

A community of entrepreneurs, innovators & change agents



EIT Students and Alumni Connect! 2013

10 –11 November 2013

Budapest, Hungary



The importance of communities and commitment to them

“ When you bring people together, something happens. I have experienced this in my professional life when I have, for instance, participated in meetings – when you get people together, a kind of collective wisdom develops. And I think this is what we expect from our community.

You are all agents of change, and this is very important. In fact, we shouldn't just look at you as students because you are the future. You are the future of the EIT and I'm convinced that a lot of you will make change. I think it's fascinating that, when we considered entrepreneurs in the past, we often thought about people who wanted to make money. Now I hear our entrepreneurs talking about wanting to change the world, which I think is great. By doing so you will also create career paths and growth paths for Europe, and you will have our support.

The EIT is about innovation and entrepreneurship, but mostly it's about people. Because behind any innovation there are people. Behind the knowledge, books and laboratories, there are people. So the purpose here is to energise this community and that's why it's so important that we encourage what you are doing at the KIC level with your communities. But the EIT should not only observe, but also incentivise and this is the reason why we are so excited on our side.

You are the future of the EIT. You are the EIT. If we are successful, some people in this room could change the world. That's why it's not about you just participating, like you would in a club or sports team. And you shouldn't just approach this as taking part in a community or taking part in a programme. You have to incorporate the EIT's mission into yourself. You are, with your own willingness, supposed to – and will – change a lot of things.

So be yourself. Relax, because there's no success without fun. Take advantage of the opportunities you're given to inspire yourself and get involved. If we can help you to do this, then what we've been trying to do here will have been a success. ”

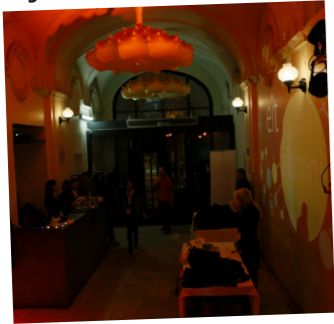
José Manuel Leceta, EIT Director, speaking at the EIT Students and Alumni Connect! event



EIT Students and Alumni Connect! event – what happened when?

Held on 10-11 November 2013 in Budapest, Hungary, the EIT Students and Alumni Connect! event brought together more than 150 students and alumni from Climate-KIC, EIT ICT Labs and KIC InnoEnergy. It was a chance for them to share knowledge, exchange ideas, collaborate on challenges addressing topics such as sustainable mobility, smart cities and resource efficiency, and be part of building a vibrant EIT alumni community of young entrepreneurs, innovators and change agents.

Registration



The popular Ötkert venue in Budapest was chosen as the venue for the “meet-up” event.

Breaking the ice



Speed-dating, EIT style!

Mingle with music



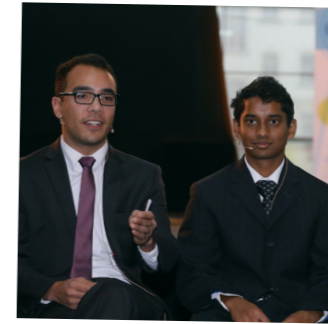
With all the serious work out of the way, it was time to kick back, relax and mingle!

The EIT in a nutshell



Nadja Dokter, Policy Officer for the EIT, gave a quick overview of the EIT with a special focus on its education and community building initiatives.

KIC alumni associations



Representatives from each KIC alumni community shared experiences from their respective alumni associations.

Pitching time!



In true Dragon’s Den style, each group presented their ideas to the audience.

10 Nov
2013

18:00

18:15

18:30

19:00

21:30

11 Nov
2013

08:30

09:00

09:30

10:45

11:30

13:45

16:15

Welcome



EIT Director José Manuel Leceta and his team got the ball rolling with some inspirational words.

Teamwork challenge



The students’ entrepreneurial minds were put to the test when they were challenged to work together and develop ideas in the areas of smart cities, sustainable mobility, resource efficiency and community building.

Opening



The next morning, the EIT Students and Alumni Connect event officially got started at the Millenaris venue in Budapest.

Keynote speaker



EIT Governing Board Member Linnar Viik took over and discussed the role of IT in innovation, inspiring the audience with some words of wisdom.

Interactive teamwork session



Having ironed out all the basic details of their ideas from the first day, it was time for the students and alumni to work together to refine and perfect them.

Roundtable: an EIT alumni community?



This session posed the question of turning the collaborative ideas of KIC students and alumni into an EIT alumni community – how could it be done? Should it be done?

Building an EIT alumni community of change agents

The main drive behind the Students and Alumni Connect! event was the idea of building a thriving EIT community of change agents. After an ice-breaker session which got the conversation flowing, the EIT challenged the students and alumni to put their heads together and come up with some solutions to problems in the areas of smart cities, sustainable mobility and resource efficiency, along with practical steps to get the EIT alumni community moving. Over 30 teams with members from all three KICs rose to the occasion.

The result? A collection of fascinating ideas, some of which could very well become reality within the next couple of years. Here's a tantalising selection of the teams' pitches...

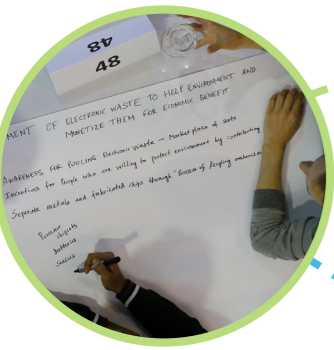


Table 48 tackled how to manage and monetise e-waste for a better ecosystem. Using smartphones as an example, they proposed that components could be extracted and given back to the dealer for a small fee. In return the customer would receive credit points or vouchers.



Led by CH.A.N.G.E Award nominee Linkesh Diwan, **Table 28** pitched about rural urban migration/ systems for self-reliant villages. Their suggestions included organising small events and providing self-organisational training.

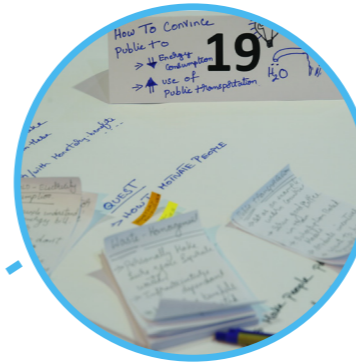
“It was good to see what KIC InnoEnergy and EIT ICT Labs do and make some acquaintances that could be useful in the future in terms of possible employment opportunities” Vasileios Latinos, Climate-KIC (Table 28)



It was **Table 20's** job to look at sustainable mobility vs. continuous GDP/economic growth. They concluded that a new platform was needed where demand and what was on offer met government regulations.



Recycling was the subject given to **Table 15**. They were challenged to change people's behaviours and create a new recycling infrastructure. They rose to the occasion and responded with ideas including single or multiple bins and the concept of trash ownership – making people more attached to what they produce.



For **Table 19**, the challenge was to come up with a way to make people use public transport more and reduce energy consumption. How could they make it attractive to the general public? Their answer was to provide incentives to the users and include waste management to encourage recycling.



Table 4 brainstormed about brainstorming and how it could be used efficiently, coming up with the concept of putting ideas into a database.

“We were a cross-disciplinary team of nuclear engineers, geologists and management students, and everybody had something to contribute” Gourav Sen, KIC InnoEnergy (Table 13)

“We found good market niches for a product developed from the proposed technology” Andrey Bogomolov, EIT ICT Labs (Table 42)



Table 14 discussed communicating data on energy consumption through interactive art. They came up with the idea of video screening, with data coded into changing patterns and colours.

“It was excellent. Different ideas really open up new avenues to look into” Junayed Sarker, KIC InnoEnergy (Table 46)

“It was a really great experience to work with such a diverse group of people” Muhammad Rizwan Awan, CH.A.N.G.E Award nominee (Table 46)



Table 35 was all about resource efficiency and mimicking the natural environment to improve that efficiency. They outlined their plan to use microorganisms for waste treatment.

Roundtable: The power of alumni

The roundtable session was a chance for everyone to discuss the concluding topic of the day. Could all the collaborative ideas of the KIC students and alumni be turned into an EIT alumni community? If so, how?

The panel

Made up representatives of the KICs, the KIC Alumni Associations and the EIT, the panel firmly supported the prospect of an EIT alumni community and saw its benefits for students, alumni and staff.

Facilitator **Rainer von Leoprechting** felt that it would need to come from the students themselves and remain something light and non-formal.

Nadja Dokter (EIT Policy Officer) agreed and highlighted the existing LinkedIn group as a first step in the right direction.

The Climate-KIC Education Deputy Director, **Eleanor Saunders**, added that events like the Alumni and Student Connect! one were also a really great starting point as they brought everyone together.

“The EIT and Masters Schools are scattered globally. An alumni association could act as a glue to get people together and form stronger ties” Sepp Silver, EIT ICT Labs alumni rep



The students

Four of the groups from the teamwork challenge were given topics that revolved around establishing an EIT alumni community and building connections.

Among them, **Table 10** encouraged everyone to join the EIT Alumni LinkedIn group, to extend invitations to fellow students and alumni and to reach out to students and alumni no longer in Europe. They asked for guidance from the EIT and stressed the need to involve the different KIC alumni associations and their boards to drive the set-up of an EIT alumni association.

Table 11 challenged their fellow students and alumni to tell at least five of their fellow KIC students about the Students and Alumni Connect! experience. They suggested creating a database of research and entrepreneurship, as well as sharing the experiences of the individual KIC alumni groups.

Table 49 saw the need for strong collaboration between the students and alumni under one EIT brand.

“I picture it as a vibrant community, sharing opportunities with each other, and I want to be an active member” Junayed Sarker, KIC InnoEnergy alumni

Students' corner

Considering this event was all about them, we wanted to find out what was on the minds of the EIT's students and alumni...



“Entrepreneurship is about seeing a problem from another perspective, developing a solution to it and being brave to make it a reality”

Maria Fernanda Barrera Ortiz,
KIC InnoEnergy



“I want to start a revolution to change culture and structure inside the business sector”

Denise Beilschmidt, Climate-KIC
alumni

“Time should be taken to brainstorm because it can bring up really interesting and innovative ideas” Pauline Bolignano, EIT ICT Labs

“Never stop. We have the power to make an impact” Marta Molero, KIC InnoEnergy



“There are people out there to collaborate with and make your business idea come true”

Tewodros Deneke, EIT ICT Labs



“In the future I want to find a problem, solve it effectively and found a company”

Pham Tran Anh Quang, EIT ICT Labs

“Being an entrepreneur allows me to do a better job at work, be more creative and be able to identify and seize opportunities”
Charlotte van de Water, Climate-KIC

“With the right team, nothing is impossible” Staycie Domzalski, Climate-KIC



“I want to actively share knowledge, participate and collaborate in innovative and entrepreneurial endeavours that can best address solving the major, deep-rooted problems”

Yacob Gebreyohannes Hiben, KIC InnoEnergy

“Collaboration between strangers can be successful and fruitful” Iliana Lykissa, KIC InnoEnergy

“Being an entrepreneur means stepping off the beaten path” Ignacio Villaseñor, KIC InnoEnergy

“Don't be afraid to think big and lead the future” Iuliia Svyrydonova, KIC InnoEnergy

Get involved!

Inspired by the Student and Alumni Connect! event? Want to stay in touch with your fellow alumni? Then get involved with the EIT's social networking community through LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter.



EIT Alumni Community

linkd.in/1b8pfme

Become part of an active alumni community and engage with the EIT and your fellow students and alumni from Climate-KIC, EIT ICT Labs and KIC InnoEnergy.



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You can also find out more information and the EIT and its KICs by signing up to the official EIT newsletter: eit.europa.eu/newsletter

About the EIT and the KICs

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) was established in 2008 to enhance Europe's ability to innovate. It accomplishes this by nurturing young entrepreneurial talent and supporting exciting new ideas through the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs).

There are currently three KICs:

- **Climate-KIC** addresses the challenge of climate change
- **EIT ICT Labs** generates world-class ICT business
- **KIC InnoEnergy** tackles the issue of sustainable energy

All offer training and education programmes, business incubators and invaluable networking opportunities for their students and entrepreneurs.

Contact

To find out more about the exciting opportunities on offer through the KICs and the EIT, and how you can get involved, please use the following contact information:

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Climate-KIC

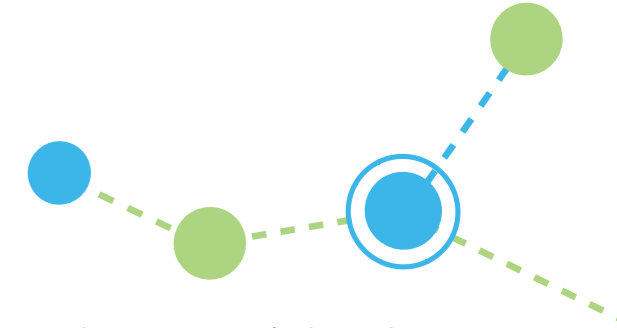
Website: www.climate-kic.org

EIT ICT Labs

Website: www.eitictlabs.eu

KIC InnoEnergy

Website: www.kic-innoenergy.com





A community of entrepreneurs, innovators & change agents



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