

Budapest, 25 July 2018

Nominated: Top graduates, entrepreneurs and innovators of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT).

Budapest, Hungary, 25 July 2018 – Celebrating a touch of genius, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) announces the 41 nominees for the EIT Awards 2018. All across Europe, excellence is accelerating, with women entrepreneurs making up more than 40% of the nominees.

The Awards ceremony will be held in Budapest on 4 October during the EIT's annual Innovation Forum, [INNOVEIT](#). The 41 nominees represent the most promising entrepreneurs and innovators in Europe. Each nominee has been selected for driving European innovation through ground-breaking products, projects and services that tackle global challenges in the fields of climate, energy, digitalisation, food, health and raw materials.

This year's nominees come from: Austria (1), Belgium (3), Bulgaria (1), Canada (1), China (2), Colombia (1), Denmark (1), Egypt (2), Estonia (1), France (4), Germany (2), Greece (2), Hungary (3), Iceland (1), Italy (5), Latvia (1), Mexico (1), Spain (3), Sweden (2), Switzerland (1), The Netherlands (1), United Kingdom (1) and the United States (1).

Tibor Navracsics, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport responsible for the EIT, said: *'I am pleased that the EIT is so successful in training innovators, helping young people make the most of their talents while tackling the big challenges facing our society. Driving change, bringing together business, higher education and research, the EIT is helping us build bridges for more effective cooperation between East and West, North and South - a truly European effort. I am proud of the entrepreneurs now competing globally, helping us create a resilient, open-minded Europe for the future. The EIT Awards are a celebration of this European success and global ambition.'*

The 2018 EIT Awards nominees have been selected from the most successful graduates, entrepreneurs and innovators supported by the EIT Community as part of its drive to tackle global challenges. The nominees compete in four categories: EIT Change, EIT Innovators and EIT Venture, and, for the first time, the EIT Woman Award. The EIT Woman Award is a recognition of the excellence and ability of Europe's women entrepreneurs and leaders, and a spotlight to encourage the positive trend of more women in innovation. The 41 nominees will now go through to a final selection for the four awards, with the winners announced at the EIT Awards ceremony in Budapest on 4 October.

Dirk Jan van den Berg, Chairman of the EIT Governing Board, added: *'The EIT has grown into a success story, setting-up Europe's largest, most connected innovation ecosystem with more than 1000 leading partners, including many of Europe's top businesses, universities and research centres successfully co-operating. Our innovation hubs grow ground-breaking ideas that become products and services. This has resulted in nurturing more than 1 250 start-ups and scale-ups that have raised in excess of 890 million EUR in external investment and created over 6 100 highly skilled jobs. The Awards are a reflection of this thriving network.'*

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Martin Kern, EIT Interim Director, concluded: *'The EIT Awards are a window on Europe's future as the EIT Community provides solutions to some of our most pressing challenges. These innovations presented by our nominees can help Europe to compete, thrive and succeed. The Awards showcase some of Europe's brightest talents; at the EIT, we are proud to support these exceptional individuals and outstanding teams.'*

The full list of the 2018 EIT Awards nominees can be found [here](#). Download the infographic with information on the 2018 EIT Awards and nominees.

EIT BACKGROUND: Europe's future is connected to its power to innovate!

What is the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)?

The EIT was created in 2008 to strengthen Europe's ability to innovate. The EIT is a unique EU initiative, the only one to fully integrate business, education and research. The Institute supports the development of dynamic pan-European partnerships between leading universities, research labs and companies. These are called Innovation Communities and each focuses on a specific global challenge.

What challenges do the EIT's Innovation Communities focus on?

The first six Innovation Communities work to mitigate and adapt to climate change (*EIT Climate-KIC*), create sustainable sources of energy and increase its supply (*EIT InnoEnergy*), accelerate the digital transformation (*EIT Digital*), support healthier and longer living (*EIT Health*), including the provision of sustainable and healthier food (*EIT Food*), and manage our planet's raw materials in an efficient, secure and sustainable way (*EIT Raw Materials*). Together with their partners, they offer a wide range of innovation and entrepreneurship activities. This includes education courses that combine technical skills with entrepreneurial ones, business creation and acceleration services, run innovation driven research projects. A call for new Innovation Communities in the field of Urban Mobility and Manufacturing is ongoing.

What has the EIT Community achieved?

Some of the EIT Community's achievements and impact so far:

- We are the **largest innovation community in Europe**, with 40 innovation hubs across Europe that have brought together over 1,000 partners, with more than half from business, both large corporates and a very strong SME participation rate of 25%.
- With our support, **1250+ start-ups and scale-ups** supported with **6,100 highly skilled jobs created**.
- Venture capitalists have invested **more than EUR 890 million** in companies supported by EIT Community accelerators. By doing so, they have expressed strong confidence in the entrepreneurial activities of the EIT Community.
- **670 innovative products and services** have been brought to market.
- Over **1 700 students graduating from EIT label** entrepreneurial education programmes.
- More information on EIT success stories [here ...](#)

The EIT – Making Innovation Happen!

For more information visit eit.europa.eu & follow the EIT on Twitter @EITeu #EITAwawards #EUinnovation

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The EIT is a body of the European Union