European Institute of
Innovation & Technology

EIT Regional Innovation Scheme

Implementation Guidance Note 2018–2020

The EIT – Making Innovation Happen

European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

Budapest | March 2017

www.eit.europa.eu

Contents

1.   Introduction

Innovation has a prominent role in Europe's efforts to tackle major societal and environmental challenges. As stated in the Commission Work Programme 2017, it is essential to "*continue to work to create the right climate for innovation in Europe, to help create new industries and jobs*". The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is working towards this objective through its operational arm, the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), by accelerating innovation and supporting the creation of the conditions where innovation is more likely to thrive and generate breakthroughs. It does so through the collaboration and interlinking of leading entities from higher education, research and business areas, which are the three sides of the Knowledge Triangle. In other words, the EIT is fostering innovation via the Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI).

Nevertheless, Europe is characterised by considerable disparities in terms of research and innovation performance (e.g. EU15-EU13, Northern-Southern countries). This has resulted in classification of the European countries as innovation leaders and strong innovators to 'moderate and modest innovators'[1] in the annual European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS).[2] One reason for lower innovation performance is missing or weak linkages among the key players—businesses and research institutions and academia, as well as between private and public sectors,[3] including a lack of know-how of innovation schemes and a structured, systematic approach towards innovation.

As a response to this challenge, the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS) was introduced by the European Parliament and the Council as part of the EIT's Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2014-2020. Consequently, in line with the SIA, the EIT RIS is designed to share good practices and experience emerging from the EIT Community's activities, as well as to widen participation in KIC activities. Therefore, the aim of the EIT RIS is to help disseminate the knowledge and know-how of the EIT Community and widen participation in the KICs across Europe. The EIT RIS focuses on countries with limited or no participation in the EIT Community's activities, where innovation

---

[1] See section 11 of this Guidance Note for an explanation of this term
[2] European Innovation Scoreboard (http://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation/facts-figures/scoreboards_en)
[3] Background material: Veugelers, R.The European Union's growing innovation divide
(http://bruegel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/pc_2016_08.pdf)

capacity is moderate or modest and which otherwise would not be able to benefit from the experience gained by the KICs.

The EIT RIS has been designed as a two-way interaction scheme. By sharing their good practise related to KTI and increasing their activities in the EIT RIS eligible countries, the KICs will also gain access to productive inputs, business skills, talent, cooperation opportunities in education, markets and business, currently untapped entrepreneurial potential, customers for innovative ventures, innovation, knowledge, know-how and technology transfer possibilities, additional testbeds for applications of innovative solutions as well as access to co-funding options provided by EU, regional and national support schemes.

> *The introduction of a Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) targeted at partnerships of higher education institutions, research organisations, companies and other stakeholder organisations will provide a specific mechanism for the dissemination of best practice and widening participation in KIC activities.*
>
> DECISION No 1312/2013/EU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 11.12.2013 on the Strategic Innovation Agenda of the EIT: the contribution of the EIT to a more innovative Europe

The EIT RIS is an integral part of the wider EIT Community outreach activities. However, while the EIT RIS has a specific European focus with a view to contributing to increased innovation capacity, the outreach activities have a broader aim of openness to the world, which is raising awareness of the EIT innovation model (based on KTI), building on synergies and developing strategic alliances internationally.

2.   Aim of the Guidance Note

This note provides updated implementing guidance for the EIT KICs based on the objectives of the EIT RIS and in line with the provisions set out in the amended EIT Regulation and SIA. The development and implementation of a fully-fledged EIT RIS by the EIT and its KICs was designed as a gradual process, which is based on the experience gained from the implementation of 2014 and 2015 activities plus the full implementation of EIT RIS activities in 2016, which was the first year when dedicated budgets for EIT RIS activities were ring-fenced in the KICs' annual budgets.

The lessons learnt during the first three years of EIT RIS implementation has demonstrated a mutual interest among KICs and the EIT RIS eligible countries and, hence, potential for extending the KICs' activities to other countries and regions. Nevertheless, methods of cooperation modalities have to be better tailored to address the intrinsic gaps that prevent actors from the EIT RIS countries and regions from fully participating in KIC activities. This guidance note builds on the experience gained and lays out rules for enhanced EIT RIS implementation for the years 2018-2020.

2017 will serve as a transition period from the existing implementation modalities to those provided by this Guidance Note. Furthermore, KICs may already adapt their EIT RIS activities planned for 2017 in line with this Guidance Note and amend their Business Plans for 2017 accordingly.

3.   Expected impact

The EIT RIS is designed as a long-term initiative to strengthen the national and regional innovation eco-systems of countries that are moderate and modest innovators. The overarching objective of the EIT RIS is to contribute to the advancement of the innovation performance of these countries and regions by **strengthening the capacity of their innovation enablers and actors and linkages among them** (such as business accelerators, incubators, start-ups, scale-ups, businesses including SMEs, agencies, educational and research institutions and their infrastructures, etc.) through the dissemination of the KTI approach, the cornerstone of the EIT intervention logic.

> The objective of the EIT RIS is to contribute to enhancing the innovation capacity of the countries and regions that are modest and moderate innovators by transferring KIC good practise of the Knowledge Triangle Integration.

The EIT RIS serves the purpose of opening up the KICs to entities that cannot (yet) become KIC partners, as well as providing targeted support to individuals and entities from EIT RIS eligible countries to take part in KICs activities and benefit from KIC services and programmes. In addition, the EIT RIS provides a framework for transferring KIC good practise and know-how of the KTI, thus

ultimately increasing the impact of the EIT Community at the European level. Furthermore, it is expected that activities carried out under the EIT RIS will lead to stronger participation of entities from EIT RIS eligible countries in KIC core activities. Ultimately, the EIT RIS will help raise the capacity of local actors to potentially apply to become full KIC partners.

In the mid-term perspective, the EIT RIS is expected to facilitate the **incorporation of relevant players of the local innovation eco-systems in KIC ecosystems and foster the KTI** approach as a framework for the enhancement of innovation capacity. The KTI approach places entrepreneurship at its heart as a channel to fertilise, diffuse and commercialise the knowledge generated at higher education, business and research institutions.[4] This is not to be understood as a linear process, as different models of interaction apply depending on the field.

In terms of immediate EIT RIS outcomes, within the framework of the EIT RIS, KICs have to engage with local innovation eco-system players and build sustained relationships and partnerships.

To facilitate achievement of the desired outcomes, KICs should develop and adopt their own mid-term KIC EIT RIS Strategy 2018-2020 *vis-à-vis* both KIC objectives and local innovation needs (see section 4). This is to be achieved by capitalising and expanding on their EIT RIS activities and adopting tailor-made solutions wherever appropriate. The over 120 smart specialisation strategies and their specific priorities that were developed at national and regional levels can provide a starting point for seeking cooperation with the local enterprises, researchers and public bodies in charge of innovation and industrial transformation in all EU regions (see section 6). Many regions and countries have identified priorities that resonate well with the KIC themes. Many KICs could benefit from associating themselves to the thematic smart specialisation platforms[5] and the emerging partnerships thereunder.

---

[4]Background material: from OECD HIGH LEVEL EVENT ON THE KNOWLEDGE TRIANGLE: Enhancing the Contributions of Higher Education and Research Institutions to Innovation, Paris, 15-16 September 2016, BACKGROUND DOCUMENT CASE STUDIES

[5] The existing Smart Specialisation Thematic Platforms so far are on energy, agro-food and industrial modernisation (http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/s3-thematic-platforms)

4.   Implementation framework

The KICs will have a certain flexibility in designing their own EIT RIS activities, provided the activities contribute to promoting KTI in the EIT RIS eligible countries and regions. Namely, the KICs are free to design the best-fitting approach in line with their strategy and priorities to deliver tangible deliverables in terms of widening participation in KICs and transferring good practice and KTI know-how.

The schematic below illustrates the intervention logic within which the KICs are expected to operate to create the desired impact:
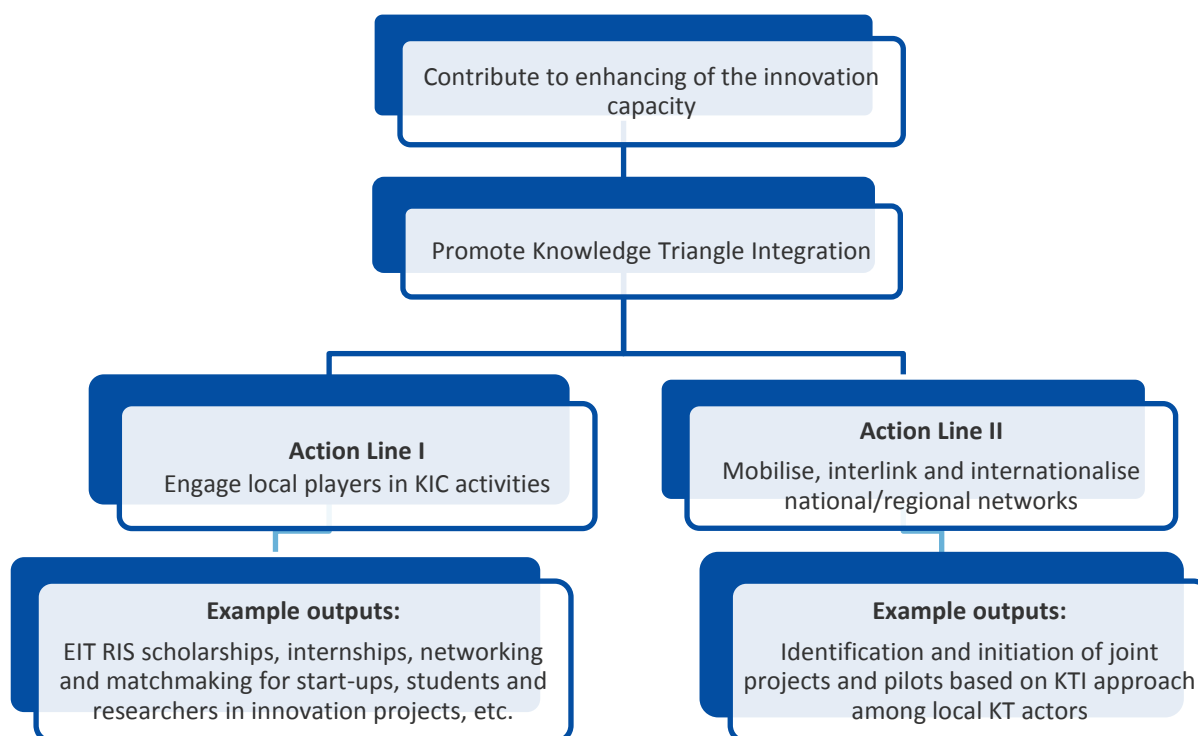
To promote KTI, the KICs are expected to work with local higher education institutions, research institutions and businesses, as well as to provide mentoring and help that will allow the actors at EIT RIS countries to effectively adapt KIC KTI practise to local reality. Acknowledging the diversity of the existing framework conditions, different types of education, business communities, research institutions and local innovation eco-systems, there is no single model to be applied as institutional characteristics vary across countries and fields.

The promotion of the KTI model should take place via two main Action Lines: (I) engaging local players in KIC activities; (II) mobilising, interlinking and internationalising the national/regional networks. The KICs have to implement activities of both actions lines in each EIT RIS target country, and should do so in cooperation with the EIT Hubs (please consult chapter 5).

The main outcomes and deliverables of the EIT RIS activities therefore should be: an increased number of ventures from the EIT RIS countries supported by KICs; an increased number of students from the EIT RIS countries, new collaborations (projects, initiatives, programmes) between knowledge triangle actors, e.g. internship programmes, innovation projects, educational programmes designed by higher education institutions and industry, acceleration programmes financed by other sources of funding than the EIT funding replicating the elements of the KIC KTI approach. Finally, the EIT RIS will help raise the capacity of local actors to apply to become full KIC partners and thus potentially lead to an increased number of new partners from EIT RIS countries joining the KICs. The above list is not exhaustive since more deliverables can be produced depending on individual KIC EIT RIS activities.

I. Engaging local players in ongoing KIC activities

The KICs are expected to engage local players—individuals (notably students, researchers) and entities (e.g. start-ups, scale-ups, universities, research labs, NGOs, regions and cities)—in KIC activities within the three main areas by practically demonstrating the benefits of KTI. Below is a list of example activities:

Education: among other things, KICs may set up EIT RIS scholarship programmes for their educational programmes, carry out targeted information campaigns and networking events to promote opportunities provided by KICs, trigger and facilitate industry involvement in educational programmes/ projects domestically and internationally, develop internship programmes for graduates in EIT RIS countries in accordance with the KTI model (e.g. in business).

Entrepreneurship: among other things, KICs may set up dedicated programmes on how to increase participation of the start-ups and scale-ups in KIC business acceleration programmes, support start-up creation, provide networking and matchmaking opportunities, develop

internship programmes for SMEs from EIT RIS eligible countries, establish partnerships with local business and innovation hubs.

Innovation and Research: among other things, KICs may involve local start-ups in technology and know-how transfer, engage students benefiting from the EIT RIS (e.g. by specific scholarships) in innovation projects and run pilots and tests of the outcomes of KIC innovation projects, and involve researchers from the EIT RIS countries in KIC innovation projects.

In line with the SIA, KICs and EIT RIS participants should seek opportunities to mobilise other sources of funding, including national and regional funding, EU funds (e.g. ESIF, H2020) and EIT RIS participants' own resources, to enable and broaden participation of EIT RIS countries' organisations/entities and individuals in KIC activities.
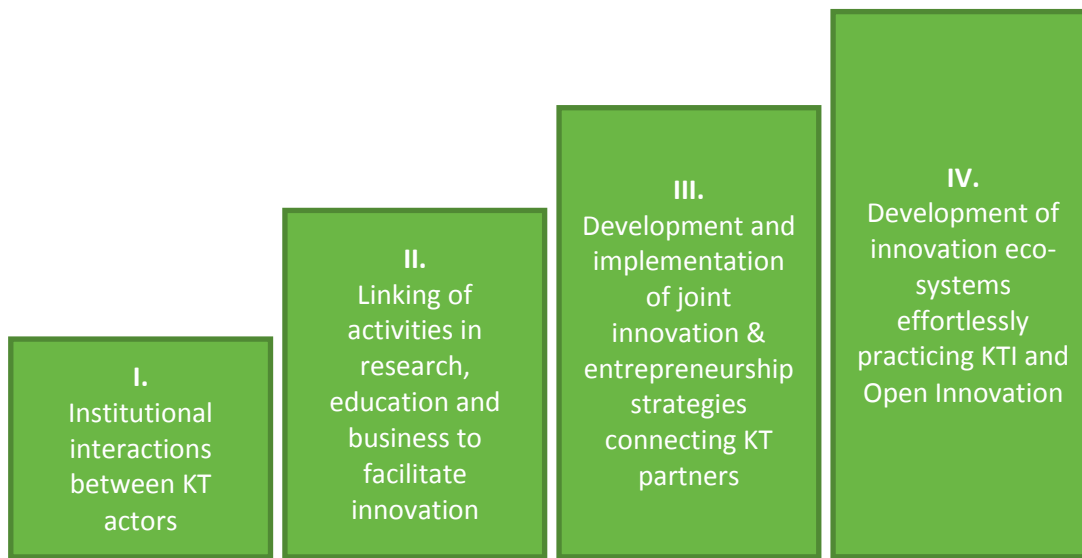
All activities under Action Line I should receive broad publicity at local level by, among other things, raising awareness of the EIT Community brand and its KTI model. The EIT RIS should therefore become available to entities that are not KIC partners.

Transparency

Local players should be selected in a transparent manner via publicly available and broadly communicated announcements (open calls). Furthermore, the selection criteria should be clearly spelled out in the call, and an adequate candidate assessment should take place at KIC level. All participants should be informed about the calls outcomes and the reasons of rejection, if applicable.

II.   Mobilising, interlinking and internationalising national/regional networks

In addition to directly involving local players in KIC activities, KICs should work with Knowledge Triangle stakeholders at national level to raise awareness and share best practise from the KTI model. Below is a scheme illustrating the four stages of KTI from initiating interaction among actors from the three sides of the knowledge triangle to development of fully-fledged innovation eco-systems that use KTI as their innovation delivery mechanism:

			IV.
		III.	Development of innovation eco-systems effortlessly practicing KTI and Open Innovation
	II.	Development and implementation of joint innovation & entrepreneurship strategies connecting KT partners	
I.	Linking of activities in research, education and business to facilitate innovation		
Institutional interactions between KT actors			

The KICs should operate with a view to contributing to achievement of fully fledged KTI-based innovation eco-systems (stage IV); however, their actions should not be limited to the initiation of the necessary interactions (stage I). The KTI model should be promoted via the EIT Hubs and by promoting synergies with the Smart Specialisation Strategies and their implementation mechanisms. The EIT Hubs will act as a platform for interaction and brokerage, as well as a channel for the sharing of knowledge and good practises related to KTI acquired by the KICs. Furthermore, the individuals, start-ups and other organisations taking part in KIC activities under EIT RIS Action Line I should share their experience with the local eco-systems via the EIT Hubs. The concept of the EIT Hubs and their responsibilities are detailed in section 5, which also serves as a reference to the scope of actions to be taken by KICs in promoting KTI.

Among other things, the KICs - in cooperation with the EIT Hubs - should carry out stakeholder events (e.g. thematic conferences and working meetings), identify and initiate joint projects and pilots where all the three sides of the local knowledge triangle are on board, draft policy papers, position papers and related publications. Furthermore, the KICs should help broker collaboration agreements among actors representing the three sides of the knowledge triangle, and deploy expertise on KTI at the EIT Hubs to provide mentoring services to local actors. The initiated joint projects and pilots (example outputs of the Action Line II) should primarily be financed by other funding sources.

In Action Lines I and II, emphasis should be placed on ensuring sustainable and durable activities that act as role models for the EIT RIS countries and regions, attract the interest of regional and national authorities and mobilise possible additional funding that would allow for a continuation of operations in a sustainable manner for as long as necessary after the implementation EIT RIS activities.

KIC EIT RIS Strategy

KICs should develop their **KIC EIT RIS Strategy for 2018-2020** and submit it together with the Business Plan 2018 by 15 September 2017. The Strategy should define the level of ambition, three-year goals and main directions of action. As an underlying basis for a KIC EIT RIS strategy, KICs should set out a roadmap where countries of interest are identified with accompanying justification. To demonstrate the level of ambition, the Strategy should contain an indicative list of deliverables for 2020 and main annual milestones and expected outcomes.

Indicators

EIT RIS activities have to contribute to the achievement of the EIT core KPIs and KIC specific KPIs. This includes setting specific EIT RIS KPIs by the KICs, reflecting the main deliverables and intensity of engagement of EIT RIS actors.

Overall, **EIT RIS success** will be measured in terms of an increased number of ventures from the EIT RIS countries supported by KICs; an increased number of students from the EIT RIS countries, new collaborations (projects, initiatives, programmes) between knowledge triangle actors, e.g. internship programmes, innovation projects, educational programmes designed by HEI and the industry, acceleration programmes financed by other than the EIT funding replicating the elements of the KIC KTI approach. Finally, the EIT RIS may potentially lead to an increased number of entities from the EIT RIS countries joining the KICs as partners in accordance with the KICs individual EIT RIS Strategies. The list is not exhaustive since more deliverables can be produced depending on the individual KIC EIT RIS activities.

The KIC EIT RIS strategies will have to detail the expected deliverables and set the baselines and indicators for measuring the success for both Action Lines.

5. EIT Hubs

Within the framework of Action Line II, KICs have to establish a formalised collaboration with a local entity capable of functioning as an EIT Hub, an 'interaction point' between KICs and local actors. As KTI should be at heart of EIT RIS activities, these EIT Hubs will serve as an entry point for interacting with local players, mobilising and internationalising the local networks and facilitating KIC efforts in fostering KTI. Such EIT Hubs can be theme based (i.e. per KIC), or can be of a broader nature and encompass several linked themes, such as climate change, energy, circular economy, etc. (i.e. cross-KIC).

Role

The KICs, through the EIT Hubs should ensure the active involvement of local knowledge triangle actors, as well as liaise with and provide expertise to the relevant national, regional and local authorities. The EIT Hubs will also help identify KTI funding and project opportunities and provide advice to KTI project/ initiative / programme development and implementation. Structured dialogue with the national, regional and local authorities could contribute to a better understanding of KTI value and the incorporation of its components to their policy making. This could remove unnecessary barriers, but also enhance the effectiveness of the local innovation eco-system and mobilise possible additional sources of funding. The enhanced visibility of the EIT Community and awareness raising among national policy makers will be another positive effect of KIC EIT RIS activities via the EIT Hubs.

Furthermore, the KICs in cooperation with the EIT Hubs, should also liaise with other existing information channels, offices (both regionally and in Brussels), platforms and key experts (e.g. H2020 NCPs and NCP_WIDE.NET, managing authorities, regional ministries and agencies, S3 Platform, COST, EEN local contact points, EURADA, ERRIN Network, etc.) to ensure efficient exchange of information (e.g. on their own activities or available regional/national/EU funding) and best practise, explore synergies and further promote the visibility of the EIT Community.

Eligible Entities and Selection Procedure

The EIT Hubs can be a natural continuation of the EIT RIS Partnerships established before the adoption of this Guidance Note. Namely, if a KIC considers it feasible to continue its collaboration with an entity from an EIT RIS country established prior to adaptation of this Guidance Note, and this entity has the capacity and interest to serve as an EIT Hub, this collaboration can be continued in accordance with this Guidance Note. Nevertheless, this entity should fulfil the minimum criteria listed below.

It is recommended that KIC partners from the EIT RIS eligible countries act as EIT Hubs. This will allow them to directly share and disseminate KIC knowledge and know-how to local knowledge triangle actors. If this is not the case, a local entity could act as the EIT Hub, provided that it is selected via an open and transparent process (open calls) against the following minimum criteria:

- **Thematic alignment:** The applicant entity should demonstrate a thematic alignment with EIT themes and KIC-specific focus areas; and in case it does not, it should be able to demonstrate a credible plan how it will extend its operations so as to cover the respective thematic area.
- **Capacity**: Every entity acting as an EIT Hub should demonstrate its capacity to work with local knowledge triangle actors (education, research, business) and national/regional authorities, both in terms of resources as well as in terms of network. With the view to ensuring the successful management and delivery of activities in the relevant EIT RIS country, the future EIT Hub should demonstrate (i) an appropriate level of commitment of the required resources, and (ii) its capacity to leverage its existing network of knowledge triangle actors, including ways to develop the network for the purposes of its work as an EIT Hub.
- **Commitment:** To ensure the commitment of the potential EIT Hub to the EIT RIS implementation, the candidate entity should describe its vision as to how it would facilitate the KIC's work in alignment with the KIC's EIT RIS Strategy (including stakeholder engagement).
- **Relations with national/regional authorities**: Access to policy makers will strengthen synergies and complementarities at all governance levels. In this respect, the entity

should be able to demonstrate whether it has existing relations and enjoys the support of policy makers in national or regional authorities. If this is not the case, a realistic and relevant plan to establish contact with national or regional policy makers, within the framework of EIT RIS activities, should be described.

The KICs may introduce additional criteria, customised according to their EIT RIS strategic objectives. In any case the open calls for an EIT Hub should include clear, comprehensive and transparent selection criteria and process, clearly spelled out terms for collaboration, obligations and benefits, as well adequate information regarding the EIT, the KIC, as well as the objectives of the EIT RIS and objectives of a KIC EIT RIS strategy. The open calls should be widely advertised. All participants should be informed about the calls outcomes and the reasons of rejection, if applicable.

An entity that will be selected to operate as an EIT Hub should provide an infrastructure and administrative resources from its own funds (e.g. offices, personnel), while it will only be eligible to receive EIT RIS funding for operational activities directly related to promoting the KTI model and not administrative costs.

If a Co-location Centre is established (physically located) in an EIT RIS eligible country, it should perform the functions of the EIT Hub.

Branding

To ensure adequate visibility of EIT Hubs as integral members of the EIT Community at the local and national level, a simple and consistent naming convention that clearly shows the connection of the selected entity with the EIT and the KIC should be used. Therefore, the selected entity should be visually identifiable by using the name EIT Hub together with the KIC name, e.g. EIT Climate-KIC Hub, EIT Digital Hub, etc.

6. Synergies with Smart Specialisation Strategies

The EIT RIS has been conceptualized in a way that allows for synergies[6] and efficiency gains for regions and countries that, through their identified Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3), are looking for better integration of the knowledge triangle, as a driver to enhance their innovation capacity. Furthermore, regions have identified their S3 priorities (strengths) based on the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process,[7] and this process has allowed them to understand and learn about their regional capacities and potential, opportunities, weaknesses, as well as local actors, their activities and markets. The KICs, through their CLCs or the EIT Hubs, as active innovation facilitators for the local actors have a key-role in regional as well as interregional economies, by stimulating the flows of ideas and supporting projects and investment within and across borders. Within this framework, matching the specific focus areas of KICs against S3 priorities can potentially act as a driver for a more targeted group of countries, where each KIC will be able to add value through its EIT RIS activities.

As part of Action Line II, broader EIT RIS impact at national/ regional level can be achieved by interacting with the S3 responsible national/regional authorities, managing authorities, regional institutions and implementing actors. The KICs, in cooperation with EIT Hubs or through CLCs, are encouraged to provide their expertise in their specific fields and KTI approach, both during the design as well as the implementation and monitoring processes of the S3. In addition, KICs are recommended to interact with local actors to assist with S3 implementation mechanisms (such as cooperating with ESIF[8] funded project implementers in designing and implementing these projects with a view to integrating KIC best KTI practise and approaches). Furthermore, the KICs could explore the potential to provide mentoring services to S3 managing authorities and regional institutions regarding the KTI model. In particular, these mentoring services could provide guidance regarding the ways that links between strong local knowledge triangle actors could be strengthened so that they would become functional and effective for the local innovation eco-system. This will allow the national/ regional authorities to design, if they so decide, national or

---

[6]*"Enabling Synergies between European Structural and Investment Funds, H2020 and other research, innovation and competitiveness-related Union programmes"*, DG REGIO, 2014

[7]http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/entrepreneurial-discovery-edp

[8]European Structural Investment Funds

regional programmes (possibly eligible to be funded by ESIF) that will explore their national/regional KTI potential.

Consequently, the KICs are encouraged to interact with the respective players by:

➢ Providing access to the existing KIC pools of expertise in the relevant areas of interest for the Managing Authorities and Regional Institutions;

➢ Providing access for companies from EIT RIS countries to Global Value Chains through the KIC partners and available equipment / infrastructure;

➢ Seeking association to the topic-wise relevant thematic smart specialization platforms and the partnerships thereunder;

➢ Facilitating the spill-over effects through the CLCs/ EIT Hubs at national, regional and interregional levels.

➢ Providing mentoring services regarding the strengthening of links between local Knowledge Triangle actors based on the so-far experience and expertise from the implementation of the KTI model in CLCs and EIT RIS regions as well.

The EIT will effectively facilitate the process through its contact with the European Commission at institutional level (e.g. through the EIT-JRC MoU, DG REGIO, DG RTD, DG GROW), as well as through the use of existing tools (e.g. the S3Platform, including the Eye@RIS3 database of smart specialisation priorities and thematic platforms, S3 related cluster initiatives, H2020 projects and INTERREG projects etc.), and in coordination with the KICs. This will ensure a more coordinated approach of the EIT Community that could lead to strengthened relationships with national, regional and local innovation actors.[9]

7.   Communication and dissemination

To ensure wide participation in the EIT RIS, it is essential to increase the visibility of the EIT RIS and raise awareness and interest among relevant stakeholders. In particular, the EIT Community should increase the visibility of the EIT RIS among higher education institutions, research

---

[9]According to Recommendations in the Report by Commissioner Navracsics' High Level Group on the EIT

institutions and enterprises in regions not yet working directly with the EIT Community, as well as to other relevant stakeholders such as local, national and regional authorities.

Timely and targeted communication of EIT RIS activities, calls and events, as well as broad dissemination of results and good practice is important for potential EIT RIS participants, who should have access to all relevant information in a structured and coherent manner. KICs should ensure that information on the implementation of the EIT RIS is widely disseminated and easily accessible on each KIC website.

Taking the importance of the EIT RIS into account, the EIT will actively support KICs and amplify visibility and dissemination efforts to ensure consistent promotion of the EIT RIS among all stakeholders, notably via a dedicated EIT RIS gateway on the EIT website and via the annual EIT Stakeholder Forum and its Member State configuration.

To achieve the visibility and dissemination objectives set out above, the following action points should be implemented by all members of the EIT Community:

✓ A dedicated section for the EIT RIS on the KICs' websites, providing comprehensive information on the EIT RIS in general (e.g. objectives, eligible countries) as well as specific KIC EIT RIS activities, calls, events and contact points.

✓ Calls related to EIT RIS activities should be sent to the EIT contact point prior to launch, to be published on the EIT website and relevant social media, as well as to timely inform the concerned stakeholders, including representatives from the EIT Member State Configuration.

✓ Development of information material such as brochures (per KIC or jointly) and broad dissemination in relevant events.

✓ The use of the EIT RIS logo when promoting EIT RIS related activities, in particular on the KICs' websites and EIT RIS publications (Annex 1) to clearly highlight that activities are conducted in the framework of the EIT RIS.

✓ Participate in joint awareness days in interested (EIT RIS eligible) Member States as part of cross-KIC EIT RIS activities, in cooperation with the EIT.

✓ Participate in workshops, conferences, events, etc. organised by other EU programmes and organisations, to raise awareness of the EIT RIS. Coordination with EIT Headquarters is essential.

✓ Regular identification and communication of results and achievements under the EIT RIS, including testimonials of beneficiaries.

8.   Cross-KIC EIT RIS activities

A dedicated cross-KIC EIT RIS KAVA[10] on the implementation of the EIT RIS is being implemented during 2017. The cross-KIC EIT RIS KAVA will contribute to the goals of this Guidance Note and must be fully compliant with its implementation framework. Additionally, the cross-KIC KAVA should function as a platform for KIC interaction and coordination of EIT RIS activities to ensure efficiency and avoid fragmentation of efforts among KIC activities. The cross-KIC KAVA should always be designed so as to facilitate the individual KIC EIT RIS activities and ensure greater and more coherent visibility of the EIT RIS and its achievements. Consequently, the cross-KIC activity should also serve as a KTI best practise, knowledge and tools repository.

The EIT may cooperate with the cross-KIC EIT RIS KAVA on communication and visibility matters; the cross-KIC EIT RIS KAVA will also serve as a single KIC contact point *vis-à-vis* the EIT in horizontal EIT RIS implementation matters. Furthermore, cross-KIC EIT RIS activity should facilitate the process of reaching out to EIT RIS stakeholders in a joint and coordinated manner, based on the common KTI approach, and thereby ensure the coherent representation of the EIT Community in EIT RIS eligible countries.

9.   Coordination with the EIT

While implementing the EIT RIS, the KICs have to maintain close contact with the EIT and keep the EIT informed of upcoming events and their achievements. Furthermore, the EIT will play an active role in facilitating KIC relations and synergies with the local public, regional or national authorities, other relevant EU programmes or any other initiatives. This will be implemented

---

[10] KAVA = KIC Added Value Activity

through the EIT's existing contacts or through an approach at institutional level and, of course, in line with the KICs' interests and approved EIT RIS strategy.

This Guidance Note is designed to allow for flexible, results-driven EIT RIS implementation. To make this possible, it is of the utmost importance that KICs liaise with the EIT and communicate their activities and achievements regularly. The appropriate coordination and communication among the EIT Community within the framework of the EIT RIS will contribute to a more effective implementation and consequently to better delivery of the desired effect.

10.   Funding

In 2017, a budget for EIT RIS implementation will be allocated to each KIC, amounting to 10% of the competitive EIT annual contribution to the KICs, in line with the EIT RIS Implementation Guidance Note issued in 2016. As of 2018, a new funding model will be introduced. It will be a separate fund allowing each KIC to apply for between EUR 1.5 - 4 million annually (excluding EIT RIS cross-KIC activities). The final amount allocated to each KIC will be based on the amount requested and following assessment of planned deliverables by the EIT as part of the Business Plan assessment process.

In 2018 no minimum amounts to be spent per Action Lines will be set. Based on the lessons learnt, this approach may be reconsidered for 2019 and 2020 in the Business Plan Guidance.

11.   Eligible countries

Consistent with the EIT RIS main objective of reducing the innovation and knowledge gap between the different groups of innovation performers in Europe, the following two categories will be considered as target areas:

I.   Countries which belong to the 'moderate and modest innovators' performance groups according to the 2016 EIS.[11]

---

[11]European Innovation Scoreboard (http://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation/facts-figures/scoreboards_en)

II.   Applicants from Horizon 2020 Associated Countries in Europe, provided that they do not belong to the performance groups of Innovation Leaders or Strong Innovators, according to the EIS.

Furthermore, in order to ensure that the EIT RIS will deliver the maximum impact in countries that use innovation as a mean to enhance their growth potential, the (economic) criterion of GDP per capita[12] will be used as a corrective measure, to the aforementioned two categories. After applying this criterion, countries with a GDP per capita above the EU28 average[13] will be excluded from the EIT RIS.

The table below includes the EIT RIS eligible countries across Europe:

EU Countries	H2020 Associated Countries in Europe
1) Bulgaria	18) Albania
2) Croatia	19) Armenia
3) Cyprus	20) Bosnia and Herzegovina
4) Czech Republic	21) Faroe Islands
5) Estonia	22) Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
6) Greece	23) Georgia
7) Hungary	24) Moldova
8) Italy	25) Montenegro
9) Latvia	26) Serbia
10) Lithuania	27) Turkey
11) Malta	28) Ukraine
12) Poland	
13) Portugal	
14) Slovakia	
15) Slovenia[14]	
16) Spain	
17) Romania	

---

[12]Gross domestic product (GDP) is a measure for the economic activity. It is defined as the value of all goods and services produced less the value of any goods or services used in their creation. The volume index of GDP per capita in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS) is expressed in relation to the European Union (EU28) average set to equal 100. If the index of a country is higher than 100, this country's level of GDP per head is higher than the EU average and vice versa.

[13]http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/graph.do?tab=graph&plugin=1&pcode=tec00114&language=en&toolbox=sort

[14] Although Slovenia is a strong innovator, given that this Guidance Note builds on the Guidance Note issued in 2016, and that the KICs are to continue with the established collaboration by stepping up efforts in line with this Guidance Note, Slovenia will remain as an EIT RIS eligible country until 2020. The EIT RIS and the criteria for selecting eligible countries will be revisited for the post 2020 period, in connection with the development of the EIT's SIA 2021-2027.

The KICs may also choose to operate only in parts of the EIT RIS countries, e.g. South Italy, where the KICs' presence is limited (as opposed to North Italy), and where the innovation capacity is significantly lower. Should this be the case, the KICs have to describe their approach in the KICs' individual EIT RIS strategies and demonstrate how EIT RIS activities in one part of the country will complement KIC efforts in another part of the country where the KICs' presence is more active. However, if there is a Co-location Centre established (physically located) in an EIT RIS eligible country, it should perform the functions of the EIT Hub.

12. Activity update

Every six months (June and December), the KICs will have to submit a brief activity update consisting of the following elements:

- ✓ Main activities, events and outcomes;
- ✓ Work with national and regional stakeholders and entities representing the knowledge triangle;
- ✓ Main planned events in the next six months;
- ✓ Success stories, including testimonials by beneficiaries and any relevant media coverage at regional or EU level.

Annex 1 – EIT RIS logo

The EIT RIS logo should be used by the KIC when promoting its EIT RIS activities. The logo will be used solely for EIT RIS activities and not for outreach activities. This is crucial for stakeholders to understand the different portfolio of activities and that EIT RIS activities do not form the sole outreach activities carried out by the KIC.

The logo should be clearly displayed in all websites and information material produced in the scope of EIT RIS activities and should be used alongside the KIC logo and EU flag, following the guidelines set out in the EIT Community Brand Book.

Annex 2 – KIC EIT RIS Strategy 2018-2020

The following outline should be followed by the KICs during the drafting of their EIT RIS Strategy 2018-2020:

I.   Lessons learnt from the implementation of the EIT RIS 2015-2017

Please highlight what went right and what improvements based on your experiences you will introduce in the future. What past activities and results / cooperation models you will be building on in 2018-2020.

II.   Country strategy and gap analysis

Please describe the following:

- Selected countries (regions) and justification for their selection (incl. complementarity withKIC strategy, geographical coverage, etc.);
- Country specific gaps to be addressed in 2018-2020, opportunities and risks (including risk mitigation measures);
- Links to the KIC Strategic Agenda and the country's and/or regions' Smart Specialisation Strategy;
- Cross-KIC cooperation and synergies with other instruments/ programmes.

III.   Objectives of the KIC EIT RIS activities 2018-2020

Please list overall objectives and specific objectives you want to reach by the end of 2020.

IV.   Approach and solutions to address the gaps

Please describe activities and solutions to be developed and used to address the gaps including key outcomes/ deliverables.

V.   Expected main outputs and results of the KIC EIT RIS activities 2018-2020

Please describe the main outputs and results in quantitative and qualitative terms, including EIT and KIC specific KPIs with baselines (where possible) and targets. In addition, please list target groups for each output.

VI.   Communication and dissemination plan

Increasing the EIT RIS visibility is of the utmost importance. Please describe how you will communicate and disseminate your EIT RIS activities and its results. In your description include the following elements:

- Main messages;
- Main target audiences;

- Main communication and dissemination channels and tools.

VII. Main milestones

Please set indicative six months milestones.

VIII. Financial forecast

Please forecast the EIT funding required for the period 2018-2020, other funding to be mobilised and potential revenues.