

EIT's 2016 Call for Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KIC) Proposals

- Food4Future - Sustainable Supply Chain from Resources to Consumers
and
- Added-value Manufacturing

Deadline: 14 July 2016 (17:00 Brussels local time)

European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

www.eit.europa.eu



The EIT is a body of the European Union



**The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)
2016 Call for Knowledge and Innovation Communities' (KICs') proposals**

The EIT invites applicants to submit their proposals with a view to selecting and designating a Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) in each of the following thematic areas:

- 1) Food4Future - Sustainable Supply Chain from Resources to Consumers; and
- 2) Added-value Manufacturing

The deadline for the submission of proposals is:
14 July 2016 [17h00 local time in Brussels]

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is a key driver of sustainable European economic growth and competitiveness. It reinforces the innovation capacity of the EU and its Member States in order to address the grand challenges facing European society.

During the period from 2014 to 2020, the EIT will contribute to the general objectives of [Horizon 2020 - The Framework Programme for Research and Innovation](#)¹, by integrating the entrepreneurship-driven 'Knowledge Triangle' of higher education, research and business in order to deliver disruptive innovation.

To further enhance its impact and to incentivise the innovations needed to meet new societal challenges, the EIT will, as established in the [EIT Regulation](#)² and [Strategic Innovation Agenda \(SIA\)](#)³, gradually expand its portfolio of Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). With this Call, the EIT launches the selection process for two new KICs in the thematic areas of: 1) Food4Future - Sustainable Supply Chain from Resources to Consumers; and 2) Added-value Manufacturing.

The KICs offer a genuine opportunity for leading innovation players to be part of a highly integrated and collaborative community, based on principles of excellence and commitment, which will achieve pan-European impact. KICs are organised according to business logic, with a focus on people and talent as drivers of innovation and a lean and efficient governance and business model. The interrelation of these elements within a KIC provides the optimal framework for achieving long-lasting structural, economic and societal impact, and the creation of skilled jobs in Europe.

1. The EIT – European Institute of Innovation and Technology

Europe has excellent education, research, and inventions whose innovation potential can and should be fully exploited. Europe's research and innovation systems can also be further integrated by allowing the development and scale-up of poles of excellence with the critical mass to compete at a global level and by fostering close collaboration between organisations from the Knowledge Triangle. Moreover, to create and nurture high-growth companies and capture the value of research and innovation outputs, Europe must do more to instil an entrepreneurial culture throughout society.

The EIT has been created to enhance Europe's ability to innovate by integrating, for the first time at the EU level, education and entrepreneurship with research and innovation.

¹ OJ L 347 of 20.12.2013, p. 104

² OJ L 97 of 09.04.2008, p. 1., as amended by Regulation (EU) No 1292/2013 of 11 December 2013 (OJ L 347 of 20.12.2013, p. 174.)

³ OJ L 347 of 20.12.2013, p. 892

To achieve this goal, the EIT follows an ‘investor approach’, which stands for a focus on identifying the best strategic opportunities and selecting a portfolio of world-class partnerships –the KICs – to deliver them.

Through the KICs, the EIT develops and tests new models of how innovation is approached, managed, financed and delivered in Europe. After six years of operation, the EIT has created new environments in which innovation thrives and has generated breakthroughs in the way in which higher education, research and business collaborate. Ultimately, the EIT aims to boost and significantly accelerate the innovation process – from idea to product and service, from student and researcher to entrepreneur, from lab to the market – thereby triggering a change towards a more entrepreneurial mind-set.

As a European institute, the EIT shares new, innovative approaches and good practices emerging from the KICs for the benefit of the European Union as a whole as well as for future generations.

The EIT is an integral part of the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation – Horizon 2020 – which brings together all existing Union research and innovation initiatives for the period of 2014 to 2020. In order to promote cross-fertilisation, the EIT and its KICs will exploit synergies and complementarities with existing European and other relevant policies and programmes.

2. KICs - Knowledge and Innovation Communities

A KIC is a highly autonomous partnership of leading higher education institutions, research organisations, companies and other stakeholders in the innovation process that tackles societal challenges through the development of products, services and processes and also by nurturing innovative, entrepreneurial people. A KIC connects excellence-driven innovation hubs, the Co-location Centres, with a view to becoming leading centres of excellence and competing and collaborating with other innovation hubs across the world.

A KIC follows a long-term innovation and impact-driven strategy, operating with a business logic and a results-oriented approach to contribute to the achievement of the EIT's overall mission, the priorities laid down in [the Strategic Innovation Agenda](#) and the attainment of the general objectives established in Horizon 2020.

A KIC carries out a whole range of world-class activities bringing together actors from different sides of the Knowledge Triangle (business, education and research) encompassing the whole innovation value chain within a particular field. A KIC's portfolio of activities typically includes, inter alia: entrepreneurial education and training programmes, research and innovation projects, and incubation of and support to start-ups and ventures. The EIT also encourages cross-KIC collaboration.

A KIC is established as a legally and financially structured partnership and sets up its own governance system following good governance principles. A strong commitment by KIC partners, including financial support, is a must. KICs must remain open and flexible in order to attract new partners that bring added value to the partnership.

2.1 Impact

A KIC is expected to turn investment into tangible economic and social impact (such as new businesses and business opportunities, risk taking and entrepreneurial people contributing to sustainable economic growth) and generate new, high quality jobs. The potential and desired impact must be the overarching principle when designing the KIC strategy, business model, portfolio of activities and management. The impact of a KIC results from the clear articulation and execution of:

- *Long-term strategy:* A KIC strategic outlook covers a seven-year period. This long-term perspective enables partners to commit for a long timeframe, and ensures that a KIC is able to

focus on short, mid and long-term objectives, whilst remaining flexible enough to adapt to new, emerging needs.

- *Integration of the Knowledge Triangle:* A KIC designs and implements an integrated portfolio of activities, which acts as a catalyst, blending an exploitation approach into the existing research base and making education and training activities more responsive to business needs. On this basis, a highly interactive process is generated.
- *Performance and results:* A KIC has to define impact indicators derived from the key performance indicators included in a KIC Scoreboard consistent with the KIC's activities.

2.2 People & Talent

People act as carriers and multipliers of knowledge and, therefore, are of paramount importance in achieving a KIC's objectives. A KIC is expected to attract business professionals, educators, students, entrepreneurs, investors, researchers, and academics, from Europe and abroad, who are eager to innovate.

A KIC will contribute to the development of the EIT brand and promote the recognition of talent through the EIT labelled masters and doctorates as well as through training and post-doctoral programmes.

A KIC approach towards the promotion of collaboration between individuals includes:

- Stimulating innovative learning environments within and across Co-location Centres in diverse and multidisciplinary teams;
- A highly developed entrepreneurial team culture and spirit;
- Mobility between business, research organisations and academia and across national boundaries; and
- Incentive schemes that attract and retain excellent people and talent from across the innovation chain.

2.3 Partnership

A KIC must be a diverse, balanced, collaborative and world-class partnership with the adequate operational and financial capacity to deliver on the KIC's proposed strategy and portfolio of activities.

By developing robust, collaborative relationships between excellent partners from the 'Knowledge Triangle', namely higher education institutions, research organisations and business (including SMEs), a KIC allows partners to optimise resources, have access to new business opportunities, accelerate market uptake of new products and services and enhance the attractiveness of postgraduate education.

Disruptive innovation comes from the cooperation between talented individuals, institutions and organisations with different cultures and backgrounds that challenge traditional collaborative models. Diversity, in terms of composition and approaches towards innovation, is therefore essential in creating new value chains in KIC partnerships, governing bodies and leadership teams.

The combined strength of the partners must be greater than the sum of the strengths of individual partners. This is determined, to a large extent, by the commitment of each individual partner.

A KIC is a dynamic partnership. The initial partnership has a crucial role in defining the core elements of a KIC, successfully setting up a KIC and starting to implement activities. As the volume and scope of

activities grow, a KIC is expected to expand the partnership to incorporate new partners, provided they bring further added value to the KIC.

The assessment of the partnership's innovation quality will be based exclusively on the partners forming the consortium at the application stage.

2.4 Co-location Centres

Co-location Centres are the main instrument for managing KIC activities and knowledge flow. They bring together diverse teams from across the 'Knowledge Triangle' in one specified physical location and provide the focal point for a KIC's activity in that area. Geographical proximity is essential for facilitating interactions among KIC partners within a geographical area.

While geographically distributed across a specific area, a KIC's different Co-location Centres are effectively connected to each other; they are closely aligned with the KIC's strategy and goals, and work closely together in a coherent manner as part of the KIC partnership. Co-location Centres should build on existing centres of excellence in higher education, research and innovation, and embed themselves in local innovation ecosystems, linking them together to become a world-class innovation hub in the relevant thematic area. Co-location Centres must give visibility to the EIT brand and EU support.

All Co-location Centres must fulfil the following key functions:

- *Connectivity:* Co-location Centres provide a physical space for interaction with the local ecosystem, the main Knowledge Triangle partners based in the area and strong links to the KIC partnership. They attract a wide range of innovators (e.g. students, start-ups, industry, policy-makers, etc.) from within the KIC and beyond.
- *Activity management:* Co-location Centres act as hubs for many KIC activities, such as for coordinating and managing partner activity, structuring and implementing governance arrangements and facilitating collaboration.
- *Knowledge management:* Co-location Centres function as points for knowledge exchange (within and between Co-location Centres).

In order to ensure an efficient set-up, a KIC must have a maximum of five Co-location Centres at the proposal stage. Applicants should provide specific locations (city or town) for Co-location Centres in their proposals, ensuring that geographical proximity (clearly specifying and justifying regional coverage) and physical location principles are respected.

2.5 Building the EIT Community identity

When communicating, a KIC must contribute to the development of an innovative community based on the EIT values. Communications activities must be understood as an intrinsic part of the KIC's strategy to achieve its goals. In doing so, a KIC will also contribute to the development of the EIT Community identity and support the EIT's vision and mission. Close collaboration between the EIT and each KIC is of particular importance in order to ensure brand alignment.

In promoting the EIT Community identity, a KIC will apply the EIT Community brand and the EIT principles of excellence and innovation in all of its activities. The EIT label, which can be awarded to Master and Doctoral programmes offered by a KIC's partners, is an important element of a KIC's approach to building the EIT identity and in raising the visibility of its novel approach to higher education.

2.6 Outreach & Dissemination

A KIC shares and exchanges information, results and lessons learned from its activities between KICs and with external stakeholders across the European innovation landscape through outreach and dissemination activities, thereby promoting a faster uptake of innovation models across the European Union.

A KIC's strategy will include specific outreach initiatives in order to bring benefits to the whole of the European Union. A KIC's outreach activities are an opportunity to establish a mutually enriching engagement with areas and stakeholders beyond the KIC's community and partners. In particular, a KIC will develop activities in the framework of the EIT 'Regional Innovation Scheme' (RIS) as outlined in the SIA. The EIT RIS is an outreach scheme targeted at partnerships between higher education institutions, research organisations, companies and other stakeholders, in order to foster innovation across the Union.

2.7 Governance & Management

A KIC has substantial autonomy in defining its internal organisation and composition as well as its strategy, objectives, activities and working methods. The governance structure must follow good governance principles and should:

- reflect the diversity in the composition of the partnership, in particular the balance within the Knowledge Triangle;
- separate ownership/membership from operational management;
- ensure an open and high-quality decision-making process, composed of top management from KIC partners as well as independent, high-level members;
- separate the supervisory function from the operations and integrate a system of checks and balances; the body with the supervisory function should have an independent chairperson;
- be of a size that allows it to function in an effective and efficient way.

In its operations, a KIC should follow the principles of flexibility and business logic.

A KIC must put in place a strong, diverse and flexible management structure that includes:

- Governance arrangements which reflect the Knowledge Triangle of higher education, research and innovation;
- A governance structure where high-level management from KIC partners is involved and which integrates a system of checks and balances;
- An effective operational structure to deliver the KIC strategy and ensure a gradual and transparent partner expansion plan;
- A high quality and diverse management team with strong direction, leadership and executive power over the implementation of the KIC's strategy and business plan – including a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and other key management positions;
- Business plans with short, mid and long-term targets, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and milestones for activities; and

- Internal rules which guarantee transparency.

To function as a legally and financially integrated partnership, the designated KIC must establish a KIC Legal Entity (KIC LE) that is the official representative of the KIC for all contractual relations with the EIT.

The KIC will be free to decide on its legal form. At the proposal stage, a suitable KIC LE must be identified and presented, with the choice of entity justified.

2.8 Business model, financial plan and sustainability

The business model and financial plan of a KIC must be consistent with, and contribute to, the KIC's objectives and strategy and provide for an optimal and efficient use of resources. It must be designed so as to contribute to the generation of economic and societal impact and the positioning of the KIC as a leading global player in its field.

While a KIC will not be financially independent from the EIT during its first years of operation, it should aim to become sustainable in the medium term, and it should gradually reduce its dependency on EIT funding.

The EIT's funding model seeks to generate a smart alignment of investment as well as high leveraging and pooling of resources. The proposal therefore requires strong financial commitment from partners, including a substantial and increasing contribution from business, and from other non-EIT sources to ensure long-term, sustainable financing.

A KIC's business model should foresee the monetisation of investments resulting in additional revenue streams stemming from KIC activities (e.g. equity stakes in new start-ups, licencing deals, IP revenues, etc.) that capitalise on the competitive advantages of the KIC.

A KIC must develop a policy for the management and exploitation of Intellectual Property (IP), tailored to the specific needs of its thematic area, aligned with the KIC business model, contributing to the KIC's financial sustainability in the medium term and following the intellectual property rules laid down in the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. A KIC is advised to set up an IP Board to facilitate the formulation and management of its IP policy.

3. Indicative EIT financial contribution to the KICs

During the period 2014-2020, the EIT will be funded through a contribution of EUR 2.35 billion from Horizon 2020. The EIT budget covers three main priorities during this period: the necessary expenditure for consolidating the five established KICs, the set-up of three new KICs to be launched in two waves (in 2016 and 2018 respectively), and dissemination and outreach activities and administrative expenditure.

The EIT's contribution to the KIC's budget will not exceed 25% of its overall budget. The remaining 75% should be financed from other non-EIT sources of financing (e.g. mainly partners' own resources and other sources including national/regional funding, EU funds, etc.).

The financing modalities are defined in accordance with the [Principles for financing, monitoring and evaluating KIC activities](#) and the [EIT Financial Regulation](#)⁴.

⁴ Decision of the Governing Board of the EIT of 27 December 2013 adopting the Financial Regulation for the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (01364.EIT.2014.I), as amended by Decision 6/2015 of the Governing Board of the EIT of 5 March 2015 (00101.EIT.2015.I.GB34)

The **form of grant**, the **reimbursement rate** and the **types of cost**, including the eligible costs are indicated in Articles 4-5 of the model Specific Grant Agreement, as annexed to the model Framework Partnership Agreement.

4. Contractual relations between the EIT and the KICs

4.1 Start-up Grant Agreement

As stated under point 5, the EIT may sign a Start-up Grant Agreement with the designated KICs in order to ensure financial support for the start-up phase of the KICs.

The Start-up Grant Agreement is a multi-beneficiary grant agreement which will be concluded between the consortium submitting the proposal (represented by the Coordinator) and the EIT. The Start-up Grant Agreement will have the duration until the end of the start-up period (December 2017).

The model Start-up Grant Agreement is annexed to the Call.

The award of the Framework Partnership Agreement is subject to the successful completion of the start-up phase.

4.2 Framework Partnership Agreement and Specific Grant Agreement

The long-term cooperation between the EIT and each KIC will be formalised through a seven-year Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA), which will be concluded between the KIC (represented by the KIC LE) and the EIT. This agreement specifies the common objectives, the nature of activities planned and the general rights and obligations of each party. The FPA may be renewed.

Within this framework, the EIT may award grants to a KIC formalised through Specific Grant Agreements (SGA) under the FPA. The EIT will make the annual funding decisions, following an assessment of each KIC's individual performance and a competitive review between the KICs.

The EIT intends to sign an FPA with the designated KICs within a period of nine months following their designation.

The model FPA is annexed to the Call.

The long-term cooperation between the KIC and the KIC partners must be formalised through internal arrangements (i.e. Internal Agreements, Statutes and by-laws of the KIC LE), which should include provisions for enforcing the terms of the FPA and the Specific Grant Agreements.

5. Start-up Grant

The EIT may award a grant of up to EUR 4 million to the two designated partnerships in order to support the efficient setting up of the two KICs. The designated partnerships, therefore, will have to submit their Start-up Plans in early 2017.

The Start-up Plans will be evaluated by the EIT according to the following award criteria: relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the Start-up Plan.

As outlined in [the Framework of Guidance](#), the grant may cover the eligible costs of, inter alia, the following activities: establishment of legal structures, including the set-up of the KIC Legal Entity; recruitment and appointment of a CEO and other core staff; coordination and signature of the internal agreements formalising the engagement of partner organisations; preparation of the first KIC Business Plan. In addition, when justified, the EIT Start-up Grant Agreement may also finance some initial higher

education, research and innovation activities that directly contribute to the rolling out of the first KIC Business Plan.

More details will be communicated to the designated partnerships shortly after the designation decision of the EIT Governing Board (EIT GB).

6. Overview of proposal preparation and submission

This section contains an overview of the preparation and submission of a KIC proposal - further information, including guidance for applicants on how to submit proposals, is available through the Call page of the EIT website: <http://eit.europa.eu/collaborate/2016-call-for-kics> or directly through the Participant Portal: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html>.

The electronic proposal submission system will open on 14 January 2016. Only proposals submitted through the electronic proposal submission system will be accepted.

6.1 Proposal content and structure

The proposal will contain three sections:

- **Part A** – this part contains administrative information on the proposal, the Coordinator and partners, including declarations that they are not in a situation leading to exclusion;
- **Part B** – this part includes the main body of the proposal and the following elements should be included:
 - **KIC strategy**, including the KIC strategic approach, its added value, innovativeness, readiness to establish synergies and complementarities with other relevant initiatives, and KIC partnership innovation quality; (maximum 15 pages)
 - **KIC operations**, including the KIC's governance and leadership model, operational structure, key identified thematic areas (with a focus on Knowledge Triangle Integration), KIC business model and financial plan, and a plan for the management and exploitation of intellectual property; (maximum 20 pages)
 - **KIC impact**, including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and KIC Scoreboard, KIC communication strategy, and outreach and dissemination plans; (maximum 15 pages)
 - Estimated KIC financial resources.
- **Part C** – this part contains a declaration from the legal representative of each partner on their motivation and endorsement of the proposal, and their commitment, including financial commitment (indicative budget per partner), to the objectives and aims of the KIC. The partners in the Motivation and Commitment declarations should provide information about their linked third parties, which are planned to be involved in the KIC's activities. In addition, the Coordinator should attach to the declaration, the relevant project references and the CVs of the key members of the Interim Management Team.

Proposals may be submitted in any of the official languages of the European Union. The EIT prefers, however, to receive documentation in English, as this is its working language. Nonetheless, the choice of language will not have an impact on the evaluation. The EIT appreciates documentation presented in an orderly way, which is clear and easy to read.

7. Evaluation procedure and criteria (admissibility, eligibility, exclusion, selection and technical evaluation criteria)

7.1 Admissibility criteria

Prior to evaluation, proposals will be examined for compliance with the following admissibility criteria:

- the proposal must be submitted through the electronic proposal submission system;
- the proposal must be submitted by the Call deadline;
- the proposal must have completed all mandatory parts.

7.2 Eligibility criteria

After the admissibility check, a proposal will only be considered eligible if:

- (a) its content and scope correspond to the topic of the Call and the KIC model;
- (b) it complies with the following eligibility conditions:
 - The proposed KIC must contain at least three independent partner organisations established in at least three different Member States;
 - at least two thirds of the partner organisations forming the proposed KIC are established in Member States;
 - the proposed KIC includes at least one higher education institution and one private company;
 - the proposal must be submitted by a partnership containing a maximum of 50 partners;

Only proposals satisfying all of the eligibility criteria shall pass on to the evaluation stage.

7.3 Exclusion criteria

Applicants will be excluded from participation in the Call and from the award if they are in one of the situations referred to in Articles 106(1) and 107 of the [EU Financial Regulation](#)⁵.

As evidence, the applicants will have to submit a declaration of honour on exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interest. Following the designation decision, the winning consortia will be requested to submit recently issued evidence (e.g. registration and tax certificates, judicial records) in support of the declaration of honour, in accordance with Article 143 of the [Rules of Application of the Financial Regulation](#)⁶.

7.4 Financial and operational capacity (selection) criteria

Only admissible and eligible proposals will be evaluated against the financial and operational capacity criteria.

⁵ OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1

⁶ OJ L 362, 31.12.2012, p. 1

7.4.1 Financial capacity criteria

The organisation of the Partnership's Coordinator (or Coordinator of the KIC start-up phase) will be subject to the financial capacity assessment if (and when) the KIC has been designated and the Coordinator is subject to a financial viability check. Financial capacity will be assessed on the basis of the financial viability check⁷.

At the proposal submission stage⁸, the Coordinator will be asked to confirm that he/she has carried out a self-check of the financial capacity of the organisation through the financial self-check tool⁹ or has been covered by a financial viability check for an EU project for the last closed financial year.

If the Coordinator's financial viability would be assessed as 'weak' or 'insufficient':

- the Coordinator will normally step down as Coordinator but can participate in any other role; in this case, the consortium must put forward a solution, including the appointment of a new Coordinator and reassignment of coordination tasks;
- the partnership's activities will be subject to additional monitoring and reporting based on an action plan;
- if no acceptable solution or action plan would be presented by the Coordinator, the KIC designation/start-up phase may be terminated and the designated KIC (partnership) cancelled.

Following the provisions of Article 15(10)-(11) of the [Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation](#)¹⁰, public bodies including international organisations, higher or secondary education establishments or legal entities, whose viability is guaranteed by a Member State or associated country, will be exempted from the financial capacity check.

7.4.2 Operational capacity criteria

1) The Partnership's Coordinator's familiarity with the Call's theme and experience of coordinating and/or participating in international projects related to the integration of the three sides of the Knowledge Triangle, as well as familiarity with the European Union's financial procedures, is proven through having:

- participated in at least one project with a total budget (allocated or coordinated) exceeding EUR 3 million;
- coordinated at least one project with at least two other partners (three in total) from at least three different European countries and from at least two sides of the Knowledge Triangle;
- participated in at least one project financed by EU funds.

The Coordinator should provide references for at least two projects as evidence of his/her operational capacity (one project may meet several of the above criteria). The projects should have been successfully completed, the final implementation date of the projects should not be earlier than 31 December 2012, and the minimum budget of the projects should be higher than EUR 100 000 to make the reference eligible. All reference projects should be related to the relevant thematic area.

⁷ The organisation's financial viability will be assessed by checking that: it has sufficient liquidity – it is able to cover its short-term commitments, it is financially autonomous, it is solvent - capable of covering its medium and long-term commitments, it is profitable – by generating profits, or at least with self-financing capacity.

⁸ This confirmation will be requested on the SEP system as part of the Proposal Submission Forms.

⁹ <https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/lfv.html>

¹⁰ Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013, see Article 15

2) The capability and necessary experience of the key members of the Interim Management Team, namely the CEO (Chief Executive Officer), COO (Chief Operational Officer) and CFO (Chief Financial Officer), is evidenced through them having:

- at least 7 years' work experience relevant to the position;
- for the CEO, 7 years' and for the COO, 5 years' experience in the Call's thematic field;
- at least 3 years' work experience in an international environment.

Candidates are required to have a level of education which corresponds to completed university studies of at least four years attested by a diploma. Only qualifications issued by EU Member State authorities and qualifications recognised as equivalent by the relevant EU Member State authorities will be accepted¹¹.

Detailed curriculum vitae in the Europass format¹² covering relevant educational and professional qualifications and experience shall be attached to the Coordinator's Motivation and Commitment Declaration.

Only proposals that pass the operational capacity verification will be evaluated by the external experts.

7.5 Technical evaluation criteria for the selection of KICs

Proposals will be evaluated by Panels of high-level, independent external experts with respect to the criteria presented in Table 1 below. Each sub-criterion will be scored out of 5 and weighted. The evaluation scores of each criterion will be calculated as a sum of the weighted sub-criteria scores. Independent external experts will be grouped into Panels of Experts for each thematic area, covering the entrepreneurship-driven 'Knowledge Triangle' of higher education, research and business. Each Panel will consist of six evaluators and one rapporteur. Each Panel of Experts will prepare a consolidated evaluation report for each proposal. Representatives of KIC proposals reaching or exceeding the threshold of 70% will be invited to the hearings of the EIT Governing Board.

The EIT will appoint a high-level Independent Observer who will give an opinion on the conduct and fairness of the evaluation process.

The EIT will select the independent external experts based on the principles of transparency, equal treatment and non-discrimination. They will abide by the Code of Conduct for independent external experts acting as evaluators, as adopted by the EIT.

¹¹ In the event of qualifications issued by authorities outside EU Member States, the proof of recognition of equivalence by the relevant EU Member State authorities must be specifically mentioned in the online application form under 'Additional information'. In the event of an invitation to an interview, the above proof must be provided.

¹² <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>

Table 1 – Technical evaluation criteria for the selection of KICs

STRATEGY 30 points max.	OPERATIONS 30 points max.	IMPACT 40 points max.
TOTAL 100 points		
<p>1.1 STRATEGIC APPROACH</p> <p>Relevance and specificity of the strategic approach; applicability of the KIC model to tackle the societal challenge(s) of Horizon 2020 via a multidisciplinary approach by integrating the Knowledge Triangle and fostering entrepreneurship and innovation. [10 points max]</p> <p>[1-5 points; weighting: 2]</p> <p>1.2 ADDED VALUE, INNOVATIVENESS AND SYNERGIES</p> <p>Novelty of the strategic market-oriented approach; added-value and readiness to establish concrete synergies and complementarities with EU and other relevant global, public, private and third sector initiatives. [10 points max]</p> <p>[1- 5 points; weighting: 2]</p> <p>1.3 KIC PARTNERSHIP INNOVATION QUALITY</p> <p>The combined strength and quality of the partners (including SMEs), forming a diverse, balanced, collaborative and world-class partnership. [10 points max]</p> <p>[1- 5 points; weighting: 2]</p>	<p>2.1 KIC GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP</p> <p>Quality and relevance of the KIC governance and management model including suitability of the KIC Legal Entity to implement the KIC’s strategy, including the involvement of partners’ top management in the KIC’s governance and the quality of the leadership team profiles. [10 points max]</p> <p>[1- 5 points; weighing: 2]</p> <p>2.2. OPERATIONS</p> <p>Effectiveness of the operational structure including Knowledge Triangle Integration within and connectivity among co-location centres; quality, innovativeness and relevance of key identified thematic areas and demonstration of how activities (education, research, and business) are integrated in the entrepreneurship-driven Knowledge Triangle to foster innovation. [10 points max]</p> <p>[1- 5 points; weighting: 2]</p> <p>2.3 KIC BUSINESS MODEL AND FINANCIAL PLAN</p> <p>Feasibility of the KIC’s business model and financial plan (including EIT and non-EIT resources) for achieving financial sustainability in the long-term; a plan for the management and exploitation of intellectual property supporting the KIC’s business model. [10 points max]</p> <p>[1- 5 points; weighting: 2]</p>	<p>3.1 IMPACT AND KIC SCOREBOARD</p> <p>Mid and long-term potential pan-European impact on human capital, job creation, economic growth and its relevance in the context of the KIC’s strategy and the EIT’s Strategic Innovation Agenda. Relevance and feasibility of the expected outputs and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) included in a KIC Scoreboard and their contribution to the EIT Scoreboard. [25 points max]</p> <p>[1-5 points; weighting: 5]</p> <p>3.2 COMMUNICATION, OUTREACH AND DISSEMINATION</p> <p>Quality and relevance of the KIC communication strategy including the contribution to building the EIT identity; quality and relevance of the outreach and dissemination plans, including sharing good practices, within, between and beyond the KICs, across EU Member States, regions (also in regions with a lower innovation capacity) and institutions to ensure a widening of the reach of the EIT. [15 points max]</p> <p>[1- 5 points; weighting: 3]</p>

7.6 Hearings and designation of the KICs

The EIT GB will hold hearings with representatives of KIC proposals reaching or exceeding the threshold of 70% of points at the Panel of Experts evaluation stage.

At the evaluation stage of the Governing Board Hearing, the overall strategic rationality and consistency of the KIC model presented in the proposal will be assessed. This will be done by evaluating the proposals from a holistic perspective against the three main selection criteria: Strategy, Operations and Impact. In particular, the following aspects that are key to the effective implementation of the KIC model will be assessed:

- **Strategy** - adaptability and suitability of the KIC model for the proposed strategic approach by the applicant;
- **Operations** – feasibility of the proposed KIC operational model and its financial sustainability, taking into account lessons learnt from current KICs;
- **Impact** – consistency of the applicant’s KIC model and its potential to achieve a significant and sustainable systemic impact in line with the EIT’s overall objectives;

Each criterion will be scored with a total of 10 points [1- 5 points; weighting: 2] by the Governing Board, therefore the maximum score that can be obtained in the hearing is 30 points. The Governing Board's score will be calculated as the average of the individual scores of the Governing Board members.

The sum of the points from the Governing Board Hearing will be added to the points obtained at the technical evaluation stage (Panel of Experts stage). The proposal receiving the highest number of points out of the maximum of 130 points will be designated by the EIT Governing Board. The EIT GB will designate one KIC per thematic area and may establish a reserve list with one KIC per thematic area.

Hearings will take place at the EIT premises in **Budapest on 16-17 November 2016**. Representatives of KIC proposals should ensure that they keep this date available in case they are called.

More details on the hearing procedures will be communicated in due time to the representatives of the pre-selected proposals. The EIT Governing Board intends to complete the selection and designate the two KICs by December 2016.

The EIT will apply its [Code of Good Conduct](#)¹³ in the eventuality of any conflict of interest.

The EIT has no obligation to designate a KIC or KICs as a result of the Call for proposals. The EIT shall not be liable for any compensation with respect to applicants whose proposals have not been accepted, nor shall the EIT be liable if it decides not to designate a KIC or KICs or to cancel the procedure at any time. A decision not to designate a KIC or KICs will be substantiated and brought to the attention of applicants.

7.7 Information for applicants

The applicants are invited to send in any questions they might have regarding the Call by 31 May 2016 via the [Contact Page](#) on the EIT website. Replies will be given by 15 June 2016.

All questions together with their answers will be published on the EIT's website on the KIC Call page. It is therefore strongly recommended that applicants regularly check this website.

On the grounds of equal treatment, the EIT Governing Board members and EIT staff cannot give applicants a prior opinion on the eligibility, quality or any other relevant element of a specific proposal.

Following designation of the KICs by the EIT Governing Board, all applicants will receive written feedback on the evaluation of their proposals. Letters to unsuccessful applicants will state the name of the successful applicant and the grounds on which the decision was taken.

7.8 Informing the public about the final result

The EIT will publish the results of the 2016 Call for KIC Proposals on its website.

¹³ Decision 13/2015 of the Governing Board of the EIT on the Code of Good Conduct on Conflicts of Interest for Members of the EIT Governing Board (00227.EIT.2015.I.GB35)

7.9 Publicity

By the KIC:

In accordance with the provisions of the FPA, the KIC must clearly acknowledge the European Union's contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used. In this respect, the KIC is required to give prominence to the name and emblem of the EIT on all their publications, posters, programmes and other products realised in line with the EIT Brand Book. If this requirement is not fully complied with, the grant may be reduced in accordance with the provisions of the FPA.

By the EIT:

Annual ex-post publication: All information relating to grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on the EIT's website no later than by 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded. The EIT will publish the name and address of the KIC, the subject of the grant and the amount awarded.

7.10 Gender and ethical principles

Gender and ethical principles are governed in accordance with the provisions laid down in Horizon 2020 - The Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

7.11 Procedure for complaints and appeals

7.11.1 Evaluation review procedure:

Applicants may have recourse to redress if they have grounds to believe that their application has been adversely affected by shortcomings in the evaluation of their proposal. A request for redress, from the Coordinator and addressed to the Chairman of the EIT Governing Board, may be submitted through the [Contact Page](#) on the EIT's website or to the functional mailbox EIT-Director@eit.europa.eu within **1 month** of the date on which the EIT informs the Coordinator of the evaluation results. Please note that redress on the basis of the technical judgment of the external expert evaluators is not admissible.

To be admissible, a complaint must be:

- received within 30 days of the date on which the EIT informed the Coordinator of the evaluation results;
- submitted in writing;
- submitted by the Coordinator of the original proposal;
- related to the eligibility of a specific proposal or the evaluation process.

Applicants must base their complaint on the information included in the letter addressed to them stating the grounds on which the decision was taken, possibly with reference to the conditions and criteria laid down in the Call for Proposals.

The EIT Evaluation Review Committee will examine the request and provide an opinion on the procedural aspects of the evaluation process, but not on the merits of the proposal.

The Committee may recommend one of the following:

- The results of the initial evaluation are confirmed:
 - o due to the absence of evidence or inadequate evidence to support the complaint;
 - o there is evidence to support the complaint, but no re-evaluation is recommended, as the shortcoming is limited to a certain part of the evaluation and did not influence the overall outcome of the evaluation;

- Full or partial re-evaluation of the proposal is recommended, as there is sufficient evidence to support the complaint.

On the basis of the Committee's opinion, a decision will be taken by the EIT and the Coordinator will be notified in writing.

7.11.2 Lodging a complaint to the European Ombudsman:

Applicants who believe that there was maladministration regarding the evaluation of their application may lodge a complaint with the European Ombudsman within **two years** of the date on which they became aware of the facts on which the complaint is based:

European Ombudsman

1 avenue du Président Robert Schuman

CS 30403 F-67001 Strasbourg Cedex

France

Tel.: (+33) 3 88 17 23 13 Fax: (+33) 3 88 17 90 62

Website: www.ombudsman.europa.eu

Contact form (for general inquiries): <http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/shortcuts/contacts.faces>

Complaint form (for lodging a complaint):

<https://secure.ombudsman.europa.eu/atyourservice/secured/complaintform.faces>

7.11.3 Launching an action for annulment before the General Court of the European Union:

Applicants may lodge an appeal against the designation decision. This must be done within **two months** of receipt of the notification letter (see point 7.7). Any redress complaint or any complaint for maladministration will have neither the purpose nor the effect of suspending the time-limit for lodging an action for annulment. The court responsible for hearing appeal procedures is the General Court:

General Court

Rue du Fort Niedergrünwald

L-2925 Luxembourg

Tel.: (352) 4303-1 Fax: (352) 4303 2100

E-mail: GeneralCourt.Registry@curia.europa.eu

URL: <http://curia.europa.eu>

7.12 Data protection

The reply to any call for proposals involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless otherwise indicated, the questions and any personal data requested are required for the purpose of evaluating the application in accordance with the specifications of the call for proposal and will be processed solely for that purpose by the EIT. Details concerning the processing of personal data are available in the privacy statement at: http://ec.europa.eu/dataprotectionofficer/privacystatement_publicprocurement_en.pdf.

Personal data may be registered in the Early Warning System (EWS) only or both in the EWS and Central Exclusion Database (CED) by the Accounting Officer of the Commission, should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- Commission Decision 2014/792 of 13 November 2014 on the Early Warning System (for more information see the Privacy Statement at:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm),

or

- Commission Regulation 2008/1302 of 17 December 2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (for more information see the Privacy Statement at http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm)

For more information please consult the privacy statement concerning the management of grants on the EIT website.

ANNEXES

Documents for information

- a. Templates for submitting a Proposal
- b. SIA thematic factsheets
- c. Model Framework Partnership Agreement
- d. Model Specific Grant Agreement
- e. Model Start-up Grant Agreement
- f. Evaluation template – Panel of Experts evaluation stage