Culture & Creativity

Co-funded by the European Union

Synergies with EIT Culture & Creativity

for prospective EIT Higher Education Initiative applicants

https://eit-culture-creativity.eu

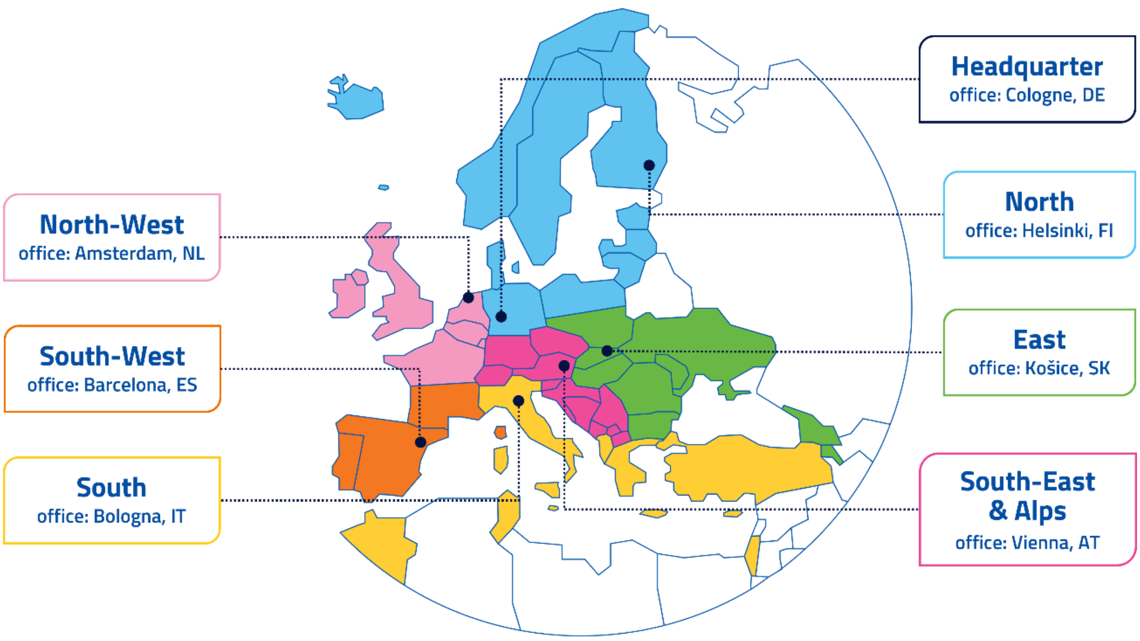
Contents

Who we are

Culture and creativity are part of our daily lives. They are the media we consume, the clothes we wear, the buildings we live in, and the communities we belong to. They are not a luxury, but a critical infrastructure for resilience, renewal, and growth.

EIT Culture & Creativity is a European institutional partnership dedicated to making Europe's cultural and creative sectors and industries more sustainable, resilient, and competitive. Founded in 2023 by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), we are its ninth Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC). Together with our community of more than 60 partners, we create purposeful connections between start-ups and corporates, entrepreneurs and investors, consumers and industry, research and impact, ideas and reality. 99.9% of cultural and creative sector organisations are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).[1] We support their transformation by opening up new ways of understanding what entrepreneurship can mean - economically, socially, and environmentally. We empower our partners to achieve what they could not accomplish alone.

Where we are



[1] Source: Interreg - Cultural and Creative Industries, January 2024

Strategic Agenda 2024-2027

EIT Culture & Creativity's Strategic Agenda 2024-2027 is built upon addressing three core challenges facing the European CCSI: the lack of appropriate skills, the lack of innovation implementation capacity, and the lack of venture creation and scaling.

We operate through three defined Strategic Objectives (SOs) that guide all programming and activities:

1. **Education (SO1):** Future-proofing CCSI students and professionals with entrepreneurial and cross-disciplinary skills for the green and digital transition.
2. **Innovation (SO2):** Deploying and scaling CCSI innovations on green and digital technologies and new business models unlocking positive societal and economic impact.
3. **Business Creation (SO3):** Accelerating and scaling CCSI market opportunities to compete globally.

We further support Societal Transformation through initiatives that regenerate values and social cohesion, deploying the power of culture and creativity to facilitate Europe's green, digital, and social transitions.

What we do

Network

Accelerate innovation through our 6 regional hubs

Provide access to top talent and educational programmes for skills development

Build long-term partnerships beyond standard EU grant cycles

Market Access

Fast-track market entry for start-ups and scale-ups

Provide large organisations with early access to new innovations

Support with market insights, matchmaking, trade missions, and showcases

Finance

Reduce risk with co-investment opportunities

Turn creative ideas into sustainable businesses

Policy

Shape policy and prepare partners for regulatory changes

Enhance competitiveness in Europe and globally

Our Priority Areas

To maximise impact, we focus our interventions on five high-potential sectors, with a specific focus on these sectors' societal challenges across our Strategic Objectives.

Priority Area	Education challenges	Innovation challenges	Business Creation challenges
Fashion Moving towards sustainable production and consumption in line with EU circular economy standards.	Lack of specialist skills and expertise to assist the sector in innovating and delivering strategic change towards a more circular, digital, and sustainable model.	Lack of capacity to implement and successfully commercialise digital innovations, new textile and fashion technologies (processing and recycling), circular business models, circular design, and supply chain innovation (e.g. Digital Product Passport).	Difficulty for SMEs and new ventures in this sector to compete with large global industry players, along with challenges in scaling and raising finances.
Architecture Using innovative technologies and circular practices to maintain, renovate, or rebuild architectural sites and buildings to meet net-zero goals.	Need to upskill practising and young architects on reusing and renovating existing buildings, instead of constructing new ones. Lack of training on the social impact of architecture in cities and lack of entrepreneurial skills in graduating architects.	Lack of capacity to use architecture to promote social cohesion in urban environments, work with new (bio-based) materials and technologies, focus on reuse and more circular building practices, climate adaptation measures, and collaborate with other sectors such as cultural heritage.	Many SMEs and freelancers are currently unable or unwilling to scale, and it is challenging to find the appropriate economic models to valorise products and services.
Cultural Heritage Adapting heritage sites to climate change and enhancing social cohesion.	Disappearing traditional knowledge and craft skills, along with limited skills for emerging technologies and entrepreneurship in the sector.	Lack of capacity to integrate emerging technologies, innovative materials, and digital media (especially ICT and AI), as well as limited cross-sectoral collaboration. Limited adoption of new business models within the sector, along with limited scalable products and services.	Limited financial instruments, making it hard to monetise and find new revenue streams from cultural heritage. Critical innovation and investment bottleneck in creating sustainable investment leverage for smaller scale cultural heritage activities, particularly in disadvantaged urban and depopulated rural locations.
Audio-visual Media Promoting responsible technologies from EU companies to protect consumers and reduce environmental impact.	Specific skills are missing in both future and current workforce related to the disruptions in the AVM sector, including skills related to data, supercomputing, cloud computing, IP protection, monetising IP in the era of AI, and using AI in AVM. Need for skills related to the social aspects of the AVM sector.	Limited cross-collaboration with other sectors. Audience data availability issues. Limited development of new business models based on disruptive technologies and lack of capacity to implement and commercialise solutions using disruptive technologies such as generative AI. Sovereignty and digital identity concerns, and challenges applying digital ethics	EU AVM companies are dominated by global platforms and struggle to compete globally. EU AVM companies face stagnant revenues and limited investment capabilities in content, emerging technology (like AI), IP protection.
Gaming Supporting EU SMEs in adopting AI, no-code tools, user-generated content while promoting digital ethics.	To maintain and grow the EU gaming market share, access to talent is the main challenge. This not only relates to specific game industry curricula but also to synergies with related sectors and related technology studies.	Finding ways to overcome limitations from global platforms that restrict access to data, market access, choosing the payment provider and the choice of distribution channels is crucial. The adoption of disruptive trends and technology such as AI, third-party payment systems, no-code platforms, user-generated content, and adaptation through EU regulation are also essential.	EU gaming companies struggle to maintain their global market share, as they are dominated by American and Asian players. EU game developer studios, both start-ups and scale-ups, face challenges in accessing risk capital. European games are not sufficiently visible in saturated markets, further hindering their growth and market share.

EIT Culture & Creativity and the EIT Higher Education Initiative

EIT Culture & Creativity joined the EIT Higher Education Initiative in 2024. In the framework of Cohort 4 Projects we currently support 6 inspiring consortia that span from Western and Southern Europe to the Balkans, Turkey, and the Eastern Partnership region. Topics cover creativity-driven business models, digital skills and transformation in the CCSI, inclusive creative ventures, resilient CCSI ecosystems, innovation districts and strategic foresight, micro-credentials, entrepreneurial and innovation capacity in arts, film and creative practices, and integrating sustainable and circular economy approaches in fashion.

Future EIT Higher Education Initiative project applicants with an interest in the cultural and creative sectors are invited to reflect upon one or more of the challenges we identified for our priority areas. We look forward to welcoming a new cohort of changemakers that align with EIT Culture and Creativity's mission to empower and nurture a sustainable innovation ecosystem including all involved in the CCSI knowledge triangle.