

HEI Initiative

Innovation Capacity Building for Higher Education



A body of the European Union



Pilot Call 2021: Factsheet

Why has the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) launched a new initiative to boost innovation in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)?

- This is one of the EIT's new specific objectives for 2021 to 2027.
- The EIT's strategy for this period calls on the EIT to increase the entrepreneurial and innovation capacity of Europe's higher education sector by promoting and supporting institutional change in higher education institutions (HEIs) and their integration in innovation ecosystems.

What is the HEI Initiative: Innovation Capacity Building for Higher Education?

- The initiative will help HEIs across Europe to strengthen their ability to innovate.
- More specifically, the initiative aims to encourage these institutions to look at their own practices and develop concrete actions to increase the impact of their innovation and entrepreneurship activities on their local and regional ecosystems.
- Selected projects will receive expert coaching and funding from the EIT Community to support them in achieving these aims.

What type of activities will the Initiative support?

- Activities to support HEIs can focus on several themes, including:
 - Fostering institutional engagement and change
 - Strengthening partnerships between higher education, business and research organisations
 - Developing innovation and business support services
 - Enhancing the quality of entrepreneurial education
 - Creating and disseminating knowledge

Who can apply to the initiative?

- HEIs based in the EU and Horizon Europe Associated Countries are eligible to apply, in consortia of at least four organisations including at least one that is not an HEI.
- Each HEI is permitted to apply in only one consortium.
- Full details on eligibility are provided in the call text.

When should HEIs apply and how long will the project run for?

- The Pilot Call will be open from 24 March until 25 May 2021, and the outcome will be announced in June 2021.
- Pilot projects will run for 24 months from July 2021 until July 2023.
- The successful completion of Phase 1 (July – December 2021) will facilitate progression into Phase 2 (January 2022 – July 2023).

How much funding is available?

- Funding of up to EUR 400 000 per consortium will be available during Phase 1, with up to EUR 800 000 available for Phase 2, leading to a total of up to EUR 1.2 million over 24 months.

What should consortia look like?

- Consortia should consist of:
 - One coordinating HEI which submits the application
 - Minimum of two other HEIs
 - Minimum one HEI that is a partner of an EIT KIC
 - The majority of HEIs shall be non-partners of an EIT KIC
 - A minimum of one actor from another side of the Knowledge Triangle (e.g. VET organisations, RTOs, SMEs and start-ups)

How should HEIs apply?

- The full call text, eligibility criteria and application portal can be accessed at eit-hei.eu

Will further calls be launched?

- Yes, this is a strategic priority for the EIT as part of its 2021 to 2027 strategy.
- The Pilot Call will select 23 projects and a second Call will follow in Autumn 2021 to select projects to start at the beginning in January 2022.