NOTE
From: The Commission
To: Delegations
Subject: European Institute for Technology (EIT)

Delegations will find attached an information note from the Commission on the above-mentioned subject.
European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT): update on progress

Information from the Commission

In the course of the last year, the EIT's autonomous decision-making Governing Board has made considerable progress with a view to turning the EIT in to a reality. Thanks to its efforts, the EIT will become fully operational as of early 2010.

First, the EIT's first rolling Triennial Work Programme (TWP 2010-2012), outlining the EIT's planned activities and actions to support the first KICs, was drafted and transmitted to the EU institutions in June 2009. The TWP also outlines the process leading up to the adoption of the EIT's first seven-year draft Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) by June 2011, which will set out the EIT's long-term priorities (including themes for further KICs).

Second, the first EIT Director took up his new duties on 1st November and the Hungarian government signed a rental contract for offices which were made available to the EIT at the end of 2009. The Director and his staff (8 currently recruited, 35 by end 2010) will be active at the Headquarters in Budapest from the end of March.

Most importantly, following a selection process driven by independent external evaluators, the EIT's Governing Board selected the first three Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) from a shortlist of the six top-ranked proposals on 16 December 2009 under the following priority themes: climate change mitigation and adaptation ("Climate KIC"); sustainable energy ("InnoEnergy"); future information and communication society ("EIT ICT Labs"). All KICs will connect top-ranked universities, globally renowned research institutes and world-class businesses in new configurations to tackle societal challenges.1

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1 Further information on the designated KICs, including overview presentations and information on partners, can be found on the EIT website at the following address: http://eit.europa.eu/kics1/kics-call.html
The KICs will aim to integrate the entire "innovation chain" from education and research to entrepreneurship and commercialization, with a strong focus on "CEO"-style leadership, delivery and impact. KIC partnerships will bring together their members and activities not only virtually but also in physical clusters called "co-location" centres. These are the lead "nodes" (4-6 per KIC), integrating most or all of the elements of the innovation chain with partners working face-to-face in diverse teams, in geographical proximity. KICs will aim over time (7-15 years) to be recognized as world-class powerhouses of innovation in all its forms (including non-technological and user-driven), creating new business opportunities for both existing industry and new endeavours alike. Furthermore, with their particular emphasis on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education, which the EIT considers as the linking factor between the various strands of the innovation chain, KICs have the potential to emerge rapidly as role models for the integration of the knowledge triangle.

“Climate KIC”, to be coordinated by Utrecht University in Netherlands, has five co-location centres: in London, Zürich, Berlin, Paris and Randstad. Its core partners are Bayer, Beluga Shipping, Cisco, DSM, EDF, PIK, SAP, Schiphol Group, Shell, Solarvalley and top-universities such as ETH Zürich, Imperial College, IPSL/ParisTech. It will aim to create a self-sustaining community with world-renowned innovation capability and climate change knowledge.

“InnoEnergy”, to be coordinated by Karlsruhe Institute of Technology in Germany, has six co-location centres: in Karlsruhe, Grenoble, Eindhoven/Leuven, Barcelona, Krakow and Stockholm, and the main partners include KIT, Total, Vattenfall, KTH, EDF, ESADE, EnBW, SAP, ABB, CEA, Iberdrola, TNO, TUE, UPC, and AGH. This KIC will envision paving the way for an independent and sustainable energy system enabling a climate-neutral Europe by 2050, achieved via the successful commercialisation of innovations.
“EIT ICT Labs”, to be coordinated by KTH in Sweden, has five co-location centres in Berlin, Eindhoven, Helsinki, Paris and Stockholm. Its core partners include Deutsche Telekom, Siemens, Fraunhofer Gesellschaft, TU Berlin, Philips, Novay Nokia Corporation, VTT, Aalto University, Alcatel-Lucent, Orange-France Télécom, Thomson, INRIA, Université Pierre et Marie Curie Paris 6, Université Paris-Sud 11, Institut Télécom, Ericsson, TeliaSonera, and KTH. This KIC will aim at a radical transformation of Europe into a knowledge society via an unprecedented proliferation of internet-based services.

Negotiations are currently underway between the KICs and the EIT in order to bring their initial set-up plans to maturity by June, when a major EIT/KIC launch event will take place in co-operation with the Spanish Presidency. In addition, each KIC will shortly receive an initial "preparatory grant" of EUR 1 million to help them start implementing their activities as swiftly as possible. The EIT is negotiating a seven-year framework partnership agreement as well as annual grant agreements with each KIC. KICs' annual funding will be strongly outcome-driven.

The full participation and long-term commitment of industry from the outset is crucial to the EIT's and to the KICs' long-term sustainability and credibility. The Community contribution to the EIT budget is considered as leverage for the attraction of further funding from various public and, increasingly, from private sources. In addition, the legal establishment of the EIT Foundation as a vehicle for receiving funds from private, financial and philanthropic donors (and for rapidly channelling these funds towards KICs' activities), will be developed throughout 2010.