

Budapest, 16 December 2009

European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) launches the first three Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs)

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) announced today its first three Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). KICs are highly integrated partnerships, bringing together excellent higher education, research and business around the topics of climate change mitigation and adaptation ('Climate-KIC'), sustainable energy ('KIC InnoEnergy') and the future information and communication society ('EIT ICT Labs') respectively. The launch of the KICs marks a crucial step in setting up the EIT, which is designed to become a role model for boosting innovation in Europe and thereby contributing to the goals of the future EU 2020 strategy.

José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission welcomed the decision: *"The selection of the first Knowledge and Innovation Communities is a further milestone towards a more innovative Europe. I am looking forward to the KICs to become innovation hotspots that attract the brightest talents from Europe and beyond. They should develop into the 'places to be' for those students, researchers, and entrepreneurs who want to work together in areas of high relevance for our common future."*

Maroš Šefčovič, Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth underlined: *"The KICs will help to bridge those gaps that are still too often hindering an effective cooperation within the knowledge triangle of higher education, research and innovation. I am confident the EIT will help to inspire a change in mindsets, facilitating our readiness for the knowledge society and creating an environment where new ideas can prosper."*

The selected KICs have been chosen from among 20 proposals received in answer to the EIT's first call for KICs earlier this year. The call, which was open from 2 April to 27 August 2009, had been launched in three priority areas: sustainable energy, climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as future information and communication society. It was up to the KIC proposers to define their area of activity within those fields. After evaluations by independent experts, the top two proposals from each priority were invited to hearings with the Governing Board today, 16 December, following which the final decision was taken.

"The overriding criteria for our decision were leadership and excellence. In the Governing Board we were extremely impressed with the response to the call for KICs, which showed a high level of commitment from all interested parties" said Martin Schuurmans, Chairman of the EIT's independent Governing Board. "The KICs are innovation test-beds and we want them to generate a real impact, notably in terms of new business creation, entrepreneurship education and societal benefit. The foremost task of the EIT is now to get the KICs energised by mid next year."

In order to facilitate a rapid and smooth start, the EIT will immediately equip the KICs with a start-up grant of a total amount of 3 million Euro. The KICs are expected to

become fully operational shortly after having signed a seven-year Framework Partnership Agreement with the EIT and after confirmation of the first annual grant agreements towards mid-2010.

See a brief description of the selected KICs in the Appendix.

EIT website: <http://eit.europa.eu>

Appendix: Summaries of the selected Knowledge and Innovation Communities

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Climate-KIC

Concept

Addressing climate change requires a huge transformation of the global economy. Climate-KIC's mission is to accelerate and stimulate the innovation for this transformation and ensure benefits for Europe.

The KIC will achieve this by creating a community with world-renowned innovation capability and climate change knowledge. By 2014, it will be the natural place for companies to locate climate R&D centres, top students to look for climate education, researchers to look for inspiration and policy makers to seek advice. It will have created significant industrial value and high-skill jobs for Europe and built the critical mass to be self-sustaining.

Focus

Climate-KIC will initially focus on achieving excellence in four areas: assessing climate change & managing its drivers, transitioning to low-carbon resilient cities, adaptive water management and zero carbon production. These fields were selected for their mitigation-adaptation potential as well as innovation and job creation opportunities.

Structural elements

The four areas will form the core structural elements, each with a world-renowned lead responsible for the entire chain from education to commercialisation. Work will be embedded in five co-locations responsible for creating local innovation ecosystems to drive entrepreneurship and venture creation, whilst linking into a network of implementation sites. The core partners consist of major companies, academic institutions and regional agencies that have the strength to make the KIC a success. A joint not-for-profit entity will ensure effective governance.

Co-location centres:

London, Zürich, Berlin metropolitan area, Paris metropolitan area, Randstad metropolitan area

Sustainable Energy

KIC InnoEnergy

Concept

InnoEnergy is a strongly integrated alliance of reputable players from the education, research and industry sectors. It was created based on long standing links of cooperation as well as the principles of excellence and transformation. The partners have jointly developed a strategy to tackle the weaknesses of the European

innovation landscape and aim to be the leading motor for innovation in the field of sustainable energy.

Focus

The KIC will create economical and societal value by developing ideas from mind to market. Achieving this aim entails the training of technology leaders with an entrepreneurial mindset as well as connecting key players across the innovation chain through projects, platforms and events. State-of-the-art innovation and entrepreneurial support will be offered and continuously improved. The structural and systemic concept of the partnership will pave the way to a paradigm shift in innovation networks and cooperation. The adopted technological approach covers the most challenging areas of the Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET Plan) and addresses the transition of the system as a whole. The IPR policy and precise support measures provide incentives for the exploitation of research results. In addition, the holistic concepts of education, innovation and technology ensure the integration of the knowledge triangle.

Structural elements

InnoEnergy will systematically produce innovation by creating critical mass and integrating different actors of the knowledge triangle in a sustainable and structured manner. To achieve this, InnoEnergy will be organised and managed as a business. Its installation as a European Company (SE) provides stability and creates self-reinforcing mechanisms leading to sustainability. The managerial processes and mechanisms employed will assure the development of the alliance. Strong commitment of its complementary partners reflected in the jointly developed strategy and the dedicated resources is the key to success of InnoEnergy.

Co-location centres:

CC Germany: Karlsruhe, CC Alps Valleys: Grenoble, CC Benelux: Eindhoven/Leuven, CC Iberia: Barcelona, CC PolandPlus: Krakow, CC Sweden: Stockholm

Future Information and Communication Society

EIT ICT Labs

Concept

EIT ICT Labs, the KIC for the future information and communication society, aims at radical transformation of Europe into a knowledge society with an unprecedented proliferation of internet-based services. It will establish a new partnership between business and academia based on trust, transparency and mobility of ideas and people. The consortium connects world leading companies, globally renowned research institutes and top-ranked universities all dedicated to speeding up innovation to address grand challenges of our society. Committed to an efficient open innovation model, EIT ICT Labs will generate faster transformation of ideas and ICT technologies into real products, services and business, boosting Europe's future competitiveness in all sectors of society.

Focus

EIT ICT Labs will equip students, researchers and business people with skills and inspiration for creativity, risk taking and entrepreneurship. By re-aligning the activities in the European Higher Education Area, the European Research Area and high growth ICT companies the EIT ICT Labs will leverage regional, national, and EU level funding instruments. EIT ICT Labs will foster international top talent and involve under-utilised innovation and entrepreneurial resources such as non-core IPR,

women, students, and cost-driven innovations for the next billion users. Committed to an open innovation approach, the EIT ICT Labs will catalyse the creation of strong ventures and help them to grow to become the future world leaders in the ICT arena.

Structural elements

EIT ICT Labs will build upon five co-location centres – Berlin, Eindhoven, Helsinki, Paris, and Stockholm – and turn these excellent clusters and their partners into a world-class network of innovation hotspots. The consortium covers the entire value chain in the ICT sector, thereby facilitating the capture of new business opportunities in the dynamic ICT sector. Cohesion and efficiency will be achieved by combining strong CEO-type management and clear IPR policies for open innovation with the agility of bottom-up initiatives provided by an extensive network of local and international innovation partners.

Co-location centres: Berlin, Eindhoven, Helsinki, Paris and Stockholm