EIT Higher Education Initiative (HEI)

Call for Proposals 2025

10.12.2025
V2.0

History of changes version	Publication date	Changes
V1.0	3 December 2025	N/A
V2.0	10 December 2025	Correction Notice: an error was identified in the initial version of the EIT HEI Call for Proposals 2025 text on page 29 (page 30 in V2.0), where an incorrect link to the Horizon Europe eligible countries documentation was provided. Please consult the latest updated version of the List of Participating Countries in Horizon Europe, available here and in *Section 6.3 - Eligibility for Funding and Consortium Composition (Horizon Europe eligible countries).*

0. Table of Contents

1. Introduction

1.1. Information on the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is a European Union body with a legal personality and a wide legal capacity accorded to legal persons under national law. The EIT was created in 2008 by the European Union (EU) to enhance Europe's global competitiveness by fostering collaboration between businesses, research institutions, and higher education organisations.

The EIT is governed by Regulation (EU) 2021/695 (EIT Regulation), which aligns the EIT's mission with the EU's priorities and the objectives of Horizon Europe on evolving research, innovation, economic growth, job creation, global competitiveness, sustainable growth, higher education and entrepreneurship, by means of the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), which address specific societal challenges and are established and supported by the EIT.

The EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2021-2027 is aligned with Horizon Europe and lays down the priority fields and the strategy of the EIT for future initiatives, capacity to generate the best innovation added-value, objectives, key actions, mode of operation, expected results, impact, as well as an estimate of the resources needed for the duration of Horizon Europe.

Horizon Europe Regulation

The Horizon Europe Regulation (EU) 2021/695 foresees that the EIT takes part in the implementation of the Horizon Europe Programme in accordance with its strategic objectives for the period 2021 to 2027, as outlined in the Strategic Innovation Agenda of the EIT, and taking into account the strategic planning of Horizon Europe.

EIT and Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) relations

The EIT Regulation defines KICs as large-scale Institutionalised European Partnerships of higher education institutions, research organisations, companies and other stakeholders in the innovation process in the form of a strategic network, regardless of its legal form, based on joint mid- to long-term innovation planning to meet the EIT's challenges and contribute to attaining the objectives established.

According to the EIT Regulation, and without prejudice to the Partnership Agreements and grant agreements between the EIT and each KIC, the KICs have substantial autonomy to establish their internal organisation and composition, as well as their agenda and working methods, provided that they result in progress towards achieving the objectives of the EIT and the KICs, taking into account the strategic planning of Horizon Europe and the strategic direction of the EIT set out in the SIA and by the Governing Board.

Contractual framework between the EIT and the KICs

The long-term relations between the EIT and each KIC are based on a seven-year Partnership Agreement (PA)[1] laying down the general terms and conditions under which the KIC operates as an Institutionalised European Partnership. Subject to positive performance, interim review and outcome of comprehensive assessment of the KIC, the PA can be extended for another period of a maximum of seven years.

The Grant Agreement (GA)[2] is the contractual instrument laying down the provisions concerning the implementation of the KIC activities (KIC Business Plan, Cross-KIC activities, etc.) through grants, on an annual or multi-annual basis of up to three years with the KICs. Business plans describe the main objectives and expected results and actions taken by the KICs.

1.2. Information on the EIT Higher Education Initiative (EIT HEI)

The EIT Higher Education Initiative (hereinafter referred to as the "EIT HEI" or "the initiative"), established under the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027[3], aims to strengthen European higher education's role in innovation ecosystems. By building institutional innovation and entrepreneurship capacity, the EIT Higher Education Initiative fosters systemic change in higher education institutions (HEIs) and enhances their integration into regional and European innovation networks.

EIT HEI projects follow the Knowledge Triangle Model, described in the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda, bringing together education, research, and business to co-create impactful solutions to global challenges. Central to the initiative is the creation of a dynamic and inclusive innovation community that connects HEIs, businesses, investors, and other stakeholders, amplifying individual and collective project impact.

1.3. Information on the EIT HEI Consortium

This Call is launched in accordance with the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2021-2027 and is managed by the EIT HEI Consortium. The EIT HEI Consortium is made up of the following participating EIT KICs[4], who implement the EIT HEI:

- EIT RawMaterials (coordinating EIT KIC)
- Climate KIC
- 28Digital
- EIT Food
- EIT Health
- EIT Manufacturing

---

[1] Model Partnership Agreement: Partnership Agreement
[2] Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement: general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf
[3] Decision (EU) No 2021/820 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 on the Strategic 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 189/3 of 28 May 2021, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021D0820&from=EN
[4] KICs under Partnership Agreement and KICs under Memorandum of Cooperation.

- EIT Urban Mobility
- EIT Culture & Creativity

2. EIT HEI Call 2025 Objectives

2.1. Policy objectives

Europe faces an urgent need to strengthen competitiveness and strategic autonomy, notably in key sectors. In this context, investment in innovation, entrepreneurship, skills and competencies notably in fields of strategic importance for EU competitiveness, such as Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields is fundamental. Global competition, rapid technological change, and the twin green and digital transitions require a new generation of highly skilled graduates, researchers, innovators and workers who can translate knowledge into solutions with real societal and economic impact. These needs are pointed out in the Commission Communication on the Union of Skills and the STEM Education Strategic Plan, as well as the Draghi, Letta, and Niinistö reports. Higher education institutions and highly ambitious initiatives such as the EIT HEI and the European Universities Initiative (EUI) and its European Universities alliances are instrumental for delivering these ambitions, as well as wider EU priorities including the Green Deal, Digital Europe, Competitiveness Compass, and the European Education and Research Areas. By mobilising HEIs as engines of innovation and entrepreneurship skills and competencies development, the EIT HEI directly support the STEM Education Strategic Plan objectives and selected projects contribute to a more inclusive, competitive, and resilient European innovation ecosystem. Specifically, this Call 2025 will contribute to the STEM Education Strategic Plan target of training 200,000 STEM students, academic staff, and non-academic staff in innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP management by 2028. The STEM Education Strategic Plan also calls the European Universities alliances and the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities to work in synergies and explore collaborative frameworks, which this Call will drive forward. The EIT Higher Education Initiative will organically and directly drive the objectives and actions laid out in the Start-up and Scale-Up Strategy, as the initiative's fundamental scope contributes to the aim of the Strategy: 'to make Europe the best place in the world to launch and grow global technology-driven companies, including deep tech companies,' and to 'focus on helping innovators, founders and investors to Choose Europe by improving the conditions for startups and scaleups'. As an innovation and entrepreneurship capacity building initiative for higher education institutions, the EIT HEI serves to improve the European environment and strengthen the ecosystem, laying the ground for it to thrive and boosting its attractiveness to non-European entrepreneurial talent (thus also contributing to the Choose Europe initiative).

Proposals submitted under this Call are expected to contribute to the following objectives:

1. Increased Higher Education Competitiveness: Transformation of HEIs into engines of innovation, attracting top talent and fostering strategic partnerships.
2. Enhanced Skills and Employability: Equipping students with advanced skills for future job markets and innovation-driven careers.

3. Inclusive Innovation Community: Promotion of collaboration and knowledge co-creation across a diverse European ecosystem.
4. Innovations-to-Market Pipelines Enabled: the transition of academic innovations into market-ready solutions, including start-up creation and investment attraction.

The Call contributes to two core objectives through the two Topics respectively:

Objective 1: To strengthen the innovation and entrepreneurship capacity of Europe's STEM talent pipeline, contributing significantly to the EU's Union of Skills, in particular the STEM Education Strategic Plan.

Objective 2: To build stronger, long-term synergies between the EIT's Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) and the European Universities alliances, enhancing Europe's competitiveness, resilience, and strategic autonomy.

The Call therefore follows this Two-Topic Approach:

Topic 1: EIT-HEI-2025-STEM-CAPACITY-BUILDING

Topic 2: EIT-HEI-2025-BUILDING-SYNERGIES

Applications need to describe, if applicable, how the project will be complementary to activities funded under other Calls for proposals, for example European Excellence Initiative (EEI) (HORIZON-WIDERA-2025-01) or those financed under Erasmus+ targeted at European Universities alliances. Any duplication which presents a risk against double funding will automatically exclude the proposal from the selection process.

2.2. Scope

As described in the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda, successful proposals selected for funding under this Call will receive support to implement their long-term innovation capacity building strategy and actions.

It is therefore a priority that the top management of the HEIs is actively engaged throughout the project lifecycle (including during the proposal writing stage), ensuring that leadership acts as a driver for embedding innovation and entrepreneurship into institutional strategies, governance, and culture.

Projects are expected to fully integrate the three dimensions of the EIT Knowledge Triangle – education, innovation, and business – to strengthen cooperation between higher education institutions, industry, and other innovation actors. This integration should accelerate the translation of knowledge and research into tangible societal and economic impact and reinforce entrepreneurial mindsets and skills across the participating institutions and their ecosystems.

Activities should be firmly anchored in regional innovation ecosystems, contributing to sustainable growth and competitiveness in line with European development priorities. Projects are invited to support and build synergies with Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3), engage relevant national and regional authorities, and

contribute to the objectives of the EU Cohesion Policy by fostering balanced innovation-led development across European territories.

Projects must demonstrate a clear and measurable commitment to diversity and inclusion. This includes promoting gender equality, equal opportunities, and social inclusion across all project dimensions, and ensuring that innovation capacity building is territorially balanced and accessible to all regions and groups, in line with the EU Gender Equality Strategy and the EU Cohesion Policy.

2.2.1. Priorities for Topic 1

As outlined in the EU's Union of Skills and its STEM Education Strategic Plan, Europe faces an urgent need to strengthen competitiveness and strategic autonomy, particularly in key technological sectors. Global competition, rapid technological change, and the twin green and digital transitions require a new generation of highly skilled graduates, researchers, innovators, and workers capable of translating knowledge into tangible societal and economic impact. These needs are underscored in the Commission Communication on a Union of Skills as well as the Draghi, Letta, and Niinistö reports.

Topic 1 of the EIT HEI Call 2025 will address this challenge by supporting projects that strengthen the innovation capacity of STEM fields across the higher education area, and specifically that embed innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP management into STEM higher education.

For this Call, STEM is defined in alignment with the STEM Education Strategic Plan, which "broadly covers the fields of education 'Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics (05)'; 'Information and Communication Technologies (06)' and 'Engineering, manufacturing and construction' (07)' of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), as well as related interdisciplinary fields and studies. Applicants may also refer to this Eurostat publication with detailed descriptions for each field.

Topic 1 of this Call seeks to:
- Build an inclusive, entrepreneurial STEM talent pipeline: Equip STEM students, researchers, and staff with high-quality innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP management training. Ensure training activities are delivered directly to participants in STEM faculties, departments, KTO/TTOs and research activities, improving the quality, inclusiveness, and market-readiness of the STEM talent pipeline in strategic sectors such as AI, clean tech, biotechnology, advanced manufacturing, and cybersecurity.
- Enhance Europe's competitiveness and resilience: Develop STEM talent and accelerate research-to-market pathways in key technologies and strategic sectors.
- Reduce territorial disparities: Strengthen regional innovation ecosystems and promote cross-border cooperation in STEM-related fields.

- Establish strategic partnerships and institutional structures: Create long-term governance arrangements, dedicated units, or institutional strategies that sustain innovation activities across STEM fields beyond the project lifecycle.

2.2.2. Priorities for Topic 2

Topic 2 aims to support the European Universities alliances (EUAs) in strengthening their innovation and entrepreneurship capacity through long-term strategic cooperation with the EIT and its Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), Europe's largest innovation ecosystem. Applicants are encouraged to design proposals that enhance institutional innovation capacity and foster sustainable partnerships and collaboration with the EIT KICs, contributing to Europe's competitiveness and resilience in strategic sectors. While a focus on STEM fields is not mandatory in Topic 2, it is strongly encouraged for applicants to contribute to the objectives of the STEM Education Strategic Plan.

Where relevant, proposals must seek thematic alignment with the focus areas of the EIT KICs to maximise synergies and contribute directly to the KICs' strategic objectives. Alliances are invited to align with a minimum of two and a maximum of three EIT KICs, leveraging the KICs' expertise, networks, and mechanisms for research-to-market translation, innovation support, and entrepreneurial skills development. At the same time, flexibility is maintained for alliances with a broader or multidisciplinary scope, allowing them to benefit from KIC support even if closer sectoral alignment is not possible; these sector-agnostic alliances may instead look for alignment with specific activities or methodologies. This approach ensures that all alliances, regardless of disciplinary focus, can benefit from collaboration with the EIT ecosystem while enhancing Europe's overall innovation capacity.

Topic 2 of this Call seeks to:
- Strengthen institutional innovation capacity: Promote collaborative, cross-border approaches to innovation and entrepreneurship across the European Universities alliances.
- Enhance innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP management training: Empower students, researchers, and staff with entrepreneurial competences throughout alliance structures.
- Establish long-term strategic partnerships: Build sustainable collaborations between European Universities alliances and the EIT KICs that align missions, resources, and, where relevant, thematic focus areas (e.g., health, digital, climate) for greater impact. Proposals will be asked to align with a minimum of two and maximum of three EIT KICs and contribute to their strategic objectives, though alliances with broader or multidisciplinary orientations are also encouraged to apply.
- Bolster Europe's innovation ecosystem: Unite and leverage the combined networks of European Universities alliances and the EIT KICs, applying the EIT Knowledge Triangle model to bring together HEIs, businesses, research organisations, and other stakeholders in support of transnational collaboration, knowledge exchange, and, where relevant, thematic alignment with KIC priorities.
- Accelerate research-to-market translation: Reinforce institutional structures such as Knowledge Transfer Offices and Technology Transfer Offices, leveraging the expertise, best practices, and

working mechanisms of the EIT KICs to enhance the efficiency, scalability, and impact of research commercialisation across European higher education institutions.

2.3. Specific Activities

Selected projects are invited to implement the policy objectives by means of a coherent set of activities, aligned with EIT HEI Impact Domains and Funded Actions outlined in the EIT HEI Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework (and listed in Section 3 of this Call text).

2.3.1.Specific Activities for Topic 1

Applicants under Topic 1 are invited to select their Actions in line with the following Topic-specific activities:

- Embed and scale high-quality innovation, entrepreneurship and IP training across STEM fields
  - o Integrate innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP management training within STEM curricula, learning offer and staff development programmes.
  - o Training targets for this Topic will contribute significantly to the STEM Education Strategic Plan target, which aims to train 200,000 STEM students, academic staff, and non-academic staff in innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP management by 2028.
- Ensure quality and recognition of learning
  - o Guarantee the quality of all capacity building activities, including by developing or leveraging quality assurance systems for training activities that are aligned with the European Education Area.
  - o In line with the 2018 Council Recommendations on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, this Call requires that the development and delivery of all entrepreneurship training programmes funded under the project follow EntreComp – the entrepreneurship competence framework developed by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) in partnership with DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. EntreComp is used to design curricula and learning activities that build entrepreneurship skills, and to define parameters for assessing learners' and citizens' entrepreneurial abilities. The framework and a user guide can be accessed here.
  - o Applicants are encouraged to pursue the EIT Label for non-degree education and training, a quality mark in education and training, and to include plans for certification in their IVAP/proposals. The EIT Label Handbook for Quality system for non-degree education and training and EIT Competence Certification Model can be accessed here.
  - o Proposals may also incorporate micro-credentials or other certifications recognising innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP management competences, in line with the Council Recommendation on a European Approach to Micro-credentials.
- Strengthen STEM research-to-market pathways and Knowledge and Technology Transfer Offices capacity

- o Identify and address institutional and systemic barriers to STEM innovation output.
- o Support Knowledge and Technology Transfer Offices to enhance their capacity for innovation and commercialisation.
- o Apply the EIT Knowledge Triangle model to generate synergies between education, research, and innovation based on clearly defined partner roles in advancing STEM research toward market uptake.
- Establish strategic partnerships and institutional structures to advance innovation in STEM
  - o Create or reinforce institutional structures and cross-border, cross-sector partnerships to strengthen STEM innovation capacity, support STEM entrepreneurial talent development, and facilitate the translation of STEM research into market-ready solutions.
  - o Establish dedicated innovation units, joint governance bodies, long-term collaborations with industry, and the EIT KICs. Ensure these structures sustain entrepreneurial STEM talent development long-term, enable joint investments, share infrastructure and know-how, and embed innovation into institutional strategies.
- Improve diversity, inclusion, and transnational cooperation in the STEM innovation pipeline
  - o Leverage existing institutional structures and collaborations to promote diversity, inclusiveness, and cross-border engagement within the STEM pipeline, in line with the STEM Education Strategic Plan's objectives to Lead, Level Up, and Lift Barriers.
  - o Implement STE(A)M approaches combining creativity and design thinking.
  - o Demonstrate commitment to diversity and inclusion through a value statement and action plan across all activities.

2.3.2. Specific Activities for Topic 2

Applicants under Topic 2 are invited to select their Actions in line with the following Topic-specific activities:

- Strengthen institutional and alliance innovation capacity
  Build the capacity of alliances and participating institutions to design, implement, and scale innovation and entrepreneurship initiatives across disciplines, regions, and, where relevant, thematic focus areas aligned with the EIT KICs (e.g., raw materials, health, urban mobility, etc.).
- Develop a long-term Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP) that pursues sustainable cooperation between the alliance and the EIT ecosystem (KICs)
  Outline a comprehensive strategy describing how the alliance's collaboration with a minimum of two and maximum of three selected EIT KICs may contribute to the strategic objectives of both parties. Propose clear proposed plans for cooperation and potential joint implementation to ensure sustainable, structured, and thematically coherent synergies. Flexibility is maintained for alliances with broader or multidisciplinary scopes where strict thematic alignment may not be feasible.

- Improve and embed innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP management training across the alliance, including the pursuit of the EIT Label
  Integrate and deliver high-quality innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP management training for students, researchers, and staff within the alliance's education pathways, including professional development programmes. The alliances are encouraged to contribute to the STEM Education Strategic Plan target to train 200,000 STEM students, academic staff, and non-academic staff in innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP management by 2028.
    - Proposals are also expected to actively pursue EIT-labelled programmes. Pursuing the EIT Label – where appropriate and feasible – ensures consistent, high-quality, and recognisable educational standards across the alliance, while embedding entrepreneurship and innovation competences into multidisciplinary curricula. This activity will strengthen the alliance's institutional capacity for delivering innovation-driven education and may maximise alignment with the strategic priorities of the EIT KICs. Applicants should include plans for certification – or the strengthening of existing EIT-labelled courses – in their proposals, drawing on guidance from the EIT Label Handbook for Quality System for Non-Degree Education and Training and the EIT Competence Certification Model, accessed here.
    - EIT-labelled programmes also provide a structured framework for integrating research, education, and innovation, enhancing the employability and entrepreneurial readiness of graduates, and creating pathways for translating academic outcomes into market-ready solutions. Where relevant, training content should reflect the sectoral focus areas of the aligned KICs to reinforce thematic coherence and generate synergies between alliance objectives and KIC strategic priorities.
- Leverage networks to scale cross-border innovation activities
  Use the combined reach of alliances and EIT KICs to expand innovation initiatives, increase mobility and exchange, and connect regional innovation ecosystems across Europe. Thematic alignment with KIC focus areas should be leveraged to strengthen sector-specific collaboration and knowledge transfer.
- Strengthen capacity for research-to-market translation
  Enhance the performance and connectivity of Knowledge Transfer Offices (KTOs), Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs), and other institutional structures to support entrepreneurial talent, foster innovation uptake, and accelerate market deployment of research outcomes. Where aligned with KIC thematic priorities, leverage the KICs' expertise, established processes, and sector-specific mechanisms to maximise efficiency and impact.

3. Specific Requirements

The EIT HEI methodology, as outlined in the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda, requires all HEIs in the consortium to complete the HEInnovate self-assessment, either individually or as a group. The results

provide a baseline of the consortium's current innovation and entrepreneurship capacity and serve as the foundation for developing the project's proposal – that is the Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP) – presenting the long-term impact vision for institutional and systemic change. The results of the self-assessment should help identify institution- and consortium-level priorities for innovation capacity building and guide the selection of available funded actions under the specific EIT HEI impact domains set out below.

3.1. EIT HEI Impact Domains and Funded Actions

The available Actions are structured under five key Impact Domain Pathways, listed below. For both Topics, eight actions must be selected by consortia (and no more), with the following criteria:

- For Domains 1 – 4, a minimum of one action must be selected per Domain. These are effectively Actions #1, #2, #3 and #4.
- Two additional actions must be selected from those available under Domains 1 – 4, according to consortia needs. These are effectively Actions #5 and #6.
- Domain 5 – knowledge sharing and success. Both actions under this domain must be selected by all EIT HEI project applications. These are effectively Actions #7 and #8.

List of Domains and associated funded Actions

Domain 1 – Fostering leadership support and institutional change

- Secure and maintain institutional engagement for the implementation of the IVAP, especially among HEI leadership and its strategy.
- Enhance the scale and scope of student engagement activities, including improving student support offices to advise on entrepreneurship and innovation.
- Develop inter- and multi-disciplinary support, incentive and collaboration structures (including digital infrastructure) to foster innovation.

Domain 2 – Strengthening partnerships and networks

- Establish new collaborations and enhance the nature, content and types of collaborations with external partners, including businesses, research organisations, governmental bodies, NGOs and other societal partners.
- Build partnering capacities among staff and facilitate networking and connections with partners.

Domain 3 – Supporting Innovation and Business generation

- Develop and utilize structures and conditions for people to create or develop their businesses and start-ups, and to transfer technology.
- Create structures and conditions for innovation-driven research.

Domain 4 – Enhancing innovation and entrepreneurship education

- Develop or improve the innovation and entrepreneurial curricula.
- Develop innovation and entrepreneurial training programs and mentoring schemes for staff and students.
- Organise internships in businesses.

- Provide up-skilling opportunities to businesses, especially SMEs.
- Assessment of teaching and learning practices.

Domain 5 - Sharing knowledge and success

- Collect and share success stories and lessons with others.
- Engage in joint activities with other EIT Higher Education Initiative project partners via the EIT HEI community[5].

3.2. Knowledge Triangle Integration

This Call emphasises the full integration of the three pillars of the EIT Knowledge Triangle – education, innovation, and business – within EIT HEI project consortia, as strong knowledge triangle integration will be key to driving the Call's objectives, and will therefore greatly enhance the project's impact. In particular, significant industry participation in the consortia will be positively evaluated as university-business cooperation is at the heart of what the EIT ecosystem works to achieve. To ensure robust industry engagement and the effective translation of research into tangible societal and economic benefits, each consortium must comply with the Eligibility criteria laid down in Chapter 6, actively contributing to innovation support and business generation activities, in line with Domain 3 of the EIT HEI Domain-Impact Framework (see Section 3.1). Proposals must clearly define the specific roles and responsibilities of each partner in advancing research to market and demonstrate how the consortium will apply the EIT Knowledge Triangle model to generate synergies that accelerate innovation and build entrepreneurial capacity.

3.3. Connection with the EIT KICs and the EIT Community activities

Applicants should review the strategic documents and websites of the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) which outline the global challenges and strategic objectives addressed by each KIC and attend the Call 2025's info session that showcases all participating EIT KICs. Proposals to both Topics must select at least two and a maximum of three EIT KICs that are most relevant to the project's scope and clearly demonstrate how the project will contribute to and engage with their strategic objectives and key activities. In addition, applicants should consider how their project could connect with EIT Community activities to strengthen the proposal. For example, projects may outline pathways from EIT HEI-funded start-up creation activities to subsequent accelerator programs. Information on these initiatives is available on the EIT Community and EIT KIC websites.

EIT KICs (e.g. KIC Legal entities, KIC Co-location Centres and other entities part of the KICs' governance) are therefore not eligible to participate as a partner organisation in an application to this Call for Proposals but will act in their capacity of intermediary granting entities. This means that the projects selected under this Call will be allocated across the participating EIT KICs for project management purposes. Each project will be assigned to a specific EIT KIC, which will be responsible for managing the contractual agreements and

---

[5] These activities may include but are not limited to: speaking at in-person or digital community events; participating in community roundtables; engaging as a regional community ambassadors; participating in mentorship programs; active contributions to community-wide knowledge sharing, e.g. through further development and/or sharing of good practices, tools, reports, or templates from your projects; active participation in and promotion of the community and its events and activities. The community can be accesses via https://eit-hei.eu/community

supporting the project through its lifecycle. The assigned KIC will act as the primary point of contact, supporting project implementation, monitoring, and reporting, and facilitating access to relevant EIT resources.

Furthermore, when preparing a proposal, consortia are encouraged to review EIT Community (Cross-KIC) activities and to consider how they might connect with them to strengthen their proposal, for example planning pathways from the EIT HEI Initiative-funded start-up creation activities to other later-stage startup accelerator programmes, details for which can be found on the EIT Community and the EIT KIC websites[6].

3.4. EIT HEI Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework

Two Project Reviews will be conducted with the EIT Higher Education Initiative during the funding period, in alignment with its Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Framework. The Mid-Project Review will collect key data across the Impact Domains and Funded Actions after the first year of implementation, while the End-of-Project Review will gather key data at the conclusion of the funding period. Projects are required to participate in these review activities, which are designed according to the EIT HEI MEL Framework. These processes and their outputs will support the continuous improvement and scaling-up of project activities, providing a foundation for insight-sharing, collective reflection, and sense-making events throughout the project lifecycle and beyond.

3.5. The Regional Dimension

Enhancing the local and regional impact of projects is a central component of the EIT HEI. Consortia are expected to map their local and regional innovation ecosystems before application and incorporate this mapping exercise into preparation of the proposal; this then forms the basis for the System Innovation training delivered by the EIT HEI during project implementation. This ensures projects are regionally embedded and contribute to sustainable, innovation-driven growth in line with European development goals. Proposals are invited to align with and show how partners will support Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3), including concrete plans to engage with the national authorities responsible for S3 and to explore related funding opportunities. In doing so, projects are expected to contribute directly to the EU Cohesion Policy, by helping reduce territorial disparities, strengthen regional competitiveness, and enabling all regions to participate in and benefit from innovation-led growth. They should also align with the Choose Europe! strategy, by positioning European regions as attractive hubs for investment, talent, and knowledge exchange.

A broad geographical scope, especially involving organisations established in RIS and Widening countries, including EU outermost regions and third countries associated to Horizon Europe which have not typically benefited from EU funding resources, support or networks before, is strongly encouraged. An ambitious but realistic explanation as to how such institutions will be involved in the project and how they will benefit

---

[6] KIC websites are linked where the EIT HEI consortium is listed at the top of the *1.3. Information on the EIT HEI Consortium* sub-section.

from the project's activities will be positively evaluated. It is suggested that relevant regional/territorial authorities be consulted in the process of application development.

3.6. HEI participation and leadership engagement

The EIT HEI defines Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) as institutions which offer recognised degrees or other tertiary level qualifications, or other comparable institutions at tertiary level (if recognised by their national authorities). In an application to this Call, each HEI must submit proof of accreditation by the corresponding national authorities to offer recognised degrees. Each HEI partner must engage at least two faculties or departments to ensure institution-wide awareness and commitment to the IVAP's objectives and work plan, and the application will request these details (see Eligibility criteria, Section 6.).

The lead partner of applying consortia must be an HEI, and the lead partner will appoint a Project Coordinator.

A top management signed commitment letter will also be required and must list the participating faculties and departments in the project. An official template for this letter is provided in the Application Portal and must be annexed to the application.

To ensure that the HEI (and if applicable the European Universities alliance) leadership acts as a driver for embedding innovation and entrepreneurship into institutional strategies, governance, and culture, the signed letter of commitment from the HEI top management should cover the following:

- Leadership Commitment – direct support for the project.
- Integration into Strategy – alignment with institutional goals and embedding into long-term plans.
- Long-Term Engagement – sustainability and transferability plans for outcomes.

Proposals may also include:

- Leadership roles in governance and milestone reviews.
- Leadership-led dissemination (e.g., showcases, policy events).
- Integration of outcomes into KPIs, policies, curricula, or investment plans.
- Partnerships with other institutional networks, industry, and regional innovation ecosystems.

Top management will be invited to participate in annual EIT HEI in-person events and the EIT HEI Community activities to discuss institutional transformation in line with European policy objectives.

3.7. Previous and Current EIT Higher Education Initiative Project Partners

The EIT HEI Call 2025 is the first to focus specifically on innovation capacity building within STEM fields and on fostering long-term cooperation between European Universities alliances and the EIT KICs. While organisations that have previously participated as EIT-funded beneficiaries in selected EIT HEI projects from Cohorts 1, 2, 3 and 4 are permitted to apply, this Call is not an opportunity to repeat past activities; rather,

it is a chance to scale up, extend, and amplify existing innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP management capacity building initiatives, or to launch new ones.

For Topic 1, these organisations are expected to transfer proven approaches, tools, and actions into new STEM contexts and disciplines, ensuring that prior achievements deliver sustained value across a broader and more diverse set of STEM-driven innovation ecosystems. For Topic 2, European University alliance-member organisations with previous experience of the EIT ecosystem (including the EIT HEI) are expected to further embed their previous innovation capacity building activities into the wider alliance strategy and portfolio, with particular emphasis on cooperation with the EIT KICs.

To make this ambition concrete, Cohort 1 – 4 EIT HEI partners should assume the role of "Innovation and Entrepreneurship Pioneer" within their consortium and the wider EIT HEI Community. This pioneer role, and the associated activities, must be clearly described and justified throughout the project's IVAP. At a minimum, it should include:

- Mentoring and guidance: Support novice partners in designing and implementing their IVAPs, with a particular focus on building innovation capacity, including in STEM fields where relevant.
- Strategic support: Assist novice partners in shaping and improving their innovation strategies, policies, and institutional practices.
- Capacity gap analysis and action: Lead the identification of critical capacity gaps within the consortium and implement targeted activities to address them.
- Multi-level mentoring: Design and deliver mentoring programmes across organisational roles and stakeholder groups.
- Knowledge sharing: Disseminate and transfer good practices and success stories to novice partners, submitting these to the EIT HEI Community platform by project end.
- Leveraging EIT experience: Use prior engagement with the EIT ecosystem to pursue additional opportunities and partnerships, such as Cross-KIC activities (e.g., EIT STEM Tech Talent Induction, EIT Jumpstarter, EIT Supernovas), and support HEI partners in achieving EIT Label certification where feasible. This is particularly relevant for Topic 2.
- Representation and advocacy: Act as an EIT HEI ambassador at internal and external events, strengthening the EIT HEI's position as the leading community for innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education.
- Community engagement: Actively contribute to the EIT HEI Community and its activities and events, aligning with Domain 5, Action 2 (see Section 3.1).

This role applies to both Topic 1 and Topic 2, with activities adapted to the specific focus of each Topic: for Topic 1, pioneers focus on scaling innovation capacity in STEM fields; for Topic 2, pioneers embed their expertise within alliance-level strategies for KIC cooperation.

Important: IVAPs that merely continue activities funded under previous calls without clearly scaling or adapting them, or that fail to define the role of previous EIT HEI partners within their new consortia, will not be considered for funding.

3.8. Participation in EIT HEI Community Activities and Events

The EIT HEI management team, in its role supporting the development, implementation and learnings of project IVAPs, convenes project participants and the larger EIT HEI community of projects to a series of both online and in-person events, such as:

- IVAP Workshop (in person): 2-day event, minimum four representatives per participating project (Q4 2026)
- Masterclass on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (online): 1.5-hour event, minimum two representatives per participating project (Q4 2026)
- System Innovation Training (blended): approximately 10 days of training (four in-person, six online) open to entire consortium (2026 + 2027)
- Sensemaking sessions (in person): 2.5-day event, up to three representatives per participating project (2027)
- Preparing for Investment with Creative Innovation course (online): 5 x 1.5-hour online sessions (2027)
- Co-creation workshops and KIC Discovery Days (online): 9 x 0.5 days open to entire consortium (2026, 2027, 2028)
- In-person community event: 1 day per year, open to the entire consortium (2026, 2027, 2028)
- Participation in online community activities, e.g. speaking at online events; participating in roundtables; active contributions to community-wide knowledge sharing; active participation in and promotion of the community and its general events and activities (2026, 2027, 2028)

Please note the list above is non-exhaustive and subject to change as it may be adapted to actual project needs that will arise during the implementation. Precise dates and invitations will be sent to awarded projects in due time, please use it as an approximation of the effort required.

The cost of attending any necessary physical meeting shall be covered by the project and shall be included in the budget proposed and detailed as specified in the template found in the application portal.

Estimates should be an approximation of the estimated travel rates used by your organisation and meet the eligibility criteria of Horizon Europe. Appropriate time and budget should be dedicated to the activities above. Participation to these activities may be aggregated into one Task in the IVAP, dedicated to EIT HEI Community Integration activities. Projects should also include extra travel costs in the budget for any other ad-hoc events not listed above.

3.9. Diversity and Inclusion Value Statement and Action Plan

Projects must demonstrate a clear commitment to diversity and inclusion, supported by a value statement and an action plan that applies across all activities. This approach is expected to reinforce the EU Gender

Equality Strategy and the EU Cohesion Policy by ensuring that innovation capacity building is both socially inclusive and territorially balanced, and to support the objectives of the STEM Education Strategic Plan.

Specific actions should:
- Advance gender equality, in particular in STEM entrepreneurial skills development, including through induction periods and mentorship.
- Promote equal participation in leadership and entrepreneurship, and embed gender-sensitive practices in teaching, mentoring, and innovation support, thus contributing to the Gender Equality Strategy's goal of equal participation and economic empowerment.
- Reduce social and regional disparities in access to skills development, education and innovation opportunities, in particular in STEM, by engaging underrepresented groups, including those from rural, remote, cross-border, migrant, low socio-economic, and LGBTQ+ backgrounds – directly supporting the Cohesion Policy's objective of balanced and fair development across Europe.
- Promote inclusive practices that are both gender-sensitive and culturally responsive, ensuring all learners can participate fully in the project's activities.

3.10. Submission of Proposal

Proposals should be submitted through the official EIT HEI application portal – accessed here: https://seedbook.eitrawmaterials.eu/AddHeiInitiativeProject.aspx?CallId=58006.

The details submitted in the application portal will constitute the complete project plan – or the IVAP.

The application has two parts:
- Part A – Technical Information (completed online in the portal)
- Part B – Narrative Content (using a Word template, uploaded online)

Further instructions for the submission of proposals are found in Annex 12.

3.11. KPI Criteria

The mandatory KPIs that Topic 1 and Topic 2 projects will be required to deliver on have been carefully selected from the EIT Impact Framework to serve as drivers and indicators of the EIT HEI overarching objective: long-lasting institutional change. KPI targets are set (and results are reported) at the project level; they are the responsibility of the consortium.

In the EIT HEI Call 2025, Topic 1 and Topic 2 have slightly different KPI requirements to reflect the Topic-specific objectives and key priorities outlined in Section 2 of this Call text. These are clearly indicated in the

below KPI table that outlines the minimum targets for the mandatory KPIs[7]. To be eligible for funding, the IVAP must demonstrate it is able to achieve the pre-defined minimum targets found in the table.

Please see Annex 12.3 for further information of each EIT KPI and the supporting evidence required to substantiate the achievement of the corresponding EIT KPI.

The EIT HEI Call 2025 does not set minimum annual KPI targets. Consortia are required to plan their KPIs on a calendar-year basis and will be expected to deliver on the commitments stated in their application.

<u>Topic 1 – KPI minimum requirements</u>

The below table outlines the minimum KPI requirements for proposals submitted to Topic 1:

KPI Code	KPI Description	Minimum Total Target – 1.09.2026 – 31.08.2028
EITHE03.1	Number of start-ups and scale-ups supported by the KIC for at least 2 months in year N, provided the KIC's services contribute to the company's growth (including potential growth). *Applicants should justify that the services provided to the start-up/scale-up by the EIT HEI project contribute to the company's growth (including potential growth). Examples of such services are mentoring, consultancy on access to finance and markets, product/service marketing, legal advice, internationalisation and matchmaking. The services should be provided for a total period of at least two months.*	6
EITHE04.1	Number of start-ups established in year N 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.	2
EITHE08.1	Number of successful participants in EIT professional development courses, online training courses and other education/training activities delivered or in a process of delivery (by country and type of programme), including data on country of citizenship and gender. Only participants, who successfully finished the programme,	4,000 *For EITHE8.1, projects must achieve minimum KPI results across three different participant*

---

[7] Please note that in the context of this call, when reading the KPI descriptions in the table, 'KIC' refers to the EIT HEI project; the project must implement/deliver on these activities.

	will be counted. For this KPI, only those education and training activities which have clearly defined learning outcomes, and which carries out competency assessment method are applicable. *In line with the Call's requirements (see Section 2), all trainings must foster the innovation, entrepreneurship and IP management capacities of students, academics and staff enrolled/working in STEM fields.* *All training programmes must consist of a minimum of 10 learning hours.*	*categories: students, academic staff and non-academic staff. The distribution should be set by the project.*
EITHE19.1	Number of new and/or improved structures and mechanisms established in or mobilized by HEIs participating in the EIT HEI with an objective to support innovation and / or entrepreneurship. *For example, the following structures and mechanisms will be considered: innovation testbeds, units, programmes, physical spaces, infrastructures, etc.*	4 *One of these must enhance diversity and inclusion, such as a new structure supporting female entrepreneurs.*
EITHE20	Number of new partnerships established as a result of the EIT HEI. This indicator has two sub-indicators, for which only one sub-indicator needs to be fulfilled: • [EITHE20.1] # New partnerships established by participating HEIs and businesses, research organisations, other actors • [EITHE20.2] # and % of HEIs which participate in other activities of the KICs *For both sub-indicators, partnerships must serve to strengthen the connection and integration of the project and its partners with other innovation and entrepreneurship (I+E) actors and/or initiatives.* • *Examples for sub-indicator 20.1 could be innovation-driven partnerships established between participating HEIs and other actors from the I+E network such as business partners or Research and Technology Organisations*	4

	(RTOs), or between consortia partners and local/regional government bodies, etc. • *Examples for sub-indicator 20.2 could be partnerships between project consortia partners and one or more of the EIT KICs, the project's participation in other KIC activities and/or EIT Community initiatives, etc.*	

In addition, the Topic 1 IVAP must select and deliver on a minimum of one of the following EIT Core KPIs, to be achieved by the end of the project funding period (31 August 2028). The proposal will be asked to indicate the planned year of achievement (recommended 2028, to allow full funding period for delivery).

KPI Code	KPI Description	Minimum Total Target – 1.09.2026 – 31.08.2028
EITHE02.4	Number of innovations introduced on the market during the KAVA duration or within 3 years after completion[8] with a sales revenue of at least 10 000 EUR documented. *Innovations introduced on the market must be directly linked with the KAVA [EIT HEI project] and reported in the year when they reached the first revenue.*	1
EITHE04.4	Number of start-ups established in year N 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 having financial transactions of at least 10 000 EUR for services/products (result of the KIC KAVA [EIT HEI Initiative project]) sold to customers or at least 200,000 EUR raised via private investment into start-up equity	1
EITHE06.1	Total EUR amount of private and public capital attracted in year N by supported startups/scale-ups (per country) that have received KIC business creation services support or EIT HEI Initiative project support for a total duration of at least two months.	Minimum 10,000€

---

[8] Please be advised that the EIT KPIs and EIT Core KPIs selected in the application, must be achieved within the year indicated in the proposal.

Topic 2: minimum KPI requirements

The below table outlines the minimum KPI requirements for proposals submitted to Topic 2:

KPI Code	KPI Description	Minimum Total Target – 1.09.2026 – 31.08.2028
EITHE03.1	Number of start-ups and scale-ups supported by the KIC for at least 2 months in year N, provided the KIC's services contribute to the company's growth (including potential growth). *Applicants should justify that the services provided to the start-up/scale-up by the EIT HEI Initiative project contribute to the company's growth (including potential growth). Examples of such services are mentoring, consultancy on access to finance and markets, product/service marketing, legal advice, internationalisation and matchmaking. The services should be provided for a total period of at least two months.*	6
EITHE08.1	Number of successful participants in EIT professional development courses, online training courses and other education/training activities delivered or in a process of delivery (by country and type of programme), including data on country of citizenship and gender. Only participants, who successfully finished the programme, will be counted. For this KPI, only those education and training activities which have clearly defined learning outcomes, and which carries out competency assessment method are applicable. *It is encouraged for proposals submitted to Topic 2 to deliver build innovation, entrepreneurship and IP management capacities in participants from STEM fields.* All training programmes must consist of a minimum of 10 learning hours.	4,000 *For EITHE8.1, projects must achieve minimum KPI results across three different participant categories: students, academic staff and non-academic staff. The distribution should be set by the project.*
EITHE09.1	Sum of students enrolled in EIT labelled master's, EIT labelled PhD programmes, participants in EIT labelled Fellowship schemes and other	50

	education activities awarded EIT Label (in year N).	
EITHE19.1	Number of new and/or improved structures and mechanisms established in or mobilized by HEIs participating in the EIT HEI Initiative with an objective to support innovation and / or entrepreneurship. *For example, the following structures and mechanisms will be considered: innovation testbeds, units, programmes, physical spaces, infrastructures, etc.*	4 *One of these must enhance diversity and inclusion, such as a new structure supporting female entrepreneurs.*
EITHE20	Number of new partnerships established as a result of the EIT HEI Initiative. This indicator has two sub-indicators, for which only one sub-indicator needs to be fulfilled: • [EITHE20.1] # New partnerships established by participating HEIs and businesses, research organisations, other actors • [EITHE20.2] # and % of HEIs which participate in other activities of the KICs *For both sub-indicators, partnerships must serve to strengthen the connection and integration of the project and its partners with other innovation and entrepreneurship (I+E) actors and/or initiatives.* 　• *Examples for sub-indicator 20.1 could be innovation-driven partnerships established between participating HEIs and other actors from the I+E network such as business partners or Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs), or between consortia partners and local/regional government bodies, etc.* 　• *Examples for sub-indicator 20.2 could be partnerships between project consortia partners and one or more of the EIT KICs, the project's participation in other KIC activities and/or EIT Community initiatives, etc.*	4 *These partnerships should be with stakeholders in the EIT ecosystem to generate EIT-alliance cooperation.*

In addition, the Topic 2 IVAP must choose and deliver on a minimum of one of the two following EIT Core KPIs, to be achieved by the end of the project funding period (31 August 2028). The proposal will be asked to indicate the planned year of achievement (recommended 2028, to allow full funding period for delivery).

KPI Code	KPI Description	Minimum Total Target – 1.09.2026 – 31.08.2028
EITHE05.1	Number of start-ups established in year N by students enrolled and graduates from EIT labelled MSc and PhD programmes or by learners / participants in other EIT labelled activities. *To be eligible, a start-up should be created during EIT labelled programme (by students, participants) or within 3 years from the graduation (by graduates) or within 1 year in case of other EIT Label activities*	1
EITHE07.1	Sum of graduates from EIT labelled master's, PhD programmes and other education activities awarded EIT Label (in year N).	10

4. Financial and Operational Aspects of the EIT HEI Call 2025

4.1   Project Duration

The duration of the projects selected under the EIT HEI Call for Proposals 2025 is 24 months. The funding period will start on 1 September 2026 and will finish on 31 August 2028.

4.2.   Available Budget

The total budget earmarked for the financing of projects under this call for proposals is estimated at EUR 70,000,000.

Topics	Indicative budget
Topic 1	EUR 36,000,000
Topic 2	EUR 34,000,000

We reserve the right not to award all available funds and/or to redistribute them between the Call Topics, subject to the proposals received and the results of the evaluation.

4.3.   Form of Grant, Funding Rate and Maximum Grant Amount

The grant parameters (maximum grant amount, funding rate, total eligible costs, etc.) will be fixed in the Project Grant Agreement (PGA) signed between the allocated EIT KIC and the project consortium.

The project budget (maximum grant amount) is up to 2,000,000 EUR per project. Applicants will be asked to plan their budget – and associated activities and KPIs – on a calendar-year basis.

The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested. The amount will be fixed by the allocated EIT KIC on the basis of the estimated project budget and a funding rate of 100%.

Projects selected under this call will receive a minimum pre-financing payment of 25% of the total annual grant amount to ensure smooth implementation. Both pre-financing and balance payments may follow an annual schedule, subject to the financial framework and reporting obligations agreed upon in the EIT HEI Project Grant Agreement. Beneficiaries are expected to manage funds responsibly and in compliance with Horizon Europe and EIT financial regulations.

4.4. Timeline and deadlines

Call Stage	Deadlines (indicative)
Call opening	3 December 2025
Deadline for submission	4 March 2026, 17:00:00 CET
Evaluation	March 2026 – June 2026
Information on evaluation results	July 2026
Project Agreement Preparation stage	July – August 2026
Expected project start date	1 September 2026
Expected project end date	31 August 2028

4.5. Eligibility of Costs

EIT HEI Projects are part of Horizon Europe. General funding and cost eligibility regulations follow the Horizon Europe Regulation and are governed by the Horizon Europe Grant Agreement[9] (annotations can be found in the HE Annotated Model Grant Agreement (AGA)). The funding rate that applies to the EIT HEI Projects selected for funding is up to 100%. The grant can only reimburse eligible costs (i.e. costs that comply with the general and specific conditions set out in Article 6 of the AGA).

The following budget categories apply to the EIT Higher Education Initiative Projects:

- Personnel costs
- Subcontracting costs
- Purchase costs
    - Travel and subsistence
    - Equipment

---

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

- o Other goods, works and services
- Other cost categories
  - o Financial support to third parties
  - o Internally invoiced goods and services
- Indirect costs

The budget of the selected EIT HEI Call for Proposals 2025 projects will be based on the estimated costs to be incurred by the project activities; 100% of all eligible costs may be covered but co-funding is encouraged.

The funding requested must be justified in relation to the planned activities as described in the IVAP. All costs must be fully described and justified. The costs should be reasonable, justified and directly related to the achievement of the objectives of the EIT HEI and IVAP. Moreover, subcontracting must comply with EU public procurement rules.

4.6. Operational Model

The Project Grant Agreements (PGA) will be signed between the allocated EIT KIC and the project consortium[10]. Based on the different operational models found across the KICs, details may vary; this information will therefore be presented to the selected projects following the communication of their proposal being selected for funding (during the operational onboarding process). This means that for operational matters, the project will always deal directly with their assigned EIT KIC and must follow their operational policies and requirements. However, the EIT HEI projects are part of Horizon Europe, so general funding and cost eligibility regulations are governed by the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (GA), as outlined in *Section 4.5*.

4.7. Intellectual Property Rights Rules

Selected EIT HEI projects, being projects funded under Horizon Europe, are governed by the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) rules laid out in Article 16 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (GA).

4.8. Communication, Dissemination and Visibility Rules

Selected EIT HEI projects, being projects funded under Horizon Europe, must follow the communication, dissemination and visibility rules (including the branding guidelines and obligations) set out in Article 17 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (GA).

The communication infrastructure and all communication activities implemented by the project must comply with the branding guidelines for the EIT HEI. This means that all project-related content must include the logo of the EIT HEI and the logo of the EIT KIC the project is allocated to, with the following text: *"[EIT KIC name] is supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the*

---

[10] This allocation process will be based on the proposal's EIT KIC alignment where possible, but it is not guaranteed that a project will be allocated to one of its two or three selected EIT KICs.

European Union"). The branding guidelines and all relevant branding assets (including logos, branded templates, etc.), will be shared with the selected projects during their onboarding process. Projects should include a Dissemination and communication activities Plan as a mandatory deliverable in their IVAP.

4.9.   Data Management Rules

Selected EIT HEI projects will be required to follow the data management rules set out in Article 17.4 and Annex 5 of Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (GA). Projects must prepare a Data Management Plan (DMP) in accordance with Horizon Europe guidelines as a deliverable. The DMP must outline how the data generated during the project will be managed.

Project data will be included in the EIT Portal by the relevant KIC and will be accessed by the EIT / European Commission. In addition, project data will be included in the HE system (i.e. eCORDA) and will be accessible to Member States.

5. Admissibility criteria

- The proposal is submitted by the submission deadline indicated.
- The proposal is submitted via the submission platform indicated.
- The proposal is complete, i.e. all mandatory fields have been filled in.
- The proposal is submitted in English.

If a proposal is found to be inadmissible, it will not move forward to the eligibility check, based on the eligibility criteria[11], and the applicant will receive an official communication from the EIT HEI informing them of the outcome of the admissibility check and explaining why the proposal failed to meet the criteria.

6. Eligibility criteria

Following the admissibility check, only proposals complying with the following conditions will be considered eligible for further evaluation:

6.2.   Entities eligible to participate

Any legal entity, regardless of its place of establishment, including legal entities from non-associated third countries is eligible to participate, provided that the conditions laid down in the Horizon Europe Regulation have been met (e.g. the entity is not under EU sanction), along with any other conditions laid down in the specific call/topic. For this call, a 'legal entity' means legal person created and recognised as such under national law, EU law or international law, which has legal personality and which may, acting in its own name, exercise rights and be subject to obligations, or an entity without legal personality.

---

[11] Please see Section 6. Eligibility criteria.

Funded entities must register in the EU Participant Register before submitting their application, in order to obtain a Participant Identification Code (PIC)[12].

6.3. Eligibility for funding

In accordance with the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025[13], in order to be **eligible for funding**, the **applicant must be established in one of the eligible countries**, i.e.:
- the Member States of the European Union, including their outermost regions;
- the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) linked to the Member States[14];
- countries associated to Horizon Europe[15];
- certain low- and middle-income countries[16].

Affiliated entities are eligible for funding if they are established in one of the countries listed above, or in a country identified in the Call.

Beneficiaries (BEN): A beneficiary is any legal entity that signs the Project Grant Agreement and undertakes to carry out part of the EIT HEI project. Beneficiaries are entitled to receive EU/EIT funding for their tasks and have full rights and obligations under the Project Grant Agreement, including technical implementation, financial management, and reporting.

Associated partners (AP): These are entities that are not able to or do not wish to participate as funded beneficiaries, but they may participate as associated partners.

Consortium composition criteria:

In Topic 1, proposals must be submitted by a consortium of **at least five beneficiaries,** which complies with the following conditions:

- Minimum three higher education institutions (HEIs):
  - based in three different Horizon Europe eligible countries,
  - at least one of the three partners must be based in a Member State,
  - at least two HEIs must be new to EIT HEI projects ("novice partners"),
  - each HEI must involve at least two faculties/departments.

- One business partner (private; small, medium or large enterprise),
- One other non-HEI partner (private or public), for example:
  - Second business partner (private; small, medium or large enterprises),

---

[12] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/participant-register
[13] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2025/wp-14-general-annexes_horizon-2025_en.pdf
[14] 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.
[15] 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
[16] See the Horizon Europe Programme Guide on the Funding and Tenders Portal for a complete list of these countries.

- o   Industrial associations,
- o   Cluster associations,
- o   KTOs/TTOs,
- o   Science parks,
- o   Incubators and accelerators,
- o   Venture Capitalists,
- o   Angel Investors,

In Topic 2, proposals must be submitted by a consortium of **at least five beneficiaries,** which complies with the following conditions:

- Minimum three higher education institutions (HEIs):
  - o   based in three different Horizon Europe eligible countries,
  - o   at least one of the three partners must be based in a Member State,
  - o   all three HEIs are either members of the same European Universities Alliance established under the European Universities Initiative (https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/european-universities-initiative),), or were members of the same European Universities Alliance after 1 January 2019,
- One business partner (private; small, medium or large enterprises),
- One other non-HEI partner (private or public), for example:
  - o   Any other organisation consisting of the above referred higher education institutions specifically set up with the purpose of implementing deep institutional transnational cooperation, including joint educational activities,
  - o   Second business partner (private; small, medium or large enterprises),
  - o   Industrial associations,
  - o   Cluster associations,
  - o   KTOs/TTOs,
  - o   Science parks,
  - o   Incubators and accelerators,
  - o   Venture Capitalists,
  - o   Angel Investors.

There is no maximum number of organisations within an EIT HEI project consortium.

An organisation may only participate as a funded partner in **one single application to the Call**, meaning they are not able to submit an application to both Topics. An organisation may participate in other applications only as an associated partner. If more than one application is submitted on behalf of the same institution, only the first proposal submitted to the application portal will be evaluated.

Only proposals satisfying all the eligibility criteria shall pass on to the selection and evaluation stages.

6.4.   EU restrictions on participation

- **EU restrictive measures**: Entities subject to EU restrictive measures under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)[17] as well as Article 75 TFEU[18], are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). Special rules also apply to entities covered by Commission Guidelines No 2013/C 205/0522[19].

- **Legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine**: Given the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the involvement of Belarus, there is currently no appropriate context allowing the implementation of the actions foreseen in this programme with legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine. Therefore, even where such entities are not subject to EU restrictive measures, such legal entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity. This includes participation as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis for justified reasons. With specific regard to measures addressed to Russia, following the adoption of the Council Regulation (EU) 2024/1745 of 24 June 2024[20] (amending Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 of 31 July 2014) concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, legal entities established outside Russia but whose proprietary rights are directly or indirectly owned for more than 50% by a legal person, entity or body established in Russia are also not eligible to participate in any capacity.

- **Measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary**: Following the Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506, as of 16 December 2022, no legal commitments can be entered into with Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain. Affected entities may continue to apply to calls for proposals and can participate without receiving EU funding, as associated partners, if allowed by the call conditions. However, as long as the Council measures are not lifted, such entities are not eligible to participate in any funded role (beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, recipients of financial support to third parties, etc.). In case of multi-beneficiary grant calls, applicants will be invited to remove or replace that entity in any funded role and/or to change its status into associated partner. Tasks and budget may be redistributed accordingly.

- **Restrictions for the protection of European communication networks**: The protection of European communication networks has been identified as an important security interest of the Union and its

---

[17] Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the EU Sanctions Map
[18] Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the EU Sanctions Map
[19] Commission guidelines No 2013/C 205/05 on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp. 9-11)
[20] OJ L 229, 31.7.2014, p. 1–11

Member States[21]. For further information, please refer to the Horizon Europe, Work Programme 2025, General Annexes, B – Eligibility on page 14[22].

7. Exclusion criteria

Applicants will be excluded from participation in the Call and from the award if they are in one of the situations referred to in Article 138(1) of the EU Financial Regulation. Applicants that are subject to EU administrative sanctions (i.e. exclusion) or are in one of the following exclusion situations that bar them from receiving EU grants can NOT participate:

- Bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts);
- They are in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts);
- They are guilty of grave professional misconduct (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant);
- They are guilty of fraud, corruption, having links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant);
- They have shown significant deficiencies in complying with their main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant);
- They are guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/9534 (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant); or
- They have created under a different jurisdiction an entity with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).
- Have misrepresented the information required as a condition for participating in the procedure or have failed to supply that information; or

---

[21] European Council conclusions of 1 and 2 October 2020 (EUCO 13/20), point 11; Council Conclusions on the significance of 5G to the European Economy and the need to mitigate security risks linked to 5G, 14517/19.
[22] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2025/wp-14-general-annexes_horizon-2025_en.pdf

- Were previously involved in the preparation of documents used in the award procedure where this entails a breach of the principle of equality of treatment, including distortion of competition, that cannot be remedied otherwise.

As evidence, the applicants (i.e. the Coordinator and all the proposed partners participating in the applicant consortium) will have to submit a declaration of honour on exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interest. Failure to provide adequate documentation may result in the exclusion of the applicants concerned.

Successful applicants will go through the legal entity validation process of the Onboarding Service of the KICs (i.e. a shared service led by EIT Urban Mobility KIC). If not provided in the application, the Onboarding Service will request registration documents and a signed Declaration of honour from the successful applicant. The validation may also include a check of the successful applicants by the EIT in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) of the European Commission.

8. Operational capacity

Applicants must demonstrate operational capacity through concrete, verifiable evidence, such as identified staff with relevant qualifications, documented experience in projects of comparable scale, and access to the specific infrastructure and resources required to carry out their assigned tasks. It will be based on the **competence and experience of the applicants and their project teams,** including their operational resources (human, technical and other) or, exceptionally, the measures proposed to obtain the necessary competence and experience by the time the tasks are implemented.

In particular, for Topic 1,
- Applicants must demonstrate the existence of a sufficiently large pool of potential participants (students, academic staff, and non-academic staff in STEM-fields of education) across partner HEIs within the consortium to ensure that KPI 8.1 (4,000 trained participants) can be met.

For Topic 2,
- Applicants must demonstrate the existence of a sufficiently large pool of potential participants (students, academic staff, and non-academic staff) across partner HEIs within the consortium to ensure that KPI 8.1 (4,000 trained participants) can be met.

Applicants will have to show their operational capacity by providing evidence of the size and relevance of this population required. Additional supporting documents may be requested, if needed to confirm the operational capacity of any applicant.

If, in case of doubt, additional documents may be requested by the KIC to confirm the operational capacity of the applicants:

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

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

9. Financial capacity

Applicants must have stable and sufficient resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share. In accordance with Article 27 of the Horizon Europe Regulation, the financial capacity **shall be verified for the coordinator if the requested funding is equal to or greater than EUR 500 000.** If there are grounds to doubt the financial capacity of an applicant, the allocated KIC shall also verify the financial capacity of the applicant, or of the coordinator even where the requested funding is below the threshold referred to above.

If requested by the allocated KIC, successful applicants will go through the validation and financial capacity check process of the **Onboarding Service of the KICs (i.e. a shared service led by EIT Urban Mobility KIC)**.

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[23] or has been covered by a financial viability check for an EU project for the last closed financial year.

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

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

---

[23] https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/lfv/lfvSimulation.do

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

10. Evaluation, Award and EIT KIC Allocation Procedure

Proposals will have to follow the standard submission and evaluation procedure (one-stage submission + one-step evaluation). Proposals will first be checked for admissibility and eligibility, see Sections 5 and 6). Proposals found admissible and eligible will be evaluated (separately per Topic) against the operational capacity (while the financial capacity will be checked only for the successful applicants at the grant preparation phase).

As next step, applications will be assessed against the award criteria. A quality assessment to evaluate the extent to which the applications fulfil the evaluation criteria will be carried out with the support of at least three independent experts per application. The independent experts will be supported by guidelines developed by the EIT HEI Selection Committee and provide a ranking list following the scoring agreed by the experts. This will result in two ranking lists, one per Topic.

The EIT HEI Selection Committee – representing all participating EIT KICs in the EIT HEI – will oversee the integrity of the entire evaluation, selection and allocation process. If the ranking list resulting from the external, independent evaluation results in further selection decisions being required, the EIT HEI Selection Committee will make the final selection based on a set of priority factors indicated in section 10.2. The EIT HEI Selection Committee will oversee the KIC allocation procedure.

10.1 Award Criteria

The award criteria are as follows:

TOPIC 1 AWARD CRITERIA	
1. **Excellence** (maximum 25 points)	
Clarity and relevance of the project's objectives.	• Describes clear, coherent objectives that directly address Europe's need to strengthen competitiveness, resilience, and strategic autonomy through STEM innovation. • Demonstrates alignment with the Union of Skills and STEM Education Strategic Plan objectives, including the twin green and digital transitions. • Provides a convincing rationale for embedding innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP management within STEM curricula and institutional strategies. • Contributes to building an inclusive and entrepreneurial STEM talent pipeline that supports strategic sectors. • Identifies clear target groups and expected benefits for students, researchers, and staff.
Quality of the proposed coordination and/or support measures, including soundness of methodology	• Describes a sound and evidence-based methodology for integrating innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP training within STEM faculties, departments, curricula and research settings. • Includes mechanisms for quality assurance, monitoring, and evaluation of learning outcomes. Demonstrates the use of established frameworks (e.g. EntreComp, EIT Label Quality System) to ensure pedagogical and quality coherence across activities. • Explains how methods (e.g. challenge-based learning, experiential training, cross-disciplinary projects) will achieve the defined objectives. • Provides a robust approach to strengthen research-to-market pathways and KTO/TTO capacity using the EIT Knowledge Triangle model. • Includes mechanisms to identify and address institutional barriers to STEM innovation and ensure continuous quality assurance.
2. **Impact**	
Credibility of the pathways to achieve the expected outcomes and impacts (maximum 25 points)	• Shows realistic and credible pathways to deliver the expected results, such as upskilling STEM students,

	researchers, and staff; and strengthening inclusive entrepreneurship in STEM fields.
	• Demonstrates clear contribution to Europe's strategic autonomy and resilience in key technologies.
	• Describes measurable KPIs and expected long-term impact on institutional capacity, innovation ecosystems, and regional growth.
	• Demonstrates how project outputs contribute to the STEM Education Strategic Plan, including contributing to the target of 200,000 trained participants by 2028.
	• Provides credible mechanisms to ensure long-term impact through institutional structures, governance models, and strategic partnerships that sustain innovation capacity beyond project funding.
	• Contributes to reducing territorial disparities by involving institutions from moderate and emerging innovation regions.
Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan (maximum 25 points)	• Provides a concrete plan for dissemination and communication at institutional, regional, and EU levels. • Defines how results will be exploited or institutionalised (e.g. curriculum integration, policy adoption, creation of innovation units). • Ensures sustainability and transferability of results beyond the project lifetime. • Describes comprehensive dissemination and exploitation measures to ensure broad uptake of successful STEM training models and innovation practices.
3. **Quality and efficiency of the implementation** (maximum 25 points)	
Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks, and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages, and the resources overall.	• Describes a clear and realistic work plan structured around coherent work packages aligned with Topic 1 priorities. • Demonstrates a well-defined timeline, milestones, and deliverables for embedding and scaling innovation training, strengthening KTOs and TTOs, and establishing partnerships. • Provides appropriate allocation of tasks, resources, and budget in proportion to expected results. • Includes a robust risk assessment and mitigation plan addressing institutional, operational, and contextual risks (e.g., stakeholder engagement, sustainability, staff capacity).

Capacity and role of each participant, and extent to which the consortium brings together the necessary expertise	• Describes the role and complementarity of each partner, ensuring the consortium brings together expertise in STEM education, entrepreneurship, IP management, and innovation management. • Consortium demonstrates integration of the Knowledge Triangle model, in particular strong participation from industry partners. • In the case of participation of previous EIT HEI participants, demonstrate how they will act as "Innovation and Entrepreneurship Pioneers" who scale and adapt proven approaches in STEM, provide mentoring and strategic guidance to novice partners, address capacity gaps, and share knowledge and best practices to ensure sustained impact across STEM innovation ecosystems. • Demonstrates institutional commitment through clear governance, decision-making, and resource-sharing arrangements. • Provides evidence of engagement with regional innovation ecosystems, industry partners, and EIT KICs to strengthen impact and sustainability.

TOPIC 2 AWARD CRITERIA	
1. Excellence (maximum 25 points)	
Clarity and relevance of the project's objectives.	• Demonstrates that project objectives are clearly focused on establishing long-term strategic partnerships between the alliance and the EIT KICs, aligning missions, resources, and, where relevant, thematic focus areas for maximum impact. • Explains how the proposal will align and collaborate with 2 - 3 selected EIT KICs, or where appropriate, pursue broader cross-KIC or sector-agnostic engagement, to enhance institutional innovation capacity and support alliance and KIC objectives. • Contributes to EU-level priorities (e.g. Union of Skills, Green Deal, Digital Transition, Smart Specialisation Strategies) and demonstrates complementarity with existing EU-funded activities to leverage synergies, avoid duplication, and build on proven results.
Quality of the proposed coordination and/or support measures, including soundness of methodology	• Describes a clear, robust methodology for alliance-level capacity building, coordination, and integration of KIC collaboration.

	• Includes a well-defined IVAP demonstrating structured, sustainable cooperation with EIT KICs, highlighting potential joint activities and resource sharing. • Includes mechanisms for quality assurance, monitoring, and evaluation of learning outcomes. Demonstrates the use of established frameworks (e.g. EntreComp, EIT Label Quality System) to ensure pedagogical and quality coherence across activities. • Demonstrates use of experiential learning, cross-disciplinary projects, and challenge-based approaches to achieve alliance and KIC-aligned objectives. • Provides a coherent approach to leveraging the EIT Knowledge Triangle to foster transnational collaboration, research-to-market translation, and thematic alignment with KIC priorities.
2. Impact	
Credibility of the pathways to achieve the expected outcomes and impacts (maximum 25 points)	• Demonstrates credible pathways to establish and sustain long-term strategic cooperation between the alliance and EIT KICs, mutually reinforcing innovation and entrepreneurship capacity. • Shows how alliance–KIC collaboration will strengthen institutional innovation strategies, research-to-market translation, and entrepreneurship education across Europe. • Describes the systemic impact of integrating alliance and KIC networks, including cross-border knowledge exchange, regional ecosystem strengthening, and interdisciplinary innovation. • Contributes to embedding sustainable innovation and entrepreneurship practices across alliance institutions, ensuring lasting benefits from KIC collaboration. • Demonstrates alignment with KIC thematic areas and cross-KIC objectives, generating scalable and transferable benefits for the broader European innovation ecosystem.
Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan (maximum 25 points)	• Provides a concrete plan to leverage alliance and KIC networks for dissemination, communication, and exploitation, ensuring sustained visibility and impact at institutional, regional, and EU levels. • Describes how cross-border mobility, exchange, and knowledge transfer between alliance and KIC partners

	will strengthen Europe's innovation ecosystem and amplify impact across sectors and regions. • Defines how results will be exploited or institutionalised (e.g. curriculum integration, policy adoption, creation of innovation units). • Ensures sustainability and transferability of results beyond the project lifetime.
3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation (maximum 25 points)	
Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks, and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages, and the resources overall.	• Describes a clear and realistic work plan structured around coherent work packages aligned with Topic 1 priorities. • Demonstrates a well-defined timeline, milestones, and deliverables for embedding and scaling innovation training, strengthening KTOs and TTOs, and establishing partnerships. • Provides appropriate allocation of tasks, resources, and budget in proportion to expected results. • Includes a robust risk assessment and mitigation plan addressing institutional, operational, and contextual risks (e.g., stakeholder engagement, sustainability, staff capacity).
Capacity and role of each participant, and extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary expertise	• Demonstrates that consortium partners collectively bring the expertise needed to embed innovation capacity, entrepreneurship, and IP management across alliances and strengthen cooperation with EIT KICs. • Consortium demonstrates integration of the Knowledge Triangle model, in particular strong participation from industry partners. • Explains the role of previous EIT HEI participants as "Innovation and Entrepreneurship Pioneers," who embed prior experience into alliance strategies, provide mentoring and strategic guidance to novice partners, address capacity gaps, and share knowledge and best practices to ensure sustained alliance-wide impact. • Provides evidence of institutional commitment through governance, decision-making, and resource-sharing arrangements across alliance members. • Includes engagement with KTOs, TTOs, regional innovation ecosystems, industry partners, and EIT KICs to reinforce short- and long-term impact.

Award criteria (Topic 1 and Topic 2)		Minimum pass score	Maximum pass score
Excellence		17	25
Impact	Credibility and scale of the project's expected outcomes and impacts	17	25
	Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan	17	25
Quality and efficiency of the implementation		17	25
Overall score		75	100

The following evaluation standards will be used to award scores to an application:

Score	Description
0 - 4	The application fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
5 - 9	Poor. The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
10 -16	Fair. The application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
17 - 21	Good. The application addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
22 - 24	Very good. The application addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
25	Excellent. The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

Maximum points: 100 points.
Individual thresholds per criterion: 17/25 points.
Overall threshold: 75 points.

Proposals that pass the individual thresholds AND the overall threshold will be considered for funding – within the limits of the available call budget (i.e. up to the budget ceiling). Other proposals will be rejected.

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing within the week of 6 – 10 July 2026.

A **reserve list** for the call, based on the final ranking lists of proposals (for Topic 1 and 2), will be in place in case a selected project cannot move forward with their funding period.

10.2. Ex-aequo Proposals

For proposals with the same score (within a topic) a **priority order** will be established as follows, starting with the highest scored group, and continuing in descending order:

1. The proposals will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the criterion 'Excellence'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on scores for the criterion 'Impact'.
2. If a distinction still cannot be made, the panel may decide to further prioritise by considering other factors such as gender and other diversity aspects in the innovation capacity building activities, participation of the non-academic sector, geographical diversity, and any other factors considered relevant by the EIT HEI Selection Committee. These factors will be documented in the Evaluation and Selection Report.
3. If this does not allow to determine the priority, a further prioritisation can be done by considering the overall project portfolio and the creation of positive synergies between projects, or other factors related to the objectives of the call. These factors will be documented in the panel report.

10.3. Standstill period

Following the communication of the results of the evaluation, a standstill period of **30 days** shall be applied before signing the Project Grant Agreement with the selected applicants.

10.4. Redress and Complaint Procedure

Upon receipt of the evaluation results, the applicant may wish to lodge a request for redress, if there is a concern that there might have been a shortcoming in the way a proposal was evaluated.

The redress procedure is not meant to call into question the judgement made by the independent experts who evaluated the proposals. The redress procedure will only consider procedural shortcomings and factual errors.

Requests for redress should be raised within **14 days** of the receipt of the evaluation report and should be sent to compliance@eitrawmaterials.eu.

Requests must:
- Be related to the evaluation process
- Include a clear description of the grounds for the complaint
- Be received within the time limit specified above

An initial reply will be sent to complainants no later than two weeks after the deadline for redress requests. This initial reply will indicate when a reply will be provided. The EIT HEI Selection Committee will be informed about the redress and a Redress Committee, established by EIT RawMaterials, will be convened to examine the evaluation process for the case under consideration.

If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could have affected the funding decision, the Redress Committee may decide that all or part of the proposal should be re-evaluated. Unless there is clear

evidence of a shortcoming there will be no follow-up or re-evaluation. The Redress Committee will inform the EIT HEI Selection Committee of the outcome of any such re-evaluations.

Please note:
- This redress procedure is concerned with the evaluation process.
- The Redress Committee will not call into question the judgment of the individual expert evaluators, whose qualifications have already been assessed and validated.
- A re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the quality assessment of a proposal. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on any other criterion.
- The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive.
- The evaluation score may be lower than the original score.
- Only one request (i.e. the first submitted request) for redress per proposal will be considered.

10.5.   EIT KIC Allocation Procedure

Once the ranking list per Topic has been finalised, the EIT HEI Selection Committee will oversee the procedure of allocating the successful proposals across the EIT KICs for project management purposes.

For Topic 1, the allocation methodology will prioritise balanced project management across all participating EIT KICs for the Call 2025, while making its best effort to match proposals according to thematic alignment with the KICs' objectives (Topic 1 proposals must also align with minimum two, maximum three EIT KICs). Thematic alignment – while important – is not the primary factor, rather ensuring equitable support, guidance, and access to resources from all EIT KICs involved in the EIT HEI. This approach allows Topic 1 projects to benefit from the collective expertise of the EIT KICs while maintaining flexibility to address a wide range of innovation priorities across Europe.

For Topic 2, the allocation methodology will reflect the unique nature of the Topic; proposals are expected to be designed in close alignment with the strategic objectives and thematic focus areas of their chosen two KICs. This ensures that projects directly contribute to the KICs' priorities while leveraging their expertise, networks, and innovation mechanisms. While thematic alignment is the primary priority for Topic 2, a level of flexibility is maintained for alliances with broader or multidisciplinary scopes, allowing them to benefit from KIC support even if closer sectoral alignment is not possible; these sector-agnostic alliances may instead look for alignment with specific activities or methodologies. This approach balances strategic thematic focus with inclusivity.

11. Other terms and conditions

11.1. Clarifications on errors or missing information

In the event of errors (such as obvious clerical mistakes) or missing information in the proposal, applicants may be invited to provide a clarification, correction, or completion of the application. Applicants will have

ten (10) calendar days from the date of the official communication to submit the requested information, with full respect for the principles of equal treatment and transparency.

The response will be assessed by the Evaluation Committee. If the applicant fails to provide the requested clarification or submits it after the deadline, the proposal will remain inadmissible and will be rejected. The Lead Applicant will be informed accordingly.

11.2. Acceptance of the call conditions

The KICs managing the EIT HEI reserve the right to make reasonable amendments and additions to the call conditions. Amendments and additions to the call conditions shall be valid only before the submission deadline, and if made available to all potential applicants at the same time on the call page here: https://eit-hei.eu/funding-support/funding-opportunities/open-calls/call-for-proposals-2025/

The KICs managing the EIT HEI may declare the call unsuccessful in case no applications are received, if the applications do not meet the admissibility, eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria, or if none of the applications reach the thresholds laid down in this call text.

By submitting the application form, the applicant agrees to the present call conditions. Applicants agree that they have no legal entitlement to funding.

11.3. Cancellation of the call
The KICs managing in the EIT HEI reserve the right to cancel the call at any time before the signature of the Project Grant Agreement(s) without the obligation to compensate applicants, in particular where its objectives can no longer be met, provided that the applicants are informed in a transparent manner in writing as follows:
- if the cancellation takes place before that award: on the call page of the EIT HEI website here: https://eit-hei.eu/funding-support/funding-opportunities/open-calls/call-for-proposals-2025/;
- if the cancellation takes place following the communication of the results to the applicants, during the standstill period, or any time before the signature of the Project Grant Agreement: in writing directly to the selected applicants.

11.4. Data protection

The EIT Raw Materials Deutschland GmbH managing the EIT HEI ensure that any processing of personal data shall be performed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016, on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and in accordance with Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).

As a data subject, you have the right of access, the right to rectification, the right to erasure, the right to restrict processing, the right to data portability, the right to object, and the right not to be subject to a decision based solely on automated processing. If you have a question about personal data processing or want to exercise your data subject rights, you can contact the Data Protection Officer of EIT Raw Materials Deutschland GmbH at kontakt@wiemer-ardnt.de.

The collected personal data will be used solely for the evaluation of the applications and the conduct of the call process. The data controller is EIT Raw Materials Deutschland GmbH.

Personal data will be deleted 5 years after the announcement of the results of the call in case of unsuccessful applications. Personal data processing for successful applications must be managed under the data policy for successful applications.

By submitting your application to this call, you consent that the KICs will collect, transfer, process, store, and delete your data in accordance with the aforementioned conditions.

For more information on the processing of your personal data, please consult the privacy statement of EIT Raw Materials Deutschland GmbH at:
https://seedbook.eitrawmaterials.eu/CallFileDownloadOpen.aspx?Id=63567

11.5. Confidentiality

The KICs managing the EIT HEI undertake to use any confidential information shared by the applicants solely for the purposes of the evaluation process.

Confidential information shall mean data and/or information (in any form) that is proprietary to, or possessed by, the applicants and not generally known to the public, or that has not yet been revealed whether in tangible or intangible form, that is identified as confidential in writing or when disclosed orally.

Confidential information included in the application form must be expressly labelled by the applicant as such in the form. As regards confidential information expressly labelled as such in the call process, the KICs managing the EIT HEI undertake to (i) not disclose them in any way and any form, without the prior written authorization of the applicant; and (ii) not to use them for purposes other than those strictly necessary for participation in the call.

Confidential information may be shared among the KICs managing the EIT HEI and their subsidiaries (e.g. KIC Co-Location Centres) solely for the purposes of the call process. The KICs managing the EIT HEI undertake to impose this confidentiality obligation on its employees and the employees of its subsidiaries and its collaborators, as well as on independent experts and all subjects who, by virtue of participating in the conduct of the call, including as members of the Evaluation Committee, may have access to such confidential data and information.

The applicants agree that data and information regarding the selected projects' implementation (e.g. success stories) not labelled as confidential may be disclosed in connection with the EIT HEI activities.

11.6. Avoidance of conflict of interest

The KICs managing the HEI are committed to ensure the avoidance of conflict of interest (regarding all actors) and comply with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination and sound financial management.

Measures to avoid potential Conflict of Interest or unequal treatment of applicants are ensured including through appropriate conflict of interest declaration and assessment process, established written communication channels and independent and fair complaints/redress procedures.

In case an applicant becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest affecting the conduct of the call process, it shall notify EIT Raw Materials compliance@eitrawmaterials.eu of the conflict of interest without any delay.

11.7. Ethics and values

The proposal must comply with:

- ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity) and

- applicable EU, international and national law, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Supplementary Protocols.

No financial support/EIT funding can be granted, within or outside the EU, for activities that are prohibited in all Member States. No financial support/EIT funding can be granted in a Member State for an activity which is forbidden in that Member State.

11.8. Intellectual property rights

Applicants retain full and exclusive ownership of their prior information and intellectual property rights. By submitting their application, applicants affirm that they hold ownership or have legally secured the right to use all elements of the innovative product or service included in their application.

Applicants agree to indemnify and hold harmless the allocated KIC and/or any assignee or affiliate from any third-party allegations or claims of intellectual property rights infringement by the product or service of applicants. Applicants shall have the right to further develop, use and license their intellectual property rights for creating, making, marketing, and distributing products, services, and technology. Applicants agree to respect the IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) Rules (Article 16) of the General Model Grant Agreement and the respective provisions of the Project Grant Agreement.

11.9. Withdrawal of the funding – Recovery of undue amounts

The allocated KIC may withdraw the funding after its award and recover all payments made in line with the provisions of the Project Grant Agreement, including in the following cases:

- in case the applicant committed substantial errors, irregularities or fraud;

- in case the applicant committed serious breach of obligations under the Project Grant Agreement or during its award (including non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, etc.)

- it is established that the awarded applicants were not eligible or should have been excluded.

11.10. Checks, reviews, audits and investigations

The allocated KIC retains the right to initiate checks, reviews and audit on an applicant that has been awarded funding, in order to verify compliance with the requirements of the call conditions and of the legal and contractual framework referred to above.

The allocated KIC may request any information and data from applicants that have been awarded funding for 5 years after completion for these purposes, as well as in relation to monitoring by the EIT.

In accordance with the Grant Agreement between the EIT and the KICs, the EIT and/or the Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) and the Court of Auditors may carry out checks, reviews, audits and investigations in relation to the call and the implementation of the projects.

11.11. Applicable law

The present call is governed by the applicable European Union legal framework (i.e. in particular the EIT Regulation[24], the EU Financial Regulation[25], the Horizon Europe Regulation[26]), supplemented, if necessary, by the national law of Belgium.

The applicants agree to observe the obligations outlined in the Partnership Agreement and the provisions of the Horizon Europe Grant Agreement signed between the EIT and the KICs to implement the EIT HEI activities.

Following the signature, the applicants will have to comply with the terms of the Project Grant Agreement between successful applicants and the allocated KIC.

---

[24] Regulation (EU) 2021/819.
[25] Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.
[26] Regulation (EU) 2021/695.

11.12. Settlement of disputes

All disputes arising out of or in connection with the call procedure and the implementation, which cannot be solved amicably, shall be finally settled before the courts of Brussels

12.Annexes

12.1   Information on Key Dates, Submission and Enquiries

Key Dates	Timeline
Launch of EIT Higher Education Initiative Call for Proposals 2025	3 December 2025
Opening of the application portal	3 December 2025
Deadline for submitting applications to EIT HEI Call for Proposals 2025	4 March 2026, 17.00 CET
EIT HEI Call for Proposals 2025 – online Info Sessions *Click on the name of the Info Session to go to the relevant event registration page.*	• 10 December 2025, 10:00 – 12:15 CET: EIT KIC Discovery Day • 15 December 2025, 15:00 – 16:30 CET: Overview of EIT HEI Call for Proposals 2025 • 18 December 2025, 10:00 – 11:15 CET: Introduction to HEInnovate • 12 January 2025, 15:00 – 16:30 CET: European Universities alliances Participation • 14 January 2026, 15:00 – 16:30 CET: MEL Framework and the Impact Domains and Actions • 15 January 2026, 15:00 – 16:30 CET: KPI Expectations • 19 January 2026, 15:00 – 16:30 CET: Application and Budget Planning • 20 January 2026, 15:00 – 16:30 CET: Open Q&A session
Evaluation period	4 March – 6 July 2026
Announcement of evaluation results to all applicants *(This will be accompanied by a request for the preparation of partner information templates for the Project Agreements)*	Week of 6 – 10 July 2026
Start date of EIT HEI Call for Proposals 2025 projects (Cohort 5)	1 September 2026
Face-to-Face Kick Off IVAP Workshop for selected projects (participation mandatory)	September/October 2026

	(If a proposal is selected for funding, exact dates will be communicated alongside the positive decision.)
Where to apply	Create an application in the portal here: https://seedbook.eitrawmaterials.eu/AddHeiInitiativeProject.aspx?CallId=58006
How to stay informed	Sign up to the newsletter HERE
For enquiries	For general enquiries: hei@eitrawmaterials.eu For enquiries related to the EIT KICs and their strategic documents: - EIT RawMaterials: Rosanna West: Rosanna.west@eitrawmaterials.eu - EIT Health: Siddhanth Rao: siddhanth.rao@eithealth.eu - EIT Urban Mobility: Antoine Berwart: antoine.berwart@eiturbanmobility.eu - EIT Manufacturing: Taylor Hall: taylor.hall@eitmanufacturing.eu 28Digital: Federico Curatolo: federico.curatolo@28digital.eu - EIT Food: Laura Borge del Rey: laura.borge@eitfood.eu - Climate-KIC: Climate-KIC HEI Initiative team: eit-hei@climate-kic.org - EIT Culture and Creativity: Dr Rolf Hughes: rolf.hughes@eit-culture-creativity.eu
FAQs	Please take a look at the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document for the EIT HEI Call for Proposals 2025 here.

12.2. Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP) Submission Guidelines

All funded projects must develop an Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP), which serves as the project's full proposal. The details submitted in the application portal will constitute the complete project plan.

Submission structure
The IVAP has two parts, which must be completed and submitted through the application portal:

Part A – Technical Information (online)

- General information about your project
- Applicant and partner details
- Associated partners
- Operational capacity
- Domains and Actions
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Alignment with EIT KICs
- Project budget

Part B – Narrative Content (Word template):

- Section 1: Excellence: Describe how your project demonstrates innovation and quality.
- Section 2: Impact: Explain the expected impact on your HEIs, students, and regional ecosystems.
- Section 3: Quality and Efficiency of Implementation: Outline how the project will be managed, monitored, and delivered effectively.

Once you have completed both parts, the lead partner must:

1. Download the Declaration of Honour template,
2. Sign it on behalf of the consortium, and
3. Upload it to the portal before final submission.

Using HEInnovate to Shape Your IVAP

- All HEIs in your consortium should complete the HEInnovate self-assessment tool, either individually or as a group.
- The results indicate your current innovation and entrepreneurship capacity and should guide your choice of Funded Actions.
- A dedicated info session on HEInnovate will be provided (see Section 4).

Your IVAP should clearly explain:

- Work packages, milestones, and deliverables
- Beneficiaries and key indicators to track progress
- Risk management and intellectual property (IP) strategies

Planning Beyond the Funding Period

Although funding covers 24 months (1 September 2026 – 31 August 2028), your IVAP must demonstrate a credible plan for sustaining project activities and achieving your 2035 vision.

12.3. EIT Impact Framework

From EIT's inception, excellence and impact have been guiding principles. A tangible and measurable impact is essential, especially during economic downturns. The EIT Community is characterised by a focus on results and on achieving long-lasting impact in the way Europe approaches and manages innovation. It is therefore critical that the selected projects demonstrate their ambition to create in a longer-term educational impact by strengthening human capital in research and innovation, enhancing innovative and entrepreneurial skills both at individual and organisational levels and fostering the creation and diffusion of knowledge and innovation openly within society.

The EIT HEI projects are expected to demonstrate how the implementation of the IVAPs will contribute to achievement of outcomes within the EIT HEI project funding period and toward 2035. In the IVAP, applicants must address the specific EIT KPIs and at least one of the listed EIT Core KPIs found in Section 3.11. All of these KPIs have been selected from the EIT Impact Framework.

Applicants should include the following in the call application:

- Specific EIT KPIs from Section 3.11 of this EIT HEI Call for Proposals 2025 text that may continue to be used to measure progress during the post-EIT HEI project funding period, 1 September 2028 – 31 December 2035.
- Minimum one EIT Core KPI shall be used to measure progress during the EIT HEI project funding period. Applicants must specify which Core KPI they select and the related target as per Section 3.11 of this call text.

Applicants should not use the KIC-specific KPIs found in the EIT Impact Framework for their IVAP.

Additional indicators may be used to monitor and track progress, results, outcomes and impacts, notably the EIT HEI MEL Framework[54].

12.4. Glossary of Terms

Horizon Europe: the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation. It tackles climate change, helps to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and boosts the EU's competitiveness and growth. More information can be found at https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en

European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT): Europe's largest innovation network strengthening innovation since 2008 by bringing together organisations across business, education, and research. This EU body mission is to create jobs and deliver sustainable and smart growth. It is an integral part of Horizon

Europe, the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. More information can be found at https://eit.europa.eu/

The **EIT IT Portal** collects detailed project, KPI, financial, and portfolio data needed for monitoring and strategic analysis. EIT KICs must submit data regularly in line with EIT guidance, with specific deadlines for different datasets. All information from the Portal is transferred to the EU's central data warehouse CORDA, supporting transparency and alignment with Horizon Europe. A shared Cross-KIC data pipeline will ultimately enable automated data transfer via API.

EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2021-2027: document setting the strategic direction, priorities and objectives of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and of its Knowledge and Innovation Communities (EIT KICs) for the years 2021 to 2027.
https://eit.europa.eu/news-events/news/new-eit-strategy-launched-2021-2027

EIT Governing Board: the EIT's principal governing body, entrusted with the strategic leadership of the Institute and the overall direction of operational activities implemented by the EIT main office. It is composed of 15 experts from higher education, research, business, and innovation appointed by the European Commission. It is independent in its decision-making and responsible for the selection, evaluation, and support of the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities. More information can be found at https://eit.europa.eu/about-us/eit-governance/eit-governing-board

EIT KIC: EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) are Europe-wide networks centred around addressing a specific societal challenge, from sustainable energy to climate change to healthy food and green transport. They are communities of Higher education institutions, Research centres, Businesses and investors, Public and non-profit organisations. There are currently 9 EIT KICs: EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Culture & Creativity, EIT Digital, EIT Food, EIT Health, EIT InnoEnergy, EIT Manufacturing, EIT RawMaterials and EIT Urban Mobility.

EIT Community (Cross-KIC): a collaborative network comprising the European Institute of Innovation and Technology's (EIT) long-term partnerships, known as Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). The EIT KICs work collaboratively on these EIT Community initiatives (Cross-KIC) that bring together academia, research, and business to power innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity. More information can be found at https://eit.europa.eu/community-activities

EIT Knowledge Triangle Model: Innovation model pioneered by the EIT based on the integration of the knowledge triangle, Higher Education – Business – Research, as an instrument addressing societal challenges.

EIT Impact Framework: the list of KPIs valid from 2022 to 2027 provided by the EIT. It comprises EIT Core KPIs (indicated in red), EIT KPIs and KIC specific (thematic) KPIs. The document can be downloaded at https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eit_impact_framework_2022-2027.pdf

KAVA: When this term is found in the KPI descriptions, it refers always to the funded EIT HEI project.

EIT Core KPI: EIT Core Key Performance Indicators. A Key Performance Indicator quantitatively measures the performance of a project over a specific time for a specific objective. KPIs are a compulsory requirement from the EIT for all activities implemented by the KICs and by the projects supported by the KICs. They are used by EIT to monitor the projects' and the KICs' performance and to define their funding allocation. The EIT Core KPIs are listed in the EIT Impact Framework 2022-2027 and highlighted in red.

EIT KPI: Key Performance Indicators set by EIT to monitor the performance of the KICs' and the KICs' supported projects activities. The EIT KPIs are listed in the EIT Impact Framework 2022-2027.

HEI: Higher Education Institution. Organisations providing higher, postsecondary, tertiary, and/or third-level education.

HEInnovate: a free, confidential, self-assessment tool for all types of higher education institutions willing to explore their innovative potential. It helps HEIs in the process of identification, prioritisation and action planning in eight key areas. It is an initiative of the European Commission launched in 2013 in partnership with the OECD. More information can be found at https://www.heinnovate.eu/en.

EIT HEI Call for Proposals 2025: fifth Call for Proposals launched by the EIT Higher Education Initiative. Four previous Calls for Proposals were launched and four cohorts of projects implemented, with the fourth cohort running until 31 April 2027. For more information on the previous calls, visit the EIT Higher Education Initiative website: https://eit-hei.eu/

EIT Higher Education Initiative cohort: the batches of Projects funded by the EIT Higher Education Initiative. These projects therefore implement their activities according to the same timeline, set of criteria and conditions.

Call Topic: The EIT Higher Education Call for Proposals is divided into two Topics, each with its specific scope and set of requirements/KPIs.

Application Portal: website through which consortia can submit their application for the EIT HEI Call for Proposals 2025. Please find the link to the Application Portal here: https://seedbook.eitrawmaterials.eu/AddHeiInitiativeProject.aspx?CallId=58006

Domains: impact areas to which the EIT Higher Education Initiative is aiming at contributing. There are five Domains, each of which includes a set range of Actions: Domain 1 – Fostering leadership support and institutional change, Domain 2 – Strengthening partnerships and networks, Domain 3 – Supporting Innovation and Business generation, Domain 4 – Enhancing innovation and entrepreneurship education, Domain 5 - Sharing knowledge and success.

Actions: activities funded under the EIT Higher Education Initiative Call for Proposals 2025. To form their Innovation Vision Action Plan, consortia choose from a set of Actions thematically arranged across five Domains. The full list of Actions is detailed in section 3.2.1.

EIT Label: The EIT Label model as a certificate of quality is only awarded to excellent educational programmes that focus on innovation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and leadership and are based on the knowledge triangle paradigm - the integration of business, education and research.

EIT HEI Community: a vibrant, cross-border network connecting students, staff, start-ups, HEIs, non-HEI partners, and other stakeholders from past, current, and future cohorts — while actively expanding to include new members beyond funded projects who share our mission. It fosters knowledge sharing, collaboration, and long-term support, enabling its members to continue to enhance their innovation and entrepreneurship capacity beyond project lifecycles. Through a dedicated platform, diverse events, community activities, and targeted matchmaking, it enables idea exchange, highlights successes, and drives systemic change across Europe and beyond.

Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP): it is the core of the EIT HEI project's application, generated with the answers provided by applicants to the questions in the EIT HEI Application Portal. The IVAP provides a clear, step-by-step action plan consisting of work packages, milestones, deliverables, and beneficiaries, as well as other key indicators to track progress and impact. A risk management and intellectual property management approach must also be included. For more details on the creation and criteria of an IVAP, please refer to section 3.2 of the EIT HEI Call 2025 text.

Participant Identification Code (PIC): a 9-digit number that serves as a unique identifier for legal entities participating in European funding programmes. A PIC number has no expiry date. To find the PIC of an already registered organisation, you can use the search tool of the EU Funding and Tenders Portal at https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/participant-register-search

Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS): an initiative by the EIT to enhance innovation capacities of countries with moderate and modest levels of innovation, according to the European Innovation Scoreboard. The list of EIT RIS eligible countries and territories can be found at https://eit-ris.eu/

Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3): the national or regional innovation strategies which set priorities to build competitive advantage by developing and matching research and innovation own strengths to business needs to address emerging opportunities and market developments in a coherent manner, while avoiding duplication and fragmentation of efforts. A smart specialisation strategy may take the form of, or be included in, a national or regional research and innovation (R&I) strategic policy framework. More information can be found at https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/home

Transferability Plan: part of the IVAP that demonstrates how the Actions selected by the project will be transferred and scaled within all relevant institutions during the funding period. The transferability plan

must also outline details regarding the further institutionalisation of the IVAP with a view toward 2035, and ways to sustain the project's main activities once the EIT HEI funding runs out.