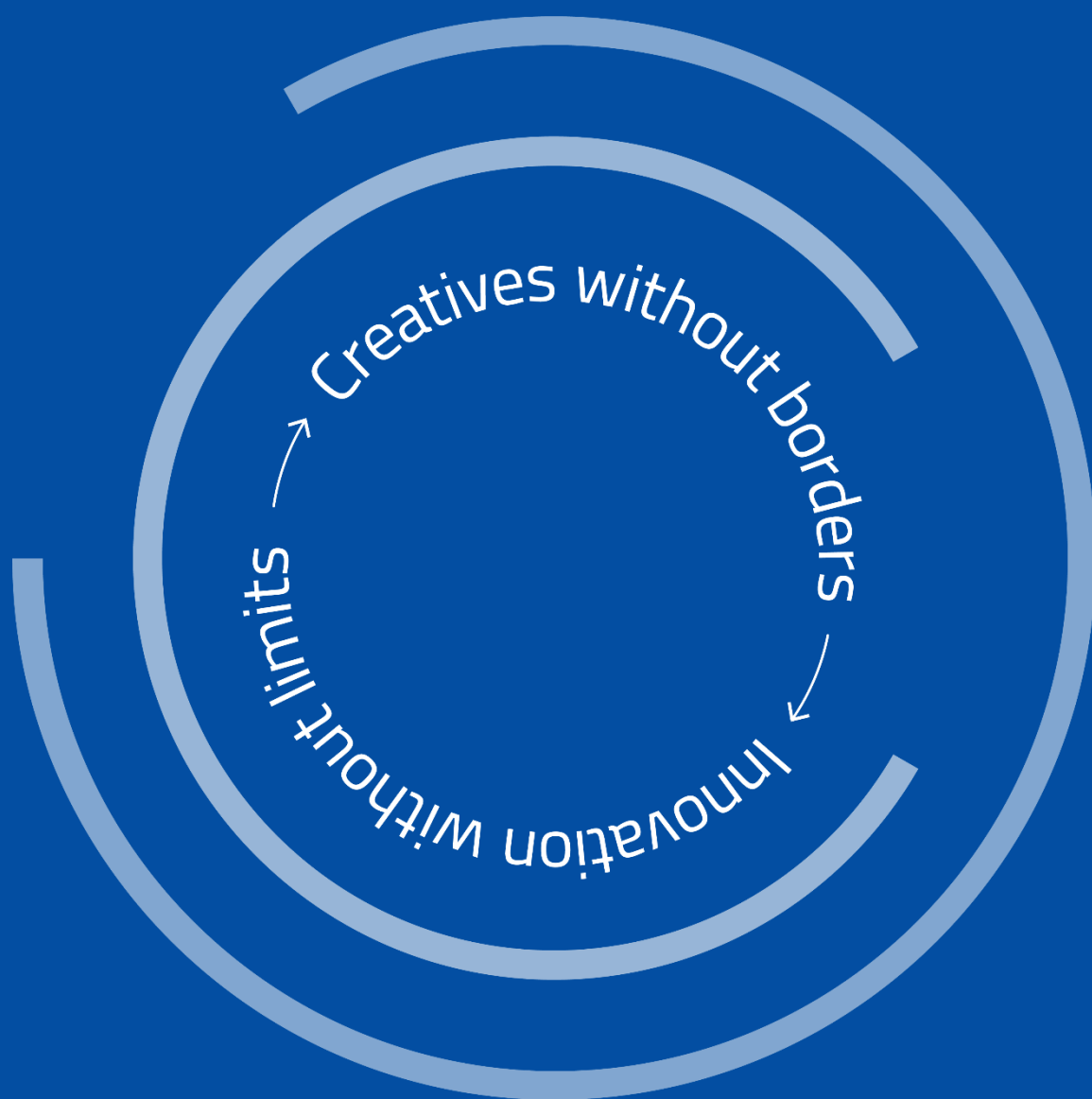


Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Incubation Programmes in Architecture and Cultural Heritage 2025

Call Guidelines





Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Incubation Programmes in Architecture and Cultural Heritage 2025

Version 1.0 (2025)

History of Changes

| Version | Date | Changes |
|---------|------------|------------------|
| 1.0 | 06/05/2025 | Initial version. |

****This Call may be subject to corrections, modifications and clarifications. Applicants are encouraged to regularly check the Call pages of the EIT Culture & Creativity website for updates.****



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| FACTSHEET | 5 |
| INTRODUCTION | 8 |
| EIT CULTURE & CREATIVITY'S INCUBATION PROGRAMME 2025 | 10 |
| 1. REQUIREMENTS | 12 |
| 1.1. WHO CAN APPLY | 12 |
| 1.2. MEMBERSHIP..... | 13 |
| 1.3. STRATEGIC FOCUS | 13 |
| 1.4. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE & KEY ACTIVITIES | 14 |
| 1.5. EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND IMPACT | 15 |
| 1.6. Programme duration | 16 |
| 1.7. GENDER AND DIVERSITY..... | 16 |
| 1.8. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs) | 16 |
| 1.9. Demo Day & Conditions for Participation | 17 |
| 1.10. Prize Opportunity for Top-Performing Ventures..... | 17 |
| 1.11. SPECIFIC MONITORING REQUIREMENTS..... | 18 |
| 1.12. Contribution to EIT CC's financial sustainability..... | 19 |
| 1.13. CHAPTER LEGAL ASPECTS AND DOCUMENTATION..... | 21 |
| 2. PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION TO THE PROGRAMME | 23 |
| 2.1. SUPPORT GIVEN TO APPLICANTS PREPARING AN APPLICATION | 23 |
| 3. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS | 25 |
| 3.1. ADMISSIBILITY AND ELIGIBILITY CHECK..... | 25 |
| 3.2. FINAL RANKING AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS..... | 27 |
| 4. COMMUNICATION OF RESULTS TO APPLICANTS..... | 29 |
| 4.1. SELECTED APPLICATIONS..... | 29 |
| 4.2. RESERVE LIST AND REJECTED APPLICATIONS | 29 |
| 5. APPEALING AGAINST EVALUATION RESULTS..... | 30 |
| 6. FAST-TRACK PROVISIONS..... | 31 |
| ANNEX I: PRIZES AWARDING PROCESS & ELIGIBILITY..... | 32 |
| ANNEX II: Examples of SMEs and scale-ups to be selected | 36 |
| ANNEX III: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) | 37 |
| ANNEX IV. APPLICATION FORM | 41 |



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

| | |
|---|----|
| ANNEX V. APPEAL PROCESS (ONLY APPLICABLE TO THE CALL FOR APPLICATION TO THE PROGRAMME) | 44 |
| ANNEX VI: GENERAL RULES FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS WITH THE RESPECT TO HE's COMPLIANCE PRINCIPLES | 47 |
| ABBREVIATIONS | 50 |
| GLOSSARY OF TERMS | 51 |



FACTSHEET

WHO IS THIS CALL FOR?

This call for applications is open to individuals and teams (of up to 3 people) with an early-stage business idea in the Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI), specifically focusing on Architecture and Cultural Heritage.

- **Individual applicants:** This includes students, recent graduates, professionals, creatives, or researchers with an innovative business idea in the target sectors. No prior company registration is required at the time of application.
- **Teams of individuals:** Up to 3 people working together on a common idea, ideally with complementary skills. Teams can apply even if they are not yet part of a registered organisation. One team member must be designated as the lead contact person.
- **Spin-offs or teams from existing organisations:** Teams developing a new business idea that is distinct from the main activity of their university, research institution, or company. These ideas should be intended for development as independent start-ups.

Additional notes:

- Applicants must be based in an EU Member State or a third country associated with Horizon Europe.
- A legal entity is not required at the time of application but must be created before the Demo Day to be eligible for the financial prize.

WHAT DOES THE PROGRAMME OFFER?

Selected participants will receive **tailored incubation support** to help them **validate their business ideas, develop a minimum viable product (MVP), and prepare for market entry**. Participants will benefit from:

- **Expert mentorship & coaching** from industry leaders.
- **Entrepreneurial training** on business models, product development, and market validation.
- **Networking & industry connections** to help build valuable partnerships.
- **Participation in Demo Day**, with the chance to compete for financial prizes.
- **Free membership in EIT Culture & Creativity's ecosystem** during the programme as "Community Participants".

PROGRAMME SCOPE

The **Spark (Incubation) Programme** is designed to **support aspiring entrepreneurs** in transforming their ideas into viable businesses. The programme will provide structured training and mentoring, covering key focus areas:

- **Architecture:** Sustainable building practices, climate-resilient urban planning, and digital transformation in construction.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

- **Cultural Heritage:** AR/VR immersive experiences, digital transformation projects, and innovative business models for value distribution in the sector.

WHY PARTICIPATE?

- **Expert Mentorship & Coaching** – Gain knowledge from top industry experts and successful entrepreneurs.
- **Business Model & Product Development** – Validate ideas, create an MVP, and prepare for market entry.
- **Networking & Partnership Building** – Connect with industry experts, potential partners, and investors.
- **Funding & Financial Opportunities** – Compete for **up to €10,000 financial prizes** at the Demo Day.
- **Participation in Key Programme Events** – Engage in the **Kick-off Workshop and Demo Day**, with logistical support provided.

PRIZES

Top-performing participants at the **Demo Day** will compete for financial prizes:

1st Prize (x2): €10,000

2nd Prize (x3): €7,500

3rd Prize (x3): €5,000

The Prizes will be paid to the **Legal Entity as registered before the Demo Day**. The prize selection process and eligibility requirements are outlined in **Annex I of the Call Guidelines**.

HOW TO APPLY?

Applications must be submitted via the **EIT Culture & Creativity application platform** by **30 June 2025 at 17:00 CET**.

- ♦ **Step 1:** Read the full **Call Guidelines** & check eligibility criteria.
- ♦ **Step 2:** Complete the **online application form** & submit required documents.
- ♦ **Step 3:** If selected, actively participate in the programme & register a legal entity to qualify for the Demo Day and prize competition.

WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION?

✦ **Visit our website:**

<https://eit-culture-creativity.eu/calls-funding/>

✦ **Attend our info sessions:**

<https://forms.monday.com/forms/b1a22656c9140375b90983e9eb420cbe?r=euc1>

✦ **Submit inquiries via our contact form:**

<https://forms.monday.com/forms/48dc2a1b58384be2eec702b307ea43b3?r=euc1>



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

| Field Title | SPARK – Incubation Programme |
|---|---|
| Application opening | 06 May 2025 |
| Application deadline | 11 July 2025 at 17:00 CET |
| Communication of final results to applicants | Mid Aug 2025 |
| Max. number of Applicants admitted | Up to 16 selected applications (individuals or teams of up to 3 people). Each selected application counts as one participant, regardless of whether submitted by a single individual or a team. If selected, the team must establish one legal entity to represent the venture. |
| Start of the programme | 22nd September 2025 |
| Duration of the programme | 8-10 weeks |
| Demo Day – Prize pitch (date and place) | Demo Day at the end of the programme (December 2025), in an EU country to be defined |
| Who can apply | Individuals or teams (up to 3 people) with a potential business idea in the fields of architecture or cultural heritage. Applicants must be based in an EU Member State or a Horizon Europe-associated country. If selected, they must register a legal entity in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe-associated country before the Demo Day to qualify for the prize competition. |
| @Key Priority Areas | Architecture - Sustainable building practices and innovative materials - Climate-resilient architecture and urban planning - Digital transformation in construction Cultural Heritage - Immersive experiences using AR/VR for heritage sites - Digital transformation projects that enhance accessibility and engagement - Innovative business models that promote fair value distribution in the sector |
| Programme support | - Weekly online sessions - Group mentor sessions - Networking opportunities - Demo Day participation - Free membership for the duration of the programme |
| Demo Day prizes | Up to 8 prizes awarded at the Demo Day: - 1st Prize (x2): €10,000 - 2nd Prize (x3): €7,500 - 3rd Prize (x3): €5,000 |
| Total FSTP EIT Funding | Maximum EIT Funding in Prizes in this call: €57,500 |
| Application platform | Please submit your applications here: Application form: To be provided |



INTRODUCTION

EIT CULTURE & CREATIVITY

As the ninth Knowledge & Innovation Community (KIC), **EIT Culture & Creativity** is dedicated to transforming the **Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI)** across Europe. Our mission is to **empower and nurture a sustainable innovation ecosystem**, integrating education, research, business, and public organisations to address sector-specific societal and economic challenges. By fostering interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration, EIT Culture & Creativity aims to unlock the innovative potential of CCSI, contributing to Europe's **green, digital, and social transitions**.

Vision and Mission

Vision:

EIT Culture & Creativity aims to fundamentally change the CCSI towards new understandings of competitiveness, resilience, and sustainable economic growth.

Mission:

Empowering and nurturing a sustainable innovation ecosystem, including all actors of the knowledge triangle in the CCSI, EIT Culture & Creativity and its partners provide interventions to CCSI and sector-specific challenges in education, innovation, and business creation, and foster interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration. In this way, EIT Culture & Creativity unlocks the innovative potential of its fragmented ecosystem, contributing to Europe's triple transition and accelerating competitive and resilient cultural and creative entrepreneurship.

Strategic Objectives

To achieve our mission, **EIT Culture & Creativity** focuses on three core **strategic objectives**:

- **Future-proofing CCSI Students and Professionals** – Equipping students and professionals with **entrepreneurial and cross-disciplinary skills** to navigate the **green and digital transitions**, emerging technologies, market disruptions, and globalization.
- **Deploying and Scaling CCSI Innovations** – Supporting collaborative innovations with **commercial potential** and **societal benefits**, emphasizing **green and digital technologies** and **new business models**.
- **Accelerating and Scaling CCSI Market Opportunities** – Enabling **start-ups and SMEs** to **compete globally**, secure investment, and **expand into new markets and audiences**.

These strategic objectives **contribute to job creation, economic resilience, and the sustainable growth of CCSI across Europe**.

Priority areas

EIT Culture & Creativity prioritizes five key **sectors within the CCSI**, each facing unique challenges but collectively representing a substantial portion of the EU's creative economy. Our focus is on addressing **innovation gaps, sustainability, and market opportunities** across these industries:



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

| Priority Area | Objective | Key Challenges |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Fashion | Promote circular innovations , new textile processing and recycling technologies, and sustainable business models. | High reliance on raw materials, environmental impact, waste generation, and market competition for SMEs. |
| Architecture | Foster circular innovation, affordable climate adaptation , and social cohesion through new materials and sustainable design. | Lack of entrepreneurial skills, financial bottlenecks, and limited capacity for scaling innovations. |
| Cultural Heritage | Integrate emerging technologies and new business models to commercialize scalable cultural heritage solutions. | Limited digital transformation, financial sustainability challenges, and preservation issues. |
| Audio-Visual Media | Promote responsible and trustworthy technology use , including generative AI and audience data analytics. | Stagnant revenues, business model disruptions, data privacy concerns, and limited investment access. |
| Gaming | Foster digital ethics , cross-sector collaboration, and innovation in game development and business models . | Access to talent, restrictive market platforms, and competition with dominant global players. |

Additionally, **EIT Culture & Creativity supports innovation** aligned with **The New European Bauhaus (NEB)**, focusing on **beautiful, sustainable, and inclusive solutions**. This includes **accessible living spaces, environmentally respectful building methods, circular design, and smart infrastructure**.

Compliance and transparency

EIT Culture & Creativity operates in full compliance with the **Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (HE MGA)** regulations. We uphold the principles of **transparency, non-discrimination, sound financial management, and conflict-of-interest prevention** across all programme selection, evaluation, and implementation processes.

All applications must demonstrate **not only alignment but active contribution** to the **EIT Culture & Creativity Strategic Agenda 2021-2027**, ensuring impact-driven innovation that supports **Europe's creative economy, sustainability goals, and market resilience**.

Co-location centers (CLCs)

To ensure broad accessibility and regional engagement, **EIT Culture & Creativity operates through a network of six Co-Location Centres (CLCs)** across Europe. These centres **support local innovation ecosystems**, facilitating cross-border collaboration and sectoral growth.

- **CLC Northwest:** Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- **CLC North:** Helsinki, Finland
- **CLC South:** Bologna, Italy
- **CLC Southwest:** Barcelona, Spain
- **CLC Southeast Europe & Alps:** Vienna, Austria



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

- **CLC East:** Košice, Slovakia

With over 60 partners across 20 countries, EIT Culture & Creativity is establishing Europe's first dedicated innovation community for CCSI, fostering an inclusive and interconnected network to drive impact at local, national, and international levels.

EIT CULTURE & CREATIVITY'S INCUBATION PROGRAMME 2025

Building on its commitment to fostering entrepreneurship in the Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI), EIT Culture & Creativity is launching the **Spark Programme (Incubation)**. This initiative aims to support aspiring entrepreneurs and early-stage start-ups in developing innovative solutions within **Architecture** and **Cultural Heritage**, providing structured training, mentorship, and strategic guidance to help transform ideas into viable businesses.

The **Spark Programme (Incubation)** is a regular open call, offering a structured 8-10-week incubation programme designed to equip participants with the skills, knowledge, and connections needed to launch and grow their businesses.

Key Features of the Spark Programme (Incubation)

- **Structured Training & Mentorship** – An 8-10-week programme featuring a 2-3 day face-to-face Kick-off event, personalised coaching, and mentoring by industry leaders.
- **Entrepreneurial Mindset Development** – Training focused on resilience, opportunity recognition, and problem-solving.
- **Business Model & Market Validation** – Guidance on defining business models, identifying target markets, and developing a strong value proposition.
- **Product Development** – Support in building and testing a **Minimum Viable Product (MVP)**.
- **Legal & Financial Fundamentals** – Training on intellectual property (IP), contracts, and financial management for start-ups.
- **Pitching & Presentation Skills** – Hands-on coaching to prepare for investor and stakeholder pitches.
- **Networking & Industry Connections** – Access to a network of mentors, experts, and potential partners to foster strategic collaborations.

Prize Competition for Top-Performing Ventures

In addition to programme participation, the eight **highest-ranked ventures** from the programme will be awarded financial prizes based on their performance at the Demo Day¹. These prizes are intended to provide initial financial support for the most promising start-ups, helping them take their ventures to the next stage.

- **First Prize (Rank 1 & 2):** €10,000

¹ Note: The actual number of prizes awarded will depend on the number of eligible participants in the Demo Day, as detailed in the section "Prize Allocation Adjustment Based on Contestant Numbers" below.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

- **Second Prize (Ranks 3-5):** €7,500 each
- **Third Prize (Ranks 6-8):** €5,000 each

Through the **Spark Programme (Incubation)**, EIT Culture & Creativity empowers creative entrepreneurs by providing the **knowledge, resources, and strategic support** necessary to develop impactful and sustainable businesses in the **Architecture and Cultural Heritage** sectors.



1. REQUIREMENTS

1.1. WHO CAN APPLY

1.1.1. Who can apply

This call for applications is open to **individuals or teams of up to three people** with a **potential business idea** in the fields of **Architecture** or **Cultural Heritage**. Applicants do **not need to have an established company** at the time of application. However, **selected participants must register a legal entity in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe-associated country before the Demo Day** in order to qualify for prize funding.

The programme is designed to support early-stage entrepreneurial ideas by helping participants validate their concept, build a business model, and develop a Minimum Viable Product (MVP). Applicants can belong to one of the following categories:

- **Individual applicants:** Students, recent graduates, professionals, creatives, or researchers with an innovative idea.
- **Teams of individuals:** Up to three people collaborating on a shared idea, ideally combining complementary skills. One team member must act as the lead contact.
- **Spin-offs or teams from existing organisations:** Teams developing a new business idea within a university, research institution, or company, with the intention of launching a separate start-up.

Eligible applicants must also meet the following criteria:

- **Innovation Focus** – The business idea should contribute to CCSI innovation, with a focus on areas such as:
 - **Sustainable building practices**
 - **Innovative materials and construction processes**
 - **Climate-resilient architecture**
 - **Immersive experiences using AR and VR**
 - **Digital transformation in cultural heritage**
- **Stage of Development** – Applicants may be at the **ideation stage**. The programme is designed to support early-stage entrepreneurs in validating their concept and developing an MVP.
- **Application Format** – Applications may be submitted **individually or as a team**. Teams are encouraged to have members with complementary skills.
- **Documentation** – Applicants must provide:
 - **A business plan outline** including a preliminary market analysis, business model, and financial projections.
 - **Market research evidence** demonstrating demand for the product or service.
 - **Team details (if applicable)**, including resumes, roles, and relevant experience of the founding members.

By applying, participants will gain **hands-on support, mentorship, and expert guidance** to develop their ideas into a viable business, laying the foundation for future growth and success in the **Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI)**.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

1.2. MEMBERSHIP

Selected participants in the **Spark (Incubation) Programme** will gain **free access to EIT Culture & Creativity's ecosystem** during their participation, benefiting from strategic networking opportunities, industry insights, and community resources.

During the Programme:

- **Individuals and Teams** will be granted **temporary community access (as Community Participants)**, allowing them to engage with the EIT Culture & Creativity network, attend events, and access resources tailored to their entrepreneurial journey.
- **This access does not require formal company registration**, as the programme is designed to support idea-stage entrepreneurs.

After Completing the Programme:

- **Ventures that sign a Financial Sustainability Mechanism (FSM) agreement** with EIT Culture & Creativity will automatically receive **Cooperation Partner status** for the duration of the agreement, with no membership fee required.
- **Ventures that do not sign an FSM agreement** will have the option to continue their engagement by selecting a **membership category** that aligns with their needs.

For full details on EIT Culture & Creativity's **membership categories and benefits**, please visit: [Join the Community](#)

1.3. STRATEGIC FOCUS

The **primary objective** of this call for applications is to identify and support **students, recent graduates, and professionals in architecture and cultural heritage** who have a **potential business idea** and are seeking to develop it into a **viable company** through participation in **EIT Culture & Creativity's Spark (Incubation) Programme**.

The **programme is designed to help participants validate** their business ideas, develop a **minimum viable product (MVP)**, and **lay the foundation for future growth**. Through structured training, mentorship, and hands-on guidance, participants will transition from **ideation to the early stages of business development**.

EIT Culture & Creativity's Spark (Incubation) Programme aims to:

- **Foster innovation in architecture and cultural heritage** by supporting individuals and teams with promising business ideas.
- **Validate business concepts** by providing structured training in **market research, business modelling, and financial planning**.
- **Develop entrepreneurial skills** and prepare participants for the **challenges of launching a start-up**.
- **Support the creation of viable businesses** by guiding participants toward **company registration**.
- **Provide tailored mentorship and coaching** from **industry experts, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and professional partners**.
- **Enhance networking opportunities** by connecting participants with **mentors, industry professionals, and potential collaborators**.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

1.3.1. Key Focus Areas

The **Spark (Incubation) Programme in 2025** focuses on two **strategic sectors** within **CCSI**:

| Focus Area | Key Topics |
|--------------------------|---|
| Architecture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable building practices and innovative materials. Climate-resilient architecture and urban planning. Digital transformation in construction. |
| Cultural Heritage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immersive experiences using AR and VR for heritage sites. Digital transformation projects that enhance accessibility and engagement. Innovative business models that promote fair value distribution in the sector. |

1.4. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE & KEY ACTIVITIES

The **Spark (Incubation) Programme** is structured to provide participants with **progressive learning**, **practical application**, and **hands-on mentorship** to develop **market-ready ventures**.

| Component | Description |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Kick-off Workshop | 2-3 days face-to-face workshop introducing participants to the programme, expectations, and idea validation methodologies. Includes networking sessions and foundational entrepreneurship training. |
| Weekly Sessions Online | Conducted over 8-10 weeks , covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entrepreneurial Mindset Building resilience and opportunity recognition. Business Model Development Structuring value propositions and customer segments. Market Research & Validation Identifying demand and refining business positioning. Product Development Defining and prototyping a Minimum Viable Product (MVP). Legal & Financial Basics Understanding intellectual property, contracts, and financial management. Pitching & Presentation Enhancing storytelling and fundraising potential. |
| Mentorship & Coaching | Ongoing one-on-one and group mentorship sessions with industry experts and experienced entrepreneurs . |
| Networking Events | Opportunities to connect with mentors, industry experts, and potential partners through curated networking activities. |
| Demo Preparation Day | Hands-on support in refining business models, crafting pitch decks, and presentation coaching . |
| Demo Day | Final showcase where participants pitch their business ideas to a panel of industry judges, potential investors, and sector stakeholders . Top eight performing ideas will receive financial prizes . |



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

All selected participants will receive coverage for participation in the Kick-Off and Demo Day, including necessary logistical support.

1.5. EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

The **Spark (Incubation) Programme** is designed to **accelerate the transition from ideation to business creation**, ensuring that participants **validate their ideas and establish a strong foundation** for sustainable growth.

1.5.1. Key Expected Outcomes

- **Company Formation:** Participants **register** their **business entity** to advance towards market entry.
 - *Example:* A team working on sustainable building materials registers their company before launching their MVP and attending the Demo Day.
- **Market Validation:** Participants conduct **market research and test their concepts**, refining business strategies based on customer insights.
 - *Example:* A start-up exploring immersive AR experiences tests its prototype with museums and heritage sites.
- **Entrepreneurial Skills Development:** Participants acquire **critical entrepreneurial competencies** for launching and managing a start-up.
 - *Example:* A cultural heritage innovator learns financial planning and investor communication strategies.
- **Product Development:** Each participant develops a **minimum viable product (MVP)**, receiving expert feedback for improvement.
 - *Example:* An architectural firm prototypes a **climate-resilient** material and seeks commercial partners.
- **Networking & Collaboration:** Participants establish **strategic connections** with mentors, industry professionals, and investors.
 - *Example:* A digital transformation project for heritage archives partners with local museums.
- **Pitching & Investment Readiness:** Participants refine their **storytelling and presentation** skills, gaining confidence to attract funding.
 - *Example:* An architecture start-up perfects its pitch for potential seed funding.

By **achieving these outcomes**, the Spark (Incubation) Programme ensures that participants are **well-equipped to navigate the early stages of entrepreneurship** including seeking pre-seed funding and acquiring first customers, setting them on a path toward **long-term business success**.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

1.6. PROGRAMME DURATION

The **Spark Programme (Incubation Programme) 2025** will run as a single cohort, with selected participants beginning their incubation journey in **September 2025**.

The programme will run for **8-10 weeks**, followed by a **Demo Day**, which will be scheduled at a later stage.

1.7. GENDER AND DIVERSITY

EIT Culture & Creativity is committed to fostering gender balance, diversity, and inclusion in entrepreneurship. This call encourages individuals and teams from all backgrounds to apply, ensuring equal opportunities for participation.

Applicants are encouraged to consider gender and diversity aspects in the design and implementation of their business ideas. This may include:

- **Team composition** – fostering diverse perspectives and complementary skill sets.
- **Inclusive design** – ensuring that products and services are accessible and relevant to a broad range of users.
- **Social and market impact** – promoting inclusivity and accessibility in target audiences and business models.

EIT Culture & Creativity welcomes applications from all applicants and particularly values projects that actively address inclusion, accessibility, and societal engagement in the fields of Architecture and Cultural Heritage.

1.8. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

All participants must include the mandatory KPI in their application, committing to achieving the minimum target by 31 December 2025 (or no later than 6 months after programme completion).

Failure to meet the expected KPI target may trigger increased monitoring and additional support from EIT Culture & Creativity to help ventures achieve their financial and market goals.

Mandatory KPI

| EITHE Code | KPI Title | Minimum Target |
|------------|-------------------|----------------|
| EITHE04.1 | Start-ups Created | 1 |

Additional KPIs (Positively Assessed in Evaluation)

| EITHE Code | KPI Title | Description |
|------------|---|--|
| EITHE06.1 | Investment Attracted by KIC-supported Start-ups/Scale-ups | Total EUR amount of private and public capital secured by ventures within one year after programme completion. While there is no formal minimum threshold, ventures are encouraged to aim for at least €10,000 as an indicative early milestone. The higher the investment attracted, the greater the positive impact on evaluation and reporting. |



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

| | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| EITHE01.1 | Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) | Number of innovative products, processes, and IPR applications resulting from the programme. |
| EITHE02.4 | Innovations Launched on the Market (€10K Revenue) | Number of innovations introduced to the market during or after programme completion, generating at least €10,000 in revenue. |

For full KPI descriptions, evidence requirements, and reporting guidelines, refer to Annex III – Key Performance Indicators.

1.9. DEMO DAY & CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

The **Demo Day** serves as the final event of the **Spark (Incubation) Programme**, providing participants with the opportunity to present their business ideas to a panel of industry experts, potential investors, and key stakeholders.

Objectives of the Demo Day

- Showcase the progress and potential of participating entrepreneurs.
- Provide exposure to mentors, potential partners, and the broader innovation ecosystem.
- Offer participants the opportunity to compete for financial prizes (see **Annex I – Prize Awarding Process & Eligibility**).

Conditions to Participate in the Demo Day

To qualify for the **Demo Day**, participants must meet the following requirements:

| Criteria | Description |
|---|--|
| Face-to-Face Kick-Off | Participants must attend the Kick-off event of the programme. |
| Attendance | Attend at least 75% of weekly online sessions and 100% of mentorship sessions . Participants may be required to complete assignments or assessments. |
| Completion of Mandatory Deliverables | All required programme deliverables must be submitted and approved by EIT Culture & Creativity before the Demo Day. |
| Company Registration | Participants must register their business as a legal entity before the Demo Day to be eligible to pitch. |

Only participants who meet these conditions will be allowed to pitch at the **Demo Day**.

1.10. PRIZE OPPORTUNITY FOR TOP-PERFORMING VENTURES

In addition to the benefits of participating in the Spark (Incubation) Programme, selected participants will have the opportunity to compete for financial prizes. These prizes are designed to reward outstanding performance and provide additional support for business development beyond the programme.

While programme participation does not automatically guarantee a prize, participants who successfully complete the programme and meet specific criteria will be eligible to enter the prize competition.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

Key Features of the Prize Competition

| Programme Segment | Total Number of Prizes | Prize Amounts |
|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Spark (Incubation) Programme | Up to 8 prizes | 1st place (ranked 1-2): €10,000 |
| | | 2nd place (ranked 3-5): €7,500 |
| | | 3rd place (ranked 6-8): €5,000 |

The full details on eligibility criteria, competition structure, selection methodology, and disbursement conditions are provided in Annex I – Prize Awarding Process & Eligibility.

1.11. SPECIFIC MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

EIT Culture & Creativity will monitor the **Spark (Incubation) Programme** to ensure that participants actively engage in the programme activities, benefit from mentorship, and make tangible progress in validating and developing their business ideas.

The monitoring process is designed to be lightweight yet effective, focusing on engagement, business development, and measurable impact rather than complex administrative reporting.

1.11.1. Monitoring During the Programme (Incubation)

During the programme, monitoring will focus on **engagement, progress tracking, and preparation for the Demo Day**. The following key elements will be assessed:

- **Mentorship & Coaching Feedback** – Feedback from mentors and coaches will be collected to assess participant engagement, progress, and areas needing further support. Participants must actively participate in scheduled mentorship and coaching sessions.
- **Business Idea Validation & Progress Assessment** – Periodic surveys and interviews will help measure participants' progress in validating their ideas, refining their business models, and developing their Minimum Viable Product (MVP).
- **Demo Day Readiness** – Participants must submit a **Business Model Canvas** or an equivalent **Early-Stage Business Plan** before the end of the programme to qualify for the **Demo Day**. This document must outline the market validation process, value proposition, customer segmentation, and early-stage financial projections. A template will be provided.

1.11.2. Post-Programme Monitoring Requirements

Post-programme monitoring will focus on assessing the **real impact of the incubation support** and tracking the **business development and sustainability** of participants.

- **Follow-up Survey** – A short-term follow-up survey in 2026 will assess whether participants have registered a company, progressed in developing their MVP, or secured early-stage funding.
- **Business Progress Report** – Selected participants may be asked to submit a brief **progress report** detailing key achievements, challenges, and next steps.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

- **Ex-Post Impact Assessment (up to 5 years after completion)** – Ventures participating in the Demo Day acknowledge that they may be subject to an ex-post impact assessment by EIT Culture & Creativity or the EIT, within up to five years following programme completion. This assessment will evaluate the long-term impact of the programme, including innovation outcomes, business growth, and contributions to EIT KPIs.

Participants agree to maintain updated contact details and cooperate with reasonable information requests related to these assessments.

1.11.3. Deliverables

| Deliverable | Description | Due Date |
|--|--|-------------------------|
| Business Case | A structured document outlining the value proposition, market research, financial feasibility, scalability strategy, and next steps. This could be a Business Model Canvas or similar instrument to be shared during the programme. Required for Demo Day participation. | End of programme |
| Proof of registration | A proof of registration of the company. Required for Demo Day participation. | End of programme |
| Impact Assessment Survey | A structured survey detailing how the programme influenced business development, skills, and market readiness. | End of programme |
| Signed Financial Sustainability Mechanism (FSM) | A signed Virtual Shares agreement formalising the financial sustainability commitment of the venture. The structure allows for future valuation flexibility where needed. Required for Demo Day participation. | Before Demo Day |

1.12. CONTRIBUTION TO EIT CC'S FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

EIT Culture & Creativity (EIT CC) is committed to achieving long-term financial sustainability by ensuring that ventures supported through the Spark (Incubation) Programme contribute to the sustainability of the organisation. Given the early-stage nature of the participating ventures, EIT Culture & Creativity aims to secure a share in companies created as a result of the programme.

1.12.1. Financial Sustainability Mechanism

EIT Culture & Creativity preferred FSM for this call is **Virtual Shares**.

What are Virtual Shares?

Virtual Shares represent a commitment from the supported ventures to allocate an **agreed percentage of their future equity** (target between **5-10%**) to EIT CC **upon company formation**. This mechanism ensures that ventures benefiting from the programme contribute to the sustainability of EIT Culture & Creativity without immediately relinquishing ownership.

- **For ventures already registered as a company:** The percentage of future equity will be determined based on the company's valuation and growth potential.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

- **For ventures that are incorporated during or after the programme:** The equity percentage will be structured to align with their initial valuation and projected market entry.

EIT Culture & Creativity reserves the right to conduct additional assessments to determine the basis for negotiations and to **adapt the financial sustainability mechanism to different business models**.

While Virtual Shares are the **preferred** mechanism, **alternative** FSM models may be considered on a **case-by-case basis**, including equity participation, convertible instruments, or other structured financial contributions.

This approach ensures that EIT Culture & Creativity remains **an active long-term partner**, supporting ventures **beyond incubation** while maintaining a vested interest in their success.

Benefits for Ventures

In exchange for participating in the FSM, ventures will receive personalised post-programme support, including:

- **Access to Markets:** Facilitated market entry, introductions to EIT Culture & Creativity network members, and strategic dissemination of their business.
- **Access to Finance:** Direct connections to investors and funding opportunities.
- **Access to Skills:** Ongoing training on intellectual property (IP) management, business development, and leadership.
- **Access to Talent:** Support in attracting top talent to build and strengthen their team.
- **Be featured in the EIT CC “100-to-Watch” list**, gaining increased visibility within the creative and cultural sectors.

By engaging in the **FSM**, ventures not only contribute to EIT Culture & Creativity sustainability but also **secure long-term strategic support**, ensuring continued business growth.

1.12.2. Financial Sustainability Process

| Stage | Description |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Application Submission | Selected participants acknowledge the FSM as part of their engagement with the Spark (Incubation) Programme. |
| Company Incorporation | Ventures must register their company before the Demo Day to finalize their participation in the programme. |
| Agreement Formalization | Once the company is registered, ventures will sign an FSM agreement outlining the specific Virtual Share structure. |
| Company Incorporation | Ventures must register their company before the Demo Day to finalize their participation in the programme. |
| Post-Programme Monitoring | EIT Culture & Creativity will track the progress of ventures, ensuring they benefit from post-programme services and meet their FSM commitments. |

This model ensures that **all supported ventures contribute to the long-term sustainability of EIT Culture & Creativity**, enabling continued investment in future creative and cultural innovation.



1.13. CHAPTER LEGAL ASPECTS AND DOCUMENTATION²

All applicants will be required to sign a Declaration of Honour in the format provided for under the Financial Support Agreement.

Applicants which are subject to an EU exclusion decision or in one of the exclusion situations referred to in the Declaration of Honour that ban them from receiving EU funding cannot participate.

EIT Culture & Creativity financially supported activities are part of Horizon Europe, general funding rules and cost eligibility rules are governed by the Horizon Europe Annotated Model Grant Agreement (AGA).

The participation in this EIT Culture and Creativity call for applications takes place entirely at the applicants' own costs and risk. Any actions taken by the selected entities to start the implementation of the programmes selected before the Participation Agreement is signed, equally happens at their own costs and risk. EIT Culture and Creativity can in no circumstances held liable for any actions or costs incurred by the applications selected entities before signature of the Participation Agreement.

1.13.1. Communication, Dissemination and Visibility Requirements

Legal entities participating in the Spark (Incubation) Programme, particularly those receiving financial prizes, must comply with the communication, dissemination, and visibility obligations as set out in **Article 17 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (HE MGA)**.

Ventures must ensure that all communication or dissemination activities (including websites, promotional materials, and social media) clearly acknowledge the support received by displaying the following statement:

"KIC Culture & Creativity is supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union."

In addition, ventures must include the **EIT and EIT Culture & Creativity logos** in accordance with the official branding guidelines available on the EIT Culture & Creativity website. Compliance with these requirements will be monitored and may affect future eligibility for support.

1.13.2. Exclusion Criteria

Individuals, teams, or ventures applying to or participating in the **Spark (Incubation) Programme** may be excluded at any stage—during assessment, contracting, or implementation—if they meet any of the following conditions:

1. Financial and Legal Status

² For this call for applications, only the prize component (to be launched at a later stage) will be considered financial support under these rules. The programme participation itself does not constitute financial support.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

- Declared bankrupt, in liquidation, under court administration, or subject to similar legal proceedings.
- Found in breach of social security or tax obligations by a final judgment or decision.

2. Legal and Professional Misconduct

- Convicted of fraud, corruption, money laundering, involvement in a criminal organisation, terrorism-related crimes (including financing), child labour, or human trafficking.
- Found guilty of **grave professional misconduct** by a final judgment or decision.
- Subject to **an administrative sanction** (e.g., exclusion from EU funding).

3. Past Compliance and Integrity Issues

- Previously **failed to comply** with obligations under an EU-funded contract.
- **Misrepresented information** or failed to provide required documentation during the application process.

4. Conflict of Interest

- Individuals or teams who were **involved in preparing this call or the evaluation process** in a way that distorts competition.

Any applicant found in violation of these exclusion criteria **will be disqualified immediately** and may face further consequences in accordance with EIT Culture & Creativity regulations.

1.13.3. Special cases

To ensure compliance with EU funding regulations, applicants must confirm that they:

- **For teams and individuals:** Are not nationals of Russia or Belarus **or affiliated with entities that are subject to EU sanctions**.
- **For future start-ups to be created:** Will not be directly or indirectly owned or controlled by entities based in Russia or Belarus.
- **For all applicants:** Are not affiliated with or planning to establish their venture under Hungarian universities excluded from EU funding.

EIT Culture & Creativity reserves the right to verify the **nationality, institutional affiliations, and future ownership structures** of applicants. Supporting documentation may be requested at any stage of the evaluation process. If an .

1.13.4. Funding limitations for BP 2024-2025

Under the 2-year Grant Agreement (GA 101159520), participants from EU Member States and Horizon Europe Associated Countries have a €6 million funding cap for the entire BP 24-25 period. Legal entities from non-Horizon Europe Associated Countries can participate but are limited to €60,000 over two years. These limits apply to all EIT funding, including activities and awards.



2. PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION TO THE PROGRAMME

2.1. SUPPORT GIVEN TO APPLICANTS PREPARING AN APPLICATION

2.1.1. Application guidelines

EIT Culture & Creativity has developed the Call for Application Guidelines to assist all potential applicants during the application preparation and submission processes. This document is available on the applications webpage as part of the applications package and provides detailed information and instructions for the use of the application system and preparing your application for submission.

2.1.2. Applications information sessions

To help applicants with the preparation and submission of their applications, EIT Culture & Creativity will host information sessions after the publication of the call for applications. These online information events will focus on the call for applications content, topics, and requirements, and on general procedures, such as the submission and evaluation process, financial aspects, and monitoring and reporting activities.

| Type of Event | Topic Covered | Date and Time (CET) | Access to Platform |
|----------------|---|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Webinar | This webinar will provide an overview of the Spark (Incubation) Programme, including its strategic focus, eligibility criteria, and application requirements. Participants will gain insights into the programme structure, key benefits, and expected outcomes, as well as the evaluation and selection process. The session will conclude with a Q&A, offering applicants the opportunity to clarify any doubts regarding the call. | 20 May 15.00 – 16.30 CET | Microsoft Teams |
| Webinar | Guidelines for Applicants: applications preparation, submission and evaluation process. | 20 May, 16.30 – 17.00 CET | Microsoft Teams |

2.1.3. Contacts points

All applicants may submit their inquiries via the official **EIT Culture & Creativity [Contact Form](#)**.

This form should be used for all questions related to **applications 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.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

2.1.4. FAQ

A repository of common queries and troubleshooting guides will be created and maintained on the EIT Culture & Creativity website.

2.1.5. Submission of an application

The application process will be done through the EIT Culture & Creativity application platform, Monday.com.

More information on the use of the platform may be found in the Application guidelines and will be also provided during the info sessions organised by the EIT Culture & Creativity.

All required documents must be submitted via the EIT Culture & Creativity application platform by the deadline of the chosen cohort date and no later than the final cohort date of the call for applications.

- **Application form**

Any applications submitted after the deadline will be ineligible.



3. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

3.1. ADMISSIBILITY AND ELIGIBILITY CHECK

To be able to participate in any of these programmes, the applications submitted must meet the following admissibility and eligibility criteria:

3.1.1. Admissibility criteria

| Criteria | Description |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Time | The application must be submitted by the specified deadline. |
| Language | The application – and its supporting documents if any- must be written entirely in English with the only exception of the certificate of incorporation which can be in an official language of the country where the venture has been created (EU member state or Horizon-associated country) |
| Submission Platform | The application must be submitted through the designated application platform. |
| Completeness | The application must include all required documents, completed form sections, and annexes according to the requirements from EIT Culture & Creativity. |
| Applicant admissibility | <p>All individual applicants or teams must meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nationality and Residency: Applicants must be nationals of an EU Member State or a third country associated with Horizon Europe, or have been legally residing in such countries for at least three of the last five years.• Age Requirement: Applicants must be at least 18 years old at the time of application.• Professional Background: Applicants should be students, recent graduates, or professionals in the fields of architecture, cultural heritage or similar fields, with a viable business idea relevant to these sectors.• Team Composition: Teams of up to three people are encouraged to apply; however, all team members must individually meet the nationality and residency criteria. <p>These criteria ensure that the programme supports individuals with strong ties to the EU or associated countries, aligning with the objectives of fostering innovation within the European cultural and creative sectors.</p> |

Applications containing one or more inadmissible elements will be rejected and will receive an official communication from EIT Culture & Creativity setting out the outcome of the admissibility check.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

3.1.2. Eligibility criteria

| Criteria | Description |
|-----------------------|--|
| KPIs Addressed | Applicants must contribute to the mandatory KPI outlined in Section 1.5.3.: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EITHE04.1 – Number of start-ups established based on KAVA outputs or for an innovation project. |

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

Correction process for incorrect eligibility information

Applicants with incorrect eligibility information (e.g., incorrect KPI target number or incorrect PIC number) will be given **5 calendar days** after receiving the official notification to address and correct identified issues. This ensures **procedural fairness**, particularly for minor technical or administrative errors.

During the verification and evaluation process, applicants may be asked to clarify factual information. However, these clarification requests must not allow modifications to the technical content of the application. Corrections are strictly limited to factual or administrative issues, such as confirming a clerical error (e.g., fixing an incorrect KPI figure).

If the applicant submits the corrected information within the specified timeframe, the application will proceed to the next evaluation stage.

If the applicant fails to respond or submits corrections after the deadline, the application will be deemed ineligible and will not proceed further.

This process follows the **principles outlined in the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (HE MGA), Annex V.**

3.1.3. ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

Applications will be assessed based on three main criteria: **Excellence, Impact and Quality and Efficiency of Implementation**. Each criterion is scored based on assessment sub criteria, scored from **1 to 5 points**, with a **maximum total score of 25 points**. Only whole points will be awarded (no fractional scores).

The **minimum threshold** for an application to be considered for the ranking is **13 out of 25 points**.

Evaluation Process

- Each application is reviewed by **two external experts** and **one internal expert** from EIT Culture & Creativity.
- The evaluation focuses on the **feasibility, innovation, and market opportunity** of the applicant's business idea.
- The final ranking is based on the total evaluation score, with top-ranked applications selected for participation.

Evaluation Criteria – Spark (Incubation) Programme

For individuals or teams at the **ideation stage**, seeking to validate their business ideas and develop a minimum viable product (MVP).



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

| Criteria | Sub-Criteria | Description | Max. Score |
|---|-----------------------------|---|------------|
| Excellence | Idea Viability | Clear understanding of the sector, trends, competitive landscape, challenges, and opportunities. Is the business idea viable and addressing a clear need? | 5 |
| | Innovation Potential | Novelty and originality of the idea in terms of technology, approach, or business model. Does it offer something distinctive in the cultural and creative sectors? | 5 |
| Impact | Market Potential | Identification of target users, market segments, and their needs. Is there a clear market gap or demand, and potential for societal, cultural or commercial impact? | 5 |
| | Idea Pitch | Clarity, persuasiveness, and relevance of the pitch. Is the value proposition clearly communicated and the expected impact compelling? | 5 |
| Quality and Efficiency of Implementation | Team Capacity | Strength and complementarity of team members or individual experience. Is the team capable of delivering, and is there a plan to acquire missing expertise if needed? | 5 |
| Total Score | | | 25 |
| Threshold for Eligibility | | | 13 |

3.1.4. Scoring

| Score | Definition |
|----------------------|--|
| 1 - Very Poor | <i>Information is missing, unclear, or irrelevant.</i> |
| 2 - Poor | <i>Weak information with major gaps or inconsistencies.</i> |
| 3 - Fair | <i>Meets the basic requirements but lacks depth in some areas.</i> |
| 4 - Good | <i>Solid, well-supported proposal with minor gaps.</i> |
| 5 - Excellent | <i>Outstanding proposal with clear, strong evidence.</i> |

3.2. FINAL RANKING AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

For the **Spark (Incubation) Programme**, two separate ranking lists will be established based on the total score obtained in the evaluation process, one for each priority area:

1. **Architecture**
2. **Cultural Heritage**



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated and ranked within their respective priority area: **Architecture** and **Cultural Heritage**. The programme aims to select up to **16 participants in total**, with an indicative balance of **8 from each category**.

However, **this target is not binding**. In order to maximise the quality of the cohort and ensure full use of the available places, **EIT Culture & Creativity reserves the right to adjust the distribution of selected applicants across the two areas**, depending on the final ranking scores and quality of applications received. This means that if fewer high-quality applications are received in one area, additional places may be allocated to higher-ranking proposals from the other.

This approach ensures a fair selection process based on merit while maintaining the flexibility to build the strongest possible cohort.

3.2.1. Categories of Applications

After ranking, applications will be classified into the following categories:

1. **Selected** – Applications ranked within the **selection limit** for each programme and cohort will be admitted.
2. **Reserve List** – Applications **meeting the minimum threshold (13/25 points)** but ranked **below the selection limit** will be placed on a reserve list.
3. **Rejected** – Applications **failing to meet the minimum threshold** will not proceed.

3.2.2. Mechanism in Case of a Tie

In the event of a tie between two or more applications competing for the final available spots, the following **tiebreaker steps** will be applied in order:

1. **Higher Score in Idea Viability** – The application with the highest score in **Idea Viability** will be prioritized.
2. **Higher Score in Idea Pitch** – If the tie persists, the application with the higher score in **Idea Pitch** will be given priority.
3. **Higher Score in Market Potential** – If the tie remains, preference will be given to the application with the highest score in **Market Potential**
4. **Deliberation by the Evaluation Panel** – If the tie is still unresolved, the **evaluation panel will conduct a final review** and make a decision by majority vote, considering qualitative aspects of the applications.

3.2.3. Reserve List and Potential Re-Selection

EIT Culture & Creativity **may invite applicants from the reserve list** within one year if **additional EIT funding becomes available** under the current Business Plan.



4. COMMUNICATION OF RESULTS TO APPLICANTS

4.1. SELECTED APPLICATIONS

The selected applicant will receive formal communication from EIT Culture & Creativity, including the Evaluation Summary Report and an evaluation letter.

4.2. RESERVE LIST AND REJECTED APPLICATIONS

Applicants placed on the reserve list or rejected will receive a notification upon request. Those on the reserve list may be contacted by EIT Culture & Creativity if additional spots become available.



5. APPEALING AGAINST EVALUATION RESULTS

In case applicants wish to appeal, please refer to Annex V for detailed guidance on the appeal procedure.



6. FAST-TRACK PROVISIONS

Disclaimer: The Fast-Track Mechanism described in this section is subject to approval by EIT Culture & Creativity in coordination with the EIT. Until formal guidelines are finalized and agreed upon, any Fast-Track Mechanism and additional financial or in-kind support are contingent upon EIT's approval.

The successful execution and completion of the activities implemented under the framework of these programmes may unlock the possibility of receiving additional EIT Culture & Creativity financial support for upscaling purposes after project completion. This process is regulated by the provisions included in EIT Culture & Creativity's fast-track mechanism.



ANNEX I: PRIZES AWARDING PROCESS & ELIGIBILITY

Participants in the **Spark (Incubation) Programme** will have the opportunity to compete for financial prizes upon successful completion of the programme. A total of up to **8 prizes** will be awarded at the **Demo Day**, recognizing the top-performing projects based on predefined selection criteria.

Eligibility criteria and conditions

Only ventures that participate in the Demo Day - according to the conditions stated in the section 1.4.2. Conditions to attend to the Demo Day- will be eligible to enter the prize contest.

Prize Structure & Budget

| Prize Tier | Description | # of Prizes | Amount per Prize (€) | Total (€) |
|---------------------|---|-------------|----------------------|----------------|
| First Prize | Awarded to the top 2 ventures with the highest scores at the Demo Day. | 2 | €10,000 | €20,000 |
| Second Prize | Awarded to the next 3 ventures (ranked 3rd to 5th). | 3 | €7,500 | €22,500 |
| Third Prize | Awarded to the following 3 ventures (ranked 6th to 8th). | 3 | €5,000 | €15,000 |
| Total | | 8 | - | €57,500 |

Note: The actual number of prizes awarded will depend on the number of eligible participants in the Demo Day, as detailed in the section “Prize Allocation Adjustment Based on Contestant Numbers” below.

Prize Selection & Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation criteria for awarding prizes are **distinct** from the selection criteria used during the initial application phase. The prize evaluation focuses on **progress made during the incubation process** and the **potential for future success**.

Selection & Scoring

Each jury member will assess participants based on the following criteria, scoring from **1 (Very Poor) to 10 (Excellent)**. The final ranking will determine the prize recipients.

| Criteria | Sub-Criteria | Assessment Focus | Max. Points |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|--|-------------|
| Excellence | Problem–Solution Fit | How well does the business idea address a clearly identified and validated need or problem, supported by real-world insights, user research, or testing? | 10 |



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

| | | | |
|--|--|---|-----------|
| | Innovation & Differentiation | How original is the solution? Does it bring novelty to the architecture or cultural heritage sector, either through technology, model, or approach? | 10 |
| Impact | Market Readiness & Traction | To what extent has the venture validated its solution with users or stakeholders (e.g. feedback, pilots, partnerships, interest from clients or investors)? | 10 |
| | Business Model & Feasibility | How clear and viable is the business model, including revenue logic, go-to-market strategy, and positioning in the competitive landscape? | 10 |
| Implementation | Team Capability & Execution Potential | Does the team have the skills, experience, and commitment to deliver on their plan? Are they adaptable and prepared for growth and challenges ahead? | 10 |
| Total Score (threshold 26 points) | | | 50 |

PRIZE ALLOCATION & CONTINGENCIES

The **prize allocation** is designed for a **full cohort of contestants**; however, if the number of participants is lower than anticipated, the allocation of prizes will be **adjusted accordingly**.

Minimum Number of Contestants

To ensure a **competitive selection process**, the minimum number of eligible contestants required for the prize contest to be valid is **5**.

If fewer than **5 eligible ventures** participate in the **Demo Day**, EIT Culture & Creativity reserves the right to **withhold the awarding of prizes** for that cohort.

Prize Allocation Adjustment Based on Contestant Numbers

If the **number of eligible participants** is below the originally planned full cohort, the number of prizes will be adjusted as follows:

| Number of Participants in Demo Day | Total Prizes Awarded | Prize Distribution |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| 5 participants | 3 prizes | 1 prize of €10,000 + 1 prize of €7,500 + 1 prize of €5,000 |
| 6-8 participants | 4 prizes | 1 prize of €10,000 + 1 prize of €7,500 + 2 prize of €5,000 |
| 9-11 participants | 6 prizes | 1 prize of €10,000 + 2 prize of €7,500 + 3 prizes of €5,000 |
| 12 or more participants | 8 prizes (full allocation) | 2 prize of €10,000 + 3 prizes of €7,500 + 3 prizes of €5,000 |



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

Jury Composition & Selection

The Prize Jury for the programme will consist of a **three-member panel**, including **one internal expert from EIT Culture & Creativity and two external experts**. The jury is responsible for evaluating ventures based on predefined selection criteria to ensure a fair and transparent decision-making process.

Selection of Jury Members

- **Internal Jury Member:** A representative from EIT Culture & Creativity leadership or an expert with relevant experience in start-ups and venture development.
- **External Jury Members:** Two experts selected from a pre-approved pool of investors, industry leaders, and ecosystem stakeholders.

Additionally, EIT Culture & Creativity **may invite up to two external observers** to join the jury process. These observers, who will **not have voting rights**, may include representatives from **funding organisations, industry associations, or strategic partners**. Their role is to ensure transparency and provide sectoral insights without influencing the scoring or selection of winners.

Prize Selection: Event Structure & Timeline

1. **Number of Demo Days**
 - The programme will conclude with 1 (one) Demo Day.
2. **Pitch Format & Jury Q&A**
 - Each participating venture will deliver a pitch to present their **business model, market potential, and growth strategy**.
 - A **Q&A session** with the Jury of experts will follow each pitch, allowing further insights and evaluation.
3. **Pre-Submission of Deliverables**
 - All **mandatory deliverables, business plans, and pitch decks** must be submitted one week before the Demo Day to the **Business Creation (BC) team**.
 - Jury members will receive these materials in advance for evaluation.
4. **Scoring & Final Ranking**
 - Jury members will assess each pitch and Q&A performance using a structured **scorecard**.
 - Based on their scores, ventures will be ranked accordingly.
 - **Top-ranked ventures** will be awarded the financial prizes.
5. **Results Submission & Announcement**
 - Jury members will submit their **signed results (scores, rankings, and winners)** to the Internal Jury Member for final validation.
 - Winners will be **officially announced** during the Demo Day.
6. **Prize Disbursement & Agreement Finalization**
 - To receive the prize, winners must sign the **Prize Agreement** and provide **verified payment details** to EIT Culture & Creativity.
 - Prize funds will be **disbursed upon completion** of the agreement formalities.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

Resolving a Tie in Prize Selection

If two or more ventures receive the same final score, the following steps will be applied to determine the final ranking:

1. **Re-evaluation** – The jury will re-assess the tied ventures, focusing on the criteria where their scores were closest, ensuring a fair and objective reassessment.
2. **Additional Criterion** – If the tie persists, an additional factor will be introduced:
 - **Contribution to EIT Culture & Creativity Impact Metrics** – The ventures will be evaluated on their alignment with EIT Culture & Creativity **Strategic Agenda and impact goals**. This criterion will be **scored from 1-10** and added to the total score.
3. **Jury Deliberation & Final Decision** – If the tie remains after the additional criterion, the jury will **conduct a final discussion and make a decision through a majority vote** to establish the final ranking.

These adjustments ensure fairness and maintain the **competitive integrity** of the prize selection process.



ANNEX II: Examples of SMEs and scale-ups to be selected

To provide clarity on the types of projects and early-stage ventures that the **incubation programme** seeks to support, here are **examples** of ideas and business concepts from the **Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI)** that align with the **strategic focus** of this call:

1. Architecture

- **Sustainable Building Materials** – A team researching and developing **biodegradable** or **low-carbon** construction materials to enhance **environmental sustainability** in architecture.
- **Climate-Resilient Urban Design** – An idea focusing on the **adaptive reuse of buildings** and urban planning models that integrate **nature-based solutions** for climate resilience.
- **AI-powered Design Optimization** – A concept using **artificial intelligence** to help architects optimize building designs for **efficiency, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness**.

2. Cultural Heritage

- **Immersive Heritage Experiences** – A project developing **AR/VR applications** to bring historical sites and artifacts to life through **interactive storytelling**.
- **AI-driven Restoration and Conservation** – A team working on **AI-powered image reconstruction** and **digital twin technology** for heritage conservation.
- **Community-led Heritage Platforms** – A business idea creating **collaborative digital platforms** where communities contribute to preserving and documenting **local cultural heritage**.



ANNEX III: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

To ensure measurable impact, ventures selected for the programme must meet the **mandatory KPI** outlined below. Additional KPIs are not compulsory but will contribute positively to evaluation scores.

MANDATORY KPI

This KPI is required for all programme participants and must be achieved no later than **31 December 2025**. Failure to meet the expected KPI target may trigger increased monitoring and additional support from EIT Culture & Creativity to help ventures achieve their financial and market goals.

| EITHE Code | KPI Title | KPI Description | Minimum Target | Deadline | Evidence Required |
|------------------|-------------------|---|----------------|------------------|---|
| EITHE04.1 | Start-ups Created | Number of start-ups established based on KAVA outputs or for an innovation project. | 1 | 31 December 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A declaration filled in with the following information signed by the company's legal representative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Year of reporting o Company name o Company registration number o Country of the company registration o Gender of the company CEO <p>Sources providing this investment support</p> |

ADDITIONAL KPIs (NOT MANDATORY, POSITIVELY ASSESSED IN EVALUATION)

While not required, these KPIs demonstrate additional impact and will be considered positively during proposal evaluation.

| EITHE Code | KPI Title | KPI Description | Deadline | Evidence Required |
|------------------|------------------------------|--|----------|--|
| EITHE06.1 | Investment Attracted by KIC- | Total EUR amount of private and public capital secured by ventures within one year | Deadline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A declaration filled in with the following information signed by the company's legal representative: |



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

| | | | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|--|
| | supported Start-ups/Scale-ups | after programme completion. While there is no formal minimum threshold, ventures are encouraged to aim for at least €10,000 as an indicative early milestone. The higher the investment attracted, the greater the positive impact on evaluation and reporting. | 31 December 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Title of the programme o Acronym o Program ID o Year when the programme has been received o Name of the company o Registration number o Country o CEO gender o Investment amount received <p>Sources providing this investment support</p> |
| EITHE01.1 | Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) | Number of innovative products, processes, methods, and IPR applications resulting from the programme. | Deadline 31 December 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A declaration filled in with the following information signed by the company's legal representative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Title of the acceleration program o Acronym o Program ID o Year when the program has been received o Name of the company o Registration number o Country o CEO gender o Type of intellectual property right: patent, trademark, registered design, utility model, other o Application title o Application reference o Application date o IPR owner o Country of the IPR owner o Does the IPR owner take part in the HEI Capacity Building Initiative (HEI CBI) o IPR status: has the IPR protection been awarded? o IPR Award reference if any <p>Technology Readiness Level</p> |



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

| | | | | |
|------------------|---|--|------------------|--|
| EITHE02.4 | Innovations Launched on the Market (€10K Revenue) | Number of innovations introduced to the market generating at least €10,000 in revenue within three years after programme completion. | 31 December 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A declaration filled in with the following information signed by the company's legal representative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Title of the acceleration program ○ Acronym ○ Program ID ○ Year when the program has been received ○ Name of the company ○ Registration number ○ Country ○ CEO gender ○ Declaration demonstrating link with the startup and financial proof of the startup investment in the innovation development ○ Name of the innovation ○ Type of innovation (e.g. new product, new service) ○ Market (country) ○ Country of origin of the company commercialising the innovation ○ Was the innovation developed and launched on the market as a result of the capacity building activities delivered as part of the HEI CBI? ○ Was the innovation launched by learners/graduates from labelled programs (or with direct link to participating in the labelled activity)? ○ Description of product or process with specified performance characteristics/physical parameters/functionalities demonstrating novelty (new or significant improvement) of the product/process <p>Documented proof such as an invoice or an online sales record demonstrating that the purchase has been made by a customer.</p> |
|------------------|---|--|------------------|--|



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

REPORTING & COMPLIANCE

- Ventures must submit evidence of KPI achievement using the **official templates provided by EIT Culture & Creativity**.
- KPI verification may include audits or additional clarifications as required.



ANNEX IV. APPLICATION FORM

1. Lead Applicant

- **Full Name (Lead Applicant)**
- **Date of Birth**
- **Gender** (☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Non-binary ☐ Prefer not to say)
- **Nationality**
- **Country of Residence**
- **Address**
- **Contact Email**
- **Phone Number**

☐ Applying as an individual

☐ Applying as a team (If selected, a company must be incorporated before the Demo Day)

2. Team Information (if applicable)

(If applying as a team, provide information about key team members)

- **Team Member 1:** Full Name, Role, Key Expertise
- **Team Member 2:** Full Name, Role, Key Expertise
- **Team Member 3:** Full Name, Role, Key Expertise

3. Application Title

(Max characters: 100)

Provide a title for your business idea.

4. Application Acronym

(Max characters: 50)

Create a short acronym for your application.

5. Executive Summary

(Max 750 characters)

Briefly describe your business idea, what problem it aims to solve, and how it creates value for potential customers.

6. Strategic Area

Identify your focus area and choose between:

- ☐ Architecture
- ☐ Cultural Heritage
- ☐ A combination of the above (please describe) _____

7. Motivation

Indicate the **top 3 goals** you would like to achieve with this programme:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

8. Business Idea Development Stage

Select the option that best describes your idea's current stage:

- ☐ Idea stage (concept, but not yet tested or validated)
- ☐ Problem-solution fit tested (some validation of market demand has been conducted)
- ☐ MVP/prototype under development
- ☐ MVP/prototype already developed and being tested

10. Financial Sustainability Mechanism

- ☐ The applicant agrees to sign a Financial Sustainability Mechanism (FSM) as described by EIT Culture & Creativity in section 1.12 of this call.

11. CV Upload

Please upload the CV of the lead applicant and any key team members. Maximum **3 CVs** allowed. We recommend CVs no longer than **2 pages**.

12. Supporting Documentation

Provide any **additional materials** that strengthen your application (optional):

- ☐ Business Plan / Lean Canvas
- ☐ Pitch Deck/Video
- ☐ Market Research or Validation Data
- ☐ Prototype / MVP Documentation (if applicable)

Section 2: Business Intelligence

1. Idea Viability (*Max 1000 characters*)

Describe your business idea clearly. What problem does it solve? Why is this solution needed? Explain how your idea can realistically be implemented and turned into a business. If you have taken any early steps (e.g., concept testing, discussions with potential users, first prototype), mention them.

2. Customer Identification (*Max 750 characters*)

Define your target market. Who are your potential customers or users? How large is the market, and what demand or gap have you identified? Explain any market research or validation you have conducted and how you plan to reach your audience. If you have competitors, describe how your idea differs from existing solutions.

3. Innovation Potential (*Max 750 characters*)

What makes your business idea innovative? Describe whether it introduces **a new technology, a unique approach, or an original business model**. How does it improve current industry practices in **architecture or cultural heritage**? If applicable, explain how digital transformation, sustainability, or emerging trends play a role in your innovation.

4. Team & Entrepreneurial Potential (*Max 750 characters*)

Describe the strengths and complementary skills of your team members or your own relevant skills and experience. How will you acquire any missing expertise needed to execute your idea?

5. Selected KPIs & Target Goals



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

Applicants must select at least **one KPI** from the call's list and define a **realistic target** they aim to achieve by the end of the incubation programme.

Selected KPI: (choose from the provided KPI list in the call document)

Target by end of programme: (Specify a quantitative goal aligned with the KPI selected)

6. Business Pitch (Optional)

Provide a link to a **max 2-minute video** where you present your business idea, its market potential, and innovation value. Make sure the link is accessible for external viewers.

By submitting this application, you agree to be contacted by EIT Culture & Creativity through email, phone, instant messaging, newsletter and other communication channels. If selected for a programme, the information submitted may also be shared with coaches and trainers of the respective programme to optimize your learning and growth journey.



ANNEX V. APPEAL PROCESS (ONLY APPLICABLE TO THE CALL FOR APPLICATION TO THE PROGRAMME)

The rules set out in this document are aimed at providing the applicants with a transparent appeal procedure concerning the decisions made by EIT Culture & Creativity during the eligibility and admissibility check as well as the evaluation process of an application submitted to a call for applications launched by EIT Culture & Creativity.

1. APPEAL REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITIONS

The Applicant is the only person entitled to file an appeal.

The right to appeal against a decision regarding the application selection applies to the applicant whose application was found ineligible during the admissibility and eligibility check or was rejected after the evaluation process.

The appeal is to be lodged against the communication issued by the EIT Culture & Creativity Program Management Office (PMO) based on the decision taken by the EIT Culture & Creativity Selection Committee.

The appeal can be lodged against the outcomes of the admissibility and eligibility check or the evaluation upon the following grounds **only**:

- Process errors by EIT Culture & Creativity
- Technical problems beyond the applicant's control
- Obvious human/mechanical errors by EIT Culture & Creativity
- Factual errors during the evaluation process

Appeals cannot be made based on other grounds than those indicated above.

If an appeal is accepted according to ground - *Factual errors during the evaluation process* mentioned above, it is possible that all, or part of the application, is re-evaluated by a new evaluation panel. Otherwise, there will be no follow-up or re-evaluation of the application unless there is clear evidence for appealing under the grounds provided above.

The applicant must formally submit the appeal, including all the mandatory information required below, by email to pmo@eit-culture-creativity.eu within **15 calendar days** of receiving the official notification of the outcomes. **Appeals received after 15 calendar days will not be considered.**

The appeal must contain:

Name and address of the organisation of the applicant;

- Name, position and contact details of the appellant;
- Reference number and acronym of the application that is the subject of the appeal;
- Clear reasons for the appeal, including all elements which are being appealed and/or failures in adherence with procedures limited to those criteria outlined in point 4.
- Any supporting documents. The applicant must provide relevant documentation in support of its appeal.

The relevant documentation included in the appeal shall be provided for the sole purpose of supporting it. It will not alter the quality or content of the evaluated application. The PMO will confirm the receipt of the appeal in writing to the applicant.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

An appeal will be rejected if:

- It is submitted after the set deadline;
- It is based on other grounds than those set out in point 4;
- Any of the information requested at point 5 is missing.

In case the appeal is rejected under provisions set out in point 7, the PMO will convey this information within 5 calendar days (of receipt of the appeal) to the applicant and inform the responsible Thematic Area at EIT Culture & Creativity.

The appeal procedure will be published in the call for applications guidelines, providing applicants with clear details of the grounds for appeal, steps of the appeal process, timelines, and composition of the appeal panel. Applicants will also be informed of their right to appeal, including the limitations of this procedure, in the official notification of the evaluation results.

2. INTERNAL APPEAL EVALUATION PROCESS

The PMO acts as the secretariat and examines the appeal of an ineligible or rejected application duly submitted by the applicant within the set deadline and according to the appeal requirements. The PMO prepares a technical examination on the merit of the appeal and sends it to the Appeal Panel.

The appointed Appeal Panel evaluates all the available information provided by the applicant and the technical examination prepared by the PMO.

The role of the Appeal Panel is to ensure a coherent interpretation of the requests and equal treatment of applicants. The Appeal Panel itself, however, does not re-evaluate the application. Instead, the Appeal Panel evaluates the grounds of the appeal and ensures compliance with the announced evaluation criteria, EU Financial Regulation Article 61, and EIT legal framework. Decisions are made through consensus, ensuring equal treatment and adherence to the announced call for applications criteria. Any recommendation for re-evaluation must demonstrate clear procedural or factual errors impacting the application's assessment. In light of its review, the Appeal Panel recommends a course of action to be followed.

The Appeal Panel's evaluation follows these steps:

1. **Review of relevant documentation:** The panel examines the appeal submission, technical examination, original application, and supporting documents.
2. **Verification of grounds for appeal:** The panel assesses the appeal against set criteria, such as process errors, technical problems, and factual inaccuracies.
3. **Structured decision-making process:** The panel ensures each ground is addressed with clear rationale, referencing relevant policies or regulations.
4. **Documentation:** The panel consolidates its findings, recommendations, and binding decision into a standardized report template to ensure transparency and accountability.

The Appeal Panel consists of at least 3 members, to be appointed from among the following bodies:

- Two members of the EIT Culture & Creativity ELSI Board, ensuring independent ethical and legal oversight.
- One Thematic Area Director not involved in the cohort selection for the call for application under review, ensuring relevant expertise while maintaining impartiality.



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

- One Legal Counsel, serving in a legal advisory capacity only, without voting rights.

The members of the Appeal Panel (and their respective deputies) are appointed by the CEO of EIT Culture & Creativity at the beginning of each year. Impartiality of members of the Appeal Panel towards the case under review must be ensured. If this cannot be provided, the relevant member shall refrain from the relevant case's review and be replaced by another impartial member.

The PMO shall provide the members of the Appeal Panel with a copy of:

- The appeal and all the supporting documents provided by the applicant.
- The technical examination prepared by the PMO.
- The original application and all supporting documents that were taken into consideration by the relevant bodies during the application admissibility and eligibility check and the evaluation process.
- Any other document requested by the Appeal Panel members relevant to the appeal.

The Appeal Panel will have 5 calendar days to provide a binding decision after the receipt of the documentation provided by the PMO, through a written justification with explicit reference to the grounds mentioned in point 4.

The decision on the appeal is taken by the Appeal Panel by consensus and is communicated by the PMO in writing to the applicant within 5 calendar days of the receipt of the Appeal Panel decision.

The appeal procedure, from the receipt of the appeal to the communication of the Appeal Panel's decision to the Applicant, should be resolved within a maximum of 20 calendar days.

The decision of the Appeal Panel is final, binding to all parties and not subject to any further appeal proceedings within EIT Culture & Creativity based on the same grounds.



ANNEX VI: GENERAL RULES FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS WITH THE RESPECT TO HE's COMPLIANCE PRINCIPLES

This annex outlines the general rules and responsibilities for all stakeholders—Beneficiaries, Affiliated Entities, external evaluators, and other participants—regarding Conflict of Interests, Confidentiality and Security, Ethics and Values, Data Protection, and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) - in relation to the selection, evaluation, and implementation of programmes provided under this call for applications.

All stakeholders involved in the call for applications, including Beneficiaries, Affiliated Entities, external evaluators, Selection Committee members, and KIC staff, must act in full compliance with the **Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (HE MGA)** regulations and the principles enshrined in the **EU Financial Regulation (Article 61)**. These principles include:

- **Conflict of Interest Management:** Preventing and addressing any situation where impartiality or objectivity may be compromised due to personal, economic, or other interests.
- **Transparency and Openness:** Ensuring clear, open, and traceable decision-making processes throughout the applications and selection lifecycle.
- **Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity:** Providing equal access and impartial treatment to all applicants and stakeholders, regardless of nationality, gender, or other characteristics.
- **Confidentiality and Data Security:** Safeguarding sensitive information and ensuring the secure handling of all data related to the call for applications and its participants.
- **Ethics and Integrity:** Adhering to high ethical standards and values in all interactions, including respect for diversity and social responsibility.
- **Data Protection Compliance:** Ensuring the handling of personal data complies with relevant data protection regulations, including GDPR.
- **Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Protection:** Respecting and securing intellectual property rights in line with EU regulations and the HE MGA.

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Conflict of Interests | <p>All stakeholders must comply with <u>Article 61 of the EU Financial Regulation</u> and adhere to the EIT Culture & Creativity Code of Conduct and Anti-Fraud Policy, which outline standards for impartiality, transparency, and ethical behavior in agreements or project participation. Conflicts of interest may arise from familial, emotional, political, economic, or other personal connections.</p> <p>General Obligations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stakeholders must promptly disclose any real or potential conflicts of interest to the granting authority and take immediate corrective action.• Measures will be implemented to prevent and address actual or perceived conflicts in all roles and responsibilities. <p>For External Evaluators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conflict of interest obligations will be included in their evaluation contracts, requiring disclosure of any potential conflicts and prohibiting involvement in evaluations where impartiality may be compromised. |
|------------------------------|--|



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-compliance will result in removal and replacement to safeguard the integrity of the evaluation process. <p>For EIT Culture & Creativity and Selection Committee Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and committee members must declare any conflicts before engaging in evaluations or decisions and recuse themselves where impartiality is at risk. A Conflict-of-Interest Register will document all disclosures and actions taken to ensure accountability. <p>Additional Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transparent communication with applicants through designated channels, ensuring equal and fair treatment. Dissemination of FAQs and consistent guidance to support applicants. <p>These measures are designed to uphold the highest standards of integrity and fairness throughout the process. For further details, refer to the EIT Culture & Creativity Code of Conduct and Anti-Fraud Policy available on EIT Culture & Creativity website.</p> |
| Transparency and Openness | These are key principles in the EIT Regulation , the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027 , and are detailed in Article 7.2 of the Partnership Agreement. They shall apply at each stage of the calls for applications of KICs in order to ensure a fair and impartial selection of projects/programmes. |
| Non-discrimination | In accordance with Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights , all stakeholder shall prove no discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, color, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited. |
| Confidentiality and security | The parties must keep confidential any data, documents, or other material (in any form) that is identified as sensitive in writing ('sensitive information') — during the implementation of the action and for at least until the time-limit set out. The beneficiaries may disclose sensitive information to their personnel or other participants involved in the action only if they: (a) need to know it in order to implement the Agreement and (b) are bound by an obligation of confidentiality. The granting authority may disclose sensitive information to its staff and to other EU institutions and bodies. It may moreover disclose sensitive information to third parties, if: (a) this is necessary to implement the Agreement or safeguard the EU financial interests and (b) the recipients of the information are bound by an obligation of confidentiality. |
| Ethics and Values | <p><u>Ethics</u>: The action must be carried out in line with the highest ethical standards and the applicable EU, international and national law on ethical principles.</p> <p><u>Values</u>: The beneficiaries must commit to and ensure the respect of basic EU values (such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities).</p> |
| Data Protection | <p>The beneficiaries must process personal data under the Agreement in compliance with the applicable EU, international and national law on data protection (in particular, Regulation 2016/6794*). They must ensure that personal data is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subjects collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes |



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

| | |
|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date - kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is processed and processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the data. <p><i>* 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, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC ('GDPR') (OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1)</i></p> |
| Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) | <p><u>Ownership of results:</u> The granting authority does not obtain ownership of the results produced under the action. 'Results' means any tangible or intangible effect of the action, such as data, knowhow, or information, whatever its form or nature, whether it can be protected, as well as any rights attached to it, including intellectual property rights.</p> |



ABBREVIATIONS

| Abbreviation | Term |
|--------------|---|
| AGA | Annotated Model Grant Agreement |
| AR | Augmented Reality |
| CCSI | Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI) |
| CEO | Chief Executive Officer |
| CLC | Co-Location Centres |
| CLV | Customer Lifetime Value |
| CPD | Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses |
| EIT | European Institute of Technology and Innovation |
| EIT CC | EIT Culture & Creativity |
| ESR | Evaluation Summary Report |
| FS | Financial sustainability |
| FSA | Financial Support Agreement |
| FSM | Financial sustainability mechanism |
| HE | Horizon Europe |
| IP | Intellectual property |
| KIC | Knowledge and Innovation Community |
| KPIs | Key Performance Indicators |
| KTI | Knowledge Triangle Integration |
| MVP | Minimum Viable Product |
| RIS | Regional Innovation Scheme |
| SA | Strategic Agenda |
| SAM | Serviceable Addressable Market |
| SME | Small and medium enterprise |
| TRL | Technology Readiness Level |
| VR | Virtual Reality |



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| Applicant Representative | The main point of contact for EIT Culture & Creativity from the submission of the application until the completion of the programme. |
| Augmented Reality (AR) | An interactive experience that overlays digital content (such as images, sounds, or other data) on the real-world environment, often accessed through mobile devices or AR glasses. Used in cultural heritage to enhance visitor engagement at historical sites. |
| Call for applications | The instrument used by EIT Culture & Creativity to select participants for its programmes in alignment with the Strategic Agenda. |
| Call for applications guidelines | The main document outlining the terms, conditions, and criteria for any call for applications launched by EIT Culture & Creativity, ensuring transparency, equal treatment, open competition, and sound procedural management. |
| CCSI | Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI) are based on cultural values, creativity, skills, and talent with the potential to generate innovation, wealth, and jobs through social and economic value creation, particularly from intellectual property. Sectors include architecture, archives, artistic crafts, audio-visual (film, TV, software, video games, multimedia, recorded music), cultural heritage, design, high-end industries and fashion, festivals, live music, performing arts, publishing, radio, visual arts, and advertising. (Source: European Parliament (2016/2072(INI))). |
| CLC | Co-Location Centres (CLCs) are operational units that bring together regional and local clusters and nodes of excellence. A CLC is a physical hub promoting links and collaboration among Knowledge Triangle actors, building on existing labs, offices, or campuses of KIC's core partners. |
| Deliverable | Key outputs of a project, such as analysis reports, feasibility studies, strategy documents, pilot action reports, and training documentation, demonstrating the project's achievements and judicious use of public funds. |
| EIT | The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is an EU body established in 2008 to strengthen Europe's innovation capacity. It is part of Horizon Europe, the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, and funds EIT Culture & Creativity (www.eit.europa.eu). |
| EIT Culture & Creativity | EIT Culture & Creativity, designated by the EIT in 2022, aims to fundamentally change the CCSI towards new understandings of competitiveness, resilience, and sustainable economic growth. Its primate impact goal is to create and maintains job in a resilient CCSI business ecosystem able to scale and compete in global markets. (www.eit-culture-creativity.eu) |
| Evaluation Panel | A group of expert evaluators, usually including independent external individuals and a Rapporteur, with expertise, at least, in the specific area of the call for applications which |



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

| Term | Definition |
|--|--|
| | they are evaluating. The panel evaluates eligible applications based on predefined criteria, assisted by a Quality Controller from EIT Culture & Creativity to ensure compliance. |
| Evaluation Process | The process by which EIT Culture & Creativity, supported by external experts, examines the quality of the application to determine its suitability for EIT Culture & Creativity financial support. |
| HE MGA | The Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement sets out the rights, obligations, terms, and conditions applicable to the grant awarded. |
| KAVA (Key Added Value Activity) | A strategic activity or project supported by an EIT Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) that contributes directly to achieving the KIC's objectives. KAVAs are designed to deliver measurable impact aligned with the KIC's Strategic Agenda, including innovation, education, and business creation activities, often involving collaborations across the Knowledge Triangle (industry, academia, and research organizations). |
| KIC | Knowledge Innovation Communities (KICs) are European Partnerships addressing global challenges and strengthening innovation ecosystems. They integrate education, research, and innovation, promoting entrepreneurship and the creation of innovative companies in synergy with the EIT. |
| KPIs | Key Performance Indicators defined by the EIT and EIT Culture & Creativity . |
| Large Company | A large company is a business that exceeds the thresholds of a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME). Specifically, it has 250 or more employees and an annual turnover greater than €50 million, or a balance sheet total exceeding €43 million. These entities typically possess significant resources, established market presence, and extensive networks, making them valuable partners for scaling innovations. |
| Minimum Viable Product (MVP) | A basic version of a product that includes only the core features necessary to validate the idea and gather feedback from early users. A key milestone in the programme's product development phase. |
| Priority Areas | <p>Key focus areas for EIT Culture & Creativity, representing significant shares of the EU CCSI workforce and revenue, aimed at targeted innovation and development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fashion: Circular innovations, textile recycling, and sustainable business models. • Architecture: Circular biobased materials, climate adaptation, and social cohesion. • Cultural Heritage: Emerging tech, new business models, and heritage preservation. • Audio-visual Media: Responsible tech use, generative AI, and new business models. • Gaming: Digital ethics, cross-sector collaboration, and societal impact. |
| Prize | A financial reward granted to individuals or organizations that successfully address a specific challenge or objective defined by the European Commission. Prizes are designed to stimulate innovation and find solutions to societal challenges by encouraging a wide range of participants to compete. Unlike traditional grants, prizes are awarded upon the successful completion of the challenge, without prior funding for the development process. This approach incentivizes efficiency and effectiveness in reaching the desired outcomes. |



Call for application to participate in the EIT Culture & Creativity Acceleration and Post-Acceleration Programmes 2025

| Term | Definition |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| RIS | The Regional Innovation Scheme boosts innovation performance in countries with moderate or modest innovation scores. |
| Scaleup | A scale-up is defined as a company that has been in operation for a minimum of 3 to 4 years and has demonstrated consistent growth. Specifically, it should have achieved an annual growth rate of at least 10% in either turnover or number of employees over three consecutive financial years. |
| SMEs and Micro Enterprises | Defined by EU recommendation 2003/361 based on staff headcount and either turnover or balance sheet total: Medium: <250 staff, ≤€50 million turnover or ≤€43 million balance sheet; Small: <50 staff, ≤€10 million turnover or balance sheet; Micro: <10 staff, ≤€2 million turnover or balance sheet. |
| SO | Strategic Objective of EIT Culture & Creativity. Five SOs form the framework's main pillars. |
| Social Innovation | New ideas addressing unmet needs that are social in their ends and means, creating new social relationships or collaborations (European Social Innovation, 2010). |
| Triple Transition | EIT Culture & Creativity's term for driving green, digital, and social transformations in Europe, building on the European Twin Transition. |
| TRL | Technology Readiness Level (TRL) is a metric used by the EU and EIT to assess the maturity of a particular technology, from basic research (TRL 1) to full deployment in real-world applications (TRL 9). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRL 1-4: Research and concept validation. • TRL 5-7: Prototype and demonstration in relevant environments. • TRL 8-9: System qualification and operational readiness. |
| Virtual Reality (VR) | A fully immersive digital environment experienced through headsets or devices, allowing users to explore simulated settings. In cultural heritage, VR is used to recreate historical environments or inaccessible locations. |