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HEInnovate Information Session

November 6, 2026

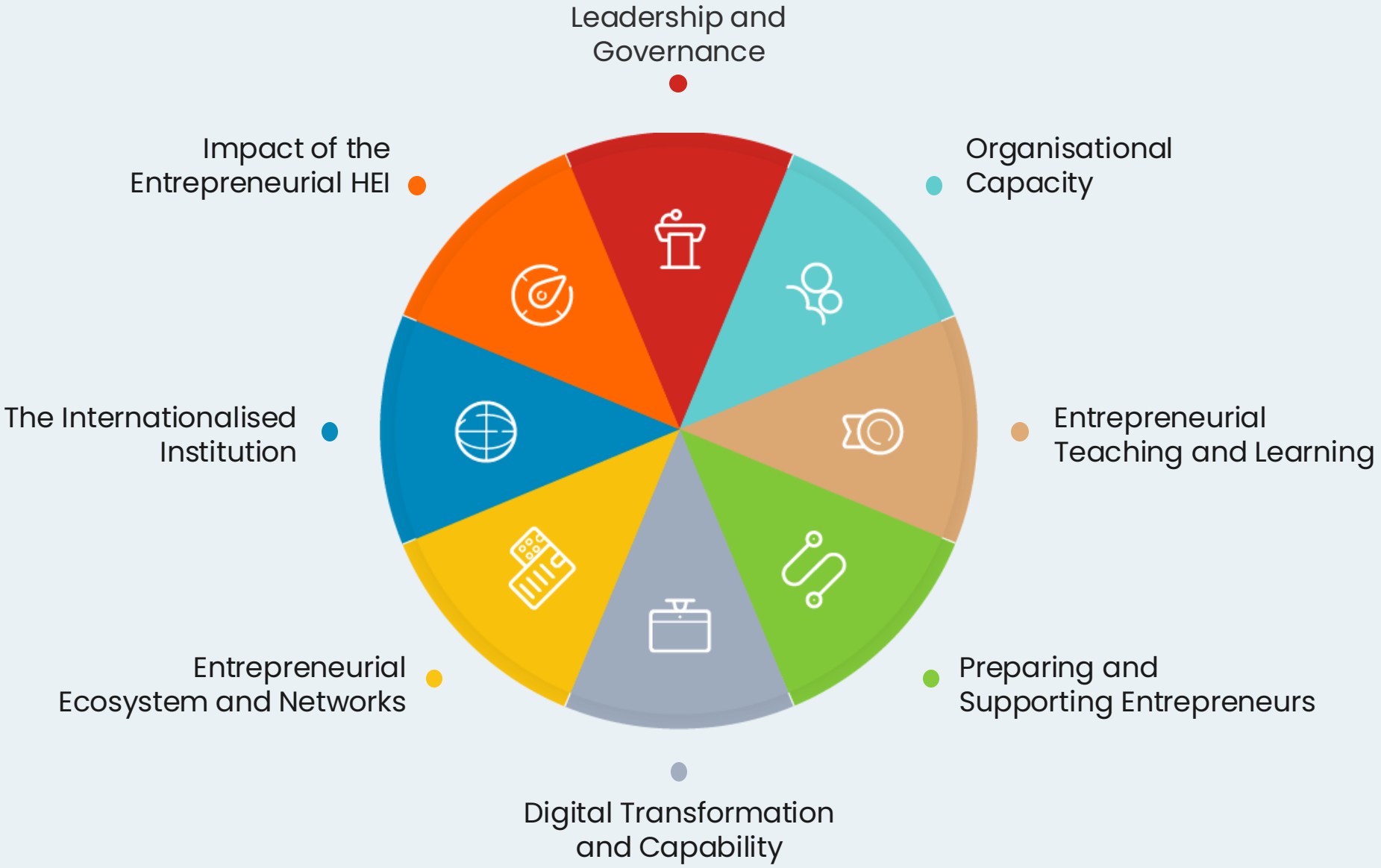


European Commission | OECD

Introducing HEInnovate: A Framework for Change

- A **European Commission & OECD initiative**, part of the **Erasmus+ tools**.
- A **trusted, evidence-based framework** to support higher education institutions in becoming more innovative and entrepreneurial.
  - Helps you **identify strengths and gaps** across 8 key dimensions.
  - Creates a **shared language** that brings leadership, staff, and students into the same conversation.
  - Supports **strategic planning and capacity building**, turning insights into concrete action.
- Opens the door to **EU opportunities** such as the EIT Higher Education Initiative.

The 8 dimensions of HEInnovate



How HEInnovate Supports Institutional Change



Step 0: Discover

- Before you begin, **take some time to explore the tool**. Understand what it offers, how the self-assessment works, and what kinds of resources are available.
- Recommended resources:
  - Testimonials (User Stories)
  - Case Studies
  - Guidance Notes
  - HEInnovate Foundation Guide **NEW!**
  - Practical Guide for European Universities alliances **NEW!**



Step 1: Reflect

- Start by completing the **HEInnovate self-assessment**. This involves reflecting on eight key dimensions of innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education.
- You can **invite multiple colleagues, students and stakeholders** to collect a **wide range of perspectives** to create a fuller picture.
- The result is a clear, evidence-based overview of your institution's strengths and areas for improvement.
- Recommended resources:
  - Quick Start Guide for the HEInnovate Self-Assessment **NEW!**



Step 2: Engage

- Once you have your results, **organise a discussion** with leadership, staff, students, and other stakeholders.
- Share the self-assessment outcomes and discuss the results.
- Use this exercise to create a common language to talk about innovation and entrepreneurship in your institution.
- This step builds **shared understanding** and ensures everyone has a voice in shaping the way forward.
- Recommended resources:
  - Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit **NEW!**
  - Basic Workshop Guide

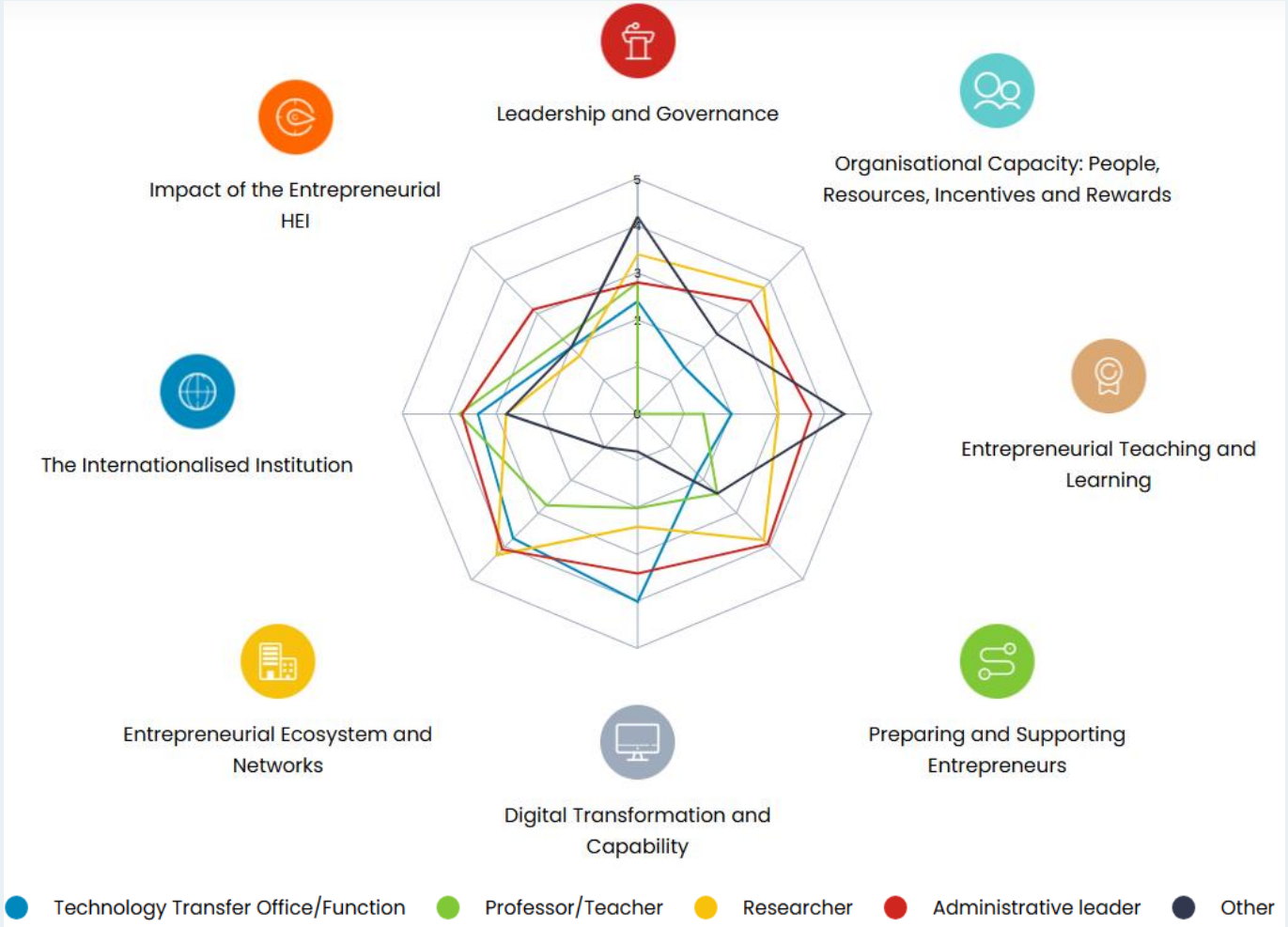


Step 2: Engage





Step 2: Engage



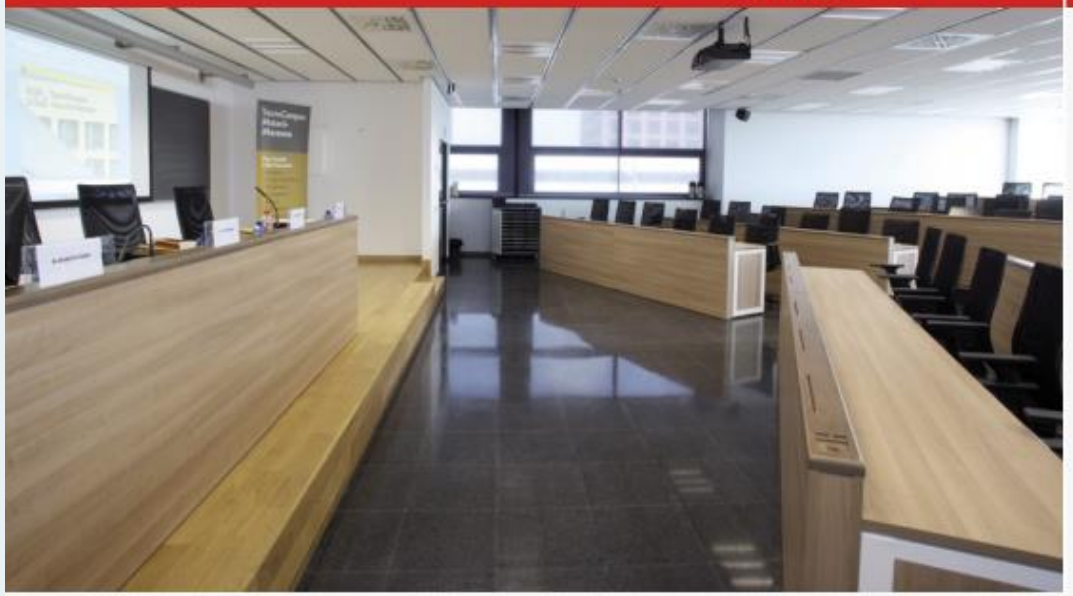


	Leadership and Governance	Organisational Capacity : People, Resources, Incentives and Rewards	Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning	Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs	Digital Transformation and Capability	Entrepreneurial Ecosystem and Networks	The internationalised institution	Impact of the Entrepreneurial HEI
Partner A	2.8	1.2	2.2	2.0	1.8	3.0	2.4	3.0
Partner B	4.2	4.0	3.8	4.2	3.4	4.3	3.8	4.5
Partner C	2.6	2.0	2.6	3.0	1.6	3.3	2.4	1.0
Partner D	4.4	4.3	3.2	3.6	3.6	4.3	4.2	3.7
Partner E	3.1	1.6	3.8	2.8	3.4	3.3	3.8	2.6
Partner F	2.8	2.2	2.8	2.6	2.1	3.0	2.7	2.2
Partner G	4.2	3.4	4.8	4.6	3.0	4.5	3.4	2.8
AVE	3.4	2.7	3.3	3.3	2.7	3.7	3.2	2.8
MIN	2.6	1.2	2.2	2.0	1.6	3.0	2.4	1.0
MAX	4.4	4.3	4.8	4.6	3.6	4.5	4.2	4.5

Step 3: Plan

- Based on Steps 1 and 2, you can start preparing a **concrete, strategic plan**.
- Identify which dimensions of innovation and entrepreneurship need the most attention.
- Use HEInnovate's resources as practical guides for **designing actions** and **shaping interventions**.
- Define **clear goals and indicators to track progress** over time.
- **Assign responsibilities** and engage both leadership and staff to ensure **momentum** and **accountability**.
- Recommended resources:
  - Action Cards
  - Action Plan Template
- **For EIT HEI applicants:** plan according to the **call requirements** and use your self-assessment results to develop your **Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP)**.





Entrepreneurship Board or Council

Actions & Formats	Timespan
Form an entrepreneurship council that brings together local key stakeholders.	Medium-term
Create an entrepreneurship board to challenge and mentor your organisation. Include internal decision-makers and external stakeholders on the board.	Medium-term
Set up a scientific council of advisors to advance your entrepreneurship research agenda.	Long-term

Leadership and Governance
A
Advanced

Entrepreneurship Board or Council

Regular checks by external stakeholders and experts can provide necessary feedback to craft a realistic yet ambitious entrepreneurship strategy for your HEI. An entrepreneurship board or council can provide non-binding strategic advice to your HEI, interest group or department.

An internal entrepreneurship board could comprise relevant stakeholders, such as vice-presidents, rectors and deans who provide context-specific counsel and help with supporting new initiatives. An external board may consist of national and international entrepreneurship experts who can provide strategic insights into current developments within the field.

A regional entrepreneurship council made up of local industry representatives, politicians and other relevant stakeholders can help connect your activities to the existing local entrepreneurial ecosystem.

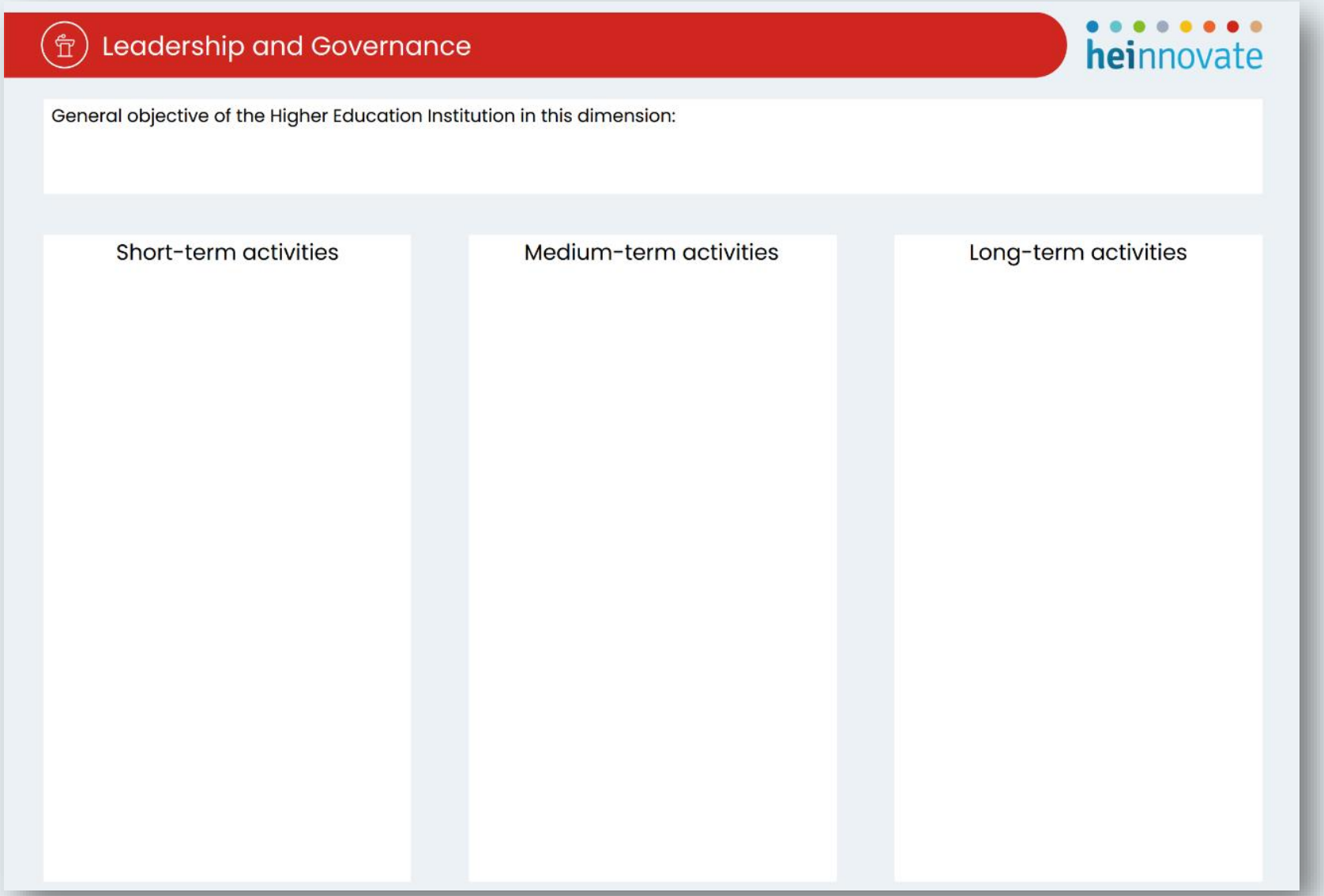
If you are part of a research-driven HEI, setting up a scientific council may provide valuable guidance on strengthening your international research profile.

Applicable Profiles

1 2 3 **4** **5** **6** **7**

4 Internal Performer, **5** Regional Performer,
6 International Performer, **7** Guru

Action Planning Template



Action Planning Template

Organisation into Work Packages

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Work Package	Activities Included	Work Package Leader	Estimated Time Frame

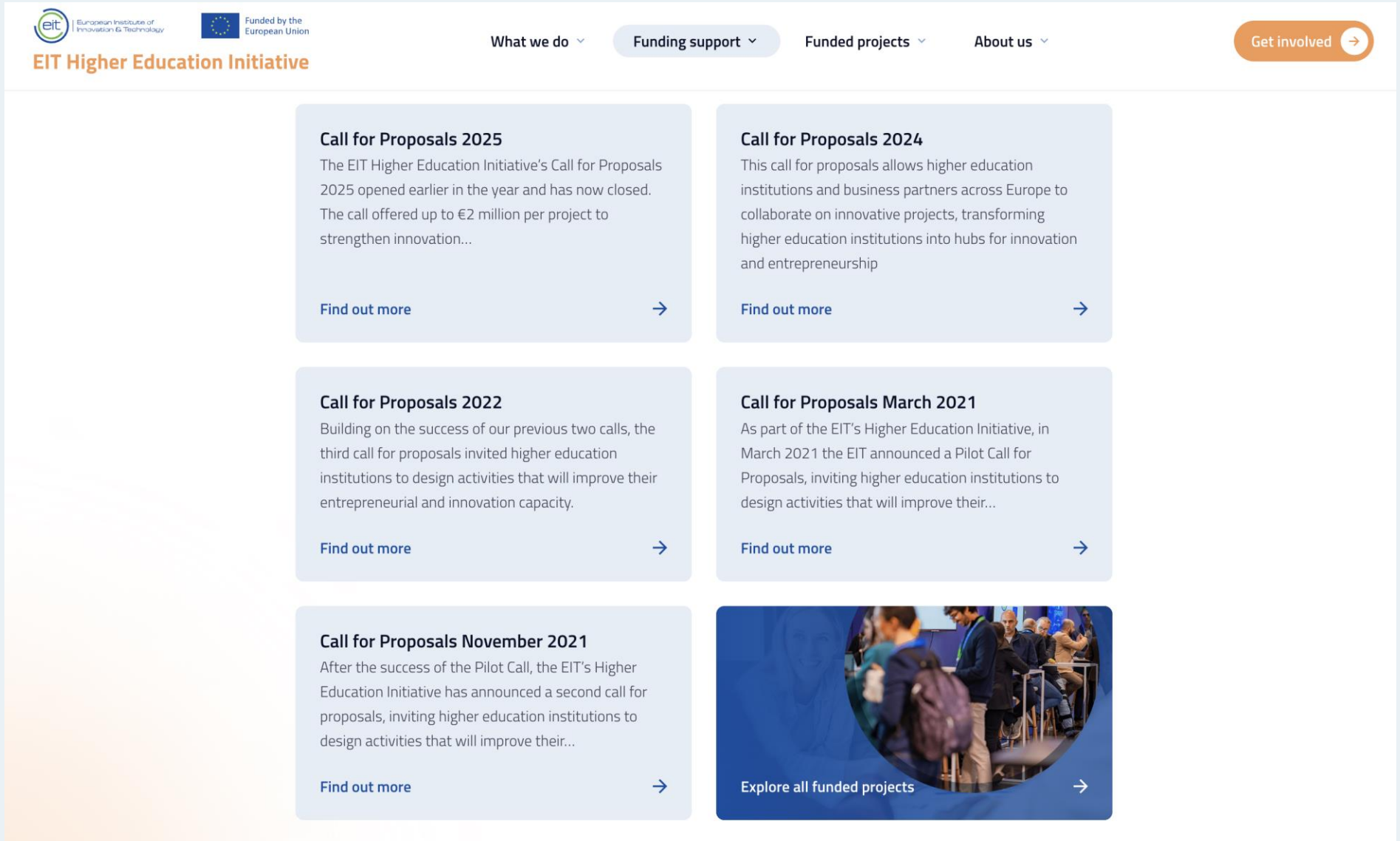
Step 4: Act

- **Launch pilot projects**, **programmes**, and **institutional reforms** that foster innovation and entrepreneurship.
- **Provide training**, **resources**, and **support** to staff and students to sustain change.
- Use your KPIs to track progress and **refine actions** as needed.
- ***Opportunity for funding*:** Connect your action plan to the EIT HEI Initiative, where your HEInnovate-based roadmap becomes the foundation of an Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP). This opens the door to funding, partnerships, and networks across education, business, and research.

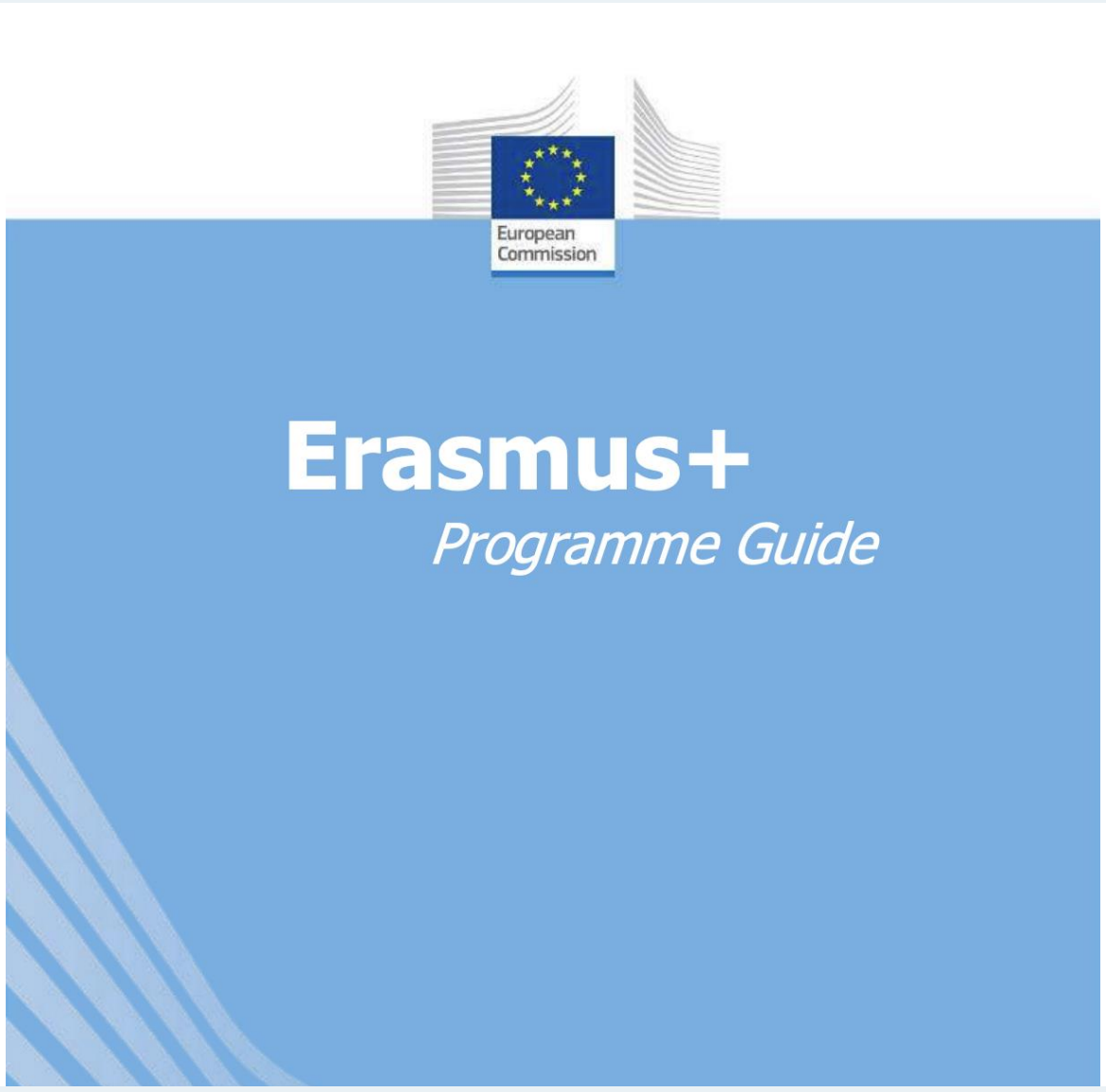




EIT Higher Education Initiative funding



Erasmus+ Programme Guide



HEInnovate

The HEInnovate guiding framework offers higher education institutions (HEIs) in the EU and beyond the opportunity to examine their innovation and entrepreneurship capacities through self-reflection in one or several of the following eight dimensions:

- Leadership and Governance
- Organisational Capacity: People, Resources, Incentives and Rewards
- Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning
- Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs
- Digital Transformation and Capability
- Entrepreneurial Ecosystem and Networks
- The Internationalised Institution
- Impact of the Entrepreneurial HEI

HEInnovate is also a community of practice, and its experts offer webinars and workshops for HEIs to improve their innovation performance and train the trainers events to disseminate the approach more widely at institutional level. The HEInnovate Expert Group plays a key role in designing and implementing the HEInnovate resources as well as providing direct guidance to the applicants through a dedicated "Expert inquiry box" on the platform. Training materials are available on the website.

The platform also provides case studies and user stories to showcase examples of different innovation approaches in HEIs throughout the EU. An enhanced version of the self-assessment tool was launched in June 2023: it includes updated statements (on which the self-assessment is based) and recommendations for follow-up actions in the form of "action cards".

The Community for Educational Innovation is developed under the HEInnovate initiative to unite educational institutions, educators, businesses, and policymakers to advance educational innovation and equip learners with the skills and mindsets needed to contribute to Europe's innovation landscape including entrepreneurial skills, green and digital transitions, STEM, and lifelong learning.

Erasmus+ funded projects such as the European Universities alliances and the Alliances for Innovation are encouraged to use HEInnovate where relevant to accompany their projects.

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Q&A

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Coordinator, EAS-EL Project (EIT HEI 2025) | University of Graz

- Managing Director of ZWI – Centre for Knowledge and Innovation Transfer (Unicorn Start-up & Innovation Hub), Graz, since 2016.
- Head of Digital Innovation Modelling at Uni for Life since 2019, supporting innovation education and ecosystem collaboration.
- 20 years of experience in start-up mentoring and innovation, having supported over 400 start-ups since 2006.
- Former Managing Director of Science Park Graz, securing funding for major deep-tech acceleration programmes, including ESA BIC and AplusB.

HEINNOVATE INFORMATION SESSION · EIT HEI CALL 2026

Using HEInnovate to prepare your EIT HEI proposal

Practical tips from a coordinator funded in the 2025 call

Bernhard Weber · Coordinator EAS-EL · University of Graz

WHERE THE TIPS COME FROM

One funded proposal, six universities, one tool

Call 2025

Topic 2, funded

6

universities ran HEInnovate

38

statements compared side by side

~4

weeks from survey to submission

EAS-EL builds a shared AI sandbox for entrepreneurship education across the Arqus Alliance. Eight partners, €2 m, 24 months. Everything that follows is what worked for us, and what I'd do differently.

THE SHORT VERSION

Use HEInnovate as your needs analysis, not as an annex

1

Run it early, with every partner

Before anyone writes proposal text. Same setup everywhere, so results are comparable.

2

Let the weak spots pick your actions

The lowest-scoring statements tell you which domains and actions to choose. Not the other way round.

3

Make every KPI traceable

An evaluator should be able to follow each target back to one HEInnovate statement and the gap behind it.

In reality

Compliance (KPIs that the project has to deliver)		Context			Strategic Alignment
EIT KPI Code	EIT KPI Description	HEInnovate Dimension & Aspect	HEInnovate Baseline Gaps	Regional Ecosystem & S3 Mapping Gaps	KICs Strategic objectives
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.	**Impact of the Entrepreneurial HEI:** The performance indicators allow for comparisons with other national or international peers.	The HEIs lack standardized performance indicators that allow for comparisons with other national or international peers, leading to a quality gap when attempting to bridge local businesses to the EIT KIC ecosystem. Why: By focusing on international peer comparison, the project addresses the "quality gap" that currently keeps local start-ups from scaling. We aren't just providing basic mentoring; we are using EIT's high standards to benchmark our support against the best in Europe. This ensures that the 6 start-ups we support move from being "locally successful" to "globally competitive," effectively turning university knowledge into a tool for European economic progress as defined by Arqus.	While local infrastructure exists, it remains fragmented and siloed, preventing high-potential businesses from accessing the cross-border industrial partnerships and specialized support offered by the EIT KICs. Why: We are not building "new offices", but connecting our local talent to the EIT's international network. This gap justifies our project because it explains why these start-ups need EIT-specific support to break out of local silos and reach the European market.	**EIT Digital** At EIT Digital, we aim at fostering a stronger European Digital ecosystem that can leverage the diversity and complementarities of the different players to build world class Digital companies. EIT Digital wishes to support European digital technology development to achieve a greater spread of European values in the digital world and achieve European digital sovereignty. **EIT Health** Support entrepreneurs in building and scaling companies. Provide talent to start the entrepreneurial journey. **EIT Manufacturing** Europe competes in a challenging global market that requires extreme agility towards customer demands. EIT Manufacturing will increase industry's agility, flexibility and resilience. The KIC will support established players as well as new innovative start-ups and SMEs, which are key sources of innovation across Europe. European manufacturing must commit to radically reduce its climate impact whilst creating closed-looped manufacturing. EIT Manufacturing will support industry in reducing emissions, environmental pollution, energy, and material consumption, while also promoting the transition to a Circular Economy.
	Number of successful participants in EIT				**EIT Digital**

	Implementation	
Arqus Major Goals	HEI Domain & Action	Work Package (WP)
he unique role played by universities as open places f freedom, pluralism and democratic participation, edicated to the generation and dissemination of nowledge through research, education, innovation nd culture for sustainable societal progress. Vhy: This value directly connects "innovation" and generation of knowledge" to "societal impact", which the primary purpose of a start-up or spin-off.	**Domain 3:** Supporting Innovation and Business Generation **#3**: Develop and utilize structures and conditions for people to create or develop their businesses and start-ups, and to transfer technology.	WP2: Training Courses within EASEL and EIT supports Start-ups. WP3: Start-ups are supported by offering the Sandbox Services. WP 5: Connecting the Startups with the Ecosystem and the KICs with HAckathons and Events like the Stakeholder Engagement Forum.

WHY BOTHER

What HEInnovate gives you in an EIT HEI proposal

1

Evidence evaluators recognise

It's the call's own reference tool. A gap found with HEInnovate needs less explaining than one you describe yourself.

2

A shared language

Partners from different systems compare the same 38 statements. Discussions get concrete fast.

3

A shortlist of actions

Weak statements point straight at the call's domains and actions. Choosing gets easier.

4

A baseline for impact

Run it again at the end and you can show change, not just activity.

PLAN BACKWARDS FROM THE DEADLINE

Give it six to eight weeks, not four

Weeks 1 – 2

Agree the setup

One owner per partner. Same roles, same deadline, same export.

Weeks 2 – 5

Collect answers

Send reminders. Chase the groups that are missing, usually leadership and externals.

Weeks 5 – 6

Aggregate & read

One sheet, all partners. Sort, compare, discuss the gaps together.

Week 6 +

Write

Needs analysis first, then actions, WPs and KPIs built on it.

Our reality: we squeezed this into about four weeks. It worked because most partners had used HEInnovate before. If your partners haven't, start this week.

Same setup at every partner, or the numbers won't compare

1

One group assessment per institution

You get one group report per partner, ready to compare.

2

Invite a real mix of people

Leadership, academics, TTO, support staff, students, external stakeholders. Roles see the same university very differently.

3

Use the full tool

All eight dimensions. Your weakest area might be one you didn't expect.

4

Name one owner per partner

Someone who sends reminders and delivers the export on time.

5

Agree on the export

Same format, one shared folder. Saves a week of chasing.

WHAT WE DID

Six universities, one shared folder with a subfolder per partner. Each dropped its HEInnovate group report there as a PDF.

That one boring decision made the next step possible.

Five ways to get more out of the numbers

1	**Go to statement level**	Dimension averages are too coarse to write a proposal on.
2	**Sort from weakest to strongest**	The bottom of the list is your needs analysis.
3	**Look at the spread**	Where partners differ a lot, one can learn from another, or pilot first.
4	**Compare roles**	If leadership scores high and students low, that gap is a finding in itself.
5	**Don't hide the weak spots**	Low scores are what justify the funding. Evaluators expect them.

From a weak score to a KPI, in four steps

1 HEINNOVATE STATEMENT	2 THE GAP	3 DOMAIN, ACTION, WP	4 KPI AND TARGET
Pick a low-scoring statement and quote it word for word.	Say in one sentence what's missing and why it matters.	Choose the call's domain and action that closes it. Name the WP.	Pick the EIT KPI that measures the fix. Set a number.
"The HEI validates and assesses entrepreneurial learning outcomes." Avg 3.02	Training exists but nothing certifies the competences gained.	Domain 1, action #5. Certified modules in WP2.	EITHE09.1: 50 students in EIT-labelled activities.

Top row: the method. Dark row: how it looked for us. **Do this once per KPI and put it in one table.**

COMMON TRAPS

What I'd avoid

Running it after the text is written

Then it only decorates decisions you already made.

Only the coordinator fills it in

One person's view isn't an institutional baseline.

Reporting averages and stopping there

No one funds a 3.4. Name the statement and the gap.

Paraphrasing the statements

Quote them exactly so the link is obvious.

Trying to fix every gap

Pick three or four. A focused proposal reads stronger.

Treating it as a one-off

Plan a second round near the end to show change.

BEFORE YOU SUBMIT

A quick check for your Part B

- [ ] Every partner completed HEInnovate, and you say so
- [ ] The needs analysis names specific statements, not just dimensions
- [ ] Each selected domain and action responds to a named gap
- [ ] Each KPI traces back to a statement, a gap and a work package
- [ ] The statements are quoted word for word
- [ ] There's a plan to re-run HEInnovate as an impact measure

If you can tick all six,

an evaluator can follow your logic from the first page to the last KPI without guessing.

THANK YOU

Questions?

Good luck with your proposals.

Bernhard Weber
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EAS-EL consortium, kick-off in Graz, 8 Sep 2026

Other events and opportunities to engage

- **Train the Trainers Programme:**
  - Fully funded programme to help you through the HEInnovate journey in your institution
- **Share Your Experience:**
  - Got a good practice in innovation or entrepreneurship? Contact us to develop a case study
- **Info Sessions:**
  - Stay tuned for upcoming events
- **Host Workshops:**
  - Facilitate group assessments and strategic planning on campus.



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More ways to stay connected

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Join our social media campaign and share your experience of HEInnovate with us!



Subscribe to our newsletter

Receive monthly updates on upcoming events, community activites, and fresh resources.

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Thank you for joining! If you have any further questions, please contact us at **info@heinnovate.eu**

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