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Request for Proposals

EIT Community Officer of the EIT Community RIS Hub in Serbia

Guidelines

(21702-23 Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations

IMP-XKIC-21702-23)

EIT FOOD

Leuven, Belgium

November 2024

[Eitfood.eu](https://eitfood.eu)



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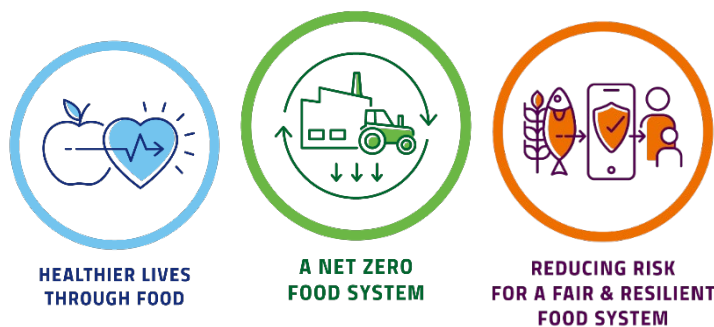
1. Overview

1.1. The EIT Food

EIT Food is the world's largest food innovation community, creating connections right across the food system. Supported by the European Union (EU), we invest in projects, organisations and individuals which share our goals for a healthy and sustainable food system.

We have built a unique not-for-profit business to carry out transformative programmes in skills, education, entrepreneurship, start-up investment and communications. We deliver these programmes in partnership with our members to create a culture and build a community which sees the long-term value in the food innovation we fund.

Our Missions



EIT Food's Missions respond to major societal challenges within the food system. The alignment of our chosen challenges towards United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and EU policy is detailed in our main funding [strategy document](#) agreed with EIT (European Institute of Innovation & Technology). For more about our Missions-led approach please visit [our website](#).

1.2. The European Institute of Innovation and Technology and the Knowledge and Innovation Communities

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is a European Union body established by Regulation (EC) No 294/2008 of the European Parliament and the Council of 11 March 2008.

The EIT's mission is to contribute to the sustainable European economic growth and global competitiveness by reinforcing the innovation capacity of the Member States and the Union and addressing major challenges faced by the European society. It does this by promoting synergies and cooperation through integrating higher education, research, and business in order to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the knowledge triangle integration model. The EIT combines strategic orientation at EIT level, primarily through its Governing Board, with a bottom-up approach within the thematic remit of its Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). **KICs are highly integrated legal entities, which function as pan-European partnerships and bring together excellent universities, research organizations, small-, medium and large enterprises and other innovation actors on a long-term commitment around specific grand societal challenges.**

The Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) are designated by the EIT on the basis of an open competitive call. In 2009, the EIT designated three initial KICs in the fields of sustainable energy (EIT InnoEnergy), climate change adaptation and mitigation (EIT Climate-KIC) and next generation information society (EIT Digital, until 2015 named EIT ICT Labs). In 2014, two new KICs were designated

in the areas of healthy living and active ageing (EIT Health) and raw materials- sustainable exploration, extraction, processing, recycling and substitution (EIT Raw Materials). In 2016 the EIT selected one additional KIC: EIT Food – sustainable supply chain from resources to consumers. In 2018 two KICs were designated in the thematic areas of Urban Mobility and Adding Value Manufacturing. In 2022 the newest KIC was designated to house a sustainable ecosystem for European Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI). Each KIC has been set up as a legal entity and has appointed a CEO to run its operations – a first for an EU initiative. The KICs operate under a great degree of autonomy to define their legal status, internal organization and working methods, and the KICs have been conceived so that they are able to react in an effective and flexible way to new challenges and changing environments.

Each KIC has regional Co-location Centres (Innovation Hubs) with partners in proximity, which is essential to facilitate interaction among members of the regional community. Co-location Centres are the focal point for the KICs' activity within these areas of focus. Co-location Centres build on the existing labs, offices, or campuses of some of the KICs' core partners, which serve as clusters for a particular region, discipline, or task. There they bring together people and teams from across the knowledge triangle for ideation, projects, and other initiatives. Partners in KICs work together with a common goal: a positive societal and economic impact for Europe, to be measured in terms of new business creation, innovation in existing emerging industries, businesses and SMEs, jobs creation, entrepreneurship education and delivery of a new generation of entrepreneurs, and the overall success of the KIC in addressing societal challenges within their priority thematic areas.

1.3. The Regional Innovation Scheme

The EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS)¹ was introduced by the European Parliament and the Council as part of the EIT's Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2014-2020. The EIT RIS is designed to share good practices and experience emerging from the EIT Community's activities, as well as to widen participation in KICs' activities. The aim of the EIT RIS is to help disseminate the knowledge and know-how of the EIT Community and widen participation in the KICs across Europe. The EIT RIS focuses on countries that are moderate and modest innovators according to the European Innovation Scoreboard² and have limited or no participation in the EIT Community's activities.

Countries eligible to take part in the EIT RIS (2021-2024):

- EU Member States: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.
- Horizon Europe Associated Countries: Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, Ukraine.
- Outermost Regions: Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion, Martinique, Mayotte and Saint-Martin (France), the Azores and Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain).

1.4. EIT RIS Hubs in the EIT RIS Countries

In order to promote KICs activities in the EIT RIS countries, KICs engage local organizations to serve as EIT RIS Hubs in the respective EIT RIS countries and regions. KICs have established EIT RIS Hubs in the countries where they did not have presence in terms of Co-location Centres or partners. Hence, an EIT

¹ [The EIT Regional Innovation Scheme \(RIS\): Closing the Innovation Divide in Europe | EIT \(europa.eu\)](#)

² [European innovation scoreboard - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

Hub functions as a representative of the respective KIC and mobilizes local organizations to take part in joint activities with the KICs.

Local organizations are selected through an open competitive selection process and are designated to function as an EIT Hub for a specific KIC. The primary role of an EIT Hub is to ensure the visibility of the EIT Community and raise awareness of the EIT Community activities and cooperation opportunities for local players representing education, business and research areas. The organizations serving as EIT Hubs have a strong footing in local ecosystems and help promote KICs' good practices and know-how of KTI. In addition, EIT Hubs also liaise with the relevant national, regional and local authorities and facilitate the sharing of EIT Innovation Community expertise with them. A network of over 90 EIT RIS Hubs present in all EU Member States and beyond drive the successful implementation of the EIT RIS. The EIT RIS Hubs have helped the EIT Community to significantly widen its geographical spread. Over 1,300 organisations from the EIT RIS countries have become partners of [EIT Innovation Communities](#) while some 2,500 start-up teams from eligible countries were coached and prepared to enter accelerators.

1.5. The EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster

EIT Community SRI Cluster is a joint activity of several KICs, funded by the EIT, to implement cross-sectoral actions to boost innovation in Europe's emerging economies, including those countries eligible for support under the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS). The objective of the Cluster is to bring together all of the EIT KICs in the context of one formal project to enable joint learning and improve the efficiency of the KICs' RIS projects and activities by sharing best practices, and utilizing synergies built on common geographical and thematic interest. The guiding and decision-making body of the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation cluster is the Steering committee composed of two representatives of each KIC. The KICs that actively take part in the EIT Community SRI Cluster are:

- EIT Climate-KIC: Working to accelerate the transition to a zero-carbon economy;
- EIT Digital: Driving Europe's digital transformation;
- EIT Food: Leading a global revolution in food innovation and production;
- EIT Health: Giving EU citizens greater opportunities to enjoy a healthy life;
- EIT InnoEnergy: Achieving a sustainable energy future for Europe;
- EIT Manufacturing: Strengthening and increasing the competitiveness of Europe's manufacturing industry;
- EIT RawMaterials: Developing raw materials into a major strength for Europe;
- EIT Urban Mobility: Smart, green and integrated transport;
- EIT Culture and Creativity: Creatives without borders, innovation without limits.

1.6. EIT Community SRI Cluster actions for Serbia

The focus of the support activities of the EIT Community SRI Cluster in Serbia will be laid upon deep tech solutions in the fields covered by the KICs listed above (without excluding other areas).

The actions of the EIT Community SRI Cluster will aim to address the needs of the Serbian innovation ecosystem primarily by establishment of the EIT Community SRI representation on-the-ground in the form of an EIT Community RIS Hub, managed by an EIT Community Officer.

The EIT Community RIS Hub will help to strengthen the activities of the EIT Community SRI Cluster, as well as the activities run by EIT KICs individually, especially by:

- connecting the EIT Community with relevant Serbian stakeholders,

- assisting in the preparation of EIT Community events and participation in national-level events to promote the EIT Community,
- scouting for high-potential Serbian startups and talents, as well as helping upskilling/reskilling talents into entrepreneurs and paving the way towards increased uptake into EIT or EU programs in general,
- exploring synergies with pan-European programs and organizations also supporting Serbia,
- identifying potential further EIT Community Hub actions for joint delivery and, as appropriate, taking forward the development of these actions into joint proposals.

Detailed definition and scope of the EIT Community RIS Hub and EIT Community Officer can be found below.

EIT Food has been designated the task to launch the procurement procedures on the setting up of the EIT Community Officer in Serbia and to co-ordinate and monitor the operation and activities of the future EIT Community Officer of the EIT Community RIS Hub together with the representatives of the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster and the Steering Committee in the period between 2024 and 2025.

1.7. Definitions

EIT Community RIS Hub (EIT CRH) – is a coordination mechanism, providing local innovators with a unified source of information on all services and opportunities provided by the entire EIT Community, both locally and internationally. It serves as a centralised gateway, for local innovators, to all EIT KICs, irrespective of their local on-the-ground representation. It is established under the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) to foster innovation and entrepreneurship by linking local innovation actors with the broader EIT ecosystem.

EIT Community Officer (ECO - previously referred to in the strategic documents as National Secretary) – An individual or entity appointed to represent and facilitate the activities of the EIT Community RIS Hub at a country level. The EIT Community Officer acts independently of any KIC, and at the same time represents all the KICs to ensure impartiality and avoid conflict of interests. EIT Community Officer is responsible for tasks as outlined in detail in the [“EIT RIS HUBS Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles”](#), specifically in the “List of Tasks and Responsibilities of the National Secretary / EIT Community Officer”. Among ECO’s key duties are facilitating communication, organizing events, consolidating data, and ensuring adherence to EIT standards and principles without exerting hierarchical control over RIS Hub entities.

2. Scope of work

2.1. General terms and conditions

In order to ensure the provision of the services described in section 1.6 (and in details in section 2.2), EIT Food was designated to launch an open service procurement procedure, on behalf of the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster, whose overall goal is to bring together all of the EIT KICs in the context of one formal project to enable joint learning and improve the efficiency of the EIT KICs’ RIS projects and activities by sharing best practices, and utilising synergies built on common geographical and thematic interest.

In this context, EIT Food is aiming to conclude a direct contract for one EIT Community Officer in Serbia. The present procedure aims at the provision of the necessary services and handling the volume of such services as detailed in the EIT RIS Hubs Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles³.

In the framework of the present service procurement, EIT Food is seeking to select one professional to overtake the position of the EIT Community Officer in Serbia. The aforementioned EIT Community Officer will undertake the facilitation and support of the local EIT Community RIS Hub.

The following documents regulate the terms and conditions under which the selected Tenderer (i.e. Contractor) shall fulfil the specific tasks as a result of the current procedure:

- a) The Request for Proposal for the EIT Community Officer of the EIT Community RIS Hub in Serbia;
- b) The Contract to be signed with the selected Tenderer.

The Contracting Authority is responsible for sharing all available, relevant information, existing documents and data on the projects related to which tasks are to be performed by the Contractor based on individual purchase orders, if relevant. The Contracting Authority is responsible for the validity and completeness of all such information.

The specifications of the present Request for Proposals will become an integral part of the contract that will be concluded following the award procedure. Non-compliance to them during the performance of the contract may constitute a reason for EIT Food to terminate it.

The EIT Community Officer's tasks are defined in the "[EIT RIS HUBS Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles](#)", published in September 2022, and revised in December 2023 and shall be used to measure the successful operation of the EIT Community Officer (see Annex 3 of the Pre-Qualification Notice).

The EIT Community Officer will act independently of any EIT KIC, and at the same time will represent all the KICs to ensure impartiality and avoid conflict of interests.

The working language for the performance of tasks is English.

The detailed list of tasks and objectives are listed in the sub-sections below.

2.2. Detailed scope of work

The support that is required and requested should cover the following areas and tasks. All tasks will be in full coordination with the EIT Food (as Contracting Authority) and the EIT Community SRI Cluster Steering Committee to ensure strategic fit and alignment of the selected Contractor, activities, timing, and execution.

2.2.1. Internal Communication and Coordination (EIT Community Officer, EIT RIS Hubs, Community Members and EIT KIC offices)

- Develop a good understanding of the EIT model and keep up to date with the KICs activities;
- Form good working relations with all EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem both nationally and regionally;
- In consultation with the EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem, establish a smooth and efficient working method which limits

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https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ris_hubs_minimum_standards_and_guiding_principles_final_agreement.pdf Please note that the EIT Community Officer was previously referred to as National Secretary and that 'EIT RIS Hubs Minimum Standards and Guiding principles' might be subject to updates.

the administrative burden on the EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, and other EIT KIC Offices, while supporting their minimum functions;

- Design an appropriate work method and necessary tools for information sharing / coordination so as to facilitate continuous information exchange between the Hub Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem both nationally and regionally.
- Keep an up-to-date record of all entities which are members of the EIT CRH (MoU signatories) and involve them in the coordination of the EIT CRH as set out in the EIT CRH governance MoU.

2.2.2. Physical space

- Set up and maintain a physical space, in the location accepted by the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster and the EIT, where local stakeholders can physically, walk-in to obtain information on, as well as gain access to the EIT Community, while additionally, aiding with the EIT's on-the-ground visibility and branding. (Please note that applicants are requested to share their ideas about the physical space of the EIT Community Officer's office - including a cost estimate - in their offer. The EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster can decide to use the offered option or to suggest hosting for the EIT Community Hub if a better option is given. Please see point 3.3 for more details.)

2.2.3. Communication and dissemination

- Serve as a centralised contact gateway for local stakeholders to the EIT Community as a whole and refer stakeholders to contact persons within other relevant EIT KICs, best suited to support their needs.
- Collect information to share through applicable channels related the EIT KICs' activities, events, results, and opportunities of interest to local stakeholders with a view to their dissemination internally and externally.
- Coordinate and support the EIT RIS Hubs local joint communication efforts, including by: managing and updating the EIT Community RIS Hub website, in English and in the local language, with information on EIT Community activities and opportunities, including dedicated sections targeted towards specific stakeholders, including, students, start-ups, national authorities and so on; facilitating the organisation of EIT Community awareness-raising events, including possible open days within the context of INNOVEIT (the EIT's annual innovation forum), and coordinating and supporting the participation of EIT Community representatives in relevant national events.

2.2.4. Financial sustainability

- Coordinate the collection of local funding opportunities and relevant key national events and bring these to the attention to the local Hub Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices.
- Scout for and recommend to the EIT KICs opportunities to implement joint projects financed through other EU / national / regional funds including the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III).
- Contribute to, support and where appropriate, with the agreements of the EIT KICs, lead any horizontal exploratory efforts towards securing co-funding opportunities, including securing meetings with relevant national / regional authorities and facilitate the preparation for the submission of joint proposals for national / regional funding in case of general Cross-KIC actions.

2.2.5. Stakeholder engagement

- To the greatest extent possible, ensure a coordinated approach amongst the EIT KICs' RIS Hubs towards national authorities including relevant NCPs and Managing Authorities.
- Identify the need for and facilitating the implementation of shared services for Hub Members with a view to improve efficiency.
- Suggest and support, including, where appropriate and with the agreement of the EIT KICs, lead, the implementation of possible joint activities amongst the EIT KICs, to be implemented nationally and / or regionally, aligned with relevant RIS3⁴ priorities.

2.2.6. Local intelligence gathering

- At the request of the EIT KICs, support any necessary updating of the local Country-specific roadmap and support its implementation, as appropriate.
- Upon request, provide support, additional to that already offered by the EIT RIS Hubs, to the EIT and the EIT KICs with navigating the local innovation landscape, including by contributing to the development of EIT maps / ecosystem mapping.

2.2.7. Other tasks

- Any other tasks mandated by the EIT Management which, in principle, supports the EIT RIS Hubs to contribute to the achievement of the EIT's Objectives and implementation of its Strategy and Annual Work Programmes.

Alongside the above elaborated key operational areas, the EIT Community Officer is responsible to deploy the governance Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the EIT Community RIS Hubs members, which will regulate their roles and responsibilities, coordination instruments, code of conduct and conflict resolution policy. A standard MoU will be facilitated by the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster.

The key performance indicators and their minimum targets for the EIT Community Officers are included in the Annex 2 and 3 containing extracts from the document 'EIT Community RIS Hubs - the EIT Community Officer's guide to performance monitoring' elaborated by the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovations Cluster. The document is approved by EIT, but please note, that the list of the afore-mentioned minimum KPIs might be changed, however these minimum KPIs should be met by the EIT Community Officers during their yearly activities.

2.3. Location, timing, planning and reporting

2.3.1. Start date & period of implementation

The term of the contract commences on the date of its signature by both parties until the date specified therein. The intended start date is 18 January 2025. It is expected to last until 31st December 2025.

If budget for the service is provided after 2025 and both parties agree, to ensure seamless functioning of EIT Community RIS Hub in Serbia and smooth ECO role takeover, the contracting authority might extend the contract until the date of effective contracting of EIT Community Officer selected for the period after 2025. In such a case the contract shall be extended by no longer than 6 months. The financial terms will remain the same with service fee calculated pro rata for the time of extension.

Estimated dedication for the performance of this assignment is 0,5 FTE, which converts to approximately 800 hours per year.

⁴ [Guide on Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation \(RIS3 Guide\) - Smart Specialisation Platform \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.eu)

As there have been more open procurement procedures published parallelly related to the EIT Community Officer in the RIS regions, a longer procurement procedure is envisaged.

Timeframe for the provision of services

Step	Period	Month	Description	Additional comments
Set up	Month 1, year 1	January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting with successful applicant shall take place in January 2025.⁵ Delivery of the services will start on January 18, 2025. In case the contract is not signed before January 18, 2025, the service delivery will start as soon as the contracting is finalized. 	
Onboarding and kick-off	Month 1, year 1	January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EIT Community Officer onboarding and kick-off. EIT Community Officer updates the Annual action plan (delivered in his/her proposal), based on feedbacks of the evaluation. EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster Steering Committee approves the adapted Annual action plan. 	Once contracting is closed, pre-finance payment (30% of yearly budget), upon approval of Annual action plan.
Midterm performance review (January-June 2025)	Month 7, year 1	July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EIT Community Officer will have signed the governance Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) among EIT CRH members. EIT Community Officer submits Midterm report (January-June 2025). A template will be provided by the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster. EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster Steering Committee will review the Midterm report for 2025. 	Second payment (for activities done in January-June 2025, up to 40% of yearly budget), upon positive assessment of the 2025 Midterm report by July 31, 2025 at the latest.
Annual Performance review (January-December 2025)	Month 12, year 1	December 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EIT Community Officer submits Annual report (January-December 2025). A template will be provided by the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster Steering Committee will review the Annual report. 	Final balance payment (up to amount of yearly budget remaining after previous payments) upon positive assessment of the 2025 Annual report, by January 31, 2026 at the latest.

⁵ Please note, that EIT Food shall not offer the contract until its 2024-25 budget is confirmed by EIT and the pre-finance timeline of the KIC is assured.

Final settlement and transition	Month 1, year 2	January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EIT Community Officer supports seamless continuation of functioning of EIT Community RIS Hub during renewal of the contract of the EIT Community Officer or role takeover by a new contractor. Procedures will be provided by the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster. 	
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2.3.2. Location

The scope of operation covers the full territory of the Republic of Serbia. All services (2.2.1 – 2.2.7) will be provided in person and online. Video conferences and telephone conferences are preferred options for team meetings.

EIT Community Officer is requested to set up and maintain physical office space in one of the cities accepted by the EIT Community SRI Cluster and the EIT, because the EIT Community Officer should be contacted physically by the local stakeholders, who can walk in to obtain information and gain access to the EIT Community. As it has been emphasised under section 2.2.2 the applicants are requested to share their ideas about the physical space of the EIT Community Officer.

The locations indicated by the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster and the EIT are: **Belgrade, Novi Sad or Niš.**

Tenderers are requested to share their ideas about the physical space of the EIT Community Officer's office (description including a cost estimate) - in their technical offer (please see section 3.3). The cost of the office space shall be an optional part of their budget proposal, it should be indicated in a separate line. The EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster can decide to use the offered option or to suggest hosting for the EIT Community Hub, if a better option is given. The office space must be suitable to hold negotiations, simple and small meetings besides providing a working environment for the EIT Community Officer. It is also favourable if the office is close to the various actors of the local innovation ecosystem (eg. National or Regional Contact Points, EIT NCPs, etc.). The use of a space for free of charge would be preferred.

On a needed basis, the EIT Community Officer can be called for specific assignments either to EIT Food, EIT or the EIT Community SRI Steering Committee or any other project site designated by EIT Food. All costs borne for such travels shall be subject to reimbursement detailed later by EIT Food if justified.

2.3.3. Payment terms

Available maximum fund of 34,485 EUR (thirty four thousand four hundred eighty five euro, VAT excluded) for the requested services is segregated below, for the 1 year assignment.

For year **2025: 34,485 EUR maximum available funds** (VAT excluded). Out of the 34,485 EUR maximum available funds, 11,616 EUR can be dedicated to incidental costs (including office space, travel and accommodation costs or other related costs).

Please, note that these amounts are the maximum funding available, covering all potential costs.

Please, note that these amounts do not include deductible value-added tax (VAT), and whether VAT is deductible or not will be determined by the legislation of the Republic of Serbia. Particularly in instance of cross-border invoicing, Contractor is required to furnish to EIT Food's Financial Department

documentation demonstrating (accordingly to the local authorities regulations) VAT deductibility or service type exemption. After EIT Food's approval of the presented proof of VAT deductibility, suppliers may then invoice the net amount with the designation 'VAT reserve charged'.

The EIT Community Officer will be compensated based on a performance-based system of remuneration. The total payment within the duration of the contract may not exceed the contracted amount.

The services should be invoiced in arrears including specific timesheets, according to deliverables achieved. Payment shall be made upon the acceptance of the deliverables completed.

1. The first payment (**pre-finance payment**) corresponding to the 30% excluded of the total yearly budget shall be made upon submission and acceptance upon EIT Food of the Annual action plan (DEL_RS_AP_2025).
2. The second payment (**midterm payment**), corresponding to 40% of the total yearly budget shall be made upon submission and acceptance of the Midterm report (DEL_RS_MR_2025).
3. The third payment (**balance payment**), corresponding to the 30% of the total yearly budget shall be made upon submission and acceptance of the Annual report. (DEL_RS_AR_2025). The balance payment may not exceed the amount of yearly budget remaining after previous payments.

Upon the acceptance on the corresponding deliverable, EIT Food shall make the payment within 30 days from receipt of the invoice. The Contractor shall have 20 days in which to submit additional information.

The payment of all related taxes and other costs (VAT and other taxes, social contributions, and similar obligatory costs) is the responsibility of the Supplier. Delayed or missing payments of the above obligations cannot be accepted by EIT Food and will lead to the termination of the contract.

2.4. Methodology of work

The EIT Community Officer will align with the EIT Food RIS Manager, the relevant RIS managers of the corresponding KICs, the Steering Committee and the representative of EIT on a regular basis. The work of the EIT Community Officer might be supported by an Advisory Board (consisting of 3-5 representatives of the local innovation ecosystem stakeholders i.e. EIT NCP, Ministry of Innovation, universities, startup ecosystem, large corporates, etc.) in case the EIT Community SRI Cluster and the EIT Community Officer believe it is of crucial importance. If such expertise is necessary, the role of the above expert team is to provide strategic advice on implementing the ECO's activity plan and complementarity of the local needs and opportunities, to give an overview of relevant policies, identifying relevant gaps or areas for improvement where EIT activities should be created, and identifying potential opportunities for creating synergies with EIT Communities towards innovation and growth. The members of such an expert team should undertake their mandate on a pro bono basis.

The following meetings between the EIT Community Officer (ECO) and the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster are planned:

Year 1	
Preparatory call	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to the kick-off meeting, the EIT Headquarters and the EIT Community Officer will organise a preparatory call to discuss the scope of the contract and the role the ECO together with the representatives of the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster. Format: online.

Onboarding and Kick-off meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the start of the contract the ECO will be invited to a full day introduction and a kick-off meeting with the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster and with the representatives of the EIT Headquarters. The annual action plan submitted by the ECO shall be reviewed and updated during the kick-off meeting. The action plan shall be approved by the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster Steering Committee. Format: online
Status calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the kick-off meeting, the representatives of EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster and EIT Headquarters will inform the ECO on the frequency of the status calls. Format: online.
Closing meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting will be held to draw conclusions on the implemented service and lessons learnt and address any other topics that might arise. Format will be confirmed in year 2.

2.5. Deliverables

All services shall be provided within the contract period.

The EIT Community Officer is expected to produce the following deliverables (each year in case of a multiple year service delivery):

- 1) **Annual action plan** (AP) describing the main activities, success criteria, targets for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and modus operandi of the EIT Community Officer.
- 2) **Midterm report** (MR) covering the period January-June, using the template provided by the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster.
- 3) **Annual report** (refers to the months of actions executed in a respective year) using the template provided by the EIT Cross- KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster.
- 4) **Monthly progress briefs** (MB) to be submitted to the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster describing the main activities undertaken by the EIT Community Officer and main achievements. Depending on the amount of information to be included in the respective reporting period, the reports should on average have 3-4 pages.
- 5) **Minutes of all the meetings** held with EIT Community RIS Hub Members, EIT KIC Offices representatives and external stakeholders (annexed to the monthly progress briefs).

Presentation and references:

The data in the above deliverables shall be presented with an appealing layout, containing tables as well as appropriate graphics to illustrate the arguments. All deliverables must be sent to the Contracting Authority (the relevant KIC) for review by the contractor in electronic format. They should have numbered paragraphs and pages and a clear identification, including the version (draft, revision or final) and the date.

The format and structure will be discussed during the onboarding session of the EIT Community Officer. The reports/deliverables are to be provided for unrestricted use by EIT KICs and free from all third-party copyright restrictions.

Further requirements regarding the deliverables include compliance with the EIT Food brand guidelines provide the requirements for use of our logo. These will be provided during the onboarding of the EIT Community Officer. The extent that other requirements (e.g. typeface) apply to the report can be discussed with the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster. Please note, that all deliverables and communication shall be in English language.

Timing of the submission of the required deliverables:

	Code	Month	Year
Annual action plan (2025)	DEL_RS_AP_2025	1	1 (2025)
Monthly progress brief	DEL_RS_MB_202501	1	1 (2025)
Monthly progress brief	DEL_RS_MB_202502	2	1 (2025)
Monthly progress brief	DEL_RS_MB_202503	3	1 (2025)
Monthly progress brief	DEL_RS_MB_202504	4	1 (2025)
Monthly progress brief	DEL_RS_MB_202505	5	1 (2025)
Monthly progress brief	DEL_RS_MB_202506	6	1 (2025)
Midterm report (January-June 2025)	DEL_RS_MR_2025	7	1 (2025)
Monthly progress brief	DEL_RS_MB_202507	7	1 (2025)
Monthly progress brief	DEL_RS_MB_202508	8	1 (2025)
Monthly progress brief	DEL_RS_MB_202509	9	1 (2025)
Monthly progress brief	DEL_RS_MB_202510	10	1 (2025)
Monthly progress brief	DEL_RS_MB_202511	11	1 (2025)
Monthly progress brief	DEL_RS_MB_202512	12	1 (2025)
Annual report (January-December 2025)	DEL_RS_AR_2025	12	1 (2025)

3. Proposal Process

3.1. Proposal Schedule

The **deadline to submit the proposal is 22th of December, 2024 23:59 CET**.

In duly justified cases, however, no later than 1 (one) calendar day before the original deadline, the submission deadline can be extended.

After the end of the deadline to the proposal submission, the shortlisted candidates will be invited to a round of interviews.

Proposals that do not meet the Request for Proposals requirements will not be considered.

The indicative timeline for the call for proposals is as follows:

	DATE
Publishing the Request for Proposals	20 November, 2024
Deadline for requesting clarification from the EIT Food	16 December, 2024
Last date for the EIT Food to issue clarification indicative	18 December, 2024
Deadline for submitting proposal	22 December, 2024
Intended date of notification of shortlisted candidates	27 December, 2024
Interviews with potential suppliers	2-8 January, 2025
The intended date of notification of the award	8 January, 2024

Stand still period	10 days
Intended date of contract signature	18 January 2025
Intended start date of the contract implementation	18 January 2025

3.2. Submission of proposal

Proposals are requested to be emailed in written form (as attached electronically signed document or scan of a signed document in pdf format) to the following address:

Contact name: For the attention of Miss. Milda Krauzlis, (RIS Programme Manager) at EIT Food

E-mail: milda.krauzlis@eitfood.eu

The email including the proposal must be sent and delivered by the deadline provided in section 3.1.

Proposal will be deemed timely submitted, if it is received by EIT Food by the submission deadline. All risks associated with the delay or loss of the proposal shall be borne by the Tenderer only. EIT Food will deem proposal received after the submission deadline invalid.

All times specified in hours in any procedural document are to be understood as Polish local time.

All emailed proposals will be followed by an email confirmation of receiving the proposal.

The tenderer represents that the individual submitting the natural entity's proposal is duly authorized to bind its entity to the proposal as submitted. The tenderer also affirms that it has read the request for proposals and has the experience, skills and resources to perform, according to conditions set forth in this proposal and the tenderers' proposal.

3.3. Eligibility Requirements

Tenderers must meet **the following minimum eligibility requirements:**

- 1) The Tenderer is a resident of Serbia (in case the Tenderer is a natural person) or has a registered office in Serbia (in case the Tenderer is a legal entity).
- 2) In case the Tenderer is a legal entity, only a sole candidate/expert will be appointed for the full duration of the services, and the appointed expert should fulfil the requirements below.
- 3) Applicants must speak English and Serbian fluently.
- 4) Applicants must demonstrate a minimum of previous experience in the activities to be carried out within this Request for Proposals.
- 5) Applicants must not be involved in any situations that indicate a Conflict of Interest and/or that qualify them for other exclusion scenarios, as outlined in sections 4.4 and 4.8 of this Request for Proposal.
- 6) Applicants must have or be able to set their place of business in one of the following cities of Serbia: Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš. Please, note that the office of the applicant to be selected for the role of EIT Community Officer should be located in one of these cities whilst ensuring best access and proximity to the project's key stakeholders including the Serbian Horizon Europe National contact points.

3.4. Requirements as to form and content

Proposals are requested to be prepared in **English** and using **templates provided in Annex 1.: Proposal template (Letter of Interest, Reference Letter(s), Signed CV(s) of the expert(s), Tender submission form, Tender Declaration of Honor, Detailed Proposal).**

- The Tenderer must submit its proposal via email in proper (legibly) scanned and non-editable PDF, which is accessible without entering a password.
- Proposals may not be submitted by joint Applicants.
- Proposal must be signed by the tenderer.
- Proposal should be concise and clear. The tenderer's proposal will be incorporated into any contract that results from this procedure. Tenderer is, therefore, cautioned not to make claims or statements that they are not prepared to commit to contractually.

The proposal shall contain:

1. A signed Letter of Interest including the list of relevant experience. The list of references shall contain at least the following information: Contracting entity; Project/Programme title; Contract start date; Contract end date; Subject-matter of the contract.
2. Reference Letter(s) signed by the Authority(ies) confirming the experience(s) presented to comply with shortlisting selection criteria described in Section 4.2. The Reference Letter(s) should include all necessary information that will allow the Contracting Authority to fully assess compliance with the selection criteria.
3. A signed CV(s) of the expert(s), presenting the requirements to comply with the shortlisting selection criteria described in Section 4.2.
4. The technical response to the services requested (see Section 2.2: 'Detailed scope of work') **Technical description in detail** how the services dissected in Chapter 2 of the Request for Proposals will be provided by the tenderer. (max. 2 pages)
5. **Annual action plans for the year 2025** including the following mandatory activities:
 - **Mapping of local ecosystem and stakeholders**
 - **Local event mapping**
 - **Awareness raising activities** (supporting the EIT Community awareness-raising events)
 - **Events info** (supporting the EIT Community information events and mapping the events of the local stakeholders which can be of interest for the EIT Community)
 - **Collecting information on local funding opportunities** (and bring these to the attention to the local Hub Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices)
 - **Updating the common platform** (database accessible for the KICs on local calls, events, etc.)
 - **Additional activity(-ies) proposed by the Candidate**
Please propose detailed activities with approximate, realistic timeline taking into consideration the Indicative list of key performance indicators and minimum targets for the EIT Community Officers presented in Annex 3. Tenderers are requested to propose KPI targets in their activity plan (e.g. number of organised co-ordination meetings, EIT Community awareness-raising events, joint meetings for all KICS with regional/local/ national authorities, meetings with external stakeholders, etc.) (max. 2 pages)

Narrative part related to the Annual action plans for 2025 should include:

- 1) Description on how the tenderer plans to co-ordinate the events, organise meetings, his/her capacity to co-ordinate the events and liaise with EIT RIS Hubs, stakeholders, etc.
- 2) Description of the tenderer's plans to reach and establish good working relationships with the RIS Hubs and other stakeholders.
- 3) A short description on the local funding opportunities and how these can be funnelled to the KICs' activities.

4) Description of the capacity of the tenderer to provide extra services to RIS Hubs and other stakeholders.

Detailed scope of work for the implementation of tasks proposed by the tenderer, Organisation and methodology together with the Activity plan plus the narrative part cannot exceed 10 pages

6. **Innovation gap analysis.** Tenderers are requested to identify 5 main gaps of the local innovation ecosystem in Serbia and prioritise them based on importance. Please explain, how you would target them with your actions. Please, propose adequate solutions for the problems. (max. 1 page)
7. Ideas of the tenderers for **the physical space of the EIT Community Officer's office** - including a cost estimate and description of the office space presenting: (max. 0,5 page)
 - Size (m2):
 - Functions:
 - Category of the office building:
 - How far is it from the various players of the local innovation ecosystem:
 - Name of hosting institution (if applicable):
5. **The financial offer** (the price for the service). The financial offer must be presented in euro (EUR). The price must be indicated as gross amount, excluding (VAT).
A fixed price for the service shall include all the costs pertaining to the provision of the requested service in particular:
 - staff costs (specifying daily rate and proposed days of service; minimum 800 hours yearly),
 - travel, hotel and subsistence costs,
 - office space rental,
 - other goods, works and services including organization of events, communication tools, translation costs, other office related costs as commodities, utilities, etc. and any other cost related to the service.

The detailed financial plan with budget breakdown by category should be included in the proposal indicating the major planned expenses (A - Personnel (€), B - Incidental expenditure (€): Travel & subsistence (€), Office Space rental (€), Other goods, works and services (€) including other office related costs such as commodities, utilities, etc.). Please note, that the office space cost is to be included in the financial proposal even in the case that no facilitation is provided, as mentioned in the section 2.2.2. The Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster can decide to use the offered option or to suggest hosting for the EIT Community Hub, if a better option is given. Cost of the office space rental should be indicated separately from cost category *Other goods, works and services* (€). Suggestion for co-financing of the EIT Community Officer's activities / operations might also be included if there is any.

As all incidental expenditures have to be verified by invoices, **only *budget line (A) Personnel* of the financial offer will be taken into consideration during financial evaluation.**

3.5. Minimum requirements

The following documents and declarations are to be submitted together with the tender by the tenderer. In order to be considered valid, proposals must include:

- A signed Letter of Interest including the list of relevant experience
- Reference Letter(s) signed by the Authority(ies) confirming the experience(s).
- A signed CV(s) of the key expert(s).
- Tender Submission form and Tender Declaration of Honor (Annex 1)

- Scan of supporting documents evidencing the legal name of the Tenderer (copy of the official documents showing the name of the natural person or legal person, the address of its head office, and the registration number given to it by the national authorities);
- An administrative part (Detailed Proposal) including all the information and documents required by the EIT Food for the evaluation of the tender based on the exclusion and selection criteria set out below;

Any amendment requests after the tender submission deadline and the notification of award shall not be accepted or discussed. EIT Food is not obliged to accept any amendment requests, proposed modifications or contract templates.

3.6. Validity of the proposal

Tenderers are bound by their proposal 30 days after the deadline for submitting the proposal or until they have been notified of non-award, whichever period is longer.

The winner must maintain its proposal for a further 30 days to close the contract.

Proposals not following the instructions of this Request for Proposal can be rejected by EIT Food.

3.7. Additional information before the deadline for submitting proposals

The instructions to the tenderers should be clear enough to avoid the tenderers having to request additional information during the procedure. In case the tenderer requires additional information, please address it to the address below.

Contact name: For the attention of Miss. Milda Krauzlis, (RIS Programme Manager) at EIT Food

E-mail: milda.krauzlis@eitfood.eu

EIT Food has no obligation to provide clarification if decides.

3.8. Cost for preparing proposals

No costs incurred by the tenderers in preparing and submitting the proposal are reimbursable. All such costs must be borne by the tenderer.

3.9. Ownership and confidentiality of proposals

EIT Food retains ownership of all proposals received under this tendering procedure. Proprietary information identified as such, which is submitted by tenderer in connections with this procurement, will be kept confidential.

The potential or actual supplier should accept that during the implementation of the contract and for four years after the completion of the contract, the Contract Authority has the right for the purposes of safeguarding its financial interests that the proposal and the contract of the supplier may be transferred to internal as well as external audit services.

3.10. Clarification related proposals

After submission of the proposal, it shall be checked if it satisfies all the formal requirements set out in the proposal dossier. Where information or documentation submitted by the tenderer is or appears to be incomplete or erroneous or where specific documents are missing, the Contract Authority may

request the tenderer concerned to submit, supplement, clarify or complete the relevant information or documentation within an appropriate time limit.

4. Evaluation of Proposals

4.1. Exclusion criteria

The Tenderer will be excluded from participation in the current procedure, if:

- a) it is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, where its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business activities are suspended, or where it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national laws or regulations;
- b) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the Tenderer is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the applicable law;
- c) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the Tenderer is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the Tenderer belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes a wrongful intent or gross negligence, including, in particular, any of the following:
 - i. fraudulently or negligently misrepresenting information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of selection criteria or in the performance of a contract;
 - ii. entering into agreement with other Tenderers with the aim of distorting competition;
 - iii. violating intellectual property rights;
 - iv. attempting to influence the decision-making process of the contracting authority during the procurement procedure;
 - v. attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the procurement procedure; it has been established by a final judgment that the Tenderer is guilty of fraud, corruption or money laundering;
 - vi. the proposal does not meet the requirements described of this Request for Proposals;
 - vii. any evidence of a conflict of interest discovered during the evaluation process will render the candidate's application invalid. Candidates are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest that may compromise the fairness and integrity of the selection process. Failure to provide accurate and complete information regarding conflicts of interest may result in disqualification from consideration for the project or opportunity outlined in this Request for Proposals. The EIT Food reserves the right to assess and determine the impact of any conflicts of interest on the impartiality and objectivity of the selection process.
- d) it has been established by a final judgment that the Candidate is guilty of fraud, corruption or money laundering.

4.2. Shortlisting selection criteria

Up to five tenderers will be shortlisted for interviews and further evaluation of their submitted proposals. The short listing will be based on the professional capacity of the Applicant. The following selection criteria will apply:

4.2.1. Minimum eligibility criteria

- Natural person is a resident of the Republic of Serbia.
- Legal entity has a registered office in the Republic of Serbia. In case the Applicant is a legal entity, only a sole candidate/expert will be appointed for the full duration of the services, and the appointed expert should fulfil the requirements below:
- Candidate possesses C1 level fluency in the official language/s/ of Serbia,
- Candidate possesses C1 level fluency in English,
- Candidate has a university or a related higher education degree in business, economics, law, political science, environmental studies, sustainability, or other innovation-related fields.
- Candidate has at least 3 years of professional experience in innovation, entrepreneurship and/or European affairs as a project manager or key expert
- Managed/worked as a key expert for at least 1 EU-financed project for at least one year.

4.2.2. Special eligibility criteria

Special eligibility criteria	Description
Secondary eligibility criterion	<p>Connection and knowledge of the local innovation ecosystem.</p> <p>Number of delivered projects for Innovation ecosystem development in the last 8 years.</p> <p>The Applicant must provide evidence of number projects.</p>
Third eligibility criterion	<p>Knowledge of the EIT system, and collaboration experience with EIT/EIT KICs/RIS Hubs in the last 8 years.</p> <p>The applicant must provide evidence of collaboration.</p>
Fourth eligibility criterion	<p>Experience with networking services (events organised, studies or other services provided for international networks) in the last 8 years.</p> <p>The applicant must provide evidence of services delivered.</p>

Applicants are allowed to refer to contracts completed within the reference period of the last 8 years even if started earlier.

During the assessment of the minimum eligibility criteria, a range of the number of tenderers will be set and in the second stage, the invitation to take part in interviews will be sent only to a number of candidates, which fall within the upper limit of that range. The upper limit of that range will be no more than 5 candidates.

At first, the suitability of all the candidates will be checked upon the Minimum eligibility criteria. In case more candidates than the set upper limit of the range meet the minimum eligibility criteria, these candidates will be assessed against the Secondary eligibility criterion, and it will be checked if candidates can be shortlisted into the set limit. If not, the third eligibility criterion will be applied.

Reference Letters or corresponding documents must contain all relevant data allowing the Contracting Authority to fully assess the compliance of the Applicant, otherwise, the experience will not be considered.

4.3. Additional information regarding interviews

A round of interviews will be conducted with short listed tenderers, potential suppliers with the best professional capacity. Tenderers will be requested to indicate minimum two suitable time slots for the interview within the given timeframe.

In line with point 4.2 Award criteria of the present Request for proposal, the following questions will be raised during the interviews:

1. Could you please, identify the 5 main gaps of the local innovation ecosystem?
2. Would you please, prioritise the main gaps of the local innovation ecosystem based on importance.
3. Which adequate actions or solutions do you propose for the gaps in the local innovation ecosystem?

During the interviews the communication skills of the candidate will be examined based on the two criteria below:

- How easily and clearly can candidate express herself/ himself in English.
- To what extent is the candidate able to understand and take part in innovation and work-related communications.

4.4. Award criteria

The EIT Food will award the contract to the candidate who submitted the most advantageous technical and financial proposal based on best value for money based on the following criteria (including the weighting assigned to them). The quality of each proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the below mentioned award criteria.

The award criteria will be examined in accordance with the requested service/support indicated in Section 2 of the document and ensure best value for money by applying the below equation.

The technical score is calculated based on the assessment rating below:

DESCRIPTION	SCORE
Action Plan evaluation	Max. 60 points
1. Feasibility of the candidate 's action plan, his/her yearly program – overall methodology and work of scope.	10 points
2. Content of the proposal, detailed description, attention to details of the submitted proposal. Quality of the proposal and organization of candidate`s services.	10 points
3. How the candidate plans to co-ordinate the events, organize meetings, his/her capacity to co-ordinate the events and liaise with EIT RIS Hubs, stakeholders, etc.	5 points
4. How the candidate plans to reach and establish good working relationships with the RIS Hubs and other stakeholders.	10 points

5. Knowledge on local funding opportunities and a plan how to funnel them into KICs activities	10 points
6. Capacity of the candidate to provide extra services to RISHubs and other stakeholders.	10 points
7. Creativity of the proposal – Out of the box thinking	5 points
Interview phase	Max 40 points
A - Communication skills of the candidate in English and Serbian. <i>(Please note that speaking English and Serbian fluently is a requirement of this Request for Proposals)</i>	
1. How easily and clearly can candidate express herself/himself in English.	10 points
2. To what extent is the candidate able to understand and take part in innovation and work-related communications.	10 points
B- Identifying the 5 main gaps of the local innovation ecosystem in Serbia	
1. Candidate identified the main gaps in the local innovation ecosystem. (Number of main gaps identified 1 Gap = 2 points 2 Gaps = 4 points 3 Gaps = 6 points, etc.)	10 points
2. Candidate prioritized the main gaps of the local innovation ecosystem based on importance. (Number of main gaps prioritized 1 Gap = 1 point 2 Gaps = 2 points 3 Gaps = 3 points, etc.)	5 points
3. Candidate offered adequate solution / actions for the gaps in the local innovation ecosystem.	5 points

The applicable award criteria will be weighted as follows:

- A. Technical content: 80 %
- B. Financial offer: 20 %

Aggregate evaluation and scoring:

A. Technical content (maximum weighted score: 80 %)

Evaluation of the technical content will be carried out following the below sub-criteria:

Technical capacity of the Tenderer (maximum score: 100)

As for the Action Plan criterion, the method of the evaluation is as follows:

Where the highest ranking is 10 points:.

- 10 points – Exceeds the required standards, response to the question with precision and relevance.
- 7 points – Meets the standard required. Comprehensive response in terms of detail and relevance to the question.
- 4 points – Meets the standards in most aspects but fails in some areas. Acceptable level of detail, accuracy and relevance.
- 1 point – Meets only some of the aspect of the standards. Limited information, inadequate or only partially addressed the question.

Where the highest ranking is 5 points:.

- 5 points – Exceeds the required standards, response to the question with precision and relevance.
- 4 points – Meets the standard required. Comprehensive response in terms of detail and relevance to the question.
- 3 points – Meets the standards in most aspects but fails in some areas. Acceptable level of detail, accuracy and relevance.
- 1 point – Meets only some of the aspect of the standards. Limited information, inadequate or only partially addressed the question.

B. Financial offer (maximum weighted score: 20%)

The financial offer must be presented in EUR. Prices must be indicated as gross amount, excluding VAT. The lowest offered price shall receive the highest score (100), others shall be calculated in relation to that in linear equation.

Should there be a suspicion that the provider will not be able to perform according to the price offered, EIT Food has the right to ask for explanations and may reject the tender where the evidence supplied does not satisfactorily account for the low level of price or cost proposed.

4.5. Selection of the suppliers

An Evaluation Committee containing at least three members and a representative of EIT Food as a secretary of the Committee will be established. **Each proposal will be evaluated by each committee member and ranked according to the criteria outlined in this Request for Proposals.** The compliance with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination, equal treatment, and absence of conflict of interest will be ensured.

The final selection of the supplier will be based on the best price-quality ratio principle. The best price-quality ratio is established by weighing technical quality against price on a 80%/20% basis, i.e.

Total technical score: max. 100 (weight: 80%)

Total financial score: max.100 (weight: 20 %)

Total score: max. ... (total technical score x 0,8 + total financial score x 0,2)

The winners shall be the one with the highest total score summed from technical and financial scores, and that candidate shall be proposed for the contract.

The successful and unsuccessful candidates will be informed in writing via email about the result of the award procedure.

4.6. Signature of contract(s)

The final award does not yet constitute the contract. The contract will be concluded at the time of signature by the Supplier and EIT Food.

Within 30 days of receipt of the contract from EIT Food, the selected tenderer shall sign and date the contract and return it to EIT Food.

In case the winning tenderer is unable to enter the contract, EIT Food may decide to contract the supplier receiving the second highest ranking. In the event of the need for replacement of the initially selected suppliers, the pre-selected applicants of this Request for Proposal hereby acknowledge and agree that EIT Food reserves the right to contact them for potential engagement in the project. This communication may occur to assess their availability, interest, and ability to fulfil the requirements outlined in the Request for Proposals.

The contract to be awarded through this Request for Proposals shall explicitly be understood as a service agreement for the provision of deliverables and shall not, under any circumstances, establish an employer-employee relationship. The tenderers acknowledge and agree that this contractual arrangement is solely for the purpose of delivering specified services and does not imply or create any form of employment relationship between the contracting parties. The obligations and responsibilities outlined in the contract are strictly limited to the scope of services and deliverables detailed in the Request for Proposals, and no employment benefits or rights are conferred or implied by the contractual agreement.

The tenderer agrees that the total value of the contract to be signed with EIT Food will in no way exceed the bid (the amount contained in the proposal) of the tenderer.

4.7. Cancellation of the proposal procedure

In the event of cancellation of the proposal procedure, EIT Food will notify the tenderers of the cancellation. In no event shall EIT Food be liable for any damages whatsoever including, without limitation, damages for loss of profits, in any way connected with the cancellation of a proposal procedure, even if EIT Food has been advised of the possibility of damages.

4.8. Appeals / Complaints

Tenderers believing that it has been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may file a complaint. Appeal should be addressed to EIT Food. The tenderer has 3 days to file their complaint from the receipt of the letter of notification of award.

4.9. Ethics clauses / Corruptive practices

EIT Food reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to substantial errors, irregularities, or fraud. If substantial errors, irregularities, or fraud are discovered after the award of the Contract, EIT Food may refrain from concluding the Contract.

The suppliers shall take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the contract is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests'). She/He should inform EIT Food immediately if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the tasks.

4.10. Safeguarding of EU's financial interest

The potential or actual supplier should accept that during the implementation of the contract and for four years after the completion of the contract, EIT Food has the right for the purposes of safeguarding the EU's financial interests, the proposal and the contract of the supplier may be transferred to internal audit services, EIT, to the European Court of Auditors, to the Financial Irregularities Panel or to the European Anti-Fraud Office.

5. Annex List

Annex 1 – Proposal template

(Application form, Tender submission form, Tender Declaration of Honor, Detailed Proposal, Supporting documents)

Annex 2 – Definitions of the Key Performance Indicators

Annex 3 – EIT Community RIS Hubs - the EIT Community Officer's guide to performance monitoring

Annex 4 – EIT RIS hubs minimum standards and guiding principles (2023-2025)

Annex 5 – Contract template (to be shared with shortlisted candidates)

Annex 1 – Proposal template

APPLICATION FORM EIT Community Officer of the EIT COMMUNITY RIS HUB in Serbia

Application submitted by

Name of Applicant / Legal entity*	
Official address	
Tax registration number	

* Please, consider it carefully. If the applicant is a natural person, her/his name has to be indicated. In case the applicant is a legal entity offering a sole expert for the assignment, the name of the legal entity must be indicated in this row.

Contact person

First Name and Last Name	
Address	
Telephone	
e-mail	

Professional capacity

<p>EXPERIENCE</p> <p><i>Please present the relevant expertise of the Tenderer with special regard to the tasks and role of the EIT Community Officer of the EIT Community RIS Hub in Serbia. Please specify the exact references, upon which further information may be requested by the Contracting Authority.</i></p>

A. Personal information of the expert, candidate to be appointed as the EIT Community Officer

Name	Surname
Nationality/ies	Country of Residence
Email	Mobile
Gender	Country's official language (C1 level min.)
Languages	English (C1 level min.)
Professional Web Profile (i.e. LinkedIn, ResearchGate)	

Letter of Interest

In response to the Request for Proposals published on the EIT Food website for appointing EIT Community Officer of the EIT Community RIS Hub in Serbia,

I, _____
(hereby referred to as Candidate) would like to express my interest in undertaking the activities mentioned in the notification. As instructed, I have enclosed all the necessary documents for your information and records.

<Signature of Expert/Candidate>

B. Administrative part

Please include all the information and attach documents required by the EIT Food for the evaluation of the application based on the exclusion and selection criteria set out in the pre-qualification notices.

The candidate is a natural person and is a resident of Serbia.	YES / NO**
The candidate is a legal entity with a registered office in Serbia and offers a sole expert who will be appointed for the full duration of the services, and the appointed expert fulfils the requirements below.	YES / NO**
Candidate possesses C1 level fluency in the official language/s/ of Serbia	YES / NO
Candidate possesses C1 level fluency in English.	YES / NO
Candidate possesses a university or a related higher education degree in business, economics, law, political science, environmental studies, sustainability, or other innovation-related fields.	YES / NO
Candidate has at least 3 years of professional experience in innovation, entrepreneurship, and/or European affairs as a project manager or key expert.	YES / NO
Managed/worked as key expert for at least 1 EU-financed project for at least one year.	YES / NO

** The candidate is a natural person or a legal entity. Therefore please, indicate YES only for one question out of the first two.

C. Technical part

Please include all the information required for the technical evaluation and attach relevant documents. The technical part shall be listed by the applicant. Please, enclose CV of the expert as part of this application.

CV

(Paste here)

Listed experience linking the evidence document in accordance with special eligibility criteria

Description	Listed Evidence
Connection and knowledge of the local innovation ecosystem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
Knowledge of the EIT system, collaboration experience with EIT/EIT KICs/RIS Hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
Experience with networking services (events organised, studies or other services provided for international networks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •

Reference Letter(s)

(Paste here)

TENDER SUBMISSION FORM FOR THE PROCEDURE OF

Request for Proposals for

EIT Community Officer of the EIT COMMUNITY RIS HUB in Serbia

Tender submitted by

Name of Natural person / Legal entity*	
Official address	
Tax registration number	

* Please, consider it carefully. If the tenderer is a natural person, her/his name has to be indicated. In case the tenderer is a legal entity offering a sole expert for the assignment, the name of the legal entity must be indicated in this row.

Contact person

First Name and Last Name	
Address	
Telephone	
e-mail	

Statement

I,<name of authorised representative>, the undersigned, being the authorised signatory of the above tenderer, hereby declare that we have examined and accept without reserve or restriction the entire content of the tender documentation for the above procurement procedure. We offer to provide the services requested in the tender documentation on the basis of the following, which comprise our financial offer and our technical offer:

Award criteria	Tenderer's Offer
Financial offer: presented in EUR (gross amount, excl. VAT)	X EUR
Technical offer: name and professional capacity of Expert years of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert • X years of experience

<Signature of authorised representative>

Tender Declaration of Honor

<Place and Date>

<Name of the Legal Entity and Signatory>

Subject: Request for Proposals for EIT Community Officer of the EIT COMMUNITY RIS HUB in Serbia

I, <Name of the legal representative authorized by the organization or/applicant>, hereby declare the following in connection with my application for the Request for Proposal seeking the appointment of an EIT Community Officer:

- I will commit to take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the contract is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests'). We will inform the EIT Food immediately if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the tasks.
- I accept that during the implementation of the contract and for five years after the completion of the contract, the supplier must keep confidential any data, documents or other material that is identified as confidential at the time it is disclosed ('confidential information').
- I accept that during the implementation of the contract and for five years after the completion of the contract, the EIT Food has the right for the purposes of safeguarding its financial interests, the proposal and the contract of the supplier may be transferred to internal as well as external audit services.
- I confirm that the entity represented by me is not currently experiencing any of the following situations:
 - a) The entity is not bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding up procedures, and its assets are not being administered by a liquidator or by a court. It is not in an arrangement with creditors, and its business activities are not suspended, nor is it in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure under national legislation or regulations.
 - b) There is no final judgement or final administrative decision establishing a breach of obligations related to the payment of taxes or social security contributions.
 - c) There is no final judgement or final administrative decision establishing guilt of grave professional misconduct, including but not limited to fraud, violation of applicable laws or regulations, ethical standards, distorting competition, violating intellectual property rights, attempting to influence EU Bodies' decision-making processes, attempting to obtain confidential information, or any other wrongful conduct impacting

professional credibility.

d) There is no final judgement establishing guilt of fraud, corruption, participation in a criminal organization, money laundering or terrorist financing, terrorist-related offences, child labour, or other forms of trafficking in human beings.

e) The entity has not shown significant deficiencies in complying with the main obligations in the performance of a contract, a grant agreement, or a grant decision financed by the European Union's budget, leading to early termination, application of liquidated damages, or other contractual penalties, discovered through checks, audits, or investigations.

f) There is no final judgement or final administrative decision establishing that the entity has committed an irregularity within the meaning of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95.

g) There is no final judgement or final administrative decision establishing that the entity has created an entity in a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social, or any other legal obligations.

If any situation applies, details are provided in an Annex to this declaration along with a brief explanation.

- In the absence of a final judgement or final administrative decision in the cases mentioned above, or in the case of point (e), I acknowledge that the Applicant may be subject to:
 - i) Facts established in the context of audits or investigations by EPPO, the Court of Auditors, OLAF, or the internal auditor, or any other check, audit, or control performed under the responsibility of the authorizing officer.
 - ii) Non-final administrative decisions, including disciplinary measures taken by the competent supervisory body responsible for the verification of the application of standards of professional ethics.
 - iii) Facts referred to in decisions of persons and entities implementing Union funds.
 - iv) Information transmitted in accordance with the Financial Regulation.
 - v) Decisions of the Commission or national competent authority relating to the infringement of Union or national competition law.

I hereby declare the accuracy and truthfulness of the above statements.

Yours faithfully,

<Signature of authorised representative>

Detailed Proposal

EIT Community Officer of the EIT COMMUNITY RIS HUB in Serbia:

Detailed proposal

Technical Part

The technical part shall describe in detail how the services dissected in Chapter 2 of the Request for Proposals will be provided by the tenderer. It should include all the information required for the technical evaluation of the proposal. Detailed scope of work for the implementation of tasks proposed by the tenderer, organisation and methodology together with the action plans plus the narrative part cannot exceed 10 pages.

1. TECHNICAL RESPONSE TO THE SERVICES REQUESTED (max. 2 pages)

*Please, provide **technical description in detail** how the services dissected in Chapter 2 of the Request for Proposals will be provided by the tenderer.*

2. ACTION PLANS FOR 2025 (max. 2 pages)

Please propose detailed activities with approximate, realistic timeline taking into consideration the Indicative list of key performance indicators and minimum targets for the EIT Community Officers and including the following mandatory activities:

- *Mapping of local ecosystem and stakeholders*
- *Local event mapping*
- *Awareness raising activities (supporting the EIT Community awareness-raising events)*
- *Info events (supporting the EIT Community information events and mapping the events of the local stakeholders which can be of interest for the EIT Community)*
- *Collecting information on local funding opportunities (and bring these to the attention to the local Hub Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices)*
- *Updating the common platform (database accessible for the KICs on local calls, events, etc.)*
- *Additional activity(-ies) proposed by the Candidate*

(Tenderers are requested to propose KPI targets in their Activity plans e.g. number of organised co-

ordination meetings, EIT Community awareness-raising events, joint meetings for all KICS with regional/local/ national authorities, meetings with external stakeholders, etc. Tenderers may include Gantt charts to provide details of the action plans.)

2025:

1. Description on how the tenderer plans to co-ordinate the events, organise meetings, his/her capacity to co-ordinate the events and liaise with EIT RIS Hubs, stakeholders, etc.

2. Description of the tenderer's plans to reach and establish good working relationships with the RIS Hubs and other stakeholders.

3. A short description on the local funding opportunities and how these can be funneled to the KICS' activities.

4. Description of the capacity of the tenderer to provide extra services to RIS Hubs and other stakeholders.

3. INNOVATION GAP ANALYSIS (max. 1 page)

Please, identify 5 main gaps of the local innovation ecosystem in Serbia and prioritise them based on importance. Please explain, how you would target them with your actions. Please, propose adequate solutions for the problems.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

4. PHYSICAL SPACE (max. 0,5 page)	
<i>Ideas of the tenderers for the physical space of the EIT Community Officer's office - including a cost estimate and description of the office space presenting:</i>	
Size (m2):	
Functions:	
Category of the office building:	
How far is it from the various players of the local innovation ecosystem:	
Name of hosting institution (if applicable):	
Cost estimate:	

Detailed Financial Plan

Setting out prices in accordance with paragraph 2.3.3 of these Request for Proposal specifications. (The financial offer must be presented in euro (EUR). The price must be indicated excluding VAT.

A fixed price for the service: this price shall include all the costs pertaining to the provision of the requested service in particular:

- staff costs (specifying daily rate and proposed days of service; minimum 800 hours yearly),
- travel, hotel and subsistence costs,

- office space rental,
- other goods, works and services including organization of events, communication tools, translation costs, other office related costs as commodities, utilities and any other cost related to the service.

The detailed financial plan with budget breakdown should indicate the major planned expenses and include the cost of the physical space, which detailed description is requested as part of the technical offer.

Suggestion for co-financing of the EIT Community Officer`s activities / operation might also be included if there is any.

Budget template	Cost category descriptions	Total 2025
Cost EUR		
(A) Personnel (€)		
(B) Incidental expenditure (€)		
Travel & subsistence (€)		
Office Space rental (€)		
Other goods, works and services (€) including other office related costs such as commodities, utilities, etc		
Total (A+B) (€)		

Supporting documents

Scanned supporting documents evidencing the legal name of the Tenderer (copy of the official documents showing the name of the natural person or legal person, the address of its head office, and the registration number given to it by the national authorities) to be attached below.

(Paste here)

Annex 2 – Definitions of the Key Performance Indicators

KPIs	Definition
EITECO01:	New regional EIT Community partners relevant to the KICs introduced* *in established countries, the target will be achieved focusing in KICs which have NO PRESENCE in the country (no presence = no CLC, RIS Hub or dedicated KIC expert)
EITECO02:	Cross-KIC matchmakings performed, namely active partners collaborating in the EIT Community, initially supported and/or referred by the ECO* *in established countries, the target will be achieved focusing in KICs which have NO PRESENCE in the country (no presence = no CLC, RIS Hub or dedicated KIC expert)
EITECO03:	Start-ups and scale-ups referred to EIT Community opportunities* *in established countries, the target will be achieved focusing in KICs which have NO PRESENCE in the country (no CLC, RIS Hub or dedicated KIC expert)
EITECO04:	Events, workshops, and meetings organised/facilitated by the ECO for the EIT Community members and the number of participants
EITECO05:	External events organised by national and/or regional authorities with the participation of the ECO and promotion of the EIT Community.
EITECO06:	Relevant key national events collected and communicated to the EIT Community Members, SRI Cluster and EIT KICs
EITECO07:	Media mentions of the EIT Community in local publications/news outlets facilitated by the ECO
EITECO08:	Local funding opportunities collected and communicated to the local EIT Community Members, SRI Cluster and EIT KICs
EITECO09:	External funding attracted from synergies/cooperation agreements identified/concluded by the ECO, contributing to the Financial Sustainability of the ECO, and the amount of funding attracted
EITECO010:	Local funding opportunities collected and communicated to the local EIT Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and EIT KICs to implement projects jointly.

Annex 3 – EIT Community RIS Hubs - the EIT Community Officer's guide to performance monitoring

EIT Community RIS Hubs

- the EIT Community Officer's guide to performance monitoring

11.12.2023, Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations Cluster



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Introduction and scope

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027 designates “increasing the regional impact of the EIT KICs” through an enhanced EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS), reinforced with a significantly stronger mandate and additional financial resources, as a key, EIT priority. While this recognises the Scheme’s success since its establishment, as well as its potential to do more, expectations on the EIT RIS to deliver increasing levels of impact in line with the EIT’s objectives are very high. To meet these expectations, the EIT RIS needs an “all hands on deck” approach, with the whole EIT Community working together towards a common goal. In particular, it must be ensured that the EIT RIS Hubs, with their unique, on-the-ground presence across Europe, strongly contribute to the EIT’s objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Towards this aim, a set of minimum standards and guiding principles for EIT RIS Hubs have been drawn up in close consultation with the Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations (SRI) Cluster and the EIT-KIC Forum and fully aligned with, and complimentary to, the EIT Legislative Framework and the EIT RIS Implementation Framework (2022-2027). The above-mentioned “EIT RIS Hubs Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles (2023-2025)” outlines the need and necessity of the establishment of the EIT Community RIS Hubs that attract and facilitate the integration of new participants in EIT Community activities, among others.

To do this, the EIT RIS Hubs must liaise closely with local/regional/national authorities and stakeholders, including the EIT National Contact Points (NCPs). NCPs are expected to act as an assistance, information and referral point for potential beneficiaries, who will be redirected to the local EIT RIS Hub or EIT KIC Office according to their needs. To achieve this, the Hubs should regularly provide the EIT NCPs with all relevant information to support their core functions and, if requested, help the NCPs understand the specificities around the KIC they represent and the type of activities they deliver. Once an EIT Community RIS Hub is established in a particular country or territory, the consolidated provision of information to the local EIT NCPs can be centrally delivered by the **EIT Community RIS Hubs** coordinated by a designated **EIT Community Officer** with full support from the existing EIT RIS Hubs. This should also enable EIT RIS Hubs, EIT Community Officers and NCPs to team up for regular outreach, communication, and awareness-raising activities, and eventually reach new audiences and increase the number of national EIT beneficiaries.

The Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations Cluster's mission is to enhance the consolidated presence of the EIT Community in the EIT RIS-eligible area. As a result of the “EIT RIS Hubs Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles (2023-2025)” (from now on, “minimum guidance document”), two pilots of the EIT Community Officers have been launched, one in North Macedonia and the other in Latvia. At the same time, a Country-specific roadmap document was drawn up by the EIT, based on the input received from the Lead KICs and was submitted for analyses and discussion during the EIT-KIC Forum of 8 November 2023. The EIT-KIC Forum adopted the current version of the Country-specific roadmap which is now considered the final way forward towards a more impactful and coordinated EIT Community landscape, which in turn will feed into the Business Plan 2023-2025 amendment process.

In those ecosystems where EIT RIS Hubs are already established, the EIT Community RIS Hubs will aim to integrate these Hubs’ and rebrand them as EIT Community Members. EIT Community Members will maintain their RIS Hub functions but will be required to:

- undertake a rebranding and renaming exercise aimed at external stakeholders;
- to commit to an enhanced level of cooperation with the other EIT Community Members operating in the same country/region in collaboration with the EIT Community RIS Hub, including implementing joint activities foreseen by the above-mentioned Country-specific roadmaps document.

The minimum guidance document together with the country-specific roadmaps describes that in each country a KIC will take the lead in establishing the EIT Community RIS Hub and appoint, or select through an

open call, an EIT Community Officer tasked with running the Hub. The selection either follows an open call process or leverages existing KIC co-location centres (CLC) or excellent-performing RIS Hubs. The EIT Community Officer is selected based on merit, experience and the potential to tap into local opportunities. The EIT Community Officer will be either **a natural person or legal entity** and, **even in case of holding links of any EIT KIC, it will ensure impartiality and avoid conflict of interest**. While a list of tasks and responsibilities of the EIT Community Officer is included in the annex of the minimum guidance document, it lacks information on how the performance of the EIT Community Officer will be measured. **The scope of this document is to provide this missing information by defining the performance indicators for the activities of the EIT Community Officer, determining its minimally expected targets and defining the monitoring process**, taking the adopted Country-specific roadmaps document into account as well as revising the originally submitted version based on the feedback provided by the EIT RIS expert group in the document called EIT - RIS Hub Monitoring and Reporting Assessment. The adopted changes in the document mentioned are forecasting the further amendment of the “EIT RIS Hubs Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles (2023-2025)”

Activity clustering, performance indicators and their minimum targets for the EIT Community Officers

The minimum guidance document has defined a comprehensive list of tasks and responsibilities that the EIT Community RIS Hub EIT Community Officer is expected to do. Some tasks are quite administrative, while others refer to an objective explicitly, where measurable targets can be defined. The network of EIT Community Officers is planned to cover all RIS-eligible countries and territories in the next years and is supposed to support the EIT Communities locally. The work of the EIT Community Officers will be overseen by the EIT cross-KIC SRI Cluster supported by the lead KICs in each country setting up the EIT Community, contracting and monitoring the EIT Community Officer and by one coordinator on behalf of the EIT cross-KIC SRI Cluster, who collects monitoring data from all the lead KICs, comparing them to targets as of date and escalate it to the Cluster Steering Committee in case the forecasted performance is below a specific tolerance level set forth and mandated by the Steering Committee of the Cluster – monitoring process is described in a later chapter of this document. Because the project is piloted for the first time in 2023, the Cluster has no experience yet on how the system could realistically operate and be optimised.

Therefore, the Cluster’s approach is to simplify the monitoring process by rationalising and clustering the foreseen tasks and responsibilities into five different categories (Administration, Coordination, Support, Communication and Financial Sustainability) and defining easily understandable, measurable and relevant indicators of the effectiveness of such work. The result of the clustering can be found in the following table:

Activity cluster	Activity
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form good working relations with the whole EIT Community, including the SRI Cluster and Community Members and establish a smooth and efficient working method which limits the administrative burden on the Community Members and the KICs side. Deploy necessary tools for information sharing/coordination to facilitate continuous information exchange between the EIT Community in both directions. Develop a good understanding of the EIT model and keep up to date with the KICs' activities.

Activity cluster	Activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up and maintain a physical space. • Review and report to the EIT Community Officer Coordinator. • Any other tasks mandated by the EIT Management which, in principle, support the EIT Community to contribute to the achievement of the EIT's Objectives and implementation of its Strategy and Annual Work Programmes.
Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate and coordinate EIT Community branding efforts, sharing information and advising KICs and Community Members. • Facilitate and coordinate EIT Community efforts to develop and implement joint activities and events based on the local ecosystem needs. • To the greatest extent possible, ensure a collaborative, aligned approach amongst the EIT KICs' RIS Hubs (future Community Members) towards national authorities, including relevant NCPs and Managing Authorities. • Facilitate and coordinate efforts of the local actors from the EIT Community and the KICs where appropriate to jointly apply for local/national granting and funding opportunities. • Suggest and support, including, where appropriate and with the agreement of the EIT KICs, leading the implementation of possible joint activities amongst the EIT KICs, to be implemented nationally and/or regionally, aligned with relevant RIS3 priorities. • Identify the need for and facilitate implementing shared services for Community Members to improve efficiency.
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the KICs' broader community to plan and implement local activities and events in the country, looking for cross-KIC synergies where appropriate and facilitating them. • Support those KICs not present in the ecosystem so their opportunities are accessible to the local talents and ensure at least their basic representation in the country/region. • At the request of the SRI Cluster and EIT KICs, support any necessary updating of the local Country-specific roadmap and support its implementation, as appropriate. • Serve as a centralised contact gateway for local stakeholders to the EIT Community and refer stakeholders to contact persons within other relevant EIT KICs, best suited to support their needs. • Support all the KICs by scouting new KIC members, local start-ups and scale-ups for their activities, matching and connecting them with all of the KICs through either their local Community Members or through the SRI Cluster. • Provide support, in addition to that already offered by the EIT RIS Hubs, to the EIT and the EIT KICs with navigating the local innovation landscape, including by contributing to the development of EIT maps/ecosystem mapping.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a good understanding of the EIT model and keep up to date with the KICs' activities. • Ensuring the EIT's on-the-ground visibility and branding. • Facilitating the organisation of EIT Community awareness-raising events, including possible open days within the context of INNOVEIT (the EIT's annual innovation forum), and coordinating and supporting the participation of EIT Community representatives in relevant national events. • Collect information to share through applicable channels related to the EIT KICs' activities, events, results and opportunities of interest to local stakeholders with a view to their dissemination internally and externally. • Managing and updating the EIT Community RIS Hubs' website in the local language, with information on EIT Community activities and opportunities, including dedicated sections targeted towards specific stakeholders, including students, start-ups, national authorities, etc.
Financial sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scout for and recommend to the EIT KICs opportunities to implement joint projects financed through other EU/national/regional funds, including ESIF and IPA III (collection of local funding opportunities and bring these to the attention of the local Hub Community Members and the KICs). • Contribute to, support and, where appropriate, with the agreements of the EIT KICs, lead any horizontal exploratory efforts towards securing co-funding opportunities, including the EIT Community Officer position, securing meetings with relevant

Activity cluster	Activity
	national/regional authorities and facilitating the preparation for the submission of joint proposals for national/regional funding in case of general Cross-KIC actions.

Administration and **Coordination** are activities that have to be implemented, and the activities can be reported, **Support**, **Communication** and **Financial Sustainability** are activities with important outcomes that are possible and worth measuring to assess the performance of the EIT Community Officer. Therefore, the EIT cross-KIC SRI Cluster recommends measuring the following indicators.

Activity cluster	How to measure - KPIs
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluated at the start, mid-term and end of the business year based on reviews and reporting (performance monitoring toolset)
Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluated at the start, mid-term and end of the business year based on reviews and reporting (performance monitoring toolset)
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New regional EIT Community partners relevant to the KICs introduced Cross-KIC matchmakings performed, namely active partners collaborating in the EIT Community, initially supported and/or referred by the EIT Community Officer Start-ups and scale-ups referred to EIT Community opportunities
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Events, workshops, and meetings organized/facilitated by the EIT Community Officer External events organised by national and/or regional authorities with the participation of the EIT Community Officer and promotion of the EIT Community Relevant key national events collected and communicated to the local Hub Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and EIT KICs Media mentions of the EIT Community in local publications/news outlets facilitated by the EIT Community Officer.
Financial sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local funding opportunities collected and communicated to the local EIT Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and EIT KICs External funding attracted from synergies/cooperation agreements identified/concluded by the EIT Community Officer, contributing to the Financial Sustainability of the EIT Community Officer, and the amount of funding attracted. Local funding opportunities collected and communicated to the local EIT Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and EIT KICs to implement joint projects

Before elaborating on each Key Performance Indicator in detail, it is worth mentioning two different types of countries and territories the SRI Cluster needs to consider. There are countries and territories where the EIT and its KICs on the ground representation are broad, and there are different stakeholders representing the knowledge triangle of many of the KICs, RIS Hubs and Co-Location Centers established. In these countries and territories (“**established**”), the EIT Community is well established, there is high potential for cross-KIC activities, and the EIT Community Officer has an overall coordinative role, avoiding overlap with existing KIC experts (the “EIT Community members”). There is another, smaller set of countries and territories where there is no (yet) on-the-ground EIT or KIC representation; however, stakeholders relevant to the EIT Community are ready to be engaged and actively take part in EIT activities and the building of the local ecosystem and integrate the knowledge triangle. These countries we call “**white-spot**” countries. In white-spot countries, the EIT Community Officer will have a deeper representative role. These major roles are important to distinguish because both the expectation and how to monitor activities will differ in “established” and “white-spot” countries. In many cases, the general mission of the EIT Community Officer (ECO for short) is to contribute, to support and, where appropriate, with the agreements of the EIT KICs, to lead any horizontal exploratory efforts towards securing co-funding opportunities, including securing meetings with relevant national/regional authorities, facilitate the preparation for the submission of joint proposals for national/regional funding in case of general Cross-KIC actions, cultivating on-site and digital communication in the local language.

Important that the “white-spot” countries and territories slowly evolve to be “established” countries. According to the EIT cross-KIC SRI Cluster, countries and territories are considered “established” when at least two KICs operate CLCs or RIS Hubs being members of the local EIT Community in the country as of 1 January of the corresponding year.

The Definition of the Key Performance Indicators

The performance monitoring toolset is defined in Chapter 3: Performance Indicator Monitoring. The definition and description of the rest of the KPIs are the following:

EITECO01	New regional EIT Community partners relevant to the KICs introduced	
Definition: EIT Community Officers are requested to strategically scout and secure new joint project partnership opportunities for joint-KIC activities. EIT Community Officers are responsible for identifying and securing new opportunities for joint-KIC activities and the EIT Community as a whole, including the RIS Hubs and the EIT KICs. It is considered that at least two Hubs and/or EIT KICs must be involved in a joint-KIC partnership.	Source of information:	
	A review and final report of the ECO	
	Any proof or structured data:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of the new EIT Community partner Representative/reference person of the new EIT Community partner with contact information Connecting KICs/Hubs and the name and contact of the reference persons 	

EITECO02	Cross-KIC matchmakings performed, namely active partners collaborating in the EIT Community, initially supported and/or referred by the ECO	
Definition: EIT Community Officers are requested to provide additional support to EIT and EIT KICs in navigating the local innovation landscape in addition to the support already provided by the EIT RIS Hubs. This includes a contribution to the development of EIT maps/ecosystem maps and the establishment of synergies and network effects at the Cross-KIC level. To be considered joint-KIC matchmaking, at least 2 Hubs and/or EIT KICs must participate. Active partner: takes part actively in one of the KIC's and/or joint-KIC Cluster's activities.	Source of information:	
	A review and final report of the ECO	
	Any proof or structured data:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of the new joint-KIC partner Representative/reference person of the joint-KIC partner with contact information The KIC where the partner has already been engaged so far Connecting new KICs/Hubs where the match was created and the name and contact of the reference persons 	

EITECO03	Start-ups and scale-ups referred to EIT Community opportunities.	
Definition: EIT Community Officers are responsible for promoting, facilitating and initiating referrals of start-ups and scale-ups to EIT Community opportunities and members via dissemination, promotion and other means.	Source of information:	
	A review and final report of the ECO	
	Any proof or structured data:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of the start-up/scale-up Registration number of the start-up Representative/reference person of the EIT Community partner with contact information Opportunity description, potential follow-ups 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting new KICs/Hubs where the match was created and the name and contact of the reference persons
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EITECO04	Events, workshops, and meetings organised/facilitated by the ECO and the number of participants
Definition: EIT Community Officers are requested to proactively organise events, workshops and meetings to establish and develop networks for and in coordination with the EIT Community members and support the promotion and dissemination of the EIT Community opportunities and activities.	Source of information:
	A review and final report of the ECO
	Any proof or structured data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name and nature of the event Role of the ECO Organisations involved. KICs/Hubs involved and the name and contact information of respected reference persons

EITECO05	External events organised by national and/or regional authorities with the participation of the ECO and promotion of the EIT Community.
Definition: EIT Community Officers are requested to carefully and strategically source and participate actively in external events organised by and/or regional events relevant to the promotion of the EIT Community and the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda in reference to the EIT RIS implementation framework 2022-27.	Source of information:
	A review and final report of the ECO
	Any proof or structured data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name and nature of the event Role of the ECO Promoted joint-KIC opportunities and activities. Follow-up activities done

EITECO06	Relevant key national events collected and communicated to the Community Members, SRI Cluster and EIT KICs
Definition: EIT Community Officers are requested to scout, collect and communicate relevant key national events for/to the EIT Community members. EIT Community Officers must disseminate the information to all KICs at the same time.	Source of information:
	A review and final report of the ECO
	Any proof or structured data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name and nature of the event, date Organiser (national/local authority, university, private sector, etc.) Link to the event and link at the EIT Community portal where the event was communicated, Relevant to which KICs/stakeholders and how,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow-up activities, if any Number of attendees, if possible.
--	---

EITECO07	Media mentions of the EIT Community in local publications/news outlets facilitated by the ECO
Definition: EIT Community Officers are requested to support the dissemination of activities and achievements of the EIT Community.	Source of information:
	A review and final report of the ECO
	Any proof or structured data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link to the media mentions Which KICs have been referred What was the role of the ECO in organising this media coverage

EITECO08	Local funding opportunities collected and communicated to the local EIT Community Members, SRI Cluster and EIT KICs
Definition: EIT Community Officers are requested to coordinate, communicate, and facilitate the collection of local funding opportunities and relevant key national events and bring these to the attention of the SRI Cluster first. The SRI Cluster members are responsible for further dissemination of these opportunities within their KICs and Community Members. EIT Community Officers must disseminate the information to all KICs at the same time.	Source of information:
	A review and final report of the ECO
	Any proof or structured data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source of funding Amount of funding To which KIC offices and stakeholders (members) Role of the ECO in securing the funding, if applicable Contacts of the reference persons involved in the process

EITECO09	External funding attracted from synergies/cooperation agreements identified/concluded by the ECO, contributing to the Financial Sustainability of the ECO, and the amount of funding attracted
Definition: EIT Community Officers are requested to actively contribute towards their financial sustainability through synergies/cooperation agreements identified/concluded by the ECO as stated in the RIS Hubs Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles.	Source of information:
	A review and final report of the ECO
	Any proof or structured data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source of funding/investment Amount of funding Involved KIC offices and stakeholders (from the EIT Community) Role of the ECO in securing the funding Contacts of the reference persons involved in the process

EITECO10	Local funding opportunities collected and communicated to the local EIT Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and EIT KICs to implement joint projects		
Definition: EIT Community Officers are requested to source, recommend and secure opportunities for the EIT KICs, the SRI Cluster and EIT Community Members to facilitate joint projects financed through other EU/national/regional funds (including ESIF and IPA III). EIT Community Officers must disseminate the information to all KICs at the same time.	Source of information:		
	A review and final report of the ECO		
	Any proof or structured data:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Source of opportunity• Amount of funding secured• Which KIC offices and stakeholders (members) were involved• Role of the ECO in securing the opportunity• Contacts of the reference persons involved in the process		

The EIT Community Officers are requested to collect and document any activities that support their claim that they have met a KPI target reported through an electronic reporting platform operated by the lead KIC that appointed/selected the EIT Community Officer.

To establish a minimum target for each KPI, it is necessary to understand how each KPI is defined and how the performance of an EIT Community Officer is measured. Since the network of EIT Community Officers is a new initiative, it is only an indicative target for the first year of operation of each EIT Community Officer. To set realistic minimum targets, it is necessary to consider the experiences of several EIT Community Officers in different countries for at least one year. Using the pilot activity as a basis, a realistic baseline can be established to measure future activities and performance and be communicated to the EIT for approval as part of the Business Plan process. The underperformance of any minimum KPI shall be reported and well-justified by the EIT Community Officers in their mid-term and final reports.

In light of this, the EIT cross-KIC SRI Cluster recommends revising the minimum targets outlined below on a country-specific basis after each EIT Community Officer has completed their first operational year based on their reported performance, an evaluation conducted by the lead KIC, which takes into account country-specific factors, and approval by the EIT cross-KIC SRI Cluster Steering Committee. Based on the above-mentioned indicators, the following are the initial minimum targets for EIT Community Officers:

NS minimum target values					
		White Spot Countries		Established countries	
EITECO01	New regional EIT Community partners relevant to the KICs introduced* <small>*in established countries, the target will be achieved focusing in KICs which have NO PRESENCE in the country (no presence = no CLC, RIS Hub or dedicated KIC expert)</small>	Innovation Index Score (GIS) 20-30	1	Innovation Index Score (GIS) 20-30	2
		Innovation Index Score (GIS) 30-40	2	Innovation Index Score (GIS) 30-40	3
		Innovation Index Score (GIS) 40+	3	Innovation Index Score (GIS) 40+	4
EITECO02	Cross-KIC matchmakings performed, namely active partners collaborating in the EIT Community, initially supported and/or referred by the ECO* <small>*in established countries, the target will be achieved focusing in KICs which have NO PRESENCE in the country (no presence = no CLC, RIS Hub or dedicated KIC expert)</small>	1		2	
EITECO03	Start-ups and scale-ups referred to EIT Community opportunities* <small>*in established countries, the target will be achieved focusing in KICs which have NO PRESENCE in the country (no CLC, RIS Hub or dedicated KIC expert)</small>	Innovation Index Score 20-30	1	Innovation Index Score 20-30	3
		Innovation Index Score 30-40	2	Innovation Index Score 30-40	4
		Innovation Index Score 40+	3	Innovation Index Score 40+	5

EITECO04	Events, workshops, and meetings organised/facilitated by the ECO for the EIT Community members and the number of participants	2	2
EITECO05	External events organised by national and/or regional authorities with the participation of the ECO and promotion of the EIT Community.	4	4
EITECO06	Relevant key national events collected and communicated to the EIT Community Members, SRI Cluster and EIT KICs	all visible, that has been communicated and promoted in various channels in the respective country	all visible, that has been communicated and promoted in various channels in the respective country all visible
EITECO07	Media mentions of the EIT Community in local publications/news outlets facilitated by the ECO	2	3
EITECO08	Local funding opportunities collected and communicated to the local EIT Community Members, SRI Cluster and EIT KICs	all visible, that has been communicated and promoted in various channels in the respective country	all visible, that has been communicated and promoted in various channels in the respective country
EITECO09	External funding attracted from synergies/cooperation agreements identified/concluded by the ECO, contributing to the Financial Sustainability of the ECO, and the amount of funding attracted	equivalent of 0.5 FTE of the EIT Community Officer personnel costs	equivalent of 0.5 FTE of the EIT Community Officer personnel costs
EITECO10	Local funding opportunities collected and communicated to the local EIT Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and EIT KICs to implement projects jointly	all visible, equivalent with at least kick start one RIS Hub ⁶	all visible, equivalent to RIS Hub co-funding requirements

The above KPI targets are established for the involvement of the EIT Community Officers operating on the country level. In the future, the Cluster can reconsider whether the EIT Community Officers can cover more than one country (regional approach). There is an exception for two KPIs: EITCO01 and EITCO03, where the minimum targets depend on the country's scoring in the Global Innovation Index 2021⁷. For EITECO01 In the case of the KPI EITCO04, the number of participants in events, workshops, and meetings will be determined country by country. As for KPI no. EITCO09, the 0,5 FTE equivalent, is considered a recommendation because, in most cases, EIT Community Officers, especially in the first year of operations, might be unable to fulfil it. However, EITCO09 shows the direction and expectations towards financial sustainability.

⁶ It represents the approximate budget for establishing and operating a RIS Hub activity in a given country by any of the KICs. In order for that country to exit the "white spot" status, we expect the ECO to secure funds to establish the first Hub there.

⁷ https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo_pub_gii_2021.pdf

Performance indicator monitoring

The performance of EIT Community Officers is measured through a unified and simplified evaluation and reporting system called the “Performance monitoring toolset”. The **EIT cross-KIC SRI Cluster Steering Committee** is the overall decision-making body in any relevant activities related to the EIT Community RIS Hubs and its EIT Community Officers. Its responsibilities are:

- Approve reports and business plans for the EIT Community Officers;
- Provide strategic guidance and reference to overall EIT Community RIS activities;
- Inform the ECO Coordinator of any new requirements coming from the EIT.

The procedural proposal of the Performance monitoring toolset:

The lead KIC set up the business plan for the EIT Community Officer including an activity plan, time-bounding milestones deliverables and KPI targets within the electronic platform the Lead KIC regularly operates to monitor and report projects and activities.

The EIT Community Officer proactively reports its progress within this electronic system quarterly together with a forecast of any potential deviation of activities, deliverables, milestones and KPIs (deviation measured in time and ambition) against its business plan.

Quarterly reports are collected and shared through the lead KIC with the ECO Coordinator who prepares a combined quarterly update report to inform the SRI Cluster Steering Committee.

In case the forecast deviation is below 10% (the tolerance level), the EIT Community Officer provides a mitigation plan to the Lead KIC describing how to get back on track by the next quarterly report in agreement with the Lead KIC.

During the following quarterly report, if the ECO is back on track, only monitoring continues, however if the mitigation plan does not work, forecast deviation must be considered to be above 10%.

In case the forecast deviation is above 10% (the tolerance level), the EIT Community Officer provides a mitigation plan that is transferred through the lead KIC to the ECO Coordinator and escalated to the SRI Cluster Steering Committee to approve the mitigation plan. ECO has to execute the approved mitigation plan with close monitoring of the Lead KIC.

By the end of the year, overall performance must be measured and deviation (deviation measured in ambition) against its business plan must be below 10%. Reports collected by the Lead KIC, are transferred to the ECO Coordinator to escalate the annual ECO reports to the SRI Cluster Steering Committee for approval.

- If the approved report has a lower deviation than 10%, the SRI Cluster Steering Committee will allocate a “green light” rating
- If the approved report has a deviation between 10% and 20%, the SRI Cluster Steering Committee will allocate a “yellow light” rating
- If the approved report has a deviation over 20%, the SRI Cluster Steering Committee will allocate a “red light” rating

Approved annual EIT Community Officer reports are to be added to the RIS Community RIS Hubs Annual report by the Lead KIC to provide an up-to-date description of the existing distribution and role of Community RIS Hubs to the EIT.

At the end of the contract term (composed by 2 or 3 assessments), no green light achievements, or a red light achievement in the last year will automatically disqualify the ECO to renew its position for an additional term.

Annex 4 – EIT RIS hubs minimum standards and guiding principles (2023-2025)

EIT RIS hubs minimum standards and guiding principles (2023-2025)

(Version of 2023.12.20)

CONTEXT

The [EIT SIA 2021-2027](#), designates “increasing the regional impact of the EIT KICs”, through an enhanced [EIT Regional Innovation Scheme \(RIS\)](#), reinforced with a significantly stronger mandate and additional financial resources, as a key, EIT priority. While this recognises the Scheme’s success since its establishment, as well as its potential to do more, expectations on the EIT RIS to deliver increasing levels of impact, in line with the EIT’s objectives, are very high. To meet these expectations, the EIT RIS needs to have “all hands-on deck”, with the whole EIT Community working together towards a common goal. In particular, it must be ensured that the EIT RIS Hubs, with their unique, on-the-ground presence across Europe, strongly contribute to the EIT’s objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Towards this aim, a set of minimum standards and guiding principles for EIT RIS Hubs, have been drawn up in close consultation with the Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations (SRI) Cluster and the EIT-KIC Forum, and fully aligned with, and complementary to, the EIT Legislative Framework and the [EIT RIS Implementation Framework \(2022-2027\)](#). This document sets out a common strategic approach, which will underpin the establishment and operation of all EIT RIS Hubs, aimed at ensuring their consistent effectiveness in contributing towards achieving the EIT’s objectives and KPIs, while also rationalising the EIT Community’s on-the-ground presence. These minimum standards and guiding principles will be the basis for the Business Plan 2023-2025 process with some pilot actions rolled out in 2022. This document will be reviewed and potentially updated in 2024.

MISSION

In line with Article 2(4) of the [EIT Regulation](#), EIT RIS Hubs are “physical hub, 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. The EIT Legislative Framework also includes a goal that the EIT RIS Hubs could pave the way to the establishment of a Co-Location Centre in the targeted region.

EIT RIS HUB MINIMUM FUNCTIONS

To deliver on their mission, all existing and future EIT RIS Hubs are required to fully perform the following minimum functions, all of which must be specifically included as fundamental requirements in all contractual agreements between the local EIT RIS Hub organisations and their EIT KICs:

- Improve the innovation capacities of the local ecosystem

EIT RIS Hubs must deliver on the EIT RIS’ core objective of improving the innovation capacities of local ecosystems, through capacity building activities, and closer interactions between the local knowledge triangle innovation actors (such as, clusters, networks, regional public authorities, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), research organisations, Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutions, SMEs) and their activities. These activities should include the dissemination of the EIT Community’s results and good practices, as well as activities focused on citizen engagement. EIT RIS Hubs should be able to demonstrate measurable results and impact of their activities and provide opportunities for feedback from local ecosystem stakeholders and adjust their activities accordingly.

- Attract and facilitate the integration of new participants in EIT Community activities

EIT RIS Hubs must directly support the EIT RIS' objective of attracting and facilitating the integration of potential new partners and participants in the EIT KICs and their activities. The EIT RIS Hubs must strongly promote EIT Community opportunities within the local innovation ecosystems and help to link these to the EIT Community's pan-European innovation ecosystems. EIT RIS Hubs must also serve as a pipeline of talent and innovation potential (including students, ideas, start-ups, etc) towards the EIT Community, manifestly contributing to the attainment of the EIT's objectives and KPIs, including the EIT KICs' Financial Sustainability targets and the RIS Hub's own Financial Sustainability targets.

To do this, the EIT RIS Hubs must liaise closely with local/regional/national authorities and stakeholders, including the EIT National Contact Points (NCPs). NCPs are expected to act as an assistance, information and referral point for potential beneficiaries, who will be redirected to the respective local EIT RIS Hub or EIT KIC Office according to their needs. To achieve this, the Hubs should regularly provide the EIT NCPs with all relevant information to support their core functions, and if requested, help the NCPs understand the specificities around the KIC they represent and the type of activities they deliver. Once an EIT Community RIS Hub is established in a particular country or territory, the consolidated provision of information to the local EIT NCPs can be centrally delivered by the EIT Community RIS Hub EIT Community Officer with fully support from the EIT RIS Hubs. This should also enable EIT RIS Hubs and NCPs to team up for regular outreach, communication and awareness raising activities, and eventually reach new audiences and increase the number of national EIT beneficiaries.

The detailed task sharing and cooperation rules for all local EIT related local entities should be described in the establishing MoU of the EIT Community RIS Hub, which will be signed by the contributors. The management of the MoU signature (as all coordinating tasks) are the responsibility of the national EIT Community Officer (ECO).

The EIT RIS Hubs should additionally actively scout for the most promising talent and innovation potential in their local ecosystems with a view to channel such talent towards their EIT KICs' education programmes, Accelerators and so on.

- Support the establishment of synergies

With support from the EIT in a "door opener" role, via the national EIT Member State Representative Group (MSRG) representative and NCPs, the EIT RIS Hubs must spearhead efforts to establish synergies between EIT Community activities and the local innovation ecosystem, aligned with the relevant Regional Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3). EIT RIS Hubs should engage with relevant local authorities as well as, undertake regular mapping exercises to identifying potential funding and collaboration opportunities.

With a view towards the EIT RIS Hubs' own financial sustainability, they 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). Here too, 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 by contributing to capacity building actions under the EIT - EIC Fastrack Scheme and facilitating the cross participation of local start-ups and SMEs in EIT and EIC activities.

- Coordinate with other EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices

To fully perform all these minimum functions, each EIT RIS Hub must coordinate its work closely with other Hubs and EIT KIC Offices, such as Co-Location Centres and Satellite Offices, present in the same innovation ecosystem. This includes providing other EIT RIS Hubs and EIT KIC Offices with regular updates on its ongoing and planned activities, including via any coordination mechanisms to be put in place, as well as, concrete cooperation, including joint activities with a view to maximise impact. Once an EIT Community RIS Hub is established covering a given country or territory, all Hubs present in that ecosystem should be linked to it and therefore, this coordination and information distribution amongst EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices will be supported by the EIT Community RIS Hub EIT Community officer.

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 other EIT KIC Offices. 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.

EIT RIS HUB KEY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Establishment of new EIT RIS Hubs

Any new EIT RIS Hubs will only be established following the consent of the EIT, with any decision taken based on a thorough needs analysis. Plans for new Hubs must be reported in the Country-specific roadmaps which has been drawn up in consultation with and adopted by the EIT as part of the Business Plan process. The EIT KICs are entitled to propose updates to their Country-specific roadmaps, in circumstances driven by unforeseen fundamental changes that make this necessary, including lessons learnt from the launch of the already established and operating EIT RIS Community Hubs for consideration by the EIT.

The aim of the Country-specific roadmaps is to describe, in a single document, the country-specific plans of the KICs, to be implemented either individually or jointly, including:

- planned changes in a KIC's on-the-ground presence;
- a timeline towards the establishment of the local EIT Community RIS Hubs; and;
- plans for Cross-KIC activities, aligned with the local RIS3 priorities, to be implemented locally.

The last version of the country-specific roadmap adopted by the KICs and the EIT on November 8, 2023 is the governing one, the modifications and adaptations that become necessary after the agreement are recorded by the EIT and the KICs in an attached annex.

The Country-specific roadmaps must take into consideration the specificities of the target territory and will be officially approved by the EIT as part of the 2023-2025 Business Planning process. Country-specific roadmaps should be drawn up for all EIT RIS-eligible country and territory at either national or Regional-level.

New EIT RIS Hubs should ensure complementarity with existing EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices present locally, as well as the local EIT Community RIS Hub, once established. New EIT RIS Hubs should also contribute to boosting the EIT KICs' geographical balance across the EIT RIS-eligible countries and territories. Additionally, the engagement of local organisations or other entities to serve as EIT RIS Hubs, must be subject to an open call process. Where appropriate, non-country specific open Calls to set up new, impact driven, EIT RIS Hubs, are encouraged.

- Integration of EIT RIS Hubs into EIT Community RIS Hubs

By the end of 2020, 97 EIT RIS Hubs had been established to drive the successful implementation of the EIT RIS. The concentration of multiple EIT RIS Hubs in some countries is creating a complex landscape which many stakeholders are struggling to navigate, yet, at the same time, several EIT RIS-eligible countries and territories do not have on-the-ground representation by some or even any EIT KICs. In this context, focus should now shift towards strengthening local-level synergies and ensuring the presence of the EIT Community in every EIT RIS-eligible country and territory. Towards this end, the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster will be mandated and provided with the necessary resources to establish EIT Community RIS Hubs to be run by a EIT Community Officer (ECO) covering every EIT RIS-eligible country and territory, by the end of 2025, either at the national or Regional (such as Baltics, Western Balkans, etc)-level.

These EIT Community RIS Hubs will, primarily, be a coordination mechanism, providing local innovators with a unified source of information on all services and opportunities provided by the entire EIT Community, both locally and internationally. It will also serve as a centralised gateway, for local innovators, to all EIT KICs, irrespective of their local on-the-ground representation.

In those ecosystems where EIT RIS Hubs are already established, the EIT Community RIS Hubs will aim to integrate these Hubs' and rebrand them as Community Members. Community Members will maintain their RIS Hub functions but will be required to:

- undertake a rebranding and renaming exercise aimed at external stakeholders;
- to commit to an enhanced level of cooperation with the other Community Members operating under the same EIT Community RIS Hub, including by implementing joint activities.

In exchange, they will not lose any of the operational independence they enjoyed prior to integration, and will not be requested to relocate. A common naming and branding approach across all EIT Community RIS Hubs and their Community Members will be put in place. Once EIT RIS Hubs become Community Members, they will be commonly renamed to "EIT [KIC name] RIS Hub [country], member of the EIT Community RIS Hub [country]". This will allow for each EIT Community RIS Hub to be displayed as a unitary Hub on the EIT's external communications maps.

Each EIT Community RIS Hub will be run and coordinated by an EIT Community Officer chosen by the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster, following an open call process or employed directly by the entity which is agreed by the KICs to take over the ECO role (local CLC or RIS Hub). The EIT Community Officer can be a natural person or an entity as well. In case of the selection of an entity, the lead expert qualification, who is taking over the ECO role, must be the major selection criteria. This lead expert can be just replaced with a contract amendment accepted by the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster. The ECO must be fluent both in English and in the official local language/s. A list of tasks and responsibilities of the ECO are included in annex 1.

With active support from the EIT, as appropriate, national authorities may be invited to finance or co-finance the cost of establishing and / or operating their local EIT Community RIS Hub, as well as joint activities aligned with the local RIS3 priorities from which all Community Members could potentially benefit.

Unless external funding can be found, the cost of the ECO, who will be compensated based on a performance-based system of remuneration, other direct and indirect costs related to the running of the EIT Community RIS Hub, such as the operation of the website, the set up and maintenance of a small physical space (if this cannot be accommodated in an existing EIT Community space or another offered space), as well as Cross-KIC management costs related to operationalising the Hubs, will be covered from the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster's budget. The Cross-KIC SRI Cluster's budget for 2023-2025, will be adequately increased to reflect this, having taken into consideration a total cost estimation to be drawn up by the Cluster. Similarly, unless external funding can be found, Cross-KIC activities could be jointly financed from the EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members' budgets.

As with all aspects of this document, where necessary, starting from 2023, the contractual agreements between the local organisations running an EIT Community RIS Hub Network Member and their EIT KICs should be updated, to reflect this provision.

Six pilot EIT Community RIS Hubs have been established in 2022 and 2023, starting in North Macedonia, followed by Latvia, Ukraine, Cyprus, Malta and Montenegro. On the basis of learnings gleaned from the establishment and initial operation in these six pilot EIT Community RIS Hubs, the process for the establishment of the remaining 19 EIT Community RIS Hubs covering all EIT RIS-eligible countries and territories by 2025 might be fine-tuned. The intention is that 14 EIT Community RIS Hubs will be established in 2024, followed by the final 5 in 2025. A clear establishment schedule is contained in the Country-specific roadmaps.

- EIT RIS Hub financing

EIT RIS Hubs are co-funded by the EIT KICs as either a local independent organisation or a consortium of organisations working with the EIT KICs as KIC partners, subcontractors or subgrantees. Local organisations engaged to serve as EIT RIS

Hubs will only be eligible to receive EIT RIS funding for operational activities directly related to the fulfilment of its mission. Administrative costs such as offices and related infrastructure, personnel costs, and so on, are not eligible. All EIT RIS Hubs must demonstrate cost effectiveness.

As part of their Business Plan submissions, the EIT KICs should also include binding, multi-annual Financial Sustainability targets for each of their EIT RIS Hubs. While subject to the final Memorandum of Cooperation review, in principle, all EIT RIS Hub will need to achieve 100% financing from non-EIT sources by the time their EIT KIC reaches the maximum fifteen-year period of EIT grant support. This means that for the first wave KICs' EIT RIS Hub, 100% financing from non-EIT sources will need to be reached by the end of 2024.

The Cross-KIC SRI Cluster should develop a unified and simplified evaluation and reporting principles to ensure that each EIT KIC can establish a system to closely track, measure, and assess the timely performance of their own EIT RIS Hubs. 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 KICs' objectives and KPIs. The targets for each EIT RIS Hub will need to be communicated to the EIT for approval as part of the Business Plan process.

A unified and simplified evaluation and reporting system shall also be introduced for the EIT Community RIS Hubs to assess the performance of the ECOs. This system will be operated by all the KICs jointly in the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster project. The ECOs' individual targets will need to be communicated to the EIT for approval as part of the Business Plan process.

Since both evaluation systems will be performance based, in cases of underperformance applicable financial penalties and other mitigating measures, should be transparently delineated. The EIT approved the EIT RIS Hubs unified and simplified evaluation and reporting principles based on the EIT Common List KPIs and the revised suggestion of the unified and simplified evaluation and reporting system for the EIT Community RIS Hubs is under evaluation of EIT in 2023 containing also the adequate monitoring mechanism as part of its monitoring strategy in 2023.

ANNEX: LIST OF TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EIT Community Officer (ECO)

- Develop a good understanding of the EIT model and keep up to date with the KICs activities;
- Form good working relations with all EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem both nationally and Regionally;
- Manage the signature of the EIT Community RIS Hub MoU with all local EIT representations on the ground to finalise the establishment of the EIT Community RIS hub
- In consultation with the EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem, establish a smooth and efficient working method which limits the administrative burden on the EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, and other EIT KIC Offices, while supporting their minimum functions;
- Set up and maintain a physical space, in a city accepted by the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster and the EIT, after having consulted with the national authorities, where local stakeholders, including NCPs, can physically, walk-in to obtain information on, as well as gain access to the EIT Community, while additionally, aiding with the EIT's on-the-ground visibility and branding;
- Design an appropriate work method and necessary tools for information sharing / coordination so as to facilitate continuous information exchange between the Hub Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem both nationally and Regionally;
- Collect information to share through applicable channels related the EIT KICs' activities, events, results and opportunities of interest to local stakeholders with a view to their dissemination internally and externally;
- Coordinate the collection of local funding opportunities and relevant key national events and bring these to the attention to the local Hub Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices.
- Contribute to, support and where appropriate, with the agreements of the EIT KICs, lead any horizontal

exploratory efforts towards securing co-funding opportunities, including securing meetings with relevant national / regional authorities and facilitate the preparation for the submission of joint proposals for national / regional funding in case of general Cross-KIC actions;

- Coordinate and support the EIT RIS Hubs local joint communication efforts, including by:
 - managing and updating the EIT Community RIS Hub website, in the local language, with information on EIT Community activities and opportunities, including dedicated sections targeted towards specific stakeholders, including, students, start-ups, national authorities and so on;
 - facilitating the organisation of EIT Community awareness-raising events, including possible open days within the context of INNOVEIT (the EIT's annual innovation forum), and coordinating and supporting the participation of EIT Community representatives in relevant national events;
- To the greatest extent possible, ensure a coordinated approach amongst the EIT KICs' RIS Hubs towards national authorities including relevant NCPs and Managing Authorities;
- Scout for and recommend to the EIT KICs opportunities to implement joint projects financed through other EU / national / regional funds (including ESIF and IPA III);
- Suggest and support, including, where appropriate and with the agreement of the EIT KICs, lead, the implementation of possible joint activities amongst the EIT KICs, to be implemented nationally and / or Regionally, aligned with relevant RIS3 priorities;
- At the request of the EIT KICs, support any necessary updating of the local Country-specific roadmap and support with its implementation, as appropriate;
- Serve as a centralised contact gateway for local stakeholders to the EIT Community as a whole, and refer stakeholders to contact persons within other relevant EIT KICs, best suited to support their needs.;
- Identify the need for and facilitating the implementation of shared services for Hub Members with a view to improve efficiency;
- Upon request, provide support, additional to that already offered by the EIT RIS Hubs, to the EIT and the EIT KICs with navigating the local innovation landscape, including by contributing to the development of EIT maps / ecosystem mapping;
- Any other tasks mandated by the EIT Management which, in principle, supports the EIT RIS Hubs to contribute to the achievement of the EIT's Objectives and implementation of its Strategy and Annual Work Programmes.

Annex 5: Contract template

Contract template to be shared with shortlisted candidates.