European Institute of Innovation & Technology

EIT HEI Initiative

Call for Proposals 2024

Funded by the European Union

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Question	Category	Answer
What makes a good quality Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP)?	APPLICATION	Quality Innovation Vision Action Plans establish clear links to the objectives of the EIT HEI Initiative and the focus of the call for proposals. They build a credible path towards reinforcing the innovation and entrepreneurship capacities of higher education institutions and establish concrete actions in their Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP) to fill in their existing gaps. They set ambitious yet sound targets for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), to measure the success of project implementation. They involve the relevant players in their consortia that are able to address the objectives defined in the project, that have a wide geographical scope, represent different sides of the knowledge triangle, and include organisations from RIS countries as much as possible.
Should each HEI in the consortium create an IVAP, or should this be delivered at the consortium level?	APPLICATION	The IVAP (this is the proposal you submit through application) should be one collaborative document, put together and submitted via the application system, by the consortium lead. It consists of Part A (completion of the online tabs in the Application Portal) and Part B (the upload of a narrative Word document to the Application Portal). Details on Part A and Part B content are found in Section 3.3 of the call text.
Should each HEI in the consortium complete the HEInnovate self-assessment?	APPLICATION	This decision is up to the consortium; the HEIs in your consortium may choose to take the HEInnovate self-assessment as separate institutions and combine their results to build the IVAP, or they may take the self-assessment as a group of HEIs. The chosen approach should be explained in your IVAP (proposal).
How recent should the results of the HEInnovate self-assessment be by the time the consortium submits its proposal?	APPLICATION	The HEInnovate self-assessment should be done during the submission window (i.e., anytime from 19 September – 12 December 2024).
Could you explain the project 'phases'?	APPLICATION	There will be two implementation phases: Phase 1 and Phase 2, as described in the call text. At the end of Phase 1there will be a 'stop-go decision' in which the project will be assessed against its KPI targets and the successful fulfillment of them will inform the decision around its continuation to phase 2 and the securing of phase 2 funds. Due to the existence of an annual reporting cycle at the EIT KICs, proposals will also be required to plan their Phase 2 KPI targets and project budget per calendar year, meaning that for project planning and management purposes, Phase 2 is broken down into Phase 2a and Phase 2b. Please see the call text for information on the dates of each phase.
Is the minimum number of KPIs enough or should we aim for more? Will this make a difference when evaluating applications?	APPLICATION	Applications will be partially assessed on their capacity for impact, therefore projects that show higher ambition toward KPI targets may be more positively evaluated. However, proposals must also be realistic and achievable for the consortium, so this will also be evaluated. As a general rule, it is recommended to set ambitious targets that reflect the capacity of your consortium. The evaluators will take the profile of the consortium and the project scope into account, rather than treating applications with a one-size-fits-all approach.

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What is deep tech?	APPLICATION	Please refer to the definition in the call text. More information on the EIT Deep Tech Talent Initiative may be found HERE.
Can I apply to both Strands, in other words submit an application to Strand A (general I+E capacity building) and Strand B (I+E capacity building for the enhancement of deep tech)?	APPLICATION	No, organisations can only participate in one application as a full partner, and therefore can apply to only one Strand (A or B). Organisations/consortia should consider which strand best suits their innovation and entrepreneurship capacity building needs.
Can you tell us more about the EIT Pledge for Deep Tech Talents?	APPLICATION	You can read about the EIT Pledge for Deep Tech Talents HERE. Selected proposals for Strand B of this EIT HEI Initiative call will be asked to join the EIT Deep Tech Talent Initiative Pledge given the alignment of activities between the two initiatives. Furthermore, selected proposals from Strand A will also be encouraged to join the Pledge.
Strand B: What qualifies as deep tech talent training for students?	APPLICATION	There are two possibilities for such training: 1. proven deep tech focused training delivered to students enrolled in any academic programme (for instance, this could be business and management students, social sciences students, etc.) who need training in a deep tech domain to complement their entrepreneurial and innovation related activities and studies AND/OR 2. innovation/entrepreneurship capacity building training delivered to science/engineering/technology students who are studying or working on deep tech fields, for the purpose of complementing their deep tech expertise.
Can a non-HEI partner be an entity that delivers training under the KPI 8.1?	APPLICATION	Yes. However, the training courses have set criteria that must be followed. For example, for the student training programmes, they must correspond to at least 2 ECTS-equivalent credits, meaning 50-60 hours of workload including self-study. Please see Section 3.3.2 for details on the KPI criteria.
Can the training programmes be delivered 100% remotely?	APPLICATION	Yes, the training can be delivered face-to-face, hybrid or entirely online. This is at the consortium's discretion.
Is there a template for the Commitment letter?	APPLICATION	For the top management Commitment Letter, there is a template (downloadable in the Application Portal) that must be used; the Commitment Letter must be written and signed by the top management (e.g. President, Rector, Chancellor) of each HEI on their official HEI letterhead. For the Commitment Letters to be uploaded by each participating faculty/department, there is no template.
Are businesses/industry players eligible to apply to the EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024?	CONSORTIUM	Businesses/industry partners are not only eligible to apply, the call's consortium composition eligibility criteria states that every consortium must have at least one full partner of this profile. The objectives of the EIT HEI Initiative and the 2024 call require a strong focus on enhancing research and technology transfer, supporting business creation structures and strengthening collaboration between HEIs and business partners, all of which require the active participation of the business sector.
Can a European University Alliance participate in an EIT HEI Initiative project?	CONSORTIUM	European University Alliances are welcome to apply to the EIT HEI Initiative and build synergies in their workplan between the EIT HEI Initiative and other European programmes such as Erasmus+. They will have to demonstrate how they contribute to the objectives of the call and demonstrate that the EIT HEI Initiative would fund new/additional activities.
What are the benefits for well-established, mature universities and smaller, less mature ones when participating in the EIT HEI Initiative?	CONSORTIUM	Both HEI types will reinforce and build their capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship and get access to a wider network. The former may be especially interested in strengthening their links to the innovation ecosystem and its different players, such as other HEIs, the business sector (e.g., to develop internships in business, programmes to support start-ups, etc.) and the government level (e.g., contribution to the definition or implementation of smart specialisation strategies). The latter can benefit from the experience and expertise of more mature HEIs to improve their programmes and equip themselves with the relevant structures to support innovation and entrepreneurship (e.g., technology transfer offices).

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What is the role of associated partners and their added value for the project?	CONSORTIUM	Associated partners complement the role of full partners. While they do not receive EIT funding, they may contribute knowledge and expertise, opportunities for scaling up project achievements, support for future financial sustainability, etc. The actual contribution depends on the objectives of the project and the set-up of its consortium.
What are the rules and requirements around the participation of previous partners in this call (organisations from previously selected EIT HEI Initiative projects)?	CONSORTIUM	Full partners from previously funded EIT HEI Initiative Calls for Proposals are eligible to apply in an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Pioneer role. Please see Section 3.4.3 of the call text for information on how previous EIT HEI Initiative partners may participate in this call for proposals.
Is there a maximum number of partners allowed in a consortium?		There is no strict maximum number of partners in an EIT HEI Initiative consortium. However, the consortium should be balanced and fit the project's scope and complexity. It's recommended to keep the size manageable to ensure effective coordination, communication, and management. The proposal must demonstrate that each partner contributes meaningfully to the project objectives.
Can a consortium reapply if their proposal is unsuccessful in a previous call?		Yes, consortia can reapply in future calls if their proposal is unsuccessful. The EIT HEI Initiative provided feedback in the form of evaluation reports, which can help applicants improve their proposals. It is advisable to address the reviewers' comments and take them into account; bear in mind that the HEInnovate self-assessment completed for previous applications cannot be re-used, it must be taken fresh for the Call for Proposals 2024, so the IVAP will inevitably be somewhat different anyway.
Are the KPIs counted per participating partner or per consortium?	CONSORTIUM	The KPIs are counted per consortium, and all participating partners should be contributing to the fulfilment of the KPIs.
How do we calculate compliance with the funding distribution criteria?	ELIGIBILITY	The funding distribution criteria is outlined in Section 3.5 of the call text. It states that the majority of the per project funding issued by the EIT – meaning more than 50% of the total project funding – must be allocated to full partners in the consortium that fulfil all three of the following criteria: ▪ Their organisation type **IS** an HEI ▪ They are an HEI that is **NOT** formally affiliated to any EIT KIC ▪ They are an HEI that has **NEVER** participated as a full partner in a selected EIT HEI Initiative project before. These criteria apply to the Phase 1 budget, the Phase 2 budget, and the total project budget. Moreover, non-HEI partners automatically fall into the category of consortium partners that are not eligible to receive the majority of the project funding, as they do not meet the first criterion — their organisation type is not a higher education institution (HEI).
Should we consider associated partners in the funding distribution criteria?		No, associated partners cannot receive any EIT funding and therefore should not be taken into account when calculating the distribution of EIT funds and compliance with the funding distribution criteria.
Does our consortium need to have an organisation that is a member/partner of one of the EIT KICs in it?	ELIGIBILITY	No, there is no requirement to include a KIC partner/member in your consortium for the EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024.
Are HEIs that only offer bachelor-level education eligible to apply, or do we have to also offer recognised master's degrees?	ELIGIBILITY	Yes, if you offer degrees recognised by a national authority, you meet the accreditation-related eligibility criterion.
Which countries are eligible to apply?	ELIGIBILITY	The EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024 is aligned to Horizon Europe, therefore please consult this document for the latest information on country eligibility. Partners from those countries not associated with Horizon Europe may have to provide co-funding or funding from other sources, like national support, to cover their participation.
Are organisations from the UK eligible to apply to the EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024?	ELIGIBILITY	The UK is associated with Horizon Europe effective from January 1, 2024. This allows UK researchers and organisations to participate in the programme on equal terms with EU Member States.

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Are organisations from Switzerland eligible to apply to the EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024?	ELIGIBILITY	Swiss partners are not eligible for EIT funding but can participate as full partners in proposals, with their budget covered by the State Secretariat for Education, Research, and Innovation (SERI). They cannot lead a consortium nor do they count towards the "three HEIs from three Horizon Europe eligible countries" criterion. Their budget is not a top-up; it must fit within the total €1.34 million.
How does the December 2022 Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506 affect the participation of Hungarian HEIs in the EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024?	ELIGIBILITY	Due to the Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/250670 effective from December 16, 2022, no legal commitments can be entered into with Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entities they maintain. Affected entities can apply to calls for proposals but are not eligible for funded roles (beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, etc.) until the Council measures are lifted.
Are organisations from Russia, Belarus, and Non-Government Controlled Territories of Ukraine eligible to apply?	ELIGIBILITY	Legal entities from these regions are currently not eligible to participate in any capacity due to the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the involvement of Belarus. This includes participation as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors, or recipients of financial support. Please see Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2025, General Annexes, Point B – Eligibility (page 9).
Are non-governmental/civil society organisations eligible to apply and receive funding under the HEI Initiative?	ELIGIBILITY	Yes, non-governmental, non-profit, civil society organisations are eligible to apply as full partners (and hence have funding allocated) under this call.
What type of support, services and resources are available from the EIT KICs and the EIT HEI Initiative during project implementation?	RESOURCES	If your application is successful, you will be granted access to a wide range of support, services and resources! Firstly, every selected project is allocated a hands-on Project Officer (PO) to support you throughout the project lifecycle. The PO is employed by the EIT KIC that the project is allocated to for coordination, meaning that they can help with everything you need to know, both EIT HEI Initiative and EIT KIC-related. The PO will also serve as a connector between your project and other opportunities found within the EIT KIC ecosystem. Furthermore, at the central EIT HEI Initiative level, several services, tools and events are provided to all selected projects. Check out section 3.5.1 of the call text (EIT HEI Initiative community activities and events) for information on how the initiative supports the development, implementation and learnings of project IVAPs, and how it convenes project participants and the larger HEI Initiative community of projects to a series of both online and in-person events. Read more about these services and events on the EIT HEI Initiative website HERE.
My organisation is looking for potential consortium partners to apply for the call. How can we reach them?	RESOURCES	The EIT HEI Initiative has provided access to an online networking and matchmaking platform specifically for this Call for Proposals, hosted on Conversation Starter. Please create a profile and browse potential partners HERE.
Who can I address to seek advice on applying to the EIT HEI Initiative Call for Proposals 2024?	RESOURCES	For general queries, such as application process and rules for participation, you may contact: *hei@eitrawmaterials.eu*. For questions on specific Knowledge Innovation Community (KIC) Strategic Agendas, you may address the dedicated KIC contact person. Find the list on the Call 2024 webpage.