

Call for expressions of interest to become EIT Health RIS Hub in Slovakia

EIT Health hereby invites legal entities from Slovakia to apply to become EIT Health Hub within the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS) programme.

Programme:

EIT Health Regional Innovation Scheme

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Application form:

<https://eithealth.wufoo.com/forms/r1sj7xml0r7aqv7/>

Submission deadline:

20 June 2022 17:00 CET

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In the subject line, please write
“Call for Hubs”

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Get engaged with EIT Health and take part in the implementation of the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS). Receive support for the development of your local innovation ecosystem. Help us find the best talents, entrepreneurs and start-ups from your region/country. Support innovative SMEs to create new economic activity and new jobs locally. Learn and adopt best in class business creation and education programmes. Team up with one of the biggest healthcare initiatives worldwide!

1. Background information about EIT Health

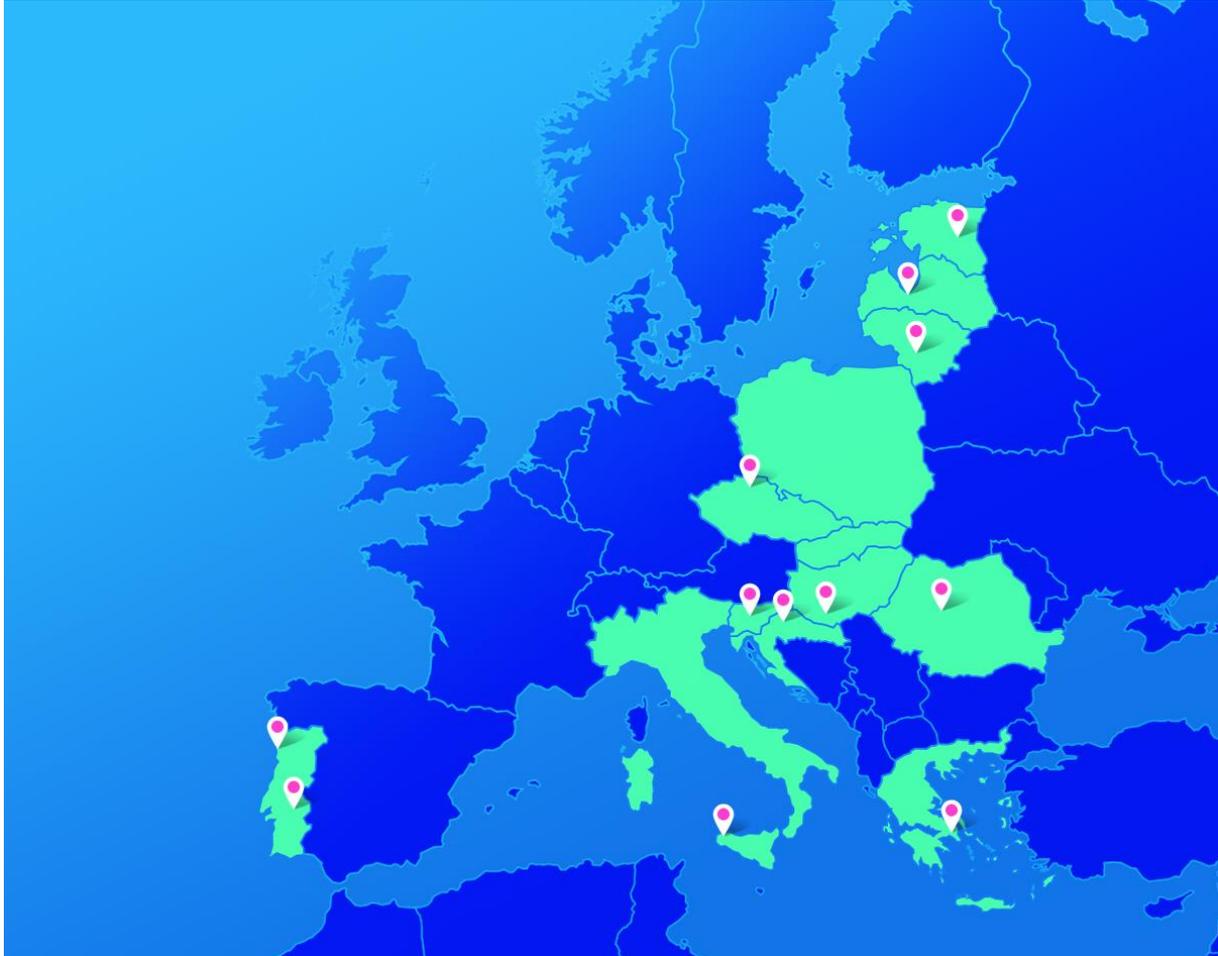
[EIT Health](#) – supported by the European Commission through the European Institute of Innovation and Technology - is one of the largest healthcare initiatives worldwide. Its goal is to sustainably advance the foundations of healthcare and thus promote the future conditions for healthier living and the wellbeing of people across Europe. EIT Health is leveraging the expertise of more than 150 leading organisations spanning key areas of healthcare such as Pharma, MedTech, Payers, Research Institutions and Universities. The consortium offers best-in-class research capabilities, higher education, and business expertise. EIT Health will purposefully invest in Europe's best entrepreneurial talents and creative minds to foster the development and commercialisation of smart product and service solutions in the health sector, addressing the challenges imposed by demographic change and ageing societies.

The regional structure of EIT Health extends across Europe. With its headquarters in Munich (Germany), EIT Health has established six Innovation Hubs in leading innovation hubs of Europe such as Galway (Ireland-UK/), Stockholm (Scandinavia), Barcelona (Spain), Paris (France), Mannheim and Heidelberg (Germany/Switzerland) and Rotterdam (Belgium/Netherlands).

1.1. EIT Health InnoStars

With the twin goals of leveraging diversity and driving the potential of emerging innovation clusters, EIT Health has added the [InnoStars](#) to its network. These active regional clusters consist of industry partners, academia, and health providers in 4 countries – Hungary, Poland, Portugal and Italy. Each region represents research specialities and socio-economic structures that ideally complement the EIT Health six Innovation Hubs while ensuring wider participation and outreach across Europe's multifaceted innovation landscape.

1.2.EIT Health Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT Health RIS)



[EIT Regional Innovation Scheme](#) (EIT RIS) is a structured outreach scheme of EIT Health. EIT RIS is designed to disseminate knowledge, know-how, good practices, and lessons learnt emerging from EIT Health's activities, as well as to widen participation in its activities. EIT RIS focuses on countries where innovation capacity is moderate or modest.

EIT RIS is designed as a two-way interaction scheme. By sharing its good practices of Knowledge Triangle Integration (KTI)¹ and increasing their activities in the eligible countries, EIT Health will also gain access to productive inputs, business skills, talent, cooperation opportunities in education, market and business, currently untapped entrepreneurial potential, customers for innovative ventures, innovation, knowledge, know-how and technology transfer possibilities, additional testbeds for applications of innovative solutions as well as access to co-funding options provided by EU, Regional and National support Schemes.

In the mid-term perspective, EIT RIS is expected to facilitate the incorporation of relevant players of the local innovation ecosystems in the EIT Health partnership and foster the Knowledge Triangle Integration approach as a framework for the enhancement of innovation capacity.

1.3. Background information about EIT Health Hubs

EIT Health Hubs should ensure active involvement of local Knowledge Triangle actors, as well as liaise and provide expertise to the relevant national, regional, and local authorities. The Hubs will also help identify potential funding and project opportunities for Knowledge Triangle Integration, as well as provide advice to KTI project / initiative / programme development and implementation. Structured dialogue with the national/ regional/local authorities could contribute to a better understanding of the KTI value and the incorporation of its components to their policy making. The enhanced visibility of the EIT Community and awareness-raising among the national policy makers will be another positive effect of the KICs intervention via the Hubs.

EIT Health Hubs are selected through a competitive call and evaluated, having the benefits of affiliation to the EIT and the EIT Health. EIT Health Hubs are selected and managed in line with recommendations of the EIT RIS Implementation Framework, being instrumental to implementing EIT Health RIS activities, transferring best practices of EIT Health to their respective countries/regions, working with local stakeholder networks to strengthen their innovative capacities, promoting the brand visibility of EIT in targeted countries and carrying out localized activities as part of the EIT Health RIS portfolio.

The present call is launched by EIT Health to select organisations (individual organisation having the status of legal persons OR a consortium consisting of maximum THREE organisations, where one organisation acts as a lead entity, the other organisation supporting business creation activities and start-up ecosystem) that would be designated as EIT Health Hub in Slovakia.

The selection process is implemented as an open call managed by EIT Health InnoStars, in accordance with the EIT RIS Implementation Framework, using clear and transparent selection criteria. The candidate organisations will be recognized as important players in the local innovation eco-systems with a strong regional outreach, experienced in supporting entrepreneurs and capable of organising local events.

From 2022 EIT Health Hub will benefit from funding to implement the contractual obligations towards EIT Health and acquire complementary, regional or national funding for future activities. EIT Health Hub will have a detailed implementation plan, requiring them to regularly update contact lists of relevant stakeholders, maintain relations with selected regional players, engage in the exploration of the local start-up community, organise stakeholder events, workshops and trainings for students, start-ups and entrepreneurial talents, and promote EIT Health portfolio of instruments in the targeted country. The performance of EIT Health Hub will be evaluated yearly. EIT Health Hub will be expected to develop its plans of future activities and approaches to leveraging local funding options to accelerate

the implementation of Knowledge Triangle and complement the initial EIT funding. Their success in acquiring the local funding will be considered in annual evaluations of EIT Health Hub.

Local Smart Specialisations Strategies should provide the strategic directions for EIT Health Hub activities in supporting local Knowledge Triangle Integration. EIT Health Hub role is to monitor various policy instruments focused on research and innovation, including measures implemented by other local, national and European bodies and to support EIT Health with creating possible synergies.

2. Eligibility criteria

A proposal will only be considered eligible if:

- a) Submitted in the English language.
- b) Submitted through EIT Health InnoStars registration platform, Wufoo. Incomplete submissions, late submissions, or submissions via any other routes (e.g. email) will not be accepted.
- c) It complies with the eligibility conditions set out below:
 - a. **Legal status:** Being a legal entity in Slovakia (such as companies, higher education institutes, research institutes, non-governmental organisations). The applicant can apply individually or together with a group of partners sparring the Knowledge Triangle, but one organization needs to be designated the lead. In this case, the lead organization needs to demonstrate the group's commitment by producing letters of commitment from the other partners.
 - b. **Personnel support:** The Hub will commit at least 1 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) support necessary to execute the hub tasks.
 - c. **Thematic alignment:** The applicant entity should demonstrate a thematic alignment with EIT Health focus areas and a proven track record of start-up incubation (mentoring, coaching, training, knowledge transfer) and managing research projects in the area of EIT Health's mission: promote healthy living, support active ageing, improving healthcare.
 - d. **Capacity:** Every entity acting as EIT Health Hub should demonstrate its capacity to work with the local Knowledge Triangle actors (education, research, business) and national/regional authorities, both in terms of resources as well as in terms of a network.
 - e. **Relations with National/ Regional Authorities:** Access to policy-makers will strengthen synergies and complementarities at all governance levels. In this respect, the entity should be able to demonstrate whether it has existing relations and enjoys the support of policy makers in national and/or regional authorities.
 - f. **Mobilising other sources of funding:** The potential EIT Health Hub should be able to provide an outline of how they plan to mobilise and use other (additional) sources of funding (regional/ national/ EU funding) to support KTI projects, pilots, initiatives, programmes etc.

- g. **Financial Sustainability:** The potential candidate needs to submit a plan towards achieving financial sustainability regarding innovation and business creation activities after 2027.

3. Scope of expected activities of EIT Health Hub in Slovakia

Scope of activities delivered by EIT Health Hub:

- Supporting a two-way interaction between local players from Slovakia and EIT Health partners, by engaging stakeholders from Slovakia in EIT Health activities;
- Sharing and transferring good practices of EIT Health, including the Knowledge Triangle model, to widen participation in EIT-funded activities, enhance the innovation capacity of Slovakia;
- Promoting the innovation agenda of EIT Health among relevant government authorities, regulators and opinion leaders in Slovakia;
- Creating active communities of healthcare R&D professionals and entrepreneurs in Slovakia to support networking and embed EIT RIS actors into innovation activities of EIT Health;
- Contributing to the development of regional innovation capacity by shaping entrepreneurial mindsets of local stakeholders, including entrepreneurial talents and start-ups. EIT Health InnoStars aims to ensure that the innovation capacity-building activities will be closely aligned with and contribute to the future EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation's targets and ambition;
- Actively inspiring, proposing, and customizing EIT Health activities to local circumstances and opportunities, especially by ensuring a reciprocal alignment between EIT Health activities and national or regional Smart Specialisation Strategies and by establishing synergies with local, regional, national, and European sources of project funding.
- Leverage additional private and public funding, with particular attention to European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF).

The programme will be divided into two (2) parts. The Hub will be expected to implement compulsory activities set out in the Detailed Implementation Plan (part 1). In terms of ecosystem development (part 2), the Hub will be expected to participate in the DRIVE programme and focus on learning the know-how and implement ecosystem development activities based on local needs (please see the Capacity Building Annex I).

4. Expected KPIs, deliverables, outputs

Expected KPIs, deliverables and outputs will be set out in the Detailed Implementation Plan containing the activities the Hub has to implement each year.

5. Eligible costs

The information in this chapter refers to the Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 on the financial rules and to the draft Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (MGA). The rules not highlighted here can be found in the referred documents.

5.1. General conditions for eligibility of costs

All costs must meet the following criteria:

- be **incurred by the participant** (no estimated/imputed/budgeted costs),
- be **incurred in the project period** (exception: travel costs for kick-off meeting; costs of the final report submitted within 60 days of the end of the project),
- be **included in the budget** (indicated in the estimated budget of the GA; for more information see budget transfers),
- be incurred in connection with the action and necessary for its implementation,
- be **identifiable and verifiable and recorded** in the beneficiary's accounts in accordance with the applicable accounting standards and **usual cost accounting practices**,
- **comply with the applicable national laws** on taxes, labour, and social security, and be **reasonable and justified** and comply with the principle of **sound financial management** (regarding economy and efficiency)

Eligible budget categories:

All 'eligible costs' must be broken down according to the following budget categories, as defined in Art. 6 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement:

- A. Personnel costs:** The proposal must contain a calculation of the time that a person will likely spend on the project. This estimated working time has to be stated in the project proposal as so-called "person months"
- B. Subcontracting:** Cost of services to implement a specific task described in the proposal. Only limited parts of the action may be subcontracted if duly justified (e.g. no in-house knowledge, and it would be disproportionate to hire someone only to complete the action task; or specific knowledge is required). Beneficiaries must choose subcontractors on "best value for money" competitive selection procedures, requesting several offers.
- C. Purchase costs**
 - Travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs: all travel costs may be incurred for project staff (participation in project meetings, presentation of project results at conferences etc.) or for external experts.

- Other goods and services: mainly including consumables, catering, printing, graphics and translations, open access publications, costs of audit certificates from qualified auditors (Certificate on the Financial Statements, CFS) as well as license and patent fees.

D. Other costs

- Financial support to third parties: costs for providing financial support to third parties (in the form of grants, prizes or similar forms of support) are eligible if and as declared eligible in the call conditions, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions, are calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred.

E. Indirect costs (overheads) are charged at a flat rate of 25 % of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs, subcontracting costs, financial support to third parties and exempted specific cost categories, if any).

Non eligible costs:

- costs related to return on capital and dividends paid by a beneficiary
- debt and debt service charges
- provisions for future losses or debts
- interest owed
- currency exchange losses
- bank costs charged by the beneficiary's bank for transfers from the granting authority
- excessive or reckless expenditure
- deductible VAT (non-deductible VAT is eligible)
- costs incurred or contributions for activities implemented during grant agreement suspension
- costs incurred during suspension of the implementation of the action
- costs declared under another EU/Euratom grant (no double funding)

For details, please check financial regulation Art. 6 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement Evaluation and selection process.

6. Evaluation and selection process

All eligible proposals will be evaluated. The Call has a single-stage submission and two step evaluation procedure. EIT Health InnoStars reserves the right to hire external evaluators to be engaged in the two-step evaluation procedure.

Local EIT Health Hubs within EIT RIS are selected through an open and transparent process. Participation in the EIT RIS does not imply automatically a potential future partnership with EIT Health.

6.1. Remote evaluation

Each eligible proposal will be evaluated by evaluation committee consisting of InnoStars team members and external experts based on the criteria indicated below. The evaluators contracted by EIT Health InnoStars e.V. receive training on the EIT Health strategy, rules, and procedures. They will be instructed to check for conflict of interest and to inform the EIT Health headquarters, if necessary, before the evaluation of the proposals' proceeds.

A maximum of 100 points will be awarded by each evaluator during the remote evaluation. The final remote evaluation score will be the average of all remote scores.

6.2. Online interview

Those applicants who receive at least 80 points during the evaluation phase OR the three best performer of the evaluation phase will be invited to the second round of the selection procedure.

6.3. Evaluation criteria

Applications will be rated according to the following criteria:

1. Competences and capabilities in ecosystem development (35%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant experience in community building and ecosystem development 10% - Please list experience of the organization and the Hub manager and/or relevant team members; • High level capacity building concept - future role of the organization and its plans for 2022 and beyond; 25 points
Supporting materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CV of Hub manager/relevant team members; • Minimum 3 reference of work done in ecosystem development and community building (reference of former projects/work done together with relevant stakeholders). • Links to websites/programme descriptions/social media posts;
2. Potential of project delivery (40%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pipeline building (access to potential target audience from healthcare sector – students, healthcare start-ups, healthcare professionals, researchers, medical experts;), (number of points given depends on relative size of the target group) – 20 points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access to talents – 5 points ○ Access to researchers – 5 points ○ Access to start-ups – 5 points ○ Access to policymakers – 5 point

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in organising local events for the innovation community – Description of at least 3 local events organized in 2021 (date, topic of the event, number of participants, variety of stakeholders) – 10 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication reach and media network – (established social media accounts /social networking platforms, presence in local media) - 10 points
Supporting materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshots of social media statistics. • Screenshots of presence in media (articles, publications, interviews etc). • Screenshots of local events media coverage and/or screenshots of own social media coverage of the event(s). • Other supporting documents which confirm the access to target audience.

3. Strength and commitment of the team (15%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficiency of the team (at least 1 FTE dedicated to RIS project management) – 10 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complementarity of other team members who can support the main RIS Hub PM with additional expertise in area of, start-up acceleration, communication, engaging local authorities and social media) – 5 points
Supporting materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CV and Motivation Letter of an employee who will be assigned as the RIS Hub Project Manager • CV of additional employees who will support the main RIS Hub PM;

4. Long-term vision and strength of financial sustainability plan (10%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial plan to continue activities after 2027 that has been started in the RIS programme – 5 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential revenue generating services offered by the applicant that might ensure financial sustainability in the longer term – 5 points
Supporting materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA

7. Submission

Final proposal submission: all full proposals must be submitted no later than **20 June 2022, 17:00 CET (Budapest time)** via the following link: <https://eithealth.wufoo.com/forms/r1sj7xml0r7aqv7/>

Any submission done by any other means and/or after the deadline will not be considered as eligible.

8. Timeline

Time	Action
20 April 2022	Call opens
20 June 2022	Call closes
21- June – 1 July 2022	Eligibility check
4 -15 July 2022	Evaluation
25-27 July 2022	Interviews
28 July 2022	Announcement of winning organization
1 st August– 31 st December 2022	Project implementation

9. Contract duration

The hub will join the Agreement of the Regional Innovation Scheme governing the implementation of the Regional Innovation Scheme programme.

The first year is a trial period, the contract will not be automatically renewed. Continuation of the contract after 2022 will be dependent on receiving positive assessment in the first year of RIS Hub performance. EIT Health InnoStars reserves the right to terminate the contract if the implementation of the programme is deemed to be insufficient.

If under the present call no EIT Health Hub is selected for Slovakia, the call might be relaunched for this respective country.

The contract will be concluded under the condition of the EIT Health 2022 Grant Agreement (“GA”) being approved and providing financing for EIT Health Hub activities.

The contract shall automatically end when the GA ends. EIT Health InnoStars may at any time terminate the contract upon notice if the GA is terminated or not concluded for a given year.

10. Confidentiality and conflict of interest

All proposals submitted will be accessible only to EIT Health InnoStars team and HQ staff for the processing of the application. Proposals are shared with the assigned external evaluators, who are bound to confidentiality by contract. Furthermore, EIT Health InnoStars may give access to the submitted data to sub-contractors that are assigned with maintaining the internal system. These third parties are also bound by confidentiality provisions.

11. Grounds for Appeal and Appeal Procedure

Applicants may appeal against the selection process in relation to their own proposal(s).

The grounds for appeal are:

- Procedural irregularity, factual error, manifest error of assessment or misuse of powers. Mere repetitions of your application or mere disagreement with the result or the reasoning of the evaluation will NOT be considered. Your review request will NOT automatically trigger a re-evaluation of your application. A re-evaluation will only be carried out if your request shows that the selection procedure was flawed by a breach which affects the final decision on whether to fund your project.”
- Technical problems beyond the control of applicants (e.g. the technical failure of the electronic submission system).
- Obvious human/mechanical errors made by EIT Health staff.

What is NOT ground for appeal:

- Scores awarded in the course of the evaluation process.

Appeal process:

- Applicants should send their appeals in writing to the managing director of EIT Health InnoStars as soon as they identify an error, but no later than 10 calendar days after the error occurred.
- EIT Health InnoStars staff assess the claim and delivers a first response.
- If there are grounds for appeal, the staff will attempt to remedy the consequences (e.g. if a technical error of EIT Health InnoStars prevented the submission of a proposal).
- The Supervisory Board is notified about the matter if:
 - the applicant does not accept that EIT Health InnoStars rejects the appeal, or
 - there are grounds for appeal, but the problem cannot be remedied any more without disrupting the process.

12. Where to get help?

For questions related to the content of the call, send your enquiries: ewa.kostecka@eithealth.eu

In the subject line, please write “Call for Hubs”.

13. Annex I

13.1. Capacity Building (ecosystem development)

1. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of your ecosystem. Please also introduce and evaluate current ecosystem development activities in your region (max 250 words)
2. What are the strengths that you would like to build on and what are the weaknesses you would like to address with your capacity building activities? (max 250 words)
3. Please describe what kind of capacity building activities you have implemented so far to develop your regional innovation ecosystem. (max 250 words)
4. By answering the questions below, please explain how you plan to further develop your innovation ecosystem in 2022. Please describe the capacity building activity that you would like to implement 2022. Choose the activity with the highest impact. Be as specific as possible in answering the following questions:
 - a) Describe the project idea: What is the goal, what are the activities included in the project and how do you plan to implement these? (max 250 words)
 - b) What is the specific problem that triggers the project? (max 250 words)
 - c) Who is the target group? In addition to the target group, name any other stakeholder groups that will benefit from the results of the project. (max 250 words)
 - d) What is your project's unique value proposition? (max 250 words)
 - e) Describe the planned project consortium and the added value of each potentially participating organisation. (max 250 words)
 - f) What results will be visible by the end of 2022, i.e. what will be the outputs of the project? (max 250 words)
 - g) What will be the long-term impact of this project? When do you expect these? Please detail the impact for the different stakeholder groups. (max 250 words)
 - h) How could this project become sustainable (e.g. generate revenue, acquire private or public external funds)? (max 250 words)

14. Annex II

14.1. Financial sustainability

The requirement to ensure proper and efficient investment of scarce resources and to leverage other sources of funding aimed at financial sustainability, is a key objective for all EIT KICs.

While being key implementors of the EIT KICs' EIT RIS ecosystem development and capacity building activities, the EIT RIS Hubs must still ensure their financial sustainability. In this context, the EIT RIS Hubs must move away from a focus on disbursing grants and running joint activities and instead increase their efforts aimed at generating successful companies / innovations.

By answering the question below please describe how your organization's activities can become financially sustainable to maintain your innovation ecosystem beyond the EIT funding.

1. What kind of external financial resources (other than EIT Health RIS funding) do you plan to involve while implementing the RIS Hub project? (max 250 words)
2. What kind of funds can your organization attract from public and private sectors (for RIS Hub and non-RIS Hub activities)? (max 250 words)
3. What are activities managed by your organization can generate revenue in the future? (max 250 word)