



European Institute of Innovation and Technology

Invitation to submit proposals  
for KIC Business Plans 2023-2025  
(2023-2024 in case of first wave KICs),  
for the Cross-KIC activities 2023-2025, and  
for the Higher Education Institutions (HEI)  
initiative 2023-2025

(Call HORIZON-EIT-2022-KIC)

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September 2022



HISTORY OF CHANGES			
Version	Publication Date	Change	Page
1.0	28.04.2022	Initial version	
1.1	30.06.2022	<p>Amended version</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification that each activity “in education, innovation, business creation and EIT RIS” included in the Business Plans should contribute to at least one core EIT KPI</li> <li>• Explanatory footnote on EIT core KPI coding</li> <li>• Contribution of the Cross-KIC activities in shared services to KICs’ efficiency added</li> <li>• Contribution to the Mutual Insurance Mechanism (change from 8% to 5%)</li> <li>• Explanation on the cascading and portfolio model</li> </ul>	<p>15-25</p> <p>31</p> <p>35</p> <p>60-61</p> <p>61</p>
1.2	22.09.2022	<p>Amended version No 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor change in Chapter 5. Admissibility and documents</li> <li>• Update of Chapter 9.1.3 regarding EIT Climate-KIC Business Plan 2023-2024</li> </ul>	<p>11</p> <p>18-19</p>

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# 1. Introduction

This is an invitation to submit proposals for EU action grants under the Horizon Europe (HE) Framework Programme for Research and Innovation<sup>1</sup>, European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT).

The EIT, as part of HE, is governed by a new regulatory framework (i.e. EIT Regulation (recast)<sup>2</sup>, EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027<sup>3</sup>) and a new contractual framework (EIT Partnership Agreement (PA) and HE Model Grant Agreement (GA)) in the 2021-2027 period.

The main conditions for the multiannual grants for the 2023-2025 period are defined in this invitation as well as in the respective guidelines and templates.

**The sixteen topics of the invitation belong to three types of EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KIC) actions:**

- **KIC Business Plans 2023-2025 (KIC Business Plans 2023-2024 in case of first wave KICs)**
- **Cross-KIC strategic activities and shared services 2023-2025, Cross-KIC Thematic Innovations 2023-2025**
- **HEI initiative 2023-2025**

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 48/2021 of the EIT Governing Board on the adoption of the Final Single Programming Document (2022-2024), Annex XI on Grants, which will be the multiannual financing decision to award the grants for 2023-2025<sup>4</sup>;
- Decision 01/2022 of the EIT Governing Board on the adoption of the Draft Single Programming Document (2023-2025), Annex XI on Grants<sup>5</sup>,
- Decision 11/2022 of the EIT Governing Board on the principles for the determination of the EIT financial allocation to Knowledge and Innovation Communities' (KICs') Business Plans for 2023-2025

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<sup>1</sup> 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.)

<sup>2</sup> 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)

<sup>3</sup> 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)

<sup>4</sup> Ares(2021)7938768

<sup>5</sup> Ares(2022)751686

(2023-2024 for first wave KICs), to Cross-KIC activities and shared services for 2023-2025, and to the HEI initiative 2023<sup>6</sup>,

- Decisions of the EIT Governing Board on the adoption of the
  - EIT Budget and Establishment Plan for the financial year 2023<sup>7</sup>;
  - EIT Budget and Establishment Plan for the financial year 2024<sup>8</sup>;
  - EIT Budget and Establishment Plan for the financial year 2025<sup>9</sup>.

The KICs **only** 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 annotated proposal templates. More details on the actions and the topics, the timeline, the eligible entities, eligible activities, evaluation criteria and the allocation process can be found below.

Therefore, we invite you 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 provide clarifications and answers to questions you may have when preparing your proposal:

- the invitation outlines:
  - the topics of the invitation
  - available budget and timetable
  - admissibility and documents
  - criteria for exclusion
  - evaluation and award procedure
  - award criteria
  - legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements
  - how to submit an application
- the Online Manual outlines the:

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<sup>6</sup> Ares(2022)2218730

<sup>7</sup> To be adopted in Q4 of 2022.

<sup>8</sup> To be adopted in Q4 of 2023.

<sup>9</sup> To be adopted in Q4 of 2024.

- procedures to register and submit proposals online via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal (Portal)
- recommendations for the preparation of the application.
- The Guidelines and Templates contain:
  - Horizon Europe reference documents, online manual, IT how to, Glossary
  - EIT annotated proposals templates for Business Plan, Cross-KIC (Strategic/ Shared Services and Thematic Innovations) and HEI
  - Horizon Europe model template for Monitoring and Reporting.
- the AGA — Annotated Model Grant Agreement contains:
  - detailed annotations on all the provisions in the Grant Agreement you will have to sign in order to obtain the grant (*including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc*).

## 2. Topics of the invitation

Each proposal under the invitation must address one of the following topics covered in this invitation:

Type of EIT KIC Actions	Topics	Comments
<p>1) KIC Business Plans 2023-2025 (in case of first wave KICs: 2023-2024)</p> <p>Type of action (ToA): EIT KIC Action</p>	<p>Eight topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>EIT Digital Business Plan 2023-2024</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-24-KIC-EITDIGITAL)</li> <li>- <b>EIT InnoEnergy Business Plan 2023-2024</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-24-KIC-EITINNOENERGY)</li> <li>- <b>EIT Climate-KIC Business Plan 2023-2024</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-24-KIC-EITCLIMATEKIC)</li> <li>- <b>EIT Health Business Plan 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITHEALTH)</li> <li>- <b>EIT RawMaterials Business Plan 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITRAWMATERIALS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The KICs will continue to <b>implement the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS) individually and included in the Business Plans.</b></li> <li>- A specific Business Plan proposal template shall be used in eGrants.</li> <li>- One grant agreement per KIC will be signed (all together eight grant agreements).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>EIT Food Business Plan 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITFOOD)</li> <li>- <b>EIT Urban Mobility Business Plan 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITURBANMOBILITY)</li> <li>- <b>EIT Manufacturing Business Plan 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITMANUFACTURING)</li> </ul>	
<p>2) <b>Cross-KIC activities</b></p> <p>A) <b>Cross-KIC Strategic Activities and shared services 2023-2025</b></p> <p>B) <b>Cross-KIC Thematic Innovation activities 2023-2025</b></p> <p>Type of action (ToA): EIT KIC Action</p>	<p>Seven topics: one <u>shared services</u> topic, five <u>strategic Cross-KIC activities</u> topics and one <u>Thematic Innovations</u> topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Shared Services 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-SharedServices)</li> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Strategic Outreach 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-StrategicOutreach)</li> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-RegionallInnovations)</li> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Strategic Synergies 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-StrategicSynergies)</li> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Strategic Education 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-StrategicEducation)</li> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Strategic Access to Finance 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-StrategicFinance)</li> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Thematic Innovations 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-ThematicInnovations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Specific Cross-KIC proposal templates shall be used in eGrants.</li> <li>- One proposal for each <b>Cross-KIC strategic</b> topic should be submitted, which will lead to one grant agreement for each Cross-KIC strategic topic (all together six grant agreements for Cross-KIC strategic themes).</li> <li>- For the <b>thematic innovations Cross-KIC activities</b> the KICs are expected to submit several proposals. Following their evaluation, they will be ranked and the EIT will sign one or more separate grant agreement(s) for the best ranked thematic innovations Cross-KIC activity(ies).</li> <li>- <b>First wave KICs</b> (i.e. EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Digital and EIT InnoEnergy) can participate in the Cross-KIC activities and shared services until 31 December 2024, when their Partnership Agreement expires. After that, a first wave KIC can participate in Cross-KIC activities and shared services under the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. it has received a positive final review,</li> <li>b. signature of the Memorandum of Cooperation with the EIT.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>In case the conditions are not met, the first wave KIC's participation in the GAs <b>will have to be terminated</b> by 31 December 2024 by way of amendment. <b>In case a first wave KIC is proposed as the coordinator/work package leader of Cross-KIC activities and shared services, the proposal should include a planning for another KIC willing to take on the coordinator/work package leader role in the grant agreement for the scenario if the termination of the first wave KIC is necessary.</b></p>
3) <b>Higher Education Institutions (HEI)</b>	<p>One topic: <b>HEI initiative 2023-2025</b> (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-HEI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A specific HEI proposal template shall be used in eGrants.</li> <li>- The three-year long pilot HEI action is funded under two grant agreements:</li> </ul>

<p><b>initiative 2023-2025</b></p> <p>Type of action (ToA): EIT KIC Action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the eight 2021-22 Grant Agreements for the years 2021-22, and</li> <li>b. under a single Grant Agreement for the years 2023-2025, therefore for this period one grant agreement will be signed.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>First wave KICs</b> can participate in the HEI initiative until 31 December 2024, when their Partnership Agreement expires. After that, a first wave KIC can participate in the HEI initiative upon the following conditions:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. it has received a positive final review,</li> <li>b. signature of the Memorandum of Cooperation with the EIT.</li> </ul> <p>In case the conditions are not met, the first wave KIC's participation in the GAs <b>will have to be terminated</b> by 31 December 2024 by way of amendment. <b>In case a first wave KIC is proposed as the coordinator/work package leader of Cross-KIC activities and shared services, the proposal should include a planning for another KIC willing to take on the coordinator/work package leader role in the grant agreement for the scenario if the termination of the first wave KIC is necessary.</b></p> </li> <li>- The initial funding allocation will cover costs of implementation in 2023. <b>Any additional funding allocation decision for the HEI initiative beyond 2023 is conditional upon decision of the EIT Governing Board, depending on the outcome of the three years pilot phase in 2021-2023.</b></li> </ul>
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### 3. Available budget

#### Available budget 2023-2025

For the 2023-2025 period, the overall indicative EIT budget available for grants is MEUR 1,250 including the estimated contributions from EEA-EFTA countries, however without the contributions from other third countries already associated or which will be associated to Horizon Europe.

Out of this, the indicative EIT budget available for grants for the initial multiannual funding allocation decision is MEUR 905, including the estimated contributions from EEA-EFTA countries, however without the contributions from other third countries already associated or which will be associated to Horizon Europe. The rest will be awarded annually by way of **additional funding allocation decisions at the end of 2023 and 2024.**

As required by Chapter 5.1 of the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027:

- at least 10% and a maximum of 15% of the overall EIT budget (2021-2027) shall be dedicated to implementing EIT RIS activities, with a view to increasing the number of KIC partners from targeted countries and regions;
- a maximum of 7% of the EIT budget (2021-2027) shall be dedicated to Cross-KIC activities, including support to KICs for which the partnership agreement is expired or terminated;
- a maximum of 3% of the EIT budget (2021-2027) shall be dedicated to a pilot to help develop the entrepreneurial and innovation capacity of Higher Education institutions (HEI), this pilot initiative shall be of three years.

The budget for the initial funding allocation decision shall be distributed by means of three separate “funds”, as follows:

Type of ‘Fund’	Indicative budget (in MEUR)
EIT KIC Fund (i.e. KIC Business Plans incl. EIT RIS) 2023-2025 (2023-2024 in case of first wave KIC)	790
Cross-KIC Fund (i.e. Cross -KIC strategic activities, shared services and Thematic Innovation activities) 2023-2025	75
HEI Fund (i.e. HEI activities) 2023	40
<b>Total (without third country contributions)</b>	<b>905</b>

### Funding allocation process

As stipulated in the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027, the funding allocation criteria are **performance-based**. As indicated above, the EIT GB will take an **initial multiannual funding allocation decision** for the 2023-2025 period for the EIT KIC Fund (2023-2024 period in case of first wave KIC), for the 2023-2025 period for the Cross-KIC Fund, and for the 2023 period for the HEI Fund, based on the assessment of the criteria laid down in Decision 11/2022 of the EIT Governing Board and a prudent multiannual planning.

Then, when the final EIT budget is known for 2024 and 2025, the EIT Governing Board may take **additional funding allocation decisions** at the end of 2023 and 2024, taking into account the available EIT budget, the ongoing multiannual legal commitments between the EIT and the KICs, the performance of the KICs and the estimated financial needs. **Any additional funding allocation decision for the HEI Fund beyond 2023 is conditional upon decision of the EIT Governing Board, depending on the outcome of the three years pilot phase in 2021-2023.** It shall be ensured that there is no double funding of KIC activities by the additional funding allocation and award.

## 4. Timetable and deadlines

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

Key dates	Date and time or indicative period
<b>Deadline for submission of the</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2023-2025 Business Plan proposals (2023-2024 Business Plan proposals for first wave KICs)</li> <li>- 2023-2025 Cross-KIC proposals</li> <li>- 2023-2025 HEI proposal</li> </ul>	<b>28 September 2022 at 17.00.00 (Brussels local time)</b>
Evaluation period	October 2022 – December 2022
Hearings with the EIT GB	November 2022
Multiannual funding allocation decision by EIT GB and letters sent to the KICs, including strategic recommendations	Early December 2022
KICs to submit the final proposals	December 2022
Grant award decisions by EIT Director	January 2023
<b>Signature of the</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2023-2025 Grant Agreements for KIC Business Plans (2023-2024 Grant Agreements for first wave KICs)</li> <li>- 2023-2025 Grant Agreements for Cross-KIC activities and shared services</li> <li>- 2023-2025 Grant Agreement for the HEI action</li> </ul>	<b>January 2023</b>
First pre-financing payments	Within 30 days following the signature of the grant agreements

## 5. Admissibility and documents

Proposals must be submitted no later than the deadline for submission indicated in the table in Chapter 4.

The proposals must be submitted electronically using via the Portal, which can be accessed at:

**Funding & Tenders portal**

The submission shall comply with the respective Guidelines and the templates and standards available on the Portal. Unless otherwise indicated in this Invitation, failure to comply with this requirement may lead to the rejection of the proposal.

The proposals must be drafted in English.

## 6. Eligibility

### Entities eligible for funding

In accordance with the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2021-2022<sup>10</sup> and the Draft EIT Single Programming Document 2023-2025, in order to be eligible for funding, **the applicants must be established in one of the eligible countries**, i.e.:

- the Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU) including their outermost regions
- the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) linked to the Member States<sup>11</sup>
- eligible non-EU countries:
  - Countries associated to Horizon Europe<sup>12</sup>
  - Certain low- and middle-income countries<sup>13</sup>

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

For third parties receiving financial support, please see Chapter 16.5.

As laid down in the EIT's 2022 Work Programme, Article 195(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 KICs. As a result, this invitation is addressed to the KICs.

### Eligible activities

In line with Article 7(1) of the recast EIT Regulation, KICs will undertake in particular:

- (a) innovation activities and investments with Union added value, including facilitating the creation of innovative start-ups and the development of innovative businesses in complementarity with the EIC

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<sup>10</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/reference-documents>

<sup>11</sup> 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.

<sup>12</sup> 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](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide_horizon_en.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> See the Horizon Europe Programme Guide on the Funding and Tenders Portal for a complete list of these countries.

- and the InvestEU Programme, fully integrating the higher education and research dimensions to attain a critical mass and stimulating the dissemination and exploitation of results;
- (b) innovation-driven research, experimentation, prototyping and demonstration in areas of key economic, environmental and societal interest and drawing on the results stemming from Union and national research, with the potential to strengthen the Union's competitiveness at international level and find solutions for the major challenges faced by European society, including those relating to health and the digital market;
  - (c) education and training activities in particular at master's and doctoral level, as well as professional training courses, in areas with the potential to meet future European socio-economic and socio-ecological needs and which expand the Union's talent base, promote the development of innovation-related skills, the improvement of managerial and entrepreneurial skills and the mobility of researchers and students, and foster knowledge-sharing, mentoring and networking among the recipients of EIT education and training activities, including those that are EIT-labelled;
  - (d) actions as part of the pilot higher education initiative to better integrate HEIs in innovation value chains and ecosystems and bring them together with other key innovation players from the knowledge triangle and thereby improve their innovation and entrepreneurial capacity;
  - (e) outreach activities and the dissemination of best practices in the field of innovation with a focus on the development of cooperation between higher education, research and business, including the service and financial sectors, and, where relevant, public and third sector organisations;
  - (f) RIS activities, fully integrated in the KICs' multiannual strategy and linked to the relevant smart specialisation strategies, in order to strengthen innovation capacity and to develop sustainable innovation ecosystems with a view to decreasing the disparities and divide in innovation performance across the Union;
  - (g) to seek synergies and complementarities between KIC activities and existing Union, national and regional programmes, in particular the EIC, other European Partnerships and missions of Horizon Europe, as appropriate;
  - (h) to mobilise funds from public and private sources, in particular seeking to raise an increasing proportion of their budget from private sources and from income generated by their own activities;
  - (i) to provide, on request, information on research and innovation outputs and results, and related intellectual rights, developed pursuant to the activities of the KICs, and on the relevant inventors.

The proposals shall cover activities in line with the EIT Regulation, the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027, the EIT Single Programming Document 2022-2022 and 2023-2025, the [EIT Impact Framework](#) and the KIC Strategic Agenda (Annex 1 of the Partnership Agreement).

The activities described in the proposals shall be implemented through the grants awarded for the period.

Specific eligibility criteria (i.e. eligible entities and eligible activities) are laid down in this Invitation for the different topics.

## 7. Exclusion criteria

**Criteria:** Entities shall be excluded from participation in the Call and from award if they are in one of the situations referred to in Article 136(1) and 141 of the EU Financial Regulation<sup>14</sup>.

**Evidence:**

- Entities acceding to 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 year<sup>15</sup>.
- 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 136(1) of the EU Financial 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)<sup>16</sup>. The EIT Director may waive this obligation only in the cases indicated in Article 137(4) of the EU Financial Regulation.

## 8. Financial and operational capacity

### Operational capacity

As indicated above, this Invitation is addressed to the KICs only.

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 parallel.

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<sup>14</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 (1) (OJ-L 193/30.07.2018, p.1)

<sup>15</sup> Article 137(1) of the EU Financial Regulation

<sup>16</sup> Article 137(2) of the EU Financial Regulation

## Financial capacity

In accordance with Article 27 of the Horizon Europe Regulation, the financial capacity shall be verified only for the Coordinator and only if the requested funding is equal or greater than EUR 500 000.

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

If a KIC is participating in several grant agreements, it must have sufficient financial capacity to implement them 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**<sup>17</sup> or has been covered by a financial viability check for an EU project for the last closed financial year.

If, before the award decision, the Coordinator's financial viability is assessed as "weak" or "insufficient", the EIT may request specific measures to address this risk (e.g. the activities will be subject to additional monitoring and reporting based on an action plan; the financial capacity of the Coordinator may be structurally guaranteed by another legal entity/ies).

# 9. EIT KIC Business Plans 2023-2025/2023-2024

## 9.1 Topic description

### 9.1.1 EIT Digital Business Plan 2023-2024 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-24-KIC-EITDIGITAL)

- Expected outcome

The results of Business Plan 2023-2024 should contribute to the expected outcomes set out in the EIT Digital Strategic Agenda 2021-2027 over the medium term, and to the wider expected impacts and respective targets over the longer term.

- Objectives

- Relevant and appropriate EIT Digital Business Plan for 2023-2024 implementation of the KIC's multiannual strategy, demonstrating its **excellence** (including objectives and ambition; methodology; financial sustainability), its **impact** (including KIC's pathways towards impact; measures to maximise impact - dissemination, exploitation and communication) and its

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<sup>17</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/lfv/lfvSimulation.do>

**quality and efficiency of the implementation** (including work plan and resources at portfolio level; capacity of participants and KIC Partnership as a whole).

- to address EIT Digital's **target societal challenges** and **Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI)**, contributing to achieving the future high-level results and impacts included in the EIT Impact Framework.
- KIC objectives/priorities in the Business Plan, describing its objectives using SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) and why are they pertinent to the KIC Strategic Agenda.

- Scope

The KIC's Business Plan 2023-2024, describing the activities at portfolio level, shall be aligned to the EIT Digital Strategic Agenda in the framework of the EIT Strategic Agenda 2021-2027.

- Expected Impact

In response to this topic, EIT Digital should show how the KIC could contribute to the outcomes and impacts described in the KIC Strategic Agenda and the KPIs in the EIT Impact Framework following the specific EIT Digital's Impact Pathways, the likely scale and significance of this contribution, and the measures to maximise these impacts in the context of Horizon Europe. Each activity in education, innovation, business creation and EIT RIS included in the Business Plan should contribute to at least one core EIT KPI.<sup>18</sup>

- Estimated budget for the topic<sup>19</sup>: 32 MEUR

Keywords: Innovation management; Types of innovation; Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurship education; Entrepreneurial Skills; Education; Higher education; Digital Skills; ICT based learning; Digital Services and Platforms; Digital services; Digital Social Innovation.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); Business Plan 2023-2024; Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI); Financial Sustainability; EIT Regional Innovation Scheme; EIT Label

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<sup>18</sup> The core EIT KPIs are the KPIs used for funding allocation decisions. These are indicated in red in the EIT Impact Framework.

<sup>19</sup> The estimated budget for the topic is an average figure resulting from the available budget (see Chapter 3), therefore it can be significantly higher or lower depending on the Funding Allocation criteria outcome (see sub-chapter 9.4. Award Criteria).

### 9.1.2 EIT InnoEnergy Business Plan 2023-2024 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-24-KIC-EITINNOENERGY)

- Expected outcome

The results of Business Plan 2023-2024 should contribute to the expected outcomes set out in the EIT InnoEnergy Strategic Agenda 2021-2027 over the medium term, and to the wider expected impacts and respective targets over the longer term.

- Objectives

- Relevant and appropriate EIT InnoEnergy Business Plan for 2023-2024 implementation of the KIC's multiannual strategy, demonstrating its **excellence** (including objectives and ambition; methodology; financial sustainability), its **impact** (including KIC pathways towards impact; measures to maximise impact - dissemination, exploitation and communication) and its **quality and efficiency of the implementation** (including work plan and resources at portfolio level; capacity of participants and KIC Partnership as a whole).
- to address EIT InnoEnergy's target **societal challenges** and **KTI**, contributing to achieving the future high-level results and impacts included in the EIT Impact Framework.
- KIC objectives/priorities in the Business Plan, describing its objectives using SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) and why are they pertinent to the KIC Strategic Agenda.

- Scope

The KIC's Business Plan 2023-2024, describing the activities at portfolio level, shall be aligned to the EIT InnoEnergy Strategic Agenda in the framework of the EIT Strategic Agenda 2021-2027.

- Expected Impact

In response to this topic, EIT InnoEnergy should show how the KIC could contribute to the outcomes and impacts described in the KIC Strategic Agenda and the KPIs in the EIT Impact Framework following the specific EIT InnoEnergy's Impact Pathways, the likely scale and significance of this contribution, and the measures to maximise these impacts in the context of Horizon Europe. Each activity in education, innovation, business creation and EIT RIS included in the Business Plan should contribute to at least one core EIT KPI.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> The core EIT KPIs are the KPIs used for funding allocation decisions. These are indicated in red in the EIT Impact Framework.

- Estimated budget for the topic<sup>21</sup>: 32 MEUR

Key words: Innovation management; Types of innovation; Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurship education; Entrepreneurial Skills; Education; Higher education; Energy; Energy Efficiency; Energy education and training.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); Business Plan 2023-2024; Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI); Financial Sustainability; EIT Regional Innovation Scheme; EIT Label

### 9.1.3 EIT Climate-KIC Business Plan 2023-2024 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-24-KIC-EITCLIMATEKIC)

- Expected outcome

The results of Business Plan 2023-2024 should contribute to the expected outcomes set out in the EIT Climate-KIC Strategic Agenda 2021-2027 over the medium term, and to the wider expected impacts and respective targets over the longer term.

- Objectives

- Relevant and appropriate EIT Climate-KIC Business Plan for 2023-2024 implementation of the KIC's multiannual strategy, demonstrating its **excellence** (including objectives and ambition; methodology; financial sustainability), its **impact** (including KIC's pathways towards impact; measures to maximise impact - dissemination, exploitation and communication) and its **quality and efficiency of the implementation** (including work plan and resources at portfolio level; capacity of participants and KIC Partnership as a whole).
- to address EIT Climate-KIC's target **societal challenges** and **KTI**, contributing to achieving the future high-level results and impacts included in the EIT Impact Framework.
- KIC objectives/priorities in the Business Plan, describing its objectives using SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) and why are they pertinent to the KIC Strategic Agenda.

- Scope

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<sup>21</sup> The estimated budget for the topic is an average figure resulting from the available budget (see Chapter 3), therefore it can be significantly higher or lower depending on the Funding Allocation criteria outcome (see sub-chapter 9.4. Award Criteria).

Business Plan 2023-2024, describing the activities at portfolio level aligned to the EIT Climate-KIC Strategic Agenda in the framework of the EIT Strategic Agenda 2021-2027, and in line with the corrective measures called for by the EIT Governing Board<sup>22</sup> to re-design the portfolio of KIC activities.

- Expected Impact

In response to this topic, EIT Climate-KIC should show how the KIC could contribute to the outcomes and impacts described in the KIC Strategic Agenda and the KPIs in the EIT Impact Framework following the specific EIT Climate-KIC's Impact Pathways, the likely scale and significance of this contribution, and the measures to maximise these impacts in the context of Horizon Europe. Each activity in education, innovation, business creation and EIT RIS included in the Business Plan should contribute to at least one core EIT KPI.<sup>23</sup>

- Estimated budget for the topic<sup>24</sup>: 32 MEUR

Keywords: Innovation management; Types of innovation; Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurship education; Entrepreneurial Skills; Education; Higher education; Climate change adaptation; Climate change mitigation.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); Business Plan 2023-2024; Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI); Financial Sustainability; EIT Regional Innovation Scheme; EIT Label

#### 9.1.4 EIT Health Business Plan 2023-2025 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITHEALTH)

- Expected outcome

The results of Business Plan 2023-2025 should contribute to the expected outcomes set out in the EIT Health Strategic Agenda 2021-2027 over the medium term, and to the wider expected impacts and respective targets over the longer term.

- Objectives

- Relevant and appropriate EIT Health Business Plan for 2023-2025 implementation of the KIC's multiannual strategy, demonstrating its **excellence** (including objectives and ambition; methodology; financial sustainability), its **impact** (including KIC's pathways towards impact; measures to maximise impact - dissemination, exploitation and communication) and its

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<sup>22</sup> Ref: Decision 47/2021 of the EIT Governing Board

<sup>23</sup> The core EIT KPIs are the KPIs used for funding allocation decisions. These are indicated in red in the EIT Impact Framework.

<sup>24</sup> The estimated budget for the topic is an average figure resulting from the available budget (see Chapter 3), therefore it can be significantly higher or lower depending on the Funding Allocation criteria outcome (see sub-chapter 9.4. Award Criteria).

**quality and efficiency of the implementation** (including work plan and resources at portfolio level; capacity of participants and KIC Partnership as a whole).

- to address EIT Health's **target societal challenges** and **KTI**, contributing to achieving the future high-level results and impacts included in the EIT Impact Framework.
- KIC objectives/priorities in the Business Plan, describing its objectives using SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) and why are they pertinent to the KIC Strategic Agenda.

- Scope

Business Plan 2023-2025, describing the activities at portfolio level aligned to the EIT Health Strategic Agenda in the framework of the EIT Strategic Agenda 2021-2027.

- Expected Impact

In response to this topic, EIT Health should show how the KIC could contribute to the outcomes and impacts described in the KIC Strategic Agenda and the KPIs in the EIT Impact Framework following the specific EIT Health's Impact Pathways, the likely scale and significance of this contribution, and the measures to maximise these impacts in the context of Horizon Europe. Each activity in education, innovation, business creation and EIT RIS included in the Business Plan should contribute to at least one core EIT KPI.<sup>25</sup>

- Estimated budget for the topic<sup>26</sup>: 154 MEUR

**Keywords:** Innovation management; Types of innovation; Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurship education; Entrepreneurial Skills; Education; Higher education; Health; Public health; Healthcare system; Active ageing and working life duration; Health education; eHealth.

**Tags:** European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); Business Plan 2023-2025; Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI); Financial Sustainability; EIT Regional Innovation Scheme; EIT Label

### 9.1.5 EIT RawMaterials Business Plan 2023-2025 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITRAWMATERIALS)

- Expected outcome

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<sup>25</sup> The core EIT KPIs are the KPIs used for funding allocation decisions. These are indicated in red in the EIT Impact Framework.

<sup>26</sup> The estimated budget for the topic is an average figure resulting from the available budget (see Chapter 3), therefore it can be significantly higher or lower depending on the Funding Allocation criteria outcome (see sub-chapter 9.4. Award Criteria).

The results of Business Plan 2023-2025 should contribute to the expected outcomes set out in the EIT RawMaterials Strategic Agenda 2021-2027 over the medium term, and to the wider expected impacts and respective targets over the longer term.

- Objectives

- Relevant and appropriate EIT RawMaterials Business Plan for 2023-2025 implementation of the KIC's multiannual strategy, demonstrating its **excellence** (including objectives and ambition; methodology; financial sustainability), its **impact** (including KIC's pathways towards impact; measures to maximise impact - dissemination, exploitation and communication) and its **quality and efficiency of the implementation** (including work plan and resources at portfolio level; capacity of participants and KIC Partnership as a whole).
- to address EIT RawMaterials' target **societal challenges** and **KTI**, contributing to achieving the future high-level results and impacts included in the EIT Impact Framework.
- KIC objectives/priorities in the Business Plan, describing its objectives using SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) and why are they pertinent to the KIC Strategic Agenda.

- Scope

Business Plan 2023-2025, describing the activities at portfolio level aligned to the EIT RawMaterials Strategic Agenda in the framework of the EIT Strategic Agenda 2021-2027.

- Expected Impact

In response to this topic, EIT RawMaterials should show how the KIC could contribute to the outcomes and impacts described in the KIC Strategic Agenda and the KPIs in the EIT Impact Framework following the specific EIT RawMaterials' Impact Pathways, the likely scale and significance of this contribution, and the measures to maximise these impacts in the context of Horizon Europe. Each activity in education, innovation, business creation and EIT RIS included in the Business Plan should contribute to at least one core EIT KPI.<sup>27</sup>

- Estimated budget for the topic<sup>28</sup>: 154 MEUR

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<sup>27</sup> The core EIT KPIs are the KPIs used for funding allocation decisions. These are indicated in red in the EIT Impact Framework.

<sup>28</sup> The estimated budget for the topic is an average figure resulting from the available budget (see Chapter 3), therefore it can be significantly higher or lower depending on the Funding Allocation criteria outcome (see sub-chapter 9.4. Award Criteria).

Keywords: Innovation management; Types of innovation; Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurship education; Entrepreneurial Skills; Education; Higher education; Materials engineering; Materials & Processes; Environmental engineering; Chemical engineering.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); Business Plan 2023-2025; Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI); Financial Sustainability; EIT Regional Innovation Scheme; EIT Label

### 9.1.6 EIT Food Business Plan 2023-2025 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITFOOD)

- Expected outcome

The results of Business Plan 2023-2025 should contribute to the expected outcomes set out in the EIT Food Strategic Agenda 2021-2027 over the medium term, and to the wider expected impacts and respective targets over the longer term.

- Objectives

- Relevant and appropriate EIT Food Business Plan for 2023-2025 implementation of the KIC's multiannual strategy, demonstrating its **excellence** (including objectives and ambition; methodology; financial sustainability), its **impact** (including KIC's pathways towards impact; measures to maximise impact - dissemination, exploitation and communication) and its **quality and efficiency of the implementation** (including work plan and resources at portfolio level; capacity of participants and KIC Partnership as a whole).
- to address EIT Food's **target societal challenges** and **KTI**, contributing to achieving the future high-level results and impacts included in the EIT Impact Framework.
- KIC objectives/priorities in the Business Plan, describing its objectives using SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) and why are they pertinent to the KIC Strategic Agenda.

- Scope

Business Plan 2023-2025, describing the activities at portfolio level aligned to the EIT Food Strategic Agenda in the framework of the EIT Strategic Agenda 2021-2027.

- Expected Impact

In response to this topic, EIT Food should show how the KIC could contribute to the outcomes and impacts described in the KIC Strategic Agenda and the KPIs in the EIT Impact Framework following the specific EIT Food's Impact Pathways, the likely scale and significance of this contribution, and the measures to maximise these impacts in the context of Horizon Europe. Each

activity in education, innovation, business creation and EIT RIS included in the Business Plan should contribute to at least one core EIT KPI.<sup>29</sup>

- Estimated budget for the topic<sup>30</sup>: 150 MEUR

Keywords: Innovation management; Types of innovation; Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurship education; Entrepreneurial Skills; Education; Higher education; Food and drink processing; Food and drink; Food and nutrition; Food waste.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); Business Plan 2023-2025; Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI); Financial Sustainability; EIT Regional Innovation Scheme; EIT Label

#### 9.1.7 EIT Urban Mobility Business Plan 2023-2025 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITURBANMOBILITY)

- Expected outcome

The results of Business Plan 2023-2025 should contribute to the expected outcomes set out in the EIT Urban Mobility Strategic Agenda 2021-2027 over the medium term, and to the wider expected impacts and respective targets over the longer term.

- Objectives

- Relevant and appropriate EIT Urban Mobility Business Plan for 2023-2025 implementation of the KIC's multiannual strategy, demonstrating its **excellence** (including objectives and ambition; methodology; financial sustainability), its **impact** (including KIC's pathways towards impact; measures to maximise impact - dissemination, exploitation and communication) and its **quality and efficiency of the implementation** (including work plan and resources at portfolio level; capacity of participants and KIC Partnership as a whole).
- to address EIT Urban Mobility's target **societal challenges** and **KTI**, contributing to achieving the future high-level results and impacts included in the EIT Impact Framework.
- KIC objectives/priorities in the Business Plan, describing its objectives using SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) and why are they pertinent to the KIC Strategic Agenda.

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<sup>29</sup> The core EIT KPIs are the KPIs used for funding allocation decisions. These are indicated in red in the EIT Impact Framework.

<sup>30</sup> The estimated budget for the topic is an average figure resulting from the available budget (see Chapter 3), therefore it can be significantly higher or lower depending on the Funding Allocation criteria outcome (see sub-chapter 9.4. Award Criteria).

- Scope

Business Plan 2023-2025, describing the activities at portfolio level aligned to the EIT Urban Mobility Strategic Agenda in the framework of the EIT Strategic Agenda 2021-2027.

- Expected Impact

In response to this topic, EIT Urban Mobility should show how the KIC could contribute to the outcomes and impacts described in the KIC Strategic Agenda and the KPIs in the EIT Impact Framework following the specific EIT Urban Mobility's Impact Pathways, the likely scale and significance of this contribution, and the measures to maximise these impacts in the context of Horizon Europe. Each activity in education, innovation, business creation and EIT RIS included in the Business Plan should contribute to at least one core EIT KPI.<sup>31</sup>

- Estimated budget for the topic<sup>32</sup>: 118 MEUR

Keywords: Innovation management; Types of innovation; Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurship education; Entrepreneurial Skills; Education; Higher education; Urban planning; Urban transport.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); Business Plan 2023-2025; Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI); Financial Sustainability; EIT Regional Innovation Scheme; EIT Label

### 9.1.8 EIT Manufacturing Business Plan 2023-2025 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITMANUFACTURING)

- Expected outcome

The results of Business Plan 2023-2025 should contribute to the expected outcomes set out in the EIT Manufacturing Strategic Agenda 2021-2027 over the medium term, and to the wider expected impacts and respective targets over the longer term.

- Objectives

- Relevant and appropriate EIT Manufacturing Business Plan for 2023-2025 implementation of the KIC's multiannual strategy, demonstrating its **excellence** (including objectives and ambition; methodology; financial sustainability), its **impact** (including KIC's pathways towards impact; measures to maximise impact - dissemination, exploitation and

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<sup>31</sup> The core EIT KPIs are the KPIs used for funding allocation decisions. These are indicated in red in the EIT Impact Framework.

<sup>32</sup> The estimated budget for the topic is an average figure resulting from the available budget (see Chapter 3), therefore it can be significantly higher or lower depending on the Funding Allocation criteria outcome (see sub-chapter 9.4. Award Criteria).

communication) and its **quality and efficiency of the implementation** (including work plan and resources at portfolio level; capacity of participants and KIC Partnership as a whole).

- to address EIT Manufacturing's target **societal challenges** and **KTI**, contributing to achieving the future high-level results and impacts included in the EIT Impact Framework.
- KIC objectives/priorities in the Business Plan, describing its objectives using SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) and why are they pertinent to the KIC Strategic Agenda.

- Scope

The KIC's Business Plan 2023-2025, describing the activities at portfolio level, shall be aligned to the EIT Manufacturing Strategic Agenda in the framework of the EIT Strategic Agenda 2021-2027.

- Expected Impact

In response to this topic, EIT Manufacturing should show how the KIC could contribute to the outcomes and impacts described in the KIC Strategic Agenda and the KPIs in the EIT Impact Framework following the specific EIT Manufacturing's Impact Pathways, the likely scale and significance of this contribution, and the measures to maximise these impacts in the context of Horizon Europe. Each activity in education, innovation, business creation and EIT RIS included in the Business Plan should contribute to at least one core EIT KPI.<sup>33</sup>

- Estimated budget for the topic<sup>34</sup>: 118 MEUR

Keywords: Innovation management; Types of innovation; Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurship education; Entrepreneurial Skills; Education; Higher education; Manufacturing and processing; Manufacturing and Supply Chain.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); Business Plan 2023-2025; Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI); Financial Sustainability; EIT Regional Innovation Scheme; EIT Label

## 9.2 Eligible entities

Business Plan proposals shall be submitted by KIC LEs on behalf of the KIC partnership.

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<sup>33</sup> The core EIT KPIs are the KPIs used for funding allocation decisions. These are indicated in red in the EIT Impact Framework.

<sup>34</sup> The estimated budget for the topic is an average figure resulting from the available budget (see Chapter 3), therefore it can be significantly higher or lower depending on the Funding Allocation criteria outcome (see sub-chapter 9.4. Award Criteria).

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 accede to the Grant Agreement as co-beneficiaries or 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.

### 9.3 Eligible activities

In addition to the eligible activities described in Chapter 6, specific eligibility criteria, regarding the EIT RIS activities are laid down below.

#### EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS)

In line with the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2021-2027, **10-15% of the EIT grant shall be earmarked to the EIT RIS on a multiannual basis**. KICs should ensure that partners established in EIT RIS eligible countries and regions<sup>35</sup> increasingly participate in KIC portfolio of activities moving towards the objective to integrate EIT RIS participants into the portfolio. The EIT expects that by implementing the EIT RIS and by integrating additional EIT RIS organisations, the KICs will realise the ambitious EIT RIS related EIT Core KPIs at portfolio level as well as, ensure better geographical diversity of their activities.

As from 1 January 2022, the new [EIT RIS Implementation Framework 2022-2027](#) is applicable. Complementing this Implementation Framework, a set of minimum standards and guiding principles for EIT RIS Hubs, which would underpin the establishment and operation of all EIT RIS Hubs, aimed at ensuring their effectiveness in contributing towards achieving the EIT's objectives and KPIs and enhanced coordination and coherence of the EIT innovation ecosystem, is currently under development with a view to fully rolling these out by 2023. Once adopted, the EIT RIS Hubs minimum standards and guiding principles will be published on the EIT website and kept updated as appropriate.

The overarching objective of the EIT RIS is to contribute to the advancement of the innovation performance of targeted countries and their 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. More particularly, KIC activities supported through the EIT RIS shall aim to deliver on the following objectives:

- improve the innovation capacities of the local ecosystem, via capacity building activities and closer interactions between the local KT innovation actors (such as, clusters, networks, regional public authorities, HEIs, research organisations, Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutions, SMEs) and their activities;

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<sup>35</sup> Countries and regions eligible for EIT RIS activities are those countries identified as either “moderate” or “modest” innovator in at least one of the three European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS) annual reports issued in 2018, 2019 and 2020 for the period 2021-2024 and those identified as either “moderate” or “modest” innovator in at least one of the three EIS annual reports issued in 2021, 2022 and 2023 for the period 2025-2027, as well as Outermost Regions as defined in Article 349 TFEU.

- support the objective of attracting and facilitating the integration of potential new partners in the KICs and link local innovation ecosystems to pan-European innovation ecosystems, including through the establishment of CLCs and RIS Hubs, as part of a “place-based” innovation approach;
- used as a bridge towards relevant RIS3s (Research and Innovation Smart Specialisation Strategies);
- leverage additional private and public funding, with particular attention to European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF).

In this context, the KICs are strongly expected to engage with local players from EIT RIS countries and their regions<sup>36</sup>, most especially in those geographical areas where their engagement remains limited<sup>37</sup>, with the aim of attracting and facilitating their participation in their activities. Additionally, through the establishment of CLCs and RIS Hubs, the KICs should foster closer interactions between the actors of the knowledge triangle.

Building on pilot actions to be implemented in 2022, by the end of 2023, the EIT KICs are expected to have put in place a mechanism, in each EIT RIS eligible country and region aimed at ensuring significantly closer EIT RIS Hub collaboration. This mechanism will coordinate the EIT Community’s activities locally and engagement with local authorities. It should also serve as a centralised source of information on all services and opportunities provided by the entire EIT Community both locally and more widely, and act as a gate to all EIT KICs, irrespective of whether they have an EIT RIS Hub on the ground locally or otherwise. Under this mechanism, existing and future RIS Hubs and CLCs should also engage in dialogue with Managing Authorities from Member States to spur the implementation of RIS3 over the period 2021-2027, since the EIT KTI’s approach and the RIS3’s Entrepreneurial Discovery Process both focus on bringing together innovation stakeholders.

As much as possible, consolidation of EIT RIS Hubs into EIT Community Hubs should be pursued with a view to rationalise the number of existing and future EIT RIS Hubs across Europe. Financial incentives will be provided towards this end.

**Eligible activities under the EIT RIS:** The KICs have a certain degree of flexibility in designing their own EIT RIS activities, provided the activities contribute towards achieving the EIT’s overarching objectives as defined in Annexes I and Ia to the Regulation establishing Horizon Europe, as well as the specific objectives of the EIT for the period of 2021-2027 as outlined in the EIT SIA. Namely, the KICs are free to design the best-fitting approach in line with their multi-annual strategies and priorities to deliver the desired tangible deliverables and impact, especially in terms of widening participation in the KICs. In designing these

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<sup>36</sup> In line with the EIT RIS eligible criteria until 2024, 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, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine; *Outermost Regions*: Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion, Martinique, Mayotte and Saint-Martin (France), the Azores and Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain). This list of EIT RIS-eligible countries and territories will be updated from 2025.

<sup>37</sup> This, in particular, includes those countries and regions which do not host a CLC. Poland, Hungary, Czechia, Spain and Italy currently host, at least one, KIC CLC.

activities, the EIT KICs must demonstrate how these will contribute to the EIT / EIT RIS KPIs outlined in the EIT Impact Framework.

The KICs may choose to use their annual EIT RIS dedicated budget allocation to finance EIT RIS activities, as described in the EIT RIS Implementation Framework, co-funded up to 100%, in line with their strategy and priorities to deliver tangible deliverables including widening participation in the KICs from EIT RIS countries and regions. In this context, the EIT RIS should also be mainstreamed within the KICs' core activities (that is participation in innovation, business creation and education actions) and used to exempt EIT RIS participants from co-funding rates and membership fees, thereby facilitating and attracting a high-level of participation to the EIT Community and boosting its pan-European spread. The KICs need to pre-fix the co-funding rate already at the call stage.

However, the use of 100% co-funding should be clearly used in exceptional cases. Instead, to the greatest extent possible, while ensuring a balanced approach that does not create barriers to work with EIT RIS countries and regions, EIT RIS activities should aim at attracting co-funding and, over time, demonstrate the ability that activities achieve the objective of becoming financially sustainable. For this purpose financial projections and plans should be included in the Business Plan. Towards this goal, the EIT KICs should consider introducing a clear separation between EIT RIS activities that are to contribute to the financial sustainability of the EIT KICs, such as innovations and business creation activities, and activities that are related to the ecosystem development and capacity building, and thereby are not expected to contribute to the financial sustainability of the EIT KICs. It is recommended that the EIT activities that are to contribute to the financial sustainability of the EIT KICs should amount to at least 70% of the total.

It is pertinent to note that beyond the 15% maximum budget dedicated to the EIT RIS, entities and partners from EIT RIS countries and regions still be fully involved in all activities in line with the co-funding rates delineated in the EIT SIA. Yet, the up to 100% funded activities is limited to the EIT RIS allocations which will be capped at a maximum 15% of the overall EIT funding for existing and new KICs. The EIT GB will regularly monitor and evaluate the EIT RIS funding and may issue strategic guidance as appropriate.

**The ultimate EIT RIS target groups** who shall benefit from the EIT RIS activities are teams, individuals and organisations from EIT RIS countries and regions. As a general rule, EIT RIS must directly benefit teams, individuals and organisations from EIT RIS countries and regions and widen participation (e.g. attract new partners and other participants from the regions where the KIC has limited presence, for instance, where there is not yet an established CLC).

## 9.4 Award criteria

For the initial multiannual funding allocation 2023-2025 (in case of first wave KICs 2023-2024), the EIT KIC Fund shall be split as follows:

KIC wave	Indicative split
First wave (EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Digital, EIT InnoEnergy)	12%
Second and third waves (EIT Health, EIT RawMaterials, EIT Food)	58%

<b>Fourth wave (EIT Manufacturing, EIT Urban Mobility)</b>	30%
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For the additional funding allocation decisions the EIT Governing Board may decide on a different split.

The EIT Governing Board will decide on the funding for each KIC, which will be calculated on a set of criteria, taking into account the performance of KICs:

Criteria	Maximum score	Type	Evidence
1) Progress in implementing the multiannual strategy (financial sustainability, impact, good governance, openness)	40	Qualitative, progress in 2022 against multiannual goals	EIT GB Rapporteur visit; EIT GB Hearing
2) Level of financial sustainability achieved (2021)	10	Quantitative, past performance 2021	KIC report 2021
3) Impact achieved measured by EIT core KPIs (2021)	35	Quantitative, past performance 2021	KIC report 2021
4) Business Plan proposal (2023-2024 / 2023-2025)	15	Qualitative, future outlook 2023 and beyond	Business Plan 2023-2024 / 2023-2025

The score received by individual KICs will be converted to funding, based on the indicative budget per wave, in proportion of the KICs’ relative scores. Second and third wave KICs will be grouped for the purpose of the calculation.

The detailed sub-criteria, scoring methodology and evaluation evidence are explained in the following subchapters.

#### 9.4.1 Progress in implementing the multiannual strategy

The following will be considered when assessing the multiannual strategy criterion:

- Consistency with the strategic objectives of the European Union, in particular Horizon Europe and KIC’s contribution to achieving these goals;
- Progress in addressing the KIC’s key strategic challenges including strategic recommendations issued by the EIT Governing Board and effectiveness in integrating the knowledge triangle.

The key strategic challenges are KIC-specific and may encompass topics, such as KIC’s strategic objectives, impact and KPIs, partnership, governance, openness and transparency and/or financial sustainability (including diversification of revenue streams and asset positions). The final score will be determined by the EIT Governing Board members after the Hearings.

The following indicative scale will be used (maximum 40 points):

- 0-7: KIC fails to demonstrate sufficient strategic focus, insufficiently addressing the key recommendations.
- 8-14: Poor – KIC addresses the relevant aspects inadequately or there are serious inherent weaknesses
- 15-21: Fair – KIC broadly addresses the relevant aspects, but there are significant weaknesses
- 22-28: Good – KIC addresses the relevant aspects well, but a number of shortcomings are present
- 29-35: Very good – KIC addresses all relevant aspects very well, but small number of shortcomings are present
- 36-40: Excellent – KIC successfully addresses all relevant aspects. Any shortcomings are minor.

**Evidence:** The evaluation with scores will be based on:

- the information provided by EIT and KICs in the framework of the EIT GB Rapporteur visit as well as other supporting documents;
- the Hearings with the EIT Governing Board.

As for supporting documents, the EIT will provide to the EIT Governing Board will synthesise information from different available sources, among others based on the results of monitoring activities performed, identifying strength / weaknesses and critical challenges. They will focus on multi-annual aspects and trends. The KICs will be requested to address questions at the Hearings with the EIT Governing Board through a presentation and at the Q&A session.

#### 9.4.2 Level of financial sustainability achieved (2021)

The financial sustainability coefficient will be scored as follows, based on validated data for the year 2021:

Score	1 <sup>st</sup> wave KICs	2 <sup>nd</sup> wave KICs	3 <sup>rd</sup> wave KIC	4 <sup>th</sup> wave KICs
10	≥50%	≥40%	≥30%	≥20%
8	≥40% - <50%	≥32% - <40%	≥24% - <30%	≥16% - <20%
6	≥30% - <40%	≥24% - <32%	≥18% - <24%	≥12% - <16%
4	≥20% - <30%	≥16% - <24%	≥12% - <18%	≥8% - <12%
2	≥10% - <20%	≥8% - <16%	≥6% - <12%	≥4% - <8%
0	<10%	<8%	<6%	<4%

The financial sustainability coefficient captures the ability of the KIC Legal Entities and Co-location Centres to generate revenues from and attract financing to its KAVA activities, composed of EIT Funded Activities (EFA) and Non EIT Funded Activities (NEFA). The allowed categories of financing are listed in the KICs

Financial Sustainability principles adopted in March 2022 by the EIT GB<sup>38</sup>. The financial sustainability coefficient is calculated as the total amount of revenues and financing attracted excluding the financial contribution from the EIT divided by the EIT funding provided for EIT Funded Activities.

**Evidence:** The evaluation with scores will be based on the submitted KIC Reports 2021 and their assessment carried out by experts and validated by the EIT.

### 9.4.3 Impact achieved measured by EIT core KPIs (2021)

The final score will be calculated as the sum of the results for the following EIT core KPIs based on the validated values achieved in the year 2021:

Code <sup>39</sup>	Title	Score
EITHE02.4	Number of <b>innovations launched on the market</b> during the KAVA duration or within 3 years after completion with a sales revenue of <b>at least 10 000 EUR</b> documented	Max 5
EITHE04.4	Number of <b>start-ups created</b> as a result / based on the output(s) of KAVA(s), or start-ups created for the purpose of an innovation project to organise and support the development of an asset (but not later than three years after the completion of KAVA) having a financial transaction of <b>at least 10 000 EUR</b> for a service/product sold to customers	Max 5
EITHE05.1	Number of <b>start-ups created by students enrolled and graduates from EIT-labelled</b> MSc and PhD programmes	Max 5
EITHE06.1	<b>Investment attracted</b> in EUR by KIC-supported start-ups and scale-ups	Max 5
EITHE07.4	Number of <b>graduates from EIT-labelled</b> MSc and PhD programmes	Max 5

The results will be benchmarked against the annual targets for 2021 approved in the KIC Strategic Agenda. Any 10% underachievement will lead to one point deduction from the maximum for each of the EIT core KPIs set out in the above table. Overachievement will be awarded by one extra point per 10%, however maximised in two extra points, and the total score for the five KPIs cannot be higher than 25 points.

Furthermore, if for any of the above EIT core KPIs at least 15% of the achievement is attributable to RIS countries (i.e. innovation, start-up or student originating from RIS country), one extra point will be awarded per KPI. As such the RIS element accounts for a maximum of 5 points.

<sup>38</sup> <https://eit.europa.eu/library/gb-decision-062022-amendment-principles-financial-sustainability-knowledge-and-innovation>

<sup>39</sup> KPI codes used in the KIC SA and BP 2023-25 template differ for some KPIs. KPIs are therefore identified by their titles and definitions. e.g. the KPIs coded EITHE02.4, EITHE04.4 and EITHE07.4 in the BP23-25 template are referring to the KPIs coded as EITHE02.1, EITHE04.1 and EITHE07.1 in the SA.

In addition, diversity will be scored as follows, taking into account the less represented gender in top governance and management positions combined:

Score	Proportion of less represented gender
5	≥40%
2.5	≥25% - <40%
0	<25%

Top governance refers to the members of KIC boards (Supervisory Board or equivalent), whilst KIC management refers to the KIC CEO, COO, CFO / Director of Finance, Chief Strategy Officer, Pillar directors (Education, Innovation, Business Creation) and CLC Directors.

**Evidence:** The evaluation with scores for the EIT core KPIs will be based on the submitted KIC Reports 2021 and their assessment carried out by experts and validated by the EIT. As for diversity, the score will be given based on the state of play as of the Business Plan submission deadline, validated by the EIT.

#### 9.4.4 Business Plan proposal

Business Plans for 2023-2025 (2023-2024 in case of first wave KICs) will be assessed by the EIT with support of external experts, with respect to three sub-criteria:

- Excellence, including objectives and ambition; methodology; financial sustainability
- Impact including KIC's pathways towards impact; measures to maximise impact - dissemination, exploitation and communication.
- Quality and efficiency of the implementation including work plan and resources at portfolio level; capacity of participants and KIC Partnership as a whole.

Each of the three sub-criteria can score maximum 15 points. The following scale will be used:

- 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 evaluation with scores will be based on the evaluation of submitted Business Plans, supported by external experts.

## 10. EIT Cross-KIC activities

### A) Cross-KIC Strategic activities and shared services 2023-2025

Through joining forces, the KICs should design and implement **added-value Cross-KIC activities and shared services that shall explore the potential synergies and economies of scale, valorise the innovation potential across KICs, develop new innovation delivery mechanisms, promote the EIT Community and increase its visibility** as defined in the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027 and the EIT Single Programming Document 2023-2025. A genuine Cross-KIC activity should allow all participating KICs to be involved in the delivery of the actions with clear objectives, milestones and achievements as well as clear allocation of roles. Cross-KIC activities on a cluster level must contribute to the EIT core KPIs or indicate efficiency gains from the joint activities.

**Each cluster should be managed under a separate Work Package (WP)**, which should ensure a coordination, monitoring of the activities' implementation and reporting the progress to the EIT, managing the grant reporting process in a close collaboration with the EIT ('Management WP'). The Cross-KIC cluster leaders would be responsible for the planning of activities and operations (including information sharing) of the cluster in an open, transparent and impartial (not favouring any KICs) manner, also including decision making processes. The Management WP should ensure a proper document management strategy at a cluster level, ensuring that all participant KICs have access to updated information. The Management WP should coordinate as much as possible and ensure an adequate visibility, communications and dissemination of results of the Cross-KIC activity (including participation in the external events, ensuring adequate representation from all KICs involved in activities). The Management WP should ensure the operationalisation of the steering committee overseeing the activity implementation, which should meet at least every quarter and be open for EIT and KICs. The activity's coordinator (at least 0.75 FTE) should be located in Brussels or Budapest. The cost of the Management WP should not exceed more than 5% of the total costs of a cluster and should not be higher than EUR 200,000 a year. The management costs should be justified and evidence efficiency gains from the coordination efforts (for example through centralisation of some activities).

#### 10.1 Topic description

The following Cross-KIC activities are foreseen in 2023-2025:

##### 10.1.1 Cross-KIC Shared Services 2023-2025 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-SharedServices)

- The expected outcome should in principle be focused on (but not be limited to):

- **establishing the centralised CFS audits** scheme for all KICs (and other types of audits) to increase assurance and cover needs after the HE transition;
  - **developing IT tools supporting the EIT Community in the transition to the Horizon Europe operational and legal framework**, in particular common data and knowledge management, e.g. common data model, common templates, common reporting/publication (CORDA, Portal, EIT website), shared data management systems;
  - increasing the operational efficiency and effectiveness of KICs through **co-locating KIC activities**, particularly in Brussels (EIT House), Budapest (EIT RIS location) and co-locating KICs CLC activities Berlin, Espoo, Paris, Stockholm; other locations might be considered by providing the cost benefit analysis to the EIT and conditioning for the EIT's approval. The methodology used in selecting, estimating and justifying the EIT contribution to finance joint CLCs should be provided in the application. The assessment according to the proposed methodology for EIT support should also include existing consolidated CLCs. KICs' own offices (outside of shared location) shall be financed under main KIC topics as part of flat rate indirect costs;
  - developing **joint EIT Community communications activities**, in particular for the contribution of KICs to INNOVEIT, joint participation in high level events, industry fairs and exhibitions across Europe, joint organisation of communications campaigns on topics of common interest (education courses/programmes, regional innovation scheme actions, tech skill development, business creation and acceleration programmes, women entrepreneurship, etc.), joint access to communications management and monitoring tools (e.g. media monitoring), facilitating the communications of EIT Community activities at national and regional level and of cross-KIC activities;
  - developing KICs **joint dissemination activities**, in particular the quality support centre for developing information on activities results for all on-going and just implemented innovation projects (which has been finalised since 2020) through the EC dissemination channels (in particular the Horizon Results Platform), ensuring dissemination of innovation project results, facilitating dissemination of results of cross-KIC activities;
  - proposing and developing **joint activities in other areas**, e.g. joint procurement, HR, sustainable office, legal support, partnership management, capacity building of KICs, anti-fraud measures, document management, data protection, etc.;
  - **effective management of the activity**.
- Objective: Increase of the EIT Community efficiency and effectiveness of operations through development of joint operational activities and consolidation of KICs operational processes to result in a reduction of administrative costs and overheads by pooling resources and joint handling of operational and administrative tasks common to all KICs.
  - Scope:
    - Supporting the EIT Community with EIT KIC **IT project management and monitoring tools**;

- Servicing the EIT Community with providing **CFS audits** (and other types of audits);
- increase the awareness and **visibility of the EIT Community** in Europe;
  
- Establishing KICs **joint services** in communications, dissemination, joint procurement, HR, partnership management, KICs capacity building, etc.;
- Financing EIT Community **joint co-location** centres managed by KICs according to the agreed methodology;
  
- EIT Community hubs (EIT House in Brussels and EIT RIS Hub in Budapest)
  
- Expected Impact: to be defined by applicants addressing the specific objectives of the activity, its scope and expected outcomes supported by the cost benefit analysis of the supported actions. The intended impact should be described by results KPIs but also should include a description of the long term qualitative and quantitative impact if relevant, described through the impact KPIs of the EIT Impact Framework. The Cross-KIC activity should demonstrate in the proposal how the cross-KIC activity contributes to KICs' financial sustainability, KICs efficiency or how it contributes to the EIT core KPIs.
  
- Estimated budget for the topic: 16.7 MEUR

Keywords: Audit; Assurance, Audit, and Certification; Resources efficiency; ITC Methods and IT tools for Collaborative Development; Dissemination of results; Communication; Business environment (legal and administrative); Knowledge infrastructure; Organizational innovation.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); IT systems; shared services; support centre; joint activities; operational efficiency and effectiveness; dissemination, communication and dissemination

#### 10.1.2 Cross-KIC Strategic Outreach 2023-2025 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-Strategic Outreach)

- The expected outcome should be focused (but not be limited to) on:
  - **further developing the activities of the existing Global Outreach Programme, delivered via the EIT Community hubs**, with participation of several KICs, inter alia in Israel, USA, United Kingdom. Proposed activities should reflect EIT's knowledge triangle signature model and **be fully aligned with the EU principles on Global Approach in R&I<sup>40</sup>, as well as priorities under the bilateral international cooperation** agreements between the EU and the respective outreach countries;

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40 [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_21\\_2465](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_2465)

- exploring the feasibility and business model for the establishment of **an EIT Hub in other strategic outreach locations of common interest for the EIT Community and in full alignment with the EU principles on Global Approach in R&I<sup>41</sup> and the revised EIT Strategic Framework on EIT Community Global Outreach Activities;**
  - **implementing of impactful activities linking the innovation ecosystem of Europe with that of the selected outreach locations** through: forging synergies with global innovation leaders; attracting new talents and partners to the EIT Community and Europe as an innovation hotspot; contributing to the core KPIs in the EIT Impact Framework; contributing to the financial sustainability of the participating KICs;
  - **developing a support scheme with quantifiable outputs supporting EIT and overall EU innovators and entrepreneurs** in the selected outreach locations;
  - **providing a framework for the EIT Community platform to join efforts, resources, share good practices** and lessons learnt from the implementation of the global outreach activities, supported by the cost-benefit analysis;
  - **effective management of the activity.**
- Objective: The activity should maximise the EIT Community’s impact as measured by the Impact Framework, and contribute to the KICs financial sustainability through its global presence.
  - Scope:
    - **further development of EIT Community Hubs in USA (Silicon Valley), United Kingdom (London), Israel (Tel Aviv), and setting up of other potential locations of strategic interest;**
    - developing and start implementing activities contributing to the **respective Hub’s financial sustainability and where possible to the KICs’ financial sustainability;**
    - **linking the innovation ecosystem of Europe** with that of the selected outreach locations;
    - **supporting EIT and overall EU innovators and entrepreneurs** in the selected outreach locations, e.g. access to new partners and markets, soft landing services;
    - development **of the methodology and preparation a market study and business model** for other strategic outreach locations in line with the EIT’s strategic priorities.
    - alignment with the EU principles on Global Approach in R&I and the **EIT Strategic Framework for EIT Community Global Outreach Activities.**
  - Expected Impact: to be defined by applicants addressing the specific objectives of the activity, its scope and expected results in the context of elevating the impact of the EIT Community and improving its financial sustainability through expanding the KICs operations beyond Europe. The impact description should be supported by results KPIs and qualitative and quantitative description of the long-term impact. The results KPIs should be accompanied/ justified by the outputs KPIs (for example in relation to the financial sustainability area to indicate revenues to

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41 [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_21\\_2465](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_2465)

be generated by each location in short-term). The Cross-KIC activity should demonstrate in the proposal how the cross-KIC activity contributes to KICs' financial sustainability and how it contributes to the EIT core KPIs.

- Estimated budget for the topic: 7.5 MEUR

Keywords: Startups; Start-up companies; Related to SME and start-up support; Internationalisation - Market access.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); outreach locations; USA; Silicon Valley; Israel; United Kingdom; international cooperation; innovation ecosystems

### 10.1.3 Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations 2023-2025 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-Regional Innovations)

- The expected outcome should be focused (but not be limited to) on:
  - strengthening the **EIT KICs' presence, outreach and integration within the RIS area and other EU priority regions**, including a specific focus on the Western Balkans region and Ukraine, and support the objective of attracting and facilitating the integration of potential new partners in the EIT KICs;
  - **exploring, establishing and implementing linkages and synergies** between the EIT Community and local innovation ecosystems and Smart Specialisation Strategies, and provide capacity building support.
  - **consolidation of EIT RIS hubs into EIT Community Hubs at country or regional level in line with the EIT RIS Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles.**
  - **identifying best practices** in the field of start-up support and incubation, education and KTI development and transfer them to create synergies within the EIT Community.
  - exploring. establishing and implementing **strategic alliances** and possible cooperation with key actors in the targeted countries and regions, at different levels (e.g. local innovation ecosystems, Regional Cooperation Council, Enterprise Europe Network, among others).
  - exploring and linking the EIT funded activities through synergies with **other potential funding streams including the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), ESIF and European Innovation Council.**
  - scoping, preparation and **implementation of potential innovation projects** addressing circular economy challenges in the Western Balkans region.

- strengthening entrepreneurial education via implementation of the joint pre-accelerator **EIT Jumpstarter**.
- development and implementation of **knowledge-sharing platform** to ensure alignment between regional priorities and KICs' EIT RIS activities;
- **effective management of the activity**.
- Objective: Maximise the EIT Community's impact in the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme area as well as other priority countries and regions.
- Scope:
  - **geographical scope**: regions and countries eligible under the EIT RIS scheme as well as other priority countries and regions, including all the Western Balkan countries.
- Expected Impact: to be defined by applicants addressing the specific objectives of the activity, its scope and expected results in the context of elevating the impact of the EIT Community in the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme area as well as other priority countries and regions and increasing their competitiveness and innovativeness level. The impact description should be supported by results KPIs and qualitative and quantitative description of the long-term impact in line with the impact KPIs in the EIT Impact Framework. The Cross-KIC activity should demonstrate in the proposal how the cross-KIC activity contributes to KICs' financial sustainability and how it contributes to the EIT core KPIs.
- Estimated budget for the topic: 6.7 MEUR

Keywords: Related to regional development; Regional development; Innovation management; Types of innovation; Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurship education; Startups; Urban and regional economics.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); Regional Innovation Scheme; outreach; capacity building; Western Balkans; transfer of good practices; entrepreneurial education; ecosystems; synergies; IPA; ESIF; EIT Jumpstarter, RIS Hubs.

#### 10.1.4 Cross-KIC Strategic Synergies 2023-2025 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-StrategicSynergies)

- The expected outcome should be focused (but not be limited to) on:
  - **Enhanced impact through coordinated and joint approach by the EIT Community in EU policy priority areas** (in particular in the area of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Circular Economy, Green Deal, New European Bauhaus and Women Entrepreneurship) and activities.

- development of sustainable **joint activities** in the key strategic areas, including support systems/ activities for ventures, promoting gender equality, citizens engagement activities, innovation projects or education activities run by the KICs.
- identification and **dissemination of good practices** and lessons learnt on policy level from implementation of the activities.
- **engaging with key stakeholders** and local innovation ecosystems in the key strategic areas to elevate the impact of the KICs activities.
- identifying and **linking with the relevant other programmes** in the key strategic areas.
- **effective management of the activity.**
- Objectives:
  - Elevate the EIT Community impact in key strategic areas and to enhance the strength and visibility of the EIT KICs innovation ecosystem and positioning among key stakeholders.
  - Coordination of joint thematic and the key EIT's strategic agendas according to the EIT SIA 2021-2027 and EU policy priorities, with the participation of the majority of KICs.
- Scope:
  - **Artificial Intelligence** (in particular, joint project and support schemes and a common platform for EIT KICs and their partners to support and accelerate EIT AI start-ups and innovation activities, drive the EIT Community activities towards addressing the EIT's tasks in the EC policy documents, with a specific focus on the education and AI talent and skill development agenda with specific focus on women, exploring synergies and funding opportunities from investors and with other EU and non-EU funded programmes, exchange knowledge, investor networks, best practice and raise awareness and enhance the reputation of the EIT Community's AI activities).
  - **Circular Economy collaboration** (in particular to strengthen the already initiated KICs activities regarding Cross-KIC Circular Economy extending the collaboration with key EU stakeholders as DG ENV in different actions within the European Circular Economy Action Plan (i.e. Environmental Technology Verification Program (ETV)). This initiative shall allow participating KICs to offering joint forces regarding Circular Economy expertise in relevant initiatives as the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (ECESP), Circular/Innovative Cities, Best Available Techniques Reference Documents (BREFs) to pool and create further non-technical knowledge regarding specific aspects affecting the adequate implementation of Circular Economy approaches, as well as facilitating the access to markets for innovative KICs solutions).
  - **Green Deal** (in particular, explore synergies and funding opportunities with other EU and non-EU funded programmes in the Green Deal area);
  - **New European Bauhaus** (in particular, build on the 2021-22 pilot, further link the EIT Community's activities related to acceleration, education/ skill development, community engagement, with the EU's NEB agenda, explore synergies and funding opportunities of

- EIT KICs and their partners with other EU and non-EU funded programmes), support the delivery phase of the NEB; create synergies and excellence networks with other NEB related programmes and stakeholders;
- **Women entrepreneurship** (in particular, support women in the EIT Community through networks of women start up leaders and women led venture capital firms/ investors, network of women in the EIT Community; and establish synergies and facilitate access to funding and investment opportunities for women entrepreneurs; support women entrepreneurship, tech skill development and digital training of women; ensure that beneficiaries take all measures to promote equal opportunities, in line with the gender mainstreaming policies and gender equality plans).
  - **effective management of the activity**
- Expected Impact: to be defined by applicants addressing the specific objectives of the activity, its scope and expected results in the defined key strategic areas. The impact description should be supported by results KPIs and qualitative and quantitative description of the long-term impact in line with the impact KPIs in the EIT Impact Framework. The Cross-KIC activity should demonstrate in the proposal how the cross-KIC activity contributes to KICs' financial sustainability and how it contributes to the EIT core KPIs.
  - Estimated budget for the topic: 12.5 MEUR

Keywords: Artificial intelligence; Artificial Intelligence & Decision support; Artificial intelligence, intelligent systems, multi agent systems; (Artificial) neural networks; Computer and information sciences; Social topics (Women's and gender studies); Equality between women and men; Financial & Investment management; Circular economy; Environmental engineering; Environment, resources and sustainability; Cultural and creative economy.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); synergies; access to funding; dissemination of policy lessons learnt; coordination of KICs' portfolio of activities; Artificial Intelligence (AI); Circular Economy; Green Deal; New European Bauhaus and Women entrepreneurship.

#### 10.1.5 Cross-KIC Strategic Education 2023-2025 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-StrategicEducation)

- The expected outcome should be focused (but not be limited to) on:
  - contribution to the **EIT Deep Tech Talent** initiative in cooperation with relevant partners.
  - **contribution to the Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP) including projects such as Girls Go Circular**, according to the targets set in the relevant EU policy documents.
  - **implementation of the EIT Alumni Community's work programme**, in particular through the funding of alumni challenges and projects, EIT Alumni Connect and other events, supporting organisation and coordination of the EIT Alumni Board activities (including

meetings), promotion and communication activities related to EIT Alumni Communities, development of tools supporting the EIT Alumni Community development, supporting the EIT Alumni sustainability agenda.

- **promoting entrepreneurial education, tech skill development and disseminate good practices** and lessons learnt from the EIT Community activities, including the EIT Virtual Campus.
- **building synergies between the EIT KIC education activities** and alignment with other relevant programmes and stakeholders, including Green Deal and European Skills Agenda.
- **facilitating collaboration** and shared services and joint and merged education activities between the KICs and disseminating new effective **education methods, technologies, tools and approaches** to better deliver entrepreneurial education and skills development.
- **effective management of the activity.**
- Objectives: Elevate the impact of the EIT Community's entrepreneurship education and skills development agenda through sustainable and effective activities.
- Scope:
  - EIT Deep Tech Talent initiative for Europe;
  - EIT's contribution to the European Commission **Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP)**;
  - **Joint EIT Community activities in the area of education**;
  - Implementation of the **EIT Alumni work programme** under the overall steer of the EIT Alumni Board.
- Expected Impact: to be defined by applicants addressing the specific objectives of the activity, its scope and expected outcomes but focusing on elevating the impact of the EIT entrepreneurship education and talent and skill development agenda and the KICs EIT Alumni organisations. The impact description should be supported by results KPIs and qualitative and quantitative description of the long-term impact in line with the impact KPIs in the EIT Impact Framework. The Cross-KIC activity should demonstrate in the proposal how the cross-KIC activity contributes to KICs' financial sustainability and how it contributes to the EIT core KPIs.
- Estimated budget for the topic: 6.7 MEUR

Keywords: Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurship education; Entrepreneurial Skills; Education; Education: systems and institutions, teaching and learning; Identification of skills needs; New skills and competences for teachers; School education; Vocational training; Digital skills; IT skills and competence.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP); entrepreneurial education; Girls go Circular; dissemination of good practices;

### 10.1.6 Cross-KIC Strategic Access to Finance 2023-2025 (Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-StrategicFinance)

- The expected outcome should be focused (but not limited to) on:
  - Creating and developing an investment pipeline and to **establish a deal flow** of investment proposals originating from the EIT Community to be supported by the **European Investment Bank (EIB)** annually.
  - **Developing synergies between the EIT Community and European Investment Fund (EIF)**, by preparing and launching an open innovation platform / investment instrument that will bring together key players (Corporates, Private Venture Capital firms, and public entities), addressing issues such as green cities and sustainable mobility, decarbonisation of industries and power generation, biomanufacturing, food tech, circular economy, technology enablers for green transition, to make investments in innovation start-ups / scale-ups and that will be contributing to the KICs' financial sustainability.
  - Supporting the implementation of a **fully-fledged systemic and structural cooperation between EIT and EIC** in the context of the 8 January 2021 signed EIT-EIC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), including but not limited to the development of support mechanisms for KICs innovative start-ups and SMEs to **access EIC Accelerator**, and EIC advisory services and networks, but also to facilitate market access for and investments in innovative start-ups and SMEs, to support women innovators and innovators from widening countries, to **identify opportunities for supporting EIC Pathfinder** projects by KICs to transform research results into innovations, to identify new opportunities for collaboration and synergies, and to share data / experience and reporting.
  - **Ensuring effective management of the activity.**
- Objective:
  - Developing synergies of the EIT Community with EIC, EIF and EIB to facilitate investments (Access to Finance) for the KICs supported ventures (startups / scaleups) or innovation projects and that contribute to the KICs' financial sustainability and diversification of revenues from ROI / Equity.
- Scope:
  - Facilitation of **financial and non-financial support to KIC supported ventures** (startups / scaleups) to accelerate their growth.
  - Develop a pipeline of innovative innovation projects and ventures (startups / scaleups) supported by the EIT Community that can benefit from EIC, EIB and EIF support.
  - Development of capacity and expertise available to the whole EIT Community in accessing EIB, EIF and EIC support, including in the context of the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme countries and women led ventures (startups / scaleups).
  - Development and support of other **synergies** between the EIT Community and EIC, EIF, EIB, in the context for example of the EIT-EIF MOU signed in Sep 2021 (Education, RIS,

financial instruments, common investors events) and the EIT-EIC MOU signed in Jan 2021.

- Expected Impact: to be defined by applicants addressing the specific objectives of the activity, its scope and expected results in the context of increasing the innovation performance and innovation potential of the European Union and growth and number of new jobs to be created in the supported ventures. The Cross-KIC activity should demonstrate in the proposal how the cross-KIC activity contributes to KICs' financial sustainability and how it contributes to the EIT core KPIs.
- Estimated budget for the topic: 7.5 MEUR

Keywords: Investment readiness; Private investment; Financial Engineering; Corporate financing; Financial & Investment management; Banking, corporate finance, accounting; Startups.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); EIB; EIF; EIC; venture support; access to funding; access to finance; InvestEU.

## 10.2 Eligible entities

Any KIC may participate and implement the eligible activities under the Cross-KIC scheme<sup>42</sup>.

The participating KICs and their individual contributions have to be agreed by all KICs participating in the specific Cross-KIC activity.

One KIC should be assigned to lead a Cross-KIC activity, this KIC LE will be the coordinator of the Cross-KIC activity. Any KIC may lead a Cross-KIC activity. The leading KIC leads the Cross-KIC activity implementation and coordinates the contributions of the participating KICs. All KICs participating in the Cross-KIC activity (including the leading KIC) must agree on the main objectives, milestones and annual achievements, as well as the budget distribution. Thus, an overall Cross-KIC Activity Plan (proposal) must be agreed by the participating KICs with Work Package level details.

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

## 10.3 Eligible activities

Eligible activities are the activities covering the specific topics indicated in Chapter 10.1 above.

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<sup>42</sup> Following the designation of the KIC in the field of Cultural and Creative Industries (EIT Culture) foreseen for 2022 and after the establishment of its KIC LE in 2023, it should be allowed by way of amendment of the Cross-KIC grant agreements to participate in the ongoing Cross-KIC activities.

## 10.4 Award criteria

**Criteria:** All Cross-KIC strategic proposals will be evaluated against the following award criteria aligned with the Horizon Europe legal framework: excellence, impact and implementation as follows:

EIT Strategic activities	Excellence	Impact	Implementation
<b>Weights of criteria</b>	40%	40%	20%
<b>Sub-criteria</b>	Relevance, value added and objectives Quality of the proposed methodology Financial sustainability	Impact Dissemination, and communication	Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks, Implementation efficiency Capacity and role of each participant
EIT Shared Services	Excellence	Impact	Implementation
<b>Weights of criteria</b>	20%	20%	60%
<b>Sub-criteria</b>	Relevance, value added and objectives Quality of the proposed methodology Financial sustainability	Impact Dissemination, and communication	Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks, Implementation efficiency Capacity and role of each participant

The EIT may prioritise and/or reject a Cross-KIC activity. In case the EIT Cross-KIC Fund is lower than the requested grant, the EIT will decide on the funding level based on the results of the outcome of the evaluation process.

**Evidence:** The evaluation will be based on the submitted proposals.

Depending on the evaluation outcomes and identified weaknesses of proposals, the EIT might reduce the requested funding. Following the evaluation round, EIT might also provide requirements to the applicants to revise the content of the proposal and adjust the budgetary request accordingly.

## B) EIT Cross-KIC Thematic Innovation activities 2023-2025

### 10.5 Topic description

- Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-ThematicInnovations
- The expected outcome should be focused (but not limited to) on:

**Thematic Innovations activities** are aimed at developing highly innovative products and/or services or sustainable education and skill development programmes with high societal impact potential (contributing to the EIT core KPIs and the financial sustainability of the participating KICs), with a clear Cross-KIC value demonstrated and addressing EU/EIT priorities. These are bottom-up initiatives, selected by the EIT on a competitive basis.

- Objectives

- Relevant and appropriate Thematic Innovation proposals for 2023-2025, demonstrating their **excellence** (including objectives and ambition; methodology; cross-KIC relevance, financial sustainability, relevance with objectives of the Strategic Agendas of participating KICs in the consortium), its **impact** (including KIC's pathways towards impact; measures to maximise impact - dissemination, exploitation and communication) and its **quality and efficiency of the implementation** (including work plan and resources; capacity of participants and KIC Partnership as a whole).
- to address **societal challenges** of participating KICs and demonstrate the **Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI)** approach, contributing to achieving the future high-level results and impacts included in the EIT Impact Framework.
- Objectives in the Thematic Innovation proposals should be described according to the SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) and clearly linked with the Strategic Agendas of participating KICs.

- Scope

Proposed topics should be aligned with the EIT's Strategic Innovation Agenda and participating KICs Strategic Agendas.

A total budget of a project proposal should not be lower than EUR 3,000,000 and higher than EUR 8,000,000.

The EIT plans to select up to five thematic innovation activities.

- Expected Impact

In response to this topic applicants should evidence a contribution to the EIT Impact Framework, the EIT's strategic objectives and the EU's key strategic agendas. The expected impact should be defined upfront, should be measurable and achievable within the frame of the project duration. The project's activities should be designed accordingly. The Cross-KIC activity should demonstrate in the proposal how the cross-KIC activity contributes to KICs' financial sustainability and how it contributes to the EIT core KPIs.

- Estimated budget for the topic: 16.7 MEUR

Keywords: Types of innovation; Market-creating innovation.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI); Financial Sustainability; cross-KIC; Thematic Innovations cross-KIC activities; Innovation Principles.

**Note:** The applicants must ensure that the proposal includes:

- Commercialisation plan including a financial sustainability mechanism contributing to the financial sustainability of all participating KICs’;
- A draft of a dissemination and communication plan (part of the impact part in the proposal template).

## 10.6 Eligible entities

Any KIC may participate and implement the eligible activities under the Cross-KIC scheme<sup>43</sup>.

The participating KICs and their individual contributions have to be agreed by all partners participating in the activity.

The participating KIC LEs **should create (a) consortium/a for the preparation, submission and implementation of the proposal(s)**. At least two KIC LEs should be a part of each consortium applying for the Thematic Innovation Cross-KIC activity funding.

One KIC LE should be assigned to lead a Thematic Innovations Cross-KIC activity. Any KIC LE may lead a Cross-KIC activity. All entities, including KIC partners that may participate in the project consortia, must agree on the main objectives, milestones and annual achievements, as well as the budget distribution.

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

## 10.7 Eligible activities

Eligible activities are the activities indicated in Chapter 10.5 above.

## 10.8 Award criteria

**Criteria:** All Thematic Innovations Cross-KIC proposals will be evaluated against the following award criteria aligned with the Horizon Europe legal framework: excellence, impact and implementation as follows:

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<sup>43</sup> Following the designation of the KIC in the field of Cultural and Creative Industries (EIT Culture) foreseen for 2022 and after the establishment its KIC LE in 2023, it should be allowed by way of amendment of the Cross-KIC grant agreement to participate in the ongoing Cross-KIC activities.

EIT Thematic Innovations	Excellence	Impact	Implementation
Weights of criteria	30%	40%	30%
Sub-criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relevance, value added (including cross-KIC value-added) and objectives</li> <li>- Quality of the proposed methodology</li> <li>- Financial sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impact (including contribution to the EIT Impact framework)</li> <li>- Dissemination, and communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks,</li> <li>- Implementation efficiency</li> <li>- Capacity and role of each participant</li> </ul>

The following scale will be used:

- 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 evaluation will be based on the submitted proposals.

## 11. Higher Education Institutions (HEI) initiative 2023-2025

The purpose of the HEI Initiative is to create systemic impact in Europe **through strengthening the entrepreneurial and innovation capacity of HEIs**. This will be realised by developing a strategy and an action plan, which must allow for flexibility and experimentation

Specific objectives are to achieve the following:

- Increase the entrepreneurial and innovation capacity of higher education institutions (HEIs), both regarding HEIs own capacity to be entrepreneurial and innovative as well as being able to teach and foster innovation and entrepreneurship;
- Strengthen and safeguard the integration of HEIs in innovation ecosystems.

The activities financed under the initiative must be in line with the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027 and should clearly contribute to the core EIT KPIs. In line with the SIA 2021-2027, the EIT will in 2023 carry out the evaluation of the pilot phase by independent external experts and the results shall be communicated to the Member State Representatives Group (MSRG) and to the European Parliament. Based on the results of that evaluation, the EIT Governing Board shall decide whether the pilot higher education initiative is to be either continued and scaled-up or discontinued after 2023.

The purpose of this Call is to allow to plan the development of the initiative in years 2023-2025, depending on positive result of evaluation and EIT GB decision in 2023.

## 11.1 Topic description

- Topic ID: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-HEI

- Expected outcome:

As foreseen in the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2021-2027, the activities shall address primarily the capacity development of HEIs including:

- the exchange and implementation of best practices in knowledge triangle integration, including organisational learning, training for up-skilling and re-skilling, coaching and mentoring;
- the development of action plans on how to address identified needs in areas such as innovation management, start-up creation and development, technology transfer including intellectual property rights management, sustainability and climate neutrality by design, people and organisational management, the integration of gender approaches in innovation and engagement with local stakeholders and civil society; and
- the implementation of innovation capacity development action plans and follow-up actions.

- Objective:

To create systemic impact in higher education at the institutional level, by supporting HEIs to increase their innovation and entrepreneurial capacity and better integrate into and engage with innovation ecosystems.

- Scope:

To ensure the success of the pilot higher education initiative, the EIT shall provide funding as well as specific guidance, expertise and coaching to participating HEIs and target HEIs from across Europe, paying particular attention to HEIs from countries (and regions in those countries) that are moderate and modest innovators and other low performing regions that wish to develop their innovation capacities and strengthen their innovation footprint and smart specialisation strategies.

Particular attention shall be paid to ensuring: an open and inclusive approach to attract HEIs beyond the KICs' partners aiming for wide geographical coverage; an inter-disciplinary and inter-sectoral approach; a broader participation of women in sectors where they are underrepresented; and a link with the EIT RIS, relevant thematic platforms and smart specialisation strategies, and the Policy Support Facility when appropriate.

As the initiative has been launched in 2021 with several calls for activities, it is expected, that projects launched before 2023 can continue in 2023-2025 (depending on their positive checkpoint assessment). And in 2023-2025 also set of new projects shall be selected through open calls (shall the EIT Governing Board decide in 2023 to continue).

- Expected Impact:

The aim of the pilot higher education initiative is that the impact of the EIT reach beyond the KICs and contribute to the EIT's core mission of boosting sustainable economic growth and competitiveness by reinforcing the innovation capacity of Member States, in line with the Horizon Europe goals of fostering entrepreneurial and innovation skills in a lifelong learning perspective, including increasing the capacities of HEIs across Europe at the institutional level.

- Estimated budget for the topic: 40 MEUR (Note: this budget is estimated to cover the costs in 2023 only. Additional funding allocation decision for the HEI Fund beyond 2023 is conditional upon decision of the EIT Governing Board, depending on the outcome of the three years pilot phase in 2021-2023)

Keywords: Higher education; Modernisation of Higher Education; Education: systems and institutions, teaching and learning; Entrepreneurship education; Entrepreneurship; Education; Innovation in learning, teaching and assessment practices supported by digital technologies; Europe's innovation potential; Disruptive innovation; Demand driven innovation; Participatory Innovation; New skills and competences for teachers; Promotion of employability; Digital skills.

Tags: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT); Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs); EIT Business Plan 2023-2025; Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI); Financial Sustainability; EIT Regional Innovation Scheme; EIT Label; innovation; capacity building; transfer of good practices; entrepreneurial education; ecosystems; synergies; higher education; HEIs.

## 11.2 Eligible entities

As this initiative is a strategic priority identified by the EIT SIA 2021-2027, **all KICs are invited to participate in the initiative**. The KIC LEs can participate in the proposal as beneficiaries, one KIC (EIT RawMaterials) will be lead beneficiary.

The participating KICs and their individual contributions have to be agreed by all partners participating in the activity. All entities participating in the project must agree on the main objectives, milestones and annual achievements, as well as the budget distribution.

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

### 11.3 Eligible activities

Eligible activities are the activities covering the topic indicated in Chapter 11.1 above.

### 11.4 Award criteria

**Criteria:** The proposal for the pilot HEI activities will be evaluated against the following award criteria aligned with the Horizon Europe legal framework: excellence, impact and implementation as follows:

	Excellence	Impact	Quality and efficiency of the implementation
<b>Weights of criteria</b>	40%	40%	20%
<b>Sub-criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clarity, pertinence and relevance of the proposal’s objectives</li> <li>- Quality of the proposed coordination and/or support measures including soundness of methodology.</li> <li>- Quality of synergies and links with existing initiatives at EU, national and regional level.</li> <li>- Credibility of the financial model and contribution to KIC financial sustainability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Credibility of the pathways to achieve the expected outcomes and impacts specified in the EIT SIA 2021-2027, participating KICs’ strategic agendas and in the EIT Impact Framework, and the likely scale and significance of the contributions due to the proposal.</li> <li>- Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks, and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages, and the resources overall.</li> <li>- Capacity and role of each participant, and extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary expertise.</li> </ul>

**Evidence:** The evaluation will be based on the submitted proposals.

## 12. Submission of proposals

Proposals must be submitted electronically using the electronic submission system of the Portal of the European Commission:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/programmes/horizon>

Access to the electronic submission system is available after selecting a topic and a type of EIT KIC action of the call for proposal. Please find the **topics' links** here:

Type of EIT KIC Actions	Topics links
<p><b>1) KIC Business Plans 2023-2024/ 2023-2025</b></p> <p>Type of action (ToA): EIT KIC Action</p>	<p>Eight topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>EIT Digital Business Plan 2023-2024</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-24-KIC-EITDIGITAL)</li> <li>- <b>EIT InnoEnergy Business Plan 2023-2024</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-24-KIC-EITINNOENERGY)</li> <li>- <b>EIT Climate-KIC Business Plan 2023-2024</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-24-KIC-EITCLIMATEKIC)</li> <li>- <b>EIT Health Business Plan 2023-2025</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITHEALTH)</li> <li>- <b>EIT RawMaterials Business Plan 2023-2025</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITRAWMATERIALS)</li> <li>- <b>EIT Food Business Plan 2023-2025</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITFOOD)</li> <li>- <b>EIT Urban Mobility Business Plan 2023-2025</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITURBANMOBILITY)</li> <li>- <b>EIT Manufacturing Business Plan 2023-2025</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-KIC-EITMANUFACTURING)</li> </ul>
<p><b>2) Cross-KIC activities (Strategic Cross-KIC activities and shared services 2023-2025, Thematic Innovation activities 2023-2025)</b></p> <p>ToA: EIT KIC Action</p>	<p>Seven topics: one <u>shared services</u> topic, five <u>strategic Cross-KIC activities</u> topics one <u>Thematic Innovations Cross-KIC</u> topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Shared Services 2023-2025</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-SharedServices)</li> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Strategic Outreach 2023-2025</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-StrategicOutreach)</li> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations 2023-2025</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-RegionallInnovations)</li> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Strategic Synergies 2023-2025</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-StrategicSynergies)</li> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Strategic Education 2023-2025</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-StrategicEducation)</li> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Strategic Access to Finance 2023-2025</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-StrategicFinance)</li> <li>- <b>Cross-KIC Thematic Innovations 2023-2025</b> (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-Cross-KIC-ThematicInnovations)</li> </ul>

<p><b>3) Higher Education Institutions (HEI) initiative 2023-2025</b></p> <p>ToA: EIT KIC Action</p>	<p>One topic:  <b>HEI initiative 2023-2025</b>                  (Topic link: HORIZON-EIT-2023-25-HEI)</p>
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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, Cross-KIC, HEI, outlining work packages, costs, etc.

Further mandatory or optional annexes can be required by the call and the given topic, as shown in the submission system.

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) in the case of Business Plans, as it is requested to include an Executive Summary, and to a maximum of **45 pages** (part B) in the case of Cross-KIC activities and HEI. 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 that are watermarked.

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).

## 13. Data model and IT tools

With EIT's full integration to Horizon Europe legal and operational framework and considering the transition to the adapted implementation model, the future data model in terms of data structure and IT tools has been adapted. An overview of data requirements are set out in Annex of this Invitation.

### CORDA data management tool

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 the tool. To function as required, the new data model will require each KIC to provide the eGrants platform, directly with data in the agreed format through a portfolio approach via proposal and reporting templates. Additionally, throughout implementation each KIC will need to collect and provide data at project and partner level directly to CORDA tool. CORDA is the European Union's data warehouse, and data from CORDA feeds the [Portal](#) (also known as the Horizon Dashboard) that is accessible publicly through any web browser.

The EIT will use CORDA to store data on proposal and project implementation. By using CORDA, the EIT will ensure it meets the standards of Horizon Europe with respect to transparency and openness.

### KIC IT tools

Alongside the data model above, the IT tools currently used by the KICs are to be developed to ensure that KIC-level grant management functions are sufficiently supported, data is collected and submitted by the KIC IT tool as specified in the Annex.

The existing KIC IT tools need to be developed to provide the EIT a sufficient level of access allowing to consult data stored by KICs as part of the continuous monitoring function. The purpose of this access to each KIC IT tool is to provide means for the EIT to continuously review, monitor and validate data, so to ensure the data submission to CORDA.

## 14. Evaluation Process

### 14.1 Proposal assessment

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. If the KICs wish so, they are welcome to submit brief videos (maximum 10 minutes) presenting their proposals. The video will be made available to the experts, as part of the briefing documentation.

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 **at portfolio level**, based on the evidence presented in the previous chapters. To ensure quality of the Business Plan at portfolio level, Cross-KIC and HEI, 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 Business Plan, Cross-KIC and HEI evaluations 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 Business Plan, Cross-KIC and HEI as a condition for the grant award and the Grant Agreement signature.

#### Evaluation of the Thematic Innovation proposals:

The evaluation of the proposals will be conducted by at least three independent, external experts. The EIT may establish an evaluation committee.

Following the assessment, the external experts will provide a **ranking list**, scoring all evaluated proposals according to the award criteria.

The EIT will decide on the funding based on the ranking list and available funding. The EIT might alter the list proposed by the external experts; the change of the list will have to be justified and recorded by the EIT.

Before concluding the grant agreement, the EIT might require that the applicants satisfactorily address the weaknesses identified by the external experts or the EIT. The EIT might also provide requirements to the applicants to revise the content of the proposal and adjust the budgetary request accordingly. Depending on the evaluation outcomes and identified weaknesses of proposals, the EIT might reduce the requested funding.

The EIT will sign grant agreement with the selected consortia.

The EIT will also set up a **reserve list** for funding. Projects from the reserve list, in order of the awarded points, might replace projects selected for funding in case a selected consortium or consortia will not be able to sign grant agreements by the end of July 2023. A validity of a reserve list will expire by 31 July 2023.

Proposals might be funded only if the overall scoring at the technical evaluation stage would exceed 60% threshold.

**Evidence:** the whole Business Plan, Cross-KIC, HEI 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.

## 14.2 Multi-annual strategy assessment

The strategy and multi-annual progress assessment will be carried out by the **EIT Governing Board** with support from the appointed EIT GB Rapporteur. It will focus on the **KIC development and achievements over the years from the strategic perspective**, i.e. how successful is the KIC in reaching the EIT's and KIC's strategic objectives. Part of this assessment will be also to verify that the strategic recommendations made by the EIT Governing Board in previous years have been addressed by the KICs and that monitoring recommendations are followed up. It will also include the performance of the KIC during the Hearings with the EIT Governing Board.

The assessment will be carried out by EIT GB Rapporteurs, designated by the EIT Governing Board, to oversee the assessment process and report back to the Board during the Hearings with the KICs.

Three EIT GB Rapporteurs, members of the EIT Governing Board, were appointed (one per each wave of KICs, second and third wave combined). The EIT GB Rapporteurs' main role will be to **meet the KICs in the particular wave in order to familiarise with the KICs' strategic and multi-annual development**. The EIT GB Rapporteurs will discuss the state-of-play of implementing the strategic recommendations with high-level representatives of the KIC (CEO, Chairperson or Members of the KIC Board). Any other topics of strategic importance identified during the year can also be discussed. The EIT GB Rapporteurs will conclude the visit with feedback to the KIC with respect to the key strengths and weaknesses and recommendations/remaining challenges. The meeting will be documented in the form of main conclusions report. Based on the knowledge gained during the visit and the KIC's weaknesses identified, the EIT GB Rapporteurs will highlight the KIC's key challenges which will then be discussed at the Hearings with the KICs.

## 14.3 Hearings with the KICs

The Hearings with the KICs constitute an important part of the multi-annual strategy assessment, but also, they embrace the whole financial allocation process.

**The Hearings with the KIC CEOs will be held in person or online** on the date shown in the indicative timeline in Chapter 3. The modalities of the Hearings, in particular the scope and structure of the KIC interventions and the time allocated, will be communicated to the KICs in due time.

The main objective of the Hearing will be to conclude on the Multi-Annual Strategy criterion assessment and to issue strategic recommendations to the KICs.

The Hearings will comprise of a short introduction and an in-depth Q&A session aiming to increase the level of interaction with the KICs, enabling a deep discussion and understanding of the KIC strategy. The sessions will focus on key strategic challenges in areas such as the KICs' e.g. impact, synergies, KIC business model and progress towards financial sustainability, building the EIT Community Brand Identity, KIC governance, partnership and openness.

Following the Hearings, the EIT Governing Board will take a decision on the final scores.

The EIT Governing Board will issue recommendations to KICs on strategic elements to improve key areas in order to maximise the impact and deliver on the EIT's Strategic Innovation Agenda.

## 15. Proposal approval - Award decision – Grant Agreements signature

Following the Hearings, **the EIT Governing Board will take a decision on the level of the initial maximum EIT financial contribution for each KIC in accordance with the timeline indicated in Chapter 3.**

The EIT Director will communicate the evaluation results to the KICs and request the submission of the updated version of the proposals based on:

- (a) the EIT requirements for the proposal revision, and
- (b) the EIT Governing Board strategic recommendations.

If necessary, in the course of January 2023, **second requirement letters** may be sent to KICs, based on the first requirement letter.

**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 the grant award and the signature of the Grant Agreements.**

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

The EIT Governing Board's allocation decision will serve as the basis for the award of the 2023-2025 grants (2023-2024 grants in case of first wave KIC Business Plans) by the EIT Director and for the conclusion of the Grant Agreements, provided that the updated version of the proposals, including the estimated budget:

- are in compliance with the requirement laid down in this call text and respective guidelines;
- meet the requirements for the revision of the proposals issued by the EIT Director, including the decided maximum EIT financial contribution;
- are aligned with the Strategic Recommendations issued by the EIT Governing Board.

In the event of the grants awarded by the EIT Director, the EIT will sign the grant agreements (GA) detailing the conditions and level of funding with the KICs.

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 portal<sup>44</sup>. Please note that EIT-specific provisions can be found in Annex 5 of the MGA.

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<sup>44</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga\\_horizon-euratom\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf)

Any amendment to it should also be managed in eGrants.

## 16. Legal and financial provisions

### 16.1 Starting date, eligibility period

The following table shows the grant agreements, the starting date and the eligibility periods:

Topics	Grant agreements	Starting date and eligibility period of grant agreements
<b>1) Eight KIC Business Plans:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EIT Digital Business Plan</li> <li>- EIT InnoEnergy Business Plan</li> <li>- EIT Climate-KIC Business Plan</li> <li>- EIT Health Business Plan</li> <li>- EIT RawMaterials Business Plan</li> <li>- EIT Food Business Plan</li> <li>- EIT Manufacturing Business Plan</li> <li>- EIT Urban Mobility Business Plan</li> </ul>	One grant agreement per KIC will be signed (all together eight grant agreements).	1 January 2023 – 31 December 2024 for first wave KIC Business Plans  1 January 2023 – 31 December 2025 for second, third and fourth wave KIC Business Plans
<b>2) Seven Cross-KIC activities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cross-KIC Shared Services</li> <li>- Cross-KIC Strategic Outreach</li> <li>- Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations</li> <li>- Cross-KIC Strategic Synergies</li> <li>- Cross-KIC Strategic Education</li> <li>- Cross-KIC Strategic Access to Finance</li> <li>- Cross-KIC Thematic Innovations</li> </ul>	One grant agreement for each Cross-KIC topic will be signed (all together six grant agreements), and (a) separate grant agreement(s) for thematic innovation Cross-KIC activities.	1 January 2023 – 31 December 2025  (Eligibility period of first wave KICs: please see the table in Chapter 2)
<b>3) Pilot HEI initiative</b>	One grant agreement will be signed.	1 January 2023 – 31 December 2025 (The GA will be signed for one year and it will be extended with two years, if the EIT Governing Board approves the pilot HEI).

The action's start date and duration 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.

## 16.2 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).

## 16.3 Funding requirements in the EIT SIA 2021-2027 and funding rate in the grant agreement

EIT funding shall be provided in line with the maturity of KICs and **funding requirements** aligned with the EIT SIA 2021-2027. Additionally, in accordance with Chapter 3.6.2 of the EIT SIA 2021-2027, some KIC activities, due to their specific nature, might need extra incentives to be performed. To this aim, the EIT Governing Board decided by its *Decision 11/2022 of the EIT Governing Board on the principles for the determination of the determination of the EIT financial allocation to Knowledge and Innovation Communities' (KICs') Business Plans for 2023-2025, to Cross-KIC activities and shared services for 2023-2025, and to the Higher Education Institutions (HEI) initiative 2023*, that:

- the EIT RIS activities will be implemented in 2023-2025 at a funding rate **up to 100%**,
- Cross-KIC activities and shared services will be implemented in 2023-2025 at a funding rate **up to 100%** (with the exception of Thematic innovations which will have a funding rate **up to 70%**), and
- the HEI action will be implemented in 2023-2025 at a funding rate **up to 100%**.

The respective EIT SIA funding condition applicable for the reference year for the KIC will have to be met at portfolio level that will consider both EIT funded and Non EIT Funded activities (NEFA).

The principle of proportionality shall be respected when allocating NEFAs to the portfolios, limiting unjustified excessive use of the concept.

The costs will be reimbursed at the single reimbursement rate (SRR) indicated in the grant agreement. Co-funding will be mostly provided at the level of projects implemented through financial support to third parties. 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.

## 16.4 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). Obligatory deliverables set in the annotated templates and Horizon Europe Guidelines

are expected to be submitted during the implementation years while majority of deliverables are expected together with the interim and/or final reports as result of the implementation.

At the end of the implementation years, 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 beneficiary.

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

### For Business Plans 2023-2025, for Cross-KIC 2023-2025 and HEI 2023-2025:

The payment of the grant will be made in **two prefinancing instalments**, an **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 the payment of the balance.

The following payment and reporting scheme is foreseen:

	When	Requirements	Reporting period
First pre-financing payment (up to 70% of year N)	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.	
Additional prefinancing report	Within 60 days following the end of the reporting period.	The additional pre-financing report shall include a technical part and a financial part (i.e. statement on the use of the previous pre-financing payment). If the statement on the use of the previous pre-financing payment shows that less than 70% was used, the amount set out in the Data Sheet will be reduced by the difference between the 70% threshold and the amount used.	1-12 months
Second pre-financing payment (up to 100% of year N+1)	Within 60 days from receiving the additional pre-financing report.	5% as a contribution to the Mutual Insurance Mechanism will be retained from the second prefinancing payment.	
Interim Report	Within 90 days following the end of the reporting period.	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).	1-18 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 90 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).	1-36 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).	

### For Business Plans 2023-2024:

The payment of the grant will be made in **two prefinancing instalments** 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 the payment of the balance.

The following payment and reporting scheme is foreseen:

	When	Requirements	Reporting period
First pre-financing payment (up to 70% of year N)	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 pre-financing payment.	
Additional pre-financing report	Within 60 days following the end of the reporting period.	The additional pre-financing report shall include a technical part and a financial part (i.e. statement on the use of the previous pre-financing payment). If the statement on the use of the previous pre-financing payment shows that less than 70% was used, the amount set out in the Data Sheet will be reduced by the difference between the 70% threshold and the amount used.	1-12 months
Second pre-financing payment (up to 100% of year N+1)	Within 60 days from receiving the additional pre-financing report.	5% as a contribution to the Mutual Insurance Mechanism will be retained from the second pre-financing payment.	
Final Report	Within 90 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).	1-24 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).	

## 16.5 Portfolio approach and cascade funding

Taking into account that the KICs will enter into multi-annual grant agreements with the EIT, the two main characteristics of the future Business Plans are the description of the activities at portfolio level and the cascaded funding model.

### Portfolio approach

The information in the Business Plans will be provided at portfolio level ensuring an overview of all activities to be implemented, including budgets and impact targets measured through key performance indicators, whilst specific details about each project will be collected regularly during implementation in line with a pre-defined data set.

The portfolio description will also indicate how KICs will respect the principles that need to be complied with when selecting projects and recipients for EIT funding (e.g. principles of sound financial management, financial sustainability, good governance, openness and transparency, avoidance of conflict of interests etc.). Essential components of this approach are reinforced monitoring relying on data delivered by the KICs' IT tools to ensure that the necessary information is collected for business intelligence and assurance purposes.

A “portfolio” is a description of planned KIC funding schemes (i.e. call for projects and similar schemes which are necessary for the execution of the KIC Strategic Agenda) to be launched by the KIC, which will result in a selection of KIC added-value activities.

### Cascade funding model

Cascade funding model, also known called as Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) or sub-granting under the EU Financial Regulation also known and “sub-granting”, is a commonly used mechanism to deliver implement activities under EU funding. It means that the implementation of the portfolio of activities is cascaded by the beneficiary to further recipients of the EU grant via calls. In case of the fully cascaded model, FSTP is applied to a larger extent, meaning that a larger proportion of the grant is spent by sub-grantees. Translating this into the EIT model, the beneficiaries of the grant agreement will be the KIC Legal Entities (acting such as a ‘consortium leader’ in other programmes) and/or CLCs (acceding to the grant agreement as beneficiaries or affiliated entities) only, while KIC partners will become recipients of FSTP and will not be parties acceding directly to the grant agreement.

Nevertheless, KIC partners will participate actively in the implementation of the KIC Business Plan, and they will contribute to the delivery of the impact as well as financial sustainability of the KIC.

Sub-grants will be awarded based on clear and transparent criteria that are to be spelled out in the KIC Business Plan.

## 16.6 Financial support to third parties

Financial support to third parties involves funding provided by the beneficiary (i.e. 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). Please note that **EIT-specific rules are laid down in Annex 5 of the HE MGA.**

### 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 Chapter 6).**

Within this Invitation, the maximum amount of financial support to third parties should not exceed:

- **EUR 6,000,000** for per recipient for the grant agreements with three-year duration;
- **EUR 4,000,000** for per recipient for the grant agreements with 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.

## 16.7 Eligibility of direct and indirect costs

'Direct costs' are specific costs directly linked to the performance of the action as described under eligible activities in the relevant chapters of this invitation and as presented in the work packages of the proposals, and which can therefore be directly booked to it.

They are:

- either costs that have been caused in full by the activities of the action;
- or costs that have been caused in full by the activities of several actions (projects), the attribution of which to a single action can, and has been, directly measured (i.e., not attributed indirectly via an allocation key, a cost driver, or a proxy).

'Indirect costs' are costs that cannot be identified as specific costs directly linked to the performance of the action. In practice, they are costs whose link to the action cannot be (or has not been) measured directly, but only by means of cost drivers or a proxy (i.e. parameters that apportion the total indirect costs (overheads) among the different activities of the beneficiary).

For reasons of simplification, and notwithstanding their key importance for the operations of the KIC, the costs of governance and KIC management (C-level staff) shall be claimed as indirect costs.

## 16.8 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.

For the following equipment, infrastructure or other assets purchased specifically for the action (or developed as part of the action tasks) costs may exceptionally be declared as full capitalised costs:

Direct costs for construction of a prototype or pilot plant, if they fulfil the cost eligibility conditions applicable to their respective cost categories and if all of the following applies:

- building the prototype or pilot plant is (one of) the main action task(s) as described in the KIC Business Plan (Annex 1),

- the costs are foreseen in the estimated budget (Annex 2),
- the eligibility conditions of Art. 6.1 and 6.2 of the GA are met.

If the beneficiary records the construction costs directly under a fixed assets account in the balance sheet rather than as expenses of the year, those costs will normally be considered as compliant with Art. 6.1(a)(v) GA provided that:

- it is in accordance with the national accounting standards and with the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices,
- there is no double charging of costs (in particular, no charging of depreciation costs for the prototype or pilot plant to another EU or Euratom grant).

If such equipment, infrastructure or other assets are rented or leased, full costs for renting or leasing are eligible, if they do not exceed the depreciation costs of similar equipment, infrastructure or assets and do not include any financing fees.

## 16.9 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.

## 16.10 KIC's control strategy

The KICs must have in place effective and reliable control strategies in line with the provisions of the HE MGA Annex 5 for the start of the action on 1 January 2023.

# 17. 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 data<sup>45</sup>. Any personal data requested in accordance with the Call for Business Plans 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 by the Commission, should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in Article 136 and 141 of the Financial Regulation 2018/1046 (for more information see the Privacy Statement on: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures_en)).

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<sup>45</sup> 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

## Annex 1: Key principles and concepts of the EIT KIC model

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

Principle/concept	Reference documents	Link
Financing, monitoring and evaluation of KICs	Decision 14/2021 of the EIT Governing Board on the principles for financing, monitoring and evaluating KIC activities Articles 11-12 of the KIC Partnership Agreement	<a href="https://eit.europa.eu/library/2021-1420210507-gbwpprinciples-finmonevalkics-activities-gbdml-eit">https://eit.europa.eu/library/2021-1420210507-gbwpprinciples-finmonevalkics-activities-gbdml-eit</a>
Financial sustainability principles	Decision 06/2022 of the EIT Governing Board on the principles on the financial sustainability of KICs	<a href="https://eit.europa.eu/library/gb-decision-062022-amendment-principles-financial-sustainability-knowledge-and-innovation">https://eit.europa.eu/library/gb-decision-062022-amendment-principles-financial-sustainability-knowledge-and-innovation</a>
EIT Key Performance Indicators (EIT Impact Framework)	Decision 08/2022 of the EIT Governing Board on the EIT Key Performance Indicators	<a href="https://eit.europa.eu/library/gb-decision-082022-amendment-eit-key-performance-indicators-kpis-and-repealing-gb-decision">https://eit.europa.eu/library/gb-decision-082022-amendment-eit-key-performance-indicators-kpis-and-repealing-gb-decision</a>
EIT RIS	EIT RIS Implementation Framework 2021-2027	<a href="https://eit.europa.eu/our-activities/eit-regional-innovation-scheme">https://eit.europa.eu/our-activities/eit-regional-innovation-scheme</a>
Innovation principles	Article 7.4.1 of the KIC Partnership Agreement	<a href="https://eit.europa.eu/our-communities/eit-innovation-communities/contractual-relations">https://eit.europa.eu/our-communities/eit-innovation-communities/contractual-relations</a>
EIT Label Framework	Decision 11/2021 of the EIT Governing Board on the new EIT Label Framework	<a href="https://eit.europa.eu/library/2021-1120210317-gb66-11labelframework">https://eit.europa.eu/library/2021-1120210317-gb66-11labelframework</a>

Good governance principles	Article 6.1 of the KIC Partnership Agreement (PA)	<a href="https://eit.europa.eu/our-communities/eit-innovation-communities/contractual-relations">https://eit.europa.eu/our-communities/eit-innovation-communities/contractual-relations</a>
Sound portfolio management principles	Article 7.1 of the KIC Partnership Agreement (PA)	<a href="https://eit.europa.eu/our-communities/eit-innovation-communities/contractual-relations">https://eit.europa.eu/our-communities/eit-innovation-communities/contractual-relations</a>
Openness and transparency	Article 7.2 of the KIC Partnership Agreement (PA)  Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement, Annex 5 ( <i>the revised version under approval of the European Commission</i> )	<a href="https://eit.europa.eu/our-communities/eit-innovation-communities/contractual-relations">https://eit.europa.eu/our-communities/eit-innovation-communities/contractual-relations</a>  <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf">https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf</a>
Non EIT funded KAVA	Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement, Annex 5 ( <i>the revised version under approval of the European Commission</i> )  Decision 06/2022 of the EIT Governing Board on the principles on the financial sustainability of KICs	<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf">https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf</a>  <a href="https://eit.europa.eu/library/gb-decision-062022-amendment-principles-financial-sustainability-knowledge-and-innovation">https://eit.europa.eu/library/gb-decision-062022-amendment-principles-financial-sustainability-knowledge-and-innovation</a>

## Annex 2: Overview of EIT-KIC IT tools and data requirements

eGrants system (tools: CAP-CPS - SEP SYGMA)			CORDA database	KIC IT Tool		Business Objects tool
<b>KIC Proposals / Reporting data (portfolio level)</b>			<b>KIC Project level data (subgranted activities)</b>			
submission through Funding & Tenders Portal / eGrants, loaded to Corda			following validation, loaded to Corda by KICs in a data structure and format pre-defined by EIT			
KIC portfolio (work package) level info and data	Part A	General information	Metadata of subgranted Proposals and Projects (activity level information)	Proposal info & data	Project info & data	Horizon Europe Dashboard
		Participants		Applicant info & data	Participant info & data	
		Budget		Applicant department	Participant department	
		Ethics and security		Contact persons info & data	Contact persons info & data	
		Other questions		Geographical info & data	Geographical info & data	
	Part B	List of participants		...	IPRS (e.g. patent registration)	
		Excellence: Objectives and ambition, Methodology		...	Publication info & data	
		Impact Pathways, KPIs per Year, Measures to maximise impact		...	...	
		Work plan and resources, Capacity of participants, Work packages, Deliverables, Milestones, Risks, Cost items				
		Financial support to 3rd parties				
			<b>Budget / Costs</b>	Standard HE		
			<b>Activity (project level) information</b>	similar to DUNA data structure, but rationalized		
			<b>EIT KPIs 2021 – 2027</b> (EIT Impact Framework, aligned with HE Key Impact Pathways)	KICs to report periodically (every 12 months as part of HE reporting) against 28 KPIs. <b>KPI areas:</b> Innovation, Business Creation, Education, Knowledge Triangle Integration / Developing innovation ecosystems, Leveraging investments in R&I, Economic impact, Additional HEI Initiative-specific indicators, Additional RIS-specific indicators, Societal Impact, Societal impact: KIC specific, Horizontal Indicators		
			<b>KIC consolidated financial data</b>	Expenses, revenues, profit, FTEs, etc		

PDM	KIC IT Tool	
<b>Partner registering, validation, management</b>		
All EIT partners and affiliated entities must be registered (and have PIC nr.)	Legal Name, Business name	
	Legal Form	
	Legal Entity Type (private, public)	
	SME, NGO	
	VAT number	
	Registration Number	
	PIC number	
	LEF number	
	Country, Post code, City, Street	
	Department with Delegated Authority	
EDES Warning		