

International Training & Demonstration Centre (ITDC)



Executive Director Report

Prepared for the NNLE ITDC Executive Board

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2023 Foundation and Plans

Introduction

Establishment and Mission

In October 2023, NNLE International Training & Demonstration Centre (ITDC) was established as the knowledge and innovation center for international greenhouse horticulture and tourism sector development in Georgia and Caucasus. The membership-based organization is established by the private institutions as a leading platform where business, education, research, private, public, and different government bodies are invited to jointly innovate, connect, inspire, and share knowledge.

NNLE International Training & Demonstration Centre (ITDC) aims to connect international and local professionals, who are looking for connection, knowledge, and innovations in horticulture and HORECA. ITDC, established as a matchmaking platform, is designed to connect parties who want to contribute to sustainable food supply, greening the world and pursuing socially responsible agricultural and tourism development projects in Georgia and Caucasus.

Leading horticultural and tourism infrastructure development companies, institutions and innovations are aimed to be invited and represented at ITDC year-round trade fair with a complete reflection and demonstration of modern technologies, supply, floriculture, food horticulture and hospitality.

In order to continue to innovate and achieve its lead in Caucasus as an international sector, ITDC plans to establish a modern, high-tech state-of-the-art research and educational center by developing ITDC IT and on-ground infrastructure, establishing partnerships with different technology greenhouse production facilities and HORECA available in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan for different educational and vocational trainings, where researchers, entrepreneurs and various education institutions are planned to jointly conduct their studies.

In addition, ITDC offers a learning environment for global talent and intends to work together with leading international universities (like: HAS University of Applied Sciences, Wageningen University etc.) and vocational educational centers in Georgia and Caucasus by encouraging different exchange programs between the leading educational centers in Caucasia and beyond.

Through its IT Platform, ITDC intends to offer a unique collaboration between education, research, entrepreneurs, farmers, potential direct beneficiaries in the tourism sector and the government with an international focus. ITDC is established as the knowledge and innovation platform for international greenhouse horticulture and HORECA in Caucasus.

Finally, ITDC aims to become a leading IT and on-ground matchmaking platform where business, education, research, and government jointly innovate, connect, inspire, and share knowledge through the membership-based organization.

Goals & Objectives

Multi-Sector Training

Facilitating comprehensive training programs encompassing agriculture, tourism, and other industries to equip participants with practical skills and theoretical knowledge.

Sustainable Practices

Advocating and demonstrating sustainable practices across sectors to ensure environmental conservation and resource efficiency.

Cultural Exchange

Promoting cultural exchange and intercultural understanding through tourism, enhancing local heritage preservation and global appreciation.

Demonstration

Establishing demonstration plots and showcasing successful technology practices and advanced technologies to inspire local SMEs and promote adoption.

Research

Collaborating with research institutions to carry out applied research on region-specific challenges and solutions, contributing to evidence-based practices.

Outreach

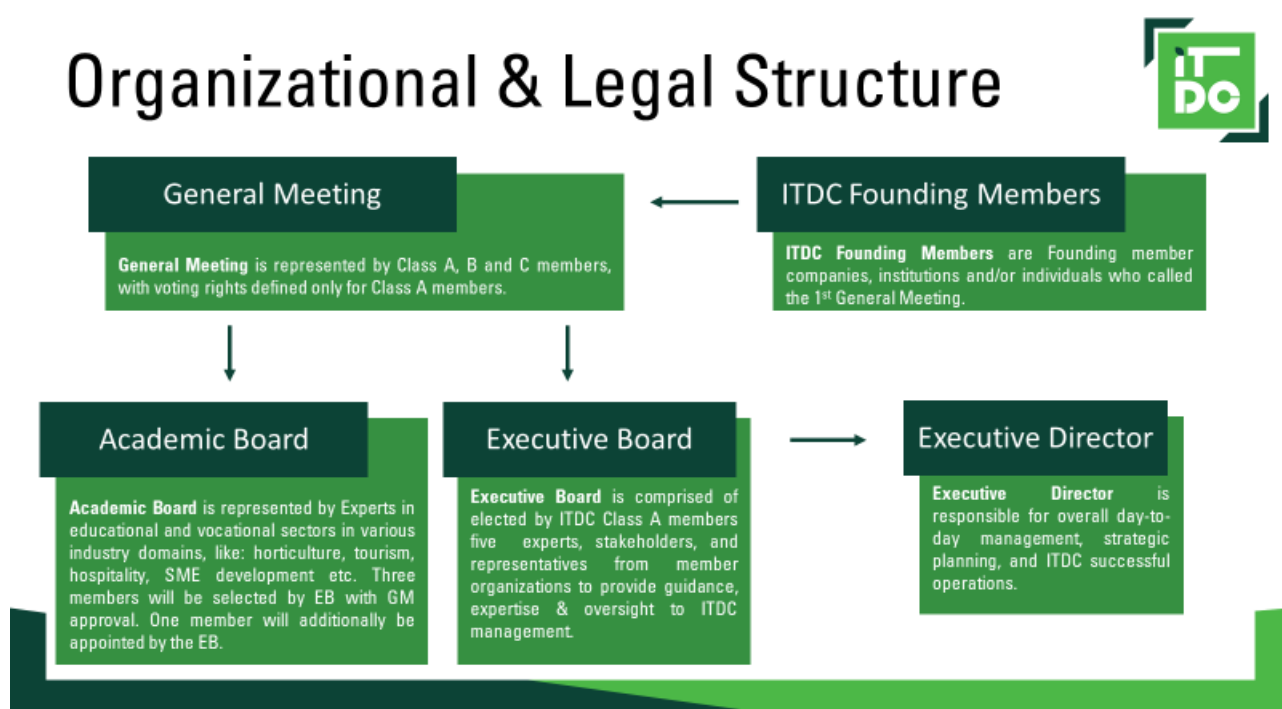
Conducting outreach programs to raise awareness among the local community about sustainable business, environmental conservation, and the importance of responsible land use.

Networking

Developing partnerships with governmental organizations, NGOs, private enterprises, and international agricultural and tourism development bodies to strengthen the impact of ITDC's initiatives.

Green Economy

Encouraging sustainable practices, supporting renewable energy adoption, advocating for green policies, and fostering collaborations among members on green initiatives.



ITDC Governance

With the changes in the NNLE ITDC charter applied from 7th of December 2023, ITDC is governed by the following bodies:

- ITDC General Meeting with the voting power for ITDC Class A members.
- ITDC Executive Board with 4 members approved by the General Meeting and internally elected Chairman.
- ITDC Academic Board with three (3) elected members, one (1) representative from the ITDC Executive Board and internally elected Chairman.
- Executive Director(s) appointed by the ITDC Executive Board.

By December 2023, after 2 months since its establishment, all relevant governing bodies have appointed its members and have successfully conducted:

- one (1) General Meeting and two (2) Extraordinary General Meetings.
- two (2) Executive Board meetings.
- one (1) Academic Board meeting.

ITDC General Meeting

According to NNLE ITDC charter, the General Meeting may be ordinary or extraordinary. Ordinary General Meeting shall be held at least once a year. An extraordinary General Meeting may be held at any time depending on the interests of the Organization.

The General Meeting may be attended by each member of the Organization, but only ITDC Class A Members shall be entitled to vote on all matters to be decided by the General Meeting.

Decisions of the General Meeting shall be adopted by a simple majority of the votes of the attendees.

ITDC Executive Board

The highest governance body of the Organization is the Executive Board. The Executive Board consists of 4 (four) members and is appointed for 2 (two) years by the General Meeting.

Mr. Michael North was appointed as a Chairman of the NNLE ITDC Executive Board with the ITDC Executive Board decision from 7th of December 2023.

ITDC Academic Board

ITDC Academic Board consists of 4 (four) members, with 3 (three) members being nominated by ITDC Class C Members and 1 (one) member being nominated by the ITDC Executive Board.

The Academic Board members are appointed by the ITDC General Meeting for a 2-year term with the decision from 25th of December 2023.

Ready-to-go ITDC Programs

In close collaboration with existing and potential member companies and institutions, NNLE ITDC offers to interest parties list of programs and projects, with the aim to strengthen individuals and businesses across agricultural and hospitality sectors in Georgia and beyond.

Through strategic collaborations with its member organizations, ITDC programs remain at the cutting edge of both industry advancements. Here are our ready-to-go initiatives:

Educational & Vocational Training Programs

Focused on introducing and promoting educational and vocational training opportunities in the agricultural sector, emphasizing sustainability, water management, energy efficiency, and environmentally friendly practices, NNLE ITDC, in cooperation with HollandDoor and Bilancia is developing different programs and projects like e.g.:

ToT & ToF Programs from HollandDoor

Agriculture in Georgia, especially in the Imereti region, needs professionals with specialized education, as existing education system does not meet current requirements as confirmed with UNIDO 2021 survey conducted in one of the 11 municipalities of Imereti region, Tskaltubo, with up to 5,000 greenhouse farmers and more than 77ha of greenhouse production facilities available, that produce up to 70% of herbs in Georgia.

With the implementation of the Trainer of Trainers Program (ToT), Georgian Technical University, College Iberia, Cartlis AgroSystems, and Noblex will receive 21 well-qualified trainers. This initiative, implemented with the help of HollandDoor Cooperative, will enable these institutions to provide relevant and adequate training for farmers in Georgia.

As a direct result of the Trainer of Farmers (ToF) program conducted by Georgian Technical University, College Iberia and Cartlis AgroSystems, up to 1,140 local farmers will be trained (by the retrained

trainers during the ToT) during the grant lifespan and up to 11,140 farmers will be trained in 10 years after the grant lifespan.

During the ToF program, additionally up to 400 farmers will participate in the series of seminars conducted by retrained trainers of LTD Noblex;

Implementation of the ToT and the ToF programs will result in an increase in agricultural productivity by at least 50% per sqm. and will lengthen the production window (will enable off-season production) by at least one month for the trained farmers, thus the selling price of the products will be higher due to the possibility of conducting sales in the months when an outdoor production is not available.

ToT & ToF Programs from Bilancia

On the NNLE ITDC Academic Board meeting held on 15th of December 2023, ITDC Executive Director introduced to ITDC Academic Board a possibility of active cooperation with Bilancia with the aim to introduce Bilancia's already established educational and vocational training programs in Netherlands to the Imereti region farmers and beyond for their consideration and further actions.

Regional Demand

Agriculture and tourism are one of the most significant sectors in Caucasus region economies, encompassing countries like Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and parts of Russia in general. All of them have significant agricultural activity.

Employment in the agricultural sector across these countries shares some commonalities like e.g., the need for skilled labor and updated farming techniques has increased, leading to a demand for education and training programs.

The Caucasus faces common agricultural challenges across its diverse landscapes. These challenges, spanning from outdated practices to limited access to modern technology, create a demand for a transformative solution like the membership based NNLE ITDC.

While addressing specific regional needs, the ITDC's response is strategic. By tailoring its offerings to both Georgian and English-speaking audiences, it aligns with the diverse linguistic and agricultural landscapes of the region, meeting the specific demands of farmers and entrepreneurs in both agricultural and tourism development sectors.

The ITDC's focus on providing cutting-edge technologies, supplier connections, and knowledge sharing directly addresses the demand for innovation in agriculture and tourism across the Caucasus, fueling the region's aspiration for agricultural and tourism infrastructure advancements.

As NNLE ITDC analyzes and anticipates market trends and regional demands, its role as a responsive hub becomes more pronounced. By proactively addressing the evolving needs of the Caucasus, it positions itself as a vital membership based, consolidating solution provider in the agricultural landscape and tourism development in general.

In conclusion, ITDC's services are not just a response to market demand; they're a strategic solution to the specific agricultural and tourism development challenges prevalent across the Caucasus. By catering to these demands, NNLE ITDC emerges as a pivotal catalyst for transformative agricultural and tourism growth in the region.

Planned Developments

With the active support of its member companies and institutions, NNLE ITDC intends to develop:

ITDC IT Infrastructure and Platform for its three different, Class A, B and C members.

Agricultural modelling, vocational training, production, and hospitality business related facilities etc.

ITDC on ground educational and demonstration infrastructure in Imereti, Georgia.

ITDC IT Infrastructure Development

ITDC is set to unveil a streamlined IT infrastructure designed for the varied needs of our members in agriculture and tourism. The platform comprises:

1. Marketplace:

- Facilitates members in selling agricultural or touristic products/services.
- Boosts member visibility, fosters collaboration, and expands business opportunities within the ITDC community.

2. E-Learning Platform:

- Empowers members to sell educational vocational programs.
- Creates a virtual space for knowledge-sharing, enabling continuous learning and generating revenue for members.

3. Online Business Plan Calculator:

- Assists members in assessing the profitability of agribusiness ventures.
- Equips members with data-driven insights for optimized business strategies, promoting sustainable growth.

In essence, ITDC's member-centric IT infrastructure ensures a seamless blend of commerce, education, and strategic planning, reinforcing our commitment to fostering a collaborative community.

Partnership and Support

ITDC is engaging EU embassies, chambers of commerce, and Development Agencies to propel its on-ground and IT infrastructure plans. Focused on a high-tech training center with a vocational horticultural facility, negotiations are in place to secure both financial and strategic support. This proactive outreach, yielding commitments, exemplifies cross-border collaboration for transformative advancements in agriculture, tourism, and vocational education.

Member Engagement

General Meeting is the highest governing body of ITDC, which is held annually together with all members, where strategic topics are discussed and voted on. The annual General Meeting is not merely a procedural event; it is a strategic cornerstone where member engagement actively contributes to ITDC's success. Their involvement ensures a future of meaningful progress in regional context, demonstrating the resilience and adaptability of ITDC in navigating the nuances of tourism and agriculture in the Caucasus region.

While the annual General Meeting serves as a pivotal checkpoint, members are endorsed while contributing insights that steer the planned programs toward effective, region-specific solutions. Members' involvement is not confined to a single event; it's an ongoing partnership that ensures our initiatives remain finely tuned to the unique challenges, the solutions to which are made clear through the know-how of our members, gathered over the years.

On-ground Infrastructure Financials

NNLE ITDC Director has positively addressed the NNLE ITDC Academic Board with the request to be supported in defining certain business plan parameters / inputs for the educational and demonstration spaces required for the quantity of potential students estimated to be hosted within the NNLE ITDC on-ground infrastructure on annual bases.

It has been agreed that ITDC management will develop a questionnaire to ITDC Academic Board for the following, 2nd NNLE ITDC Academic Board Meeting to be addressed by the members so that ITDC management could introduce the first business plan draft by the end of February 2024.

IT Platform Development

2 of the founding members of ITDC, JSC GH Agri and LLC Agrobot are developing the IT platform for several months now, with meticulous work on user flows, UI/UX design, and real-world user stories already shaped an intuitive interface, seamlessly integrating the marketplace, e-learning, and business plan calculator. This transformative platform reflects ITDC's commitment to simplicity and prosperity for our diverse agricultural and tourism communities.

IT Platform Financials

The initial calculations for the IT Platform were prepared by GH Agri together with Agrobot. The rough estimates show up to 660,000 USD budgeted figures, including the contributions from members. The detailed business plan is to be developed by March 2024.

Collecting Potential ITDC Members

The NNLE ITDC is actively working towards uniting stakeholders who share our vision for advancing agriculture and tourism. To achieve this, we're strategically inviting different players to join our ranks.

We've categorized our members into three groups:

Class A Members

- Businesses in agriculture and tourism.
- Key players shaping industry strategies.

Class B Members

- Farmers, investors, HORECA owners etc.
- Bridging the gap between producers and consumers.

Class C Members

- Educational institutions.
- Driving research and educational / vocational initiatives.

Starting February 2024, we'll be sending out invitations, pending the Executive Board's approval of the ITDC Membership Declaration. This marks the beginning of our effort to build a diverse community dedicated to developing agriculture and tourism.

We are inviting those passionate about positive changes in Georgia and the Caucasus to:

Facilitate Industry Collaboration

→ By bringing together Class A members and stakeholders for joint project.

Empower Local Entrepreneurs

→ By creating a platform for Class B members to connect and access resources

Promote Knowledge & Exchange

→ Cultivating a community of Class C members focused on research and education.

Recruiting members is crucial for NNLE ITDC. By uniting Class, A, B, and C members, we aim to create a strong ecosystem driving the modernization of agriculture and tourism. We invite potential members to join us in shaping a resilient future for Georgia and the Caucasus.

Membership Declaration

NNLE ITDC Membership Declaration is crafted to streamline the membership process, ensuring a straightforward experience for interested parties. We've made it as simple as possible to facilitate easy enrollment.

The declaration provides a transparent breakdown of benefits and responsibilities associated with each Membership Class. With the introduced ITDC Membership Declaration form, potential members can easily understand what they can expect and what is expected from them.

MNNLE ITDC declaration serves as a platform for potential members to express their collaboration needs with ITDC. It allows members to clearly outline areas where they seek cooperation, propose matchmaking opportunities, and specify how they can contribute to the collective efforts of ITDC.

As we value our potential members' time, The ITDC Membership Declaration only asks for essential information, keeping the submission process brief and efficient. Our aim is to make joining ITDC a seamless and rewarding experience. The Membership Declaration reflects our commitment to simplicity, transparency, and collaboration.

Please find the final version of ITDC Membership Declaration form approved by ITDC's Executive Board on 22nd of January 2024) attached as an Annex 001 to this Directors Report. Report on New Members' Engagement

Progress on Collecting Members

A. NNLE ITDC was founded by its three (3) Class A member companies:

- JSC GeoHolding - I.C. 405127247
- JSC GH Agri - I.C. 405408214
- LLC Agrobit - I.C. 405640212

NNLE ITDC plans to invite and attract up to twenty (20) potential Class A members in 2024.

B. NNLE ITDC is honored to have as a Class B member, Cooperative Mukhiani with its 29 member farmers – I.C. 421271901.

NNLE ITDC plans to invite and attract up to twenty (50) potential Class B members in 2024.

C. NNLE ITDC is honored to have as a Class C member, HollandDoor B.V. - I.C. 56835868

NNLE ITDC plans to invite and attract up to five (5) potential Class C members in 2024.

NNLE ITDC 2024 Budget

Please find Annex 002 attached to this Director's Report.

NNLE 2023 Financial Statement

Please find Annex 003 attached to this Director's Report.

Conclusion

In conclusion, NNLE ITDC has laid a solid foundation in its inaugural year, uniting diverse stakeholders for sustainable development in Georgia and the Caucasus. Our clear mission, governance structure, and proactive programs reflect a commitment to positive change.

The ready-to-go ITDC programs, strategic partnerships, and responsive initiatives demonstrate our adaptability to regional needs. We're poised for growth, with planned developments in IT infrastructure, on-ground facilities, and robust financials.

As we actively seek potential members, our streamlined Membership Declaration emphasizes simplicity and transparency. We invite businesses, farmers, and educational institutions to join us in shaping a resilient and prosperous future for the region.

Annexes

Annex 001

NNLE ITDC Membership Declaration Form

Annex 002

NNLE ITDC 2024 Budget

Annex 003

NNLE ITDC 2023 Financial Statement