

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

EIT CLIMATE-KIC HUBS IN CROATIA, GREECE AND LITHUANIA UNDER THE EIT REGIONAL INNOVATION SCHEME

Overview

Programme

EIT Regional Innovation Scheme

Date Published

13 February 2018

Online Application Form

[Click here](#)

Submission Deadline

10 April 2018, 23:59 CET via [online form](#)

Short Description

EIT Climate-KIC, Europe's largest public-private innovation partnership focused on climate change, is launching a call to recruit EIT Hubs (one in Croatia, one in Greece and one in Lithuania) to participate in its EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS). The EIT RIS is a structured outreach scheme to support the integration of the knowledge triangle (education, research, business) and increase the innovation capacity in regions in Europe not yet directly benefitting from the EIT and its KICs.

Target Group

Local organisations and partnerships of organisations from Croatia, Greece and Lithuania across the knowledge triangle of research, higher education and business, but also spanning the public sector, NGOs and cities and regions

Business Background

About EIT Climate-KIC

EIT Climate-KIC ("CKIC") is the EU's largest public private partnership addressing climate change through innovation. We educate students and experienced professionals on the challenges and opportunities of climate change; we develop, implement, and fund innovation programs and projects with leading climate innovators; and we incubate and accelerate climate-relevant start-ups. In so doing, we focus on four thematic priority areas: urban transitions, sustainable land use, sustainable production systems, and decision metrics and finance.

We deliver our activities through a partnership of more than 250 leading organizations from the public, private, and academic sectors, and with more than 150 staff in major cities across Europe. Founded in 2010, CKIC is supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union.

About the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

Innovation is the key to growth, competitiveness and social well-being in the 21st century. The capacity of a society to innovate is crucial in an ever more knowledge-intensive economy.

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) aims to enhance Europe's ability to innovate, which translates into adapting quickly to the fast pace of development, being one step ahead in providing solutions to rapidly emerging societal problems and developing products that meet the demands and desires of consumers.

Europe is facing a significant innovation challenge, where despite an excellence research base, dynamic companies and creative talent, good ideas are too rarely turned into new products or services. Europe needs a real change of mind-set towards the promotion of a more innovative and entrepreneurial culture.

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is a body of the European Union based in Budapest, Hungary. It was established by the Regulation (EC) No 294/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2008. It became operational in 2010 in its premises of the EIT Headquarters. The EIT currently employs approximately 50 members of staff and its Interim Director is Martin Kern since 1 August 2014.

EIT Climate-KIC is one of the current six Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) set up by the EIT:

| | |
|------------------|---|
| EIT Climate-KIC | http://www.climate-kic.org |
| EIT Digital | https://www.eitdigital.eu |
| EIT Food | https://www.eitfood.eu |
| EIT Health | https://www.eithealth.eu |
| EIT InnoEnergy | http://www.innoenergy.com |
| EIT RawMaterials | https://eitrawmaterials.eu |

You can find out more about the European Institute of Innovation and Technology on its website: <https://eit.europa.eu/>

About the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS)

The EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS) is the EIT Community's outreach scheme. The scheme enables the transfer of good practices and know-how from the EIT's unique approach to boosting innovation. The EIT Regional Innovation Scheme was introduced in 2014 to share good practices and experience emerging from EIT Community activities and to widen participation in our activities across Europe.

The objective of the EIT RIS is to contribute to boosting the ability to innovate of countries and regions in Europe that belong to the groups of so-called 'modest and moderate' innovators (according to the [European Innovation Scoreboard](#)).

Each KIC designs its own EIT RIS Strategy, fully aligned with its objectives and activities. EIT Climate-KIC started to implement the EIT RIS in 2014 – since then we have gradually extended our geographic reach. Our EIT RIS currently covers nine countries: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia. In each of the countries we work with a partnership of organisations across the Knowledge Triangle of business, research and education. In 2017 we have designated EIT Climate-KIC Hubs in each of the countries to cooperate with local innovators - individuals (e.g. students, researchers, entrepreneurs) and organisations (e.g. SMEs, universities, research labs, regions, NGOs and cities) - in our activities in education, business creation and acceleration, and innovation-driven research.

Find out more about the EIT RIS:

<https://eit.europa.eu/activities/outreac/eit-regional-innovation-scheme-ris>

EIT RIS Guidance Note:

https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eit_ris_guidance_note_2018-2020.pdf

About EIT Climate-KIC's Regional Innovation Scheme

Geographic Scope and Complementarity with our Strategy

EIT Climate-KIC aims to have impact in all EU member states, covering clusters of countries across Europe. The EIT RIS is our strategic instrument to:

1. Target the climate mitigation needs and challenges within EIT RIS eligible countries, noting that they encompass some for Europe's largest greenhouse gas emitters in the industrial and manufacturing context and through poor energy transition in the industrial and urban contexts. In addition, southern and eastern Europe faces some of the most acute climate adaptation risks and projected economic and societal costs, particularly regarding impact on agri-food.
2. Recognise local challenges spawn innovation to meet local needs. Our experience is we find astounding innovators and organisations wherever we work. We expect to learn from how local actors and ecosystems are facing their challenges and learn from that. At the same time, we will ensure the best of the experience and skills in our programmes and partnership are ready to support the EIT RIS countries in facing their part of Europe's climate change challenges.

Our Geographies (Benelux, CEE, DACH, Mediterranean, Nordics and UK/Ireland) and EIT RIS countries are where we build strong ecosystems at national and sub-national levels to grow impact in line with the Climate-KIC strategy and where we build the relationships between Climate-KIC and its community both strategically and at an operational level. We expect the interplay between the EIT RIS and our Geographies to be dynamic and attractive to EIT RIS countries and entities, encouraging them to get involved in the range of Climate-KIC activities and progress to partnership where this is deemed strategic.

EIT Climate-KIC Hubs

In all our EIT RIS countries we are working with selected local partners to set up EIT Climate-KIC Hubs to serve as entry points for interacting with local players, mobilising and internationalising local networks as well as facilitating Knowledge Triangle Integration.

Going forward, EIT Climate-KIC Hubs will be acting as the main local 'champions' in the EIT RIS countries.

The following minimum criteria are used for the assessment and recruitment of EIT Climate-KIC Hubs, ideally composed of several organisations across the knowledge triangle with usually one lead organisation:

Minimum Criteria (as specified in the EIT RIS Implementation Guidance Note 2018-2020)

1. Thematic alignment: The EIT Climate-KIC Hub is able to demonstrate commitment to the low carbon agenda and can show clear low carbon priorities.

2. Capacity: The Hub has identified one or more organisations which will act as the key intermediary with the host region/country. This organisation is in the position to commit and co-finance qualified resources to successfully manage the delivery of activities in the EIT RIS region/country and promote the EIT RIS to local players.

3. Commitment: To ensure the commitment of the potential EIT Climate-KIC Hub to the EIT RIS implementation, the candidate entity should describe its vision as to how it would facilitate the KIC's work in alignment with the KIC's EIT RIS Strategy (including stakeholder engagement).

4. Relations with national/regional authorities: The EIT Climate-KIC Hub must be able to demonstrate high-level political support at national and/or regional level. The support of policy-

makers is strongly encouraged in order to strengthen synergies and complementarities at all governance levels.

EIT Climate-KIC criteria

5. Track record in innovation: The EIT Climate-KIC Hub must be able to demonstrate a track record in low carbon sector innovation as well as the capacity to carry out activities across the entire innovation framework, working across the knowledge triangle (education, research, business).

6. Strong group of partners: The EIT Climate-KIC Hub has or is composed of a group of partners from across the knowledge triangle – universities, local authorities, companies and business intermediaries, research institutes, non-governmental organisations – who are keen and motivated to participate in local EIT RIS activities. If one entity acts as the EIT Climate-KIC Hub it has to demonstrate strong links and relationships with the aforementioned organisations.

7. Plans to use other sources of funding: The EIT Climate-KIC Hub must outline plans to mobilise and use “other sources of funding”, such as national and regional funding, including EU Structural Funds, pre-accession assistance monies and own resources, to participate in the EIT RIS and create synergies. Ideally, the organisation acting as a Hub will have a track record in mobilising such funds.

Links between the EIT RIS and Smart Specialisation

The EIT RIS has been conceptualised in a way that allows for synergies and efficiency gains for regions that have been designing Smart Specialisation Strategies (RIS3) and are looking for a better integration of the Knowledge Triangle as a driver on enhanced innovation capacity at regional level. We see Smart Specialisation as providing a strategic framework for investments in research and innovation funded by the European Regional Development Fund by:

- Setting out the main priorities for investment,
- Listing other policies and programmes that support businesses to invest in innovation,
- Helping regions and their partners to identify opportunities and collaborate across nationally and beyond, and
- Helping to align the activities of European Structural Investment Fund with other research and innovation programmes.

The EIT RIS is fully aligned with that and we create a space for our Hubs to capitalise on synergies and complementarities with their RIS3 (and equivalent) and constantly encourage them to do so.

Scope of EIT RIS Activities

In accordance with the EIT RIS Implementation Guidance Note, EIT RIS activities are to contribute to two action lines:

- **Action Line 1:** Engage local players in KIC activities (example outputs: EIT RIS scholarships, internships, networking, and matchmaking for start-ups, students and researchers in innovation projects, etc.)
- **Action Line 2:** Mobilise, interlink and internationalise national/regional networks (example outputs: Identification and initiation of joint projects and pilots based on KTI approach, among local KT actors)

Our EIT RIS activities span the entire portfolio of education, innovation and business creation activities. Via our EIT RIS Hubs we work with

- Startups: Common accelerator curriculum and methodology focusing on inter-country and regional mobility and cross-fertilisation
- Cities/districts: place-based hackathons, challenge-led workshops and (early stage) innovation projects
- Professionals: professional education and capacity-building courses and mobility programmes such as '[Pioneers into Practice](#)'
- Students: climate innovation summer school '[The Journey](#)', pre-incubation programmes and hackathons
- Ecosystems: network development and internationalisation/interlinking

Main Tasks of EIT Climate-KIC Hubs

Our EIT Climate-KIC Hubs carry out the following main tasks:

- Identify and map relevant local stakeholders across the knowledge triangle and closely cooperate with them, putting special emphasis on local, regional and national authorities.
- Function as interaction point between EIT Climate-KIC and local stakeholders.
- Organise regular events and outreach activities to inform local stakeholders how to get involved in KIC activities and engage them.
- Source local talent (students, startups, innovators) and enable them to participate in KIC activities.
- Cooperate with other EIT Hubs (both internationally - within EIT Climate-KIC - and nationally - cross-KIC) as necessary and regularly participate in EIT Climate-KIC organised meetings and calls to further refine EIT RIS strategy and goals.
- Provide EIT Climate-KIC with access to local, regional and national authorities and policy makers.
- Participate in high-level events to present the EIT RIS to relevant stakeholders and networks in Brussels and across Europe.
- Develop intelligence on EU, regional and national funding instruments and how these can be synergised with EIT RIS.

About this Call

EIT Climate-KIC is looking to extend its geographic scope via the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS), the EIT Community's outreach scheme. We are targeting innovative organisations from Croatia, Greece and Lithuania to join our network of partners and act as EIT Climate-KIC Hubs in the target countries. The EIT RIS connects EIT Climate-KIC with selected partnerships from business, higher education and research, as well as regional policy-makers, public entities and other stakeholders to spur innovation across Europe.

Call Duration

The call opens on 12 February 2018. The call closes on Tuesday, 10 April 2018, 23:59 CET. Late applications will not be accepted.

Target countries

The three target countries for this call are Croatia, Greece and Lithuania. Only organisations based in those three countries are eligible to apply under the current call.

Selection Criteria, Process and Timeline

Applications have to be sent via a dedicated [online form](#) and will be assessed against pre-set selection criteria. The selection criteria correspond to the above specified minimum and EIT Climate-KIC criteria:

| Criterion | Max. score |
|--|------------|
| Thematic alignment and commitment to the low carbon agenda | 15 |
| Capable intermediary organisation | 15 |
| Commitment to the goals of the EIT RIS | 15 |
| Excellent relations with national/regional authorities | 15 |
| Track record in innovation | 15 |
| Strong group of partners | 15 |
| Access to and plans to use other sources of funding | 10 |
| | 100 |

All complete and eligible applications received until 10 April 2018, 23:59 CET via the [online form](#) will be assessed against the EIT and EIT Climate-KIC selection criteria. The threshold to pass the first assessment round is set at 60 points. The minimal score that must be achieved per criterion may not be less than 5.

After this first round of assessments based on written application documents, EIT Climate-KIC will schedule bilateral calls with the candidates whose applications were scored with 60 or more points. The applicants will have the opportunity to present themselves. This will be followed by a round of questions. The selection panel will be composed of representatives of EIT Climate-KIC's geographies and themes as well as independent experts.

The three most qualified applicants will be selected to participate in the EIT RIS.

Timeline

| Time | Action |
|-----------------|--|
| 10 April | Call closes |
| 11-20 April | 1st assessment round (based on the written applications) |
| 20 April-25 May | 2nd assessment round (interviews via videoconferencing) |
| 28 May-1 June | Communication of selection results |

The results of the selection will be communicated to all applicants no later than **1 June 2018**. All applicants will receive confirmation in writing.

Frequently Asked Questions

Our organisation is already involved with another KIC. Can we still apply to become an EIT Climate-KIC Hub?

Yes, it is possible to get involved with more than one KIC. We even encourage synergies between activities.

Is it possible to apply for the EIT RIS as a single organisation?

Yes, it is possible, however, we strongly encourage you to apply together with other organisations and form diverse partnerships across the knowledge triangle. If you apply as a single organisation you have to demonstrate even stronger links with and support of other entities.

Is there funding available under the EIT RIS?

Yes, there may be limited funding (“seed funding”) available for qualifying proposals following selection as an EIT Climate-KIC Hub, however, we want to stress that neither EIT Climate-KIC nor the EIT RIS is a funding/granting scheme. By successfully applying to the present call for applications you become eligible to benefit from funding under the EIT RIS. Once you have been selected to work with us as an EIT Climate-KIC Hub under the EIT RIS you will be able to apply for internal calls for proposals open to EIT Climate-KIC entities involved in the delivery of our EIT RIS activities.

The primary sources of funding for the EIT RIS are from non-EIT sources (national funding, structural funds, participants’ own resources, etc.) and we expect our partners to be able to co-fund and, ideally, pre-finance activities. The annual funding volume for an EIT Climate-KIC Hub typically ranges between 200,000 € and 500,000 € for EIT Climate-KIC partners (out of which approximately 200,000 € for startup and education grants alone). Synergies and complementarities with other EU, national, regional innovation initiatives and funding sources are strongly encouraged.

If successful in the call, do we have to become an EIT Climate-KIC Community Member and EIT KIC partner?

Through the EIT RIS, EIT Climate-KIC is looking to expand its geographical reach and bring in committed and complimentary members to join our community. We welcome applicants whose core competencies complement our existing community portfolio. EIT Climate-KIC intends to welcome certain selected EIT RIS entities into the community and will support their community membership application process to become fully-fledged EIT Climate-KIC community members and, thereafter, EIT KIC Partners, if this is deemed strategic and in line with the other relevant criteria. It is highly recommended that at least one of the organisations constituting a Hub applies to become an EIT Climate-KIC Community Member and, thereafter, EIT KIC partner. In addition to formal community membership other forms of engagement are possible.

What are the benefits of being an EIT Climate-KIC community member?

The Community members have access to a range of benefits and services. Becoming an EIT Climate-KIC community member will not only enable you to benefit from funding under the EIT RIS, but will also grant you all the benefits of getting involved in our community:

- Membership of a long-term community which is transforming climate change ideas into commercial success. We bring together the most influential and commercially minded players in the climate change space
- Attractive returns on investment through open innovation
- More influence in the climate change field by working alongside the brightest academic minds and commercial entrepreneurs
- Being part of a network which not only effectively combats climate change but also generates prosperity across Europe with global impact
- Potential to apply to become an EIT KIC partner

Note there is a fee associated with community membership.

What are the expected benefits of the EIT RIS?

Selected EIT RIS partnerships and their regions benefit from the exchange of knowledge and good practice capitalising on their strengths, accelerating their innovation output, boosting regional innovation, and thus contributing to economic growth and prosperity. As main innovation actors in the regions, their participation in the EIT RIS will strengthen the regional innovation eco-system and output.

Based on the principle that people are and/or act as carriers of knowledge, participants from diverse backgrounds will be able to apply the knowledge, expertise and entrepreneurial mind-set gained through this stimulus scheme in the KICs. Upon return they will benefit not only their institutions but also the way in which innovation is approached in their

areas of origin. Moreover, they may act as multipliers by sharing the insights gained and the tangible benefits of the scheme with the selected partnership and beyond.

By collaborating with excellent partnerships from across Europe's regions, KICs benefit from an influx of talent and ideas which add value to their activities and amplify their impact in spurring innovation. Selected partnerships may act as test beds for the EIT and its KICs with a view to explore how Knowledge Triangle governance and activities could be replicated in and how lessons learnt and emerging good practices can be transferred successfully to a multitude of environments.

You are asking for one recommendation letter/letter of support. Who should this be coming from?

The letter of support should ideally be written by a national, regional or local authority in your country, dealing with climate/energy, R&D and/or innovation matters and serve as a testimony of your ability to effectively work across the country's knowledge triangle, bringing together all relevant stakeholders and mobilise the national innovation ecosystem.