

## **Technologies for meeting the challenges of the future – the role of a research cooperation strategy**

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### **Abstract**

The motto of the IHC 2018 is 'Bridging the World through Horticulture'. The colloquia intend to bridge industry with research and production and form a platform to share experiences to envision the future. Bridges play a prominent role at the IHC 2018. They connect. No success without connections. New technologies need to connect with needs, needs addressed by technologies connect with challenges and problems. And these connect – in horticulture - with horticultural farm and industry contexts and the stakeholders related with these actors. For coping with the demands of future societies in a healthy environment, horticulture needs breakthroughs in agro ecology, mitigation and adaptation to climate change and the digitalization of its value chains. But how? In the early history of science-based agriculture (note: horticulture was at the forefront of such development) private and public institutions achieved remarkable breakthroughs with their *intra muros* research and development. The existence of such institutions was for decades an achievement *per se* and was seen as a fundament for success. Nowadays, the institutional landscape of R&D actors is very diversified, dynamic and complex. A steadily accelerating technological and cost intensive innovation process is an important driver of a knowledge-based economy. The mere existence of a public research and development system does not meet the societal demands for successfully addressing the challenges of the horticultural sector and the paradigm change needed. R&D institutions need nowadays resilient and flexible cooperations with competent complementary actors for impactful science-based problem solving. In public R&D institutions, such cooperations must be based on a sound cooperation strategy for investing the often shrinking resources efficiently and effectively. Strategy-based cooperation development and implementation is a "technology" of the future not exclusively to, but particularly needed in technology and knowledge intensive, sustainable horticulture. However, what is a cooperation strategy? How to develop it? Moreover, what are important earmarks related with a successful cooperation strategy? The presentation gives insights in relevant experiences and speculates about the future.