



April 2021



"The new Horizon Europe pillar 'Innovative Europe' will position Europe as the world-leading leader innovator by leveraging our outstanding startups and innovators as well as a thriving pan-European Innovation Ecosystem."

Mariya Gabriel Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth



Pillar III

INNOVATIVE EUROPE

SUPPORTING AND CONNECTING INNOVATORS ACROSS EUROPE

Europe has a solid research and industrial base and is the home of bold, creative entrepreneurs. Yet it often needs to strengthen the use of its scientific excellence and industrial prowess to accelerate innovation and turn innovative SMEs into global technology giants.

By reinforcing close cross-border collaboration between multiple actors, including academia, the public sector, industry and individual entrepreneurs, Horizon Europe aims to develop radical solutions to pressing societal challenges and fostering sustainable economic growth and employment. Through its Pillar III 'Innovative Europe', the programme will focus on supporting the development of disruptive and market-creating innovations and on enhancing European innovation ecosystems.



Bringing in the next wave of innovation through a connected and inclusive ecosystem

Horizon Europe's Pillar III features three distinctive and complementary instruments:

the European Innovation Council (EIC)

supports start-ups, SMEs and research teams developing high-risk, high-impact breakthrough innovation, with a particular focus on scaling up game-changing solutions that contribute to the objectives of the European Green Deal and the Recovery Plan for Europe.

the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

strengthens Europe's innovation ability by powering solutions to pressing global challenges and by nurturing entrepreneurial talent.

the European Innovation Ecosystems

focus on building an interconnected, inclusive innovation ecosystem that encompasses European, national, regional and local initiatives as well as under-represented actors and territories, while also reinforcing the ecosystems' innovation capacity.



Europe's innovation powerhouse

The European Innovation Council (EIC) provides financial support in the form of grants and equity investments alongside business acceleration services. Its goals are to:

- identify and support high-risk innovations with a potential to create new markets or contribute to tackling societal challenges, where the risk, be it financial, technological/scientific or regulatory, cannot be borne by the market alone
- support innovative researchers and entrepreneurs in the rapid development of technologies and the scale-up of companies (start-ups, spinouts, SMEs) to bring their ideas to the market.

The EIC is supporting breakthrough technologies for future European leadership in areas such as human centric AI, quantum computing and new energy and health sectors.

The EIC, tested through a pilot phase, builds upon highly successful instruments while adding new features:

- The EIC Fund is a major new development investing equity (up to €15m) in EIC supported start-ups and SMEs so they can overcome market gaps in financing, scale faster and attract further investment
- Under Horizon Europe, EIC impacts will be boosted, by advice from EIC Board of leading innovators, by the appointment of Programme Managers to manage portfolios in strategic areas, and by Transition funding to overcome the gap between research and application.

The EIC is tailored to the different needs of innovators, whether they are in the early stages of research, exploring a business idea or working to commercialise a solution:



EIC Pathfinder

for radically new technologies emerging from research excellence



EIC Transition activities

for bringing research results to innovation potential



EIC Accelerator

for development and scaling up of high risk innovations by start-ups and SMEs, including with blended finance support (grants combined with investments through the EIC Fund)



EIC Business Acceleration Services

for tailor-made coaching, mentoring, and matching for all EIC supported companies and projects

The EIC has established collaborations with other research and innovation funding instruments, including the European Research Council (ERC) and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology. In particular, innovative researchers from the ERC and start-ups stemming from EIT KICs will be granted fast track access to the EIC pipeline.



The total budget of the EIC under Horizon Europe's Pillar III is:

€10.105 billion
(2021-2027)



Create, educate and innovate

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) delivers cutting-edge solutions, entrepreneurial talent and the supporting environment for innovation to thrive. With its multi-disciplinary network, the EIT provides opportunities for students, innovators and entrepreneurs across Europe: entrepreneurial education courses, innovation driven research projects, business creation and incubation services.

What the EIT offers



Training for a new generation of entrepreneurs



Development of innovative products and services



Business creation support for start-ups and scale-ups

The EIT boosts innovation by increasing the collaboration between business, education and research organisation, public authorities and civil society. To achieve this, the Institute supports the development of dynamic pan-European partnerships called EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). Each community delivers solutions to a pressing global challenge. To date, the EIT has established eight KICs tackling the following areas:

climate change	digital transformation	energy	food
health	raw materials	urban mobility	advanced manufacturing

Raising the bar for innovation

Between 2021 to 2027, the EIT will:

- Increase the impact of its activities
- Create two new KICs, one on the Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries and one on Water, Marine and Maritime Sectors and Ecosystems
- Put more emphasis on the regional dimension of its activities by providing targeted support to countries who lag behind in innovation performance.
- Launch a new pilot initiative to increase the entrepreneurial and innovation capacity of higher education institutions.

The EIT Community is well equipped to develop synergies with other programmes in Horizon Europe, in particular the European Innovation Council.

The EIT will build on its success with a budget of
€2.965 billion
(2021-2027)



Creating a more connected and efficient European innovation ecosystem

With Horizon Europe, the European Union aims to create more connected and efficient innovation ecosystems that support the scaling of companies, while encouraging open innovation in organisations and cooperation among national, regional and local innovation actors.

The European Innovation Ecosystems initiative focuses on:

- 
 launching an **EIC Forum** encompassing public authorities from Member States and Associated Countries, aiming to promote coordination and dialogue on the development of the EU's innovation ecosystem.
- 
 promoting and co-funding joint innovation programmes managed by national authorities targeting **collaborative research, technology and knowledge transfer, internationalisation and digitalisation strategies, open innovation and market deployment** of technologies by innovative SMEs.
- 
elevating the scalability potential of business by improving the flows of knowledge, talent and capital, within and between innovation ecosystems while ensuring inclusiveness and gender equality.
- 
 supporting joint programmes for **mentoring, coaching, technical assistance and other services for innovators**, in cooperation with local, European and international partners.
- 
 Fostering **innovation procurement initiatives** with the aim of increasing the use of public procurement of innovation and spur the development of new policy, with the end goal of providing market opportunities to European innovators.

The European Innovation Ecosystems complement the actions carried out by the EIC and the EIT, as well as activities managed under other pillars of Horizon Europe and initiatives developed by Member States and Associated Countries, but also by private undertakings.

The total budget for activities under the European Innovation Ecosystems is of **€527 million (2021-2027)**



Innovative Europe in numbers

EIC: a lasting impact in just a few years



Over 5,700
SMEs/startups supported



90%
of innovations addressing Sustainable Development Goals, in particular in: Green Deal, Digital, and Health



36 innovative solutions to COVID-19 were supported within 3 months of the outbreak



Over €5.3 billion follow up investments and **43** companies valued over €100 million

EIT: Europe's largest innovation community



60+
Innovation Hubs across Europe



2 000+
Partners across Europe



3 100+
Graduates completing EIT programmes



1 170+
New products and services



3 200+
Ventures supported



3.3B€
Investment raised by EIT ventures



13 000+
Jobs created

More information:

[European Innovation Council](#)
[European Institute of Innovation and Technology](#)

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