SURFIT -
Scaling Urban Regenerative Food Systems in Transition

Problem One of the key challenges for sustainable urban food systems is to shorten the food supply chain by connecting food producers directly to consumers locally, or regionally. Sustainable food networks (SFNs) try to achieve this ambition, but struggle with scaling their often isolated and marginal position.

Aim This research explores, understands and engages in how catalysers can be designed to scale Sustainable Food Networks (SFNs) for systemic transitions.

Output The project will deliver design principles and reflexive guidance in embedding catalysers to advance and scale SFNs.

Methods SURFIT will bring together SFNs, local policymakers and a multidisciplinary set of researchers from four mid-size cities to jointly conduct transdisciplinary research in Urban Food Labs (UFLs) with an urban living lab approach.

Description The SURFIT project focuses on the concept of 'catalysers' to jointly experiment with and learn about scaling process of SFNs.
A catalyser is a strategic lever that enables scaling to the systemic level of urban food networks, while delivering ecological and socio-economic benefits to local communities (and the wider region), fostering the integration of sustainable urban food systems with other urban resource systems to increase circularity, promoting equal distribution of benefits, and providing healthy and sustainable food to all inhabitants.