



# NETWORKING: A KEY FACILITATOR FOR RURAL AND FARM WOMEN-LED INNOVATION

## PRACTICE ABSTRACT 3

**Authors:** Maura Farrell, Louise Weir and Aisling Murtagh  
**University of Galway**  
**Website:** [www.fliara.eu](http://www.fliara.eu)

Networking supports rural and farm women-led innovation. FLIARA's case study comparative analysis showed the availability of and engagement with strong networks was a key aspect for successful women-led innovation.

**Networking provides diverse benefits.** Networks support the innovation's start-up and development. More specific benefits include access to information, building skills, and connecting with potential mentors. Networks can also provide a wider source of support including toward self-empowerment.

**Be part of a diverse range of networks.** For example, this could mean networking through professional organisations as well as wider local community networks. Networking at a local level is important, but so are opportunities to expand regional, national and international networks.

**Availability of networks and ability to network.** This appears a key part of improving levels of women-led rural and farm innovation. Networking takes time therefore directly supporting women leading innovations to take part in networking appears important to increase women's capacity for networking.

**Potential for specific targeted networking supports.** New ideas could be women-led innovation networking vouchers that incentivise the activity and stipend payments for joining more formal and targeted networks. Networking opportunities must be available, which makes it important to support spaces and places where these opportunities are available, such as events and network meetings, as well as available infrastructure, such as community centers. Developing networks between operators working in the same territory and/or industry or supporting more informal networks to exchange knowledge and receive support also seems relevant.



Claudia Smolka, Milch und Fleisch, Germany.



Karen Brosnan, CERES, Ireland.



Giulia Montepaone, We're South, Italy.

## Useful links:

- See the experience of: <https://fliara.eu/innovator/a-womens-collective/>; <https://fliara.eu/innovator/karen-brosnan/>; <https://fliara.eu/innovator/giulia-montepaone/>; <https://fliara.eu/innovator/claudia-smolka/>; <https://fliara.eu/innovator/francesca-casaluci/>



Funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.