

Panel discussion

Participation in the KICs: Fully exploiting opportunities

The EIT has been set up with a clear business perspective. It will help transform innovative ideas into products and services that create sustainable growth and jobs. This panel discussion will address the question of how the EIT and its KICs can turn this objective into a concrete reality.

KICs have been set up to deliver measurable societal, economic and entrepreneurial learning and impact through new business creation. To do so, KICs are to attract and work with partner organisations and top-class talent from around the world, fully exploiting the opportunities offered by this new type of cross-cutting cooperation.

With the KICs aiming to transfer higher education, research and innovation activities to the business context as well as commercial and societal applications, they have the potential of stimulating innovation in large - existing - firms as well as creating new spin-offs and start-ups and supporting SMEs. Innovation does clearly not only include technological innovation, but ranges across non-technological fields such as organisational or societal innovation, too. Clearly, this transformation towards encompassing and open innovation needs to be carried by people. The KICs will therefore invest in entrepreneurship education and new types of education programmes in order to equip people across the board with the skills necessary and to provide them with a dynamic and interdisciplinary environment that nurtures talent and provides the framework conditions for entrepreneurial risk taking.

Moreover, as KICs will become testing grounds for new innovation models and explore new business opportunities, they should also become attractive targets for venture capital funding and other types of investment.

Discussion Points:

- Which added values can KICs bring to businesses and vice versa? How can win-win situations be established?
- How can KICs access new ways of funding?
- How can KICs explore new business opportunities and become attractive targets for venture capital funding?
- In what way can higher education institutions benefit from the business collaboration in a KIC and vice versa?
- How can KICs not only lead to the set up of new businesses, but also to new business creation in existing companies?
- Is the KICs' concept providing the right means to bring together diverse partners from business, higher education and research to lead to economic growth and business creation?