European Institute of Innovation & Technology

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EIT Higher Education Institutions (HEI) Initiative

Call for Proposals 2024

Version 3.0

History of changes

Version	Publication Date	Changes
1.0	19 September 2024	N/A
2.0	2 October 2024	- Corrected an error discovered in the Annex of the call text: *Section 5.2 EIT KPIs:* The required minimum number of trained academic staff and non-academic staff was stated as 350. This should be 50, as outlined in Section 3.3.2 of the call text.
3.0	15 November 2024	- Updated definitions of full and associated partners in section 3.4 - Corrected an error discovered in the Annex of the call text: *Section 5.2 EIT KPIs:* The required minimum number of mentored academic staff and non-academic staff was stated as 50. This should be 15, as outlined in Section 3.3.2 of the call text.

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1. Introduction to the EIT Higher Education Institutions (HEI) Initiative

The EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2021-2027[1] sets the strategic direction, priorities and objectives of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and its Knowledge and Innovation Communities (EIT KICs).

Under this EIT SIA 2021-2027, the EIT and the EIT KICs will raise the bar and create systemic impact in higher education by strengthening innovation ecosystems. This will be achieved through the following:

- Increasing the entrepreneurial and innovation capacity of higher education institutions across Europe by promoting and supporting institutional change in higher education institutions.
- Strengthening the integration and contribution of higher education institutions to innovation ecosystems.

To realise these ambitions, the EIT and EIT KICs established the *EIT Higher Education Institutions (HEI) Initiative*[2] (hereinafter referred to as the "EIT HEI Initiative").

The EIT HEI Initiative plays a crucial role in driving economic and societal transformation. In line with the EIT SIA, it focuses on building innovation and entrepreneurship capacity at the institutional level and fostering the strategic integration of higher education into the wider innovation ecosystem by equipping HEIs with essential knowledge, tools and networks. Its Calls for Proposals incorporate the EIT Knowledge Triangle Model[3] which brings together partners from education, research, and business to collaborate on innovation action plans. This approach fosters systemic change by enabling the co-creation of knowledge and impactful solutions to global challenges, both within individual projects and across the broader portfolio. Central to the EIT HEI Initiative is its commitment to building a dynamic, inclusive community of HEIs and non-HEIs to enhance the role of European higher education in the innovation ecosystem, promoting a more innovative and competitive Europe.

EIT HEI Initiative Strategic Objectives:

- Innovations to Market: The EIT HEI Initiative enhances institutional innovation and entrepreneurship capacity by facilitating the transition of academic innovations into market-ready solutions, thereby attracting investments, and nurturing startup creation and support.

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[1] 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

[2] The name of the EIT HEI Initiative may change in 2025 and will be in place for the Call for Proposals 2024 cohort start date. Successful proposals will be provided information about this at the stage of the communication of the application result. The name change will not affect the contents of the IVAP in any way.

[3] The Knowledge Triangle comes from the EIT Innovation Model. It refers to the interaction between business, education and innovation, which are key drivers of a knowledge-based society.

- European Higher Education Competitiveness: The EIT HEI Initiative strengthens European HEIs' competitiveness by transforming them into engines of innovation and entrepreneurship, attracting top talent, and forming strategic partnerships to maintain Europe's leadership in education and strengthen its role in global innovation.
- Employability through Skills and Competencies Development: The EIT HEI Initiative support HEIs to ensure graduates are equipped with advanced skills and competencies vital for thriving in tomorrow's job market and catalysing innovation in their professional paths.
- Dynamic and Inclusive Innovation Community: The EIT HEI Initiative unites European HEIs, businesses, investors, and other key stakeholders to collaboratively address complex challenges, fostering a diverse and inclusive community. The knowledge transfer and co-creation that occurs across this community leads to the further amplification of individual project success, impact and outreach, leading to the creation of impact at the community level.

HEIs selected for the EIT HEI Initiative utilise the Knowledge Triangle Model to drive systemic and institutional change. They also engage with Smart Specialisation Strategies[4] and align with the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS)[5] goals. This involvement enhances connections between HEIs and their local and regional ecosystems and helps secure additional funding beyond the project's initial period. The initiative promotes collaboration between EIT KIC partners and non-partners to tap into existing innovation and entrepreneurial expertise and encourages the exploration of opportunities within the broader EIT Community to maximize project impact and strengthen ties with the EIT ecosystem.

The initial pilot phase of the EIT HEI Initiative, which ran from 1st July 2021 to 30th 31st July 2024, achieved significant milestones: 65 projects involving 359 HEIs and over 380 non-academic organizations from 42 countries, trained more than 40,000 participants, and supported over 1,100 startups and scaleups. Following an independent evaluation, the EIT Governing Board has decided to extend the Initiative through the remainder of Horizon Europe (2024-2027)[6].

2. General requirements of the EIT HEI Initiative's Call for Proposals 2024

The Call for Proposals 2024 aims to further enhance the quality and competitiveness of European higher education by funding innovation capacity building projects that will bring about institutional and systemic change. It offers applying consortia the opportunity to shape their own pathway to innovation by selecting activities that address their specific capacity building needs. Selected projects will implement funded actions that, among others, will strengthen staff capacity, establish innovation structures, support technology transfer and business creation activities and foster collaboration between HEIs and business partners across Europe through the establishment of strategic partnerships.

[4] https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu
[5] https://eit.europa.eu/activities/eit-regional-innovation-scheme-ris-closing-innovation-divide-europe
[6] https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-04/GB_Decision_14-2024_FA%20HEI%20continuation%20in%202024-2025_web.pdf

This call especially invites organisations that have not previously participated in an EIT HEI Initiative selected project to apply and requires greater representation and engagement of business partners. By expanding and diversifying the EIT HEI Initiative consortia to include a stronger presence of the business side of the knowledge triangle, this call will enhance integration and improve knowledge exchange.

Additionally, former EIT HEI Initiative partners are invited to participate in the call, with a demonstrable added value for the scope and objectives of the project and with a specific role (and set of responsibilities) that utilises their innovation and entrepreneurship expertise developed during their previous EIT HEI Initiative project and their previous experience with the EIT ecosystem. More details on the participation of former partners can be found in Section 3.4.3.

Furthermore, the call will actively encourage proposals to align with other activities within the EIT ecosystem, such as EIT Community[7] initiatives (Cross-KIC), as well as find synergies with EU initiatives relevant to the objectives of the EIT HEI Initiative.

The EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024 will incorporate a two-strand approach in which applicants will need to select one of the two strands:

- **Strand A:** Innovation and entrepreneurship capacity building at HEIs.
- **Strand B:** Innovation and entrepreneurship capacity building at HEIs for the enhancement of Deep Tech.

Both strands will follow the same structure, budget, and requirements. However, Strand B proposals must detail how their action plans will enhance deep tech innovation and entrepreneurship within their consortia and align with the EIT Deep Tech Talent Initiative.

3. Specific requirements

The following EIT KICs[8] may participate in the implementation of the EIT HEI Initiative*[9]:

- EIT RawMaterials (coordinating EIT KIC)[10]
- EIT Climate-KIC[11]
- EIT Digital[12]
- EIT InnoEnergy[13]
- EIT Food[14]

[7] https://eit.europa.eu/community-activities
[8] KICs under Partnership Agreement and KICs under Memorandum of Cooperation.
[9] EIT KICs are not eligible to participate as a partner organisation in an application to the Call for Proposals.
[10] https://eitrawmaterials.eu/
[11] https://www.climate-kic.org/
[12] https://www.eitdigital.eu/
[13] https://www.innoenergy.com/
[14] https://www.eitfood.eu/

- EIT Health[15]
- EIT Manufacturing[16]
- EIT Urban Mobility[17]
- EIT Culture & Creativity[18]

This call will fund projects which will have a total duration of 25 months and a total budget of 1.34 million EUR to implement their activities. There will be two implementation phases, namely:

Phase 1:	1 April 2025 – 31 December 2025 (9 months, 540,000 EUR)
Phase 2:	1 January 2026 – 30 April 2027 (16 months, 800,000 EUR)

For the purposes of activities, KPIs and budget planning only, Phase 2 is broken down into two parts over the two calendar years it encompasses, as follows:

Phase 2a:	1 January 2026 – 31 December 2026 (12 months)
Phase 2b:	1 January 2027 – 30 April 2027 (4 months)

However, the proposals will be required to set out a longer-term impact vision for institutional and systemic change up to the year 2030. Throughout this five-year period (2025 – 2030), meaning both during the funding period and beyond, the projects will participate in a series of project review activities based on the EIT HEI Initiative Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation Framework[19]. These review processes will support the continuous improvement and scaling up of activities throughout the project lifecycle.

3.1. Key conceptual dimensions

Expand the reach and institutional diversity of the EIT HEI Initiative

Proposals should ensure organisational diversity when it comes to the composition of consortia, with diversity coming in the following forms:

- organisation type: this applies to both HEIs (e.g. research-centric universities, universities of applied sciences, medical universities, business schools, art and design schools, etc.) and to non-HEI partners (e.g. businesses, research institutes, government bodies, NGOs, etc.).

[15] https://eithealth.eu/
[16] https://www.eitmanufacturing.eu/
[17] https://www.eiturbanmobility.eu/
[18] https://eit-culture-creativity.eu/
[19] The MEL Framework is a lively document, that is informed and adapted as the Initiative and the needs of HEIs evolve. Please consult the most up-to-date version at: EIT HEI Initiative MEL Framework.

- geography: transnational consortia and participation from organisations based in RIS countries[20] and Widening[21] countries, as well as outermost regions and third countries associated to Horizon Europe which have not typically benefited from EU funding resources. Please see Horizon Europe Dashboards for data on this[22].
- level of innovation and entrepreneurship capacity and experience (matching 'pioneers' with 'novices'): consortia that match organisations with a strong history and performance in innovation and entrepreneurship (this includes previous EIT HEI Initiative project partners) with those that are 'newer' to the topic are encouraged.
- non-KIC and KIC member organisations: the EIT HEI Initiative aims to reach organisations not currently affiliated with an EIT KIC, though including KIC partner(s) in your consortium is encouraged for knowledge sharing purposes.

Institutionalisation/sustainability and long-lasting impact

All proposals will be required to demonstrate how they will ensure the institutionalisation of project activities and impact in the long term by explaining their long-term vision for the project; the path to enhancing innovation and entrepreneurial capacity within the corresponding HEIs must be clear, both at the institutional and ecosystem level, and with a view to 2030. Selected projects will have the time and resources to not only establish innovation and entrepreneurship capacity, but also to mature and even scale the impact of their innovations.

Related to the high importance of institutional change, all proposals must outline their strategy to attract and maintain engagement of their top management in the EIT HEI Initiative project, explicitly explaining how the leadership will play an active role in implementation. A signed letter of commitment is required from top management at the application stage (using the template provided in the application portal), and this letter will outline the following elements:

- Leadership Commitment
  - Personal Endorsement: leadership's personal commitment and support for the project and its activities
- Integration into Institutional Strategy
  - Strategic Alignment: how the project activities align with the institution's strategic goals
  - Ongoing Support: how the project will be incorporated into the institution's strategic plan
- Long-Term Engagement
  - Sustainability Plan: steps to ensure the sustainability of project activities beyond its funded duration.
  - Transferability Plan: How project outcomes will be integrated into ongoing operations.

[20] https://eit.europa.eu/activities/eit-regional-innovation-scheme-ris-closing-innovation-divide-europe
[21] https://rea.ec.europa.eu/horizon-europe-widening-who-should-apply_en
[22] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/horizon-dashboard

Top management will be invited to participate in regular policy discussions both through the annual EIT HEI Initiative policy events and the EIT HEI Initiative Community of Practices[23].

Knowledge Triangle integration, specifically strengthening connection to industry and business creation

Another focus of the call is placed on ensuring stronger integration of all three sides of the knowledge triangle – education, innovation and business – in EIT HEI Initiative projects as well as requiring a more proactive and substantial role of business partners in consortia (there is a requirement to have at least one business partner receiving EIT funding in the consortium). To further strengthen knowledge triangle integration, projects must outline the specific roles and activities of each partner when it comes to supporting research to market and how they will incorporate the EIT knowledge triangle model and its expected added value. Furthermore, this call wishes to see a strong focus on business creation activities, such as start-up/scale-up support and technology transfer mechanisms and structures.

Strengthening the regional dimension

Enhancing the local and regional dimension and impact of the EIT HEI Initiative will also play a pivotal role in the call. Project proposals should demonstrate how the project partners plan to contribute to smart specialisation strategies (S3)[24] via their planned activities. They should outline how they plan to engage with their national authorities in charge of smart specialisation and how they will explore any available S3-related funding opportunities. Consider relevant thematic S3 platforms such as Agri-food, Energy, Industrial Modernisation, Sustainable Blue Economy, especially with regards to education and skills for S3. The purpose here is to strengthen the links between HEIs and their local and regional ecosystems and provide an impetus to leverage additional funding sources beyond the EIT HEI Initiative project funding period of the selected projects.

Within the proposal, projects will consider and perform a mapping of their local and regional innovation ecosystems as a basis for the System Innovation training that they will participate in during project implementation.

Diversity and Inclusion

Applications must demonstrate how the project will prioritise, promote and facilitate diversity and inclusion at all levels of the project. Proposals must recognise and incorporate the essential need for diversity and inclusion to underpin all proposed innovation capacity building activities, explicitly outlining how they will do so. In terms of specific requirements, applicants must outline a diversity and inclusion value statement and action plan in relation to their project, explaining how this dimension will be addressed holistically throughout their activities.

[23] Please see the Glossary of Terms for a definition of the EIT HEI Initiative Community of Practices.
[24] https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

Connection with the EIT KICs and the EIT Community (Cross-KIC) activities

Within the application portal, strategic documents for each of the EIT KICs are available and downloadable; they illustrate the global challenge(s) and strategic objectives that the specific EIT KIC addresses. Proposals should review these documents, as well as the websites for each of the EIT KICs[25], and choose to align with at least two of the EIT KICs – a choice that should be based on what is relevant for the project scope – and the IVAP must outline how it will connect with/contribute to these strategic objectives and key activities.

Furthermore, when preparing a Call proposal, consortia are encouraged to review EIT Community (Cross-KIC) activities[26] 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 (Cross-KIC) and the EIT KIC websites.

Connection with other EU initiatives aimed at enhancing innovation at European HEIs

As part of their long-term impact pathways strategy, projects should consider participation in other EU initiatives relevant to the objectives of the EIT HEI Initiative and outline how they might align with and access them. For example, this could mean connecting with the European Universities Initiative[27], the European Education Area[28], the European Research Area[29] and the European Innovation Area[30], Erasmus+[31], and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)[32]. Proposals that show a clear vision for integration into this EU landscape will be positively evaluated.

Strengthen the EIT HEI Initiative alumni network of institutions and beneficiaries

This call will foster a lasting, fruitful and engaged alumni network both of participants that have benefited from previous EIT HEI Initiative activities and previous participating partners. The proposal should describe how the project will build awareness of the scope, value and activities of the EIT HEI Initiative among the beneficiaries of their activities and engage them as alumni of the EIT HEI Initiative. The proposal should also explain how it will disseminate the opportunities found within the EIT HEI Initiative community, across these stakeholders:

- beneficiaries of project activities, such as students, staff and start-ups
- the organisational structure, including top management of the institution
- relevant external stakeholders within their wider innovation ecosystem

[25] All EIT KIC websites are found at the top of Section 3; links provided in footnotes.
[26] https://eit.europa.eu/community-activities
[27] https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/european-universities-initiative
[28] https://education.ec.europa.eu/
[29] https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/our-digital-future/european-research-area_en
[30] https://www.europeaninnovationarea.eu/
[31] https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/
[32] https://marie-sklodowska-curie-actions.ec.europa.eu/funding

3.2. A two-strand approach

Strand A: Innovation and entrepreneurship capacity building at HEIs
Strand A will be an innovation and entrepreneurship capacity building Call and will span the breadth of existing EIT KIC themes, individually and/or in combination. The scope of the proposal may be freely shaped according to consortia needs and according to the call requirements.

Strand B: Innovation and entrepreneurship capacity building at HEIs for the enhancement of Deep Tech
This smaller strand, funding up to 12 projects, will have the thematic focus of deep tech innovation and entrepreneurship enhancement, with a particular emphasis on capacity building via the fostering of deep tech talent at HEIs. This strand responds to the identified importance of deep tech talent development for the future of innovation in Europe, as per the earlier-outlined New European Innovation Agenda. Applications to this strand must demonstrate how they align with the EIT Deep Tech Talent Initiative[33] and contribute to deep tech innovation and entrepreneurship.

Deep technology or deep tech is a classification of an institution, an organisation or a start-up company, with the expressed objective of providing advanced and emerging technology solutions to deep societal challenges. They present scientific or engineering challenges requiring lengthy research and development, and large capital investment before successful commercialization. Their primary risk is technical risk, while market risk is often significantly lower due to the clear potential value of solution to society. The underlying scientific or engineering problems being solved by deep tech companies generate valuable intellectual property and are hard to reproduce. Moreover, the solutions provided by deep technology and applications are critical for solving the complex global challenges that humanity faces, including climate change, sustainable energy or health.

The indicated list of deep tech fields, in which EIT aims at mobilising the one million talents within include:

1. Advanced Computing / Quantum Computing
2. Advanced Manufacturing
3. Advanced Materials
4. Aerospace, Automotive and Remote Sensing
5. Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, including Big Data
6. Biotechnology and Life Sciences
7. Communications and Networks, including 5G
8. Cybersecurity and Data Protection
9. Electronics and Photonics
10. Internet of Things, W3C, Semantic Web
11. Robotics
12. Semiconductors (microchips)

[33] https://www.eitdeeptechtalent.eu

13. Sustainable Energy and Clean Technologies
14. Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, Metaverse
15. Web 3.0, including Blockchain, Distributed Ledgers, NFTs

These deep tech sectors, sub-sectors, applications and definitions may change as technologies and markets change over time. What unites them is that they hold the key to the solution of complex societal challenges through innovation.

Deep Tech-related activities should focus on the capacity building of HEIs to foster deep tech talent at universities; indeed, the call requires the delivery and completion of deep tech training/skills development programmes as its priority KPI. Details on requirements and minimum targets for this KPI are outlined in Section 3.3.2. In addition, proposals should also incorporate additional deep-tech related capacity building activities such as (but not limited to):

- the integration of deep tech fields of study in course curricula
- the support and creation of deep tech start-ups and spin-offs
- the facilitation of deep tech-related innovations going to market

The specific deep tech-focused activities should be designed, established and further elaborated by the consortia in the IVAP.

Finally, the core KPI requirement, also outlined in section 3.3.2, should be delivered within the field of deep tech.

Partners participating in projects under Strand B of the call will also be asked to sign the EIT Pledge for Deep Tech Talent[34] to contribute further to the fostering of deep tech talent in other ways within their institutions.

3.3 Creation of an Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP)

All projects selected for funding are required to create an Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP) as the core of their application. The answers provided by applicants to the questions in the EIT HEI Initiative Application Portal[35] cumulatively generate the IVAP; in other words, the proposal is the IVAP. The IVAP will be submitted through the application portal, in two Parts, A and B, according to the following structure:

Part A – Technical information (to be completed online within the Application Portal):

1. General information
2. Applicant information

[34] https://www.eitdeeptechtalent.eu/the-pledge/join-the-pledge/
[35] Please find here the link to the Application Portal.

3. Associated Partners
4. Domains and Actions
5. KPIs
6. EIT KIC alignment
7. Project budget

Part B – Narrative content (a downloadable Word document template, containing instructions for what to cover in each Section, to be completed and uploaded as an attachment within the Application Portal):

- Section 1: Excellence
- Section 2: Impact
- Section 3: Quality and Efficiency of Implementation

Once all the above elements of Part A and Part B are completed and/or uploaded within the application portal, the lead partner (applicant) must download and sign the Declaration of Honour template on behalf of the project consortium and upload it to the portal, before clicking 'submit'.

The IVAP should be shaped based on the HEInnovate[36] self-assessment tool, to be performed by each HEI individually or as a group. Applicants should complete the HEInnovate self-assessment as an indication of the current state of the innovation and entrepreneurship capacity of the consortium and the results should be used to inform the choice of funded Actions to be implemented at the corresponding HEIs (more information on the funded Actions is found in Section 3.3.1).

The IVAP will provide 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. Projects selected for funding will participate in a mandatory face-to-face IVAP Kick Off Workshop in April/May 2025[37], during which participants will co-learn and collaborate across projects around the core themes of their IVAP[38].

As mentioned at the beginning of Section 3, while the EIT HEI Initiative will provide funding and support to selected projects for 25 months of the IVAP, from 1 April 2025 – 30 April 2027, the IVAP will be continued beyond the project funding period to achieve the project's outlined 2030 vision.

3.3.1 Actions supported

The funded Actions will be tied to the needs of the consortia (following the HEInnovate self-assessment results) and aligned to the objectives of the EIT HEI Initiative. The available Actions are structured under

[36] http://www.heinnovate.eu/
[37] The exact date is TBC and will be communicated to selected projects alongside a positive application outcome.
[38] The participation of four project partners to the IVAP Kick Off Workshop is mandatory, and thus applicants must plan travelling budget to cover these expenses. Please see section 3.5 for more details.

five key impact Domains, listed below. Seven 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.
- The remaining two actions must be selected from Domains 1 – 4, according to consortia needs. These are effectively Actions #5 and #6.
- Domain 5 – knowledge sharing has one single associated action: 'Collect and share Success Stories and Lessons.' It is a mandatory action for all EIT HEI Initiative projects and therefore is automatically selected – effectively Action #7.

List of Domains and associated funded Actions

Domain 1 – Fostering institutional engagement and change

- Secure and maintain institutional engagement for the implementation of the IVAP, including departments and other units of HEI(s) as well as the leadership of HEI(s).
- Enhance the scale and scope of student engagement activities, including improving student support offices to advise on innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Infrastructure development (incl. digital infrastructure).
- Develop inter- and multi-disciplinary support structures, testbeds and other structures to foster innovation.
- Set up or improve organisational units and/or entities, such as technology transfer offices, to develop collaborations for technology transfer.

Domain 2 – Strengthening partnerships (knowledge triangle integration)

- Establish new collaborations and enhance the nature, content and types of collaborations with external partners, including businesses, regional authorities, research organisations, governmental bodies, NGOs and other societal partners.
- Exchange good practices through enhanced networking and mutual learning.
- Collaborate with the EIT KICs, e.g. through peer-to-peer collaboration.

Domain 3 – Contributing to developing innovations and businesses

- Develop structures, conditions and incentives for people to create or develop their businesses and start-ups.
- Create structures, conditions and incentives for innovation-driven research.
- Utilise testbeds and other types of platforms.

Domain 4 – Enhancing the quality of innovation and entrepreneurial education

- Develop or improve innovation and entrepreneurial curricula.
- Assessment of teaching and learning practices.

- Develop innovation and entrepreneurial training programmes and mentoring schemes for staff and students.
- Organise internships in businesses.

Domain 5 - Knowledge sharing

- Collect and share Success Stories and Lessons.

3.3.2 KPI Criteria

The mandatory KPIs that projects will be required to deliver on have been carefully selected from the EIT Impact Framework[39] to serve as drivers and indicators of the EIT HEI Initiative overarching objective: **long-lasting institutional change.** However, projects are encouraged to explore the EIT Impact Framework document and identify any additional KPIs they may use to drive institutional change within their consortia and to drive meaningful progress towards societal, systemic impact.

To be eligible for funding, the IVAP must demonstrate it is able to achieve a pre-defined minimum number of mandatory EIT KPIs in Phase 1, as described below. Please see Annex 5.2 for the description of each EIT KPI and the supporting evidence required to substantiate the achievement of the corresponding EIT KPI. Please note that in the context of this call, when reading the KPI descriptions in the table, 'KIC' refers to the EIT HEI Initiative project; the project must implement/deliver on these activities.

Phase 1 (1st of April 2025 – 31st of December 2025)

Phase 1 KPIs must comply with the criteria outlined in the below table:

KPI Code	KPI Description	Minimum Target
EIT HE03.1	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.*	4

[39] https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eit_impact_framework_2022-2027.pdf

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. *All student training programmes must be equivalent to 2 ECTS and 50 – 60 hours study time.* *Academic and non-Academic Staff training programmes must consist of a minimum of 10 delivery hours.* *<u>For the Deep Tech strand</u>* *These minimum targets refer to deep tech focused student training programmes and mentoring. There are two angles which qualify for deep tech talent training and mentoring with students:* - *Proven deep tech sub-sector focussed training programmes (as per the earlier definition of deep tech in section 2.2) delivered to students on any academic programme; for example, this could be business students who need training in a deep tech sub-sector to complement their entrepreneurial activities.* - *Innovation/entrepreneurship capacity building training programmes delivered to science/engineering/ technology students who are working within deep tech fields, for the purpose of complimenting their deep tech expertise; for example, training on how to commercialise their research, soft skills for entrepreneurial success, how to secure funding for deep tech ventures, etc.*	*For EITHE8.1, projects must achieve minimum KPI results across three different participant categories, as listed below:* 350 Students 50 Academic Staff 50 Non-Academic Staff
	Number of successful participants in additional mentoring related to the training programmes. *Please note that this mentoring must be delivered as a complementary activity to a certain number of participants trained under the EITHE8.1 training programme KPI and must not be treated as a separate activity. The KPI will also be reported as such.*	35 Students 15 Academic staff 15 Non-Academic Staff

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, spaces, infrastructures, etc. KICs will need to gather the lists of structures and mechanisms from the participating institutions and provide them to EIT together with explanations as to how the EIT HEI Initiative has contributed to establishing, improving and/or mobilizing these structures.*	2 *(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 (Cross-KIC) initiatives, etc.*	2

Phase 2 (1 January 2026 – 30 April 2027)

The below tables state the mandatory EIT KPI minimum targets for Phase 2. Please note that the planned distribution of KPIs between Phase 2a and Phase 2b is at the project's discretion, as long as the total Phase 2 targets meet minimum requirements.

All Phase 1 EIT KPIs must be increased in Phase 2 by a set percentage, as outlined in the below table[40]:

KPI Code	KPI Description	Minimum Target
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.*	At least double the target you set for Phase 1 *E.g., if you set your target as 6 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 12, etc.*
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. *All student training programmes must be equivalent to 2 ECTS and 50 – 60 hours study time.* *Academic and non-Academic Staff training programmes must consist of a minimum of 10 delivery hours.* *For the Deep Tech strand* *These minimum targets refer to deep tech focused student training programmes and mentoring. There are two angles which qualify for deep tech talent training and mentoring with students:* - *Proven deep tech sub-sector focussed training programmes (as per the earlier definition of deep tech in section 2.2) delivered to students on any academic programme; for example, this could be business students who need training*	***For EITHE8.1, projects must achieve minimum KPI results across three different participant categories, as listed below:*** Students: 30% or more than in Phase 1 *E.g., if you set your target as 400 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 520, etc.* Academic Staff: 30% or more than in Phase 1 *E.g., if you set your target as 60 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 78, etc.* Non-Academic Staff: 30% or more than in Phase 1 *E.g., if you set your target as 100 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 130, etc.*

[40] If the minimum percentage increase from Phase 1 to Phase 2 produces a non-whole number, e.g., 0.5, please round it up. For example, a 30% increase on 45 is +13.5. In this case, please round up to 14.

	in a deep tech sub-sector to complement their entrepreneurial activities. - *Innovation/entrepreneurship capacity building training programmes delivered to science/engineering/ technology students who are working within deep tech fields, for the purpose of complimenting their deep tech expertise; for example, training on how to commercialise their research, soft skills for entrepreneurial success, how to secure funding for deep tech ventures, etc.*	
	Number of successful participants in additional mentoring related to the training programmes. *Please note that this mentoring must be delivered as a complementary activity to a certain number of participants trained under the EITHE8.1 training programme KPI and must not be treated as a separate activity. The KPI will also be reported as such.*	Students: 30% or more than in Phase 1 *E.g., if you set your target as 35 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 46, etc.* Academic staff: 30% or more than in Phase 1 *E.g., if you set your target as 45 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 59, etc.* Non-Academic Staff: 30% or more than in Phase 1 *E.g., if you set your target as 40 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 52, etc.*
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, spaces, infrastructures, etc. KICs will need to gather the lists of structures and mechanisms from the participating institutions and provide them to EIT together with explanations as to how the EIT HEI Initiative has contributed to establishing, improving and/or mobilizing these structures.*	At least double the target you set for Phase 1 *E.g., if you set your target as 4 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 8, etc.* *2 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 (Cross-KIC), etc.*	At least double the target you set for Phase 1 *E.g., if you set your target as 3 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 6, etc.*

In addition, the following EIT KPIs must be achieved in Phase 2:

KPI Code	KPI Description	Minimum Target
EITHE01.1	Number of innovative products, processes and methods & Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) applications resulting from KIC activities. *Type of intellectual property right: patent; trademark; registered design; utility model; other.*	2
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

Furthermore, the 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**:

KPI Code	KPI Description	Minimum Target
EITHE02.4	Number of innovations introduced on the market during the KAVA duration or within 3 years after completion[41] 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 Initiative 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.	No minimum value, to be set by the project

3.4 Participating organisations

To be eligible for participation and funding, a participant must be a "legal entity". A "legal entity" means any natural or 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.[42]

Full partners (funded entities) must register in the EU Participant Register before submitting their application,[43] in order to obtain a Participant Identification Code (PIC).

[41] 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. For the KPIs target to be achieved in 2027, those must be completed by the end of the project funding period.
[42] See Article 197(2)(c) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A12016E197
[43] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/participant-register

To be eligible for participation and funding as a full partner, consortium members must be established in one of the Horizon Europe eligible countries.[44] Non-Horizon Europe eligible countries may participate as associated partners, but they are not eligible to receive EIT HEI Initiative funding.

To be eligible for participation and funding as a full partner, the following restrictions apply under Horizon Europe:

- **Legal entities in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine**[45];
- **Hungarian universities subject to the measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the rules of law in Hungary**[46];
- In addition, as a new Horizon Europe requirement, participants must not fall under the **restrictions for the protection of European Communication networks**, as laid down in the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2025, General Annexes, Point B – Eligibility (page 7)[47].

The types of organisations eligible for participation and funding are:

- Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). These are institutions which offer recognised degrees or other tertiary level qualifications and other comparable institutions at tertiary level, if recognised by their national authorities. Each HEI must submit proof of accreditation by the corresponding national authorities to offer recognized degrees
- Businesses/ industry (private; small, medium or large enterprises)
- Research institutes
- Public bodies at local, regional or national level
- Intermediary organisations or associations which represent Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)
- Social enterprises and NGOs

[44] For list of countries eligible for funding and eligible for participation, please refer to the Horizon Europe (HORIZON) Programme Guide – https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide_horizon_en.pdf

[45] Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2025, General Annexes, Point B – Eligibility (page 9): https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-13-general-annexes_horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf

[46] Based on the Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506) on measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary, effective as of 16th December 2022, no legal commitments shall be entered into with any public interest trust established on the basis of the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity maintained by such a public interest trust. Higher education institutions falling under the public interest trusts established on the basis of the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 may still be part of an application under the Call for Proposals. However, no new legal commitments for ongoing selection procedures shall be entered into with any HU entity covered by the above Council Implementing Decision, unless the measures set therein are lifted. In case the Council measures would not be lifted, an applicant who has in its composition an entity falling under the Council Implementing Decision, may be offered, subject to the applicable rules and procedures in the Call for Proposal and to the feasibility of the project, to replace that entity and/or to change its status into associated partner. Tasks and budget could be redistributed accordingly.

[47] Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2025, General Annexes, Point B – Eligibility (page 7): https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-13-general-annexes_horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf

3.4.1 Role of the different organisations in the project

Coordinator: A participating organisation that submits the HEI Initiative application on behalf of all the partners. The applicant/coordinator must be an HEI. The applicant/coordinator has the full responsibility to ensure the EIT HEI Initiative project is duly implemented. The coordinator must:

- Represent and act on behalf of the consortium towards the EIT, the EIT KICs and the EIT HEI Initiative core coordination team.
- Bear the responsibility for the operational, administrative and financial implementation of the entire project.
- Coordinate the overall implementation of their project and the respective involvement of the full partners in its activities.

Full partners[48]: Those participating organisations which contribute actively to the achievement of the HEI project objectives. Full partners may be funded by the EIT ("EIT-funded full partners") or by other sources ("non-EIT funded full partner"). Each full partner must sign a mandate to confer to the coordinating organisation the responsibility of acting as main beneficiary and act in his/her name during the implementation of the project.

Associated partners (optional): The HEI projects can involve associated partners who contribute to the implementation of specific project tasks/activities or support the dissemination and sustainability of the results achieved, therefore their involvement and role in the HEI project and different activities must be clearly described. Associated partners do not receive EIT funding.

The involvement and role of both full and associated partners in the HEI Initiative project and its different activities must be clearly described in the IVAP.

3.4.2 Participation

An organisation may participate as a full partner in only one application to the call. Multiple applications which include the same organisation as a full partner will result in only the first application submitted in the EIT HEI Initiative Application Portal to be eligible for funding.

An organisation may participate as a full partner in one HEI Initiative application and as an associated partner in other EIT HEI Initiative applications. Moreover, an organisation may participate as an associated partner in multiple applications.

[48] Ibid

3.4.3 Full Partners from EIT HEI Initiative previous cohorts

Any organisation involved as a full partner in a selected EIT HEI Initiative project from cohort 1, 2 and 3 may participate as a full partner[49] in an application to the EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024, but their participation will only be considered if their activities comply with the following parameters for their consortium role and responsibilities:

- Previous EIT HEI Initiative partners must take the role of "Innovation and Entrepreneurship Pioneer" within their consortium and the larger EIT HEI Initiative Community. This pioneer role and its affiliated activities must be clearly explained and detailed throughout the project's IVAP and should – among other things - incorporate the following:
    - Provide support activities to the 'novice' EIT HEI Initiative partners in the consortium, helping them thrive as leaders in innovation and entrepreneurship, e.g.:
        - Support 'novice' partners to shape and improve their innovation strategies and policies.
        - Lead the process of identifying critical gaps in the consortium's innovation and entrepreneurship capacity and propose/run activities to fill these gaps.
        - Design and deliver mentoring programmes – at different levels of the organisation and involving different stakeholders – in which these 'pioneer' organisations advise and train the 'novice' organisations in areas related to innovation and entrepreneurship.
    - Disseminate and transfer good practices and success stories from these 'pioneer' partners to the 'novice' partners.
    - Use experience with the EIT ecosystem to explore and pursue (on behalf of the project and for the optimisation of project impact) additional opportunities and partnerships available within the EIT ecosystem and within the broader EU funding landscape. For example, they may facilitate the consortium's participation in other EIT Community initiatives (Cross-KIC) such as EIT Jumpstarter[50] or the EIT Supernovas[51], or they may use their expertise to help the HEI partners to pursue the EIT Label certification[52], bringing formal credibility to the innovation and entrepreneurship education programmes found within the consortium.
    - Take on an ambassador role for the EIT HEI Initiative at internal and external events and therefore strengthen the position of the Initiative as the leading community of practices in innovation and entrepreneurship for higher education institutions.

[49] Partners who participated as full partners in previous EIT HEI Initiative projects fall into the category of consortium partners that do not have access to the majority of the total project funding; the majority of the total project budget must go to HEIs that have never participated in a selected EIT HEI Initiative project before (and who are not officially affiliated with any EIT KIC). See Section 3.5 for further details.
[50] https://eit.europa.eu/community-activities/jumpstarter
[51] https://eit.europa.eu/community-activities/women-entrepreneurship-supernovas
[52] https://eit.europa.eu/our-activities/opportunities/eit-label-call-applications-2024

- Actively contribute to the EIT HEI Initiative alumni community and events, and support engagement efforts across the community of projects.

IVAPs proposing the simple continuation of activities funded under the previous calls, or not properly detailing the role of previous EIT HEI Initiative partners within their new consortia, **will not be considered for funding**.

3.4.4 Consortium composition

An eligible consortium must have a minimum of five full partner organisations, with the following criteria:

- Minimum three EIT-funded full partner higher education institutions (HEIs), with the following criteria:
  - They are based in three different Horizon Europe eligible countries
  - One of the full (EIT funded) partner HEIs must be the Project Coordinator
  - Minimum two full partner HEIs must be 'new,' i.e., didn't participate in a previous EIT HEI Initiative Cohort
- Minimum one business / industry partner (private; small, medium or large enterprises)

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

A broad geographical scope, especially involving organisations established in RIS[53] 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 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.

Existing consortia of HEIs, such as the European University Alliances funded by the European University Initiative are encouraged to apply.

3.5 Project Duration and funding allocation

The duration of the projects selected will be distributed across two phases. The funded activities in the IVAP should be designed for a 25-month period but include a clear distinction between the activities and results in Phase 1 and those in Phase 2. Phase 2 should also be planned according to an annual breakdown: Phase 2a (1 January 2026 – 31 December 2026) and Phase 2b (1 January 2027 – 30 April 2027).

[53] https://eit.europa.eu/activities/eit-regional-innovation-scheme-ris-closing-innovation-divide-europe

The total maximum funding for each EIT HEI Initiative project from this Call is EUR 1,340,000[54] (ONE MILLION THREE HUNDRED FORTY THOUSAND EURO). The call aims to fund up to 42 projects[55].

The proposal must state how the total project budget will be distributed across the full consortium partners[56].

For a proposal to be eligible, the project's total budget distribution/allocation across the full consortium partners must fulfil the following criteria (both for Phase 1 and Phase 2):

The majority of the total project budget, specifically a minimum of 50% + 0.01€ of the 1.34 million EUR, must be allocated to full partners in the consortium who fulfil ALL of the following criteria:

- Their organisation type **IS** an **HEI**
- They are an **HEI** that is **NOT** formally affiliated to any EIT KIC[57]
- They are an **HEI** that has **NEVER** participated in a selected EIT HEI Initiative project before[58]

This means that there are two categories of consortium partners when it comes to the budget distribution; those that fulfil the above three criteria and those that do not; 50% + 0.01€ of the total budget must be allocated to organisations in the consortium that fall into the former category (i.e., those that fulfil all three criteria).

Phase 1: 1 April 2025 – 31 December 2025

Phase 1 consists of 9 months. The total maximum funding per project for Phase 1 is EUR 540,000 (FIVE HUNDRED FORTY THOUSAND EURO).

Before continuing to Phase 2, projects must satisfactorily complete Phase 1; projects will participate in a Phase 1 Review process which will lead to a STOP-GO decision for the project regarding its progression into Phase 2. This STOP-GO decision will be based on the fulfilment of the following criteria:

- Delivery and validation of the Phase 1 EIT KPIs included in the IVAP, described in Section 3.3.2 and Annex 5.2 of this HEI Call 4.
- Achievement of key milestones and deliverables in Phase 1 (as set forth in the proposal's submitted application content attachments), in order to achieve institutional change in Phase 2.
- Submission of an updated IVAP - the information on how the EIT HEI Initiative has impacted project's efforts around specific domains will be collected as part of the Phase 1 Review.

[54] This maximum includes any co-funding.
[55] Funding beyond 2025 (i.e. for Phase 2 of the project duration) is subject to the EIT's approval of the 2026-2027 Grant Agreement.
[56] Associated partners are not eligible for EIT funding and therefore should not feature in the funding allocation process, nor should they be considered in the funding distribution criterion.
[57] Each of the EIT KICs uses different terminology for their formally affiliated organisations, for example a KIC partner, a KIC member, etc. Please use this KIC partner list as the reference document for this criterion.
[58] Please refer to this previous HEI partner list as the reference document for this criterion.

Phase 2: 1 January 2026 - 30 April 2027

Phase 2 will consist of an additional 16 months, which for activities, KPIs and budget planning purposes is broken down into Phase 2a (2026) and Phase 2b (2027)[59]. It will award an additional maximum funding of EUR 800,000 (EIGHT HUNDRED THOUSAND EURO).

The implementation of Phase 2 of the EIT HEI Initiative projects, comprising 1 January 2026 – 30 April 2027, will be subject to the successful completion of Phase 1 and the approval of the EIT HEI Initiative budget for 2026 and 2027, respectively.

3.5.1 EIT HEI Initiative Community Activities and Events

The EIT HEI Initiative management team, in its role supporting the development, implementation and learnings of project IVAPs, convenes project participants and the larger HEI Initiative 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 (Phase 1; 2025)
- Masterclass on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (online): 1.5-hour event, minimum two representatives per participating project (Phase 1; 2025)
- Sensemaking sessions (in person): 2-day event, up to three representatives per participating project (Phase 2)
- System Innovation Training (blended): approximately 10 days of training (four in-person, six online) open to entire consortium (Phase 1; 2025)
- Macro-Regional conference (in person): 1-day event open to entire consortium (Phase 2)
- Co-creation workshops and KIC Discovery Day (online): 10 x 0.5 days (Phase 1 and Phase 2) open to entire consortium (Phase 1 and Phase 2)
- Alumni event (online): 2 days per year (Phase 1 and Phase 2)
- Community of Practices participation (Phase 1 and Phase 2)
- Final event (in person): 1.5-day event, up to 3 representatives per project (Phase 2; 2027)

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 invitation 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. Please

[59] There is no formal STOP-GO decision between Phase 2a and Phase 2b; the breakdown is to facilitate project planning, management and reporting processes.

make sure that the estimates are an approximation of the estimated travel rates used by your organisation and meet the basic eligibility criteria of Horizon Europe. Please make sure to plan appropriate time and budget to be dedicated to the activities above. These activities may be aggregated into one Task in the IVAP, dedicated to EIT HEI Initiative Community Integration activities.

3.6 Eligibility of costs

EIT HEI Initiative Projects are part of Horizon Europe. General funding and cost eligibility regulations follow the Horizon Europe Regulation[60] and are governed by the Horizon Europe Grant Agreement[61] (annotations can be found in the HE Annotated Model Grant Agreement (AGA))[62]. The funding rate that applies to the EIT HEI Initiative 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 HEI Initiative Projects:

- Personnel costs
- Subcontracting costs
- Purchase costs
    - Travel and subsistence
    - Equipment
    - Other goods, works and services
- Other cost categories
    - Financial support to third parties
    - Internally invoiced goods and services
- Indirect costs

The budget of the selected EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024 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 HEI Initiative and IVAP. Moreover, contracting must comply with EU public procurement rules.

[60] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0695&qid=1621434634235&from=EN
[61] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf
[62] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/agr-contr/unit-mga_he_en.pdf

3.7 Operational model

All selected projects will be following cascading modalities to administer the funding. In practical terms, this means that the Project Grant Agreements (PGA) will be signed between the EIT KICs and the project consortium. Each selected project will be allocated to a specific EIT KIC for project management and the PGA will be signed with said EIT KIC[63]. 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 Initiative projects are part of Horizon Europe, so general funding and cost eligibility regulations are governed by the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (GA)[64], as outlined in Section 3.6.

3.8 Intellectual Property Rights rules

Selected EIT HEI Initiative 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)[65].

3.9 Communication, dissemination and visibility rules

Selected EIT HEI Initiative 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)[66].

The communication infrastructure and all communication activities implemented by the project must comply with the branding guidelines for the EIT HEI Initiative[67]. This means that all project-related content must include the logo of the EIT HEI Initiative[68] 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 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.

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[63] 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 selected EIT KICs.
[64] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/aga_en.pdf
[65] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/agr-contr/unit-mga_he_en.pdf
[66] *Ibid*
[67] The name of the EIT HEI Initiative may change in 2025, and selected projects will be required to implement their projects under this new name, following the associated branding guidelines.
[68] *Ibid.*

Projects should include a Dissemination and communication activities Plan as a mandatory deliverable in their IVAP, due by month 6.

3.10 Data Management rules

Selected 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)[69]. Projects must prepare a Data Management Plan (DMP) in accordance with Horizon Europe guidelines as a deliverable due by month 6. The DMP must outline how the data generated during the project will be managed.

3.11 Evaluation and selection process

3.11.1 Admissibility and eligibility check

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[70], and the applicant will receive an official communication from the EIT HEI Initiative informing them of the outcome of the admissibility check and explaining why the proposal failed to meet the criteria.

In the event of missing or incorrect information linked to KPI and applicant registration, applicants will be given five calendar days from the date of the official communication to complete the application. If applicants fulfil this requirement within the time limit, the proposals will proceed to the next step of the evaluation process (see Section 3.11.2 below). If applicants fail to fulfil this requirement or respond after the deadline, the proposals will remain ineligible and will not proceed any further. The Lead Applicant will be informed accordingly.

[69] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/agr-contr/unit-mga_he_en.pdf
[70] Please see Annex 5.1

3.11.2 Evaluation of proposals

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 Initiative Evaluation Committee and provide a ranking list following the scoring agreed by the experts.

The EIT HEI Initiative Evaluation Committee will oversee the entire evaluation and selection process. Using the ranking list resulting from the external, independent evaluation, the EIT HEI Initiative Evaluation Committee will make the final selection.

Excellence	Impact	Quality and efficiency of the implementation
▪ Clarity and relevance of the project's objectives. ▪ Quality of the proposed coordination and/or support measures, including soundness of methodology.	▪ Credibility of the pathways to achieve the expected outcomes and impacts specified in the work programme, and the likely scale and significance of the contributions due to the project. ▪ Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities.	▪ Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks, and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages, and the resources overall. ▪ Capacity and role of each participant, and extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary expertise.

Scores will be awarded for the evaluation criteria, and not for the different aspects listed within the individual evaluation criteria. Evaluation criteria are not weighted. For submitted applications, each evaluation criterion – Excellence, Impact, Quality and efficiency of the implementation – will be scored out of 5, respectively. The threshold for individual evaluation criteria will be 3.

The following rubric will be used to award scores to an application:

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

Where an application might fall between two full scores, evaluators will be allowed to provide half points if duly justified. This will apply to all three evaluation criteria.

The total maximum evaluation score for an application is 15. A total score of at least 11 and meeting individual criteria thresholds guarantees that the proposal will be considered for funding. However, scoring 11 does not guarantee funding as it is dependent on number of applications received. Proposals with a score of 10 may be reviewed for funding by the EIT HEI Initiative Selection Committee, subject to budget limits. Proposals scoring below 10 will be rejected.

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing within the week of 3 – 7 March 2025. A reserve list for the call, based on the final ranking list of proposals, will be in place in case a selected project cannot move forward with their funding period.

3.11.3 Ex-aequo Proposals

When the total scores of two or more proposals are equal (ex-aequo cases), the priority order will be established as follows:

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. These factors will be documented in the panel report.

3.11.4 Redress and Complaint Procedure

Please see Annex 5.5 for the Redress and Complaint Procedure.

4. Information on key dates, submission and enquiries

Key Dates	Timeline
Launch of EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024	19 September 2024
Opening of the application portal	19 September 2024
Deadline for submitting applications to EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024	12 December 2024, 17.00 CET
EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024 – online Info Sessions *Click on the name of the Info Session to go to the relevant event registration page.*	• 2 October 2024, 3pm – 4.30pm CEST: Overview of EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024 • 7 October 2024, 3pm – 4.30pm CEST: Introduction to HEInnovate • 8 October 2024, 3pm – 4.30pm CEST: MEL Framework and the Impact Domains and Actions • 9 October 2024, 3pm – 4.30pm CEST: Application Expectations and the IVAP • 15 October 2024, 3pm – 4.30pm CEST: KPI Expectations • 17 October 2024, 3pm – 4.30pm CEST: Role and opportunities for previous EIT HEI Initiative participants • 29 October 2024, 3pm – 4.30pm CET: Applying to Strand B: I+E for the enhancement of deep tech • 5 November 2024, 3pm – 4.30pm CET: Open Q&A session
Evaluation period	13 December 2024 – 28 February 2025
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 3 - 7 March 2025
Start date of EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024 projects (Cohort 4)	1 April 2025
Face-to-Face Kick Off IVAP Workshop for selected projects (participation mandatory)	April/May 2025 *(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
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: Laura Ulatowski: laura.ulatowski@eitmanufacturing.eu • EIT Digital: Elena Bortolotti: elena.bortolotti@eitdigital.eu • EIT Food: Laura Borge del Rey: laura.borge@eitfood.eu • EIT 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 Initiative Call for Proposals 2024 HERE

5. Annexes

5.1 Eligibility criteria

The EIT HEI Initiative projects will be reviewed through a competitive, external and independent evaluation process. To be considered for selection, the applicant/coordinator must submit an application on behalf of the consortium as a response to this call. Applications will be assessed against the eligibility criteria presented in this section. Applications must be submitted in the EIT HEI Initiative Application Portal by the 12 December 2024, 17.00 CET.

Eligible participating organisations	To be eligible for participation and funding, a participant must be a "legal entity". A "legal entity" means any natural or 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. Funded entities must register in the EU Participant Register before submitting their application, in order to obtain a Participant Identification Code (PIC). To be eligible for participation and funding as a full partner, consortium members must be established in one of the Horizon Europe eligible countries. Non-Horizon Europe eligible countries may participate as associated partners, but they are not eligible to receive HEI Initiative funding. The types of organisations eligible for participation and funding are: • Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). These are institutions which offer recognised degrees or other tertiary level qualifications and other comparable institutions at tertiary level, if recognised by their national authorities. Each HEI must submit proof of accreditation by the corresponding national authorities to offer recognized degrees • Businesses/ industry (private; small, medium or large enterprises) • Research institutes • Public bodies at local, regional or national level • Intermediary organisations or associations which represent Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) • Social enterprises and NGOs

Consortium composition	An eligible consortium must have a minimum of five full partner organisations, with the following criteria:
	
	• Minimum three EIT funded full partner higher education institutions (HEIs), with the following criteria:
	  ○ They are based in three different Horizon Europe eligible countries
	  ○ One of the full (EIT funded) partner HEIs must be the Project Coordinator
	  ○ Minimum two HEIs must be 'new,' i.e., didn't participate in a previous EIT HEI Initiative cohort

	• Minimum one business/ industry partner (private; small, medium or large enterprise) There is no maximum number of organisations within an HEI Initiative project consortium.

Full Partners from previous EIT HEI Initiative Cohorts	An organisation involved as a full partner in a selected EIT HEI Initiative project from cohort 1, 2 and 3 may participate as a full partner in an application to the EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024, but their participation will only be considered if they strictly respect all the following conditions:
	• Previous EIT HEI Initiative partners must take the role of "Innovation and Entrepreneurship Pioneer" within their consortium and the larger EIT HEI Initiative Community. This pioneer role and its affiliated activities must be clearly explained and detailed throughout the project's IVAP and should – among other things - incorporate the following:
	  ○ Provide support activities to the 'novice' EIT HEI Initiative partners in the consortium, helping them thrive as leaders in innovation and entrepreneurship, e.g.:
	  ▪ Support 'novice' partners to shape and improve their innovation strategies and policies.
	  ▪ Lead the process of identifying critical gaps in the consortium's innovation and entrepreneurship capacity and propose/run activities to fill these gaps.
	  ▪ Design and deliver mentoring programmes – at different levels of the organisation and involving different stakeholders – in which these 'pioneer' organisations advise and train the 'novice' organisations in areas related to innovation and entrepreneurship.
	  ○ Disseminate and transfer good practices and <u>success stories</u> from these 'pioneer' partners to the 'novice' partners.
	  ○ Use experience with the EIT ecosystem to explore and pursue (on behalf of the project and for the optimisation of project impact) additional opportunities and partnerships available within the EIT ecosystem and within the broader EU funding landscape. For example, they may facilitate the consortium's participation in other EIT Community initiatives (Cross-KIC) such as EIT Jumpstarter or the EIT Supernovas, or they may use their expertise to help the HEI partners to pursue the EIT Label certification, bringing formal credibility to the innovation and entrepreneurship education programmes found within the consortium.
	  ○ Take on an ambassador role for the EIT HEI Initiative at internal and external events and therefore strengthening the position of the Initiative as the leading community of practices in innovation and entrepreneurship for higher education institutions.
	  ○ Actively contribute to the EIT HEI Initiative alumni community and events, and support engagement efforts across the community of projects.
	Previous EIT HEI Initiative full partners will fall into the category of consortium partners that <u>do not have access to the majority of the total project funding</u>; the majority of the total

	project budget must go to organisations that have never participated in a selected EIT HEI Initiative project before (and who are not officially affiliated with any EIT KIC). IVAPs proposing the simple continuation of activities funded under the previous calls, or not properly detailing the role of previous EIT HEI Initiative partners within their new consortia, **will not be considered for funding**.
Proof of Commitment – Top Management	A "Commitment Letter" must be signed by top management of each HEI (Rector, Chancellor, Vice-Rector/Vice-Chancellor, or another representative in the senior management of the HEI) involved in the consortium as a full partner. This letter must use the template provided in the EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024 Application Portal.
Proof of Commitment – Faculties and Departments	A minimum of two faculties or two departments within each of the HEIs must be involved in the submission of the application and implementation of the selected HEI projects. Previous HEI partners must involve at least one new faculty/department from their institution. The involvement of technology transfer offices, university incubators and any other structures within HEIs contributing to pushing research to the market is strongly encouraged. A "Commitment Letter" must be signed by each Faculty Dean or Department Head within each of the HEIs.
Verification of an evidence-based approach taken to the creation of the IVAP	The consortium must provide the supporting documents illustrating that the HEInnovate self-assessment was performed and used as a basis for the development of their IVAP. The result of the self-assessment must be downloaded in pdf format and be uploaded as part of the application to the Call.

Eligible participating countries	• **EU countries:** All EU countries are eligible for EIT funding.
	• **Non-EU Countries Associated to Horizon Europe:** These countries can participate under equivalent conditions as legal entities from EU Member States[71].
	• **Countries with Ongoing Agreements**[72]
	• **Non-EU Countries Not Associated to Horizon Europe:** These countries can participate in a project but not always with funding. Participants from low- to middle-income countries are automatically eligible for funding. Others are usually not automatically eligible for funding and must participate at their own cost[73].
	• Frequently Asked Topics:
	  ○ **United Kingdom**
	  ▪ UK is associated with Horizon Europe effective from January 1, 2024.
	  ▪ This allows UK researchers and organisations to participate in the programme on equal terms with EU Member States.
	  ○ **Switzerland**

[71] Please check the Horizon Europe third country participation document for specific conditions for some countries: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratom_en.pdf
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] *Ibid.*

- Partners from Switzerland are currently not eligible for EIT funding. Their budget is covered by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI).
- Partners apply directly to SERI for funding, and upon request from partners, we issue a support letter detailing the project and the potential funding amount if Switzerland were associated to Horizon Europe.

- **Hungary**
  - Due to the Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506[74] effective from December 16, 2022, no legal commitments can be entered into with Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entities they maintain.
  - Affected entities can apply to calls for proposals but are not eligible for funded roles (beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, etc.) until the Council measures are lifted.
- **Russia, Belarus, and Non-Government Controlled Territories of Ukraine[75]**. Legal entities from these regions are currently not eligible to participate in any capacity due to the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the involvement of Belarus. This includes participation as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors, or recipients of financial support.
- In addition, as a new Horizon Europe requirement, participants must not fall under the restrictions for the protection of European Communication networks, as laid down in the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2025, General Annexes, Point B – Eligibility (page 7)[76].

[74] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022D2506
[75] Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2025, General Annexes, Point B – Eligibility (page 9): https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-13-general-annexes_horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf
[76] Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2025, General Annexes, Point B – Eligibility (page 7): https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-13-general-annexes_horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf

5.2 EIT KPIs

EIT KPI Code *(for KICs internal use only)*	EIT KPI name	EIT KPI definition *(as per EIT Impact Framework)*	Required structured data *(as per EIT Impact Framework; non-exhaustive list)*	Supporting evidence *(as per EIT Impact Framework and HEI Initiative requirements)*	Phase 1 *(minimum KPI target)*	Phase 2 *(minimum KPI target)*
EITHE01.1	Intellectual property rights	Number of innovative products, processes and methods & Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) applications resulting from KIC activities.	Structured data to be provided: • Year of reporting • Type of intellectual property right: patent; trademark; registered design; utility model; other • Application title • Application reference • Application date • IPR owner • Country of the IPR owner • Does the IPR owner take part in the HEI Capacity Building Initiative (HEI CBI) • IPR status: has the IPR protection been awarded • IPR Award reference if any • Technology Readiness Level • Reference to KAVA/portfolio No supporting evidence	No supporting evidence.	0	2

EITHE03.1	# Of start-ups/scale-ups supported	**Number (#) of start-ups and scale-ups supported by KICs for at least 2 months in year N, provided the KIC's services contribute to the company's growth** (including potential growth). KICs should justify that the provided services 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, match-making, etc. The services should be provided for a total period of at least two months. Start-ups and scale-ups will be reported by country of registration of the venture.	Structured data to be provided: • Year of reporting • Company name • Company registration number • Country of registration • Gender of the CEO • Reference to a specific KIC KAVA • Was the company supported through the EIT HEI Initiative?	The projects will be asked to provide a company registration certificate (Only for the KPI(s) reached in Phase 1. This supporting evidence will not be required in Phase 2.).	4	**At least double the target you set for Phase 1** *E.g., if you set your target as 6 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 12, etc.*
EITHE04.1	# Start-ups created	**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 (but not later than three years after the completion of KAVA).	Structured data for the KPI: • Year of reporting • Company name • Company registration number • Country of the company registration • Gender of the company CEO • Link to the specific KAVA • Was the company created through the EIT HEI Initiative?	No supporting evidence.	0	2

EITHE08.1	**# Of participants in (non-labelled) education and training**	**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.	Structured data for the KPI: • Year of reporting • Title of course/training/ education activity delivered • Type of the programme • Key learning outcomes, competencies, assessment method and results of the programme • Number of participants enrolled in the reporting year (and breakdown of participants by country of origin) • Number of participants who successfully finished the course in the reporting year • Is the training/education delivered through the EIT HEI Initiative?	No supporting evidence.	**Students**: **350,** of which mentored **35.** **Academic staff: 50,** of which mentored **15.** **Non-academic staff: 50,** of which mentored **15.**	**Students: 30% or more than in Phase 1** *E.g., if you set your target as 400 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 520, etc.* **Academic Staff: 30% or more than in Phase 1** *E.g., if you set your target as 60 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 78, etc.* **Non-Academic Staff: 30% or more than in Phase 1** *E.g., if you set your target as 100 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 130, etc.*
EITHE19.1	**# Of new and/or improved support structures and mechanisms established within or mobilized by the HEIs**	**Number (#) of new and/or improved structures and mechanisms established in or mobilized by HEIs participating in the HEI Capacity Building Initiative** with an objective to support innovation and / or entrepreneurship. For example, the following structures and mechanisms will be considered: innovation testbeds, units, programmes, spaces, infrastructures,	Structured data for the KPI: • Year of reporting • Higher education institutions involved • Countries where these structures were established incl. RIS countries • Description of the diversity and inclusion focus of the support structure/mechanism	No supporting evidence is required.	2* *One must have a diversity and inclusion focus	**At least double the target you set for Phase 1** *E.g., if you set your target as 4 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 8, etc.*

	participating in the EIT HEI Building Initiative	etc. KICs will need to gather the lists of structures and mechanisms from the participating institutions and provide them to EIT together with explanations as to how the EIT HEI Initiative has contributed to establishing, improving and/or mobilizing these structures.				*2 of these must enhance diversity and inclusion, such as a new structure supporting female entrepreneurs.*
EITHEI20	**# Of new partnerships established as a result of the EIT HEI Initiative**	**Number (#) of new partnerships established as a result of the EIT HEI Initiative:** Number of new partnerships established by participating HEIs and businesses, research organisations, other actors.	Structured data for the KPI: • Year of reporting • Organisations involved in these partnerships • Nature of the new partnership (contract, agreement, informal cooperation, etc.), including roles of different partners • Countries of the organisations involved. Of them: RIS countries. • Number of organisations from RIS countries • If the organisation participates in other KICs activities: yes/no.	No supporting evidence is required.	2	**At least double the target you set for Phase 1** *E.g., if you set your target as 3 in Phase 1, your Phase 2 target must be minimum 6, etc.*

5.3 EIT Core KPIs

Project must choose one of the three Target value to be set by the project (must meet minimum requirements set out in the Impact Framework, e.g. sales revenue ≥ 10 000 EUR for Number (#) of innovations launched on the market). Please see the below tables for details on the EIT Core KPIs.

EIT Core KPI Code *(for KICs internal use only)*	EIT Core KPI name	KPI definition *(as per EIT Impact Framework)*	Required structured data *(as per EIT Impact Framework; non-exhaustive list)*	Supporting evidence *(as per EIT Impact Framework and HEI Initiative requirements)*	Phase 1 *(minimum KPI target)*	Phase 2 *(minimum KPI target)*
EITHE02.4	**# Innovations launched on the market**	**Number (#) of innovations introduced on the market** during the KAVA duration or within 3 years after completion with a sales revenue of at least 10 000 EUR documented. Innovations introduced on the market must be directly linked with the KAVA and reported in the year when they reached the first revenue (but not later than three years after completion of the KAVA).	Structured data for the KPI: • Year of reporting • Name of the innovation • Type of innovation (e.g. new product, new service) • Market (country) • Country of origin of the company commercialising the innovation • Reference to a specific KIC KAVA • Was the innovation developed and launched on the market as a result of the capacity building activities delivered as part of the HEI CBI? • Was the innovation launched by learners/graduates from labelled programmes (or with direct link to participating in the labelled activity)?	• Description of product or process with specified performance characteristics/ physical parameters/ functionalities demonstrating novelty (new or significant improvement) of the product/process • Declaration demonstrating link with a specific KIC KAVA (indication of the specific output of KIC KAVA(s)) and financial proof of the KAVA investment in the innovation development • Documented proof such as an invoice or an online sales record demonstrating that the purchase has been made by a customer.	0	1 (if this EIT Core KPI has been selected by the Consortium)

EITHE04.4	# Start-ups created	**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 (but not later than three years after the completion of KAVA) having financial transactions of at least 10 000 EUR for services/products (result of the KIC KAVA) sold to customers or at least 200,000 EUR raised via private investment into start-up equity	Structured data for the KPI: • Year of reporting • Company name • Company registration number • Country of the company registration • Gender of the company CEO • Link to the specific KAVA • Was the company created through the HEI CB Initiative? • Was the company created through a cross-KIC project?	• Registration certificate of a start-up established in year N • Description of the start-up and its core business • Document such as an invoice or an online sales record certifying financial transactions of at least 10 000 EUR for services/products (result of the KIC KAVA) sold to a customer or a proof of private investment of at least 200,000 EUR into start-up equity	0	1 (if this EIT Core KPI has been selected by the Consortium)
EITHE06.1	Investment attracted by KIC supported startups and scale-ups	**Total EUR amount of private and public capital attracted** within year N by supported start-ups / scale-ups (per country) that have received KIC business creation services support or HEI CBI project support of total duration of at least two months, within a maximum of three years following the last received KIC KAVA incl. project support activity. Supporting evidence: declaration of a start-up proving the amount, type of investment, source of income by type (public/private) and a link to a specific KAVA and support received and the year when last support was provided.	Structured data proposed: • Year of reporting • Investment amount • Company name • Company registration number • Country of the company registration • Gender of the CEO • Was the company supported through the HEI CB Initiative? • Was the company created through a cross-KIC project?	• Declaration of a start-up proving the amount, type of investment, source of income by type (public/ private) and a link to a specific KAVA and support received and the year when last support was provided.	0	**No minimum value, to be set by the project** if this EIT Core KPI has been selected by the consortium

5.4 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 Initiative projects are expected to demonstrate how the implementation of the IVAPs will contribute to achievement of outcomes within the EIT HEI Initiative project funding period and toward 2030.

In the IVAP, applicants must address the specific EIT KPIs and at least one of the listed EIT Core KPIs found in Section 3.3. All of these KPIs have been selected from the EIT Impact Framework[77].

Applicants should include the following in the call application:

- Specific EIT KPIs from Section 3.3 of this EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024 text that may continue to be used to measure progress during the post-EIT HEI Initiative project funding period, 1 May 2027 – 31 December 2030.
- For Strand B, focus on deep tech talent training should be described in detail with specific reference to the EIT KPI 08.1.
- Minimum one EIT Core KPI shall be used to measure progress during the EIT HEI Initiative project funding period. Applicants must specify which Core KPI they select and the related target as per Section 3.3 of this call text.

Applicants <u>should not</u> 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 Initiative MEL Framework[78].

[77] https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eit_impact_framework_2022-2027.pdf
[78] EIT HEI Initiative MEL Framework

5.5 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 hei@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 definitive reply will be provided. A Redress Committee including the EIT HEI Evaluation Committee may be convened to examine the evaluation process for the case under consideration.

The role of the Redress Committee is to ensure a coherent interpretation of requests and equal treatment of applicants. The Redress Committee itself, however, does not re-evaluate the proposal. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Redress Committee may review the evaluation report and individual comments and examine the CVs of the evaluation experts.

Following its review, the Redress Committee will recommend a course of action to the EIT HEI Initiative Evaluation Committee. If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could have affected the funding decision, all or part of the proposal may be re-evaluated. Unless there is clear evidence of a shortcoming there will be no follow-up or re-evaluation. The EIT HEI Initiative Evaluation Committee will be informed of any redress procedures in due course.

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.

5.6 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/

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 Initiative 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.

EIT HEI Initiative Pilot Phase (2021-2023): the first three years of the EIT HEI Initiative, 2021–2023, with three Calls for Proposals being launched and three cohorts of projects implemented. In this phase, more than 40,000 students and staff were trained and over 1,000 start-ups and scale-ups were supported through the 65 EIT HEI Initiative projects selected. In total, 359 HEIs and 380+ non-academic organisations were supported with EUR 69 million.

EIT HEI Initiative Post-Pilot Phase (2024-2027): consolidation phase of the EIT HEI Initiative after the successful 3-year Pilot Phase. In this phase, the initiative will deepen synergies with EIT educational activities, consolidating the gains made during the pilot, but also incorporate new HEIs into the existing network, fostering a collaborative environment that transcends geographical boundaries.

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 2024: fourth call for proposals launched by the EIT HEI Initiative. Three Call for proposals were launched and three cohorts of projects implemented during the EIT HEI Initiative Pilot Phase (2021-2023). For more information on the previous calls, visit the EIT HEI Initiative website: https://eit-hei.eu/

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

Application Portal: website through which consortia can submit their application for the EIT HEI Call for Proposals 2024. Please find the link to the Application Portal here: https://seedbook.eitrawmaterials.eu/Login.aspx?Action=SignUp

Domains: impact areas to which the EIT HEI Initiative is aiming at contributing. There are five Domains, each of which includes a set range of Actions: Domain 1 – Fostering institutional engagement and change, Domain 2 – Strengthening partnerships (knowledge triangle integration), Domain 3 – Contributing to developing innovations and businesses, Domain 4 – Enhancing the quality of innovation and entrepreneurial education, Domain 5 - Knowledge sharing.

Actions: activities funded under the EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024. 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 2.3.1 Actions supported as part of the projects of the HEI Initiative Call 2024 text.

Deep Tech: Deep technology or deep tech is a classification of an institution, an organisation or a start-up company, with the expressed objective of providing advanced and emerging technology solutions to deep societal challenges. They present scientific or engineering challenges requiring lengthy research and development, and large capital investment before successful commercialization. Their primary risk is technical risk, while market risk is often significantly lower due to the clear potential value of solution to society. The underlying scientific or engineering problems being solved by deep tech companies generate valuable intellectual property and are hard to reproduce. Moreover, the solutions provided by deep technology and applications are critical for solving the complex global challenges that humanity faces, including climate change, sustainable energy or health.

EIT Deep Tech Talent Initiative: a flagship initiative under the New European Innovation Agenda, the European Commission's instrument to position Europe at the forefront of the new wave of deep tech innovation. Through this Initiative the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) will train 1 million people in deep tech areas. More information can be found at https://www.eitdeeptechtalent.eu/the-initiative/

EIT Pledge for Deep Tech Talents: a vehicle for partners and sponsors to join the EIT Deep Tech Talent initiative and contribute to the development and delivery of its courses and training. The Pledge unites public and private organisations, industry representatives and champions, academic partners, education providers, and Member States to support the EIT Deep Tech Talent initiative. More information can be found at https://www.eitdeeptechtalent.eu/the-pledge/

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 Initiative Alumni: community made of all the students, academic and non-academic staff trained, and the start-ups supported by the EIT HEI Initiative projects since Cohort 1. It aims at connecting all of

them to foster knowledge sharing and create new collaboration opportunities for all, via several activities like a dedicated online platform and annual event.

EIT HEI Initiative Community of Practices: instrument facilitating knowledge sharing, collaboration, and ongoing support to the network of EIT HEI Initiative alumni institutions, comprising HEIs, non-HEI partners, and diverse stakeholders from previous and future Cohorts, to foster a dynamic and interconnected ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship. Through this community, its members can share ideas and good practices, network and establish further collaborations to enhance their innovation and entrepreneurship capacity.

EIT HEI Initiative Resource Hub: platform exclusive for the HEI Initiative projects' staff/coordinators, which serves as a repository of useful resources (both generated from the EIT HEI Initiative team and the EIT HEI Initiative projects during IVAP implementation) and inspiring good practices for project implementation. Via the Resource Hub, users can also contact other project partners from all the EIT HEI Initiative cohorts and submit news or events that they want to showcase on the EIT HEI Initiative public website.

Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP): it is the core of the EIT HEI Initiative project's application, generated with the answers provided by applicants to the questions in the EIT HEI Initiative 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 2.3 of the EIT HEI Initiative Call 2024 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/

Strand A: the larger strand of the EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024. It is general, on innovation and entrepreneurship capacity building, without any specific thematic focus but still connecting with KIC strategic objectives. For this strand, the scope of the IVAP may be freely shaped according to consortia needs (following the requirements for the creation of an Innovation Vision Action Plan as outlined in the call text).

Strand B: the smaller strand of the EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024, funding up to 12 projects. It has the thematic focus of deep tech innovation and entrepreneurship enhancement, with a particular emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship capacity building for the enhancement of deep tech at HEIs.

Applications to this strand of the call must demonstrate how they align with the EIT Deep Tech Talent Initiative and contribute to deep tech innovation and entrepreneurship.

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 2030, and ways to sustain the project's main activities once the EIT HEI Initiative funding runs out.