



Press Release – Celebrating innovative energy, health, agriculture and climate solutions: Announcing the winners of the 2022 EIT Awards

Budapest, Hungary, 12 October 2022 – The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is pleased to announce the winners of the 2022 EIT Awards, the prestigious innovation prize now in its ninth year. Anna Vanderbruggen (CHANGE Award); Bernhard Adler (Innovator Award); Christoph Berger (Venture Award); Catherine Schreiber (Women Leadership Award) and Sabrina Maria Malpede, (Public Award) have been awarded top prizes for their innovations in the fields of raw materials, clean technology, energy efficiency and health.

The winners of this year's EIT Awards, which aim to promote innovation in the fields of climate, energy, digitalisation, food, health, manufacturing, raw materials and urban mobility, were announced yesterday at a vibrant ceremony held during the EIT Summit in Brussels, Belgium. Twenty-seven nominees competed in an online semi-final on 29 September, after which 12 finalists were chosen and ranked by an international jury, with an additional prize being awarded through a public vote.

Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, said: *"It is clear that new innovations will be key to tackling pressing global problems from climate change to energy to food security. This year's winners have demonstrated that there are promising solutions emerging from across Europe which are set to transform society and position our continent as a global leader. Congratulations to this year's award recipients and to all the nominees; they are our role models for change."*

The EIT Summit, at which the awards were announced, featured round-table discussions about Europe's innovation ecosystem with MEPs, European Commissioners, CEOs and EIT representatives. It marked the final day of INNOVEIT WEEKS, Europe's largest innovation event series of the year, which took place in September and October across ten locations in Europe. Attendees met EIT-supported entrepreneurs and innovators and discovered more about how the EIT is helping to drive innovation, learning about key EU policies such as the EU Green Deal in action, and the EIT's integral work of supporting solutions that address some of globe's biggest challenges including climate change, health and energy among others.

Nektarios Tavernarakis, Chair of the EIT Governing Board, said: *"I want to congratulate the achievements of this year's winners and nominees who have distinguished themselves with their transformative solutions. As Europe's largest innovation ecosystem, the EIT's mission is to drive innovation forward and bring together business, research and education to solve global challenges. Each of the 2022 EIT Award winners emulate this mission, and we will continue to support these and other entrepreneurs through every step of their journey, from their initial idea to a successful product or service for a brighter Europe."*

2022 EIT Awards Categories

The EIT Awards fall into four main categories:

- The **CHANGE Award** acknowledges top graduates from EIT entrepreneurial education programmes.



- The **Innovator Award** commends teams and individuals that have developed high-impact products and services.
- The **Venture Award** highlights remarkable start-ups that have benefited from financial support from the EIT Community.
- The **Women Leadership Award** highlights exceptional women involved with the EIT Community.

Three winners were chosen in each of the categories and awarded a first-place prize of EUR 50,000 while EUR 20,000 was awarded for second place and EUR 10,000 for third place.

A fifth award, the **EIT Public Award**, was also awarded to the three top innovations chosen by the public. Online voting took place as of September 29.

Meet the winners:

WATCH THE VIDEO

Anna Vanderbruggen, a researcher who works for the start-up Erzlabor, won first place in the Change Award for developing a revolutionary new way to extract graphite from lithium-ion batteries. Her method, the first of its kind, separates the fine powder from crushed lithium-ion batteries in order to obtain two valuable products instead of one. This process enables the efficient and highly-selective recycling of both graphite and metals from used lithium-ion batteries. It could lead to a truly circular battery supply chain and decrease the environmental footprint of battery production as well as reliance on raw materials imports from outside the EU.

Bernhard Adler took the top prize in the Innovators Award for his rotation heat pump, a highly innovative clean technology that combines the advantages of heat pump technology with a centrifuge. It will help speed up the energy transition by providing cleaner, low-carbon industrial heat.

Christoph Berger was awarded first place in the Venture Award for developing the Vilisto system, a self-learning thermostat that improves energy efficiency in non-residential buildings. In offices and educational institutions, many rooms are unused 80% of the time yet they are heated non-stop since usage patterns are not usually taken into account. Vilisto can help companies and municipalities save up to 32% of their heat consumption and reduce their CO2 emissions.

Catherine Schreiber, the CEO and co-founder of ADVITOS, was ranked first in the Women Leadership Award for developing a 4-in-1 organ support therapy for critically-ill patients. Together with Dr Bernhard Kreyman, her co-founder, she created the device from scratch, launching it from an idea to an EU market-approved (CE mark) product. She now runs a fully-certified MedTech company with 70 employees that boasts numerous awards.

Sabrina Maria Malpede is the co-founder and Managing Director of ACT Blade Ltd, which develops the lightest, most controllable and sustainable wind turbine blade on the market. The ACR Blade is a big technological step forward in the ability to harness wind power and exploit aeroelastic science and expertise. It was awarded an EIT InnoEnergy innovation project grant in 2018 to develop the first full scale blade. The innovation was developed by Sabrina during her doctorate studies at the University of Glasgow and has already been employed in the sail design for racing yachts competing in the America's Cup.



Full list of 2022 EIT Awards winners, including 2nd and 3rd place:

EIT CHANGE Award: 1. Anna Vanderbruggen, France 2. Waliyah Sahqani, Finland 3. Federico Barbieri, Italy

EIT Innovators Award: 1. Bernhard Adler, Austria 2. Morteza Ghorbani, Denmark 3. Jean-Louis Pepin, France

EIT Venture Award: 1. Christoph Berger, Germany 2. Alejandro Trenor, Spain 3. Hans Heyn, Germany

EIT Women Leadership Award: 1. Catherine Schreiber, Germany 2. Sabrina Maria Malpede, Italy 3. Andrea Barber Lazcano, Spain

EIT Public Award: Sabrina Maria Malpede

BACKGROUND: EIT – DRIVING INNOVATION FORWARD

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY (EIT)

The EIT strengthens Europe's ability to innovate by powering solutions to pressing global challenges and by nurturing entrepreneurial talent to create sustainable growth and skilled jobs in Europe. The EIT is an EU body which is an integral part of Horizon Europe, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. The Institute supports the development of dynamic pan-European partnerships - EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities - among leading companies, research labs and universities. To date the Institute has supported eight Innovation Communities in the fields of: climate, digitalisation, food, health, energy, manufacturing, raw materials, and urban mobility. More recently, the EIT has established its newest Innovation Community, EIT Culture & Creativity to power solutions in the cultural and creative sectors and industries.

As Europe's largest innovation ecosystem, the EIT brings together over 3400 partners across more than 200 innovation hubs in Europe and beyond. It is the only innovation body with a presence in every EU state. The EIT uses a unique approach to support innovators, putting them front and centre to cater to their needs and connecting business, research and education to share knowledge.

Over the past decade, the EIT has supported more than 5 600 ventures and helped create over 1670 products and services. It has also played a part in generating over 17 400 jobs. As of August 2022, it has helped start-ups raise more than EUR 6 billion in external investment and 4 600 Master's and PhD students have graduated from EIT training programmes, with thousands more enrolled!