



ACCESS2

**FUNDING KNOWLEDGE
EUROPEAN NETWORKS**

FOR ENTREPRENEURS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS



JUMPSTARTER



Funded by the
European Union

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Foreword

Dear Innovators and start-up co-founders,

Choosing the entrepreneurial path can be intimidating, challenging and sometimes lonely. But you are not alone in this journey. Our intention in creating this booklet is to give you a compass that helps you navigate the opportunities and supporters available for innovators and technology-based start-ups coming from the Western Balkans.

EIT Communities gather passionate people to support innovative solutions to the most pressing challenges of our time and accelerate them to reach the market and European citizens quickly. Once you decide the onboard the start-up journey, we open the door for the most committed innovators, connecting you with pan-European initiatives.

We work with local accelerators and incubators to understand the challenges and needs and develop our programs in collaboration with them to address these needs. Our team consists of doers and pathfinders working on “rough terrain” connecting Emerging European countries into the European innovation bloodstream. We saw different individual and systemic challenges and worked out a collaborative approach to break down the barriers.

The EIT Jumpstarter team is committed to showing the next steps after the program and helping you to become successful start-up owners by offering you the different stages in the technology start-up journey. There are many opportunities, supporting organisations and programs where you find support to build up your business and access knowledge, funding, and the European innovation networks.

We hope that with the help of the booklet, each team from the Western Balkans will be able to find the best next step on the rocky road of the start-up journey. You are not alone; this European community of start-up enthusiasts is here to support you.



**Dora
Marosvölgyi**

Director

Cross-KIC Strategic
Regional Innovations

EIT Health



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WHO WE ARE?

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is an independent EU body boosting Europe’s ability to innovate. The EIT nurtures entrepreneurial talent and supports new ideas, bringing together the “knowledge triangle” of leading companies, universities and research centres to form dynamic cross-border partnerships called Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), or EIT Communities.

Since 2017 EIT Communities have been working jointly to close the skills gap between the developing and more developed parts of Europe, encourage more entrepreneurial mindset change to increase the competitiveness of the Emerging European regions by supporting the commercialisation of innovative technology-based projects, developing the local innovation ecosystems by connecting the key stakeholders.

We do it in the Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations Programme framework, which brings together all eight EIT Communities in a neutral environment to enhance cross-industrial collaboration to support more talents and SMEs and get them into the European innovation bloodstream.

How can we achieve this? By providing a safe environment for innovators to test their solutions, connect them with potential customers to validate the need for their innovation and bring key opinion leaders and national authorities to the same table to discuss future trends. Our working model is to connect the key players: corporations, research institutes, and universities all across Europe, where everyone shall contribute according to their expertise. We are lively communities working on solving the most pressing challenges of our time: healthcare, agri-food, climate change, raw materials, green energy, digital, urban mobility and manufacturing; because we want to create an environment in which innovation can thrive and reach the market.

In the Western Balkans, we focus on:

- providing knowledge about European markets and funding opportunities; and access to pan-European thematic innovation networks
- training young people locally in entrepreneurship and enabling their participation in European programs
- providing support and expertise to decision-makers and authorities in cross-cutting topics, such as innovation, entrepreneurship, and technology transfer; and about the latest trends in our industries to support them in designing strategies and plans in a coordinated cross-regional approach through joint programing

We design our activities along with synergies with local partners, authorities, stakeholders and regional or international organisations from the Western Balkans (e.g. Regional Cooperation Council, Enterprise Europe Network, UNDP, EBRD, World Bank), identifying the needs and building on already existing initiatives to avoid duplication and maximising the efficiency of our efforts to the benefit of the local innovators and entrepreneurs.

2

TECH STARTUP JOURNEY

Launching a technology-based start-up is challenging; it needs the right team, validation of the technology validation of the need, the suitable business model, finding your market to play in, funding and network. We have good news for you; you are not alone in this journey.

Communities are dedicated to supporting innovative start-ups from the earliest stage. Whether you have a creative project idea and want to check the business potential for it, are you after partners, funding or knowledge. We have an extensive network of international players committed to helping get ideas out of the lab and on the market. Our programs cover a technology start-up’s most critical early years to bridge the “valley of death”. This is the riskiest period, where the technology can fail, start-ups can discover that there is no market need for their solution (or the market is not ready for it yet), or even the team can fall apart – to name a few reasons why start-ups fail. Innovators and young start-ups need a safe place for trial and error, where they are pushed out of their comfort zone to learn from their peers and mentors and validate the real-life need of their product or service idea.

PRE-ACCELERATION STAGE

Do you have a business idea or a research project that you want to commercialise?

Are you alone or working with friends and colleagues? Do you want to test if your idea or project has business potential? Then you are at the incubation / pre-acceleration stage. In this stage, you need to validate the need for your solution, test the technical side, and find a suitable business model and entry market.

ACCELERATION STAGE

Do you have a prototype or a minimum viable product?

Did you validate the technology? Do you have your start-up with the key team members on board? Are you looking for seed money and support to go to the market? Then you are in the acceleration stage. In this stage, you will need an in-depth understanding of your market and customer’s needs, a strong value proposition, and funds.

SCALING STAGE

Do you want to bring your business to the next level?

Are you ready to grow? Are you prepared to go international? Then you are at the scaling phase. In this stage, you will need an understanding of the dynamics of your new target market (the competitive landscape, the customers’ decision-making and barriers to adoption). You will need to understand the regulatory frameworks and any implementation obstacles.

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EIT JUMPSTARTER

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: pre-acceleration program helps to transform innovative project ideas into validated start-ups. EIT Jumpstarter is suitable for individuals with an innovative business idea in the healthcare, agri-food, raw materials, energy, urban mobility or manufacturing and New European Bauhaus who want to gain a practical insight into what it means to run a business and establish a start-up.

Prizes in each thematic field at the EIT Jumpstarter Grand Final are:

<p>1st</p>  <p>EUR 10,000</p>	<p>2nd</p>  <p>EUR 7,000</p>	<p>3rd</p>  <p>EUR 5,000</p>
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and one Special prize available for all finalists regardless of their thematic field:



EUR 5,000

TARGET AUDIENCE:

idea holders, innovators, researchers, MA and PhD students, and university projects. The program is NOT available to already incorporated entities.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

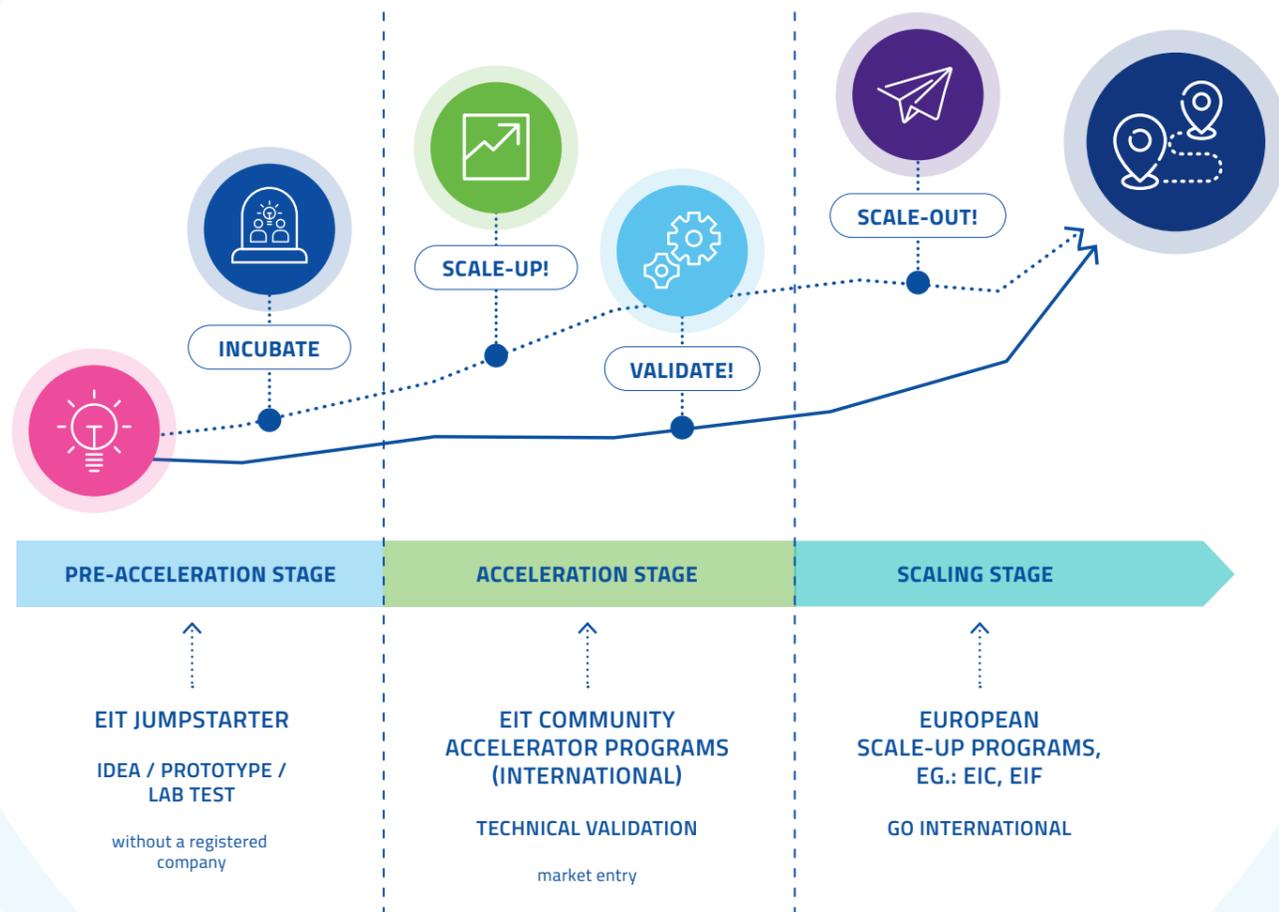
Countries eligible to take part in the programme from the **Cross-KIC RIS** project are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion, Martinique, Mayotte and Saint-Martin (France), the Azores and Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain).

EIT Jumpstarter is suitable for individuals with an innovative business idea in the healthcare, agri-food, raw materials, energy, urban mobility or manufacturing and New European Bauhaus who want to gain a practical insight into what it means to run a business and establish a start-up.



DURATION:
9 months

Below you will see how we hand-in-hand support start-ups with local accelerators, incubators and universities.



DO YOU HAVE AN INNOVATIVE IDEA AND WANT TO JUMPSTART YOUR BUSINESS?



With the creative community, advanced know-how, unique programme, expert trainers and mentors, this is EIT Jumpstarter. With the contribution of best-in-class experts, an innovative community, and unique know-how, we aim to support idea-holders to turn their ideas into business. We help innovators and entrepreneurs build a viable business model around their innovative product or service idea and validate it. If their business idea is sustainable, we encourage them to register their company.

The main aim of the program is to unleash the innovation potential in the Emerging European regions, bringing talents, international opportunities and networks to help them while staying locally through the EIT Jumpstarter and, on the other hand, strengthening our local partners and Hubs network in this region for more effective support of the local innovators. We created EIT Jumpstarter to address the needs of the innovation ecosystem of Emerging European regions. Countries face similar challenges; they have enormous innovation potential with bright scientific minds, but the research results will likely remain within the labs. At the same time, there is a significant number of needs that have been unmet from the corporate side. To overcome these challenges, connect the innovative solutions with the industry's articulated demands and increase our regions' competitiveness, six EIT Communities teamed up to jointly run EIT Jumpstarter. The competition is organised by EIT Health, EIT RawMaterials, EIT Food, EIT InnoEnergy, EIT Manufacturing and EIT Urban Mobility. They are six Knowledge and Innovation Communities of EIT, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology. They bring together businesses, research centres, and universities to create a favourable environment for flourishing creative thought and innovation. EIT is a valuable, credible partner to get your business idea up and running.



Graduates of the program possess the skills and knowledge to launch their company. As part of the alumni community, they receive further support and dedicated advice from the EIT Communities regarding the next stage of their start-up journey. We introduce teams to partners, VCs, regulatory bodies and companies that can produce their products, their first buyer or a test site. They meet major innovation hubs in Europe, which is essential when they want to enter foreign markets.



We have trained more than 500 tech start-up teams since 2017, among whom 10% established their venture during the program each year. In 2019 EIT Jumpstarter won the Best Association Training Initiative Award of the European Association Awards and, in 2020, the Young Empowerment Initiative Award from Emerging Europe. **Do you want to jump with us?**

More information: www.eitjumpstarter.eu

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EIT COMMUNITIES' ACCELERATOR PROGRAMS

EIT Food - Business Creation program open for the Western Balkans

Seedbed <<



ABOUT THE PROGRAM: a pre-accelerator programme that aims to transform innovative ideas into market-validated business propositions.

The program – delivered across 5 EU Hubs – is focused on supporting three participant groups with business propositions underpinned by science and technology that could transform the food system:

- Entrepreneurial Teams seeking to validate the commercial potential of their innovation
- Science Entrepreneurs seeking to validate the commercial potential of technology they are developing as a student, academic or employee at a Research Organisation or University
- Recently incorporated companies (spinouts or startups, typically less than a year old) seeking to validate the commercial potential of their innovation



TARGET AUDIENCE:

individuals, scientists, and aspiring entrepreneurs driven to solve our food system's complex challenges.



DURATION:

6 months



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

Business propositions must be underpinned by scientific or technological innovations with proof of concept established. They must fall under one of the six of EIT Food's Focus Areas:

- Sustainable Agriculture
- Sustainable Aquaculture
- Alternative Proteins
- Digital Traceability
- Circular Food Systems
- Targeted Nutrition

If applying as a team: one of the founders must be a citizen or resident of an EU member state or associated country.

If applying as a startup: a company must be established in an EU member state or associated countries.

More information: www.eitfood.eu/projects/Seedbed

Accelerator Network <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: EIT Food Accelerator Network (EIT FAN) is a programme that aims to fast-track science and technology-based innovations that are helping to solve global food system challenges.

Our leading EIT Food partner organisations manage the programme, operating from different regional hub locations in Europe. Each hub connects impactful agrifood startups with industry-leading corporate and research partners to pilot innovative technology and drive the ultimate goal of every business: a successful market adoption.

This is your opportunity to move your startup beyond acceleration – to become part of a rich ecosystem of business and research institutions to help you transition from an early-stage company to a global scale-up, disrupting the food system to make it more sustainable and healthy, and trusted. Are you ready to partner with world-leading corporates and research institutions in the agrifood space?



TARGET AUDIENCE:

from early-stage companies to impact impact innovators.



DURATION:

4 months



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Be a resident, citizen or legal entity based in a Member State of the European Union (EU) or Europe associated countries
- Be actively looking to bring to market an innovation underpinned by deep science, engineering and technology at a readiness level 4 ("technology validated in the lab") and customer readiness level below 4, with the primary business idea formulated that can be validated on the programme
- Have a technological solution within the scope of one of EIT Food focus areas: targeted nutrition, sustainable aquaculture, sustainable agriculture, alternative proteins, digital transformation of traceability or circular food systems
- Not having received more than €60,000 in EIT Food financial support (subgrants or prizes) per calendar year and per applicant.

More information: <https://www.eitfan.eu/>

RisingFoodStars <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: The RisingFoodStars Association is a network organisation for successful, game-changing early agrifood scaleups, enabling its members to participate as Partners in all EIT Food activities.

The value proposition includes 1, easy access and personalised introductions to world-leading corporates, academia, investors and research organisations; 2, increased visibility through accessing high-impact international agrifood and startup events and our social media; 3, backing from a 'trusted network', including names as Pepsico, Danone, Nestlé, Cambridge University, and TUM; 4, individual support to scale up, raise investment, and tackle typical startup growing pain points.

Membership comes in terms of three consecutive financial years against a fee of €3.000 per financial year. We waive the fee for the accession year.



TARGET AUDIENCE:

The programme addresses early scaleups that are past the ideation phase, have paying customers and are poised for significant growth and global scale. RisingFoodStars them grow and scale impact faster – from market testing new ideas, providing support from experts, connections to corporate partners across the food industry and access to investors.



DURATION:

4 months



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- You have your legal entity based in a member state of the European Union (EU) or Horizon Europe associated countries;
- You are a SMALL sized company as defined in the EU recommendation 2003/361 (between 5 and 49 employees and less than 10 million turnover or balance sheet);
- You expect to conclude a Series A within the next 6-12 months, or you have recently raised a Series A;
- You are past the ideation phase, with preferably paying customers and at least a product-market fit in your home market;
- You have a technological solution within one of the six key focus areas of EIT Food;
- You have the ambition of solid growth, and your next milestone is to scale your business across borders.

More information: <https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/risingfoodstars>

TeamUp <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: TeamUp matches leading technologists with entrepreneurial business professionals and supports them on their journey to co-create truly impactful agrifood ventures.

In Southern and Eastern Europe, there is a worrying gap between the number of innovative agrifood technologies developed at universities and the number of such technologies reaching the market. Our research shows that impactful startups with solid teams are better placed to commercialise promising agrifood solutions and transform our food system.

TeamUp is a program that finds and matches brilliant innovators with compatible and complementary profiles. TeamUp provides essential tools and support to build your startup, including expert guidance, world-class training, mentorship, networking and funding. These new teams will be nurtured to create strong co-founder relationships with aligned purposes and values.



TARGET AUDIENCE:

technologists with agrifood solutions and entrepreneurial-minded business and startup professionals



DURATION:

7 months



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- They are citizens/residents of one of the following RIS (Regional Innovation Scheme) countries: Albania*, Armenia*, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Faroe Islands*, Georgia*, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova*, Montenegro*, Republic of North Macedonia*, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia*, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey*, Ukraine*;
- They have received less than 60,000 EUR in funding from EIT Food in 2021;
- They have an innovative agrifood technology/solution or have experience in business development/entrepreneurship;
- You have submitted a complete application in English and have a proficient level of English to participate in the TeamUp programme fully (approximately C1 level);

* Applicants from these countries will be considered eligible only if the applicant's country of origin signs the Association Agreement for Horizon Europe before the end of the application deadline of April 18, 2022.

More information: <https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/teamup>

Test Farms <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: Test Farms links agricultural startups with farmers and testing-land.

Need help with testing your agritech solution? Apply for Test Farms and validate your product with farmers! Test Farms links agricultural startups with farmers and testing-land. By enabling these links, EIT Food wants to help innovative agritech ideas validate and test their products and services, showcase their business to customers and investors, and support the technological transformation in European agriculture.



TARGET AUDIENCE:

startups looking to validate their agricultural solutions with farmers or agricultural/pasture land to do a pilot project.



DURATION:

4 months



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

EIT Food is offering the Test Farms program to the following applicants:

- RIS startups - startups registered in countries eligible for the Regional Innovation Scheme
- non-RIS startups - startups not registered in RIS countries = not eligible for the funding from Regional Innovation Scheme.

Participation in the Test Farms program and financial subgrant to support testing needs will be available under specific conditions for eligible RIS startups. Non-RIS startups cannot receive the subgrant. However, they will be given the possibility to join the program and benefit from the match-making and expert support provided by EIT Food. The cost of these services is EUR 1500.

More information: <https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/test-farms>

CONTACT:

For more information about available EIT Food programs for the Western Balkans, please contact **Adam Strzelecki** at adam.strzelecki@eitfood.eu or **Malgorzata Kowalińska** at malgorzata.kowalinska@eitfood.eu

EIT Health – Business Creation programs open for the Western Balkans

InnoStars Awards <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: validate the need for start-ups' healthcare innovation, attract investors and shorten the time it takes to get your ideas to market.

InnoStars Awards is a competitive programme for EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) countries designed to help your start-up validate the need for your healthcare innovation, attract investors and shorten the time it takes to get your ideas to market.

During the training process, applicants will learn from experts, gain insights into their innovation through interviews with potential customers, investors and partners – and make valuable connections. At the end of the programme, they can earn the opportunity to compete for recognition and additional funding in a pitch contest.

Application: the application for the programme will be judged based on: how well-defined the prototype or minimum viable product is, the value proposition, the novelty and feasibility of the approach, the potential market impact of the innovation, the possible effect on the InnoStars region, the team and the fit with EIT Health's strategic objectives.

Training and mentoring: If the applicant is among the 15 applications accepted, the team will receive €25,000 to cover four months of training and mentoring, including additional training sessions from two different European locations. The team will also have the opportunity to gain further support and invaluable investor connections through EIT Health's world-class network.

Pitch contest: After training, the ten teams with the best business plans will be selected for the pitch contest. The participants could have the chance to pitch their innovations to an international jury of healthcare professionals, representatives of EIT Health, industrial partners and market experts. Along with gaining recognition for the idea, they could win up to €25,000 in additional support to launch the product or service.



DURATION:

4 months



TARGET AUDIENCE:

the programme is for micro and small enterprises, spin-offs and start-ups that already have a prototype or minimum viable product but do not yet have a product or service.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

applicant must be able to participate in English, have an established legal entity and reside in one of these countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain.

More information: <https://eithealth.eu/project/innostars-awards/>

CONTACT: For more information about available EIT Health programs for the Western Balkans, please contact **Balázs Kele** at balazs.kele@eithealth.eu

EIT Manufacturing – Business Creation programs open for the Western Balkans

Switch On Programme <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: a tailored package of support to start-ups in the manufacturing industry.

Switch On is for problem-solving startups that want to start shining. In this programme, the Business Creation team will offer a tailored package of support from the following services to the applicant:

Business development support:

- Access to market – new customers and geographies
- Strategy & roadmap development
- New product/service expansion
- Coaching and mentoring
- IP management services
- Marketing & communication support

Access to finance support:

- Preparing companies for fundraising
- Equity financing consideration by EIT Manufacturing
- Introductions to VCs, European institutions and other early-stage funding opportunities



TARGET AUDIENCE:

companies with a proven prototype or proof of concept for an innovative product with no or low commercial revenues; recently established legal entities or teams planning to do so in the near term.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- have an entrepreneurial team with a minimum of two members and at least one co-founder resident in an EU or Horizon Europe associated country.
- the company is looking to enhance and compliment business development efforts.
- the company is currently looking for access to finance from equity partners or plans to do so in the future.

More information: <https://www.eitmanufacturing.eu/what-we-do/business-creation/opportunities/for-startups/>

Supercharge <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: for scale-ups that want to accelerate their business. In this programme, the Business Creation team will offer a tailored package of support from the following services to the applicant:

Business development support:

- Access to market – new customers and geographies
- Strategy & roadmap development
- New product/service expansion
- Coaching and mentoring
- IP management services
- Marketing & communication support

Access to finance support:

- Preparing companies for fundraising
- Equity financing consideration by EIT Manufacturing
- Introductions to VCs, European institutions and other early-stage funding opportunities



TARGET AUDIENCE:

companies actively looking to grow and have demonstrated meaningful customer traction. It is also operating for more than one year.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- A dedicated full-time team with a headquarters incorporated in an EU or Horizon Europe associated country.
- The company has been operating for more than one year
- The company is looking to enhance and complement its business development efforts.
- The company is currently looking for access to finance from equity partners or will be doing so in the future.

More information: <https://www.eitmanufacturing.eu/what-we-do/business-creation/opportunities/for-scaleups/>

Level Up <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: for SMEs that want to transform their business and take operations to the next level. The Level Up program seeks to support SMEs that plan to transform their operations to improve competitiveness.

In this program, the Business Creation team can offer a tailored package of support from the following services to the applicant:

Services support for the transformation:

- Technology scouting
- Pre-study feasibility assessment of transformation project of the participant
- Dedicated assistance for overall project conceptualisation, facilitation and implementation
- Introduction to first-class experts relevant to the transformation of the participant

Financial support for the transformation:

- Up to 150,000 € towards the realisation of the transformation



TARGET AUDIENCE:

companies that would transform their operations and bring the company to the next level of competitiveness. The company has a transformation project related to the manufacturing lines and the production systems.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- the company meets the EU definition of an SME, including fewer than 250 employees, annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million.
- the headquarters of the company is incorporated in an EU or Horizon Europe associated country, and it has a significant commercial or industrial presence in other EU or Horizon Europe associated countries.
- Commercial presence is greater than 20% of a company's sales, while industrial presence is greater than 20% of a company's workforce.

More information: <https://www.eitmanufacturing.eu/what-we-do/business-creation/opportunities/for-smes/>

CONTACT: For more information about available EIT Manufacturing programs for the Western Balkans, please contact **Verónica Rodríguez** at veronica.rodriguez@eitmanufacturing.eu

EIT RawMaterials – Business Creation programs open for the Western Balkans

Start-Up & SME Booster Call <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: The Booster programme provides support to startups and SMEs to develop innovative products and services that can produce an impact in the raw materials sector or benefit our partners. Booster Call helps get financial support and access to the EIT RawMaterials partner network to scale up businesses.

Besides funding and customised services, the selected startups and SMEs will also access the EIT RawMaterials partner network, participate in our networking events, and gain visibility through EIT RawMaterials network channels. Supported startups and SMEs may join our network as an associate or full members to benefit from the ecosystem fully.

Booster Call provides established companies with support to:

- speed up a technology challenge resulting in a higher TRL, bringing the technology closer to the market
- accelerate market penetration by dedicating financial resources to a specific segment or target market
- facilitate product portfolio diversification, enabling product adaption or new product features to address a concrete market need

Booster Call is open all year long. Three cut-off dates for proposal submission will ensure the smooth selection and operational progress for the selected startups and SMEs.

The financial support is up to a maximum amount of EUR 200,000. As a general principle, economic permission is granted to beneficiaries chosen based on the realistic cost estimate and is paid as a lump sum.



TARGET AUDIENCE:

startups and SMEs; from product to market entry



DURATION:

maximum
12 months



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Raw materials relevant to start-up or spin-off companies at least registered at the time of application (registration certificate to be provided at the grant signature);
- Raw materials innovation- and technology-related SMEs willing to boost their business by introducing new and innovative products or services.
- The program is open to the participants who have an operative branch in one of the EU member countries or Countries Associated with Horizon Europe.

More information: <https://eitrawmaterials.eu/booster-call/>

RawMaterials Accelerator <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: The program is suitable for start-ups who consider that they already have an innovative offering and who see an opportunity in rapidly developing this offering to the exploration, mining, mineral processing, metal & mineral, steel-making and recycling industries as well as suppliers of equipment and tools to these industries.

The Accelerator aims to develop startups to rapidly become suppliers to, and perhaps future partners of, the EIT RawMaterials network. The programme comprises 3 phases – Explore, Build, Grow. Each stage has specific objectives, processes and funding schemes. The support provided consists of individual and group coaching, grants, and anchoring startups in their local and national ecosystems. At the same time, EIT RawMaterials opens up introductions to partners of the EIT RawMaterials Innovation Community on a pan-European level. The funding amount for Phase 1 is EUR 10,000, for Phases 2-3 up to EUR 80,000 combined.



TARGET AUDIENCE:

teams and scalable startups and SMEs, which would improve their market entry success rate and focus on addressing market risks.



DURATION:

3 months
for Phase 1,

6 months
for Phase 2,

6 months
for Phase 3.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

through activities in the area of business creation and support, EIT RawMaterials aims to support new businesses that contribute to our vision of developing raw materials into a major strength for Europe along the whole raw material value chain, as follows:

- Exploration and raw materials resource assessment
- Mining in challenging environments
- Increased resource efficiency in mineral and metallurgical processes
- Recycling and material chain optimisation for End-of-Life products
- Substitution of critical and toxic materials in products and for optimised performance
- Design of products and services for the circular economy



More information: <https://eitrawmaterials.eu/accelerator/>

Regional Innovation Competition <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: The Regional Innovation Competition is open for startups from one of the RIS countries with innovation and business relevant to the raw materials sector. Participation in the program provides a seat at the table of the world's largest innovation community in the raw materials sector.

The Regional Innovation Competition is one of the EIT RawMaterials business creation instruments dedicated to supporting startups from RIS countries. The end of the program is a final pitching event, where the participants pitch their idea in front of a jury. The TOP 3 start-ups selected from the Jury will be awarded: 1st prize: EUR 5,000; 2nd prize: EUR 3,000; 3rd prize: EUR 2,000.



TARGET AUDIENCE:

SMEs (according to the European Commission's definitions) having innovation projects relevant to the raw materials sector; startup or spin-off companies at least registered at the application.

Regional Innovation Competition aims to provide established startups in the RIS region with support to:

- connect with local EIT RawMaterials RIS incubators
- connect with local and pan-European ecosystems and markets
- provide dedicated coaching opportunities
- prepare for entering EIT RawMaterials business creation and support offerings
- realise their business



DURATION:

3-6 months



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

The EIT RawMaterials Regional Innovation Competition is open to any legal entity established in eligible RIS countries. From the Western Balkans region, only Serbia is eligible!

More information: <https://eitrawmaterials.eu/regional-innovation-competition-2021/>

CONTACT:

For more information about available EIT RawMaterials programs for the Western Balkans, please contact:

Tina Benda at tina.benda@eitrawmaterials.eu

EIT Urban Mobility - Business Creation programs open for the Western Balkans

EIT Urban Mobility Accelerator <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: The EIT Urban Mobility Accelerator is an EU-funded programme in five European regional hubs implemented through partners to take early-stage mobility startups to the next level..

EIT Urban Mobility is looking for early-stage startup teams with business ideas that reduce congestion and increase efficiency in the transport system. The selected startups receive EUR 5,000 as a grant, EUR 30,000 worth of support services, including individualised business coaching and training, mentoring, market validation, access to a network of living labs (in collaboration with City Club), business scaling, investor pitching coaching and potential contacts with investors and VC funds. The application period for startups opens in March.



TARGET AUDIENCE:

early-stage start-ups (TRL 4-7) providing solutions on Sustainable City Logistics, Connected vehicles, Urban Air Mobility, Public Realm, Mobility and Energy.



DURATION:

6 months uniquely designed program (June – December)



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- startups should have generated less than € 1 million in revenue (accumulated over startup lifetime).
- no more than max. 5% of the company shares are held outside the eligible countries (no detailed cap table needed).
- startup must be incorporated in EU or EIT Urban Mobility participating countries. The registration certificate will be required to participate in the program.
- a team with at least 2 FTE (not a single founder): minimum 1 team member pursuing the startup full-time (not necessarily connected to monetary compensation).
- founders and employees (e.g. ESOP) should still own more than 70% of shares.
- a transparent, scalable business idea.
- duly justified TRL 4-7
- minimum € 1 billion addressable market
- thematic scopes: shift to active modes of transport; avoid adverse health, safety and environmental impacts of urban mobility; improve urban logistics; improve public transport; improve the quality of public space; improve traffic flow management; avoid transition barriers

More information: <https://www.eiturbanmobility.eu/business-creation/accelerator/>

SME Hub <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: EIT Urban Mobility SME Hub aims to bridge the gap between SMEs, cities, and industry to boost market penetration of innovative urban mobility solutions.

The final objective is to take SMEs closer to the market by providing the tools and resources to pilot their solutions and demonstrate the benefits in natural environments. EIT Urban Mobility partners also implement the SME Hub. SME Hub will select twelve small and medium-sized enterprises, from which at least seven participants will have the opportunity to implement their solutions in real environments.



TARGET AUDIENCE:

Scale-ups (TRL 7-9), Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) as defined in EU recommendation 2003/361, including EU start-ups from EIT regions who have completed our acceleration process or external applicants.



DURATION:

Individualised based on the pilot, 5 to 6 months for those without a pilot.

More information: anna.burgues@eiturbanmobility.eu



Startup Investment <<

ABOUT THE PROGRAM: while the pandemic has taken a heavy toll on the economy, the crisis has also encountered significant opportunities for innovation. In pursuit of leading positive change and business prosperity, EIT Urban Mobility invests up to €100,000 per company in high-impact startups, scale-ups and SMEs to accelerate their journey, continue critical innovation and ultimately transform the European urban mobility landscape.

An EIT UM investment will provide you with capital, position you in the venturing ecosystem, and include you in our European partner network of Corporates, Investors, universities, and Cities. EIT Urban Mobility will be a minority shareholder, EIT Urban Mobility will be a passive shareholder, and EIT Urban Mobility shares will be diluted in case of capital increases.



TARGET AUDIENCE:

Startups, scale-ups and SMEs currently fundraising or preferably already in an ongoing funding round.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Incorporated not more than ten years ago
- Less than 100 employees on their payroll
- Innovative Product/Service contributing to at least one of the EIT Urban Mobility Focus Areas: Active Mobility, Sustainable City Logistics, Creating Public Realm, Future Mobility and Mobility & Energy

More information: <https://www.eiturbanmobility.eu/eit-urban-mobility-startup-investment-2021/>

CONTACT:

For more information about available EIT Urban Mobility programs for the Western Balkans, please contact **Anna Burgues** at anna.burgues@eiturbanmobility.eu

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REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

EBRD Star Venture Program

The EBRD's Star Venture programme (<https://www.ebrd.com/starventure/overview>) targets promising start-ups, accelerators and consultants to unleash their full potential. Working with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) for over 25 years has given the EBRD unique expertise in bolstering the start-up ecosystem across its regions. Target countries from the region: Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, and Kosovo. Target audience: higher-level startups already on the market with existing products or services. Focus: general.

South Central Ventures

South Central Ventures (<https://sc-ventures.com/>) was founded in 2015 and, together with the Enterprise Innovation Fund, is targeting tech companies in the Balkans. Up to date, they have offices in Belgrade, Zagreb, and Skopje. Their funds are generally allocated to the early stages and growth investments to help the international business expansion of the Balkan tech start-ups. Some of their latest projects are Womenpreneurs Balkan Bootcamp and TradeCore (a platform allowing FinTech companies to go to the market faster). Target audience: higher-level startups which have the intention to reach international markets. Thematic focus: Technology sector.



6

COUNTRY OPPORTUNITIES

MONTENEGRO

IEC Tehnopolis  **Tehnopolis**
Inovaciono Preduzetnički Centar

<http://www.tehnopolis.me/online/mne/home/>

Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center (IEC) Tehnopolis is an official partner and local service provider of EIT Jumpstarter and the most important centre for developing startup companies and entrepreneurship in Montenegro. As one of the critical actors in creating and reshaping the Montenegrin innovation ecosystem, Tehnopolis provides a range of infrastructure and support measures that enable the opening of new companies and the development of businesses based on new, innovative ideas and technologies. **Target audience:** from an early stage. **Thematic focus:** general.

DigitalDen  **DigitalDen**

<https://digitalden.me/>

Digital Den is a startup incubator program designed to help new startups succeed. The incubator allows entrepreneurs to solve problems typically associated with starting a startup by providing technical support, funding, mentoring, and training.

Science and Technology Park Montenegro


NAUČNO TEHNOLOŠKI PARK
Crne Gore

<https://www.ntpark.me/>

Science and Technology Park Montenegro is founded to support and strengthen the potential for economic growth and development of Montenegro through the establishment and growth of the companies/teams in high tech activities. A unique activity aspect of Science and Technology Park Montenegro supports developing and commercialising innovative ideas and projects.

Ministry of Economic Development



<https://www.gov.me/>

Activities are directed at enhancing the competitiveness, investment environment and cooperation with the business community. The business environment is continuously being improved, facilitating more explicit conduct of business operations for small and medium-sized enterprises and strengthening entrepreneurship. A business-friendly climate is being created, establishing preconditions to develop a modern Montenegrin industry. In our country, strategic planning of tourism development is pursued, developing sustainable, green, smart and inclusive all-year-round tourism products based on current trends.

Mtel Digitalna Fabrika



<http://digitalnafabrika.mtel.me/>

Mtel Digitalna Fabrika is a development centre for entrepreneurship and innovation. Mtel Digitalna Fabrika deals with IT ideas and provides perfect conditions for establishing and developing businesses. It helps young entrepreneurs to start their projects and grow a successful business as soon as possible. They have concrete support, a co-working space, technical support, a Startup program, administrative and legal advice, an excellent team and the possibility to network with other entrepreneurs.

Digitalizuj.me DIGITALIZUJ.ME

<https://digitalizuj.me/>

Digitalizuj.me is a digital community seeking to help citizens and organisations in Montenegro understand and take advantage of exciting new opportunities for social change and business in the digital environment.

RBC Berane



<https://www.rbcberane.me/>

D.O.O. The Regional Business Center (RBC) was established in 2015 within the project „Establishment of a regional business centre with a business incubator in the northeast of Montenegro”, funded mainly by the European Union and implemented by the Municipality of Berane in partnership with Regional Development Agency for Bjelasica, Komovi and Prokletije and the municipalities of Andrijevica, Bijelo Polje, Plav and Rozaje, which are its founders.

ICT Cortex



<https://ictcortex.me/>

ICT Cortex brings together renowned ICT companies and communities in Montenegro, which have recognised the importance and necessity of their organisation for the digital development of Montenegro. Through synergy, they create new business opportunities and contribute to digital transformation at the international level, but they also promote Montenegro as a significant country for IT investments.

SERBIA

Startit

<https://startit.rs/>

Startit is an EIT Food hub and an official partner and local service provider of EIT Jumpstarter. It has operated since the beginning of 2007, and they have significantly contributed to the development of the Serbian domestic IT community, the promotion of entrepreneurship, innovation and knowledge sharing. Startit provides co-working centres in different cities in Serbia, and their accelerator program, Startit Rast, is one of the best in the country.

Science Technology Park Belgrade



<https://ntpark.rs>

Science Technology Park Belgrade supports startups and growing companies in developing and commercialising innovative products and services. STP Belgrade's member companies produce more than 110 innovative products and services, employing more than 800 highly educated persons and exporting to more than 40 countries worldwide! Since the formation of STP Belgrade in 2015, they have supported the development of more than 100 companies through the BITF Inkubator.

ICT Hub



www.icthub.rs

ICT Hub is a centre for technology entrepreneurship and innovation located in the city centre of Belgrade. They offer co-working space to their members, and they provide several lectures and workshops to them. Otherwise, through their ICT Hub Venture, they invest in promising ideas.

Impact Hub Belgrade

<https://belgrade.impacthub.net/>



Impact Hub Belgrade is a small business accelerator which offers various startup and scale-up programs for entrepreneurs, SMEs and startups. It contributes to the development and promotion of entrepreneurship. Impact Hub Belgrade is also a co-working space for networking, cooperation and exchange of practice and knowledge.

In Centar

<https://www.incentar.org/>



In Centar is a small team and unique business platform that contributes to creating a new generation of innovative entrepreneurs. Achieving synergy between sustainable and responsible business practices, In Centar contributes to developing the region's startup ecosystem and entrepreneurial environment. With a clear orientation towards entrepreneurship, the synergy between sustainability and profitability. In Centar is a hub where clients get a "one-stop-shop" service model that helps them develop and implement their sustainable business. Their program, StartIN held by well-known people from the Serbian tech scene.

Business Incubator Novi Sad

<http://inkubator.biz/>



Business Incubator Novi Sad is a place where ideas become successful business ventures. The goal is to help young companies find their way to the market. Their focus is on supporting projects based on knowledge and new technologies with high scalability potential. They are specialised in working with teams in information and communication technologies and creative industries. They also organise various training and workshops and provide co-working spaces in their office.

Startup Center Nis

<https://www.startupcentarnis.org/>



Startup Center Nis is an incubator for young people's ideas and business ventures. They offer support to entrepreneurial spirit and the development of creativity among students and innovative start-up companies in science and advanced technologies on their path to maturity. It was established as a joint initiative of the Faculty of Electronic Engineering and the City of Nis. It represents the first step toward building the Science Technology Park in Nis.

Serbia Innovation Fund

<http://www.inovacionifond.rs/cir/>



Active since 2011, The Fund's mission is to support the development of innovation through appropriate financial, technical and advisory support instruments to empower innovative enterprises and strengthen the link between research and development on the one hand and the business sector on the other, respecting the highest ethical, financial and business standards and practices.

Development Agency of Serbia

<https://ras.gov.rs/>



Development Agency of Serbia is a government organisation offering a wide range of services, including support to direct investments, competitiveness, and export promotion, leading the implementation of projects aiming to improve Serbia's attractiveness and reputation and increase economic and regional development.

Serbian Venture Network

<https://www.seven.rs/>



Serbian Venture Network is an association committed to developing the start-up and entrepreneurship ecosystem in Serbia and South-East Europe. Seven is dedicated to promoting equity-based investment models and supporting startups, innovative entrepreneurs, and fast-growing companies to acquire investments and develop. The organisation of high profile events, networking between investors and entrepreneurs, mentoring, education and training, advocacy efforts, and providing business advisory and consultancy services to companies seeking investment are some of the Serbian Venture Network activities.



REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Accelerator UKIM

<https://accelerator.ukim.mk/>



UKIM is an official partner and local service provider of EIT Jumpstarter; it is a business-technology accelerator established to identify and support the growth of promising technology entrepreneurs, startups, spin-offs and scale-ups in the Republic of North Macedonia. Support includes tailored pre-acceleration and acceleration programs, early-stage investments and access to international markets, networks and communities.

Agency for Promotion of Entrepreneurship of the Republic of Macedonia

<http://www.apprm.gov.mk/>



APERM is a public institution with a mandate to implement governmental policies for SMEs and support entrepreneurship, competitiveness and innovation. The Agency supports the self-employment programme and provides business plan development services and mentoring via its regional centres. It delivers training for entrepreneurship promotion and business plan development for youth and students.

Business Confederation of Macedonia

<https://bcm.mk/en/bcm/>



Business Confederation of Macedonia supports entrepreneurship and MSMEs and contributes to economic growth. Established in 2001, they enlist 8.500 companies in 13 business associations with two regional offices in Prilep and Tetovo and their head offices in Skopje. They support entrepreneurship development and provide non-formal education.

CEED Hub

<https://ceedhub.mk>



CEED Macedonia founded CEED Hub. It is a multifunctional place that offers co-working space, events, and educational programmes for entrepreneurs, startups, and freelancers. CEED Hub provides an opportunity for networking and expanding business networks and access to finance and mentorship. They organise pitching events for startups and individuals in the presence of the CEED Business Angels Club.

Economic Chamber of Macedonia

<http://www.mchamber.org.mk/>



Economic Chamber of Macedonia brings together over 15,000 business members, of which 94 per cent are small and medium enterprises. They offer services in The Centre for Education and Human Resource Development and contribute to creating entrepreneurial spirit, competitiveness, and professionalism in the business sector.

Enterprise Europe Network

<http://een.ec.europa.eu/about/branches/mk/skopje>



Enterprise Europe Network is active in more than 60 countries bringing together 3,000 experts from 600 member organisations. The network provides help and support to SMEs in their business innovation and growth internationally.

Fund for Innovation and Technology Development

<https://fitr.mk/>



FITR was established in December 2013 to promote the innovation that will further contribute to developing a competitive economy based on knowledge. The main goal is to stimulate and support innovation in micro, small and medium enterprises, resulting in technological development, job creation and economic growth. The operations include three main objectives: co-funding MSMEs, funding new ventures (micro and small companies, foundations and accelerators), and positively contributing to the national economy in the long run. They also provide business plan development and mentoring for the interested entities.

SEEU Tech Park Tetovo

<https://techpark.seeu.edu.mk/>



SEEU Tech Park Tetovo is a technology park at the South-East European University campus. It was founded in 2013 by the South-East European University Board. The main focus is creating an environment that will motivate and encourage young people to focus on start-up creation and building networks among the MSMEs companies and start-ups, which in the long run will result in new job opportunities. Some of the services that SEEU offers are training, incubator services, and work facilities.

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KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION COMMUNITIES

Seavus Accelerator



<https://seavusaccelerator.com/>

Seavus Accelerator is a multi-functional working space for start-ups and entrepreneurs, digital artists and online media. Its focus is on working with start-ups in the IT industry and creative industries start-ups. It offers customised programmes for creative minds, coders and engineers, curious storytellers and critical thinkers.

Startup Macedonia



<https://startupmacedonia.mk/>

Startup Macedonia strives to realise the full potential of Macedonian start-ups through a connected ecosystem that supports their development. Helps in building business in North Macedonia by providing detailed information about launching a business and doing research in the efficient and competitive startup ecosystem.

SmartUp Innovation Lab



<https://www.innovationlab.mk/>

SmartUp was established in 2014 to make the most of technology to advance human development by encouraging innovative solutions to social and economic problems. SmartUp is set with a mission to catalyse social innovation in the country and the region. SmartUp acts as an eco-system builder connecting different stakeholders to promote and develop social innovation, thus building a socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable society.

X Factor Accelerator



<https://xfacc.mk/>

X Factor Acceleration provides financial and educational support for developing startups with excellent growth potential.



EIT Climate-KIC is working to accelerate the transition to a zero-carbon economy. Supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, EIT Climate-KIC identifies and supports innovation that helps society mitigate and adapt to climate change. EIT Climate-KIC believes that a decarbonised, sustainable economy is not only necessary to prevent catastrophic climate change but presents a wealth of opportunities for business and society.

Their vision is a prosperous, inclusive, climate-resilient society with a circular, net-zero emissions economy by 2050, and the mission is to catalyse systemic change through innovation in areas of human activity that have a critical impact on greenhouse gas emissions – cities, land use, materials and finance – and to create resilient climate communities.



EIT Digital embodies the future of innovation by mobilising a pan-European multi-stakeholder open-innovation ecosystem of top European corporations, SMEs, startups, universities and research institutes, where students, researchers, engineers, and business developers and investors address the technology, talent, skills, business and capital needs of digital entrepreneurship.

EIT Digital builds the next generation of digital ventures, digital products and services, breeds digital entrepreneurial talent, and answers specific innovation needs by, for example, finding the right partners to bring technology to the market, supporting the scale-up of digital technology ventures, attracting talent and developing their digital knowledge and skills.



EIT Health is one of the most significant healthcare initiatives worldwide, connecting approximately 150 partners exceptional in business, education, research and health service delivery.

Our EIT RIS program is comprehensive, with the double goal of developing innovation ecosystems in targeted regions and providing access for local actors to best-in-class EIT Health programs. Our mission is to accelerate entrepreneurship and innovation to address three key challenges: promoting healthy living, supporting active ageing, and improving healthcare.



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

EIT RawMaterials unites more than 120 core and associate partners and 180+ project partners from leading industries, universities and research institutions from more than 20 EU countries. Partners of EIT RawMaterials are active across the entire raw materials value chain, from exploration, mining and mineral processing to substitution, recycling and circular economy. EIT RawMaterials aims to significantly enhance innovation in the raw materials sector by sharing knowledge, facilitating matchmaking activities, developing innovative technologies and supporting business creation.



EIT Food is a pan-European partnership with a consumer-centred approach to empower innovators, entrepreneurs and students to develop world-class solutions to societal challenges, accelerate innovation, create jobs and increase Europe's competitiveness as one of the largest food-related initiatives worldwide; EIT Food wants Europe to lead a global revolution in food innovation and production.

The ambition of EIT Food is to redesign the way our food is produced, delivered, consumed and recycled and to create a future-proof and effective food sector which supports a sustainable and circular bio-economy.



EIT InnoEnergy brings people and resources together, catalysing and accelerating the energy transition. New ideas, products and solutions that make a real difference, and new businesses and people to deliver them to market.

Operating at the centre of the energy transition, InnoEnergy builds connections worldwide, bringing together innovators and industry, entrepreneurs and investors, graduates and employers.



EIT Manufacturing is an Innovation Community within the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) – that connects the leading manufacturing actors in Europe. Fuelled by a strong interdisciplinary and trusted community, we will add unique value to European products, processes, and services – and inspire the creation of globally competitive and sustainable manufacturing.

EIT Manufacturing will establish an innovation community and build a network of ecosystems where people can acquire skills and find opportunities; and where innovators can attract investors and accede venture capital. For that purpose, EIT Manufacturing brings together 50 European leading partners from business, education and research from 17 countries.



EIT Urban Mobility is one of the largest European initiatives transforming urban mobility with over 130 partners in 20 countries. Their goal is to encourage positive changes in how people move and goods are moved around cities and how people use the public realm to make cities more liveable.

Urban Mobility creates an innovation community to educate and inspire mobility solutions for 21st-century cities. It will avoid fragmentation by encouraging all urban mobility players to work together – with cities and citizens at its heart – and increase social inclusion and equality.

Using cities as living labs, the transportation industry, start-ups and university partners will demonstrate how new technologies could solve real problems in real cities by transporting people, freight and waste in smarter ways.

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REACH OUT TO US

We are a team of enthusiastic people, all passionate about start-ups. Find your peer matching your start-up's thematic field and reach out to us:



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Péter Mogyorósi

Péter Mogyorósi has significant experience in coaching since he provided coaching services for 15 H2020 SME Instrument beneficiaries for five selected start-up companies in 2014 in the framework of the PROFIS Project 100+ companies in North Macedonia.

During the last 25+ years, he has worked as an external consultant on many projects for the European Union, NATO and the United Nations (UNIDO, UN ESCAP), and World Bank. His expertise covers mainly the commercialisation of R&D results, strategic planning, negotiations, the establishment of new co-operations, and business development. He has experience in Europe (unique experience in West-Balkan) and the FarFar Easthina, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, and Singapore).



Dr Ana S. Trbovich

Dr Ana Trbovich is the Grid Singularity co-founder & COO, and Vice-Chair of the Energy Web Foundation. She serves on UNECE Carbon Neutrality Advisory Boards and previously acted as an independent board member at the European Institute for Innovation and Technology (EIT), Axa and the Belgrade Philharmonic. She teaches Innovation and Entrepreneurship at FEFA, a leading business school in Belgrade, Serbia, where she served as Dean from 2012 to 2015. She has consulted on good governance, competitiveness and innovation policy for international organisations, including the EU and the World Bank.



Ana Draskovic

Ana Draskovic is Director, Head of Business Development in the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), overlooking business development across 38 countries in Central Asia, CEE and Northern Africa, and over 30 FDI countries. Ana manages business development teams in Tokyo, Beijing, Seoul, Dubai, Washington DC and London. She focuses*1/6/3 on finding innovative ways of delivering more business across various countries and sectors in which EBRD operates.



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JUMPSTARTER



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