

2023 Highlights & founding story



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From the director



Reflecting on the founding of Next Food Collective in 2023, I am filled with both pride and excitement for the journey we have undertaken together in shaping our Collective's first chapter.

The Dutch innovation ecosystem is vibrant, full of talent, significant financial opportunities and internationally well recognized. We have a long history of collaboration between industry and knowledge institutes.

However, in 2022, the founding fathers and mothers of Next Food Collective came together with a shared belief that a new and improved approach to public-private collaboration in the agri-food system is essential. The founders are agro-food cooperatives, ingredient companies, multinationals, tech-companies, (applied) universities and a bank; a really strong set of players. United in the belief that by working together we will achieve so much more impact!

And this is needed. The urgency of making changes towards healthy and sustainable food systems is clear. The merger of TiFN, CCC, PCC, and SFI into Next Food Collective was a deliberate step to tackle these challenges with greater strength, better cooperation, and reduced fragmentation. The reality was that too many initiatives remained isolated, competed with one another, and made only small incremental progress.

My vision for this Collective in 2030 is to see the agri-food sector making significant steps in the desired transitions. I firmly believe that we can achieve this and that this Collective will be a powerful driving force for positive change.

I invite you to take a look at the founding story of this ambitious Collective and your first steps on this journey. As everywhere, the joy of building a new movement is through people coming together. Some of the key players are highlighted in this story, but there are many more.

Thanks to all partners in taking this bold step and all your contributions to building this vibrant community. A special word to the team members, who took the personal step to commit to the mission of Next Food Collective office. It's great to be working together! Thanks for stepping on board and building the foundation for the team we will further grow towards in 2024.

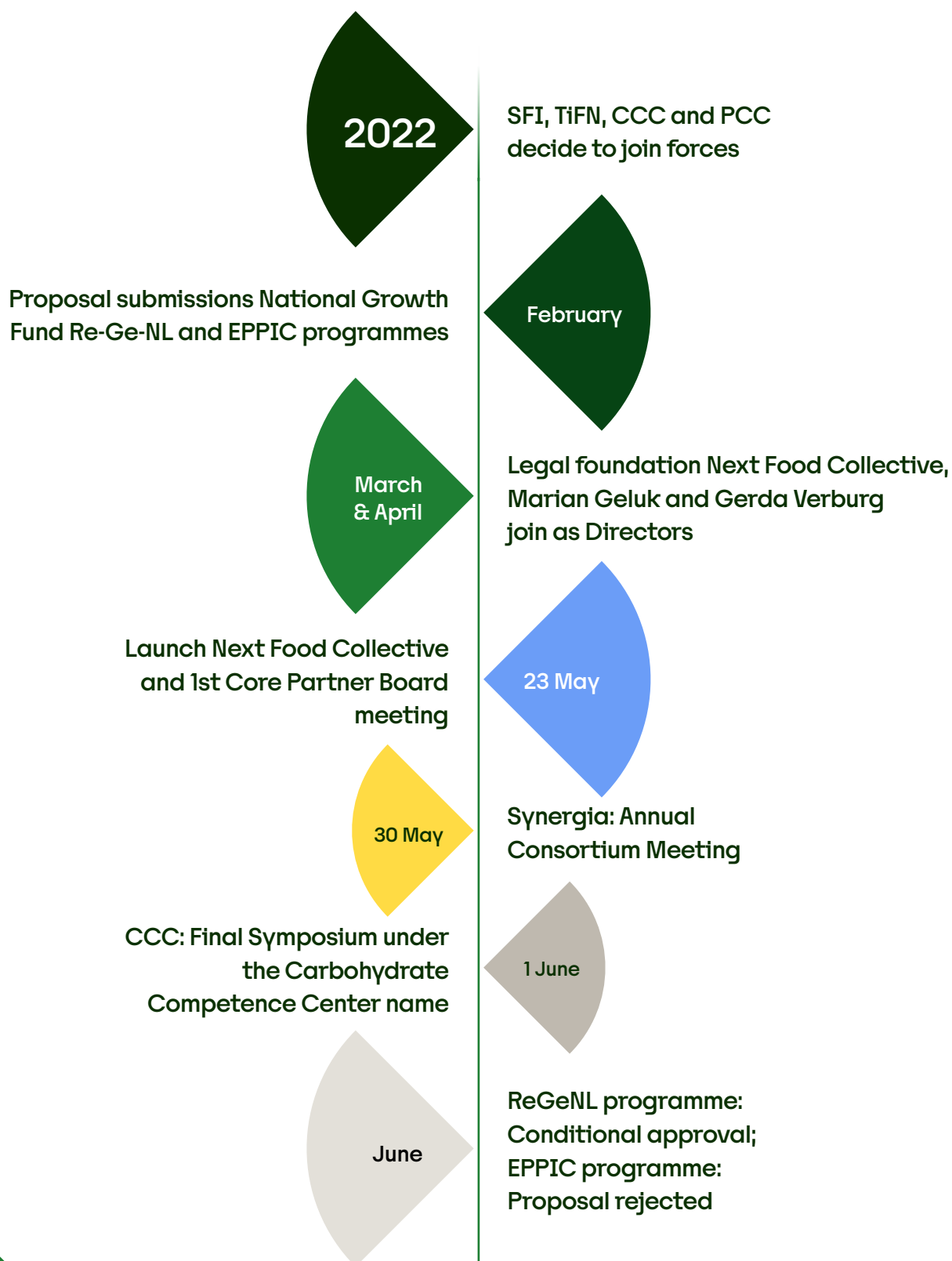
I'm excited to work together to make a real difference. Let's make 2024 a year of progress and positive change.

Warm regards,
Marian Geluk

Executive director



Timeline & milestones





GEA, Rabobank and Upfield (now Flora Food Group) join as partners

June & July

Sept.

BODEC joins as partner

MOCIA: Annual Consortium Meeting

26 Sept.

October

ReGeNL programme: Unconditional approval

The Sustainable Processing theme is established

October

3 Nov.

Next Food Collective's 1st Annual Partner Event and 2nd Core Partner Board meeting

CarboBiotics: End-Symposium

23 Nov.





The Founding Story of Next Food Collective

Next Food Collective was born from a shared vision: to maximize the impact of innovation programmes and drive meaningful change in the food industry. In 2022, this vision united four influential organizations - SFI, TiFN, CCC, and PCC - who made the bold decision to join forces. The legal merger of TiFN and SFI on March 7, 2023, marked the first concrete step toward creating a new, unified force in sustainable and healthy food innovation. For decades, these organizations had excelled in fostering public-private collaborations, but there was a clear need to shift gears.

The official launch of Next Food Collective on May 23, 2023, was a milestone moment, hosted at Innocent's The Blender factory on the Maasvlakte. Partners and stakeholders came together to celebrate this new beginning, marked by the unveiling of the Collective's logo, a symbol of unity among the four merging organizations, and the launch of its website.

Next Food Collective represents more than a merger; it is the start of a powerful movement to reshape the future of food.



Launch event Next Food Collective on May 23, 2023

*FLTR: Gerda Verburg, Marian Geluk,
Jan van Rijsingen, Emmo Meijer*



"Reshaping food for a better tomorrow"

At Next Food Collective, we are driven by a deep commitment to creating positive change and breaking down barriers.

Our mission:

Accelerate Transition:

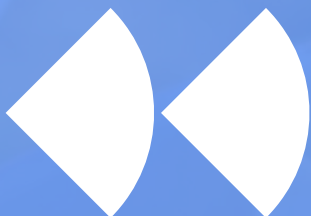
We aim to drive the shift toward a healthy and sustainable food system through purposeful and impactful collaborations.

Overcome Barriers:

By addressing shared challenges, we work to eliminate obstacles that hinder progress in the agro-food sector.

Maximize Impact:

We strive to optimize public-private investments, creating both societal impact and economic value.



Collaboration across the Agrifood value chain is crucial in developing solutions for the challenges faced in and by the food system. Farmers, academia, knowledge institutes, companies large and small, we can only make significant impact if we bundle our research towards more sustainable and healthy foods.

By bringing previously disparate initiatives together, we can continue to increase our impact by more effectively putting the available funding instruments to work. Next Food Collective, is bringing all key players together to enhance the Netherlands' position as the leading Agrifood ecosystem.

Manfred Aben

Partner Board Chair and
Global Vice President R&D
Foods & Refreshment
Science & Technology Unilever



Founding Partners



dsm-firmenich ●●●



KraftHeinz



Unilever

Rabobank



CoE GROEN
CENTRE OF EXPERTISE



Maastricht University



2023 Core Partner Board



Core partner board in December 2023

CORE PARTNERS

- 1 Agrifirm
- 2 AVEBE
- 3 CoE Groen
- 4 Cosun
- 5 Danone
- 6 dsm-firmenich
- 7 FrieslandCampina
- 8 GEA
- 9 Groupe Bel
- 10 Hanze University of Applied Sciences
- 11 KraftHeinz
- 12 Maastricht University
- 13 NIZO
- 14 Rabobank
- 15 University of Groningen
- 16 Unilever
- 17 Utrecht University
- 18 Yili Innovation Center Europe
- 19 Wageningen University & Research
- 20 Flora Food Group (formerly known as 'Upfield')

CHAIR

Member Core Partner Board

Fanny Weinbreck
Marc Laus
Anneke Bergsma
André de Haan
Dries de Bont
Marco van den Berg
Wil van Loon
Joost Vliegen
Benoît Goldschmidt
Lizette Oudhuis
Mirjam Spreeuwenberg
Daisy Jonkers
Nicolas Vles
Alex Datema
Gertjan Euverink
Annemarie Elgersma
René Kwant
Gerrit Smit
Gerhard de Ruiter
Miriam Ueberall

Manfred Aben



Building a collective for the future



First Core Partner Board meeting on May 23, 2023 (Maasvlakte)

Next Food Collective was built on the belief that collaboration is the key to transforming the agri-food sector. At its core are 20 dedicated Core Partners, each committing their support to the foundation for a minimum of four years. Together, they laid the groundwork for a partnership-driven organization with an ambitious goal: to grow into a collective that truly represents the entire agri-food ecosystem.

This vision goes beyond a simple alliance. It brings together universities, research institutes, universities of applied sciences, and businesses ranging from multinational corporations to small and medium enterprises working side by side to create maximum societal impact. The strength of this collaboration lies not only in shared resources and expertise but in shared governance. Each Core Partner holds a seat at the bi-annual Core Partner Board Meetings, playing an active role in shaping the future of the organization and its initiatives.

By uniting diverse voices and perspectives, Next Food Collective is more than just a partnership it's a dynamic force driving innovation and progress in sustainable and healthy food systems. With the collective's support, the future of the agri-food sector looks brighter, more inclusive, and ready to tackle the challenges ahead.



Transition is a must, and deep down, we know that we need each other to navigate the challenges of significant change. This requires stepping out of our comfort zones and embracing a process of change, trial and error, and carrying forward new learnings toward a new normal. That is why we are all partners in the Next Food Collective.

Gerda Verburg
Non-Executive Director
and Former Minister for
Agriculture, Nature, and Food





Role of Supervisory Board

Four Supervisory Board meetings were held last year. The Supervisory Board oversees the objectives and social legitimacy of Next Food Collective and the Executive Directors performance. Together with their installation the Articles of Association were established the Articles of Association and the Management and Supervisory Regulations, along with other key documents.

The Supervisory Board consisted of five members at the founding of Next Food Collective:



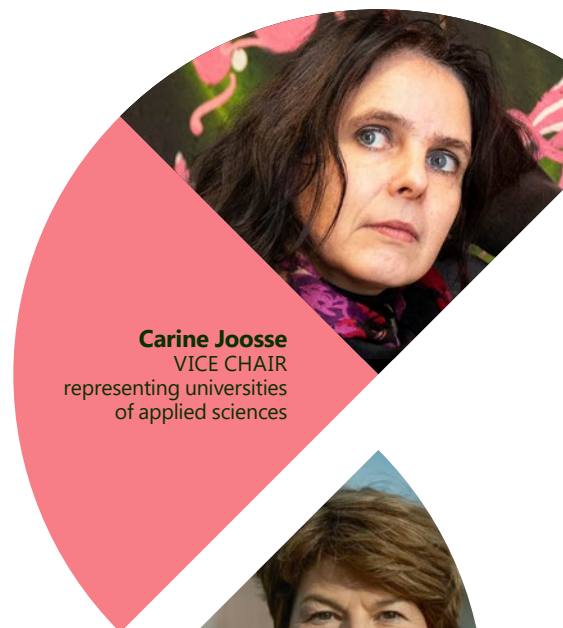
Manfred Aben
CHAIR
representing food
manufacturers



Gerard ten Bolscher †
representing the
ingredient industry



Jan van Rijsingen
representing Topteam
Agri & Food/SMEs



Carine Joosse
VICE CHAIR
representing universities
of applied sciences



Gerda Feunekes
representing the
universities

Themes



DRIVING TRANSFORMATION: Four strategic themes for a future-proof food system

Our four themes, strategically defined at the first Core Partner Board meeting, are grounded in the key transformations required to reshape the global food system. These include a shift in consumption toward more sustainable and healthier diets, as well as the need for a food production system that operates within environmental and climate boundaries.

To address these challenges, Next Food Collective focuses on sustainable agriculture, sustainable processing, healthy nutrition and wellbeing, and the protein transition critical areas for driving meaningful and lasting change.

Together, these focus areas create opportunities for impactful innovation, cross-sector collaboration, and systemic change to future-proof the agri-food sector.





1. Sustainable Agriculture

Dutch agriculture's focus on super-efficient production has been profitable but goes hand in hand with negative effects on nature. A transition is needed to a regenerative agricultural system that will enable us to produce food in balance with nature, people, the climate and the economy of the future. In addition, we need to drastically reduce environmental costs and create worthwhile new employment opportunities as well as exportable products and services.

The Re-Ge-NL programme is the main 2023 highlight for the Sustainable Architecture theme of Next Food Collective.



*Re-Ge-NL core team at Next Food Collective's Annual Partner Event in November 2023
FLTR: Jerry van Dijk (UU), Margriet Goris (WUR), Sanne Griffioen (FC), Maarten van Dam (Schevichoven Groeit!) Wouter-Jan Schouten (Next Food Collective), Peter Groot Koerkamp (WUR)
Background: Marian Geluk and Gerda Verburg (Next Food Collective)*

Re-Ge-NL



We were thrilled to celebrate the unconditional approval of the Re-Ge-NL programme '2024-2030' for the Dutch National Growth Fund in October 2023. During the partner event on November 3, the Re-Ge-NL core team was recognized and celebrated for this grant.



This iconic impact project will receive a grant of **€ 129 million** from the Growth Fund.



Sustainable agriculture is essential to transforming our food system, with farmers leading the way in balancing food production with the needs of nature, people, and the climate. By adopting regenerative practices, we can produce food within planetary boundaries, drive innovation, and unlock new opportunities.

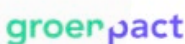
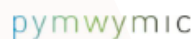
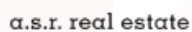
At Next Food Collective, we view sustainable agriculture as a cornerstone of our 2030 vision: creating an agri-food sector that thrives by producing high-quality, sustainable, healthy, and affordable food for all. Together with 50 partners, we successfully submitted the ReGeNL proposal and it has been granted. We look forward to collaborating with the ReGeNL partners and as many farmers as possible to develop a future-ready, regenerative agricultural sector."

Wouter-Jan Schouten
Theme Director
sustainable agriculture





Re-Ge-NL partners



Synergia



The Synergia programme '2021-2027', focusing on technology-for-ecology-based farming (€ 6.2 million), was initiated at TiFN during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Led by Peter Groot Koerkamp (WUR), the programme aims to build and integrate fundamental knowledge from life, technological and social sciences, and provide the technological methods, tools, and human capacities to facilitate acceptance and transition of new production systems into the market.

Three usecases will be developed, representing the variety of agricultural systems: greenhouse horticulture, dairy production and field crops.





2. Sustainable Processing

At the time of the launch of Next Food Collective, we started the development of this new theme. Recognizing the valuable work already being undertaken by ISPT on various processing challenges, it was decided to collaborate with partners to create a shared vision.

This vision was presented to the Core Partner Board on November 3, highlighting key priorities:

1. Accelerating CO₂ reduction to achieve 'net zero.'
2. Preventing, reducing, and upgrading industrial side streams.
3. Embracing mild(er) refining processes.
4. Redesigning ingredients to maintain functionality while minimizing their environmental footprint (water and CO₂).





The integration of AI and data science emerged as a significant opportunity identified by partners, offering immense potential for accelerating innovation and nurturing the talent pipeline for the future.

On November 3, 2023, the Core Partner Board approved the transformation of this vision into a comprehensive programme for the 4th round of the National Growth Fund (NGF). A critical objective of this programme was to strengthen collaboration between stakeholders and counteract fragmentation within the sector. To this end, connections were established with WUR, Food Valley, and ISPT organizations that had previously initiated a growth fund programme.

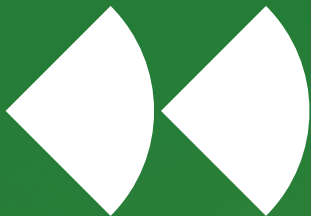
By the end of December, all parties aligned, agreeing that the agri-food sector should unite behind a single initiative for the 4th round. This marks a pivotal step toward fostering cooperation and driving impactful innovation for the sector's future.



Bovendonk, October 2023: Workshop participants, gathered to identify the abovementioned common focus areas for Sustainable Processing, taking into account existing initiatives

FLTR: André de Haan (Cosun), Jeroen den Hollander (dsm-firmenich), Michiel Meeuwse (Agrifirm), Marian Geluk (Next Food Collective), Jan Vaessen (Facilitator), George Dol (Upfield), Annemarie Elberse (Unilever), Charlotte Roos (Next Food Collective), Matthias Eisner (Yili), Gert-Jan Euverink (RUG), Onno v.d. Vegt (Avebe), Geert Meerdink (Hanze), Frank de Boeff (Bodec), Michael Koopmans (Danone), Mischa Stevens (Kraft Heinz), Julia Keppler (WUR).

Not present: Fred van de Velde (NIZO), Peter de Jong (CoE Groen)



If sustainability without performance has no impact,
performance without sustainability has no future.

Michael Koopmans

Site Director

Danone Global Research &
Innovation Center Utrecht





3. Healthy Nutrition & Wellbeing

Top institute Food and Nutrition (TiFN) and Carbohydrate Competence Center (CCC) bring a rich and extensive history to this topic, demonstrating their deep expertise and commitment. In 2023, several major projects were actively underway, with varying levels of support from Next Food Collective:

1. Processing and Overweight: *Restructure* and *Meta-Pro*
2. Sweetness and Overweight: *Sweet Tooth*
3. Carbohydrates, Gut Function, and Health Effects: *Carbosupport*
4. Lifestyle Interventions and Mental Health: *Mocia*

In November 2023, a working group comprised of (industrial) partners was formed to shape this vision. Their efforts are being followed up with further developments beginning in January 2024, paving the way for an inspiring and impactful direction for the theme.



Wageningse Berg November 2023 Industrial partners meet to kick off vision for Health theme
FLTR: Eva Jermendi (Next Food Collective), Nard Clabbers (facilitator), Janine Verheesen en Andries Olie (Cosun), Mirjam Spreuwenberg (KraftHeinz), Dries de Bont (Danone), Alwine Kardinaal en Marian Geluk (Next Food Collective), Amelia Jarmen (Unilever), Marc Laus (Avebe), Petra Dekker (FrieslandCampina), Carolien van Loo (Yili).
Not present: Celine Richonnet (Bel), Paul Whitehouse (Upfield), Szabi Péter (dsm-firmenich), Martijn Rol (Rabobank)



Public-private partnerships in the Carbohydrate Competence Center (now part of Next Food Collective) have impacted how we understand fermenting fibers and proteins to prevent cardiometabolic diseases. By working together, we achieved scientific progress with relevance for industrial product development.

Ellen Blaak
Professor Human Biology
at Maastricht University





4. Protein Transition

A sustainable and healthy food system requires a shift towards increasing the share of proteins from 'alternative' sources, such as plant-based and cellular agriculture, in our daily diet. The protein transition is gaining incredible momentum and we are seeing a wave of inspiring initiatives taking shape.

The Next Food Collective team, led by Stacy Pyett from WUR, did an outstanding job in 2023 with the submission of the Growth Fund program EPPIC, strategizing across three closely aligned platforms: agrotechnology, value chains, and global growth.

Although these efforts were not rewarded due to the non-approval of the programme, protein transition topics remain pivotal within the scope of Next Food Collective and will be addressed transversally across all our focus areas.



At Flora Food Group we are committed to offering delicious plant based products to our consumers that are natural, nutritious, affordable and sustainable. Therefore our R&D strategy ensures we continue to push the boundaries on technology solutions and continue to drive the protein transition.

Miriam Ueberall
Chief R&D Officer at
Flora Food Group

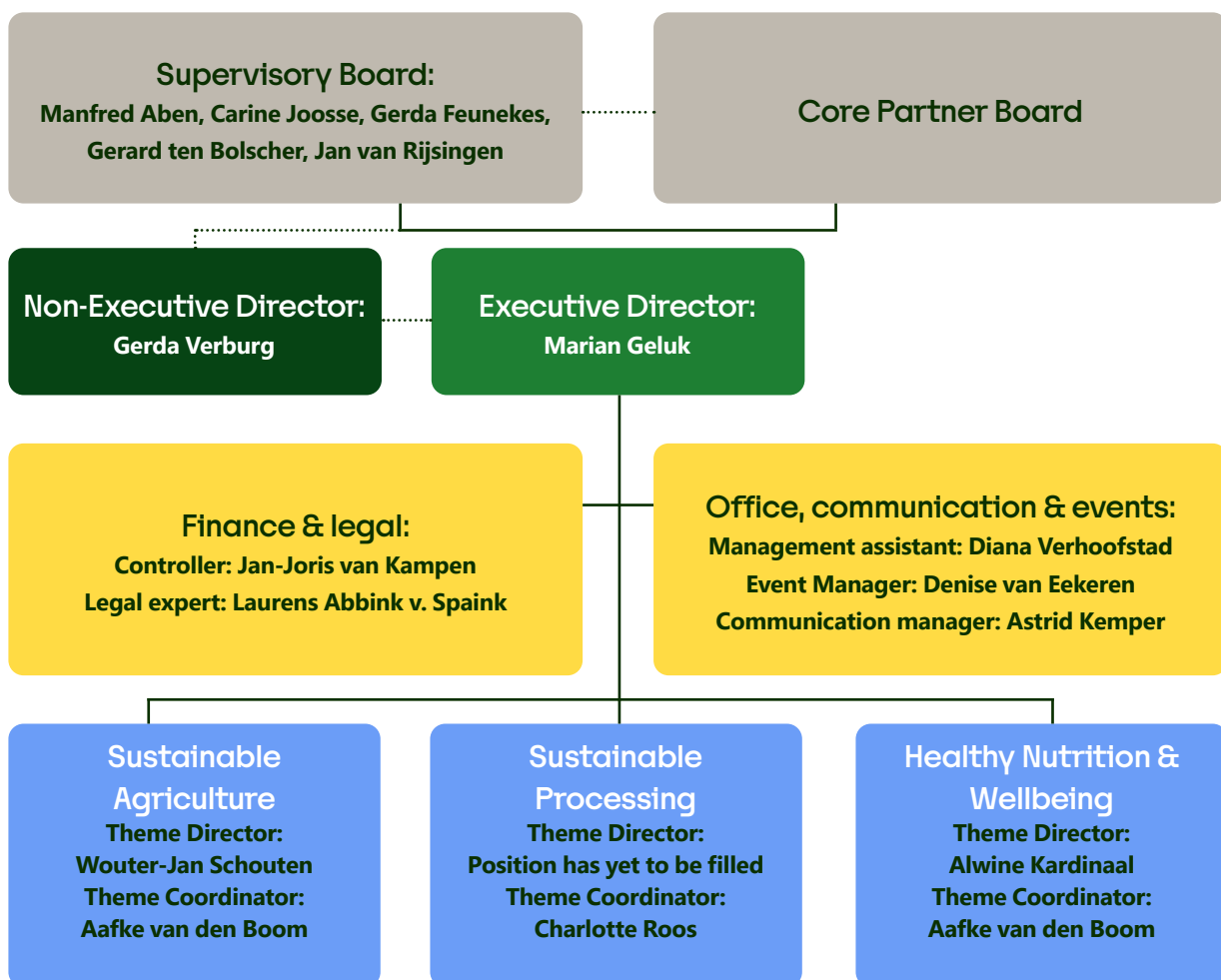




Appendix

Organigram

We built a core group of employed staff, consisting of both new hires and existing employees from TiFN, supplemented by freelancers and support services, such as IT and website management. Our structure took into account the planned expansion in 2024 of a ReGeNL team.



The Protein Transition theme will be seamlessly integrated into the other three themes