



European Institute of Innovation and Technology

Invitation to submit proposals
for KICs under
Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC)
to submit proposals for MoC activities
in 2026-2027

(Call HORIZON-EIT-2025-MOC-IBA)

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HISTORY OF CHANGES			
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1. Introduction

This is a European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) invitation addressed to the **Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) who signed the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with it, namely Climate-KIC, EIT Digital and InnoEnergy**, to submit one proposal per KIC for an EU action grant under the Horizon Europe (HE) Framework Programme for Research and Innovation¹.

The EIT, as part of HE, is governed by a regulatory framework (i.e. EIT Regulation (recast)², EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027³) and a contractual framework (MoC and HE Model Grant Agreement (GA)) in the 2021-2027 period.

The main conditions for the multiannual grants for the 2026-2027 period are defined in this invitation as well as in the respective guidelines and templates.

This invitation is launched and the EIT financial contribution to the KICs will be determined based on the criteria and processes, as described below, and in line with the following decisions of the EIT Governing Board:

- Decision 21/2021 of the EIT Governing Board on the authorisation of the EIT Director to prepare, negotiate and conclude partnership agreements and grant agreements⁴;
- Decision 24/2024 of the EIT Governing Board on the conclusion of the Memorandum of Cooperation with EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Digital and EIT InnoEnergy⁵;
- Decision 36/2024 of the EIT Governing Board on the adoption of the Final Single Programming Document (2025-2027), Annex XI on Grants (EIT Work Programme 2025)⁶;
- Decision 01/2025 of the EIT Governing Board on the adoption of the Draft Single Programming Document (2026-2028), Annex XI on Grants⁷.

The KICs shall submit their proposals in accordance with the conditions laid down in the present invitation and should be aligned with the Horizon Europe Guidelines and attached EIT guidelines as annotated proposal templates. The invitation takes precedence over the guidelines.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013 (OJ L 170, 12.5.2021, p. 1.)

² Regulation (EU) 2021/819 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 on the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (recast) (OJ L 189, 28.5.2021, p. 61)

³ Decision (EU) 2021/820 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 on the Strategic Innovation Agenda of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) 2021-2027: Boosting the Innovation Talent and Capacity of Europe and repealing decision No 1312/2013/EU (OJ L 189, 28.5.2021, p. 91)

⁴ Incl. Art. 3, “in line with the objectives of the EIT SIA 2021-2027 and the Single Programming Document of the EIT.”

⁵ Ares(2024)4696453

⁶ Ares(2024)9134718

⁷ Ares(2025)915544

KICs are invited to read the **call documentation** carefully, and in particular this invitation, the [Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement](#), the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal Online Manual](#), the [Horizon Europe Guidelines](#) and the [EU Grants AGA — Annotated Model Grant Agreement](#).

These documents below provide clarifications and answers to questions that might arise when preparing the above-mentioned proposals.

- The **invitation** outlines:
 - Available budget and timetable
 - Admissibility and documents
 - Eligibility criteria
 - Exclusion criteria
 - Financial and operational capacity criteria
 - Award criteria
 - Evaluation, funding allocation and award procedure
 - Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements
 - How to submit an application
- The **Online Manual** outlines the:
 - Procedures to register and submit proposals online via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal (Portal)
 - Recommendations for the preparation of the application.
- The annexed **Guidelines and Templates** contain:
 - EIT annotated proposal templates for MoC activities
 - Precise guidance on what to include in the different sections of the application form
 - Horizon Europe reference documents, online manual, IT how to, Glossary
- The **AGA — Annotated Model Grant Agreement** contains:
 - Detailed annotations on all the provisions in the Grant Agreement that KICs will have to sign to obtain the grant (*including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc*).
- The **EIT's annotation of the provisions of Annex 5 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement** (Annex 5 Annotation) contains:
 - Detailed guidelines regarding those provisions of HE MGA Annex 5 which are applicable for KICs under MoC (*including the principles applicable for open calls and direct awards*).

2. Available budget

The **2026-2027 overall indicative EIT budget available for this invitation is EUR 60 000 000**. KICs are expected to submit proposals within a range of EUR 10 000 000 -30 000 000.

Funding allocation process

The EIT Director will take the **award decision** for 2026-2027, following the **competitive evaluation of proposals** by independent external experts on the basis of pre-defined award criteria, in line with the Horizon Europe criteria.

If in 2027 a new MoC is signed between EIT and the KICs subjects of this invitation, the EIT Director may take an **additional award decision** to finance activities to be implemented in 2028 under Grant Agreements 2026-2027.

3. Timetable and deadlines

The indicative timeline of the submission and evaluation procedure is as follows:

Key dates	Date and time or indicative period
Launch of the Invitation	6 August 2025
Opening date for accessing the submission platform	21 August 2025
Deadline for submission	2 October 2025
Evaluation period	6-31 October 2025
EIT requirement letters sent to the KICs	7 November 2025
KICs to submit final proposals	28 November 2025
Grant award decisions by EIT Director	January 2026
Signature of the Grant Agreements	February 2026
First pre-financing payments	Within 30 days following the signature of the GAs

4. Admissibility and documents

Proposals must be submitted no later than the deadline for submission indicated in section 3.

The proposals must be submitted electronically via the **Funding & Tenders portal** through a dedicated link provided by EIT.

The submission shall comply with the respective Guidelines and the templates and standards available on the Portal. Failure to comply with this requirement may lead to the rejection of the proposal.

The proposals must be drafted in English.

5. Eligibility criteria

Entities eligible for funding

As laid down in the EIT's 2025 Work Programme, Article 198(c) of the EU Financial Regulation authorises the award of grants without a call for proposals to a body with a de jure or de facto monopoly, which is the case for the EIT KICs. Accordingly, **this invitation is addressed to the KICs** under Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC).

In accordance with the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025⁸ and the EIT Final Single Programming Document 2025-2027 and the Draft EIT Single Programming Document 2026-2028, in order to be eligible for funding, the **applicant KICs must be established in one of the eligible countries**, i.e.:

- the Member States of the European Union, including their outermost regions;
- the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) linked to the Member States⁹;
- countries associated to Horizon Europe¹⁰;
- certain low- and middle-income countries¹¹.

Legal entities, which are established in countries not listed above will be eligible for funding if their participation is considered essential for implementing the action by the EIT.

For third parties receiving financial support, please see section 13.5.

A proposal shall be submitted by the KIC LE on behalf of the KIC partnership. The KIC LE will become a beneficiary and signatory of the grant agreement. Entities associated to the KIC LE (e.g. Co-Location Centres (CLCs), etc.) shall become **affiliated entities to the KIC LE**. Other entities (both KIC partners and non-KIC partners) can be recipients of financial support to third parties.

Further entities may participate in the activities as subgrantees or subcontractors in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement.

Restrictions

As indicated in the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025:

⁸ Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025, General Annex: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2025/wp-14-general-annexes_horizon-2025_en.pdf

⁹ Entities from Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) are eligible for funding under the same conditions as entities from the Member States to which the OCT in question is linked. See the Horizon Europe Programme Guide on the portal for a complete list of OCTs.

¹⁰ Please see the Horizon Europe Programme Guide on the Funding and Tenders Portal for up-to-date information on the current list of and the position for Associated Countries:
https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide_horizon_en.pdf

¹¹ See the Horizon Europe Programme Guide on the Funding and Tenders Portal for a complete list of these countries.

- **EU restrictive measures:** Entities subject to [EU restrictive measures](#) under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)¹² as well as Article 75 TFEU¹³, are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).
- **Legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine:** Given the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the involvement of Belarus, there is currently no appropriate context allowing the implementation of the actions foreseen in this programme with legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine. Therefore, even where such entities are not subject to EU restrictive measures, such legal entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity. This includes participation as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis for justified reasons.

With specific regard to measures addressed to Russia, following the adoption of the Council Regulation (EU) 2024/1745 of 24 June 2024¹⁴ (amending Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 of 31 July 2014) concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, legal entities established outside Russia but whose proprietary rights are directly or indirectly owned for more than 50% by a legal person, entity or body established in Russia are also not eligible to participate in any capacity.
- **Measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary:** Following the [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/2506](#), as of 16 December 2022, no legal commitments can be entered into with Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain. Affected entities may continue to apply to calls for proposals and can participate without receiving EU funding, as associated partners, if allowed by the call conditions. However, as long as the Council measures are not lifted, such entities are not eligible to participate in any funded role (beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, recipients of financial support to third parties, etc.). In case of multi-beneficiary grant calls, applicants will be invited to remove or replace that entity in any funded role and/or to change its status into associated partner. Tasks and budget may be redistributed accordingly.
- **Restrictions for the protection of European communication networks:** The protection of European communication networks has been identified as an important security interest of the Union and its Member States.¹⁵ In line with the Commission Recommendation on the cybersecurity of 5G

¹² Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#).

¹³ Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#).

¹⁴ (OJ L 229, 31.7.2014, p. 1–11).

¹⁵ European Council conclusions of 1 and 2 October 2020 (EUCO 13/20), point 11; Council Conclusions on the significance of 5G to the European Economy and the need to mitigate security risks linked to 5G, 14517/19.

networks of 2019¹⁶ and the subsequent report on EU coordinated risk assessment of the cybersecurity of 5G networks of 2019,¹⁷ the EU Toolbox on 5G cybersecurity,¹⁸ the second report on Member States' progress in implementing the EU toolbox on 5G cybersecurity of 2023,¹⁹ and the related Communication on the implementation of the 5G cybersecurity toolbox of 2023,²⁰ the Commission together with the Member States has worked to jointly identify and assess cyberthreats and security risks for 5G networks.²¹ The toolbox also recommends adding country-specific information (e.g. threat assessment from national security services, etc.). This work is an essential component of the Security Union Strategy and supports the protection of electronic communications networks and other critical infrastructures.

Entities assessed as "high-risk suppliers", are currently set out in the second report on Member States' progress in implementing the EU toolbox on 5G cybersecurity of 2023²² and the related Communication on the implementation of the 5G cybersecurity toolbox of 2023²³.

The toolbox also underlines that further developing European capacities in the area of 5G and post-5G technologies by leveraging EU Research & Innovation Funding programmes is a strategic risk mitigating measure. This entails the need to avoid the participation of high-risk supplier entities in the development of other technologies linked to the evolution of European communication networks to prevent technology transfer and the persistence of dependencies in materials, semiconductor components (including processors), computing resources, software tools and virtualisation technologies, as well as related cybersecurity.

In order to protect the specific policy requirements of the Union and/or its Member States, it is therefore appropriate that the following additional eligibility criteria apply to actions identified as "subject to restrictions for the protection of European communication networks" and to proposals within the MSCA part²⁴ that concern the evolution of European communication networks (5G, post-5G and other technologies linked to the evolution of European communication networks):

Entities that are assessed as high-risk suppliers of mobile network communication equipment (and any entities they own or control) are not eligible to participate as beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners.

¹⁶ Commission Recommendation (EU) 2019/534 of 26 March 2019 Cybersecurity of 5G networks, L 88/42.

¹⁷ NIS Cooperation Group, Report on EU coordinated risk assessment of the cybersecurity of 5G networks, 9 October 2019.

¹⁸ NIS Cooperation Group, EU Toolbox on 5G Cybersecurity, 29 January 2020

¹⁹ NIS Cooperation Group, Second report on Member States' progress in implementing the EU Toolbox on 5G Cybersecurity, June 2023.

²⁰ Communication from the Commission: Implementation of the 5G cybersecurity Toolbox, Brussels, 15.6.2023 C(2023) 4049 final.

²¹ Within the NIS framework NIS 1 + 2 [Directive - 2022/2555 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)]

²² NIS Cooperation Group, Second report on Member States' progress in implementing the EU Toolbox on 5G Cybersecurity, June 2023.

²³ Communication from the Commission: Implementation of the 5G cybersecurity Toolbox, Brussels, 15.6.2023 C(2023) 4049 final.

²⁴ Doctorial Networks, Postdoctoral Fellowships, Staff Exchanges, Cofund.

The assessment is based on the following criteria:

- Likelihood of interference from a non-associated third country, for example due to:
 - The characteristics of the entity's ownership or governance (e.g. state-owned or controlled, government/party involvement);
 - The characteristics of the entity's business and other conduct (e.g. a strong link to a third country government);
 - The characteristics of the respective third country (e.g. legislation or government practices likely to affect the implementation of the action, including an offensive cyber/intelligence policy, pressure regarding place of manufacturing or access to information).
- (Cyber-)security practices, including throughout the entire supply chain;
- Risks identified in relevant assessments of Member States and third countries as well as other EU institutions, bodies and agencies, if relevant.

Exceptions may be requested from the granting authority and will be assessed case-by-case, taking into account the criteria provided for in the 5G cybersecurity toolbox, the security risks and availability of alternatives in the context of the action.

The above restrictions shall apply to financial support to third parties as well.

Eligibility of activities

In line with Article 10.1 and 10.2 of the Memorandum of Cooperation, subject to the conditions provided therein, KICs are eligible to participate in competitive calls launched by the EIT for specific and transnational coordination activities:

“10.1. EIT competitive calls for specific activities

Subject to compliance with this Agreement, the KIC under MoC, as defined in Article 2 of this Agreement, is eligible to participate in the invitations or calls for proposals launched by the EIT in the following fields:

- *Competitive calls for specific activities, such as in the field of education and training, including entrepreneurial education, training and coaching, RIS (reducing the innovation divide in Europe), innovation ecosystems, dissemination and outreach, and synergies and complementarities with other EU Programmes and initiatives;*
- *Competitive calls for Cross-KIC activities, for example, in the field of business creation, joint innovation projects in common thematic areas, and the Higher Education Initiative;*
- *Competitive calls for shared services, including for example EIT Campus; office consolidation and EIT House; coordinated communication, dissemination and outreach.*

The KIC under MoC including the KIC partners are also eligible to participate in open calls launched by the EIT or by KICs under Partnership Agreement.

In the case of EIT grants funded from other Union programmes, outside the Union contribution to the EIT under the Horizon Europe Framework Programme, the conditions laid down in the legal framework of the Union programme concerned and in the contribution agreement to the EIT apply.

10.2. Competitive calls for transnational coordination activities

In addition to the calls referred to under point 10.1. above, based on point (2) e) of Article 12 of the EIT Regulation, the EIT will launch invitations or calls for proposals for the support of transnational coordination activities, as referred to in Article 2 of this Agreement.

In order to qualify as transnational coordination activity of ‘high Union added value’, the activity shall have a pan-European character and aim to address an EU policy objective, such as in particular:

- *Maintenance of the pan-European character of the ecosystem of the KIC;*
- *Geographical balance of the overall KIC ecosystem across Europe;*
- *Reduction of the regional innovation divide;*
- *Enhancing cooperation among Co-location Centres and RIS Hubs;*
- *Addressing cross-sectoral challenges of EU policy significance at a pan-European level, including by means of the development of guidelines and methodologies, coordinated dissemination of best practice and outreach, and activities for synergies and complementarities with other EU programmes and initiatives.”*

Therefore, by means of the present invitation, the EIT requests a proposal from each KIC to mandatorily **reflect the provisions of the KIC Strategic Agenda and include the following activities i.e. work packages** (in which a minimum of three CLC’s²⁵ that are established in three different EU countries and acknowledged on the KIC’s website, i.e. their address, contact point and description of activity scope, participate):

- Entrepreneurial education and skills: min. 50% of the proposed budget;
- Business Creation: max. 20% of the proposed budget;
- Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS, reducing the innovation divide in Europe): between 10-15% of the proposed budget; and
- Innovation ecosystem maintenance; dissemination and outreach; and synergies and complementarities with other EU Programmes and initiatives: max 15% of the proposed budget.

The activities (work packages) included will determine the proposals’ eligibility, while the content will be evaluated by external experts and scored accordingly. Section 8 provides further information on the envisaged activities’ scope.

²⁵ As defined in Article 2 of the MoC, a “**Co-location Centre** means a physical hub or branch which promotes links between and active collaboration among knowledge triangle actors and acts as a focal point for knowledge exchange through which the KIC’s partners are able to access facilities and the expertise needed to pursue their common objectives. CLCs are a gateway for accessing the KIC and interacting with KIC partners, as well as with other local innovation actors”.

Additionally, cooperation across and between KICs is strongly encouraged in the implementation of activities identified in the call invitation (Sec. 8.1), besides through KICs' continued participation in the 2026-2028 Cross-KIC and HEI actions (as per Art. 10.4 of the MoC)²⁶. Nonetheless, **there shall be no overlap of the MoC activities with Cross-KIC and HEI activities and the Academies, which are the subject of separate invitations.**

The activities described in the proposals shall be implemented in the 2026-2027 period through the awarded grant.

Ethics

Proposals must comply with ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity) and applicable EU, international and national law. Applicants must have completed the ethics self-assessment as part of their application²⁷.

Proposals involving ethics issues will have to undergo an ethics review to authorise funding and may be made subject to specific ethics requirements. These requirements become part of the grant agreement as ethics deliverables, e.g. ethics committee opinions/authorisations required under national or EU law.

6. Exclusion criteria

Applicants which are subject to an **EU exclusion decision** or in one of the following **exclusion situations** that bar them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate²⁸:

- bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)
- in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)
- guilty of grave professional misconduct²⁹ (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)

²⁶ The conditions for the KICs under MoC to participate in Cross-KIC and HEI activities in 2028 are laid down in the Invitation for 2026-2028 Business Plans, Cross-KIC and HEI activities

²⁷ See [How to complete your ethics self-assessment](#).

²⁸ See Articles 138 and 143 of EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

²⁹ 'Professional misconduct' includes, in particular, the following: violation of ethical standards of the profession; wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility; breach of generally accepted professional ethical standards; false declarations/misrepresentation of information; participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition; violation of IPR; attempting to influence decision-making processes by taking advantage, through misrepresentation, of a conflict of interests, or to obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain an advantage; incitement to discrimination, hatred or violence or similar activities contrary to the EU values where negatively affecting or risking to affect the performance of a legal commitment.

- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of EU Regulation [2988/95](#) (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- intentionally and without proper justification resisted³⁰ an investigation, check or audit carried out by an EU authorising officer (or their representative or auditor), OLAF, the EPPO, or the European Court of Auditors.

Applicants will also be rejected if it turns out that³¹:

- during the award procedure they misrepresented information required as a condition for participating or failed to supply that information
- they were previously involved in the preparation of the invitation and this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise (conflict of interest).

Evidence:

Entities acceding the grant agreement shall provide a **Declaration of Honour** (DoH) at the time of the grant agreement signature or the accession request, except when such declarations have already been submitted for the purposes of another award procedure, provided that the situation has not changed, and that the time that has elapsed since the issuing date of the declarations does not exceed one year³².

In case of any doubt, the granting authority may request a DoH during the evaluation procedure.

Before the time of the signature of the grant agreement, the EIT will request **appropriate evidence that the participating entity is not in one of the exclusion situations referred to in Article 138(1) of the EU Financial**

³⁰ ‘Resisting an investigation, check or audit’ means carrying out actions with the goal or effect of preventing, hindering or delaying the conduct of any of the activities needed to perform the investigation, check or audit, such as refusing to grant the necessary access to its premises or any other areas used for business purposes, concealing or refusing to disclose information or providing false information.

³¹ See Article 143 EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

³² Article 139(1) of the EU Financial Regulation

Regulation: e.g. a recent extract from the judicial record for the KIC CEO and recent certificates issued by the competent authority/ies of the country of establishment of the KIC Legal Entity (KIC LE) (e.g. certificate from the registry in which the KIC LE is registered, tax certificate, social security certificate)³³. The EIT Director may waive this obligation in the cases indicated in Article 139(4) of the EU Financial Regulation.

7. Financial and operational capacity

Financial capacity

In accordance with Article 27 of the Horizon Europe Regulation, the financial capacity shall be verified for the coordinator if the requested funding is equal or greater than EUR 500 000. If there are grounds to doubt the financial capacity of an applicant, the EIT shall also verify the financial capacity of the applicant, or of the coordinator even where the requested funding is below the threshold referred to above.

By submitting the proposals, the KICs confirm that they have stable and sufficient financial resources to successfully implement the proposals.

If a KIC is participating in several grant agreements, it must have sufficient financial capacity to implement them in parallel.

At the proposal submission stage, the coordinator will be asked to confirm that the organisation has carried out a self-check of the financial capacity of the organisation through the **financial self-check tool**³⁴ or has been covered by a financial viability check for an EU project for the last closed financial year.

If, after the financial capacity check, a coordinator's/applicant's financial capacity is considered not satisfactory, further information may be required and further measure(s) may be applied:

- an enhanced financial responsibility regime, i.e. joint and several responsibility for all beneficiaries or joint and several liability of affiliated entities;
- the financial capacity of the applicant may be structurally guaranteed by another legal entity/ies;
- prefinancing paid in instalments;
- the granting authority may propose no prefinancing;
- the activities may be subject to additional monitoring and reporting based on an action plan;
- the granting authority may request that the applicant is replaced or, if needed, reject the entire proposal.

Evidence:

The financial capacity check will be carried out on the basis of the documents the applicant must upload in the [Participant Register](#) (e.g. *profit and loss account and balance sheet, business plan, audit report produced by an approved external auditor, certifying the accounts for the last closed financial year, etc*). The analysis will be based on neutral financial indicators, but will also take into account other aspects, such as

³³ Article 139(3) of the EU Financial Regulation

³⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/lfv/lfvSimulation.do>

dependency on EU funding and deficit and revenue in previous years, etc. If needed, it may also be done for affiliated entities.

Operational capacity

By submitting the proposals, the KICs confirm that they have the experience, know-how, qualifications and operational resources (human, technical and other) to successfully implement the proposals.

If a KIC is participating in several grant agreements, it must have sufficient operational capacity to implement them in parallel.

If, in case of doubt, it is necessary to confirm the operational capacity of any applicant, the granting authority may request supporting documents, such as:

- information on the staffing situation of the applicant;
- profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the activities,
- description of the participants in the grant agreement;
- activity reports of last year(s);
- information and list of other projects implemented.

8. MoC Activities 2026-2027

8.1 General requirements

The activities presented in the KICs' proposals, which are at risk of discontinuation without EIT funding, must be aligned to Articles 10.1 and 10.2 of the MoC, the KIC's Strategic Agenda (Annexed to the MoC) and in the framework of the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027. KICs shall demonstrate how the activities not financially supported by the present grant but foreseen in the MoC and in the KIC SA will be implemented. The description of such activities shall be complemented with the corresponding KPI target achievement.

The activities to be implemented by the KIC (with or without the EIT grant) must contribute to the objectives set out in Art. 4.1 of the MoC, support the implementation of the KIC's multiannual strategy (as per Art. 4.2 of the MoC) and alignment with EU policy objectives (as per Art. 4.3). Objectives shall be defined by using SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) and why they are pertinent to the MoC and the KIC's Strategic Agenda.

Furthermore, activities shall address the KIC's **target societal challenges, relevant EU policy objectives** (e.g. Union of Skills, Clean Industrial Deal, Choose Europe, NEB, etc.) **and** (as per the MoC Art. 7.3), **Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI)**, contributing to achieving the future high-level results and impacts included in the EIT Impact Framework (as per the MoC Art. 12.1).

The KIC shall show how each activity (i.e. work package and task) included in the 2026-2027 Activities proposal will contribute to the relevant KPIs – including the EIT RIS sub-KPIs – in the EIT Impact Framework, the likely scale and significance of this contribution to the annual targets indicated in the KIC's Strategic Agenda, and the measures to maximise these impacts in the context of Horizon Europe.

In line with Article 14 of Annex 5 of the HE MGA, **the beneficiaries must take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action** and in line with their gender equality plans. Please aim, to the extent possible, for gender equality, diversity (including non-binary individuals) and sensitivity at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level.

The KICs' proposals must be relevant, appropriate and structured within (minimally four) work packages as follows.

Entrepreneurial Education and Skills (*min. 50% of the proposed budget*):

Aligned with Art. 7.3.2 of the MoC, KICs activities should focus on:

- **deep-tech education,**
- **skill development and training activities with strong entrepreneurship and innovation components** that contribute to the training of the next generation of talents, entrepreneurs and founders, public and private business innovators and enabler organisations that advance the implementation of EU policy objectives (relevant to the societal challenge, besides Union of Skills, STEM Education Strategic Plan), addressing Europe's skills gaps and boosting its competitiveness, European economic security, etc.
- aiming to be (if not already) labelled in line with the **EIT Label** Framework and the EIT Label Handbook. All programmes and education activities of the KIC must be included in the EIT Campus.
- **strengthening their financial sustainability** prospects in education, with concrete business models and plans behind. **KICs are invited to include only activities that can demonstrate with KPIs and FS targets that they are on course to becoming financially sustainable and provide evidence of their existing education portfolio.**

Business Creation (*max. 20% of the proposed budget*):

Aligned with Art. 7.3.3 of the MoC, business creation activities should address **accelerator schemes** aimed at:

- providing upfront capital (grants) in the (pre-)seed funding stage;
- helping entrepreneurs, especially women, and women-led early-stage start-ups to translate their ideas into financially successful and socially impactful business (de-risked) ventures and
- speeding up start-up growth through access to customers, corporates and markets, develop vital business skills, and access to the relevant European networks (demonstrating knowledge triangle integration).

The portfolio of business creation activities shall explicitly contribute to the **EU Startup and Scaleup Strategy**,³⁵ advance the implementation of EU policy objectives, , while aiming at generating revenues for the KICs, for example through short to mid-term fees and longer term return on equity held in the supported startups and scaleups.

Regional Innovation Scheme (reducing the innovation divide in Europe) (10-15% of the proposed budget):

Aligned with Art. 8.1 of the MoC and the EIT RIS Implementation Framework³⁶, KICs should address **activities that close the innovation gap** across the EU in those Member States and Horizon Europe associated countries, eligible for the EIT RIS, that are categorised as “moderate” or “modest” / “emerging” innovator based on the European Innovation Scoreboard of the European Commission³⁷. With the involvement of the local KIC partners³⁸, through a place-based approach, KICs should:

- **address innovation capacity disparities and widen participation in KIC activities,**
- **realise activities aimed at linking the local ecosystem to pan-European innovation,**
- **support local innovation capacity** and integrate additional participants from EIT RIS-eligible countries.

Innovation ecosystem maintenance (emphasising KIC sustainability)³⁹; dissemination and outreach; and synergies and complementarities with other EU Programmes and initiatives (max. 15% of the proposed budget):

³⁵ A ‘Flagship Action’ under the ‘Closing the Innovation Gap’ pillar of the Commission’s new ‘Competitiveness Compass.’ See: https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-research-and-innovation/jobs-and-economy/eu-startup-and-scaleup-strategy_en and https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_339

³⁶ <https://www.eit.europa.eu/library/eit-ris-implementation-framework-updated-2025-2027>

³⁷ In line with the EIT RIS eligible criteria from 2025, the following countries and territories are eligible for the EIT RIS: EU Member States: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain. Horizon Europe Associated Countries: Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Israel. Outermost Regions: Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion, Martinique, Mayotte and Saint-Martin (France), the Azores and Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain).

³⁸ “In line with Article 2(4) of the EIT Regulation, and described in Chapter 9 of the EIT RIS Implementation Framework, EIT RIS Hubs are a “physical hub, established by a KIC and forming part of its structure, in a Member State or in an associated country targeted by the RIS and that serves as focal point for the KIC’s activities and for the mobilisation and involvement of local knowledge triangle actors in the activities of the KIC”. All EIT RIS Hubs maintained by the KIC during the term of this Agreement (if applicable) shall continue to comply with the Minimum Functions of EIT RIS Hubs as outlined in the EIT RIS Implementation Framework (Chapter 9.3). Additionally, in line with the EIT RIS Implementation Framework (Chapter 9.6), the KIC may select Members to represent them within existing local EIT Community Hubs and deliver activities on their behalf benefitting the local innovation ecosystem.

³⁹ In line with Article 7 of the MoC, a “sustainable innovation ecosystem” refers to maintaining a transnational KIC ecosystem and network, with a considerable number of KIC partners making a significant contribution as a European strategic network, and with a presence in at least three Member States. It shall have a KIC Legal Entity and CLCs. Additionally, it shall demonstrate the capacity to finance its knowledge triangle activities independently of contributions from the EIT, in line with the KIC Strategic Agenda. In line with Article 12.2 of the MoC, this capacity must be reported within the interim and final reports, together with Strategic Agenda implementation and respective KPI attainment.

Aligned with Art. 7.1 and 10.2 of the MoC, KICs shall implement activities aiming at:

- **maintaining the pan-European character of the ecosystem of the KIC** and the geographical balance of the overall KIC ecosystem across Europe (including a considerable number of KIC partners);
- enhancing cooperation among Co-location Centres, EIT Community and RIS Hubs;
- addressing cross-sectoral challenges of EU policy significance at a pan-European level, e.g. by developing guidelines and methodologies, coordinating dissemination of best practice and outreach (including sharing relevant content via the EIT Innovation Campus);
- realising synergies and complementarities, such as **coordination mechanisms and policy dialogues** linked, for example, to the upcoming Union of Skills, the Clean Industrial Deal, the EU Startup and Scaleup Strategy, European Innovation and Net Zero Industries acts, AI and Robotics enlargement policy and other EU programmes and initiatives (notably KICs under the MoC but also other European partnerships).

Expected outcomes

The results of each proposal should contribute to the objectives, strategy and EU policy alignment set out in Art. 4.1-4.3 of the MoC and the expected outcomes set out in the Annex to the MoC, i.e. the KICs Strategic Agenda 2021-2027 over the medium term, and to the wider expected impacts and respective targets over the longer term.

Furthermore, and in line with the MoC, **KICs (including their partner organisations) shall continue to undertake knowledge triangle integration activities aligned with their Strategic Agendas (Art. 7.3) independent of contributions from the EIT.**

Consequently, KICs shall indicate the planned impact of activities not funded by the EIT within 'Table 2.1b: List of EIT KPIs relevant to the KIC's Strategic Agenda in 2026-2027' of their proposals. The reporting thereof – as per Art. 12.2 of the MoC – shall occur within the interim and final reports and beside KPI attainment will summarise Strategic Agenda implementation and its external funding.

8.2 Award criteria

The competitive evaluation of the proposals and the estimated budgets will be carried out with the support of external experts on the basis of pre-defined award criteria in line with the following Horizon Europe standard criteria: Excellence, Impact and Quality and efficiency of implementation.

The score received by individual KICs will be converted to funding, based on the indicative budget and distributed **relative to one another's scores** (contingent upon meeting a **minimum scoring threshold of eight points from fifteen overall vis-à-vis the three Horizon Europe criteria**).

The sub-criteria, scoring methodology and evaluation evidence (as elaborated in this invitation's Guidelines) are as follows:

- **Excellence**, including objectives (their clarity and pertinence to the proposed activities and contribution to the KIC Strategic Agenda objectives and targets) and ambition (beyond the state of the art vis-à-vis the societal challenge); methodology (soundness in maintaining the KIC's integrity, KIC community, EU complementarity); contributions to KIC financial sustainability;

- **Impact**, including KIC's pathways towards impact (credibility, size and scale of the expected outcomes, including economic and societal as defined in the EIT Impact Framework⁴⁰ and translated into the KIC's KPI targets outlined in its Strategic Agenda); (suitability and quality of) measures to maximize impact – dissemination, exploitation, and communication (at pan-European level);
- **Quality and efficiency of implementation**, including work plan effectiveness and appropriateness of resources at portfolio/work package level; cost efficiency; assessment of risks; transparency of operations; capacity of participants (i.e. the KIC LE and CLCs) and (geographically balanced) transnational KIC partnership (that brings together the necessary expertise) as a whole.

The scale used for the assessment of the proposals is as follows, where each of the three sub-criteria can score maximum 5 points, summing to a 15-point maximum:

- 0: KIC fails to address the relevant aspects
- 1: Poor – KIC addresses the relevant aspects inadequately, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
- 2: Fair – KIC broadly addresses the relevant aspects, but there are significant weaknesses
- 3: Good – KIC addresses the relevant aspects well, but a number of shortcomings are present
- 4: Very good – KIC addresses all relevant aspects very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present
- 5: Excellent – KIC successfully addresses all relevant aspects. Any shortcomings are minor.

Evidence: The assessment with scores will be based on external experts' evaluation of the proposals, compared to the invitation to submit.

9. Submission of proposals

Proposals must be submitted electronically using the electronic submission system of the Portal of the European Commission, **the link to the submission platform will be provided by the EIT following the opening date for the submission.**

Proposals must be created and submitted by a representative/contact person of the coordinating organisation.

The electronic submission system is an online wizard that guides the applicant step-by-step through the preparation of your proposal. The proposal itself consists of two main parts as structured the Proposal Template:

- PART A) administrative forms (structured information of the basic administrative data, declarations of partners, organisations and contact persons, etc.)
- PART B) technical annex, which is the detailed description of the planned Business Plan outlining work packages, costs, etc.

⁴⁰ Aligned with the EIT Impact Framework including chiefly the KPIs indicated in Table 2.1a (listed in Annex I of the call Guidelines), complemented by the respective KPIs shown in Table 2.1b (in accordance with the KIC Strategic Agenda), and relevant EU policy objectives.

Further mandatory annexes required by the invitation are outlined in the Guidelines.

More information on how to participate in Horizon Europe proposals is available here: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/how-to-participate/1>

At proposal submission, you will have to confirm that you have the **mandate to act** for all applicants. Moreover, you will have to confirm that the information in the application is correct and complete and that the participants comply with the conditions for receiving EU funding (especially eligibility, exclusion, financial and operational capacity, etc). Before signing the grant agreement, each beneficiary and affiliated entity will have to confirm this again by signing a Declaration of Honour. Proposals without full support will be rejected.

Your application must be **readable, accessible and printable**.

Proposals are limited to a maximum of **50 pages** (Part B). All tables, figures, references and any other element pertaining to these sections must be included as an integral part of these sections and are thus counted against this page limit. The number of pages included in each section of this template is only indicative. The page limit will be applied automatically. In the Call Package, you can see the structure of the actual proposal template that you need to submit, please remove all instruction pages.

KICs may be asked at a later stage for further documents (for legal entity validation, financial capacity check, bank account validation, exclusion criteria evidence, etc).

10.Data model and IT tools

eGrants

EIT and KICs will use the eGrants IT system for the purpose of grant management, therefore proposal submission, grant agreement signature and reporting will be managed via this tool. Each KIC should submit the data in the agreed format through a portfolio/work package approach via proposal and reporting templates into the eGrants platform. Additionally, throughout the grant agreement's implementation, each KIC will need to collect and import additional data (e.g. project, partner, proposal, impact etc.) directly into the EIT's IT Portal. All data from the EIT Portal will be transferred to *CORDA – the European Union's data warehouse* feeding *eCORDA* (accessible by member state representatives) and Horizon Dashboard – publicly accessible through any web browser.

By using CORDA, the EIT will ensure it meets the standards of Horizon Europe with respect to transparency and openness.

EIT IT Portal

While eGrants is a European Commission grant management tool used for selection, signature and reporting on grant agreements between KICs and the EIT, **the EIT IT Portal is used to collect additional and more granular data relevant for assessment/monitoring, analysis guiding strategic decision-making but also for statistical purposes and business intelligence**. This collection should include data on KIC performance (impact indicators, KPIs, etc.), KIC calls (call calendar, call text, call evaluation outcome) but also data regarding the proposals submitted in response to KIC calls and regarding subgranted projects/participants to allow for monitoring of EIT grant consumption (e.g. per Area, country etc).

By the time the data pipeline is developed, KICs should import all project data to the EIT portal at least on a monthly basis, ensuring that all collected data is up to date. Besides projects, other different datasets might have different deadlines specified by the EIT (e.g. in the data guidance note or other) e.g. KPIs can be reported throughout the whole year with an annual hard deadline for the given reporting period, while proposals should be submitted as soon as the call evaluation has been completed and the evaluation summary report is submitted at the Portal, Financial Sustainability data reporting happens on a semi-annual basis etc.

Cognisant of the data pipeline development under the Cross-KIC Shared Services Grant Agreement, KICs under the MoC will also data report using this (automated data upload) mechanism to the EIT portal. Ultimately, EIT should be in a position to retrieve relevant data when needed, ensuring smooth data import.

All EIT data reporting needs are specified in the EIT guidance documents.

11. Evaluation Process

The proposals shall be assessed by **independent external experts** selected by the EIT and organised in panels. The assessment will be supported by EIT officers.

The KICs shall not have direct or indirect contact with the external experts regarding the evaluation at any time, including during or after the evaluation exercise. The information and the names of the experts shall remain confidential.

The evaluation will be carried out and scored against the award criteria, based on the evidence presented in the previous sections. The proposals will be assessed in terms of **(a) Excellence, (b) Impact and (c) Quality and efficiency of the implementation**. Furthermore, regularity and legality and other elements relating to the applicable Grant Agreement provisions are also verified.

The outcomes of the evaluation are included in the evaluation reports which contains scores substantiated by evaluative justifications. The outcome of this assessment leads to the formal EIT requirements, which shall be met prior to the approval of the proposal as a condition for the grant award and the Grant Agreement signature.

The evaluation will be based on the whole proposals. The EIT and the experts may also consult other submitted documentation, as described by the annotated templates and Horizon Europe Guidelines, or may browse publicly available sources to verify information provided by the KICs.

12. Award decision – Grant Agreement signature

The scoring will be linked to the final budget allocation, following the provisions of C.f. 8.2.

No hearings will be held by the EIT Governing Board.

The EIT Director will communicate the evaluation results to the KICs and request the submission of the updated version of the proposals in the course of November 2025, based on the EIT requirements for the KICs' final proposal submission.

The formal requirements issued by the EIT – including the maximum EIT contribution – shall be met prior to the approval of the proposals as a condition for grant award and signature of the grant agreements.

A clarification session is offered to each KIC following the EIT requirements letter.

The **EIT Director's award decision** will serve as the basis for the award of the 2026-2027 grant and for the conclusion of the grant agreements (in February 2026), provided that the updated version of the proposal, including the estimated budget:

- are in compliance with the requirement laid down in this invitation text and the respective guidelines; and
- meet the requirements for the revision of the proposal issued by the EIT Director, including the decided maximum EIT financial contribution.

In the event of the grant being awarded by the EIT Director, the EIT will **sign the grant agreement (GA)** detailing the conditions and level of funding with the KICs. One grant agreement per KIC will be signed.

The grant agreements are inbuilt in the eGrants tool and will be signed within the tool (not on paper). The grant agreements follow the Horizon Europe legal framework and the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (MGA). The MGA is published on the Funding and Tenders portal⁴¹. Please note that EIT-specific provisions can be found in the updated (April 2024) Annex 5 of the MGA.

Any amendment to it should also be managed in eGrants.

13. Legal and financial provisions

13.1 Starting date, eligibility period

The action's starting date (1 January 2026), eligibility period (1 January 2026 – 31 December 2027) and duration (24 months) will be fixed in the grant agreements.

This duration may be extended by the EIT in an exceptional situation with due justification. Such an extension shall be formalised with an amendment of the grant agreement.

⁴¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf

13.2 Maximum grant amount, reimbursement of eligible costs

The eligible and ineligible costs, the form of grant and reimbursement, calculation of the final grant amount, reporting and payment arrangements together with other financial conditions are described in the model grant agreement.

The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

The EIT grant will be a reimbursement of actual costs grant. This means that it will reimburse ONLY certain types of costs (eligible costs) and ONLY those costs *actually* incurred (NOT the *budgeted* costs).

13.3 Funding rate in the GAs

In consideration of the requirements for KICs to undertake the activities listed in section 8 with others that are part of the EIT model (i.e. innovation) completely financed by other sources, the grant funding rate for costs incurred in the implementation of activities listed in section 8 will be 100% of the action's eligible costs. As a condition for participation, as specified in section 8 ('Expected outcomes'), KICs are expected to deliver on impact goals in accordance with their Strategic Agenda. The conditions for financial support to third parties, including co-funding requirements are set out in Annex 5 of the grant agreement.

The estimated budget shall be prepared in the line with the annexed annotated templates and Horizon Europe Guidelines.

13.4 Reporting and payment arrangements and deliverables

The reporting and payment arrangements will be fixed in the grant agreement (Data Sheet, point 4 and Article 21 and 22). Mandatory deliverables set in the annotated templates (i.e. EIT Guidelines) and Horizon Europe Guidelines are expected to be submitted during the implementation years, while majority of deliverables are to be submitted together with the interim and/or final reports, as result of the implementation.

At the end of the grant agreement's implementation, each KIC shall submit a report and EIT will calculate the final EIT grant amount. If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, EIT will ask the KIC LE to pay back the difference (recovery).

All payments will be made to the coordinator.

Please also note that KICs are responsible for keeping records on all the work done and the costs declared.

The payment of the grant will be made in **one prefinancing instalment**, one **interim payment** and a **final payment (the balance)**. The aim of the prefinancing is to provide the beneficiaries with a float. The prefinancing remains the property of the EU until they are cleared against eligible costs or contributions accepted by the granting authority (normally at final payment).

The following payment and reporting scheme is foreseen:

	When	Requirements	Reporting period
First pre-financing payment <i>(up to 45% of overall grant)</i>	Within 30 days following the signature of the grant agreement.	5% as a contribution to the Mutual Insurance Mechanism will be retained from the first prefinancing payment.	
Interim Report	Within 60 days following the end of the reporting period.	The Interim report shall include a technical part and a financial part (i.e. individual and consolidated financial statements, explanation on the use of resources, certificates on the financial statements (CFS) if required, etc).	1-12 months
Interim payment	Within 90 days from receiving the Interim Report.	Based on the declared actual costs, with a ceiling that pre-financings and the interim payment together cannot be more than 90%	
Final Report	Within 60 days following the end of the reporting period.	The Final Report shall include a technical part and a financial part (i.e. individual and consolidated financial statements, explanation on the use of resources, certificates on the financial statements (CFS) if required, etc).	13-24 months
Final payment	Within 90 days from receiving the Final Report.	The EIT will calculate the final EIT grant amount. If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, EIT will ask the beneficiary/ies to pay back the difference (recovery).	

13.5 Financial support to third parties

Financial support to third parties (FSTP) involves funding provided by the beneficiary (e.g. the KIC LE) to a recipient that is not a party to the grant agreement. Financial support to third parties includes sub-grants (financial support to third parties, Article 6.2.D.1 (a) of the GA); and financial support in the form of prizes (Article 6.2.D.1 (b) of the GA). KICs are strongly encouraged to use the lump sum sub-grant type when awarding FSTP (adhering to the Guidelines for lump sums applied to KIC subgrantees issued by the EIT).

The EIT-specific rules laid down in Annex 5 of the HE MGA shall be followed when launching open calls or direct awards. Please refer to the Annex 5 Annotations.

Financial support to third parties established in HE eligible countries

As a general rule, **financial support should be awarded to entities established in HE eligible countries** (see section 5).

Within this Invitation, the maximum amount of financial support to third parties should not exceed **EUR 2 000 000** per recipient for a grant agreement of two-year duration.

Financial support to third parties established in non-HE eligible third countries

If the recipient of financial support is established in a third country not eligible under HE:

- in case of recipients of financial support **above EUR 60 000 per grant agreement**: if the entity is not eligible for funding under a national scheme, they may receive EIT funding on an exceptional basis agreed with the EIT, if the participation of the entity established in the third country is deemed essential for the action;
- in case of recipients of financial support **below EUR 60 000 per grant agreement**: the KICs may award financial support to third parties, if duly justified.

13.6 Eligibility of direct and indirect costs

Notwithstanding the key importance for the operations of the KIC, the **costs of top governance** (Supervisory Board or equivalent) and KIC management (C-level staff) cannot be claimed as direct costs (regardless of the cost category), even if top governance and C-level staff perform activities directly linked to the performance of the action.

Similarly, the following costs of indirect nature cannot be claimed by the KIC LE and entities associated to the KIC LE (CLCs etc.) as direct costs: **office costs** (utilities, maintenance, telecommunication, licences, etc.), **office supplies** (furniture, stationery, etc.), **corporate finance** incl. bookkeeping, **HR-related costs** (incl. recruitment costs), **IT equipment** (laptops, computers, monitors, mobile phones, etc.), **postage**, etc.

Those costs shall be covered by the indirect costs flat-rate 25% of eligible direct personnel costs and purchase costs (travel & subsistence, equipment, other goods, works & services).

Despite IT and rental costs normally being considered indirect costs, the following exceptions apply:

- IT costs (including licences) covered by the Shared Service “Centre of Administrative Excellence” and/or related to IT tools used for the implementation of a specific thematic activity (e.g. education platform development and licences, etc.);
- Rental costs covered under the framework of the Shared Service “Centre of Administrative Excellence”.

If a KIC under MoC does not participate in the Shared Service “Centre of Administrative Excellence”, the above costs cannot be claimed as direct costs.

Nota bene: KICs need to pay particular attention on properly budgeting direct and indirect costs, in line with this invitation’s conditions and GA provisions. The EIT reserves the right to review the cost classification provided in Annex 1 (Description of the specific action) during the assessment of financial reports. If a cost declared as a direct cost does not meet the relevant eligibility criteria of the grant agreement, the EIT will consider it ineligible.

13.7 Eligible costs for equipment, infrastructure, and other assets

In line with Art. 6.2.C.2 of the GA, purchase of equipment, infrastructure or other assets used for the action must be declared as depreciation costs calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred and written off in accordance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual accounting practices.

13.8 Joint and several liability of affiliated entities

As a rule, declarations on joint and several liability will be requested by EIT if the budget of the affiliated entity is higher than the budget of the beneficiary, with the following exceptions:

- a. If the total budget of the affiliated entity is lower than EUR 100,000;
- b. If the affiliated entity is a public body.

The KIC LE shall collect the Declaration on joint and several liability from the affiliated entities falling into the above situation and submit these to the EIT. Non-submission of the declaration may result in rejection of the costs for the affiliated entity concerned.

13.9 KIC's control strategy

The KICs must have in place effective and reliable financial control and audit mechanisms. The mechanisms must follow the guidance provided for KICs under MoC in the '*EIT Guidelines for KICs' financial control and audit mechanisms*'.

14. Processing of personal data

The reply to the present invitation involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV). Such data will be processed by the EIT pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data⁴². Any personal data requested in accordance with the Invitation for Business Plans and Cross-KIC activities will be processed solely for that purpose by the EIT. The EIT privacy statement for the management of grants is available at: <https://eit.europa.eu/data-protection>

Personal data may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) by the Commission, should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in Article 138 and 143 of the Financial Regulation 2024/2509 (for more information see the Privacy Statement on:

⁴² Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC

https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures_en.

Annex 1: Key reference documents for KICs under MoC

Besides the EIT Regulation and the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027, the following reference and related working documents apply:

Area/principle	Reference documents	Link
EIT Key Performance Indicators (EIT Impact Framework)	Memorandum of Cooperation (Art. 12.1 Impact) Decision 08/2022 of the EIT Governing Board on the EIT Key Performance Indicators	Consolidated MoC.pdf (europa.eu) https://eit.europa.eu/library/gb-decision-082022-amendment-eit-key-performance-indicators-kpis-and-repealing-gb-decision
EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS)	Memorandum of Cooperation (Art. 8.1 EIT-KIC RIS Activities) EIT RIS Implementation Framework 2021-2027 EIT RIS Hubs Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles	Consolidated MoC.pdf (europa.eu) https://eit.europa.eu/our-activities/eit-regional-innovation-scheme https://eit.europa.eu/library/ris-hubs-minimum-standards-and-guiding-principles
EIT Label Framework	Decision 11/2021 of the EIT Governing Board on the new EIT Label Framework EIT Decision 26/2021 on the adoption of the new EIT Label Handbook for degree programmes EIT Decision 62/2022 on the adoption of the EIT Label Handbook for the EIT Fellowships and the EIT Label Handbook for non-degree education and EIT competence certification model.	https://eit.europa.eu/library/2021-1120210317-gb66-11labelframework https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eit_label_handbook_degree_programmes - final.pdf https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eit_label_fellowship_handbook.pdf https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eit_label_nondegree_handbook.pdf

Governance of the KIC under MoC	Memorandum of Cooperation (Art. 6.1 Governance of the KIC under MoC)	Consolidated MoC.pdf (europa.eu)
Sound portfolio management principles	Memorandum of Cooperation (Art. 7.2 Sound portfolio management principles)	Consolidated MoC.pdf (europa.eu)
Openness and transparency	Memorandum of Cooperation (Art. 6.2 Openness and transparency of the KIC) Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement, Annex 5 (<i>updated April 2024</i>)	Consolidated MoC.pdf (europa.eu) https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf

