced for human consumption is wasted in the UK; 2) Food waste from the UK is the largest waste stream in the waste hierarchy; 3) UK initiatives like Food Share have the potential to save up to 150k tonnes of food. A 'SHARE IT STORY' section includes a paragraph about sharing food as a community effort and a bar chart showing 'Direct benefits' and 'Indirect benefits' across categories like Economic, Environmental, and Social. A 'SHARING IMPACT STORY' section details four stories of community groups and their impact on food waste and social services. At the bottom, a 'SHARING & THE SDGs' section features 17 icons representing the Sustainable Development Goals.

# The Toolshed – challenges

- Ensuring the Toolshed is both accessible and informative for initiatives who may have little time and resources to dedicate to impact reporting
- But the Toolshed also needs to be considered rigorous enough for its outputs to be valued by funders and policy makers
- Developing a full picture of the societal benefits of sharing itself is a challenge for all researchers trying to understand the impact of any area of the sharing economy
- Understanding the temporal considerations around the impact of sharing is a wicked problem!
- Ethical considerations around the application of quantitative sustainability assessment to food sharing initiatives

The screenshot shows the 'SHARE IT Sustainability Impact Summary' interface. At the top, it displays the organization name 'SHARE CITY' and the report title. Below this, there are two summary cards: 'WHAT WE DID?' and 'WHAT WE GOT?'. The 'WHAT WE DID?' card lists: Name: Food Street Fighters, City: Dublin, Goal: Reduce the amount of food being wasted, and Activities: Hub and kitchen. The 'WHAT WE GOT?' card lists: Improving integration and sharing, increasing the availability of food, health and the local economy. Below these cards is a 'USER IMPACTS' section featuring a circular sunburst chart and a text box explaining that the report shows the impact areas of an initiative for a full year, with a full explanation of the impact areas in the 'WHAT WE GOT?' section. To the right, a text box states: 'The graphic shows down the edge of this summary statement the all sustainable development goals that are addressed by the data, according to the SHARE IT framework.' Below the chart is a 'WHAT WE SHOULD KNOW' section with three bullet points: 1. 1/3 of all food produced for human consumption is wasted worldwide. 2. Food waste sends more than the biggest carbon footprint to the waste after CO2 and methane emitted as a country. 3. In the UK initiatives such as ours have shown the potential to save up to 150k tonnes if scaled up. The next section is 'SHARE IT CASE STUDY', which describes how sharing food is used as an initiative to help, save up on cooking and eating together by the redistribution of surplus from homes with excess to those who are hungry. It also mentions a social submission to reducing food waste and saving money. Below this is a 'SHARE IT CASE STUDY' section with a horizontal bar chart showing 'Direct benefits' and 'Indirect benefits' for various categories: Economic (Market, Market, Home Share, Home Share), Environmental (Organic, Organics, Organics), and Social (Domestic, Hub). The 'Direct benefits' are represented by blue bars and 'Indirect benefits' by green bars. The final section is 'SHARING & THE SDGs', which lists 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with corresponding icons and numbers.

# Conclusions

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- SHARE IT is a combined research and engagement tool which will further our understanding of the impact food sharing is having in cities around the world
- The **Toolshed** integrates concepts of value and impact not traditionally considered in the area of food sustainability but very relevant for food sharing initiatives. It responds to the lack of appropriate supports for food sharing initiatives to consider, capture and reflect on their goals and impacts.
- Communicating the value of shared experiences relating to food through the **Talent Garden** and social media will be important to the success and perceived value provided by SHARE IT to food sharing initiatives
- Through the **Greenhouse** we hope to make an impact through facilitating shared knowledge and experience between food sharing initiatives around the world. To help them overcome the significant cultural, financial and regulatory challenges many of these initiative face.
- We know that many challenges relating to governance exist for food sharing initiatives and this is now a major focus for the final stages of SHARECITY



# Thank you!

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**Website:** [www.sharecity.ie](http://www.sharecity.ie)  
**SHARECITY100:** [www.sharecity.ie/research/sharecity100-database/](http://www.sharecity.ie/research/sharecity100-database/)  
**Blog:** <http://sharecity.ie/blog/>  
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