



EIT Community Circular Economy Prize

Rules of the Prize



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1. EIT Community and the Strategic Synergies Cluster

The EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2021-2027 sets the strategic direction, priorities and objectives of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and its Knowledge and Innovation Communities (EIT KICs).

One specific objective in the new EIT SIA 2021-2027 is to establish and foster appropriate synergies and complementarities between EIT activities and other relevant Union, national and regional initiatives, instruments, and programmes, and ensure consistency with Union priorities and commitments, including the European Green Deal, the Recovery Plan for Europe, the European Strategy for data, the SME Strategy for a sustainable and digital Europe, and the New Industrial Strategy for Europe¹.

To realise such ambitions, the EIT and the EIT KICs have established the Strategic Synergies Cluster, to strengthen the EU's innovation and entrepreneurial capacity and integrate into and engage with innovation ecosystems. By doing so, the EIT KICs aim at becoming real engines of impact and support the realisation of a carbon-neutral, digital, circular, and inclusive European society.

The EIT Strategic Synergies Cluster includes four key initiatives co-designed and co-created by the EIT KICs with their innovation ecosystems: EIT Circular Economy Community, EIT Community Artificial Intelligence, EIT Community New European Bauhaus, and EIT Community Women Entrepreneurship.

A central philosophy of the EIT Community is the integration of the EIT Knowledge Triangle model² into all its activities. All the activities implemented within the EIT Strategic Synergies Cluster will also leverage and use the Knowledge Triangle model as an enabler, facilitating the creation of systemic change, while also reinforcing the links between grantees and their local and regional ecosystems, and providing an impetus to leverage additional funding sources beyond the EIT funding period of the selected projects.

¹ Decision (EU) No 2021/820 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 on the Strategic Agenda of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) 2021-2027: Boosting the Innovation Talent and Capacity of Europe and repealing Decision No 1312/2013/EU, OJ L 189/3 of 28 May 2021, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021D0820&from=EN>.

² The Knowledge Triangle refers to the interaction between business, education, and innovation, which are key drivers of a knowledge-based society.

https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eit_innovation_model.pdf



The KICs carry out activities that cover the entire innovation chain: training and education programmes, reinforcing the journey from research to market, innovation projects, as well as business incubators and accelerators. Through the KICs, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) strengthens cooperation among businesses (including SMEs), higher education institutions and research organisations, forms dynamic pan-European partnerships, and creates favourable environments for creative thought processes and innovations to flourish.

Participation in the initiatives of the EIT Strategic Synergies Cluster will unite organisations that are already EIT KIC partners and non-partners to cultivate collaborative relationships and leverage the existing innovation and entrepreneurial knowledge base developed within EIT KICs thus far. Participation in an application selected for funding will not result in any obligation to become an EIT KIC partner. However, a non-partner may become a partner of an EIT KIC if deemed desirable by the non-partner organisation.

2. EIT Circular Economy Community

In a world where demand and competition for finite resources continue to increase, and pressure on resources is causing greater environmental degradation and fragility, valuable materials are leaking from our economies. Moving to more circular economic models will allow Europe to rise to the current and future challenges of global pressure on resources and increasing insecurity of supply.

Circular economy systems are beneficial for the planet because they keep resources within the economy when a product has reached the end of its life. This means that materials can be productively used again and again and hence eliminate waste. But a transition to a more circular economy requires deep changes throughout value chains. There is a need for sustainable product design, new business and market models, alternative ways of turning waste into resources and new modes of consumer behaviour. This implies full systemic change and innovation – not only in technologies but also in organisations, society, finance and policy.

The EIT Circular Economy Community consists of five Knowledge and Innovation Communities – or “KICs” – namely EIT RawMaterials, EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Food, EIT Manufacturing and EIT Urban Mobility.

Circular Economy is currently one of the main strategies at European level and the KICs community clearly represent one of the most relevant stakeholders able to support, boost and facilitate the adequate implementation of this key strategy.

The main objectives of the EIT Circular Economy Community are:

- Support the Innovation Communities in developing a joint circular economy offer and to increase their visibility in the circular economy landscape.



- Strengthen collaboration with European Commission services through the implementation of a Circular Economy joint strategy.
- Initiate and strengthen the collaboration with other relevant stakeholders and initiatives in the circular economy landscape.
- Support breakthrough initiatives and start-ups through the Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) Programme.
- Collaborate with the European Commission in the implementation of the European Circular Economy Action Plan.
- Collaborate with the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (ECESP) through the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the European Commission (EC).
- Pool and create further non-technical knowledge regarding specific aspects affecting the adequate implementation of Circular Economy approaches, as well as facilitating the access to markets for innovative KICs solutions.

3. EIT Community Circular Economy Prize

3.1. Objectives

The EIT Community Circular Economy Prize aims to identify relevant start-ups and SMEs with significant new solutions in the four specific topics defined in the next section.

3.2. Topics of interest

This prize is specifically focused on four relevant topics:

Topic 1: New circular business models in two specific areas:

- **From products to services:** This model is an alternative to the established “buy and own” approach and includes lending, renting, or pay-for-use agreements. It allows customer to purchase a service or desired result, rather than buying the product itself.
- **Sharing economy:** The primary feature that defines a sharing economy is the mutual cooperation. It creates the opportunity for consumers to tap into the unused potential of products by reducing their idle time and increase access to goods and services.



Topic 2: Circular economy assessment methodologies: new methodological approaches to monitor and/or quantify circular economy from a general perspective or in specific sectors as critical raw materials, building, food.

Topic 3: Waste valorization including logistics: new ideas and approaches for waste valorization in specific sectors as critical raw materials, building, food including digital solutions to improve logistics.

Topic 4: Digital Products Passports: new ideas and developments in the field of Digital Products Passports as efficient tool to improve materials traceability to support the implementation of sustainable products.

4. Prize amount

Financial award of:

- EUR 15.000 for the first position topic 1, 2, 3 and 4
- Additionally, the winners may apply to business support & acceleration services by the participating EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities - KICs (EIT Raw Materials, EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Food, EIT Urban Mobility and EIT Manufacturing)

5. Deadline & admissibility

- Application period: **01.06.2022-31.08.2022**
- Deadline for submitting business ideas: **31.08.2022 23:59 CET**
- Selection process: **September 2022**
- Notification of acceptance/rejection: **Mid October 2022**
- Pitching session **End October 2022**
- Ceremony: **November 2022** (exact date to be communicated in due course) during the EIT Circular Economy Community event in Brussels.

Applications must be submitted via the registration link:

<https://webportalapp.com/sp/cep2022>

Applications must be readable, accessible and printable. Incomplete applications may be considered inadmissible if essential elements are missing.

For more information, please get in touch with the EIT Circular Economy Community contacts listed on section 11 of this document.



6. Eligibility

All EIT KICs activities are governed by the rules set out in the Partnership Agreement between the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and KICs, and more over in the Grant Agreement (see Contractual Models³) with the EIT, under the HorizonEurope Framework Programme for Research and Innovation⁴.

6.1. Eligibility Criteria

The contest is open to any legal entity or group of legal entities established in an EU Member State or in a country associated to HorizonEurope⁵. However, entities that are already beneficiaries (Partners) of the participating EIT KICs (EIT Raw Materials, EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Food, EIT Urban Mobility and EIT Manufacturing) may not receive a financial award.

Typically, the following entities may apply:

1. **SMEs** (according to the European Commission's definitions) having innovation projects relevant to the prize topics defined above;
2. **Start-up or spin-off** companies at least registered at the time of the application;

In case of joint applications by a group of participants, the participants must appoint a '**lead participant**' to represent them to the EIT Circular Economy Community. The participants will be jointly responsible and must all fulfil and respect the conditions set out in these rules. Applications must be submitted by the (lead) participant.

6.2. Exclusion Criteria

Consulting service companies without tangible product will be excluded.

For participants already receiving funding from any of the participating EIT KICs (EIT Raw Materials, EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Food, EIT Urban Mobility and EIT Manufacturing) in 2022, the following cumulated maximum funding limits apply:

³ <https://eit.europa.eu/eit-and-innovation-community-contractual-relations>

⁴ Once adopted there might be further details included here.

⁵ See the current list of associated countries here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-atom_en.pdf



- Booster support: funding of maximum EUR 200,000 in 2022
- Accelerator programme: funding of maximum EUR 60,000 in 2022

These funding limits cannot be exceeded.

Participants will be excluded if they (or one of them):

- is subject to an administrative sanction (i.e. exclusion)
- is in one of the following situations:
 - bankrupt, being wound up, having their affairs administered by the courts, entered into an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar proceedings or procedures under national law (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
 - declared in breach of social security or tax obligations by a final judgment or decision (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
 - found guilty of grave professional misconduct by a final judgment or decision (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
 - convicted of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
 - shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under a procurement contract, prize agreement or prize decision financed by the EU or Euratom budget (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
 - found guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
- has misrepresented information required for participating in the contest or fails to submit such information
- was involved in the preparation of the prize documents and this entails a distortion of competition.

7. Award criteria

Each application will be scored on the criteria listed in the following table, with the score in relation to each criterion being based on the following guidelines:



CRITERIA	EXPLANATIONS
1. TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE & IMPACT	The innovation should be relevant to the topics mentioned in section 3.2
2. MARKET NEEDS, REPLICABILITY & BUSINESS MODELS	Large market size and customers' willingness to buy are positively evaluated (e.g. initial discussion with potential customer(s)). The innovation should also be clearly replicable in different European regions.
3. QUALITY OF THE TEAM	Team capability is of the utmost importance since execution is key. Team members should demonstrate relevant expertise and track records.
4. QUALITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT ROADMAP	The quality of the Roadmap, which should show clear milestones and estimate efforts, will be evaluated.

8. Documents

The application including mandatory supporting documents will be submitted through the application portal website unless otherwise stated.

Participants may be asked at a later stage for further documents (for legal entity validation, bank account validation, ethics review, declaration of honour on exclusion grounds, etc.).

9. Procedure

The application procedure is the following:

1. **Online application:** Applicants must submit an online application form with the idea description in which they should illustrate: the problems they address (market needs), technological solution, novelty, team composition and expertise, estimated time to market.
2. **An expert panel composed of one representative from each participating EIT KIC (EIT Raw Materials, EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Food, EIT Urban Mobility and EIT Manufacturing)** will assess the applications with the underlying objectives of the prize. The best 8



applications passing this selection will be invited to pitch their idea to the jury. Shortlisted candidates will be notified according to the timeline in section 5.

3. **Pitching contest:** shortlisted candidates will pitch (online) to the jury panel composed of one representative from each participating KIC (EIT Raw Materials, EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Food, EIT Urban Mobility and EIT Manufacturing). The jury panel will rank the pitched ideas according to the evaluation criteria described in the next section.

If there are less than **eight** applications, there will not be a selection phase: all the applications will pass directly to the pitching contest.

In case one topic cannot be awarded due to lack of applications or none of the received applications meet the quality required, the EIT Circular Economy Community reserves the right to award the prize to two applications in one of the other three remaining topics.

The selection panel and jury usually have different compositions, but jury members may participate in the selection panel.

The selection panel/jury will evaluate each application against the **four award criteria** and score them as follows (half marks and decimals are not possible):

0: Non-existent, 1: Very poor, 2: Poor, 3: Fair, 4: Good, 5: Excellent.

The average of the evaluators will be used to produce the ranking. The jury's decisions are unappealable.

CRITERIA	THRESHOLD	MAXIMUM POINTS
1. TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE & IMPACT	4	5
2. MARKET NEEDS, REPLICABILITY & BUSINESS MODEL	4	5
3. QUALITY OF THE TEAM	3	5
4. QUALITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT ROADMAP	3	5
TOTAL	14	20

For applications with the same score, the selection panel/jury will determine a priority order according to the following approach:

If two or more applications tie for the first rank, the prize will be equally divided and awarded to all.

On the basis of the evaluation by the jury, EIT Circular Economy Community will decide on the awarding of the prize.

All participants will be informed by on the outcome of their application.



10. Other conditions

10.1. Payment and arrangements

The prize money will be paid to the selected applicant in one instalment by bank transfer after the announcement of the final selection, provided all the requested documents have been submitted, payment will be made within 30 days from the signature date of the Prize Agreement.

10.2. Publicity – Promoting the Prize – Visibility of the EU Funding

Publicity by the winner(s)

The winner(s) must promote the EIT Community Circular Economy Prize and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner.

Unless the EIT Circular Economy Community requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any communication activity related to the action (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.) must:

- a) display the **EIT Circular Economy Community logo with the EU emblem** and
- b) include the following text:
“Funded by the European Union”

When displayed together with another logo, the EIT Circular Economy Community logo and EU emblem must have appropriate prominence.

For the purposes of their obligations, the selected companies may use the EIT Circular Economy Community logo and the EU emblem without first obtaining approval from the organisers.

This does not, however, give them the right to exclusive use.

Moreover, they may not appropriate the EU emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.



Publicity by the EIT Circular Economy Community

The EIT Circular Economy Community may use, for its communications and publicity activities, information relating to the action as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material that it receives from the participants (including in electronic format).

The EIT Circular Economy Community will publish the name(s) of the winner(s), their origin, the amount of the prize and its nature and purpose — unless they have requested to waive this publication (because disclosure risks threatening their security and safety or harm their commercial interests).

Photos and videos taken by any participating EIT KIC during the awards ceremony where the selected applicants will feature are the sole property of the EIT Circular Economy Community.

10.3. Dissemination and Exploitation of Results

Applicants retain full and exclusive ownership of their prior information and intellectual property rights. By submitting their application, applicants warrant that they hold ownership or have legally secured the right to use all elements of the innovative product or service and that the provided materials and information do not infringe any intellectual or other property rights, including patents, of any other persons, companies or other entities. Elements of the submission that are based on rights held by others, such as patents, shall be marked as such in the submission.

The EIT Circular Economy Community and their authorised representatives in the programme undertake to ensure the confidentiality of the projects presented and developed with the support of EIT Circular Economy Community.

By submitting their application to the programme, applicants consent that the participating EIT KICs (EIT Raw Materials, EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Food, EIT Urban Mobility and EIT Manufacturing) and their Innovation Hubs (also called Co-location Centres - CLCs) will collect, transfer, process, store and delete their data under aforementioned conditions.

The selected companies agree that their data, the receipt of prize, and non-confidential information about their project, may be used by participating KICs and their authorised representatives without compensation for the promotion of their activities. Non-confidential information related to the project will be only provided after authorisation of the applicants.



10.4. Processing of personal data

Processing of personal data

Any personal data will be processed by EIT RawMaterials in accordance with the EIT RawMaterials Privacy Policy⁶.

All selected applicants consent that the following information be published by the EIT Circular Economy Community, in whatever form and medium:

- Name
- Country of origin
- Their activities in relation to the award of the prize (via the summary for publication they provided)
- Prize amount

Processing of personal data by the participants

The participants must process personal data in compliance with applicable EU and national law on data protection (including authorisations or notification requirements, if any), see the GDPR⁷ recommendations.

10.5. Ethics

The activities must be carried out in compliance with:

- a) ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity) and
- b) applicable international, EU and national law.

No funding will be awarded for activities carried out outside the EU if they are prohibited in all Member States.

The participants must ensure that the activities have an exclusive focus on civil applications.

⁶ <https://eitrawmaterials.eu/privacy-policy/>

⁷ <https://eugdpr.org/>



The participants must respect the highest standards of research integrity — as set out, for instance, in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity⁸.

10.6. Security

The activities must be carried out in compliance with Commission Decision 2015/444, i.e. security-sensitive information must be EU-classified if its unauthorised disclosure could adversely impact the interests of the EU or one (or more) of its Member States. Applications that are too security-sensitive cannot be awarded a prize.

10.7. Conflict of Interest

The participants, including applicants and expert panels, must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective award of the prize is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interest').

They must inform the EIT Circular Economy Community without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

The EIT Circular Economy Community may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

10.8. Liability for damages

The EIT Circular Economy Community cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the participants or to third parties as a consequence of the prize, including for gross negligence.

The EIT Circular Economy Community cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the participants in the context of the prize.

⁸ European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of ALLEA (All European Academies) and ESF (European Science Foundation) of March 2017 https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/european-code-of-conduct-for-research-integrity_horizon_en.pdf



10.9. Check, Audit and investigations

EIT Circular Economy Community, the EIT, the European Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), the European Court of Auditors and any other competent EU body may carry out checks, audits and investigations in relation to the prize.

10.10. Withdrawal of the Prize – Recovery of the undue amounts

The EIT Circular Economy Community may withdraw the prize after its award and recover all payments made if it finds out that:

- a. false information, fraud or corruption was used to obtain it
- b. a winner was not eligible or should have been excluded
- c. a winner is in serious breach of its obligations under these Terms & Conditions.

10.11. Administrative sanctions

If a participant has committed irregularities or fraud or has made false declarations, the EIT Circular Economy Community may also:

- a. exclude the participant from all future contracts, prizes and contests financed from the EU or Euratom budget for a maximum of five years (or 10 years in case of repetition) and/or
- b. impose a financial penalty of between 2% and 10% of the value of the prize (or between 4% and 20% in case of repetition).

10.12. Cancellation of the contest

The EIT Circular Economy Community may cancel the contest or decide not to award the prize, without any obligation to compensate participants, if:

- a. no applications are received
- b. the jury does not find a winner
- c. the winner is not eligible or must be excluded, or
- d. the objective of the contest has already been achieved.



10.13. Terms and Conditions

By submitting their application form, applicants agree to the Terms and Conditions, which form part of their submission. The EIT Circular Economy Community reserves the right to make reasonable amendments to these Terms and Conditions. Amendments and additions to these Terms and Conditions shall be valid if communicated in writing on the website of any participating KIC, the EIT Circular Economy Community web or otherwise made available to the applicants.

You may withdraw your application any time by informing us by email or withdrawing your registration any time.

10.14. Appeal and redress procedure

Requests for redress should be raised within one month of the receipt of the evaluation feedback sent by the EIT Circular Economy Community, and should be sent to ignacio.calleja@eitrawmaterials.eu. Requests must:

- be related to the evaluation process, or eligibility checks;
- include a clear description of the grounds for the complaint;
- be received within the time limit specified above.

An initial reply will be sent to complainants no later than two weeks after the deadline for redress requests. This initial reply will indicate when a definitive reply will be provided. A redress committee of the EIT Circular Economy Community may be convened to examine the evaluation process for the case under consideration. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of requests, and equal treatment of applicants. The redress committee itself, however, does not re-evaluate the proposal. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the committee may review the evaluation report and individual comments, and examine the CVs of the evaluation experts. Following its review, the committee will recommend a course of action to the EIT Circular Economy Community. If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could have affected the funding decision, all or part of the proposal may be re-evaluated. Unless there is clear evidence of a shortcoming there will be no follow-up or re-evaluation.

Please note:

- This procedure is concerned with the evaluation and/or eligibility checking process.
- The committee will not call into question the judgment of the individual expert-evaluators, whose qualifications have already been assessed and validated.



- A re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the quality assessment of a proposal. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on any other criterion.
- The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score.
- Only one request for redress per proposal will be considered

11. Contacts

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Webpage:	https://www.eit-circulareconomy.eu/calls-events/
Online Application link:	https://webportalapp.com/sp/cep2022