

## Greater Manchester Brussels Service

# Briefing: The Europe Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs)

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The European Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) bring together the fields of education, technology, research, business and entrepreneurship to provide rapid solutions to emerging societal problems, developing innovative products and services that meet the demands and needs of end users.

Funded through the Horizon 2020 programme the KICs are an integrated part of [the European Institute of Innovation and Technology \(EIT\)](#). This paper provides a brief summary of the role of the five funded KICs - **Climate Change, ICT, Energy, Health and Raw Materials** - as well as providing a brief overview about the three KICs - **Urban Mobility, Sustainable Food and Manufacturing** - that will be funded in 2016 and 2018.

*If you would like the GM Brussels Office to follow any of the issues highlighted in this Policy Briefing please contact a member of the team.*

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## 1. Background

Europe is facing a significant innovation challenge, despite an excellence research base, dynamic companies and creative talent, good ideas are rarely turned into new products or services. To address this huge challenge and to make real changes towards the promotion of a more innovative and entrepreneurial culture the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) was established in 2008.

The EIT is a body of the European Union based in Budapest, Hungary. It was established by the [Regulation \(EC\) No 294/2008](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2008. It became operational in 2010 and it currently employs approximately 50 members of staff, its Director is [José Manuel Leceta](#).

The [Knowledge and Innovation Communities \(KICs\)](#) are the operational arms of the EIT.

## 2. What KICs do?

KICs carry out a whole range of world-class activities encompassing the whole innovation circle within a particular field. A KIC's portfolio of activities typically includes: entrepreneurial education

and training programmes, research and innovation projects, and incubation of, and support to start-ups and ventures. The EIT also encourages cross-KIC collaboration.

KICs are legally and financially structured entities of internationally distributed but thematically convergent partners. These partners involve key actors from the three sides of the knowledge triangle: research, higher education, and innovation-entrepreneurship-business. Each KIC would also have five or six world-class innovation hotspots, building and they leverage on existing European capacities.

KICs must address a long-term horizon of 7 to 15 years, but with short-, mid- and long terms objectives that follow the mission of the KICs.

All KICs has strong leadership by CEOs, annual business plans, including an ambitious portfolio of activities from education to business creation, with clear targets and deliverables, looking for both market and societal impact.

The EIT funding to KICs is maximum 25% of their total overall budget. The remaining 75% comes from a number of public and private sources including EU (non-EIT) funding (e.g. EU R&D funding or structural funds), private funding, participant's own resources.

### 3. The Five Existing KICs

There are currently five KICs set up – the first three launched in 2010 and the last two in 2014.

- [Climate-KIC](#): addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation (Imperial College London and Birmingham involved).
- [EIT ICT Labs](#): addressing information and Communication Technologies (London involved).
- [KIC InnoEnergy](#): addressing sustainable energy (no UK involvement).
- [EIT Health](#): addressing healthy living and active ageing (UK Partners<sup>1</sup>).
- [EIT Raw Materials](#): addressing sustainable exploration, extraction, processing, recycling and substitution (no UK involvement).

### 4. Future Calls

The 2014-2020 Strategy for the EIT highlights that there will be three further calls for KICs in this budget period:

#### 2016:

- Food4Future - sustainable supply chain from resources to consumers
- Added-value manufacturing

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<sup>1</sup> Intel Corporation (UK) Ltd. (Business/ Industry), The Chancellor, Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford (Higher Education), The Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine (Higher Education), The University of Newcastle upon Tyne (Higher Education), West Midlands Academic Health Science Network (West Midlands AHSN) (Public body)

**2018:**

- Urban mobility

The time to start building towards the 2016 calls is now – finding out who key partners in existing consortiums are and who is planning to put forward a bid. Involvement from Greater Manchester can come via public, private or academic bodies.

**Other ways to be involved: EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS)**

The EIT has introduced the [Regional Innovation Scheme \(EIT RIS\)](#) - a structured outreach scheme to support the integration of the Knowledge Triangle and increase the innovation capacity in areas and regions in Europe not directly benefitting from the EIT and its KICs. It is based on a two-way engagement between KICs and selected partnerships from the wider European innovation community.

This is an opportunity for other partners to link closely with the KICs, in particular where, for example, Smart Specialisation Strategies link closely to the EIT and KIC themes. There is no extra funding available to implement this as it is considered that existing local/national funds or even EU Structural Funds can be used.

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