



Open call for proposals

NEB Academy |

Fashion Shift

Call reference number:

26-TRA-NEB-016-X

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| <i>Document History</i> | 4 |
| <i>Abbreviations</i> | 5 |
| <i>Definitions</i> | 6 |
| <i>Overview of key information on the call</i> | 8 |
| 1. Introduction | 12 |
| 1.1. Information on the EIT | 12 |
| 1.2. Information on EIT Culture & Creativity | 13 |
| 1.2.1. Mission and vision | 14 |
| 1.2.2. Strategic objectives | 14 |
| 1.2.3. Priority areas | 15 |
| 1.2.4. Mission of the programmatic pillars..... | 17 |
| 2. Description of the subject matter of the call | 18 |
| 2.1. Call for NEB Academy Fashion Shift | 18 |
| 2.1.1. Purpose of this call | 18 |
| 2.1.2. Scope of activities under this call | 18 |
| 2.1.3. Specific requirements..... | 19 |
| 2.1.4. Expected outcomes and impact | 20 |
| 2.2. Main requirements for applicants | 20 |
| 2.2.1. Special requirements..... | 22 |
| 2.2.2. Supporting the Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI) | 23 |
| 2.2.3. Integration of RIS applicants..... | 23 |
| 2.3. Main requirements for project implementation | 24 |
| 2.3.1. Project duration..... | 24 |
| 2.3.2. Project implementation, monitoring and reporting | 24 |
| 2.3.3. Deliverables | 25 |
| 2.3.4. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)..... | 27 |
| 2.3.5. Fast-tracking of projects (optional) | 29 |
| 3. Financial aspects of the call | 30 |
| 3.1. KIC funding | 30 |
| 3.2. Direct EIT funding and double funding restriction | 30 |
| 3.3. Reimbursement rate | 30 |
| 3.4. Payment arrangements | 30 |
| 3.5. Financial sustainability requirements | 32 |

| | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|
| 3.6. | Cost eligibility..... | 34 |
| 4. | Call criteria..... | 35 |
| 4.1. | Admissibility..... | 35 |
| 4.2. | Eligibility | 35 |
| 4.3. | Exclusion criteria | 37 |
| 4.4. | Selection criteria | 37 |
| 4.4.1. | Financial capacity criteria | 37 |
| 4.4.2. | Operational capacity criteria | 39 |
| 4.5. | Award criteria | 40 |
| 4.5.1. | External quality evaluation: Scoring, weighting and thresholds | 40 |
| 4.5.2. | External quality evaluation: Award criteria, sub-criteria and maximum scores | 41 |
| 4.5.3. | Portfolio selection: Scoring, weighting and thresholds | 42 |
| 4.5.4. | Portfolio selection: Award criteria, sub-criteria and maximum scores..... | 43 |
| 4.5.5. | Thresholds, ranking and awarding in a nutshell | 43 |
| 5. | Evaluation procedure | 45 |
| 5.1. | Admissibility and eligibility, exclusion and selection stages..... | 45 |
| 5.2. | Evaluation of proposals | 46 |
| 5.2.1. | Assessment methodology | 46 |
| 5.2.2. | Results of the evaluation: award, reserve list, rejection..... | 46 |
| 5.2.3. | Tie-breaking rules..... | 47 |
| 5.3. | Communication of evaluation results to applicants | 47 |
| 5.4. | Standstill period | 48 |
| 5.5. | Publication of selected proposals and annual publication of recipients of funds | 48 |
| 5.6. | Appeal process..... | 49 |
| 6. | Legal aspects, other terms and conditions..... | 50 |
| 6.1. | Acceptance of the call conditions | 50 |
| 6.2. | Cancellation of the call | 50 |
| 6.3. | Data protection..... | 50 |
| 6.4. | Confidentiality..... | 51 |
| 6.5. | Avoidance of conflict of interest | 52 |
| 6.6. | Ethics and values..... | 52 |
| 6.7. | Intellectual property rights | 52 |
| 6.8. | Withdrawal of the funding – Recovery of undue amounts..... | 53 |

| | | |
|--|---|-----------|
| 6.9. | Checks, reviews, audits and investigations | 53 |
| 6.10. | Applicable law | 53 |
| 6.11. | Settlement of disputes | 54 |
| 6.12. | Other | 54 |
| <i>Annex I – Appeal process.....</i> | | <i>55</i> |
| 1. | Right to appeal | 55 |
| 2. | Grounds for appeal..... | 55 |
| 3. | Appeal submission procedure..... | 55 |
| 4. | Grounds for automatic rejection..... | 55 |
| 5. | Internal appeal evaluation process | 56 |
| 6. | Composition and function of the Appeal Panel..... | 56 |
| 7. | Appeal Panel process..... | 57 |
| 8. | Timeline and outcome notification | 57 |
| 9. | Non-suspensive effect of appeals | 57 |
| 10. | Finality of the appeal process | 57 |
| <i>Annex II – Online application form.....</i> | | <i>58</i> |

Document History

Version 1.0 (2026)

Changelog

| Version | Date | Changes |
|---------|------------|-----------------|
| 1.0 | 09/06/2026 | Initial version |

Abbreviations

| | |
|----------|---|
| EIT | European Institute of Innovation and Technology |
| EIT KPIs | Key Performance Indicators defined by the EIT |
| EIT SIA | EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda |
| FSTP | Financial support to third parties |
| HE MGA | Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement |
| KAVA | KIC-added value activity |
| KIC | Knowledge and Innovation Community |
| KIC SA | KIC Strategic Agenda |
| PA | Partnership Agreement |
| BP | Business Plan |
| FSTP | Financial support to third parties |
| NEB | New European Bauhaus |
| PMO | Project Management Office |
| PRA | Subgrant agreement – Project agreement |
| RIS | Regional Innovation Scheme |

Definitions

| | |
|---|---|
| Associated partners | Associated partners are organisations contributing to the project activities without receiving EIT Culture & Creativity financial support and without being counted towards the minimum consortium composition requirements. Their role must be clearly justified in the proposal and limited to specific support activities, such as providing expertise, access to networks, facilities, pilot environments, stakeholder groups or dissemination channels. A company branch office or a KIC partner is not automatically considered an associated partner; this depends on the role assigned to the organisation in the proposal. |
| Deliverable | Deliverables are tangible or intangible goods or service produced during the project implementation phase. They track the progress made towards a project's objectives and may take the form of a report, document, software product, course, event or any other building block of a project. The deliverables specified need to fully demonstrate the project's achievements and the judicious use of public funds. |
| EIT KPI | The set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) defined by the EIT that reflect the EIT operational objectives for education, entrepreneurship, and innovation. These KPIs are used to measure how effectively a KIC/project meets the objectives of the EIT. |
| Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement | The Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (HE MGA) sets out the rights and obligations and the terms and conditions applicable to the implementation of the EIT grant. |
| Knowledge Triangle Integration | The EIT is established to complement existing Union and national policies and initiatives by fostering the integration of the knowledge triangle – higher education, research and innovation, and business creation – across the Union. |
| Standstill period | A mandatory waiting period following the communication of award decisions, during which no contracts are signed and applicants are not permitted to publicly announce the outcome – even if they have already received written notification. It gives unsuccessful applicants the opportunity to submit an appeal before any funding agreements are finalised. |
| Independent fashion brand | A business with creative and strategic decision-making held within the founding or leadership team, and without majority ownership (more than 50%), direct or indirect, by a fashion conglomerate, large retail group, or vertically integrated brand house. Minority investment is permitted, provided it does not result in loss of independent decision-making authority. This call is specifically designed for independent Fashion SMEs as consortium partners and does not target subsidiaries, spin-offs, or newly established entities operating under the |

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| | strategic or financial control of a fashion conglomerates, large retail group, or vertically integrated brand house. |
| Research institution | A higher education institution, research institute, or equivalent body whose primary mandate includes knowledge generation, applied research, or the transfer of innovation to industry or society. |
| Public authority or innovation/industry cluster | An entity providing systemic reach, policy linkage, or sectoral convening capacity relevant to the fashion and creative industries, acting as intermediaries connecting creative businesses to public or institutional resources. |
| Value-chain partner | An organisation whose core activities sit within the fashion, textile, or apparel value chain, or that is actively developing capabilities to do so, including but not limited to raw material extraction or farming, fibre and textile production, material or textile supply, design, sourcing, manufacturing, branding and marketing, logistics, packaging, import and export, distribution, retail, circular economy services (including repair, rental, resale, and consumer take-back programmes), waste processing or recycling, certification, or technology and innovation transfer. |
| EU SME | <p>According to EU Recommendation 2003/361, an SME is an enterprise with fewer than 250 employees, and either an annual turnover of up to EUR 50 million or a balance sheet total of up to EUR 43 million. Within that, there are three tiers:</p> <p>Microenterprise: fewer than 10 employees and turnover or balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 2 million. Small enterprise: fewer than 50 employees and turnover or balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 10 million. Medium-sized enterprise: fewer than 250 employees and turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million or balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million.</p> |

Overview of key information on the call

| | |
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| Call reference number | 26-TRA-NEB-016-X |
| Purpose of the call | To support consortia in developing and scaling circular, regenerative, and responsible fashion business models grounded in New European Bauhaus values of sustainability, inclusion, and beauty. |
| Call opening and deadline for applications | Call publication / opening: 09/06/2026 Deadline for applications: 31/08/2026, 17:00 CEST (Berlin time) |
| Evaluation and implementation timeline (indicative) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of proposals: September – November 2026 • Communication of results to applicants: End of November 2026 • Standstill period: 30 calendar days, as agreed with EIT, counted from the day after dispatch of the communication of results • Publication of results: End of December 2026 • Signature of the subgrant agreement – Project agreement: January 2027 (subject to expiry of the applicable stand-still period, completion of procedural and contracting checks, and, where applicable, legal entity validation by the EIT Onboarding Service) • Tentative start of the projects (according to date defined on the subgrant agreement – Project agreement): January 2027 • Tentative end of the projects: May 2028 (16 months from project start) |
| Maximum EIT funding allocated to this call | The maximum EIT funding allocated to this call is up to EUR 2,500,000 allocated as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 projects, with a maximum funding of EUR 500 000 per project |
| Reimbursement rate | EIT Culture & Creativity financial support may reimburse up to 100% of the total eligible project costs . Costs already funded by other EU programmes or sources cannot be reimbursed, in order to avoid double funding. |
| Who can apply | This call is open to legal entities established in countries eligible under Horizon Europe at the closure time of the call. Third countries associated to Horizon Europe must already be formally associated at the closure time of the call. Proposals may be submitted by consortia including a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 6 independent legal entities , established in at least two different eligible countries , including at least: |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An independent fashion brand¹ (SME under the EU definition² operating for a minimum of 3 years), • A research institution³ (e.g. HEI, research institute) • A public authority or innovation/industry cluster⁴ • One value-chain partner⁵ in the fashion value chain. <p>Each project participant must have the financial and operational capacity to implement its assigned project activities, cover the share of eligible costs not reimbursed by EIT Culture & Creativity, and manage any cash-flow needs between payment instalments. Upon request during validation or contracting, each project participant must provide supporting documents demonstrating its financial capacity, including published annual accounts, annual turnover or operating budget, number of employees/FTEs, proof of own resources, parent organisation support, financial guarantees or equivalent evidence.</p> |
| List of call documents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call guidelines • Application form, as available on the submission platform • Budget plan and EIT funding request template • Eligibility of Expenditure guidelines • Subgrant agreement – Project agreement (note: the template is subject to change) • Declaration of Honour template • EIT Culture & Creativity Guidelines for Project Monitoring and Controlling (available second half of June 2026) |

¹ For the purposes of this call, an independent fashion brand is understood as a business with creative and strategic decision-making held within the founding or leadership team, and without majority ownership (more than 50%), direct or indirect, by a fashion conglomerate, large retail group, or vertically integrated brand house. Minority investment is permitted, provided it does not result in loss of independent decision-making authority. This call is specifically designed for independent Fashion SMEs as consortium partners and does not target subsidiaries, spin-offs, or newly established entities operating under the strategic or financial control of a fashion conglomerate, large retail group, or vertically integrated brand house.

² According to EU Recommendation 2003/361, an SME is an enterprise with fewer than 250 employees, and either an annual turnover of up to EUR 50 million or a balance sheet total of up to EUR 43 million. Within that, there are three tiers:

Microenterprise: fewer than 10 employees and turnover or balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 2 million. **Small enterprise:** fewer than 50 employees and turnover or balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 10 million. **Medium-sized enterprise:** fewer than 250 employees and turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million or balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million.

³ Research Institution: A higher education institution, research institute, or equivalent body whose primary mandate includes knowledge generation, applied research, or the transfer of innovation to industry or society.

⁴ **Public authority or innovation/industry cluster:** An entity providing systemic reach, policy linkage, or sectoral convening capacity relevant to the fashion and creative industries, acting as intermediaries connecting creative businesses to public or institutional resources.

⁵ **Value-chain partner:** An organisation whose core activities sit within the fashion, textile, or apparel value chain, or that is actively developing capabilities to do so, including but not limited to raw material extraction or farming, fibre and textile production, material or textile supply, design, sourcing, manufacturing, branding and marketing, logistics, packaging, import and export, distribution, retail, circular economy services (including repair, rental, resale, and consumer take-back programmes), waste processing or recycling, certification, or technology and innovation transfer.

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| <p>List of reference documents (with links)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIT Culture & Creativity Strategic Agenda 2024-2027 • List of participating countries in Horizon Europe • EIT Culture & Creativity Code of Conduct • EIT Impact Framework (2022-2027) with codes |
| <p>List of documents to be submitted</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form as available on the submission platform • Budget plan and EIT Culture & Creativity funding template • Gantt chart with project timeline and work packages (Example from European Commission) • Link to short video in English (3 to 5 minutes) presenting your transformative idea / product / service. This video should demonstrate that it is not a research collaboration. |
| <p>Link to the PIC registration and submission portal</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1: Register your organisation in the EU Funding & tender opportunities portal to obtain the nine-digit Participant Identification Code (PIC number). If you do not know if your organisation already has a PIC number, you can verify directly on the EU Portal (click here) whether your organisation is already registered. For individuals, teams, or ventures not yet incorporated as legal entities, a PIC number may not be required at application stage, unless otherwise specified in the call guidelines. • Step 2: Link to the submission platform of the call. The application form will be available from 09 June to 31 August 2026, 17:00 CEST. |
| <p>Topics to be addressed</p> | <p>The NEB Academy Fashion Shift supports the transformation of the European fashion industry by fostering circular, regenerative, and responsible business models. It bridges the gap between creative vision and market reality through the New European Bauhaus (NEB) values, it is aligned with the ambition of the Culture Compass “Europe for Culture” placing creativity and design at the core of European transformation and competitiveness.</p> |
| <p>KPIs to be addressed</p> | <p>For details, please see Section 2.3.4.</p> <p>Mandatory KPIs (at least one must be achieved):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EITHE02.4 – Innovations launched on the market with sales revenue of at least EUR 10 000 (minimum: 1) • EITHE04.4 – Startups created with financial transactions of at least EUR 10 000 (minimum: 1) <p>Optional KPIs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EITHE06.1: Investment attracted by KIC-supported start-ups and scale-ups (minimum target: N/A) • EITHE08.1: – Successful participants in EIT professional courses and training activities (minimum target: N/A) |

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| Contact point Q&A | <p>Applicants may submit their inquiries via the official EIT Culture & Creativity Contact Form. This form can be used for all questions related to call content, technical aspects, thematic focus, administrative, financial, or procedural matters. The relevant team will review and respond accordingly to provide clear and aligned guidance throughout the application process.</p> <p>Questions submitted by applicants during the submission period will be anonymised, reviewed, and – where appropriate – published on the call page. The Q&A will be updated throughout the call period to ensure equal access to information for all applicants.</p> |
| Further information to interested applicants | <p>Interested applicants are invited to attend an online information session related to this call on 08/07/2026, 10:00-12:30 CEST (Berlin time):</p> <p>Registration is required through the following form: Registration form</p> <p>The Teams meeting link will be shared with registered participants after registration.</p> <p>This information session will focus on the call content, topics, and requirements, and on general procedures, such as the submission and evaluation process. The information session will be recorded and made available on the EIT Culture & Creativity website. Applicants are encouraged to check the call webpage regularly for updates.</p> |

1. Introduction

1.1. Information on the EIT

European Institute of Innovation and Technology

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is a **European Union body** with a legal personality and a wide legal capacity accorded to legal persons under national law. The EIT was created in 2008 by the European Union (EU) to enhance Europe's global competitiveness by fostering collaboration between businesses, research institutions, and higher education organizations.

The EIT is governed by [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#) (EIT Regulation), which aligns the EIT's mission with the EU's priorities and the objectives of Horizon Europe on evolving research, innovation, economic growth, job creation, global competitiveness, sustainable growth, higher education and entrepreneurship, by means of the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), which address specific societal challenges and are established and supported by the EIT.

The [EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda \(SIA\) 2021–2027](#) is aligned with Horizon Europe and lays down the priority fields and the strategy of the EIT for future initiatives, capacity to generate the best innovation added-value, objectives, key actions, mode of operation, expected results, impact, as well as an estimate of the resources needed for the duration of Horizon Europe.

Horizon Europe Regulation

The [Horizon Europe Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#) foresees that the EIT takes part in the implementation of the Horizon Europe Programme in accordance with its strategic objectives for the period 2021 to 2027, as laid down in the Strategic Innovation Agenda of the EIT, and taking into account the strategic planning of Horizon Europe.

EIT and Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) relations

The EIT Regulation defines KICs as large-scale Institutionalised European Partnerships of higher education institutions, research organisations, companies and other stakeholders in the innovation process in the form of a strategic network, regardless of its legal form, based on joint mid- to long-term innovation planning to meet the EIT's challenges and contribute to attaining the objectives established.

According to the EIT Regulation, and without prejudice to the partnership agreements and grant agreements between the EIT and each KIC, the KICs have substantial autonomy to establish their internal organisation and composition, as well as their agenda and working methods, provided that they result in progress towards achieving the objectives of the EIT and the KICs, taking into account the strategic planning of Horizon Europe and the strategic direction of the EIT set out in the SIA and by the Governing Board.

Contractual framework between the EIT and the KICs

The long-term relations between the EIT and each KIC are based on a **seven-year Partnership Agreement (PA)**⁶ laying down the general terms and conditions under which the KIC operates as an Institutionalised European Partnership. Subject to positive performance, interim review and outcome of comprehensive assessment of the KIC, the PA can be extended for another period of a maximum of seven years.

The Partnership Agreement between the EIT and EIT Culture & Creativity entered into force on 1 January 2024 (PA reference: PA2024/EIT/EIT CC).

The **Grant Agreement (GA)**⁷ is the contractual instrument laying down the provisions concerning the implementation of the KIC activities (KIC Business Plan, Cross-KIC activities, etc.) through grants, on an annual or multi-annual basis of up to three years with the KICs. Business plans describe the main objectives and expected results and actions taken by the KICs.

The Grant Agreement between the EIT and EIT Culture & Creativity for the 2026-2028 period entered into force on 6 May 2026 (Grant Agreement No.: GA-101264271).

Contractual framework between the KIC and the subgrantees

In line with Annex 5 of the Grant Agreement, selected applicants will be offered Subgrant agreement – Project agreements governing the implementation of the awarded projects or prizes.

1.2. Information on EIT Culture & Creativity

EIT Culture & Creativity is the institutional partnership dedicated to strengthening the European Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI), enabling them to become more sustainable, resilient, and globally competitive.

Launched in 2023 by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union, we provide access to funding, knowledge, and tailored support. As part of Europe's largest innovation ecosystem, we connect research, industry, academia, and cultural institutions to drive systemic innovation.

Our initial focus spans five key sectors: architecture, gaming, fashion, cultural heritage, and audio-visual and media. Across these domains, we support innovators end-to-end – from idea to market – scaling solutions, translating innovation into impact, and redefining entrepreneurship in the CCSI.

We are active in over 30 countries, with headquarters in Cologne and Regional Hubs in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Bologna, Helsinki, Košice, and Vienna. Together, we are building a pan-European ecosystem that transcends silos, sectors, and geographies.

We believe that culture and creativity are not luxuries, but critical infrastructure for resilience, renewal, and sustainable economic growth. Whether you are an innovator, company, university, research center,

⁶ Model Partnership Agreement: [Partnership Agreement](#)

⁷ Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement: [general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf](#)

cultural institution, investor, policymaker, civic leader, or learner, we invite you to join us in shaping desirable futures for Europe.

1.2.1. MISSION AND VISION

Vision

To position the CCSI as a central driver of Europe's economic, societal, and environmental transformation.

Mission

To drive sustainable and responsible growth within and beyond the CCSI through innovation, education, business creation, and societal transformation.

Impact goals

Working towards this mission, EIT Culture & Creativity will pursue three overarching impact goals for the EU CCSI:

- Create and safeguard jobs in a resilient European CCSI ecosystem that can scale, innovate, and compete in global markets.
- Strengthen resilience within and through the EU CCSI by reducing environmental impact, supporting inclusive growth, and increasing social cohesion.
- Accelerate the transition towards sustainable, responsible, and competitive economic growth across the EU CCSI.

Challenges

EIT Culture & Creativity has identified three core challenges limiting the ability of the CCSI to remain globally competitive, resilient, and impactful:

- **Skills gaps for future job markets** – insufficient alignment between education, training, and the rapidly evolving needs of the CCSI workforce.
- **Limited innovation implementation capacity** – strong creative potential exists, but it is not consistently translated into scalable, market-ready solutions.
- **Weak venture creation, scaling, and value capture** – insufficient support for building and growing companies, coupled with underdeveloped monetisation of intellectual property and revenue generation

1.2.2. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

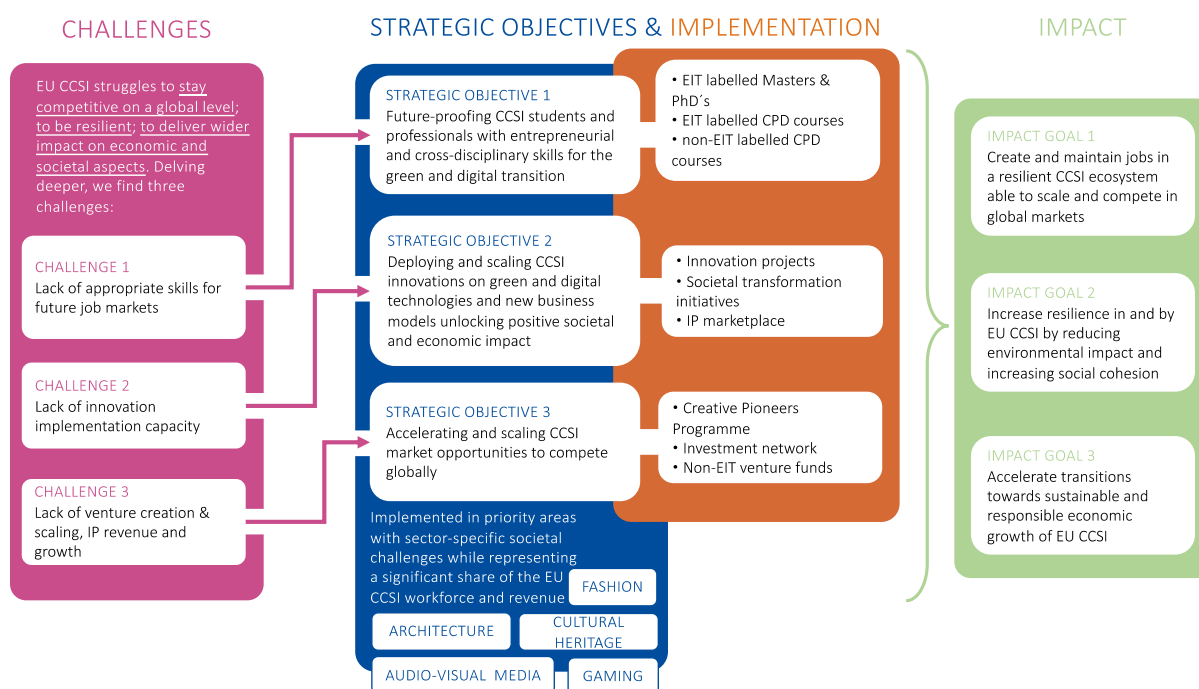
To achieve our mission, EIT Culture & Creativity will focus on the following strategic objectives (SOs):

- **Future-proofing CCSI students:** Equip CCSI students with entrepreneurial and cross-disciplinary skills necessary for the green and digital transitions. This includes addressing emerging

technologies, environmental challenges, market disruptions, globalisation, and talent shortages. Please note that this call has students as the main general target group.

- Deploying and scaling CCSI innovations: Support collaborative innovations that have significant commercial potential and societal benefits, focusing on green and digital technologies and new business models.
- Accelerating and scaling CCSI market opportunities: Provide business support to create and scale ventures, enabling them to compete globally and access necessary capital, markets, and audiences.

These strategic objectives are designed to create and maintain jobs, enhance resilience, and accelerate sustainable economic growth within the EU's CCSI.



This graphic illustrates the relationship between our challenges, strategic objectives, and impact goals, highlighting how each proposal can contribute to the overarching mission and vision of EIT Culture & Creativity.

1.2.3. PRIORITY AREAS

EIT Culture & Creativity's Strategic Agenda 2024-2027 covers five priority areas – Architecture, Audio-Visual Media, Cultural Heritage, Fashion, and Gaming – all of which are described in the table below. Each represents a significant share of the EU CCSI workforce and revenue and faces unique challenges requiring targeted intervention. In line with the Business Plan 2026–2028, the 2026 calls concentrate their funding scope on three of these areas: Architecture, Audio-Visual Media, and Fashion. Cultural Heritage and

Gaming remain strategic priorities of EIT Culture & Creativity and are included here for full context; they are planned for expanded call coverage from 2027 onwards as set out in the Business Plan.

| Priority area | Objective | Key challenges (non-exhaustive list) |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Architecture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster circular innovation with a social dimension, focusing on new bio-based materials and technologies. Affordable climate adaptation, enhancing liveability and cohesion in urban environments. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing demand for reusing and renovating existing buildings over new constructions. Limited entrepreneurial skills among architects and lack of capacity to use architecture to promote social cohesion. SMEs and freelancers in architecture struggle to scale and find appropriate economic models. |
| Audio-visual media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote responsible and trustworthy use of technology, including generative AI, audience data collection. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited capacity to implement and commercialise new technologies. New business models based on disruptive technologies. Issues with data ownership and privacy. Stagnant revenues and limited investment capabilities. |
| Cultural Heritage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate emerging technologies and new business models for commercialising scalable products and services. Preserve cultural heritage, increase societal impact towards social cohesion. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disappearing traditional knowledge and craft skills. Limited skills for emerging technologies and entrepreneurship. Financial bottlenecks making it difficult to monetise and find new revenue streams from cultural heritage. |
| Fashion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drive circular innovations, new textile processing, recycling technologies, and supply chain innovations. Promote circular business models and circular design. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High reliance on raw material consumption and environmentally damaging production processes. Significant waste generation leading to environmental degradation and social issues. SMEs and new ventures face difficulty competing with global industry players and scaling up. |
| Gaming | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster innovation with disruptive technologies focused on digital ethics and cross-sectoral collaboration. Enhance the societal impact of the gaming sector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to funding Access to talent and strict industry-specific curricula. Barriers from global platforms restricting market access and choice of distribution channels. Difficult for EU gaming companies to maintain and grow market share against dominant American and Asian players. |

1.2.4. MISSION OF THE PROGRAMMATIC PILLARS

Education

The Education area equips learners with the skills and entrepreneurial mindsets needed to lead the green, digital and social transitions. By integrating creativity, technology, sustainability and business expertise, it fosters cross-disciplinary innovation across and beyond Europe's Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI). Through practice-based learning, industry collaboration and forward-looking curricula, Education strengthens capacity for inclusive, responsible and future-oriented growth.

Innovation

The Innovation area bridges groundbreaking ideas and commercial viability through a structured, impact-driven pipeline. It advances high-potential, close-to-market projects (TRL 7–9) from validation to deployment and commercialisation through rigorous selection, milestone-based funding, and robust business models – accelerating their path to scalable impact. By mobilising cross-sector expertise and strategic investment, Innovation strengthens Europe's cultural ecosystems and enhances global competitiveness. It delivers measurable economic, societal, and financial impact for the CCSI by connecting projects to international markets, investors, and EIT business creation pathways – ensuring long-term growth and value creation.

Business Creation

The Business Creation area supports entrepreneurs and ventures in building, scaling, and internationalising sustainable, competitive businesses, while unlocking access to public and private finance. Through incubation, acceleration, and post-acceleration support, it guides companies from product development and IP strategy to market entry and expansion. With a strong focus on robust business models, investor readiness, and global positioning, Business Creation ensures that creative innovation translates into scalable ventures – driving economic resilience, long-term value creation, and measurable impact across Europe.

Transformation & New European Bauhaus (NEB), including RIS

The Transformation & NEB area drives systemic change through cultural practices and creative approaches (artistic and design methodologies), with a focus on priority areas including sustainable fashion and textiles, design, architecture, and the transformation of the lived environment. It explores new models of collaboration, governance and societal engagement, turning experimental ideas into practical, scalable initiatives. Rooted in inclusion, sustainability and shared responsibility, Transformation strengthens social cohesion and resilience, fostering place-based innovation and shaping a more sustainable, beautiful and inclusive European future.

2. Description of the subject matter of the call

2.1. Call for NEB Academy | Fashion Shift

Europe's fashion industry is responsible for major societal and environmental challenges, including environmental degradation, unfair labour practices and is struggling because of increasing global competition.

The New European Bauhaus (NEB) Academy | Fashion Shift call aims to foster collaboration across different steps of the fashion value chain as the primary driver of systemic transformation. Rather than prescribing a rigid organisational model, this call remains open and flexible, inviting applicants to propose their own vision of collaboration. We encourage consortia to build upon existing initiatives where relevant, including local pilots and proven concepts that they seek to scale, whether within their own individual regions or across them. The goal is to empower diverse stakeholders to define how they work together to create resilient, circular, responsible, and beautiful fashion ecosystems that address these urgent challenges.

This call for proposals aligns with the EIT Culture & Creativity Strategic Agenda 2024–2027. Proposals submitted to this call must support the EIT Culture & Creativity vision and mission and directly contribute to tackling our challenges, impact goals, strategic objectives (SOs) and priority areas (see Section 1.2).

EIT Culture & Creativity acts in compliance with Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (HE MGA) regulations and ensures that the principles of transparency, non-discrimination, sound financial management and no conflict of interest (including having procedures agreed with the granting authority regarding links with recipients) are ensured throughout the selection, evaluation and implementation of the sub granted activities.

Proposals need to demonstrate how the proposal will not just align with but will also actively contribute to the EIT Culture & Creativity Strategic Agenda 2024–2027.

2.1.1. PURPOSE OF THIS CALL

The NEB Academy | Fashion Shift aims to foster transformative practices in the European fashion industry by funding collaborative consortia developing and scaling circular, regenerative, responsible and positive impact business models. Aligned with the New European Bauhaus values of sustainability, inclusion and beauty, it seeks to bridge the gap between creative vision and market reality, supporting a more sovereign European fashion ecosystem that moves beyond fast fashion through shared responsibility and innovation.

2.1.2. SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES UNDER THIS CALL

Eligible activities under this call focus on the joint development and market deployment of high-impact solutions, ranging from new collaborative places or organisations to physical/digital hubs for positive innovative products, services, and manufacturing processes.

This call invites reflection on the integration of different steps of the value chain, from design and material sourcing to production, distribution and end-of-life management. Nevertheless, the call does not require applicants to cover the entire value chain; projects may focus on a specific part of the fashion life cycle or value chain, provided that the chosen focus is clearly justified and can generate measurable impact. The call encourages the involvement of actors beyond the value chain, if relevant to contribute to the innovation process (e.g. users, policymakers, other industry actors, etc).

This call does not support early-stage ideas without prior validation. It supports existing businesses, pilots, initiatives or proven concepts that are ready to be developed, deployed or scaled through meaningful collaborations, addressing an existing challenge or problem in one or more regions.

Through its activities, and with the aim of ensuring positive social and societal impact, this call encourages multi-actor engagement, beyond the identified active partners (other relevant actors within or beyond the value-chain). This engagement has the purpose of expanding and validating the relevance of the activities carried out along the project. The engagement is created through co-design sessions, required to use artistic and design approaches. This should contribute to ensuring a more systemic approach to the challenge at hand, fostering transversal and possibly trans-sectoral dialogues, reflecting on themes such as social perceptions, potential health concerns, environmental impact, ethical labour practices and consumer behaviour.

Your project must demonstrate the "Double Fit" NEB & EIT framework:

- Sustainable: Evidence of Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) or circularity metrics.
- Beautiful: Focus on forms of value that are created and on the meaning it generates for those involved (from the workers to the users, to the communities that are involved).
- Inclusive: Accessible pricing models and participatory design involving local actors.
- Market needs & fits: Demonstrate that your project is filling a gap in terms of value creation.
- Commercialisation plan: Demonstrates that the solution can survive beyond the 16-month project period.

This call strongly encourages projects that develop solutions that can be successfully implemented locally and have the potential to be adapted and replicated in other European contexts.

2.1.3. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

It is important to note that this call **does not fund basic research, early-stage research, or feasibility studies as the main purpose of the project**. The research and viability of any process or product must be validated prior to the start of the project. Instead, this call is funding collaborative platforms, initiatives and solutions with social and environmental impact that drive market uptake, wider adoption, and inclusive deployment.

At least 10% of the budget allocated to artistic activities must be dedicated to multi-actor engagement, as well as dissemination, and communication activities.

While preparing the proposal, consortia are invited to include the following mandatory activities in their work plan:

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** multi-actor mobilisation driven by creative and artistic processes. This activity must go beyond traditional consultation, using art to foster dialogue, co-creation, and emotional connection with the proposed alternative fashion model. Recipients of these activities should be involved across the value-chain, beyond the areas represented by the consortium.
- **Dissemination & Communication of their alternative solutions:** Actively communicate the project's results, demonstrating the viability and benefits of the proposed circular model to a wider audience (including industry peers, policymakers, and the public) to encourage replication and market shift.

By month 10 at the latest, all private sector consortium members, including the independent fashion brand, must provide Deliverable D4, which is a certificate of completion proving that minimum knowledge on circular business models, sustainability and/or circular design in fashion has been acquired.

This certificate of completion must be issued by an educational provider a recognised training provider, or a KIC, and must include at least 20 hours of training on circular business models, circular design, and/or sustainability in fashion. It ensures that the designer(s) and private sector consortium members involved have a minimum knowledge of circular design.

A valid certificate may include one from the NEB Fashion Adaptor (EIT Culture & Creativity call ran in 2025) or other similar programme addressing circularity and sustainability in fashion. The certificate must be dated no more than 36 months prior to the submission date of the deliverable.

2.1.4. EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

The call aims to generate tangible market innovations or newly established business entities that achieve financial sustainability and attract further investment within the project implementation period and beyond.

Expected impacts include the strengthening of local and European fashion ecosystems through resilient collaborative networks, the reduction of environmental footprints via circular and responsible practices, and the demonstration of scalable models that enhance social cohesion and prove the economic viability of a slow, beautiful, and inclusive fashion economy.

2.2. Main requirements for applicants

This call is open to legal entities established in **countries eligible under Horizon Europe** at the closure time of the call. Third countries associated to Horizon Europe must already be formally associated at the closure time of the call. This also applies to any affiliated entities involved in the proposal, unless the specific call or topic explicitly provides otherwise.

Applications must be submitted by a consortium composed of a **minimum of 4 and a maximum of 6 independent legal entities**, established in **at least two different eligible countries**.

The consortium should include at least:

- An independent fashion brand⁸ (SME under the EU definition⁹ operating for a minimum of 3 years);
- A research institution¹⁰ (e.g. HEI, research institute);
- A public authority or innovation/industry cluster¹¹;
- One value-chain partner¹² in the fashion value chain.

Applicants must demonstrate how each consortium partner contributes to the project's operational logic:

- The independent fashion brand and value-chain partners will drive market-led innovation by identifying real-world challenges, validating solutions, and supporting wider adoption.
- The research institution will embed practice-based learning and upskilling into the project's development cycle, ensuring effective talent and knowledge transfer.
- The Public authority or innovation/industry cluster will support policy actions, regulatory alignment, multi-actor engagement, and regional scalability.

This operational synergy ensures that the project will not only deliver commercial results but also generate long-lasting impact and systemic societal change. The strength of the operational integration between these roles will be a key criterion in the evaluation.

The consortium must designate one coordinator among its participating legal entities. The coordinator will be responsible for the overall administrative, financial and operational coordination of the project,

⁸ See For the purposes of this call, an independent fashion brand is understood as a business with creative and strategic decision-making held within the founding or leadership team, and without majority ownership (more than 50%), direct or indirect, by a fashion conglomerate, large retail group, or vertically integrated brand house. Minority investment is permitted, provided it does not result in loss of independent decision-making authority. This call is specifically designed for independent Fashion SMEs as consortium partners and does not target subsidiaries, spin-offs, or newly established entities operating under the strategic or financial control of a fashion conglomerate, large retail group, or vertically integrated brand house.

⁹ According to EU Recommendation 2003/361, an SME is an enterprise with fewer than 250 employees, and either an annual turnover of up to EUR 50 million or a balance sheet total of up to EUR 43 million. Within that, there are three tiers: **Microenterprise:** fewer than 10 employees and turnover or balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 2 million. **Small enterprise:** fewer than 50 employees and turnover or balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 10 million. **Medium-sized enterprise:** fewer than 250 employees and turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million or balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million.

¹⁰ Research Institution: A higher education institution, research institute, or equivalent body whose primary mandate includes knowledge generation, applied research, or the transfer of innovation to industry or society.

¹¹ **Public authority or innovation/industry cluster:** An entity providing systemic reach, policy linkage, or sectoral convening capacity relevant to the fashion and creative industries, acting as intermediaries connecting creative businesses to public or institutional resources.

¹² **Value-chain partner:** An organisation whose core activities sit within the fashion, textile, or apparel value chain, or that is actively developing capabilities to do so, including but not limited to raw material extraction or farming, fibre and textile production, material or textile supply, design, sourcing, manufacturing, branding and marketing, logistics, packaging, import and export, distribution, retail, circular economy services (including repair, rental, resale, and consumer take-back programmes), waste processing or recycling, certification, or technology and innovation transfer.

including communication with EIT Culture & Creativity, reporting, payment coordination, and consolidation of deliverables.

The coordinator must demonstrate sufficient experience and capacity to manage multi-partner projects, preferably including EU-funded, national, regional or comparable collaborative projects. Newly created legal entities or entities without proven administrative and financial capacity should not act as coordinator, unless sufficient mitigation measures are provided and accepted by EIT Culture & Creativity.

The independent fashion brand participating in the consortium must qualify as an SME under the EU definition and must have been operating for a minimum of 3 years.

For the purposes of this call, an independent fashion brand is understood as a business with creative and strategic decision-making held within the founding or leadership team, and without majority ownership (more than 50%), direct or indirect, by a fashion conglomerate, large retail group, or vertically integrated brand house. Minority investment is permitted, provided it does not result in loss of independent decision-making authority. This call is specifically designed for independent Fashion SMEs as consortium partners and does not target subsidiaries, spin-offs, or newly established entities operating under the strategic or financial control of a fashion conglomerate, large retail group, or vertically integrated brand house.

Please note that meeting these conditions will be verified during the eligibility validation process.

2.2.1. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

- **Eligibility of Associated Countries** – Countries in the process of associating with Horizon Europe must have completed their association agreement by the launch date of this call to be considered eligible. Only entities from countries officially associated at the time of publication of this call will be eligible for funding. Any association agreements finalised after the call's publication date will not apply retroactively to this call. For reference, see paragraph “Third countries associated to Horizon Europe” in the List of participating countries in Horizon Europe. Please note: European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is situated in Pillar III. Countries eligible for funding under this call must be associated to pillar III.
- **Legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine** – Given the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the involvement of Belarus, there is currently no appropriate context allowing the implementation of the actions foreseen in this programme with legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine. Therefore, even where such entities are not subject to EU restrictive measures, such legal entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity. This includes participation as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis for justified reasons.

- With specific regard to measures addressed to Russia, following the adoption of the Council Regulation (EU) 2024/1745 of 24 June 2024¹³ (amending Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 of 31 July 2014) concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, legal entities established outside Russia but whose proprietary rights are directly or indirectly owned for more than 50% by a legal person, entity or body established in Russia are also not eligible to participate in any capacity.
- **Measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary** — Following the [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/2506](#), as of 16 December 2022, no legal commitments can be entered into with Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain. Affected entities may continue to apply to calls for proposals and can participate without receiving EU funding, as associated partners, if allowed by the call conditions. However, as long as the Council measures are not lifted, such entities are not eligible to participate in any funded role (beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, recipients of financial support to third parties, etc.). In case of multi-beneficiary grant calls, applicants will be invited to remove or replace that entity in any funded role and/or to change its status into associated partner. Tasks and budget may be redistributed accordingly.

2.2.2. SUPPORTING THE KNOWLEDGE TRIANGLE INTEGRATION (KTI)

EIT Culture & Creativity applies the Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI) model to ensure meaningful collaboration across education, research, and business. The Knowledge Triangle approach ensures that supported projects are not only academically rigorous, but also closely aligned with industry and societal needs, preparing graduates to navigate and lead the green, digital, and social transitions of the CCSI.

In addition, EIT Culture & Creativity promotes **Extended Knowledge Triangle (EKT)** collaboration, which includes public institutions, policymakers, and civil society stakeholders, to foster long-term systemic impact and alignment with regional development goals.

2.2.3. INTEGRATION OF RIS APPLICANTS

EIT Culture & Creativity encourages the participation of organisations from countries with moderate or emerging innovation scores, as defined by the European Innovation Scoreboard. These countries are part of the [Regional Innovation Scheme \(RIS\)](#), and applicants from these regions are referred to as “RIS applicants”.

Encouragement for participation of RIS applicants

EIT Culture & Creativity is committed to expanding the innovation and education ecosystem by fostering collaboration with RIS countries and regions.

¹³ following the adoption of Council Regulation (EU) 2024/1745 of 24 June 2024 amending Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine.

Proposals are encouraged to meaningfully engage with RIS members and allocate a portion of their activities and budget to addressing challenges and opportunities specific to these regions. While there is no mandatory requirement for a minimum budgetary allocation, proposals that demonstrate strong engagement with RIS countries will be positively evaluated during the assessment process.

Accordingly, proposals can enhance their alignment with EIT Culture & Creativity's RIS objectives by:

- Including members from RIS-eligible countries and regions in their consortium.
- Highlighting activities specifically designed to address regional challenges or opportunities in RIS areas.
- Identifying measurable outcomes or contributions to innovation, capacity-building, and societal impact in RIS regions.

Any entity from a RIS country can apply as a RIS applicant during the initial application process. The goal of integrating RIS applicants is to expand the innovation ecosystem by connecting local RIS members to the broader European innovation landscape. This ensures that regions with moderate or emerging innovation performance are well-represented and can contribute to the overall success of the programme.

Reimbursement rate

RIS applicants are subject to the same reimbursement rate as all other applicants. Costs already funded by other EU programmes or other EU sources cannot be reimbursed by EIT Culture & Creativity, in order to avoid double funding.

2.3. Main requirements for project implementation

2.3.1. PROJECT DURATION

The total project duration is up to **16 months**, and must include all phases of the project. The total project duration must align with these specifications to ensure that all deliverables and KPIs are met within the timeframe: starting from January 2027 and ending no later than May 2028.

Please also see Section 2.3.5 about fast-tracking.

2.3.2. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REPORTING

Selected projects will be managed in line with the established project implementation and monitoring procedures, ensuring effective execution, compliance, and alignment with EIT requirements, including any updates that may apply. Project coordinators are responsible for implementing the approved work plan and ensuring timely delivery of deliverables, milestones and KPI targets, while EIT Culture & Creativity will monitor progress and provide guidance and support throughout implementation. The project coordinator must submit interim and final performance and cost reports in line with the timeline defined in the call/topic (Section 3.3) and participate in interim and final reviews where applicable. Any significant changes

(e.g. consortium changes and major budget reallocations) require prior formal approval from EIT Culture & Creativity. In case of underperformance or non-compliance, EIT Culture & Creativity may apply corrective measures, including adjustments to the financial support in accordance with the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement.

EIT Culture & Creativity is committed to **gender equality, diversity and inclusion (GEDI)**. Applicants must demonstrate how GEDI considerations are meaningfully embedded throughout the design, development and implementation of project outputs, using an **intersectional perspective** where relevant. Projects must comply with the principles set out in **Annex 5 (Specific Rules, Values) of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement** and the [EIT Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan 2025-2027](#).

2.3.3. DELIVERABLES

Mandatory deliverables

Each project proposal must include the following mandatory deliverables:

| Deliverable | Description | KPI the deliverable contributes to |
|--|--|--|
| D1 – Business Model and Sustainability Plan | A structured business model, based on the templates provided, including the Business Model Canvas, Life Cycle Assessment or equivalent sustainability assessment, and a post-EIT funding revenue projection. The deliverable must demonstrate how the proposed solution can remain viable beyond the EIT funding period. | Contribute to the achievement of EITHE02.4 or EITHE04.4 to guarantee business impact |
| D2 – Sustainability and Impact Metrics | A documented set of financial, environmental and social impact metrics, including baseline, targets, methodology and evidence sources. The metrics should demonstrate the positive impact or improvement generated by the project and help prevent unsupported sustainability claims or greenwashing. | Contribute to the achievement of EITHE02.4 or EITHE04.4 to guarantee sustainable impact. |
| D3 – Financial Sustainability Mechanism Agreement | The FSM Agreement is a legally binding agreement to be signed with EIT Culture & Creativity, establishing the financial sustainability mechanism applicable to the project. It will define the NEB Academy Fashion Shift Ambassador package, the services provided by EIT Culture & Creativity, the roles and responsibilities of the consortium, the success conditions, the fee waiver mechanism, the deferred service fee, the evidence requirements, reporting obligations, verification process, deadlines, payment triggers and audit rights. The FSM Agreement will be initiated as part of the contracting | Not directly linked to an EIT KPI. Contractual financial sustainability requirement. |

| Deliverable | Description | KPI the deliverable contributes to |
|---|--|---|
| | process and must be signed no later than month 3, unless EIT Culture & Creativity requires an earlier signature as part of the Subgrant agreement – Project Agreement process. Failure to sign the FSM Agreement within the required deadline may affect the disbursement of EIT Culture & Creativity financial support. | |
| D4 – Learning Certificate | Certificate of completion from the NEB Fashion Adaptor or an equivalent programme, proving that the relevant private-sector consortium members have acquired minimum knowledge on circular business models, sustainability and/or circular design in fashion. | Contribute to the achievement of EITHE02.4 or EITHE04.4 to guarantee the adequate skills have been developed along the time of the project. |
| D5 – Business and Dissemination Presentation | A business presentation, pitch deck or dissemination package presenting the business, product, service, process or innovation developed under the project. This deliverable should support communication, stakeholder engagement, market uptake and dissemination activities. | Contribute to the achievement of EITHE02.4 or EITHE04.4 to guarantee visibility and strong outreach impact. |

Optional deliverables

In addition to the mandatory deliverables above, applicants must include any optional deliverables needed to properly implement, monitor and evidence their project activities. These may include, for example, pilot reports, prototypes, testing reports, stakeholder engagement outputs, artistic intervention documentation, policy briefs, training materials, dissemination materials, market validation reports, or other outputs relevant to the proposed project.

The following deliverables are examples of additional deliverables that may be included where relevant. They are not a closed list.

| Deliverable | Description | KPI the deliverable contributes to |
|--|---|--|
| D6 – Curricula of courses developed | Curricula, learning materials or training modules developed within the project. | May provide evidence for education-related KPIs EITHE8.1, if applicable. |

| Deliverable | Description | KPI the deliverable contributes to |
|--|--|---|
| D7 – Capitalisation table and financing documentation | Capitalisation table, shareholder agreement, investment agreement, term sheet, financing round documentation or other relevant evidence of investment attracted. | May provide evidence for EITHE06.1, where applicable. |

2.3.4. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

This call is expected to foster collaborations and create tangible impact on the market, applying the NEB values of inclusion, sustainability and beauty; this will be captured through the fulfilment of mandatory KPIs being defined as an innovation brought to market or business created. These achievements could take the form of:

- The creation of a new legal entity hosting a European Showroom of Sustainable Fashion;
- The creation of a legal entity to host European city hubs (e.g. Circular Fashion Hub City name);
- The commercialisation of new materials, processes and methods of production (e.g. dyeing, coating etc.);
- The commercialisation of full regenerative-driven collection, capsule collection or hero pieces, representing the values and interests of the ecosystem involved;
- The co-development, in synergy with the EIT Culture & Creativity, of a NEB regional hub supporting skilling and innovation in circular and responsible fashion practices.

The above listed innovation and business created are for illustrative purpose only and does not prescribe specific expectations.

To be eligible, all submitted proposals must address the KPIs listed below and indicate the expected minimum target value for each selected KPI¹⁴.

For the purposes of this call, the KPI targets proposed by the consortium must be achieved during the project implementation period, and no later than the project end date. Although the official EIT KPI definitions may allow achievements to be counted within a longer period after project completion, proposals submitted under this call must demonstrate a credible pathway to achieving the proposed KPI target within the funded project period.

Each consortium must commit to achieving **at least one** of the two mandatory KPIs listed below.

¹⁴ [EIT Impact Framework \(2022-2027\) with codes.pdf](#)

| KPI Code | KPI description | Minimum expected | target |
|-----------|---|------------------|--------|
| EITHE02.4 | <p>Innovations launched on the market with sales revenue of at least EUR 10 000</p> <p>Number of innovations introduced on the market during the KAVA duration or within 3 years after completion with a sales revenue of at least EUR 10 000 documented.</p> | 1 | |
| EITHE04.4 | <p>Startups created with financial transactions of at least EUR 10 000</p> <p>Number of startups established in year N as a result / based on the output(s) of KAVA(s), or start-ups created for the purpose of an innovation project to organise and support the development of an asset (but not later than three years after the completion of KAVA) having financial transactions of at least EUR 10 000 for services/products (result of the KIC KAVA) sold to customers.</p> | 1 | |

It is important to note that the achievement of a mandatory KPI will be the evidence of the proper use of the allocated funding. Please note: it is important not to overpromise in a Call application as this may lead to a negative final assessment.

Optional KPIs

Optional KPIs can be achieved through activities such as upskilling and reskilling of staff in a retail point, in a municipality, in a production site, etc. The training activities must be clearly defined in the work plan and can be considered as a key success factor to shift practices and develop alternative business model.

There is no minimum target for optional KPIs. The consortium may define its target in accordance with the work plan, provided that the KPI is meaningful, measurable, and clearly linked to the proposed activities. Applicants should not include optional KPIs unless they are relevant and can be properly evidenced within the project implementation period.

| KPI Code | KPI description | Minimum expected | target |
|-----------|---|------------------|--------|
| EITHE08.1 | <p>Successful participants in EIT professional courses and training activities</p> <p>Number of successful participants in EIT professional development courses, online training courses and other education/training activities delivered or in a process of delivery (by country and type of programme), including data on country of citizenship and gender. Only participants, who successfully finished the programme, will be counted. For this KPI, only those education and training activities which have clearly defined</p> | N/A | |

| KPI Code | KPI description | Minimum target expected |
|-----------|--|-------------------------|
| | learning outcomes, and which carry out a competency assessment method are applicable. | |
| EITHE06.1 | Investment attracted by KIC-supported start-ups and scale-ups Investment attracted by KIC-supported startups and scale-ups Total EUR amount of private and public capital attracted within year N by supported startups / scale-ups (per country) that have received KIC business creation services support or HEI CBI project support of total duration of at least two months, within a maximum of three years following the last received KIC KAVA incl. project support activity. | N/A |

2.3.5. FAST-TRACKING OF PROJECTS (OPTIONAL)

EIT Culture & Creativity may, at its sole discretion, decide to activate a fast-track mechanism for a limited number of projects selected under this call to explore opportunities for scaling, replication, continuation, further development or other forms of follow-up support. Any such support may be financial and/or non-financial (including in-kind support), subject to the availability of budget, internal approvals and, where applicable, alignment with or approval by EIT.

The inclusion of this provision in these Call Guidelines does not create any entitlement, legitimate expectation or right for applicants or selected projects to receive additional support, to be assessed for fast-tracking, or to participate in any subsequent procedure. Fast-tracking is entirely optional and may only be activated where EIT Culture & Creativity considers such a mechanism appropriate, feasible and aligned with its strategic, operational, financial and portfolio objectives.

If EIT Culture & Creativity decides to activate a fast-track mechanism, it will define and communicate, at the relevant time, the applicable scope, eligibility conditions, assessment methodology, decision-making process, type of support, implementation arrangements and any applicable contractual or financial conditions.

Where applicable, any assessment may take into account factors such as project implementation progress, achievement of milestones, deliverables and KPIs, review outcomes, scalability, portfolio contribution, sustainability prospects and/or any other considerations determined by EIT Culture & Creativity for the purposes of the specific fast-track exercise.

Any fast-track mechanism will be implemented in accordance with the principles of transparency, equal treatment, sound financial management and conflict-of-interest management. Any additional support, if awarded, will be subject to a separate decision and formalised through an appropriate contractual arrangement, which may include an amendment, a new agreement or another applicable legal instrument.

3. Financial aspects of the call

3.1. KIC funding

The total maximum EIT Culture & Creativity financial support available for this call is **EUR 2 500 000 from the Business Plan 2026–2028**, conditional and subject to formal approval by the EIT.

| Scope of activities | Maximum KIC funding | Indicative number of projects to be funded | Max. EIT funding per project |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Collaboration in Fashion | EUR 2 500 000 | 5 | EUR 500 000 |

3.2. Direct EIT funding and double funding restriction

In order to avoid double funding and conflicts of interest, legal entities that receive direct financial support from EIT through any grant agreement, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Cross-KIC (X-KIC) activity, Higher Education Initiative (HEI), or any other EIT-funded instrument at the time of application are not eligible to participate in this call.

3.3. Reimbursement rate

EIT Culture & Creativity financial support may reimburse up to **100% of the total eligible project costs**. Costs already funded by other EU programmes or other EU sources cannot be reimbursed by EIT Culture & Creativity, in order to avoid double funding.

3.4. Payment arrangements

Entities receiving financial support from EIT Culture & Creativity for the implementation of the selected projects will become subgrantees under the Grant Agreement between EIT Culture & Creativity and EIT.

Necessary arrangements are put in place to ensure eligibility of costs and compliance under the Grant Agreement between the EIT and EIT Culture & Creativity. All validated entities will have to proceed with the signing of the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement, before any financial support can be provided.

EIT Culture & Creativity will provide financial support according to the payment schedule below. Interim and final payments may follow an annual schedule, subject to the availability of funds from the Granting Authority (EIT), the applicable financial framework, reporting obligations agreed upon in the Subgrant Agreement – Project Agreement, and the results of any Certificate on the Financial Statements (CFS) and other verification procedures required by EIT Culture & Creativity and/or the Granting Authority. The date of entry into force shall be the date on which all beneficiaries have successfully completed the validation process and the Subgrant Agreement – Project Agreement has been signed by all Parties.

| Reporting | | | | | Payments | | | |
|-------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|--|
| Reporting Periods | | | Type | Deadline | Type | Payment Ceiling | Reimbursement rate The reimbursement rate shall apply equally to all beneficiaries participating in the project. | Deadline |
| RP N. | Month from | Month to | | | | | | |
| - | - | - | - | - | Initial prefinancing | 25% of the maximum grant amount awarded during the Business Plan 2026–2028 | 100% | 30 days from entry into force/10 days before starting date – whichever is the latest |
| 1 | January 2027 | December 2027 | Periodic report | 60 days after end of reporting period | Interim payment | Cumulative payments up to 70% of the maximum grant amount awarded during the Business Plan 2026–2028 | 100% | 90 days from receiving periodic report |
| 2 | January 2028 | May 2028 | Periodic report | 60 days after end of reporting period | Final payment | Balance payment up to a maximum of 100% of the grant amount awarded during the | 100% | 90 days from receiving periodic report |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|----------------------------|--|--|
| | | | | | | Business Plan 2026–2028 | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|----------------------------|--|--|

EIT Culture & Creativity shall be under no obligation to distribute EIT funding as financial support to the entities selected unless the cost eligibility rules of Article 6 of the Grant Agreement (as transposed in the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement) are complied with, always subject to final confirmation by EIT.

EIT Culture & Creativity may withhold or suspend payments if the FSM Agreement is not signed within the required deadline or if the consortium does not comply with the applicable financial sustainability obligations.

3.5. Financial sustainability requirements

Through this call and its financial sustainability requirements, we aim to address a pressing market gap: circular, responsible and sustainable business models in the European fashion sector often fail to scale and adapt across regions. At the same time, with industry having to evolve at a fast pace and navigate increasingly complex and systemic challenges, exchanging practices among different regional contexts is crucial for ensuring resilience and competitiveness.

Consequently, this call seeks to demonstrate that such solutions can be successfully developed, implemented and replicated, thereby encouraging other regions and organisations to adopt and or adapt them.

The financial sustainability mechanism (FSM) requires the beneficiaries to identify another ecosystem where their developed business model can be adapted and replicated. This will be deployed through a NEB Academy | Fashion Shift Ambassador, appointed by the selected consortium. This Ambassador will be supported in this deployment by EIT Culture & Creativity, through a service package, which may include:

- liaison with EIT Culture & Creativity Regional Hubs;
- support for regional dissemination and outreach;
- support for engaging local stakeholders and aligning with regional policies;
- access to digital and physical learning spaces for mutual exchange of practices;
- support to promote the adoption or adaptation of the project results in other regions or organisations.

The purpose of this support is not general advisory support, but to help the consortium promote, adapt and replicate the funded business and transformation model beyond the original project context.

The purpose of the FSM is to ensure that the project results are not limited to the funded consortium, but can be taken up, adapted or replicated by other regions, organisations or ecosystems.

As a condition for receiving EIT funding, the consortium must sign a Financial Sustainability Mechanism Agreement (FSM) with EIT Culture & Creativity. The FSM Agreement will be prepared as part of the contracting process. Unless an earlier signature is required by EIT Culture & Creativity as part of the Project Agreement/FSA process, the agreement must be signed no later than month 3 of the project implementation period. Failure to sign the FSM Agreement within the required deadline may affect the disbursement of EIT Culture & Creativity financial support.

The FSM Agreement will operate through a **conditional service fee model**. This means that the consortium will not be required to pay the service fee if it provides accepted evidence that the project has achieved one of the success outcomes described below by the deadline defined in the FSM Agreement.

The consortium may meet the success condition by providing evidence of at least one of the following outcomes:

1. Commercial or partnership-based adoption

A commercial contract or partnership agreement valued at a minimum of **EUR 75 000**, through which a new region, organisation or ecosystem commits to adopt or adapt the project's transformative practices and to engage EIT Culture & Creativity for follow-up services.

Examples may include:

- a municipality or regional authority commissioning follow-up capacity-building or ecosystem activation activities based on the project results;
- a fashion cluster, industry association or regional ecosystem partner signing an agreement to replicate the model in another territory;
- a public or private organisation engaging EIT Culture & Creativity for follow-up services such as network development, upskilling, ecosystem activation, community engagement design or replication support;
- a group of companies or sectoral partners committing financial resources to adapt and deploy the project methodology in a new regional or sectoral context.

2. Policy or institutional adoption

Evidence that the project has substantially informed the development, endorsement or adoption of a local or regional policy, initiative, roadmap, programme or strategic measure.

Examples may include:

- the project methodology or outputs being referenced in a local or regional policy document;
- a public authority adopting a roadmap, action plan or programme inspired by the project;
- evidence that the consortium contributed to a policy design, consultation or implementation process;

- a formal endorsement, letter of support or decision from a public authority confirming that the project results are being used to shape local or regional action;
- the integration of the project's approach into a regional sustainability, circular economy, fashion, skills or innovation strategy.

If EIT Culture & Creativity accepts the evidence submitted by the consortium, the service fee will be fully waived.

If the consortium does not provide accepted evidence of one of the success outcomes by the deadline defined in the FSM Agreement, a **deferred service fee of EUR 75 000** will become payable to EIT Culture & Creativity, under the terms and conditions set out in the FSM Agreement.

The FSM Agreement will define the detailed evidence requirements, verification process, applicable deadlines, payment conditions, reporting obligations, audit rights and internal consortium responsibilities related to the mechanism.

3.6. Cost eligibility

For details on which project budget costs are eligible, please see Article 6 of the EIT-KIC Grant Agreement and document "eligibility of expenditure" available on the call website.

4. Call criteria

Following the deadline for submission, the admissibility, eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria checks will be performed for each proposal in line with the following criteria.

Proposals failing to meet one or more criteria will receive an official communication from EIT Culture & Creativity, informing the applicant of the outcome of the admissibility and eligibility check and explaining why the proposal failed to meet the criteria.

4.1. Admissibility

- **Deadline:** The application is submitted before the call deadline (see Overview). Any proposals submitted after the deadline will be inadmissible.
- **Submission format:** The application is submitted using the forms provided inside the electronic submission system (see Overview), including all mandatory templates.
- **Completeness:** The application is complete and contains all required sections, mandatory annexes and supporting documents as specified in the call/topic conditions and in the electronic submission system.
 - The financial section is completed using the EIT Culture & Creativity funding template provided (where applicable).
- **Language:** The application and all mandatory annexes and supporting documents are written entirely in English.
- **Accessibility:** The application is readable, accessible and printable.
- **Character limit:** The application respects the maximum character limits defined for each section of the application form. If any section exceeds the specified character limit, the application will not be admissible.

Only proposals satisfying all the admissibility criteria shall pass on to the eligibility criteria assessment stage.

4.2. Eligibility

Following the admissibility check, only proposals meeting all eligibility conditions below (and any additional call/topic-specific conditions) will be considered for evaluation:

- **Applicant type:** The proposal is submitted by **consortia of legal entities**, as specified in the call/topic conditions.

- **Registration (PIC):** Where applicants are legal entities, they are required to be registered in the [EU Funding & tender opportunities portal](#) and have a nine-digit Participant Identification Code (PIC number).
- **Legal status & eligibility:** The applicant(s) are legal entity(ies) and comply with the applicable Horizon Europe eligibility rules (including not being subject to EU restrictive measures under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)¹⁵ as well as Article 75 TFEU¹⁶).
- **Country eligibility:** The applicant(s) (and any affiliated entities, where applicable) are established in an eligible country under Horizon Europe, unless the call/topic explicitly provides otherwise (e.g., for essential participation). Entities established in countries that are not automatically eligible for Horizon Europe funding may participate or receive support only where this is explicitly allowed under the call/topic conditions and the applicable Horizon Europe rules.
- **Associated partners:** Associated partners are permitted only in exceptional and duly justified cases. Their participation must demonstrate a clear added value for the implementation of the project activities and must be explicitly justified in the proposal. Associated partners participate without receiving EIT Culture & Creativity financial support and do not count towards the minimum consortium composition requirements.

EIT Culture & Creativity reserves the right to reject or request the removal of associated partners whose participation is not considered necessary or proportionate to the objectives and implementation of the project.

- **Consortium structure:** Unless otherwise specified in the call/topic conditions, the proposal is submitted either by a multi-beneficiary consortium composed of a **minimum of four organisations established in at least two different EU Member States and/or Horizon Europe Associated Countries**. EIT Culture & Creativity encourages a clear EU dimension and Knowledge Triangle Integration. Where a minimum consortium composition is required, the proposal meets the **composition explicitly defined in the call/topic conditions (Section 2.2)**.
- **Additional EU restrictions:** Applicants, affiliated entities, associated partners and any other relevant participants must not be subject to EU restrictive measures, exclusion situations or other restrictions that prevent their participation or the award of EU funding under the applicable Horizon Europe and EU financial rules. Additional country-, entity- or security-related restrictions may apply, as set out in the call/topic conditions and the applicable legal framework.

¹⁵ Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#)

¹⁶ Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#)

- **Reimbursement rate:** The proposal must comply with the maximum reimbursement rate defined in the call/topic conditions. EIT Culture & Creativity financial support may reimburse up to 100 of the total eligible project costs.
- **KPIs & targets:** The proposal addresses the mandatory KPIs defined in the call and meet the minimum targets within the required timeframe.

4.3. Exclusion criteria

Applicants will be excluded from participation in the call and from funding if they are subject to EU administrative sanctions or fall under any exclusion grounds set out in Article 138(1) of the EU Financial Regulation. This includes situations such as:

- Insolvency, bankruptcy, or similar legal proceedings;
- Breach of social security or tax obligations;
- Grave professional misconduct;
- Fraud, corruption, criminal activity, terrorism-related crimes, child labour or human trafficking;
- Serious non-compliance with obligations under previous EU contracts or grants;
- EU law irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/9534;
- Creating entities to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations;
- Misrepresentation or failure to provide required information;
- Conflict of interest or unfair advantage in the award procedure.

As evidence, the applicants (i.e. the project coordinator and all the proposed project participants participating in the applicant consortium) will have to submit a **declaration of honour on exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interest**. Failure to provide adequate documentation may result in the exclusion of the applicants concerned.

Successful applicants will undergo legal entity validation process of the **EIT Onboarding Service (a shared service led by EIT Urban Mobility KIC)**, including possible checks in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) of the European Commission.

4.4. Selection criteria

4.4.1. FINANCIAL CAPACITY CRITERIA

Applicants must have stable and sufficient financial resources to successfully implement the proposed activities and cover the share of the project costs not reimbursed by EIT Culture & Creativity.

By submitting an application, applicants declare that they have the financial capacity required to implement the proposal, including where they participate in several projects or activities in parallel. This declaration will be included in the application form and/or in the Declaration of Honour submitted as part of the application package.

In line with Horizon Europe practice, the financial capacity check will normally be carried out for the coordinator where the requested EIT Culture & Creativity financial support is equal to or higher than **EUR 500 000**, except for public bodies, international organisations and low-value grants where the individual requested amount does not exceed **EUR 60 000**.

EIT Culture & Creativity may also verify the financial capacity of the coordinator or any other applicant, including affiliated entities where applicable, whenever there are grounds to doubt their financial capacity, regardless of the requested funding amount. If the financial capacity is structurally guaranteed by another legal entity, the financial capacity of that legal entity may also be verified.

Where requested by EIT Culture & Creativity, applicants must provide the documents needed to verify their financial capacity, which may include, among others:

- profit and loss accounts;
- balance sheets;
- business plans;
- audit reports or certified accounts for the last closed financial year;
- information on dependency on EU funding;
- information on deficit, revenue or financial performance in previous years;
- any other document reasonably required to assess financial capacity.

Successful applicants may also be required to go through the financial capacity check process of the EIT Community Onboarding Service or any other verification process designated by EIT Culture & Creativity.

If the financial capacity of an applicant is considered not satisfactory, EIT Culture & Creativity may request additional information and/or apply appropriate measures, including:

- payment of pre-financing in instalments;
- reduction or removal of pre-financing;
- additional monitoring and reporting requirements;
- requirement for a financial guarantee or equivalent assurance, where applicable;
- requirement for the applicant to be replaced, where possible;
- rejection of the proposal or termination of the contracting process, where the issue cannot be resolved.

Failure to provide requested information, or the submission of false, incomplete or misleading information, may result in rejection of the proposal, withdrawal of the award decision, termination of the agreement and/or recovery of funds, where applicable.

4.4.2. OPERATIONAL CAPACITY CRITERIA

Applicants must have the necessary experience, know-how, qualifications, staff, organisational capacity and operational resources to successfully implement the proposed activities and fulfil their role in the project.

By submitting an application, applicants declare that they have the operational capacity required to implement the proposal, including where they participate in several projects or activities in parallel. This declaration will be included in the application form and/or in the Declaration of Honour submitted as part of the application package.

The operational capacity assessment may take into account whether the applicant(s) have the appropriate resources, experience and internal arrangements to deliver the proposed work plan within the expected timeframe, budget and quality requirements. This may include the ability to manage the project, coordinate the proposed activities, allocate sufficient staff, provide the necessary technical or thematic input, manage risks, and comply with the reporting, monitoring and contractual obligations of the call.

Where requested by EIT Culture & Creativity, applicants must provide evidence to demonstrate their operational capacity, which may include, among others:

- description of the applicant's relevant experience and role in the proposal;
- information on the proposed team and allocation of responsibilities;
- profiles, qualifications and experience of the team members involved;
- information on staffing, technical resources and organisational arrangements;
- references to previous or ongoing activities of comparable nature, where relevant;
- list of other ongoing projects or commitments, where relevant;
- any other document reasonably required to assess operational capacity.

If the operational capacity of an applicant is considered not satisfactory, EIT Culture & Creativity may request additional information and/or apply appropriate measures, including additional monitoring, adjustment of the applicant's role, replacement of the applicant where possible, rejection of the proposal or termination of the contracting process.

Failure to provide requested information, or the submission of false, incomplete or misleading information, may result in rejection of the proposal, withdrawal of the award decision, termination of the agreement and/or recovery of funds, where applicable.

4.5. Award criteria

Eligible proposals will be assessed by **three independent external expert evaluators** through an external quality evaluation against the **mandatory Horizon Europe award criteria: (a) Excellence, (b) Impact, and (c) Quality and efficiency of the implementation**. Additionally, the following EIT-specific criteria, as applicable to this call: **(d) KIC portfolio strategic fit and compliance with the financial sustainability principles and Knowledge Triangle Integration** and **(e) EU dimension** will be assessed either during the external quality evaluation or during the portfolio selection.

For this call, the EIT-specific criteria are integrated into the evaluation model as follows:

| Criterion | Assessment stage | Maximum score | Threshold |
|---|---------------------|---------------|-----------|
| (d) KIC portfolio strategic fit, financial sustainability principles and Knowledge Triangle Integration | Portfolio selection | 10 | 6 / 10 |
| (e) EU dimension | Portfolio selection | 5 | 3 / 5 |

During the evaluation, the combined weight of the Horizon Europe criteria **(a), (b) and (c)** will be higher than the combined weight of the EIT-specific criteria **(d) and (e)**.

For this call, the portfolio selection score allocated by the Selection Committee represents 15 points out of a total maximum score of 60 points, corresponding to 25% of the final score.

Gender mainstreaming and the integration of the gender dimension will be assessed under criteria **(a) Excellence** (unless specified otherwise in the call/topic), in line with the EIT Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan 2025–2027 and the EIT-specific provisions of HE MGA Annex 5.

4.5.1. EXTERNAL QUALITY EVALUATION: SCORING, WEIGHTING AND THRESHOLDS

Each eligible proposal will be independently assessed against the award criteria set out below. Criteria may be broken down into sub-criteria as specified in the call/topic text.

For each criterion, the call/topic text will define: (i) the **maximum score**, (ii) the **minimum threshold** (if applicable), and (iii) any **weighting**. **Each criterion threshold must be met individually**, and proposals must also reach an **overall minimum score** to proceed to the next stage (e.g. portfolio selection), as defined in the call/topic text.

Standard scoring framework:

- Excellence (**15 points** – threshold: **9**)
- Impact (**15 points** – threshold: **9**)
- Quality and efficiency of the implementation (**15 points** – threshold: **9**)

Overall threshold: proposals must reach at least **27 / 45** points in total.

Evaluators assign scores based on the sub-criteria and indicators defined in the call/topic text and provide a written justification for each criterion score. Only proposals meeting all applicable thresholds (**per criterion and overall**) will progress.

Scoring scale

| Score | Description | Explanation |
|-------|-------------|--|
| 1 | Very Poor | Irrelevant or inadequate in relation to the call requirements. |
| 2 | Poor | Lacks quality and presents significant weaknesses. |
| 3 | Fair | Adequate overall, but some aspects are unclear or insufficiently developed. |
| 4 | Good | Adequate and well-explained, with minor shortcomings. |
| 5 | Excellent | Outstanding in clarity, coherence, and alignment with the call's objectives. |

4.5.2. EXTERNAL QUALITY EVALUATION: AWARD CRITERIA, SUB-CRITERIA AND MAXIMUM SCORES

The call/topic text will specify the sub-criteria, guiding questions and maximum scores under each applicable criterion.

| a) Excellence | Maximum score |
|---|---------------|
| The novelty of the collaborative model, the transformative potential of the solution, and the unique strength of the consortium. | |
| Gender mainstreaming and inclusion by design Are gender and diversity embedded in the innovation logic and team dynamics? | 5 points |
| Transformative Innovation & NEB Integration Is the proposed solution truly transformative and does it authentically integrate sustainable, beautiful, and inclusive values? | 5 points |
| Consortium excellence & collaborative synergy Does the specific combination of partners create a unique advantage that individual actors could not achieve alone? | 5 points |

| b) Impact | Maximum score |
|--|---------------|
| Market viability, environmental metrics, and the strategy for localisation and regional scale. | |
| Market viability Is the business model viable and capable of triggering the "NEB Academy Fashion Shift Ambassador" success clause? | 5 points |
| Measurable environmental & societal impact | 5 points |

| b) Impact Market viability, environmental metrics, and the strategy for localisation and regional scale. | Maximum score |
|--|----------------------|
| To what extent does the proposal define measurable environmental and societal outcomes and demonstrate a credible approach to tracking and verifying them? | |
| Adaptation and adoption in other regions & policy influence. Can the model be adapted elsewhere and/or influence local policy? | 5 points |

| c) Quality and efficiency of the implementation Articulation of the collaborative model, resource allocation, risk management. | Maximum score |
|--|----------------------|
| Well-structured and articulated work plan Is the work plan well-structured and articulated with roles and responsibilities well defined to achieve the ambition? | 5 points |
| Governance and collaborative model Is the decision-making structure effective, and does the collaborative model ensure true integration rather than parallel work? | 5 points |
| Risk management Are resources (budget/time) appropriately allocated, especially for mandatory activities, and are risks proactively managed? | 5 points |

4.5.3. PORTFOLIO SELECTION: SCORING, WEIGHTING AND THRESHOLDS

Where portfolio selection is applied as a separate assessment stage, each eligible proposal passing the external quality evaluation will be assessed by the Selection Committee Members against the weighted portfolio selection criteria defined below.

For calls where KIC portfolio strategic fit and/or EU dimension are assessed under portfolio selection, these criteria will be assessed in this section and will not be scored under Sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2. This avoids double scoring of the same criterion.

Each eligible proposal passing to the portfolio selection (see Section 5) will be independently assessed by the Selection Committee Members against two weighted criteria:

- KIC portfolio strategic fit and compliance with the financial sustainability principles and Knowledge Triangle Integration (**10 points – threshold: 6**)
- EU dimension (**5 points – threshold: 3**)

Each criterion must be met **individually**.

For this call, the portfolio selection score represents 15 points out of a total maximum score of 60 points, corresponding to 25% of the final score.

The final ranking is calculated by summing the score from the quality evaluation and the score from the portfolio selection. Projects will be funded in strict ranking order until the budget is exhausted.

Proposals meeting all thresholds but not selected due to budget limits will be placed on a reserve list, valid for up to one year.

4.5.4. PORTFOLIO SELECTION: AWARD CRITERIA, SUB-CRITERIA AND MAXIMUM SCORES

| d) KIC portfolio strategic fit and compliance with the financial sustainability principles and Knowledge Triangle Integration KIC portfolio strategic fit, contribution to EIT Culture & Creativity's Strategic Agenda, Knowledge Triangle Integration and compliance with financial sustainability principles. | Maximum score |
|--|----------------------|
| Alignment with EIT Culture & Creativity strategy and portfolio Does the proposal clearly contribute to EIT Culture & Creativity's Strategic Agenda, the objectives of this call, and the development of a balanced and coherent KIC portfolio? | 5 points |
| Knowledge Triangle Integration and financial sustainability Does the proposal demonstrate meaningful integration between business, education and innovation actors, and does it credibly contribute to EIT Culture & Creativity's financial sustainability principles, including the Financial Sustainability Mechanism? | 5 points |

| e) EU dimension European added value, cross-border relevance, and contribution to strengthening the European fashion ecosystem. | Maximum score |
|--|----------------------|
| European added value, scalability and transferability Does the proposal demonstrate clear European relevance, cross-border collaboration, and potential for adoption, adaption or scaling across different European regions? | 5 points |

4.5.5. THRESHOLDS, RANKING AND AWARDED IN A NUTSHELL

Proposals must meet **all required thresholds** at each stage of the evaluation process to be considered for financial support:

- **During the external quality evaluation**, each evaluation category has an individual threshold. Proposals failing to meet the threshold in any one category will not proceed to the portfolio selection stage.

- In addition, proposals must reach a minimum total score of 27 out of 45 in the quality evaluation to be considered for portfolio selection.
- **During the internal portfolio selection**, proposals must meet the minimum individual threshold per criterion to be included in the final ranking for funding.

Financial support will be awarded in strict descending order of final scores (quality evaluation + portfolio selection, up to a **maximum of 60 points**), until the total available call budget is exhausted.

Proposals that meet all thresholds but are not selected due to budget limitations will be placed on a **reserve list**, valid for up to one year.

5. Evaluation procedure

5.1. Admissibility and eligibility, exclusion and selection stages

After the submission deadline, EIT Culture & Creativity conducts a structured, multi-step verification and evaluation process to ensure full compliance with the admissibility, eligibility, exclusion, and selection criteria.

1. Admissibility and eligibility check

EIT Culture & Creativity PMO performs an initial screening to verify compliance with formal admissibility and eligibility requirements as defined in Section 4. Proposals failing to meet these criteria are rejected at this stage, and applicants are formally notified of the outcome and the reasons for rejection.

2. External quality evaluation

Proposals passing the admissibility and eligibility check proceed to an external quality evaluation by independent expert evaluators. Each eligible proposal will be independently assessed by three external expert evaluators against the award criteria defined in Section 4, including the Horizon Europe award criteria.

3. Internal portfolio selection

Where portfolio selection is applied as a separate assessment stage, proposals passing the external quality evaluation will be reviewed by the EIT Culture & Creativity Selection Committee against the portfolio selection criteria defined in Section 4.5.3 and 4.5.4.

The portfolio selection stage may include the assessment of KIC portfolio strategic fit, financial sustainability principles/FSM, Knowledge Triangle Integration, EU dimension, portfolio balance and/or other strategic criteria, provided that these criteria are clearly defined in the call and do not duplicate the same assessment already carried out during the external quality evaluation.

Proposals passing the quality evaluation will be reviewed by the EIT Culture & Creativity Selection Committee, composed of:

- Director of Transformation & NEB
- Two additional Thematic Area Directors (or their representatives),
- One representative from the Transformation & NEB team, with experience in the call topic
- One external observer from EIT (optional)

4. Final ranking list

The final ranking is calculated by summing the score from the quality evaluation and the score from the portfolio selection. Projects will be funded in strict ranking order until the budget is exhausted.

Proposals meeting all thresholds but not selected due to budget limits will be placed on a reserve list, valid for up to one year. See Section 5.2.2.

5.2. Evaluation of proposals

All eligible proposals are evaluated by three independent external experts, selected on the basis of their expertise in the subject matter of the call. External experts evaluate proposals against the defined award criteria and provide scores and written justifications. The requirements set out in Horizon Europe practice on expert selection, conduct, impartiality, and confidentiality are fully applied.

Based on the evaluation results, proposals are ranked according to their total scores, and the selection is made strictly following this ranking, subject to the available budget.

5.2.1. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Each proposal is evaluated against the award criteria in Section 4 using a numerical scoring system with defined maximum scores and minimum thresholds. Only proposals meeting all thresholds and the overall minimum score are eligible for funding. Final rankings are based on total scores, with ties resolved using the rules in Section 5.2.3.

5.2.2. RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION: AWARD, RESERVE LIST, REJECTION

Following completion of the evaluation procedure, EIT Culture & Creativity will establish a proposed final ranking and proposed award list based on the results of the external quality evaluation and, where applicable, the portfolio selection stage.

The proposed final ranking and proposed award list remain provisional and subject to completion of the applicable internal governance and procedural steps, including, where applicable, completion of the call report review process and confirmation that the evaluation procedure has been concluded and the results may be communicated to applicants.

Proposals may be identified for funding in strict descending order of ranking, subject to the availability of the allocated budget, compliance with all call requirements, completion of the applicable procedural checks and the conditions set out in these Call Guidelines.

Proposals that meet all applicable thresholds but cannot be funded due to budget limitations may be placed on a reserve list, in ranked order. The reserve list may be used to award funding to additional proposals in case selected projects withdraw, fail to complete contractual requirements, or if additional budget becomes available. The reserve list is valid for up to one year from the date of the award decision, unless otherwise specified in the call.

Proposals that do not meet the applicable admissibility, eligibility, exclusion, selection or evaluation requirements, or that fail to meet the minimum thresholds defined in the call, will be rejected.

Any notification indicating that a proposal has been identified as selected for funding does not constitute an award decision, contractual commitment or entitlement to receive financial support. Funding remains conditional upon: (i) expiry of the applicable stand-still period; (ii) completion of any appeal or evaluation review process; (iii) successful completion of validation and contracting requirements; (iv) continued availability of the allocated budget; and (v) signature of the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement.

The final ranking, funding line, reserve list and rejection decisions may be revised only to the extent necessary as a result of: (a) an appeal or evaluation review outcome; (b) correction of a manifest procedural or clerical error; (c) withdrawal or ineligibility of a selected applicant; (d) failure to complete contracting requirements; or (e) changes to the available call budget occurring before signature of the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement. Any such revision will be made in accordance with the published call conditions and the principles of equal treatment and transparency and will be communicated to the applicants concerned.

5.2.3. TIE-BREAKING RULES

In the event of tied scores, proposals will be prioritised in the following order:

- Proposals with a higher expected contribution to the mandatory KPIs and targets of the call.
- Proposals demonstrating stronger value for money, including a lower EIT Culture & Creativity reimbursement percentage in relation to the total project costs.

5.3. Communication of evaluation results to applicants

Following completion of the evaluation and selection procedure, and once EIT has completed its review of the call report and confirmed that the results may be communicated, EIT Culture & Creativity will inform all applicants of the evaluation results in writing.

The project coordinator will receive a formal notification by email from EIT Culture & Creativity (pmo@eit-culture-creativity.eu), indicating whether the proposal has been selected for funding, placed on the reserve list, or rejected. This notification will include the relevant assessment and score and, where applicable, the Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) and/or other relevant evaluation information in accordance with the evaluation model described in this call.

This communication constitutes the official outcome notification of the evaluation process and will be sent to the email address provided by the project coordinator. The applicable stand-still period will start on the day following the dispatch of this communication.

The notification of results does not create an unconditional entitlement to EIT Culture & Creativity financial support. Any proposal indicated as selected for funding remains subject to the expiry of the applicable stand-still period, the outcome of any appeal or evaluation review procedure, the successful completion of the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement preparation process, and the availability of the allocated call

budget. No financial support shall be considered granted until the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement has been duly signed by all required parties.

If an applicant requests further clarification regarding the evaluation result, they may contact EIT Culture & Creativity by email.

Selected proposals may be invited to the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement preparation and onboarding stage. However, no Subgrant agreement – Project agreement will be signed before the end of the applicable stand-still period and completion of the procedural and contracting checks required before signature.

5.4. Standstill period

Following the final award decision and the written communication of results to applicants, EIT Culture & Creativity will apply the standstill period applicable to this call, counted from the day after the dispatch of the communication of results.

The standard standstill period is 30 calendar days, unless a shorter period has been agreed with EIT as part of the applicable approval or procedural review of the call. During this period, applicants are not permitted to publicly announce the outcome – even if they have already received written notification.

During the standstill period, applicants may submit an appeal in accordance with the appeal procedure described in Annex I of these call guidelines. EIT Culture & Creativity may suspend or adjust the contracting process for proposals whose funding position may be affected by an appeal or evaluation review.

Where an appeal or evaluation review results in a correction, full or partial re-evaluation, or revised ranking, EIT Culture & Creativity may update the list of selected proposals, the reserve list and/or the list of rejected proposals accordingly, before any Subgrant agreement – Project agreement is signed.

No Subgrant agreement – Project agreement will be signed before the end of the applicable stand-still period and completion of the procedural and contracting checks required before signature.

5.5. Publication of selected proposals and annual publication of recipients of funds

EIT Culture & Creativity may publish the list of selected proposals once the applicable procedural checks have been completed and the results may be communicated. The publication may include the name of the selected recipient(s), the country of establishment, the amount of EIT funding committed, and the subject of the grant or contract, taking into account confidentiality, security and personal data protection requirements.

5.6. Appeal process

EIT Culture & Creativity will address requests for review concerning the procedural aspects of the evaluation process, in line with the Appeal Process set out in **Annex I** of these Call Guidelines.

Complaints shall be addressed to EIT Culture & Creativity at pmo@eit-culture-creativity.eu **within 7 calendar days** from the date of dispatch of the communication of the evaluation results.

Annex I provides full details on:

- who may appeal and on what grounds;
- the submission process and timeline;
- the internal appeal review mechanism and decision procedure.

Appeals that do not meet the specified criteria or are submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

6. Legal aspects, other terms and conditions

6.1. Acceptance of the call conditions

EIT Culture & Creativity reserves the right to make reasonable amendments and additions to the call conditions. Amendments and additions to the call conditions shall be valid only before the submission deadline, and if made available to all potential applicants at the same time on the call page of the EIT Culture and Creativity website.

EIT Culture & Creativity may declare the call unsuccessful in case no applications are received, if the applications do not meet the admissibility, eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria, or if none of the applications reach the thresholds laid down in this call text.

By submitting the application form, the applicant agrees to the present call conditions. Applicants agree that they have no legal entitlement to funding. Submission of an application does not establish any entitlement to receive financial support from EIT Culture & Creativity.

6.2. Cancellation of the call

EIT Culture & Creativity reserves the right to cancel the call at any time before the signature of the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement(s) without the obligation to compensate applicants, in particular where its objectives can no longer be met, provided that the applicants are informed in a transparent manner in writing as follows:

- if the cancellation takes place before that award: on the call page of the EIT Culture & Creativity website: <https://eit-culture-creativity.eu>,
- if the cancellation takes place following the communication of the results to the applicants, during the standstill period, or any time before the signature of the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement: in writing directly to the selected applicants.

6.3. Data protection

EIT Culture & Creativity ensures that any processing of personal data shall be performed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016, on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (GDPR). Personal data submitted in the context of this procedure will be processed to the extent necessary for the administration, evaluation, and follow-up of the call. As a data subject, you have the right of access, the right to rectification, the right to erasure, the right to restrict processing, the right to data portability, the right to object, and the right not to be subject to a decision based solely on automated processing. If

you have a question about personal data processing or want to exercise your data subject rights, you can contact dpo@eit-culture-creativity.eu.

The collected personal data will be used solely for the evaluation of the applications and the conduct of the call process.

Personal data will be deleted 5 years after the announcement of the results of the call in case of unsuccessful applications and 7 years for successful applicants.

By submitting your application to this call, applicants acknowledge that their personal data will be processed by EIT Culture & Creativity for the purposes of the management, evaluation, monitoring and administration of the call and any resulting financial support, in accordance with the applicable data protection rules..

For more information on the processing of your personal data, please consult the privacy statement of EIT Culture & Creativity at [EIT CC Code of Conduct](#).

6.4. Confidentiality

EIT Culture & Creativity undertakes to use any confidential information shared by the applicants solely for the purposes of the evaluation process.

Confidential information shall mean data and/or information (in any form) that is proprietary to, or possessed by, the applicants and not generally known to the public, or that has not yet been revealed whether in tangible or intangible form, that is identified as confidential in writing or when disclosed orally.

Confidential information included in the application form must be expressly labelled by the applicant as such in the form. As regards confidential information expressly labelled as such in the call process, EIT Culture & Creativity undertakes to (i) not disclose them in any way and any form, without the prior written authorization of the applicant; and (ii) not to use them for purposes other than those strictly necessary for participation in the call.

Confidential information may be shared among EIT Culture & Creativity and its subsidiaries (e.g. KIC Co-Location Centres) solely for the purposes of the call process. EIT Culture & Creativity undertakes to impose this confidentiality obligation on its employees and the employees of its subsidiaries and its collaborators, as well as on independent experts and all subjects who, by virtue of participating in the conduct of the call, including as members of the Evaluation Committee, may have access to such confidential data and information.

The applicants agree that data and information regarding the selected projects' implementation (e.g. success stories) not labelled as confidential may be disclosed in connection with the activities of EIT Culture & Creativity.

6.5. Avoidance of conflict of interest

EIT Culture & Creativity is committed to ensure the avoidance of conflict of interest (regarding all actors) and comply with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination and sound financial management.

Measures to avoid potential Conflict of Interest or unequal treatment of applicants are ensured including through appropriate conflict of interest declaration and assessment process, established written communication channels and independent and fair complaints/redress procedures.

In case an applicant becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest affecting the conduct of the call process, it shall notify the EIT Culture & Creativity of the conflict of interest without any delay.

6.6. Ethics and values

The proposal must comply with:

- ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity) and
- applicable EU, international and national law, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Supplementary Protocols.

No financial support/EIT funding can be granted, within or outside the EU, for activities that are prohibited in all Member States. No financial support/EIT funding can be granted in a Member State for an activity which is forbidden in that Member State.

Please refer to the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement for further requirements.

6.7. Intellectual property rights

Applicants retain full and exclusive ownership of their prior information and intellectual property rights. By submitting their application, applicants affirm that they hold ownership or have legally secured the right to use all elements of the innovative product or service included in their application.

Applicants agree to indemnify and hold harmless EIT Culture & Creativity and/or any assignee or affiliate from any third-party allegations or claims of intellectual property rights infringement by the product or service of applicants. Applicants shall have the right to further develop, use and license their intellectual property rights for creating, making, marketing, and distributing products, services, and technology. Applicants agree to respect the IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) Rules (Article 16) of the [General Model Grant Agreement](#) and Article 10 of the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement (Common Subgrant Agreement Model).

6.8. Withdrawal of the funding – Recovery of undue amounts

EIT Culture & Creativity may withdraw the funding after its award and recover all payments made in line with the provisions of the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement, including in the following cases:

- in case the applicant committed substantial errors, irregularities or fraud;
- in case the applicant committed serious breach of obligations under the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement or during its award (including non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, etc.)
- it is established that the awarded applicants were not eligible or should have been excluded.

6.9. Checks, reviews, audits and investigations

EIT Culture & Creativity retains the right to initiate checks, reviews and audit on an applicant that has been awarded funding, in order to verify compliance with the requirements of the call conditions and of the legal and contractual framework referred to above.

EIT Culture & Creativity may request any information and data from applicants that have been awarded funding for 5 years after completion for these purposes, as well as in relation to monitoring by the EIT.

In accordance with the Grant Agreement between the EIT and the KIC as well as the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement, the EIT and/or the Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) and the Court of Auditors may carry out checks, reviews, audits and investigations in relation to the call and the implementation of the projects.

6.10. Applicable law

The present call is governed by the applicable European Union legal framework (i.e. in particular the [EIT Regulation](#)¹⁷, the [EU Financial Regulation](#)¹⁸, the [Horizon Europe Regulation](#)¹⁹), supplemented if necessary by the national law of Belgium.

Applicants acknowledge that the present call is implemented within the framework of the Partnership Agreement and Grant Agreement concluded between the EIT and EIT Culture & Creativity, and that the applicable provisions of those agreements may be reflected in the Subgrant Agreement.

¹⁷ Regulation (EU) 2021/819

¹⁸ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509

¹⁹ Regulation (EU) 2021/695

6.11. Settlement of disputes

All disputes arising out of or in connection with this Agreement, which cannot be solved amicably, shall be finally settled before the courts of Brussels.

6.12. Other

All applicants selected for funding will be required to sign a **Declaration of Honour** in the format provided under the **Subgrant agreement – Project agreement**. By signing the Declaration of Honour, applicants confirm that they are not in any of the exclusion situations and that all information provided is accurate and complete.

Participation in EIT Culture & Creativity calls takes place **entirely at the applicants' own cost and risk**. Any activities undertaken by applicants to start the implementation of a project **before the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement is signed** are carried out at their own cost and risk. EIT Culture & Creativity shall not be held liable for any actions or costs incurred prior to the signature of the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement.

EIT Culture & Creativity does **not undertake any commitment** regarding the provision of financial support until the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) has confirmed the eligibility of the selected projects and the **Subgrant agreement – Project agreement has been duly signed**. All financial support is subject to the **cost eligibility rules** laid down in the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement and to the **final confirmation of cost eligibility by the EIT**.

Entities that have never been part of projects financially supported by EIT Culture & Creativity and that do not yet have a **validated Participant Identification Code (PIC)** will be subject to a **PIC validation process**. This process is managed through the EIT Community Onboarding Service in cooperation with the European Commission's Research Executive Agency (REA), and successful validation is a precondition for the signature of the Subgrant agreement – Project agreement.

Annex I – Appeal process

EIT Culture & Creativity will address requests for review concerning the procedural aspects of the evaluation process, in accordance with the appeal procedure described in this Annex.

Complaints shall be addressed to pmo@eit-culture-creativity.eu **within 7 calendar days** from the date of communication of the results of the evaluation.

1. Right to appeal

Only the project coordinator of a submitted proposal is entitled to file an appeal.

2. Grounds for appeal

Only the procedural aspects of an evaluation may be the subject of a request for an evaluation review. The evaluation of the merits of a proposal shall not be subject to appeal.

Appeals may be lodged only where the applicant considers that the applicable evaluation procedure was not correctly applied to its proposal, including procedural errors, technical or administrative errors, or manifest factual errors that may have materially affected the evaluation outcome.

3. Appeal submission procedure

The appeal must be submitted via email to pmo@eit-culture-creativity.eu within **7 calendar days** of receiving the official evaluation result notification. Late submissions will not be considered.

The appeal must include the following mandatory information:

- Name and address of the organisation of the project coordinator;
- Name, position, and contact details of the person submitting the appeal;
- Reference number and acronym of the proposal;
- Clearly stated grounds for appeal, as defined in Section 2;
- Any relevant supporting documents.

EIT Culture & Creativity will acknowledge receipt of the appeal in writing. Appeals submitted without the required information or based on ineligible grounds will be rejected.

4. Grounds for automatic rejection

An appeal will be automatically rejected if:

- It is submitted after the deadline;
- It is based on grounds not listed in Section 2;
- It does not include all mandatory information listed in Section 3.

In such cases, EIT Culture & Creativity will notify the project coordinator within **15 calendar days** of receiving the appeal and inform the relevant Thematic Area.

5. Internal appeal evaluation process

EIT Culture & Creativity will coordinate the appeal process and conduct a technical examination of the appeal, assessing whether it falls within the admissible grounds and compiling the relevant documentation. This is forwarded to the Appeal Panel for review.

The Appeal Panel does not re-evaluate proposals. Its role is to assess the validity of the appeal, ensuring that procedures were correctly followed and no factual errors occurred that could have materially affected the evaluation outcome.

6. Composition and function of the Appeal Panel

The Appeal Panel shall be composed of two voting members appointed by the CEO of EIT Culture & Creativity:

- the COO of EIT Culture & Creativity, provided they were not involved in the evaluation or selection of the proposal concerned;
- one Legal Counsel or legal representative of EIT Culture & Creativity, provided they were not involved in the evaluation or selection of the proposal concerned.

The Appeal Panel shall be chaired by the COO of EIT Culture & Creativity, unless the COO is unavailable or has a conflict of interest, in which case the CEO may appoint another impartial chair.

The CEO may appoint additional voting or non-voting members where needed, taking into account the nature of the appeal, the need for additional procedural, legal, technical or thematic expertise, or the need to avoid a conflict of interest or deadlock.

All Appeal Panel members must be free from any conflict of interest and must not have been involved in the evaluation or selection of the proposal concerned. If a conflict arises, the member will not participate in the review and the CEO may appoint a replacement.

7. Appeal Panel process

The Appeal Panel will review the appeal and the relevant documentation to assess whether the appeal falls within the admissible grounds defined in this Annex and whether the identified issue may have materially affected the evaluation outcome.

The Appeal Panel will issue an internal opinion and recommendation to EIT Culture & Creativity. Based on this opinion and recommendation, EIT Culture & Creativity may confirm the initial evaluation or decide on a full or partial re-evaluation, primarily by evaluators who were not involved in the previous evaluation.

The outcome of the appeal will be communicated to the project coordinator in writing. Internal reports and deliberations will not be shared with applicants.

8. Timeline and outcome notification

The project coordinator will receive a formal reply to the appeal within **15 calendar days from the expiry of the appeal submission deadline**, provided that the appeal is admissible and contains all mandatory information required under Section 3.

If this timeline cannot be met due to exceptional circumstances, EIT Culture & Creativity will inform the project coordinator accordingly.

All appeal-related communication will be conducted exclusively with the project coordinator, not with other project participants.

9. Non-suspensive effect of appeals

The submission of an appeal does not suspend, interrupt, or otherwise affect the evaluation, selection, or contracting process in respect of proposals not subject to that appeal. This approach is consistent with standard Horizon Europe review practice.

10. Finality of the appeal process

Based on the opinion and recommendation of the Appeal Panel, EIT Culture & Creativity will take the final decision on the appeal and notify the project coordinator in writing. The decision of EIT Culture & Creativity is final within the framework of this internal appeal procedure described in this Annex. No further appeals will be accepted on the same grounds for the same proposal. This is without prejudice to any external legal remedies that may be available under applicable law.

Annex II – Online application form

Thank you for your interest in our calls. We look forward to reviewing your application. Ready to begin? Click **“Start my application.”**

Submission is via the online platform only.

Before starting, please make sure to read the **call guidelines** and all related documents.

A few things to note

- Please fill out all sections in English – incomplete applications can't be considered.
- Use templates where provided, e.g. budget file template.

Saving your draft application

- You can save a draft of your application, but please make sure to save the link! As admins, we don't have access and unfortunately can't recover it.
- After submission, you'll still be able to edit your application, again, just keep that link safe too.

Part A – Project identification and applicant information

PROJECT INFORMATION

- Proposal title
Enter the full title of your proposal.
- Proposal acronym
*Enter a short acronym. It will be used as the project identifier throughout the process.
For example: "GREENLAB" for a project titled "Green Solutions for Urban Laboratories".*
- Project duration
 - Project start: *January 2027 (subject to PRA signature)*
 - Project end: *May 2028 (16 months from project start).*

PROJECT COORDINATOR – APPLICANT ORGANISATION INFORMATION

- Project coordinator – Legal name
Enter the full legal name exactly as registered.
- Project coordinator – Short name
Enter the short name or commonly used name of the organisation. If not applicable, please write “Not applicable”.
- Project coordinator – Type of entity
Please choose the type of entity of the organisation. For guidance:

Startup: A young, innovative enterprise (typically up to 5 years) developing scalable, technology-driven business models.

Scaleup: A high-growth enterprise with proven product-market fit, typically with annualised growth of at least 20% over three years.

SME: As per EU definition an enterprise with fewer than 250 employees and either \leq €50M turnover or \leq €43M balance sheet.

Large company: An enterprise exceeding the SME thresholds.

Higher education institution: A university or equivalent body providing tertiary education, recognised by the relevant national authorities.

Research organisation: An entity whose primary goal is to conduct fundamental or applied research, irrespective of legal status or funding source.

Public body: A national, regional, or local authority, or a body governed by public law under EU rules.

Non-profit organisation: A legal entity that reinvests any surplus toward its statutory objectives rather than distributing profits.

Foundation: A non-profit legal entity managing assets or funds dedicated to a specific public benefit or charitable purpose.

Association: A membership-based non-profit organisation pursuing shared objectives in the interest of its members or the broader public.

- Startup
 - Scaleup
 - SME
 - Large company
 - Higher education institution
 - Research organisation
 - Public body
 - Non-profit organisation
 - Foundation
 - Association
 - Other. If you have selected “Other”, please specify.
 - If you selected “SME” above. By ticking this box, I confirm that the organisation complies with the EU definition of an SME as indicated above.
- Project coordinator – Country
 - Project coordinator – Country code
- Enter the two-letter country code corresponding to the country of legal establishment. For more information, see [Country codes - Statistics Explained - Eurostat](#).
- For example: ES, DE, FR, IT.
- Project coordinator – City
 - Project coordinator – Postal code
 - Project coordinator – Street

- Project coordinator – Street number
- Project coordinator – PO Box, if applicable
If not applicable, please write “Not applicable”. A Post Office Box (PO Box) is a lockable mailbox located at a post office, used as an alternative delivery address.
- Project coordinator – CEDEX, if applicable
If not applicable, please write “Not applicable”. CEDEX (Courrier d'Entreprise à Distribution Exceptionnelle) is a French postal designation used by organisations receiving large mail volumes.
- Project coordinator – PIC number
Enter the 9-digit Participant Identification Code (PIC). If you do not know if your organisation already has a PIC number, you can verify directly on the EU Portal (click [here](#)) whether your organisation is already registered. Lead applicant – First name of contact person
- Project coordinator – Legal entity VAT number
Enter the organisation's VAT number. If your organisation is not VAT-registered, enter “Not applicable”.
- Project coordinator – Legal entity registration number
Enter the organisation's legal entity registration number as it appears on the official incorporation or registration documents.
- Project coordinator – NACE code
Enter the organisation's NACE code, corresponding to the organisation's main economic activity. For more information, see https://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/index/nace_all.html.
- Project coordinator – NUTS code
Enter the organisation's NUTS code. For more information, see [Overview - NUTS - Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics - Eurostat](#). If you do not know the NUTS code, please provide the full address and EIT Culture & Creativity may verify the code during the administrative checks.
- Project coordinator – RIS country
Indicate whether the applicant is established in an EIT RIS-eligible country. For more information, see <https://eit-ris.eu/about-eit-community/>.
 - Yes
 - No
 - To be verified
- Project coordinator – Latitude
Enter the latitude of the applicant's main legal or operational address, if known. You can find your coordinates via Google Maps: right-click your address and the lat will appear at the top of the menu. If not known, please write “To be verified”.
- Project coordinator – Longitude
Enter the longitude of the applicant's main legal or operational address, if known. You can find your coordinates via Google Maps: right-click your address and the long will appear at the top of the menu. If not known, please write “To be verified”.

PROJECT COORDINATOR - SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT (SPOC)

- Project coordinator – First name of SPOC
- Project coordinator – Last name of SPOC
- Project coordinator – Title or salutation of SPOC
Select the title and/or salutation.
 - Ms
 - Mr
 - Mx
 - Dr
 - Prof
 - Prefer not to say
 - Other. If you have selected “Other”, please specify.
- Project coordinator – Gender of SPOC
This information is for statistical and reporting purposes only.
 - Female
 - Male
 - Non-binary
 - Prefer not to say
- Project coordinator – Email address of SPOC
This email will be used for all official notifications including the evaluation result.
- Project coordinator – Telephone number of SPOC
- Project coordinator – Position / Job title of SPOC

PROJECT COORDINATOR – LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ORGANISATION (LRO)

The Legal Representative / Legal Responsible Officer should be the person authorised to legally represent the applicant organisation or to coordinate the signature of the relevant contractual documents.

- Project coordinator – First name of LRO
- Project coordinator – Last name of LRO
- Project coordinator – Title or salutation of LRO
Select the title and/or salutation.
 - Ms
 - Mr
 - Mx
 - Dr
 - Prof
 - Prefer not to say
 - Other. If you have selected “Other”, please specify.
- Project coordinator – Position / Job title of LRO
- Project coordinator – Email address of LRO

- Project coordinator – Confirmation of LRO
I confirm that the LRO identified above is authorised to represent the applicant organisation or to coordinate the signature of the relevant contractual documents.
 - Yes
 - No
 - To be confirmed during grant preparation

CONSORTIUM INFORMATION

- How many project participants does your consortium have?
 - Consortium of 4 project participants
 - Consortium of 5 project participants
 - Consortium of 6 project participants

Note: The sections below (Applicant organisation information, SPOC, and LRO) must be completed individually by each project participant (2-6). Each project participant should only fill in the section corresponding to their assigned number in the online application form.

PROJECT PARTICIPANT [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – APPLICANT ORGANISATION INFORMATION

This section is to be filled by each project participant.

- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Legal name
Enter the full legal name of the organisation exactly as registered.
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Short name
Enter the short name or commonly used name of the organisation. If not applicable, please write “Not applicable”.
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Type of entity
Please choose the type of entity of the organisation. For guidance:
 - Startup:** *A young, innovative enterprise (typically up to 5 years) developing scalable, technology-driven business models.*
 - Scaleup:** *A high-growth enterprise with proven product-market fit, typically with annualised growth of at least 20% over three years.*
 - SME:** *As per EU definition an enterprise with fewer than 250 employees and either ≤€50M turnover or ≤€43M balance sheet.*
 - Large company:** *An enterprise exceeding the SME thresholds.*
 - Higher education institution:** *A university or equivalent body providing tertiary education, recognised by the relevant national authorities.*
 - Research organisation:** *An entity whose primary goal is to conduct fundamental or applied research, irrespective of legal status or funding source.*
 - Public body:** *A national, regional, or local authority, or a body governed by public law under EU rules.*

Non-profit organisation: A legal entity that reinvests any surplus toward its statutory objectives rather than distributing profits.

Foundation: A non-profit legal entity managing assets or funds dedicated to a specific public benefit or charitable purpose.

Association: A membership-based non-profit organisation pursuing shared objectives in the interest of its members or the broader public.

- Startup
- Scaleup
- SME
- Large company
- Higher education institution
- Research organisation
- Public body
- Non-profit organisation
- Foundation
- Association
- Other. If you have selected “Other”, please specify.
- If you selected “SME” above. By ticking this box, I confirm that the organisation complies with the EU definition of an SME as indicated above.
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Country
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Country code
Enter the two-letter country code corresponding to the country of legal establishment. For more information, see [Country codes - Statistics Explained - Eurostat](#).
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – City
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Postal code
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Street
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Street number
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – PO Box, if applicable
If not applicable, please write “Not applicable”. A Post Office Box (PO Box) is a lockable mailbox located at a post office, used as an alternative delivery address.
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – CEDEX, if applicable
If not applicable, please write “Not applicable”. CEDEX (Courrier d'Entreprise à Distribution Exceptionnelle) is a French postal designation used by organisations receiving large mail volumes.
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – PIC number
Enter the 9-digit Participant Identification Code (PIC). If you do not know if your organisation already has a PIC number, you can verify directly on the EU Portal (click [here](#)) whether your organisation is already registered.
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Legal entity VAT number

Enter the organisation's VAT number. If your organisation is not VAT-registered, enter "Not applicable".

- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Legal entity registration number
Enter the organisation's legal entity registration number as it appears on the official incorporation or registration documents.
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – NACE code
Enter the organisation's NACE code, corresponding to the organisation's main economic activity. For more information, see https://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/index/nace_all.html.
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – NUTS code
Enter the organisation's NUTS code. For more information, see [Overview - NUTS - Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics - Eurostat](#). If you do not know the NUTS code, please provide the full address and EIT Culture & Creativity may verify the code during the administrative checks.
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – RIS country
Indicate whether the applicant is established in an EIT RIS-eligible country. For more information, see <https://eit-ris.eu/about-eit-community/>.
 - Yes
 - No
 - To be verified
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Latitude
Enter the latitude of the applicant's main legal or operational address, if known. You can find your coordinates via Google Maps: right-click your address and the latitude (lat) will appear at the top of the menu. If not known, please write "To be verified".
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Longitude
Enter the longitude of the applicant's main legal or operational address, if known. You can find your coordinates via Google Maps: right-click your address and the longitude (long) will appear at the top of the menu. If not known, please write "To be verified".

By ticking this box, I confirm that project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] is independent of the project coordinator: neither party exercises direct or indirect control over the other.

PROJECT PARTICIPANT [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] - SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT (SPOC)

- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – First name of SPOC
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Last name of SPOC
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Title or salutation of SPOC
Select the title and/or salutation.
 - Ms
 - Mr
 - Mx
 - Dr
 - Prof

- Prefer not to say
- Other. If you have selected “Other”, please specify.
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Gender of SPOC
This information is for statistical and reporting purposes only.
 - Female
 - Male
 - Non-binary
 - Prefer not to say
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Email address of SPOC
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Telephone number of SPOC
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Position / Job title of SPOC

PROJECT PARTICIPANT [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ORGANISATION (LRO)

The Legal Representative / Legal Responsible Officer should be the person authorised to legally represent the applicant organisation or to coordinate the signature of the relevant contractual documents.

- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – First name of LRO
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Last name of LRO
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Title or salutation of LRO
Select the title and/or salutation.
 - Ms
 - Mr
 - Mx
 - Dr
 - Prof
 - Prefer not to say
 - Other. If you have selected “Other”, please specify.
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Position / Job title of LRO
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Email address of LRO
- Project participant [2, 3, 4, 5, 6] – Confirmation of LRO
I confirm that the LRO identified above is authorised to represent the applicant organisation or to coordinate the signature of the relevant contractual documents.
 - Yes
 - No
 - To be confirmed during grant preparation

WEBSITE / SOCIAL MEDIA PAGE OF APPLICANT ORGANISATIONS

Please provide the website and social media links for all applicant organisations. Enter the official website and any active social media profiles (e.g. LinkedIn, Instagram, X/Twitter). Links must begin with https://.

- *Project coordinator:*

- *Project participant 2:*
- *Project participant 3:*
- *Project participant 4:*
- *Project participant 5, if applicable:*
- *Project participant 6, if applicable:*

MANDATORY DOCUMENT UPLOADS

- **BUDGET FILE**

Upload the completed budget file. The financial section is completed using the EIT Culture & Creativity funding template provided.

File name: Budget_Project acronym.xlsx

- **GANTT CHART WITH PROJECT TIMELINE AND WORK PACKAGES**

Upload the Gantt chart with project timeline and work packages. You can see the [example from European Commission](#).

File name: GANTT_Project acronym

- **LINK TO VIDEO**

Upload the link to short video in English (3 to 5 minutes) presenting your transformative idea / product / service. This video should demonstrate that it is not a research collaboration. The link must be publicly accessible.

OPTIONAL DOCUMENT UPLOAD

- Supporting visual materials

Upload one file that illustrates the nature and quality of your practice in relation to the award criteria. This may include, but is not limited to:

- *existing product or collection images*
- *lookbooks or brand identity materials*
- *material or technology innovation evidence*
- *manufacturing or production process documentation*
- *supply chain or sourcing documentation*

We recommend compiling all materials into a single PDF. Accepted formats: PDF, JPG, PNG.

SANCTIONS & JURISDICTION SCREENING

By ticking this box, I confirm that, in line with the call guidelines, no shareholders, UBOs, or controlling persons of the applicant(s) are nationals of, resident in, or linked to any EU-sanctioned or non-compliant jurisdiction (including Russia, Belarus, or other sanctioned territories).

LEGAL & DISPUTE HISTORY

By ticking this box, I confirm that the company has not been involved in, and is not aware of, any legal, regulatory, arbitration, criminal, civil, or other dispute proceedings, investigations, or material claims.

LEGAL DECLARATIONS

- By ticking this box, I am authorised to submit this application on behalf of the applicant(s).
- By ticking this box, I confirm that the applicant(s) have read and accept the rules and conditions of the call.
- By ticking this box, I confirm that the applicant(s) will not receive double funding for the same activities.

FINANCIAL CAPACITY

- By ticking this box, I confirm that the applicant(s) have the financial capacity required to implement the proposal.
- I declare that the applicant(s), including all consortium members, individual applicants or team members where applicable, have stable and sufficient financial resources to implement the proposed activities and to cover the share of project costs not reimbursed by EIT Culture & Creativity.
- The applicant(s) acknowledge that EIT Culture & Creativity may request information or supporting documents to verify financial capacity, including financial statements, business plans, audit reports, information on dependency on EU funding, previous financial performance or any other document reasonably required for this assessment.
- The applicant(s) understand that failure to provide requested information, or the submission of false, incomplete or misleading information, may result in rejection of the proposal, withdrawal of the award decision, termination of the contracting process or agreement, and/or recovery of funds, where applicable.

OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

- By ticking this box, I confirm that the applicant(s) have the operational capacity required to implement the proposal.
- I declare that the applicant(s), including all consortium members, individual applicants or team members where applicable, have the necessary experience, know-how, qualifications, staff, organisational capacity and operational resources to carry out the proposed activities, fulfil their role in the project, and comply with the reporting, monitoring and contractual obligations of the call.
- The applicant(s) acknowledge that EIT Culture & Creativity may request information or supporting documents to verify operational capacity, including team profiles, allocation of responsibilities, staffing information, technical resources, relevant experience, ongoing commitments or any other document reasonably required for this assessment.
- The applicant(s) understand that failure to provide requested information, or the submission of false, incomplete or misleading information, may result in rejection of the proposal, withdrawal of

the award decision, termination of the contracting process or agreement, and/or recovery of funds, where applicable.

Part B – Technical proposal

Part B is the technical part of your application. Together with the mandatory annexes (if applicable), it is assessed by independent external evaluators and the internal Portfolio Selection Committee (if applicable) against the award criteria outlined in the call guidelines.

The information provided in part B must be consistent with part A. Keep your answers focused and evidence-based. Evaluators respond favourably to clarity and credibility, not length.

PROPOSAL ABSTRACT (up to 2,000 characters)

Provide a short summary of the proposal, including:

- the challenge or opportunity your project addresses,
- your proposed approach and the role of each partner,
- the change you expect to achieve.

Write for a non-specialist reader. Avoid jargon.

EXCELLENCE (CRITERION A)

A1 Transformative innovation (up to 2,000 characters)

Describe the core transformation of your collaborative model and its transformative potential.

- How does this proposal challenge the status quo of the current fashion system (e.g., moving from linear to regenerative/ circular, from fast to slow)?
- How does it differ from existing initiatives?

A2 NEB integration (up to 2,000 characters)

Provide concrete evidence for the three NEB values: Sustainable (specific circularity metrics or Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) data), Beautiful (user experience, well-being and aesthetic) and Inclusive (accessible and inclusive design).

A3 Consortium excellence (up to 2,000 characters)

Please address the following points:

- Justify why this specific combination of partners is essential for success, describe the synergies expected. Describe the role of every participant in the consortium.
- How will the independent fashion brand, research institution, public authority or innovation/industry cluster, and value-chain partner complement each other in terms of skills and expertise?

A4 Collaborative synergy (up to 2,000 characters)

Please address the following points:

- Highlight specific past collaborations or complementary achievements of the team that prove your capacity to deliver this complex systemic change together.

- *What can this consortium achieve together that none of the members could achieve individually?*

A5 Gender Mainstreaming and inclusion by design (up to 2,000 characters)

Please address the following points:

- *Describe the consortium structure ensuring diverse voices (gender, background, age, ability, and cultural context).*
- *How does the collaboration specifically address the needs of underrepresented groups (e.g., adaptive fashion, extended sizing, cultural inclusivity, disability-led design, gender-inclusive design)?*
- *How does your approach move beyond representation toward embedding inclusion structurally, across design processes, supply chains, and business models?*

IMPACT (CRITERION B)

B1 Market viability (up to 2,000 characters)

Describe your revenue model and path to profitability within 16 months, and how you will continue your activity after the EIT funding. Provide a comprehensive business canvas model clarifying the ambition of the collaboration and how your business will operate.

B2 Market replicability (up to 2,000 characters)

Please address the following points:

- *Explain how the business model is capable of triggering the “NEB Academy | Fashion Shift Ambassador” success clause.*
- *Detail your strategy to secure the commercial contract/partnership for regional adaptation and/or adoption by month 16. Which specific regions or entities are you targeting, and what is your engagement plan with them?*

B3 Financial and business literacy (up to 2,000 characters)

Demonstrate financial and business literacy by explaining also by design how you will shift the standard fashion Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) towards a sustainable and viable model.

B4 Measurable environmental & societal impact (up to 2,000 characters)

Please address the following points:

- *Provide baseline and target metrics for relevant environmental topic such as waste reduction, carbon footprint, or water usage.*
Provide insights on how you will ensure responsible fashion from a social & societal perspective: affordability, fair salary, workers health etc.

B5 Multi-actor engagement (up to 2,000 characters)

- Describe the artistic activities dedicated to multi-actor engagement. How will art & creative practices be used to tangibly shift consumer behaviour and raise awareness on responsible fashion in the local ecosystem?
- Mandatory: confirm that at least 10% of your total budget is allocated to artistic activities covering multi-actor engagement, dissemination and communication activities. Briefly justify this allocation and explain how it is distributed across the project.

B6 Adaptation, adoption in other regions and policy influence (up to 2,000 characters)

Please address the following points:

- How will you disseminate results to support replication beyond your region/ecosystem?
- How will you rely on the EIT Culture & Creativity regional ecosystem, including regional hubs, to increase your outreach and attractiveness?
- How will the public authority, cluster or association partner use the project results to influence local/regional fashion policies?
- What are the key success factors that make your model transferable, adoptable and/or adaptable to other regions, in the EU and beyond?

B7 KPI targets

Mandatory: Please select at least one mandatory KPI that your proposal commits to achieving

- **EITHE02.4** – Innovations launched on the market with sales revenue of at least EUR 10 000 (minimum: 1)
State your target number for this mandatory KPI. At least one of the mandatory KPIs should be achieved.
- **EITHE04.4** – Startups created with financial transactions of at least EUR 10 000 (minimum target: 1)
State your target number for this mandatory KPI. At least one of the mandatory KPIs should be achieved.

Optional

- **EITHE06.1** – Investment attracted by KIC-supported start-ups and scale-ups (optional, minimum target: N/A)
State your target number for this optional KPI, if applicable.
- **EITHE08.1** – Successful participants in EIT professional courses and training activities (optional, minimum target: N/A)
State your target number for this optional KPI, if applicable.

QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION (CRITERION C)

C1 Work plan structure (up to 2,000 characters)

Please address the following points:

- Provide a comprehensive view of your overall work plan and how the different tasks will articulate.
- Provide a description per task: activities to be conducted, participating organisations and respective roles, budget allocated, deliverables and KPIs when applicable.
- Make sure the minimum activities described in the call guidelines are presented in your work plan.
- Confirm that your work plan includes Deliverable D4 (Learning Certificate), specifying which private-sector consortium members will obtain it, from which provider, and by which month (no later than month 10).

C2 Governance and collaborative model (up to 2,000 characters)

Please address the following points:

- Provide visibility on the governance and the decision-making process. How will you make this collaboration fruitful?
- How will you ensure that key skills are properly assigned and exist in the consortium?
- How does the governance structure ensure that all partners, including smaller SMEs or ecosystem actors, have a voice in the project direction?
- How will your collaborative model allow continuous improvement through feedback and ecosystem insights?

C3 Long term collaboration (up to 2,000 characters)

How will all project participants integrate into the target collaborative model in the long run? Please indicate the form and conditions under which this will happen. Demonstrate that the project structure is designed to last and will not require significant changes to continue operating after EIT funding ends.

C4 Risk management (up to 2,000 characters)

Please address the following points:

- Identify the risks to which your consortium is exposed and rank them by likelihood and severity.
- Define mitigation measure for every risk, which must allow you to adapt your work plan.

PORTFOLIO SELECTION INFORMATION (CRITERION D)

This section will be used only for the portfolio selection stage and will not be scored by the external evaluators.

D1 Alignment with EIT Culture & Creativity strategy and portfolio (up to 2,000 characters)

Please address the following points:

- How does your proposal contribute to EIT Culture & Creativity's Strategic Agenda and the specific objectives of this call?

- *What is the unique value and positioning of your project within the European creative and cultural industries landscape? How does it complement or differentiate from existing initiatives in your field?*

D2 Knowledge Triangle Integration and financial sustainability (up to 2,000 characters)

Please address the following points:

- *How does your collaboration model deliberately bridge business, education and innovation, and what does each dimension concretely contribute to the project outcomes?*
- *How does your project plan to generate revenue, reduce dependency on grants, or contribute to long-term financial viability beyond the funding period, including through the applicable Financial Sustainability Mechanism?*

EU DIMENSION (CRITERION E)

This section will be used only for the portfolio selection stage and will not be scored by the external evaluators.

E1 European Added Value, scalability and transferability (up to 2,000 characters)

Please address the following points:

- *Why does your project need to happen at a European level, and what would be lost if it were implemented in only one country or region?*
- *How does your project demonstrate clear European relevance and cross-border collaboration, and how will you actively engage with other regions, partners and networks across Europe to embed your outcomes into local fashion ecosystems?*

ETHICS, REGULATORY AND COMPLIANCE CONSIDERATIONS (SECTION F)

F1 Ethics, regulatory and compliance aspects (up to 2,000 characters)

Describe any ethics, legal, regulatory or compliance aspects that may affect the proposal.

Please address:

- *Whether the proposal involves personal data, human participants, vulnerable groups, AI systems, sensitive content, cultural heritage, environmental impacts or other ethics-related aspects.*
- *Any permits, licences, certifications, approvals or authorisations required.*
- *Any data protection, consumer protection, employment, procurement, state aid or sector-specific requirements.*
- *How these aspects will be managed.*

If this section is not applicable, explain why.

SUBMISSION CONFIRMATION

- Name of person submitting

- Name of organisation of person submitting
- Position / Job title of person submitting
- Confirmation of completeness and accuracy
 - By ticking this box, I confirm that all information provided in Part B is true, complete, accurate and consistent with Part A and all mandatory annexes.
- Confirmation of readiness for evaluation
 - By ticking this box, I confirm that the proposal is ready for evaluation and that all required sections and supporting documents have been completed and submitted.