



Pre-qualification Notice

EIT Urban Mobility - Mobility for more liveable urban spaces

National Secretary of the EIT Community RIS Hub in
North Macedonia

EIT Urban Mobility

EIT Urban Mobility KIC LE (“Contracting Authority” or “CA”)

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Co-funded by the
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1. Overview

1.1 The EIT Urban Mobility

EIT Urban Mobility, supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), acts to accelerate positive change on mobility to make urban spaces more liveable.

EIT Urban Mobility is an initiative of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). Since January 2019 we have been working to encourage positive changes in the way people move around cities in order to make them more liveable places. We aim to become the largest European initiative transforming urban mobility. Co-funding of up to € 400 million (2020-2026) from the EIT, a body of the European Union, will help make this happen



*We create systemic solutions that will **move more people around the city more efficiently and free up public space.***



*We bring **all key players in urban mobility together** to avoid fragmentation and achieve more.*



*We **engage cities and citizens** from the word go, giving them the opportunity to become true agents of change.*

The EIT Urban Mobility S.L delivers breakthrough innovations to the market and breeds entrepreneurial talent for economic growth and improved quality of life in Europe. It does this by mobilising a pan-European ecosystem of more than 50 top European corporations, SMEs, start-ups, universities and research institutes constituted into the EIT Urban Mobility Association.

As a Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), the EIT Urban Mobility S.L is focused on entrepreneurship and is at the forefront of integrating education, research and business by bringing together students, researchers, engineers, business developers and entrepreneurs. This is done in a pan-European network of Co-Location Centers (CLCs), 5 Limited Liability Companies respectively based in Germany, Czech Republic, Denmark, the Netherlands and Spain.

We create systemic solutions that will move more people around the city more efficiently and free up public space.

We bring all key players in urban mobility together to avoid fragmentation and achieve more.

1.2 The European Institute of Innovation and Technology and the Knowledge and Innovation Communities

The **European Institute of Innovation and Technology** (EIT) is a European Union body established by Regulation (EC) No 294/2008 of the European Parliament and the Council of 11 March 2008.

The EIT's mission is to contribute to the sustainable European economic growth and global competitiveness by reinforcing the innovation capacity of the Member States and the Union and addressing major challenges faced by the European society. It does this by promoting synergies and cooperation through integrating higher education, research and business in order to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the knowledge triangle integration model. The EIT combines strategic orientation at EIT level, primarily through its Governing Board, with a bottom-up approach within the thematic remit of its Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). KICs are highly integrated legal entities, which function as pan-European partnerships and bring together excellent universities, research organisations, small-, medium and large enterprises and other innovation actors on a long- term commitment around specific grand societal challenges.

The **Knowledge and Innovation Communities** (KICs) are designated by the EIT on the basis of an open competitive call. In 2009, the EIT designated three initial KICs in the fields of sustainable energy (EIT InnoEnergy), climate change adaptation and mitigation (EIT Climate-KIC) and next generation information society (EIT Digital, until 2015 named EIT ICT Labs). In 2014, two new KICs were designated in the areas of healthy living and active ageing (EIT Health) and raw materials- sustainable exploration, extraction, processing, recycling and substitution (EIT Raw Materials). In 2016 the EIT selected one additional KIC: EIT Food – sustainable supply chain from resources to consumers. In 2018 two KICs were designated in the thematic areas of Urban Mobility and Adding Value Manufacturing. In 2022 the newest KIC was designated to house a sustainable ecosystem for European Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI). Each KIC has been set up as a legal entity and has appointed a CEO to run its operations – a first for an EU initiative. The KICs operate under a great degree of autonomy to define their legal status, internal organisation and working methods, and the KICs have been conceived so that they are able to react in an effective and flexible way to new challenges and changing environments.

Each KIC has regional Co-location Centres (Innovation Hubs) with partners in close proximity, which is essential to facilitate interaction among members of the regional community. Co-location Centres are the focal point for the KICs' activity within these areas of focus. Co-location Centres build on the existing labs, offices or campuses of some of the KICs' core partners, which serve as clusters for a particular region, discipline or task. There they bring together people and teams from across the knowledge triangle for ideation, projects and other initiatives. Partners in KICs work together with a common goal: a positive societal and economic impact for Europe, to be measured in terms of new business creation, innovation in existing emerging industries, businesses and SMEs, jobs creation, entrepreneurship education and delivery of a new generation of entrepreneurs, and the overall success of the KIC in addressing societal challenges within their priority thematic areas.

1.3 The Regional Innovation Scheme

The **EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS)** was introduced by the European Parliament and the Council as part of the EIT's Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2014-2020. The EIT RIS is designed to share good practices and experience emerging from the EIT Community's activities, as well as to widen participation in KICs' activities. The aim of the EIT RIS is to help disseminate the knowledge and know-how of the EIT Community and widen participation in the KICs across Europe. The EIT RIS focuses on countries that are moderate and modest innovators according to the European Innovation Scoreboard² and have limited or no participation in the EIT Community's activities.

Countries eligible to take part in the EIT RIS (2021-2024):

- EU Member States: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.
- Horizon Europe Associated Countries: Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine.
- Outermost Regions: Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion, Martinique, Mayotte and Saint-Martin (France), the Azores and Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain).

1.3.1 EIT Hubs in RIS Countries

In order to promote KICs activities in the EIT RIS countries, KICs engage local organisations to serve as EIT Hubs in the respective EIT RIS countries and regions. KICs have established EIT Hubs in the countries where they did not have presence in terms of Co-location Centres or partners. Hence, an EIT Hub functions as a representative of the respective KIC and mobilises local organisations to take part in joint activities with the KICs.

Local organisations are selected through an open competitive selection process and are designated to function as an EIT Hub for a specific KIC. The primary role of an EIT Hub is to ensure the visibility of the EIT Community and raise awareness of the EIT Community activities and cooperation opportunities for local players representing education, business and research areas.

The organisations serving as EIT Hubs have a strong footing in local ecosystems and help promote KICs' good practices and know-how of KTI. In addition, EIT Hubs also liaise with the relevant national, regional and local authorities and facilitate the sharing of EIT Innovation Community expertise with them.

A network of over 90 EIT RIS Hubs present in all EU Member States and beyond drive the successful implementation of the EIT RIS. The EIT RIS Hubs have helped the EIT Community to significantly widen its geographical spread. Over 1,300 organisations from the EIT RIS countries have become partners of EIT

Innovation Communities while some 2,500 start-up teams from eligible countries were coached and prepared to enter accelerators.

Urban Mobility, RIS Hub collaboration Cross-KIC work package leader, has been designated the task to launch the first two pilot service procurement procedures on the setting up of National Secretariats in North Macedonia and Latvia and to co-ordinate and monitor the operation and activities of the future National Secretariats together with the representatives of the **EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster** and the Steering Committee in the forthcoming 3 years.

2. Scope of work

2.1. General terms and conditions

- The following documents regulate the terms and conditions under which the selected Tenderer (i.e. Contractor) shall fulfil the specific tasks as a result of the current tender procedure:
 - a) The Pre-Qualification Notice;
 - b) The Request for Proposal for the National Secretary of the EIT Community RIS Hub in North Macedonia (to be shared with pre-qualified Applicants);
 - c) The Contract to be signed with the selected Tenderer.
- The Contracting Authority is responsible for sharing all available, relevant information, existing documents and data on the projects related to which tasks are to be performed by the Contractor based on individual purchase orders, if relevant. The Contracting Authority is responsible for the validity and completeness of all such information.
- The working language for the performance of tasks is English.

2.2. Specific objectives

The support that is required and requested should cover the following areas and tasks. All tasks will be in full coordination with the EIT UM (as Contracting Authority) and the Cross-KIC RIS Steering Committee to ensure strategic fit and alignment of the selected Contractor, activities, timing, and execution.

The National Secretary's tasks are defined in the Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles for the EIT RIS Hubs, published in September 2022 and shall be used to measure the successful operation of the National Secretary. (see Annex 3)

The National Secretary will **act independently of any EIT KIC**, and at the same time will **represent all the KICs** to ensure impartiality and avoid conflict of interests

The detailed list of tasks and objectives are listed in the sub-sections below.

2.2.1. Internal Communication and Coordination (National Secretary, RIS Hub Community Members and EIT KIC offices)

- Develop a good understanding of the EIT model and keep up to date with the KICs activities.
- Form good working relations with all EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem both nationally and regionally.

- In consultation with the EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem, establish a smooth and efficient working method which limits the administrative burden on the EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, and other EIT KIC Offices, while supporting their minimum functions.
- Design an appropriate work method and necessary tools for information sharing / coordination so as to facilitate continuous information exchange between the Hub Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem both nationally and regionally

2.2.2. Physical space

- Set up and maintain a physical space, in a city accepted by the Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster and the EIT, after having consulted with the national authorities, where local stakeholders, including EIT National Contact Points (NCPs), can physically, walk-in to obtain information on, as well as gain access to the EIT Community, while additionally, aiding with the EIT's on-the-ground visibility and branding.

In the tendering stage of the procedure pre-qualified applicants will be requested to share their ideas about the physical space of the National Secretary's office - including a cost estimate - in their offer.

The Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster can decide to use the offered option or to suggest hosting for the EIT Community Hub, if a better option is given.

2.2.3. Communication and dissemination

- The National Secretary serves as a centralised contact gateway for local stakeholders to the EIT Community as a whole, and refers stakeholders to contact persons within other relevant EIT KICs, best suited to support their needs.;
- Collect information to share through applicable channels related the EIT KICs' activities, events, results and opportunities of interest to local stakeholders with a view to their dissemination internally and externally;
- Coordinate and support the EIT RIS Hubs local joint communication efforts, including by: managing and updating the EIT Community RIS Hub website, in the local language, with information on EIT Community activities and opportunities, including dedicated sections targeted towards specific stakeholders, including, students, start-ups, national authorities and so on; facilitating the organisation of EIT Community awareness-raising events, including possible open days within the context of INNOVEIT (the EIT's annual innovation forum), and coordinating and supporting the participation of EIT Community representatives in relevant national events;

2.2.4. Financial sustainability

- Coordinate the collection of local funding opportunities and relevant key national events and bring these to the attention to the local Hub Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices.
- Scout for and recommend to the EIT KICs opportunities to implement joint projects financed through other EU / national / regional funds including the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III);
- Contribute to, support and where appropriate, with the agreements of the EIT KICs, lead any horizontal exploratory efforts towards securing co-funding opportunities, including securing meetings with relevant national / regional authorities and facilitate the preparation for the submission of joint proposals for national / regional funding in case of general Cross-KIC actions;

2.2.5. Stakeholder engagement

- To the greatest extent possible, ensure a coordinated approach amongst the EIT KICs' RIS Hubs towards national authorities including relevant NCPs and Managing Authorities
- Identify the need for and facilitating the implementation of shared services for Hub Members with a view to improve efficiency.
- Suggest and support, including, where appropriate and with the agreement of the EIT KICs, lead, the implementation of possible joint activities amongst the EIT KICs, to be implemented nationally and / or regionally, aligned with relevant RIS3 priorities.

2.2.6. Local intelligence gathering

- At the request of the EIT KICs, support any necessary updating of the local Country-specific roadmap and support with its implementation, as appropriate.
- Upon request, provide support, additional to that already offered by the EIT RIS Hubs, to the EIT and the EIT KICs with navigating the local innovation landscape, including by contributing to the development of EIT maps / ecosystem mapping.

2.2.7. Other tasks

- Any other tasks mandated by the EIT Management which, in principle, supports the EIT RIS Hubs to contribute to the achievement of the EIT's Objectives and implementation of its Strategy and Annual Work Programmes

2.3. Location, timing, planning and reporting

2.3.1 Start date & period of implementation

The term of the contract commences on the date of its signature by both parties until the date specified therein, expected to last until 31/12/2025.

Estimated dedication for the performance of this assignment 1,600 hours per year approximately.

Please note, that EIT Urban Mobility KIC shall not sign the contract until its 2023 budget is confirmed by EIT and the pre-finance timeline of the KIC is assured. (End December, beginning of January 2023). If the budget isn't confirmed, the Contracting Authority has the right to declare the procedure unsuccessful.

2.3.2 Location

The scope of operation covers the full territory of North Macedonia. All services (2.2.1 – 2.2.6) will be provided in person and online. Video conferences and telephone conferences are preferred options for team meetings.

Candidates are requested to set up and maintain a physical office space in a city accepted by the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster and the EIT, because the National Secretary should be contacted physically by the local stakeholders, who can walk in to obtain information and gain access to the EIT Community. As it has been emphasised under section 2.2.2 the pre-qualified candidates are requested to share their ideas about the physical space of the NS office in the tendering stage of the procedure.

On a needed basis, the provider can be called for specific assignments either to EIT Urban Mobility, EIT or the Cross-KIC Steering Committee or any other project site designated by EIT Urban Mobility.

3. Pre-qualification procedure

The pre-qualification is the first phase of the two-stage procedure of selecting winning Tenderer to implement the organisation and exploitation of.

During the pre-qualification procedure the EIT Urban Mobility will, based upon the presented technical/professional capacity, establish a list of potential Tenderers. During the second phase the EIT Urban

Mobility will invite pre-qualified Tenderers to submit a detailed bid. During pre-qualification, candidates are not allowed to submit a bid.'

Please note that alliance of pre-qualified Applicants to submit joint tender will be only allowed in the second phase, when both applicants have been selected in the pre-qualification stage.

3.1. Participation

Participation is open to all interested legal entities and natural persons. Applicants may not form alliance to jointly submit Applications. In case the Applicant is a natural person, he/she should be able to invoice his/her services by the time of contracting.

All Applicants must sign a Letter of Interest in the form provided by the EIT Urban Mobility, attached as Annex 1 and Annex 2 to the present Notice.

	DATE
Publishing the PQN	26 October, 2022
Deadline for requesting clarification from the EIT Urban Mobility	14 November, 2022
Last date for the EIT Urban Mobility to issue clarification indicative	18 November, 2022
Deadline for submitting Letter of Interest	21 November, 2022
Intended date of notification of pre-qualification	25 November 2022
Establishing pre-qualification list and sending of Request for Proposals to pre-qualified Applicants	25 November 2022

3.2. Submission of Application

Applications must be emailed 21st November 2022, 16:00 PM CET, to the following address:

Contact name: For the attention of **Mr. Bence Huba, (RIS Director)** at EIT URBAN MOBILITY

E-mail: procurement@eiturbanmobility.eu

The Contracting Authority notes that Applications will be deemed timely received or submitted by the Contracting Authority, if they are received by the Contracting Authority by the submission deadline. All risks associated with delays will be borne by the Applicants only.

All times specified in hours in any procedural document are to be understood as Spanish local time.

The Contracting Authority will consider Applications submitted after the submission deadline as invalid.

The representative of the Contracting Authority will make records of the opening of the Applications, which will be sent to all Applicants within 3 days from the opening of Applications.

3.3. Requirements as to form and content

The Application shall include:

- a signed Letter of Interest (Annex 1), including the list of relevant experience. The list of references shall contain at least the following information: Contracting entity; Project/ programme title; Contract start date; Contract end date; the subject-matter of the contract.
- Reference Letter(s) signed by the Contracting Authority(ies) of the experience(s) presented to comply with pre-qualification selection criteria described in Section 3.5. The Reference Letter(s) must include all necessary information that will allow the Contracting Authority to fully assess compliance with the pre-qualification selection criteria. Please note that experience listed but not, or only partially supported by Reference Letter, will not be considered.
- CVs of the experts signed by the expert, presenting the requirements to comply with the pre-qualification selection criteria described in Section 3.5.
- The Applicant must submit its application via email in proper (legibly) scanned and non-editable PDF, which is accessible without entering a password. Application may not be submitted by joint Applicants

3.4. Participation

The Applicant may seek to receive additional information about the provisions of the documentation before the submission deadline from the Contracting Authority, who will provide the requested information at least one day before the submission deadline.

The Applicant is asked to send its request for additional information electronically to the following

Contact name: For the attention of **Mr. Bence Huba, (RIS Director)** at EIT URBAN MOBILITY

E-mail: procurement@eiturbanmobility.eu

Contracting Authority is not obliged to answer questions in case it makes a decision not to do so.

With a view to ensuring a rapid response to the questions received, the Contracting Authority asks the Applicants to send their questions in an editable MS Word format.

3.5.Exclusion criteria

The Candidates will be excluded from participation in the current procedure, if:

- a) it is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, where its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business activities are suspended, or where it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national laws or regulations;
- b) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the Candidate is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the applicable law;
- c) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the Candidate is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the Candidate belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes a wrongful intent or gross negligence, including, in particular, any of the following:
 - i. fraudulently or negligently misrepresenting information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of selection criteria or in the performance of a contract;
 - ii. entering into agreement with other Candidate with the aim of distorting competition;
 - iii. violating intellectual property rights;
 - iv. attempting to influence the decision-making process of the contracting authority during the procurement procedure;
 - v. attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the procurement procedure;

- d) it has been established by a final judgment that the Candidate is guilty of fraud, corruption or money laundering.
- e) Candidates that are currently contributing to an action of EIT under the current Business Plan, cannot submit their pre-qualification due AMGA art. 6.2.B.

3.6. Pre-qualification selection criteria

The pre-qualification will be based on the professional capacity of the Applicant. The following selection criteria will apply:

Minimum eligibility criteria

- Natural person is the resident of North Macedonia.
- Legal entity has a registered office in North Macedonia. In case Applicant is a legal entity, only a sole candidate/expert will be appointed for the full duration of the services, and the appointed expert should fulfil the requirements below:
 - Candidate possesses C1 level fluency in the official language/s/ of North Macedonia,
 - Candidate possesses C1 level fluency in English,
 - Candidate has a university or a related higher education degree in business, economics, law, political science, environmental studies, sustainability, or other innovation related fields.
 - Candidate has at least 5 years of professional experience in innovation, entrepreneurship and/or European affairs as project manager or key expert
 - Managed / worked as key expert for at least 1 EU-financed project for at least one year

Special eligibility criteria

Special eligibility criteria	Description
secondary eligibility criterion	Connection and knowledge of the local innovation ecosystem. Nr. of delivered projects for Innovation ecosystem development in the last 8 years. The applicant must provide evidence of number projects.

Third eligibility criterion	<p>Knowledge of the EIT system, collaboration experience with EIT/EIT KICs/RIS Hubs in the last 8 years.</p> <p>The applicant must provide evidence of collaborations.</p>
Fourth eligibility criterion	<p>Experience with networking services. [events organised, studies or other services provided for international networks] in the last 8 years.</p> <p>The applicant must provide evidence of services delivered.</p>

Applicants are allowed to refer to contracts completed within the reference period of the last 8 years even if started earlier.

During the assessment of the minimum eligibility criteria a range of the number of tenderers will be set and in the second stage the RfP will be sent only to a number of candidates, which are falling within the upper limit of that range. The upper limit of that range will be 5 candidates.

At first the suitability of all the candidates will be checked upon the minimum eligibility criteria. In case more than 5 candidates meet the minimum eligibility criteria, these candidates will be assessed against the secondary eligibility criterion and it will be checked if candidates can be shortlisted into 5. If not, the third eligibility criterion will be applied.

Refence Letters must contain all relevant data allowing the Contracting Authority to fully assess the compliance of the Applicant, otherwise the experience will not be considered

3.7. Cancellation of the pre-qualification procedure

In the event of cancellation of the pre-qualification procedure, the Contracting Authority will notify Applicants on the cancellation. In no event shall Contracting Authority be liable for any damages in any way connected with the cancellation of the procedure.

3.8. Appeals/Complains

Applicants believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the evaluation process of the applications may file a complaint. Appeals should be addressed to the Contracting Authority. The Applicants have 3 days to file their complaints from the receipt of the letter of the notification of selection.

3.9. Ethics clauses/Corruptive practices

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the selection procedure proves to have been subject to substantial errors, irregularities or fraud. If substantial errors, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the Contract, the Contracting Authority may refrain from concluding the Contract.

The Applicant shall take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the contract is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests'). He should inform the Contracting Authority immediately if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the tasks.

Annexes

1. Letter of Interest form

PRE-QUALIFICATION APPLICATION FOR “NATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE EIT COMMUNITY RIS HUB IN NORTH MACEDONIA”

In response to the Pre-qualification Notice published on EIT Urban Mobility website for appointing a National Secretary of the EIT Community RIS Hub in North Macedonia _____, I _____ (hereby referred to as Applicant) would like to express my interest to undertake the activities as mentioned in the notification. As instructed, I have enclosed all the necessary documents for your information and records.

Application submitted by

Name of Applicant / Legal entity	
Official address	
Tax registration number	

Contact person

Name	
Address	
Telephone	
e-mail	

EXPERIENCE

Please present the relevant expertise of the applicant with special regards to [National Secretary of the EIT community RIS hub in North Macedonia]. Please specify the exact references, upon which further information may be requested by the Contracting Authority. Letter of Interest form

2. Application Form

A, Personal information

Name:	Surname:
Nationality/ies:	Country of Residence:
Email:	Mobile:
Gender:	Country's official language (C1 level min.):
Languages:	English (C1 level min.):
Professional Web Profile: (i.e. LinkedIn, ResearchGate)	

B. Administrative part

Including all the information and documents required by the EIT UM for the evaluation of the application on the basis of the exclusion and selection criteria set out in the pre-qualification notices.

The candidate is a natural person and is the resident of North Macedonia.	YES / NO
Candidate is a legal entity with a registered office in North Macedonia and offers a sole expert who will be appointed for the full duration of the services, and the appointed expert fulfils the requirements below.	YES / NO
Candidate possesses C1 level fluency in the official language/s/ of North Macedonia	YES / NO
Candidate possesses C1 level fluency in English.	YES / NO
Candidate possesses a university or a related higher education degree in business, economics, law, political science, environmental studies, sustainability, or other innovation related fields.	YES / NO
Candidate has at least 5 years of professional experience in innovation, entrepreneurship, and/or European affairs as project manager or key expert.	YES / NO

Managed / worked as key expert for at least 1 EU-financed project for at least one year.	YES / NO
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C. Technical part

Including all the information required for the technical evaluation of the pre-qualification notice. The technical part shall be listed in by the applicant. Please, enclose your CV as part of this application.

CV
(Paste here)

Listed experience linking the evidence document in accordance with special eligibility criteria

Description	Listed Evidence
Connection and knowledge of the local innovation ecosystem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
Knowledge of the EIT system, collaboration experience with EIT/EIT KICs/RIS Hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
Experience with networking services. [events organised, studies or other services provided for international networks]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •

Signed on behalf of the Applicant

Name	
Signature	
Date	

3. EIT RIS Hubs Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles

CONTEXT

The [EIT SIA 2021-2027](#), designates “increasing the regional impact of the EIT KICs”, through an enhanced [EIT Regional Innovation Scheme \(RIS\)](#), reinforced with a significantly stronger mandate and additional financial resources, as a key, EIT priority. While this recognises the Scheme’s success since its establishment, as well as its potential to do more, expectations on the EIT RIS to deliver increasing levels of impact, in line with the EIT’s objectives, are very high. To meet these expectations, the EIT RIS needs to have “all hands-on deck”, with the whole EIT Community working together towards a common goal. In particular, it must be ensured that the EIT RIS Hubs, with their unique, on-the-ground presence across Europe, strongly contribute to the EIT’s objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Towards this aim, a set of minimum standards and guiding principles for EIT RIS Hubs, have been drawn up in close consultation with the Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations (SRI) Cluster and the EIT-KIC Forum, and fully aligned with, and complimentary to, the EIT Legislative Framework and the [EIT RIS Implementation Framework \(2022-2027\)](#). This document sets out a common strategic approach, which will underpin the establishment and operation of all EIT RIS Hubs, aimed at ensuring their consistent effectiveness in contributing towards achieving the EIT’s objectives and KPIs, while also rationalising the EIT Community’s on- the-ground presence. These minimum standards and guiding principles will be the basis for the Business Plan 2023-2025 process with some pilot actions rolled out in 2022. This document will be reviewed and potentially updated in 2024.

MISSION

In line with Article 2(4) of the [EIT Regulation](#), EIT RIS Hubs are “physical hub, established by a KIC and forming part of its structure, in a Member State or in an associated country targeted by the RIS and that serves as focal point for the KIC’s activities and for the mobilisation and involvement of local knowledge triangle actors in the activities of the KIC”. EIT RIS Hubs form the backbone of the EIT RIS’ “place-based” innovation approach and have the core mission of delivering on the EIT’s objectives and KPIs, especially those directly related to the EIT RIS. The EIT Legislative Framework also includes a goal that the EIT RIS Hubs could pave the way to the establishment of a Co-Location Centre in the targeted region.

EIT RIS HUB MINIMUM FUNCTIONS

To deliver on their mission, all existing and future EIT RIS Hubs are required to fully perform the following minimum functions, all of which must be specifically included as fundamental requirements in all contractual agreements between the local EIT RIS Hub organisations and their EIT KICs:

- Improve the innovation capacities of the local ecosystem

EIT RIS Hubs must deliver on the EIT RIS' core objective of improving the innovation capacities of local ecosystems, through capacity building activities, and closer interactions between the local knowledge triangle innovation actors (such as, clusters, networks, regional public authorities, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), research organisations, Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutions, SMEs) and their activities. These activities should include the dissemination of the EIT Community's results and good practices, as well as activities focused on citizen engagement. EIT RIS Hubs should be able to demonstrate measurable results and impact of their activities and provide opportunities for feedback from local ecosystem stakeholders and adjust their activities accordingly.

- Attract and facilitate the integration of new participants in EIT Community activities

EIT RIS Hubs must directly support the EIT RIS' objective of attracting and facilitating the integration of potential new partners and participants in the EIT KICs and their activities. The EIT RIS Hubs must strongly promote EIT Community opportunities within the local innovation ecosystems and help to link these to the EIT Community's pan-European innovation ecosystems. EIT RIS Hubs must also serve as a pipeline of talent and innovation potential (including students, ideas, start-ups, etc) towards the EIT Community, manifestly contributing to the attainment of the EIT's objectives and KPIs, including the EIT KICs' Financial Sustainability targets and the RIS Hub's own Financial Sustainability targets.

To do this, the EIT RIS Hubs must liaise closely with local/regional/national authorities and stakeholders, including the EIT National Contact Points (NCPs). NCPs are expected to act as an assistance, information and referral point for potential beneficiaries, who will be redirected to the respective local EIT RIS Hub or EIT KIC Office according to their needs. To achieve this, the Hubs should regularly provide the EIT NCPs with all relevant information to support their core functions, and if requested, help the NCPs understand the specificities around the KIC they represent and the type of activities they deliver. Once an EIT Community RIS Hub is established in a particular country or territory, the consolidated provision of information to the local EIT NCPs can be centrally delivered by the EIT Community RIS Hub National Secretary with fully support from the EIT RIS Hubs. This should also enable EIT RIS Hubs and NCPs to team up for regular outreach, communication and awareness raising activities, and eventually reach new audiences and increase the number of national EIT beneficiaries.

The EIT RIS Hubs should additionally actively scout for the most promising talent and innovation potential in their local ecosystems with a view to channel such talent towards their EIT KICs' education programmes, Accelerators and so on.

- Support the establishment of synergies

With support from the EIT in a “door opener” role, via the national EIT Member State Representative Group (MSRG) representative and NCPs, the EIT RIS Hubs must spearhead efforts to establish synergies between EIT Community activities and the local innovation ecosystem, aligned with the relevant Regional Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3). EIT RIS Hubs should engage with relevant local authorities as well as, undertake regular mapping exercises to identifying potential funding and collaboration opportunities.

With a view towards the EIT RIS Hubs' own financial sustainability, they should also actively seek possibilities for co-funding of their activities from local private and public funding sources. Special attention should be paid to efforts aimed at realising synergies with the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and the Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance (IPA III). Here too, the EIT will support in a “door opener” role, via the national EIT MSRG representative and NCPs. EIT RIS Hubs must additionally serve to support the implementation of synergies identified between the EIT and the European Innovation Council (EIC), including by contributing to capacity building actions under the EIT - EIC Fastrack Scheme and facilitating the cross participation of local start-ups and SMEs in EIT and EIC activities.

- Coordinate with other EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices

To fully perform all these minimum functions, each EIT RIS Hub must coordinate its work closely with other Hubs and EIT KIC Offices, such as Co-Location Centres and Satellite Offices, present in the same innovation ecosystem. This includes providing other EIT RIS Hubs and EIT KIC Offices with regular updates on its ongoing and planned activities, including via any coordination mechanisms to be put in place, as well as, concrete cooperation, including joint activities with a view to maximise impact. Once an EIT Community RIS Hub is established covering a given country or territory, all Hubs present in that ecosystem should be linked to it and therefore, this coordination and information distribution amongst EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices will be supported by the EIT Community RIS Hub National Secretary.

The EIT RIS Hubs should dedicate, on average, 10% of their time to coordinate with the EIT Community RIS Hub, other EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices. Additionally, each EIT RIS Hub must also be able to

accurately address queries beyond their EIT KIC specifically, including helping to refer stakeholders to contact persons within other relevant EIT KICs, better suited to support their needs.

EIT RIS HUB KEY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Establishment of new EIT RIS Hubs

Any new EIT RIS Hubs will only be established following the consent of the EIT, with any decision taken based on a thorough needs analysis. Plans for new Hubs must be reported in the Country-specific roadmaps which will be drawn up in consultation with and adopted by the EIT as part of the Business Plan process. The EIT KICs are entitled to propose updates to their Country-specific roadmaps, in circumstances driven by unforeseen fundamental changes that make this necessary, including lessons learnt from the launch of the two EIT RIS Community Hub pilots in 2022, for consideration by the EIT.

The aim of the Country-specific roadmaps is to describe, in a single document, the country-specific plans of the KICs, to be implemented either individually or jointly, including:

- planned changes in a KIC's on-the-ground presence;
 - a timeline towards the establishment of the local EIT Community RIS Hubs; and;
- plans for Cross-KIC activities, aligned with the local RIS3 priorities, to be implemented locally.

The Country-specific roadmaps must take into consideration the specificities of the target territory and will be officially approved by the EIT as part of the 2023-2025 Business Planning process. Country-specific roadmaps should be drawn up for all EIT RIS-eligible country and territory at either national or Regional-level.

New EIT RIS Hubs should ensure complementarity with existing EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices present locally, as well as the local EIT Community RIS Hub, once established. New EIT RIS Hubs should also contribute to boosting the EIT KICs' geographical balance across the EIT RIS-eligible countries and territories. Additionally, the engagement of local organisations or other entities to serve as EIT RIS Hubs, must be subject to an open call process. Where appropriate, non-country specific open Calls to set up new, impact driven, EIT RIS Hubs, are encouraged.

- Integration of EIT RIS Hubs into EIT Community RIS Hubs

By the end of 2020, 97 EIT RIS Hubs had been established to drive the successful implementation of the EIT RIS. The concentration of multiple EIT RIS Hubs in some countries is creating a complex landscape which many stakeholders are struggling to navigate, yet, at the same time, several EIT RIS-eligible countries and territories do not have on-the-ground representation by some or even any EIT KICs. In this context, focus should now shift towards strengthening local-level synergies and ensuring the presence of the EIT Community in every EIT RIS-eligible country and territory. Towards this end, the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster will be mandated and provided with the necessary resources to establish EIT Community RIS Hubs to be run by a National Secretary covering every EIT RIS-eligible country and territory, by the end of 2025, either at the national or Regional (such as Baltics, Western Balkans, etc)-level.

These EIT Community RIS Hubs will, primarily, be a coordination mechanism, providing local innovators with a unified source of information on all services and opportunities provided by the entire EIT Community, both locally and internationally. It will also serve as a centralised gateway, for local innovators, to all EIT KICs, irrespective of their local on-the-ground representation.

In those ecosystems where EIT RIS Hubs are already established, the EIT Community RIS Hubs will aim to integrate these Hubs' and rebrand them as Community Members. Community Members will maintain their RIS Hub functions but will be required to:

- undertake a rebranding and renaming exercise aimed at external stakeholders;
- to commit to an enhanced level of cooperation with the other Community Members operating under the same EIT Community RIS Hub, including by implementing joint activities.

In exchange, they will not lose any of the operational independence they enjoyed prior to integration, and will not be requested to relocate. A common naming and branding approach across all EIT Community RIS Hubs and their Community Members will be put in place. Once EIT RIS Hubs become Community Members, they will be commonly renamed to "EIT [KIC name] RIS Hub [country], member of the EIT Community RIS Hub [country]". This will allow for each EIT Community RIS Hub to be displayed as a unitary Hub on the EIT's external communications maps.

Each EIT Community RIS Hub will be run and coordinated by a National Secretary chosen by the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster, following an open call process. The National Secretary will be a natural person and ideally, independent of any EIT KIC to ensure impartiality and avoid conflict of interest. The National Secretary must be fluent both in English and in the official local language/s. A list of tasks and responsibilities of the National Secretary are included in annex.

With active support from the EIT, as appropriate, national authorities may be invited to finance or co-finance the cost of establishing and / or operating their local EIT Community RIS Hub, as well as joint

activities aligned with the local RIS3 priorities from which all Community Members could potentially benefit.

Unless external funding can be found, the cost of the National Secretary, who will be compensated based on a performance-based system of remuneration, other direct and indirect costs related to the running of the EIT Community RIS Hub, such as the operation of the website, the set up and maintenance of a small physical space (if this cannot be accommodated in an existing EIT Community space or another offered space), as well as Cross-KIC management costs related to operationalising the Hubs, will be covered from the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster's budget. The Cross-KIC SRI Cluster's budget for 2023-2025, will be adequately increased to reflect this, having taken into consideration a total cost estimation to be drawn up by the Cluster. Similarly, unless external funding can be found, Cross-KIC activities could be jointly financed from the EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members' budgets.

As with all aspects of this document, where necessary, starting from 2023, the contractual agreements between the local organisations running an EIT Community RIS Hub Network Member and their EIT KICs should be updated, to reflect this provision.

Two pilot EIT Community RIS Hubs will be established in 2022, starting in Latvia and North Macedonia. On the basis of learnings gleaned from the establishment and initial operation in these two pilot EIT Community RIS Hubs, the process for the establishment of the remaining 23, EIT Community RIS Hubs covering all EIT RIS- eligible countries and territories by 2025 might be fine-tuned. The intention is that 8 EIT Community RIS Hubs will be established in 2023, followed by another 10 in 2024, and the final 5 in 2025. A clear establishment schedule will be contained in the Country-specific roadmaps.

- EIT RIS Hub financing

EIT RIS Hubs are co-funded by the EIT KICs as either a local independent organisation or a consortium of organisations working with the EIT KICs as KIC partners, subcontractors or subgrantees. Local organisations engaged to serve as EIT RIS Hubs will only be eligible to receive EIT RIS funding for operational activities directly related to the fulfilment of its mission. Administrative costs such as offices and related infrastructure, personnel costs, and so on, are not eligible. All EIT RIS Hubs must demonstrate cost effectiveness.

As part of their Business Plan submissions, the EIT KICs should also include binding, multi-annual Financial Sustainability targets for each of their EIT RIS Hubs. While subject to the final Memorandum of Cooperation review, in principle, all EIT RIS Hub will need to achieve 100% financing from non-EIT sources by the time their EIT KIC reaches the maximum fifteen-year period of EIT grant support. This means that for the first wave KICs' EIT RIS Hub, 100% financing from non-EIT sources will need to be reached by the end of 2024.

The Cross-KIC SRI Cluster should develop a unified and simplified evaluation and reporting principles to ensure that each EIT KIC can establish a system to closely track, measure, and assess the timely performance of their own EIT RIS Hubs. These unified principles will ascertain the measurement of the performance of the EIT RIS Hubs against a common set of concrete, time-bound and measurable, multi-annual impact delivery KPIs, which demonstrate contribution to the EIT's and EIT KICs' objectives and KPIs. The targets for each EIT RIS Hub will need to be communicated to the EIT for approval as part of the Business Plan process.

A unified and simplified evaluation and reporting system shall also be introduced for the EIT Community RIS Hubs to assess the performance of the National Secretaries. This system will be operated by all the KICs jointly in the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster project. The National Secretaries' individual targets will need to be communicated to the EIT for approval as part of the Business Plan process.

Since both evaluation systems will be performance based, in cases of underperformance applicable financial penalties and other mitigating measures, should be transparently delineated. The EIT will need to approve the EIT RIS Hubs unified and simplified evaluation and reporting principles and the unified and simplified evaluation and reporting system for the EIT Community RIS Hubs before the end of 2022 and will then develop an adequate monitoring mechanism as part of its monitoring strategy in 2023.

ANNEX: LIST OF TASKS AND RESPONSABILITIES OF THE NATIONAL SECRETARY

- Develop a good understanding of the EIT model and keep up to date with the KICs activities;
- Form good working relations with all EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem both nationally and Regionally;
- In consultation with the EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem, establish a smooth and efficient working method which limits the administrative burden on the EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, and other EIT KIC Offices, while supporting their minimum functions;
- Set up and maintain a physical space, in a city accepted by the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster and the EIT, after having consulted with the national authorities, where local stakeholders, including NCPs, can physically, walk-in to obtain information on, as well as gain access to the EIT Community, while additionally, aiding with the EIT's

- on-the-ground visibility and branding;
- Design an appropriate work method and necessary tools for information sharing / coordination so as to facilitate continuous information exchange between the Hub Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem both nationally and Regionally;
 - Collect information to share through applicable channels related the EIT KICs' activities, events, results and opportunities of interest to local stakeholders with a view to their dissemination internally and externally;
 - Coordinate the collection of local funding opportunities and relevant key national events and bring these to the attention to the local Hub Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices.
 - Contribute to, support and where appropriate, with the agreements of the EIT KICs, lead any horizontal exploratory efforts towards securing co-funding opportunities, including securing meetings with relevant national / regional authorities and facilitate the preparation for the submission of joint proposals for national / regional funding in case of general Cross-KIC actions;
 - Coordinate and support the EIT RIS Hubs local joint communication efforts, including by:
 - managing and updating the EIT Community RIS Hub website, in the local language, with information on EIT Community activities and opportunities, including dedicated sections targeted towards specific stakeholders, including, students, start-ups, national authorities and so on;
 - facilitating the organisation of EIT Community awareness-raising events, including possible open days within the context of INNOVEIT (the EIT's annual innovation forum), and coordinating and supporting the participation of EIT Community representatives in relevant national events;
 - To the greatest extent possible, ensure a coordinated approach amongst the EIT KICs' RIS Hubs towards national authorities including relevant NCPs and Managing Authorities;
 - Scout for and recommend to the EIT KICs opportunities to implement joint projects financed through other EU / national / regional funds (including ESIF and IPA III);
 - Suggest and support, including, where appropriate and with the agreement of the EIT KICs, lead, the implementation of possible joint activities amongst the EIT KICs, to be implemented nationally and / or Regionally, aligned with relevant RIS3 priorities;
 - At the request of the EIT KICs, support any necessary updating of the local Country-specific roadmap and support with its implementation, as appropriate;

- Serve as a centralised contact gateway for local stakeholders to the EIT Community as a whole, and refer stakeholders to contact persons within other relevant EIT KICs, best suited to support their needs.;
- Identify the need for and facilitating the implementation of shared services for Hub Members with a view to improve efficiency;
- Upon request, provide support, additional to that already offered by the EIT RIS Hubs, to the EIT and the EIT KICs with navigating the local innovation landscape, including by contributing to the development of EIT maps / ecosystem mapping;
- Any other tasks mandated by the EIT Management which, in principle, supports the EIT RIS Hubs to contribute to the achievement of the EIT's Objectives and implementation of its Strategy and Annual Work Programmes.