



EIT HEI INITIATIVE Innovation Capacity Building for Higher Education

Innovation Capacity Building for Higher
Education in Europe's Outermost Regions

INCORE



Participating partners

Instituto Superior Técnico
(Lead partner)

PORTUGAL

La Palma Research Centre

SPAIN

Trisolaris Advanced
Technologies

PORTUGAL

Universidad Europea de Canarias

SPAIN

University of Madeira

PORTUGAL

University of Reunion Island

FRANCE

Max. funding Phase 1

€400,000

Max. funding Phase 2

€800,000



Project description

INCORE boosts innovation and entrepreneurial capacity in higher education institutions (HEIs) in Europe's Outermost Regions (ORs) by seizing region-specific contextual and business opportunities. INCORE's Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP) will be articulated and relentlessly driven towards expanding the ability of HEIs to innovate and better integrate with their regional innovation ecosystems. INCORE has a specific focus on Europe's ORs, and its mission is to trigger a fundamental transformation of the region's entrepreneurial and innovation capacity on the most systemic level.

Central to the INCORE IVAP is the identified need to substantially improve the framework conditions for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs, in particular high-tech start-ups) and HEIs to co-create new value, businesses, products and services. A key objective of the INCORE IVAP is to fundamentally transform the ways start-ups/SMEs and HEIs interact with each other via cooperation and co-creation. Our aim is to quickly pass beyond the comfort zone of studies, exchange of best practices and policy assessments and introduce a new set of sweeping measures and actions that will substantially increase entrepreneurial capacity of the participating HEIs at the institutional level. The pathway laid out by the INCORE IVAP will trigger systemic, transformational change, strengthening the integration and contribution of higher education institutions to the entire innovation ecosystem of their regions.

We aim to introduce a complementary set of concrete measures and actions based on real-life needs, creating a new foundation of an entrepreneurial environment mutually beneficial for universities and entrepreneurs alike, resulting in:

- improved SME access to HEI research infrastructures, testbeds, and laboratory facilities;
- improved HEI understanding of SMEs' perspectives and capacity requirements to turn innovations into marketable products and services;
- simplified intellectual property rights regimes and a simplified legal framework for HEI-SME cooperation;
- better, faster and simplified access to finance for new start-ups created in academic environments by staff or students;
- improved conditions for conducting demand-driven research and education activities at universities in Europe's ORs;
- a new model for SME-HEI cooperation that can be applied in other remote and rural parts of Europe.

In addition to the core objective, a set of auxiliary goals will support the design and the execution of activities, increasing the impact of the action. The pathways outlined in the INCORE IVAP will allow the development of new high-tech businesses and commercialisation capacity via rapid prototyping, proof-of-concept validation, and small-scale manufacturing for the mutual benefit of HEIs and SMEs.

Pilot Call Timeline



About the EIT's HEI Initiative

The EIT's HEI Initiative: Innovation Capacity Building for Higher Education was launched by the [European Institute of Innovation and Technology](#) (EIT) and is led by EIT RawMaterials – one of the EIT's Knowledge and Innovation Communities.

The initiative is part of the EIT's [2021–2027 EIT Strategy](#), and it aims to help higher education institutions to build the capacity to innovate and to teach innovation and entrepreneurship. More specifically, the initiative aims to encourage these institutions to look at their own practices and develop concrete actions to increase their impact on their ecosystems.

In March 2020, the HEI Initiative launched a Pilot Call for Proposals, inviting higher education institutions to design activities that will improve their entrepreneurial and innovation capacity. We are pleased to announce the results of this Pilot Call. To stay updated on the latest developments, visit the initiative website (<https://www.eit-hei.eu/>) and subscribe to our newsletter.