Call for EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub Activities

Instructions and Process Description

12 September 2022

Disclaimer

At the time of publishing this call, the underlying agreement between EIT and EIT RawMaterials is not yet in place. As a result, the timeline and budget might be subject to changes.

Abbreviations

CLC	Co-Location Center
EIT	European Institute of Innovation and Technology
EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub	Local partner (or consortium) in a RIS eligible country supporting EIT RawMaterials activities
EIT RM	EIT RawMaterials
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
KAVA	KIC Added Value Activity: KAVA projects are co-funded by the KIC
KIC	Knowledge and Innovation Community
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
KTI	Knowledge Triangle Integration
MSRG	Member States' Representatives Group
NCP	National Contact Point
Q&A	Questions and Answers
RIS	Regional Innovation Scheme
SA	Strategic Agenda

1. Background and purpose of the call

This document describes the background process for preparation, submission, evaluation, and selection of proposals in response to the call launched by the EIT RawMaterials for RIS Hub activities.

All EIT RawMaterials partners involved in the submission of a proposal in response to this call should read the following documents carefully:

- The present document (call text).

- EIT RawMaterials Strategic Agenda 2021-2027 (available online).

- Budget and proposal template (available on EIT RawMaterials website).

- EIT RIS Implementation Framework 2022-2027. (available online).

- EIT RIS Hubs Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles document. (available online).

- Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement. (available online).

- List of EIT and EIT RawMaterials KIC specific KPIs.

- The Lighthouse Appendix (that further outlines the topics and focus of EIT RawMaterials KIC).

1.1. EIT RawMaterials strategic focus and objectives

Raw materials are essential to securing a transition to green energy technologies, growth and sustainable consumption, and access to clean and efficient consumer technologies. Europe is highly dependent on importing raw materials for the global competitiveness of its manufacturing industries and accelerating the transition to a resource-efficient, sustainable society.

EIT RawMaterials vision is to develop raw materials into a major strength for Europe. The mission of EIT RawMaterials is to enable sustainable competitiveness of the European minerals, metals, and materials sector along the value chain by driving innovation, education, and entrepreneurship.

This will be realised by integrating knowledge from industry, higher education, and research by engaging stakeholders from the entire raw materials value chain. EIT RawMaterials will promote increased resource efficiency and the improvement of processes and products, support the introduction of new, innovative technologies, and rethink our current linear economic model to move towards a circular approach. Further focus areas are to increase human capital in the raw materials sector and promote entrepreneurial education at all levels.

We see a Europe with industrial strength built on a foundation of efficient, secure, and sustainable supply and use of raw materials. In this vision, products, processes, and solutions are geared towards the closure of closely interconnected material cycles. These dynamic and rapidly changing material cycles will attract new investments, enhance the innovation capacity for competitiveness, and incite the interest of talented, skilled, entrepreneurial employees. The aim is for society to appreciate the value of raw materials and perceive the sector as innovative and attractive.

The following three strategic objectives were set by EIT RawMaterials to steer our activities:

- Securing raw materials supply: collaborating across the entire industrial value chain.

- Designing solutions for materials innovation, products, and processes.

- Closing material loops: a radical shift from linear to circular thinking.

The EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs must support EIT RawMaterials' vision and mission and substantially contribute to tackling our strategic objectives (SOs). Proposals need to demonstrate how the activity will support and contribute to the objectives in the EIT RawMaterials Strategic Agenda 2021-2027 (SA). The selection of the submitted proposals will be highly dependent on their contribution to the strategic elements as outlined above.

More details can be found in the EIT RawMaterials Strategic Agenda 2021-2027. For details on thematic scope please also see The Lighthouse Appendix document.

2. Call-specific requirements

2.1. Strategic focus

The EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS) has been designed by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) as a long-term initiative, to strengthen the national and regional innovation ecosystems of countries and regions that are moderate and modest innovators.

EIT RIS is designed as a two-way interaction scheme. By sharing its good practices of Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI) and increasing activities in eligible countries, EIT RawMaterials will gain access to productive inputs, business skills, talent, cooperation opportunities in education, market and business, currently untapped entrepreneurial potential, customers for innovative ventures, innovation, knowledge, know-how and technology transfer possibilities, additional testbeds for applications of innovative solutions, as well as access to co-funding options provided by the EU, and regional and national support schemes.

In the mid-term perspective, EIT RIS is expected to facilitate the incorporation of relevant players of the local innovation ecosystems in the pan-European EIT RawMaterials ecosystem, and foster the KTI approach as a framework for the enhancement of innovation capacity.

In line with Article 2(4) of the EIT Regulation, EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs are "physical hubs" established by a KIC, and forming part of its structure, in a member state or in an associated country targeted by the RIS and that serves as focal point for the KIC's activities, and for the mobilisation and involvement of local knowledge triangle actors in the activities of the KIC. EIT RIS Hubs form the backbone of the EIT RIS "place-based" innovation approach and, have the core mission of delivering on the EIT's objectives and KPIs, especially those directly related to the EIT RIS - while also rationalising the EIT Community's on-the-ground presence. The EIT's Legislative Framework also includes a goal for the EIT RIS Hubs to pave the way for the establishment of a Co-Location Centre (CLC) in the targeted region.

EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs are the ambassadors of the EIT RawMaterials community in specific regions that are of strategic importance for the KIC. They are an extension of the CLCs in the region with appropriate connections. The Hub coordinators/consortia should be well embedded already in the local raw materials ecosystem, and use their already established network and reputation in the countries and regions to amplify the message of EIT RawMaterials, spread knowledge of existing programmes, raise awareness, promote matchmaking, attract (new) partners and stakeholders to participate in EIT RawMaterials programmes and activities, develop new project proposals for calls for Projects (KAVAs), and apply for open calls.

2.2. EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub Roles and Scope of activities

The minimum functions of RIS Hubs are required to be fully performed. These functions are presented in the EIT RIS Hubs Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles document.

In line with the mandatory EIT RIS Hub roles, EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs shall propose their activities clustered, as presented directly below in this section. They consist of mandatory activities, for which the RIS Hub receives a core budget, and additional activities that shall aim to achieve ambitious outcomes and impact, on top of the mandatory minimum targets. Additional activities can be proposed by the applicants (on top of the mandatory ones) and the best proposed additional activities might be funded from the available competitive budget. A work plan for both mandatory and additional activities should be included at the proposal submission stage of this open call. For more information about the budget please see section 2.4. Expected budget and funding.

MANDATORY ACTIVITIES of the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs are:

a) <u>Matchmaking, Networking, and Promotion:</u>
- Distribute information about the vision, mission, and activities of EIT RawMaterials –actively promote and disseminate activities via social media, websites, stakeholders mailing lists, (raising awareness among local stakeholders on EIT RawMaterials activities, cooperation opportunities and inviting them to connect at big events) and produce media pieces about EIT RawMaterials activities with high impact.

- Facilitate integration of the activities in local ecosystems for all EIT RawMaterials programmes.

- Map local ecosystem and stakeholders (or update existing mapping) and provide the KIC with the GDPR compliant relevant stakeholders list with direct contact information.

- Organise at least one stakeholder event per year for the local community (stakeholders of the extended knowledge triangle including research/education/industry/cities/ authorities/NGOs/etc. in alignment with EIT RawMaterials, with active participation from the relevant industry and start-ups. Search for other relevant events (where the RIS Hub participates and/or includes EIT RawMaterials) and connect the local community with the pan-European innovation community.

- Submit minimum one RIS Success Story per year, from year 2 onwards.

b) <u>Administrational and Operational Tasks:</u>
- Fulfil the administrative responsibilities and oversee the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub project according to the EIT RawMaterials standards for managing and reporting in a professional manner.

- Participate in EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub meetings and joint EIT Community (Cross-KIC) RIS Hub meetings.

- Regularly report on the RIS Hub's plans and achievements to the EIT RawMaterials (RIS Hub's Project Officer and EIT RawMaterials RIS Manager).

- The EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs are advised to take a leading role in planning out the KIC's country-specific approach.

- Set dissemination targets and execute communication activities accordingly.

c) Alternative Funding/Financial Sustainability Plan:

- Create a concrete plan which maps out a path towards financial sustainability of the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub, further details follow below.

- Establish synergies at a local level, identifying funding (schemes that could be matched with EIT RawMaterials funds and/or ERMA funds and support activities to synergise them (i.e. organise meetings between relevant funding institutions and EIT RawMaterials CLCs) and collaboration opportunities also with regards to the ESIF and IPA III funds.

- Engage with relevant local authorities as well as undertake regular mapping exercises to identify potential funding and collaboration opportunities, enhance visibility of the EIT RawMaterials activities and community, raise awareness among the national policymakers, organise 1:1 meetings with them, and include the KIC when appropriate/needed.

- Establish close collaboration and offer regular support to the EIT National Contact Points (NCPs) in terms of information provision for upcoming opportunities for local stakeholders and results of KIC calls (if needed, help them understand the specificities around the KIC they represent), and also regularly inquire at the EIT NCP about opportunities for potential national/regional and other available funding.

- Once an EIT Community RIS Hub is established, covering a given countries and territories all RIS Hubs present in the respective ecosystem should be linked to it. This coordination and information distribution amongst RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices will be supported by the EIT Community RIS Hub National Secretary. The RIS Hubs should dedicate on average 10% of their time to coordinate with the EIT Community RIS Hub, other EIT RIS Hubs and EIT KIC Offices. Additionally, each EIT RIS Hub must accurately address queries beyond their EIT KIC, including referring stakeholders to contact persons within other relevant EIT KICs better suited to support their needs.

For Minimum Annual targets please see the Quality criteria table.

POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL (COMPETITIVE) ACTIVITIES of the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs can include:

- Activities contributing to the following impact indicators (KPIs), may be proposed, planned, and enacted by the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs as part of their activities:

  o The number of new EIT RIS Active full KIC Partners and number of new RIS Task Partners.

  o The number of start-ups and SMEs selected the EIT RawMaterials Booster Call programme and also the RawMaterials Accelerator programme.

  o The number of submitted KAVA proposals.

  o The number of KAVA proposals selected for funding and their impact.

- o Start-ups created by students enrolled in, and graduates from, the KIC's EIT-labelled programmes (activities would need to be aligned with the EIT RawMaterials Education team).
- o The number of EIT RIS Success Stories.
- Additional private and public funding, with particular attention to European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), secured for the partners, RIS Hub, CLC/Number of organisations from RIS countries that attracted funding from ESIF (in line with Smart Specialisation Strategies) with support from KICs, and the amount of funding attracted. Matchmaking and brokerage activities (e.g. 1:1 matchmaking, roadshows) resulting in tangible matches.
- Supporting cooperation of RIS partners and potential RIS partners with non-RIS partners to either include RIS partners in non-RIS KAVA proposals or create RIS KAVA proposals including non-RIS partners as transferrers of innovation.
- Organisation and implementation of EIT RawMaterials Calls for Projects (KAVA calls) preparation and writing workshops.
- Facilitate the RIS Hubs/CLCs and KIC partners to participate in regional funding programmes that are of interest for our activities in order to support achieving the core EIT KPIs.
- Submitted proposals to alternative funding calls with existing or non- partners.

2.3. Duration

EIT RawMaterials is looking for long-term partners for cooperation in the mentioned RIS countries. EIT's Partnership Agreement with EIT RawMaterials is deemed to cover the period until 2029 ultimately, which is the long-term perspective for any potential RIS Hub. The next Grant Agreement however will be concluded for the duration of 2023-2025, which is the maximum duration of any project to be selected at the time.

In line with the requirements from both Partnership Agreement and Grant Agreement with the EIT, provisions for re-orienting or terminating underperforming projects (with regular 'go'/'no go' decision points, including a payment system linked to milestone achievements) will be established by EIT RawMaterials, also applicable to projects selected under this call.

Furthermore, and in line with the EIT RawMaterials SA, if the countries and regions are no longer deemed as a focus of the KIC's activities and/or the countries and territories potential value to the KIC is no longer deemed as high, any project to be selected might be ended. This may also happen

in case a Co-Location Centre (CLC) will be established in the countries subject to the work of the RIS Hub, especially if there is a need for a RIS Hub to be replaced with a new KIC's CLC.

At the time of submission to this call, the proposal should already include budget and work plan for the 2023-2025 period (including KPIs, Milestones, Deliverables, and Outputs). For more information, please see available templates.

When selected, EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs' budget and work plans will be subject to review and approval by EIT RawMaterials. Proposed activities will be subject to regular revision and may need to be amended. Any necessary changes will need to be made and aligned with the timing of the business planning of EIT RawMaterials. In case of underperformance, the activities may be terminated by EIT RawMaterials.

2.4. Expected budget and funding

EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs are co-funded by the EIT RawMaterials as either a local independent organisation/entity, or a consortium of organisations working with the EIT KICs as KIC partners, financially acting as subgrantees and would have to become a KIC partner. Local organisations engaged to serve as EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs will only be eligible to receive EIT RIS funding for operational activities directly related to the fulfilment of its mission. **Administrative costs, including offices and related infrastructure and personnel costs for administration, are not eligible** (these can be however planned and reported as co-funding). All EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs must demonstrate cost effectiveness.

There are mandatory activities that each EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub needs to implement, funded by the core budget. Additional activities can be proposed by the applicants in the proposal to this call text, that would be funded from the competitive budget.

The tentative EIT Funding of the call is up to EUR 1,700,000 for the period of 2023-2025. A maximum of one proposal for EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub for each country and territory/region listed in the section 2.5.1. Geographic Scope is to be selected. Following a requirement from the EIT, RIS Hubs need to gradually become financially independent from EIT funding by year 2029, meaning that the co-funding should increase every year. The EIT funding amounts available as core funding (for mandatory activities) during 2023-2025 (in EUR) are up to:

- For RIS Hub covering one EU member state: 50,000 in Year 1, 47,000 in Year 2, and 44,500 in Year 3.

- For regional RIS Hub covering more than one EU member state: 75,000 in Year 1, 71,000 in Year 2, and 66,500 in Year 3.

- For RIS Hub covering Horizon Europe Associated Countries that are not EU member states: 40,000 in Year 1; 37,750 in Year 2, and 35,500 in Year 3.

The amount of the EIT funding from the competitive budget available for additional RIS Hub activities is EUR 150,000 every year for all the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs. Each RIS Hub can (propose to) receive up to EUR 30,000 of competitive EIT funding per year, on top of the core funding.

The co-funding contributed by the project partner / consortium to mandatory activities should be minimum 10% of the total funding (NOT 10% of the EIT funding) in 2023, minimum 15% in 2024 and minimum 20% in 2025. For the years beyond 2025, the co-funding contributed by the project partner / consortium should be minimum 50% of the total funding (NOT 50% of the EIT funding) by 2027, and 100% by the end of 2029 respectively. The co-funding contributed by each partner of the RIS Hub (in case of consortia) does not need to be proportional to the funding allocated. A minimum co-funding rate of 10% also applies to additional activities funding/budget. The co-funding rate of the proposed activities is an important evaluation aspect, activities with higher co-funding rate will have better chances to be selected for funding.

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

A unified and simplified evaluation and reporting mechanism will be applied to assess the timely performance of each EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub. These unified principles will ascertain the measurement of the performance of the EIT RIS Hubs against a common set of concrete, time-bound and measurable, multi-annual impact delivery KPIs, which demonstrate contribution to the EIT's and EIT KIC's objectives and KPIs. The targets for each EIT RIS Hub will be communicated to the EIT for approval as part of the Business Plan process. The evaluation systems will be performance-based and, in cases of underperformance, mitigation measures and potentially financial reductions

will be applied. Agreements for selected projects will be issued once the selection process has been finalised and the agreement between EIT and EIT RawMaterials been signed.

2.5. Key requirements
2.5.1. Geographic scope

EIT RawMaterials welcomes proposals for EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs in the following countries and territories:

- Baltic Hub (EIT RawMaterials is looking for applications for a regional RIS Hub covering Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania)

- Czech Republic

- Greece

- Serbia

- Slovakia

- Slovenia and Croatia (EIT RawMaterials is looking for applications for a regional RIS Hub covering Slovenia and Croatia and reaching out to the Western Balkans, with the exception of Serbia)

- Southern Spain (focusing mostly on the Andalusia, Extremadura, and Murcia regions)

2.5.2. Eligibility of partners

This Call for Proposals (CfP) is open to the registered legal entities or consortia coming from the respective countries and territories, where the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub will be established. In the case of a consortium, the Activity Coordinator (Lead) must be clearly defined and named.

Any organisation (EIT RawMaterials KIC partners and non-EIT RawMaterials KIC partners) from the respective RIS countries and territories can be the Lead Applicant (Coordinator) of a project proposal.

A cooperation between non-EIT RawMaterials partners and EIT RawMaterials KIC partners (core, associate or project) is possible in a consortium.

All kind of legal entities registered in the eligible countries and territories are welcome to apply to the call (e.g. universities, companies, NGOs, etc.). It is not required to apply with a group of local

partners, but it is an advantage to show the potential of the new EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub to be a driving force for the local raw materials ecosystem.

3. Call and selection process

3.1. General rules and guiding principles

- All EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub activities must lead to specific targets over a defined timeframe and will be financed by EIT RawMaterials (the KIC) only for a defined duration.

- At the time of the submission to this call, the proposal should already include a budget and an activity plan for the period 2023-2025 (including KPIs, Milestones, Deliverables, and Outputs). For more information, please see the available templates.

- All selected EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs and their activities will be tracked, and their progress will be assessed for five years after the end of the funding period.

- Specific tasks may be attributed to subcontractors if the necessity is clearly justified and follows the general Horizon Europe principles. Please note, only a limited part (in budget and scope) of a proposal may be subcontracted; depending on the scope of the work to be provided, it may be necessary for the entity to become a KIC partner.

- It is possible to add other partners to the consortium after the project selection, but without changes to the total KAVA budget allocated to the project and only after approval by EIT RawMaterials.

- Regardless of the funding source, if an entity incurs costs as part of a KAVA, they need to become KIC partners (with the exception of the RIS Task partners). In other words, non-members who receive funding, or who incur costs as a result of a KAVA (even if the funding is brought in by them) need to become partners, supply all documents and pay fees; they need to report their costs and be subject to eligibility following the requirements for a KIC partner. Non-members who participate in a KAVA, but receive no funding and incur no costs in the project do not need to become partners. They need to sign a Project Agreement (PA). However, Intellectual Property (IP) rights and confidentiality need to be respected. The total EIT Funding of a RIS Task Partner to EIT RawMaterials KIC (not a full member of the KIC) cannot exceed EUR 60,000 (including other EIT RawMaterials supported activities' budgets). If the entities' budget exceeds this amount, the entity needs to upgrade and become a Project Partner of EIT RawMaterials.

- Changes in organisational structure: The EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub must inform EIT RawMaterials of any changes in its organisational structure as soon as possible and the changes, including changes of key personnel, need to be approved by EIT RawMaterials.

- The EIT RIS Hubs should dedicate, on average, 10% of their time to coordinate with the EIT Community RIS Hub, other EIT RIS Hubs, and offices of other EIT KIC's. Additionally, each EIT RIS Hub must also be able to accurately address queries beyond their EIT KIC specifically, including helping to refer stakeholders to contact persons within other relevant EIT KICs, better suited to support their needs.

- For other general rules and guiding principles please see the Eligibility Criteria in section 3.2.4.

3.1.1. Confidentiality, data protection, and ethical considerations

Access to the proposals will be given to EIT RawMaterials Operational Management Team (OMT) and to the evaluation panel (external evaluators) conducting the evaluations. Everyone with access to the proposal texts will have signed non-disclosure and confidentiality agreement before access is granted.

The title, scope, summary, name of partners in the consortium, name of coordinator and overall budget of projects approved for funding will be shared within the EIT RawMaterials community, and therefore, made publicly available (e.g., on the EIT RawMaterials' website, presentations at conferences etc.). Public dissemination of the project's main results and outcomes is a mandatory condition for funding and will be arranged jointly by the consortium and EIT RawMaterials staff taking into account the consortium's legitimate confidentiality requirements.

All data and information related to the proposal and its evaluation will be handled and stored on the 'Lyyti' platform according to EIT RawMaterials' customary procedures. The EIT RawMaterials' Code of Conduct will be followed throughout the evaluation process. External evaluators will receive specific instructions on the evaluation process, and access to the proposals will be granted to each evaluator only after the upload of her/his/their 'Evaluator Agreement' with provisions on confidentiality, conflict of interest, and code of conduct.

3.2. Proposal preparation, submission, evaluation, and selection process

3.2.1. Proposal registration, and preparation

It is advised that the coordinator of the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub proposal informs the RIS Manager & Innovation Hub (CLC) Director of the proposal to be submitted. The RIS Manager & Innovation Hub's/CLC staff can provide guidance and support in order to set up a solid consortium and find relevant partner(s) if required and advise and support the coordinator/consortium with their project proposal to ensure they are in line with the evaluation criteria.

It is mandatory for the applicant/consortium to determine a single-point-of-contact.

Before submitting a proposal, all applicants (lead applicants and consortium partners) must register on the EU Participant Portal in order to acquire the PIC number.

3.2.2. Proposal submission

The proposal submission will take place in a single stage. Proposals must be submitted no later than **Monday, 14 November 2022, 13:00 CET using the online IT-tool Lyyti.** The Project proposal: Guidance and Template for complementary information and Excel template for budget offer guidance must be used. The Proposal, including both the Budget plan (Excel) and Project proposal document (in PDF form) for the period 2023-2025 (3 years), should be submitted through the online IT-tool Lyyti by the due date stated in this paragraph. The budget plan and the project proposal document should include both mandatory and additional activities (they must be clearly separated in both documents).

3.2.3. Proposal evaluation and selection process

Firstly, the proposals will be evaluated according to two sets of criteria (Eligibility and Quality).

Finally, the two best scoring proposals' coordinator/team/consortia (considering the median of the total score based on Quality criteria received for mandatory and competitive part of the application combined) for each RIS countries and regions/territories, will be invited to a video call for final pitching and Q&A. In order to be invited to the online pitching and Q&A call, the proposal must receive a minimum of 70% of the total possible Mandatory Part score.

Eligibility criteria - mandatory requirements. **In line with Horizon Europe rules, proposals that do not meet all the eligibility criteria at the time of proposal submission will be deemed ineligible and**

will not be evaluated further. The Eligibility criteria against which the submitted proposals will be reviewed by two representatives of EIT RawMaterials are presented in section 3.2.4.

Quality criteria - The submitted proposals that meet all the eligibility criteria, as listed in Chapter 3.2.4. will also be evaluated based on the quality criteria as listed in Chapter 3.2.5. (for mandatory and additional part of the application/proposal) by two representatives of EIT RawMaterials and a panel of three external experts appointed by the EIT RawMaterials OMT. The quality criteria against which the eligible proposals will be scored and ranked are presented in section 3.2.5. below.

- EIT RawMaterials will strive to achieve balance in the gender and geographic provenance of the evaluators.
- All members of the evaluation panel will sign non-disclosure and conflict of interest agreements.
- Evaluation against quality criteria will be performed remotely.

Online Q&A Call and Final Decision - The RIS Hub will be a representative of the EIT RawMaterials in the countries and territories, thus it is very important for the KIC to meet (in person or online) with the people who would potentially lead the RIS Hub. The two best scoring proposals' coordinator/team/consortia (considering the median of the total score based on Quality criteria received for mandatory and additional part of the application combined) for each RIS countries and territories, will be invited to a video call for final pitching and Q&A. In order to be invited to the online pitching and Q&A call the proposal must also receive a minimum of 70% of the total possible Mandatory Part score. The Final Decision and Selection will be made by three representatives of the three relevant RIS EIT RawMaterials CLCs (CLC Committee). Each representative will give a Yes or No, based on the pitch given by the coordinator/team/consortia on the overall strategic rationality of the presented activities. This will be done by evaluating the proposal from a holistic perspective against its sustainability, feasibility and consistency. Only one Proposal (one EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub per countries and territories listed in section 2.5.1.) will be selected. Out of the two invited to the online pitching and Q&A Call, the proposal that receives 3x Yes (but must receive at least 2x Yes) from the CLC committee support will be selected to become EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub in those particular countries and territories. In case of a tie the proposal with the higher overall score of the Quality criteria will be selected. In case where neither of the two proposals invited to the Q&A Call receives a minimum 2x Yes, none may be selected, and the Call may be repeated.

The strengths and weaknesses of each proposal as perceived by the evaluators will be documented and communicated to the Proposal Coordinator once the evaluation process is completed.

Coordinators of projects that are selected for funding will be informed after approval by the Management Board and receive also the feedback from the evaluation panels. The feedback may

include a list of requested changes that must be made by the Project Coordinator before the project can be given the final approval.

Also following approval by the Executive Board, Coordinators of projects that were not selected for funding will be informed. They will receive evaluation feedback as soon as it is finalised.

Competitive budget distribution: The competitive budget amount is designated in this call to support additional RIS Hub activities which should deliver beyond mandatory activities and minimum targets, including high and ambitious targets proposed by the applicants. Only proposals selected to become the RIS Hubs of EIT RawMaterials will be eligible to receive funding from the Competitive budget. The amount of competitive budget for proposed additional activities will be negotiated with the selected EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs, based on the amount available, proposals for competitive/additional activities received via this call and their quality criteria score – selecting best value for money.

3.2.4. Eligibility criteria

Eligibility will be checked at the time of proposal submission and at the time of signing the Project Agreement, and applied throughout the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub funding period. After the signature of the Project Agreement, EIT RawMaterials will not consider any changes that impact on eligibility criteria, and the project will be immediately terminated if these are not met. The following criteria apply:

- Legal status: The applicant must be a registered legal entity in the country of the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub and it can apply together with a group of partners spanning the Knowledge Triangle also registered legal entities in the country of the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub. EIT RawMaterials will sign a contract in line with Horizon Europe rules and EIT RawMaterials contractual framework and obligations.

- Personnel support: The EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub will commit the necessary HR resource to execute activities for the EIT RawMaterials benefit during 2023-2025 and committed to allocate the same resources working with EIT RawMaterials in the following years.

- All EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub's activities must lead to specific targets over a defined time schedule.

- Proposals must meet the highest expectations and performance on the creation of impact (e.g. achieving a minimum of 1 EIT Core RIS KPI during 2023-2025, other EIT RIS KPIs and KIC Specific KPIs). Please refer to EIT RawMaterials Strategic Agenda 2021-2027 and the List of EIT KPIs and EIT RawMaterials KIC specific KPIs.

- It must be clearly explained how the proposal is aligned with the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027[1].

- A detailed work plan of the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs activities must be provided for 2023-2025 period at the time of proposal submission.

- A one-page CV of the person who will be managing the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub must be provided.

- Thematic alignment: The applicant entity/consortium should demonstrate a good network of local innovation ecosystem stakeholders from the raw materials sector. It will be favorably assessed, if the organisation has experience in managing projects in the field of Raw Materials and especially in networking and matchmaking and access to finance.

- Capacity: Every entity acting as EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub should demonstrate its capacity to work with the local Knowledge Triangle actors (in the field of education, research, business) and local, national, regional authorities, both in terms of resources as well as in terms of network.

- Proposals need to explain how activities of the RIS Hub are intended to be run in the longer term and gradually become financially independent from EIT funding by year 2029. The proposal must include a clear strategy and a tentative plan for the financial sustainability of the EIT RawMaterials RIS HUB. As part of the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub's Work Plan submission, it should also include binding, multi-annual Financial Sustainability targets for the hub. While subject to the final Memorandum of Cooperation review, in principle, all EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs will need to achieve 100% financing from non-EIT sources by the end of 2029. Applicants should be able to provide an outline of how they plan to mobilise and use other (additional) sources of funding (local/ regional/ national/ EU funding).

- The co-funding contributed by the project partner / consortium to mandatory activities should be minimum 10% of the total funding (NOT 10% of the EIT funding) in 2023, minimum 15% in 2024 and minimum 20% in 2025. For the years beyond 2025, the co-funding contributed by the project partner / consortium should be minimum 50% of the total funding (NOT 50% of the EIT funding) by 2027, and 100% by the end of 2029 respectively. The co-funding contributed by each partner of the RIS Hub (in case of consortia) does not need to be proportional to the funding allocated. A minimum co-funding rate of 10% also applies to additional activities funding/budget. The co-funding rate of the proposed activities is an important evaluation aspect, activities with higher co-funding rate will have better chances to be selected for funding.

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[1] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021D0820&from=EN

- The Proposal must include a mandatory Final annual Report, proactive bi-monthly reports to RIS manager and Project Officer.

- Above and beyond the specific EIT RawMaterials Eligibility criteria mentioned in the call the projects have to be implemented in line with Horizon Europe requirements and EIT rules, and with the conditions set in the current EIT RawMaterials Partnership Agreement (PA).

Proposals that do not meet all the above criteria or conditions, or do not contain this information in the proposal document, will not be further evaluated.

3.2.5. Quality criteria

Weight	Description of Criteria
4	1. **Mandatory Activities - Alternative Funding/Financial Sustainability Plan** • To what extent do the proposals' activities have the potential to contribute to the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub operations in the long-term and gradually become financially independent from the EIT funding. There is a clear and solid plan for the future on how to continue the RIS Hub activities for long-term impact with decreasing financing from the EIT RawMaterials' side. • The share of co-funding level of the suggested proposal. • Relations with national/regional authorities: Access to policy-makers will strengthen synergies and complementarities at all governance levels. In this respect, the entity should be able to demonstrate whether it has existing relations and the support of policymakers on city, national, and/or regional levels. • To what extent can the proposed activities mobilise the use of "other sources of funding", such as national and regional funding, including EU Structural Funds, pre-accession assistance, and own resources. • There is a clear and solid multi-annual plan/business model with financial figures and performance indicators towards achieving a level of co-financing from non-EIT sources of 10% in 2023, 20% until 2025, 50% until 2027, and 100% until 2029.
4	2. **Mandatory Activities - Administration, Operations, Communication, and Dissemination** • How well the Work plan addresses roles and the mandatory activities of the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs listed in chapter 2.2. • To what extent the Work plan is clear and feasible. • The objectives, deliverables, outputs, and KPIs are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound.

	• The time plan is realistic and consistent with the availability of required resources.
	• There is completeness and clarity of information provided in the proposal.
	• The budget is aligned with the planned activities and reflects the best value for money. All costs are clearly explained and justified.
	• Soundness and effectiveness of the communication and dissemination strategy relative to the planned activities and targets. A minimum *# of web and social media reach/views: 10,000).*
4	**3. Mandatory Activities - Coordinator/Team/Consortium** • To what extent does the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub coordinator and/or consortium have the competencies to implement the activities as well as commitment and competencies to take the steps that will lead to the impact expected from the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub. • To what extent does the coordinator/team/consortium have a good knowledge of the raw materials sector and experience in managing projects (especially in networking, matchmaking, and access to finance). • The coordinator/team/consortium demonstrates a good network of connections with the local knowledge triangle actors (industry, research, academia) and local, national, and regional authorities, both in terms of resources and network. • The coordinator/consortium has well-established relations with national/regional authorities and the support of policymakers on city, national, and/or regional level.
8	**5. Mandatory Activities - Impact** • The proposal/activities contribute to the building and management of a strong local/regional raw materials community. • Minimum required targets are demonstrated to be reached per year (as direct result of the Hub's activities):

Population (in Millions) in the countries and territories the RIS Hub covers	<5	5-10	>10
Number of relevant (in the scope of EIT RawMaterials KIC) KAVA proposals initiated and supported by the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub advancing to Stage 2 of the KAVA Call, and submitted as a final proposal, per year (in the case also including new partner organizations joining the KIC will be evaluated positively).	Minimum 1	Minimum 1	Minimum 2
Number of relevant (in the KIC's scope and of good quality) applicants scouted by the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub to apply for the EIT RawMaterials Accelerator and/or Booster Call programmes and that are invited to pitch, per year.	Minimum 1	Minimum 2	Minimum 2
Number of relevant idea holders that apply for the EIT Jumpstarter programme, per year.	Minimum 2	Minimum 3	Minimum 3
Number of news/press releases/ articles mentioning EIT RawMaterials, prepared by the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hub in alignment with EIT RawMaterials Communications team, and published in top tier media.	Minimum 2	Minimum 3	Minimum 3
The number of RIS students informed about EIT RawMaterials-labelled programmes in alignment	100	150	200

	with EIT RawMaterials education team.				

> • How well the proposal feeds the pipeline of the following KIC's programmes, on top of the minimum required targets, all as a direct result of the RIS Hub's activities:
>
>> • The number of new EIT RIS Active Full KIC Partners and number of new RIS Task Partners.
>>
>> • The number of start-ups and SMEs joining the EIT RawMaterials Accelerator and Booster Call programmes.
>>
>> • The number of submitted KAVA proposals.
>>
>> • The number of KAVA proposals selected for funding and their impact.
>>
>> • The number of RIS students enrolled in the KIC's EIT-labelled programmes.
>>
>> • Start-ups created by students enrolled in, and graduates from, the EIT-labelled programmes.
>>
>> • The number of RIS Success Stories.
>>
>> • Additional private and public funding, with particular attention to European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), secured for the partners, RIS Hub, CLC/Number of organisations from RIS countries that attracted funding from ESIF (in line with Smart Specialisation Strategies) with support from KICs, and the amount of funding attracted.
>
> • Quality of the Success Stories creation plan.

5	**Impact for additional activity proposed** The proposals will be evaluated on the best value for money principle, considering the respected outcomes and KPIs delivered compared to the budget the activity requires. Effective work plans will be evaluated positively. The proposed competitive work plan could have at least one of the activities clearly drawing the line of generating the respective outcomes and KPIs: • Activities contributing to the following impact indicators (KPIs), may be proposed, planned, and enacted by the EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs as part of their activities:

	- The number of new EIT RIS Active full KIC Partners and number of new RIS Task Partners. - The number of start-ups and SMEs joining the EIT RawMaterials Booster Call programmes and also RawMaterials Accelerator programme. - The number of submitted KAVA proposals. - The number of KAVA proposals selected for funding and their impact. - Start-ups created by students enrolled in, and graduates from, the KIC's EIT-labelled programmes. - The number of EIT RIS Success Stories. - Additional private and public funding, with particular attention to European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), secured for the partners, RIS Hub, CLC/Number of organisations from RIS countries that attracted funding from ESIF (in line with Smart Specialisation Strategies) with support from KICs, and the amount of funding attracted. Matchmaking and brokerage activities (e.g. 1:1 matchmaking, roadshows) resulting in tangible matches. - Supporting cooperation of RIS partners and potential RIS partners with non-RIS partners to either include RIS partners in non-RIS KAVA proposals or create RIS KAVA proposals including non-RIS partners as transferrers of innovation. - Organisation and implementation of EIT RawMaterials Calls for Projects (KAVA calls) preparation and writing workshops. - Facilitate the RIS Hubs/CLCs and KIC partners to participate in regional funding programmes that are of interest for our activities in order to support achieving the core EIT KPIs. - Submitted proposals to alternative funding calls with existing or non-partners.

Total weight = 25

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The score given for each criterion (from 0 - non-existent to 10 - excellent) by the panel will then be multiplied by the weight. Maximum score for the mandatory activities part is 200. Maximum score for the additional activities part is 50.

0	**Non-existent:** no relevant information provided in the application file or cannot be judged because out of range
2	**Very poor:** The criterion is addressed in a very incomplete and unsatisfactory manner
4	**Poor:** There are serious inherent weaknesses in relation to the criterion in question
6	**Fair:** While the proposal addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses that would need correction
8	**Good:** The proposal addresses the criterion well, although some improvements are possible
10	**Excellent:** The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor only.

3.3. Calendar

Monday, 12 September 2022	Launch of call for EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs activities
Monday, 12 September 2022	The proposal submission platform "Lyyti" https://www.lyyti.in/RIS_HUB_call_6204 goes online
Monday, 14 November 2022, 13:00 CET	Final Proposal SUBMISSION deadline (Final Proposal is uploaded in Lyyti)
13 November – 16 December 2022	Evaluation of Proposals
5 – 9 December 2022	Online Q&A Call, please reserve your availability
Friday, 16 December 2022	Outcomes of the evaluation of the Final proposals is communicated to the consortia
Wednesday, 1 January 2023	Earliest Kick-off date for approved EIT RawMaterials RIS Hubs activities

3.4. Registration and proposal submission using Lyyti

Registrations and proposals can only be submitted using the IT-tool Lyyti filling in the form and attach the proposal as a Pdf document and the budget as an excel table using this link: https://www.lyyti.in/RIS_HUB_call_6204

The **proposals** must be submitted by **Monday, 14 November 2022, 13:00 CET.**

3.5. Appeal and redress procedure

Upon receiving the feedback, the applicant may wish to lodge a request for redress in case there is a concern that there might have been a shortcoming in the way a proposal was evaluated, or if the results of the eligibility checks are incorrect. The redress procedure is not meant to call into question the judgement made by the expert-evaluators. It will consider only procedural shortcomings and factual errors.

Requests for redress should be raised within one month of the reception of the evaluation feedback sent by EIT RawMaterials, and should be sent to compliance@eitrawmaterials.eu. Requests must:

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

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

Please note:

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

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- A re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the quality assessment of a proposal. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on the other criteria.

- The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score.

- Only one request for redress per proposal will be considered by the committee.

- All requests for redress will be treated confidentially.