



Synergies with Climate KIC

for prospective EIT Higher
Education Initiative
applicants

Climate KIC Vision

Our direction for the future.

A just, climate-resilient, beautiful future.

Climate KIC Mission

Our core focus and daily drive.

To catalyse systemic change for climate action through innovation, radical collaboration and place-based approaches.

Climate KIC Story

Our brand story

Founded in 2010 by the EIT, our initial mandate was to foster a community of innovators, educators, and businesses that could harness their skills to tackle the climate crisis. We take immense pride in having supported some of Europe's most innovative and inspiring changemakers over the past 15 years, building a network of over 200 organisations and supporting over 6,000 start-ups and 44,000 learners with our education programmes.

Yet despite our successes, we realised that the interconnectedness and complexity of the issues caused by climate breakdown – including environmental degradation, food and energy insecurity, geopolitical and financial instability, and economic and social inequality – calls for a broader, more holistic and integrated approach. So, we evolved.

Today, we apply a systems lens to all our work, catalysing action in places using innovation and radical collaboration. We work with 119 cities, 100 regions, 50 countries and many industries, to enable testing and learning, helping them deploy solutions that address interconnected challenges and unleash scalable transformation.

For us, this means playing the role of an orchestrator. Like a conductor, we connect, bridge, and find patterns in different solutions so that they become bigger than the sum of their parts. We listen, opening opportunities to learn from one another and find a different way to do things, together.

Organisation Strategy 2024-2030: Transformation, with Urgency

In December 2023, Climate KIC launched its refreshed strategy: [Transformation, with Urgency 2024-2030](#). This strategy sets our strategic direction for the next seven years and outlines the key decisions we have taken about the role that we and our Community will play, the work we will do and the impact we will seek to have for the rest of this decade. Going forward, we are committing to work on the basis of four principles and with a set of eight strategic choices listed below. The principles are the “foundations” on which we stand, and the strategic choices are the “constellation” by which we steer our efforts - directional inputs to shape and guide our work.

Our Four Principles

- Where there is a way, there is a will.
- Learning by doing.
- Radical collaboration.
- Changing everything needs everyone.

Our Strategic Choices

These choices represent an evolution of a number of key intervention areas to enable bolder and more effective action and capability building for places and industries in the ‘messy middle’ so that they can close the implementation gap between climate commitments and the reality of where the world is now:

1. Systems innovation to catalyse positive tipping points for change
2. A combination of depth and breadth to build momentum
3. Emphasis on learning to create adaptive capabilities
4. Radical collaboration to overcome fragmentation and competition
5. Illustrations of viable common futures to engage imagination and aspiration
6. Innovations to allow people to live well with less (starting in the Global North)
7. Technology advances and nature-based solutions to lower emissions and build resilience
8. Financial mobilisation and new institutional forms to stimulate and shape investment

For a detailed overview of Climate KIC’s principles and strategic choices, please see [Transformation, with Urgency 2024-2030](#)

What we do

This is a brief overview of selected Climate KIC activities to demonstrate how our strategic choices manifest in practice. We invite potential projects to explore Climate KIC programs and consider how they align with their HEI Initiative project implementation.

Systems Innovation Learning Partnership (SILP): Enable organisations, their people, and their implementation partners to learn together about what it takes to accelerate impact through systems innovation and how it can be done in practice - rethinking our responses to some of the world's most complex challenges.

Climate Entrepreneurship: Our flagship entrepreneurship programmes support citizens, entrepreneurs, and start-ups in kickstarting their climate solutions. We provide them with ideation support, business skills, access to networks, finance, and mentorship opportunities to unleash innovation across the world. See more details on our entrepreneurship initiatives Climathon, ClimateLaunchPad and ClimAccelerator on the "Collaborating with Climate KIC" topic below.

Net Zero Cities: EU Mission 100 cities achieving climate neutrality by 2030 supported by a consortia of city networks, research organisations, think-tanks, companies, and universities.

Climate KIC Academy: Our tailored learning approaches focus on transferable skills that encourage people to adapt, innovate, and lead across diverse industries. Whether it's system innovation, climate resilience, or regenerative business models, the Academy helps bridge the gap between climate ambition and workforce capability

Pathways to Resilience: An EU Mission project to support regions to strengthen climate resilience, in collaboration with 14 partners from 10 countries.

New European Bauhaus: The EIT Community to explore, test and scale-up new concepts for future ways of living with citizen engagement and co-creation projects.

Slovenia Deep Demonstration: A country transition to a circular, regenerative, and low-carbon economy with the nine ministries from the Slovenian government and key actors in the country.

Ireland Deep Demonstration: Systems innovation for the transition to a climate-neutral Agri-food sector in Ireland with the Irish Government and key stakeholders in the sector.

Gipuzkoa Deep Demonstration: An initiative to build collaborative governance on the two leading sectors of mobility and food and a deeper systemic way of thinking and working.

Climate Adaptation Innovation Learning (CAIL): The project accelerates innovation and private sector engagement in climate change adaptation by creating a unique knowledge-sharing platform across three communities of practice: MSME acceleration and innovation, investment funds, and impact measurement and information flows.

Climate KIC and the EIT Higher Education Initiative

Climate KIC has been a delivering KIC within the EIT Higher Education Initiative since the Initiative's inception in 2021. We have been working with projects, spanning 40 countries and over 100 full partners, on themes of sustainable futures, climate innovation, climate-neutral smart and circular cities, Green-and Deep- Tech. In addition to supporting and administering project grants, Climate KIC orchestrates the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework within the Initiative to gather impact and generate learnings and lessons from project activities. Sensemaking sessions and Systems Innovation are at the core of our contribution to the EIT Higher Education Initiative.

Future EIT Higher Education Initiative projects will address one or more of the following areas:

- agri-food and land use
- blue economy
- cities & regions
- finance & investments
- industry and value chains

Projects should align with Climate KIC's mission of catalysing systemic change for climate action through innovation in a holistic, and systemic, and place-based approach. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are fundamentals that all projects should be including in their work, you can explore our resources [here](#).

Collaborating with Climate KIC

EIT HEI Initiative project partners are eligible to apply for the following activities. These activities can be part of IVAP development. Reach out to us for more information!

Apply to be a [Climathon Organiser](#): A global movement, orchestrated by Climate KIC, that empowers citizens to take action against climate change. Through Climathon, we seek to inspire, connect, and support local changemakers who are determined to accelerate the transition to a zero-carbon, climate resilient society. We bring together diverse stakeholders, including students, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and citizens, to foster collaboration and innovation. We provide a supportive environment for ideation, experimentation, and implementation of innovative climate solutions. We provide training, mentorship, and resources to support the development and implementation of sustainable solutions. Through skill-building workshops, coaching sessions, and access to a network of experts, we equip participants with the knowledge and tools necessary to make a difference in their communities.

Apply to be a [ClimateLaunchpad Organiser](#): The world's largest competition for green business ideas, aimed at helping aspiring entrepreneurs develop and scale innovative solutions to climate change. The program provides training, coaching, and pitching opportunities to the earliest-stage green innovators. Running from March - October each year, the programme includes an online mini-course, 3-day virtual boot camp training, delivered by certified trainers, a ready to deliver coaching curriculum for partner organisations, opportunities for participating teams to pitch at National & Regional events, and cash and in-kind prizes for the winning teams. ClimateLaunchPads are organised by national leads. Please check our [map](#) to see if your country still needs an organiser.

Apply to be a [ClimAccelerator Organiser](#): ClimAccelerator is a global initiative designed to support start-ups in developing, scaling, and implementing innovative climate solutions. The program is aimed at accelerators, incubators, innovation hubs, and other entrepreneurship support organizations that want to run ClimAccelerators and contribute to combating climate change. Climate KIC invites partners across Europe to

collaborate on this program, which offers tailored tools, a Climate Impact Framework, access to fundraising opportunities, a global network, and branding support. Focusing on themes like Agriculture, Blue Economy, and Industrial Decarbonization, the program seeks partners with a strong track record in supporting start-ups and helping them address climate challenges. Start-ups must be incorporated prior to the program and will be selected based on specific criteria set by the partners.

Apply to be a [Climate KIC Academy](#) partner: Right now, only one in eight workers have the green skills needed to support the transition to a safe and just future where we live within planetary boundaries. This skills gap is holding us back and slowing down the progress we so urgently need. Without the right people equipped to lead the change, sustainable practices across industries are being delayed, putting our future at risk. Together, we can scale impact, connect innovation with action, and create a fairer future for us all. The Climate KIC Academy has been recommended for the EIT Label, an addition seal of excellence for training activities that meet the requirements and quality standards of the Climate KIC Academy. Reach out to learn more.

Read more about Climate KIC's work here:

- [How to build resilient economies and ecosystems in the face of climate change](#)
- [Towards climate-neutral agriculture: System insights from ClieNFarms](#)
- [NetZeroCities: Zagreb's Model for Sustainable Urban Transformation](#)
- [United by soil: turning soil knowledge into climate action](#)
- [How businesses and neighbourhoods are building a climate movement together in Marseille](#)
- [How Earth observation data and climate services are helping local authorities manage the impacts of climate change](#)
- [From the ground up: the youth and women creating change in Tanzania](#)
- [From boardrooms to communities: rethinking climate adaptation for real impact](#)
- [Resilience in practice: Leading Europe's shift towards systemic climate adaptation](#)
- [Introducing Inclusive Design for Climate Innovation: A Practitioner's Guide](#)
- [Green skills are the missing link in climate action—and we're running out of time](#)
- [Together for a greener future: Cluj-Napoca's citizen-centric climate strategy](#)



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