The EIT and its Innovation Communities present:

Connect & Experience 2023

We are excited to **officially open the call** for the 2023 Connect & Experience cohort. We invite you to join the European-Israeli community that offers a platform for peer-learning and collaboration, aimed at enhancing start-up growth and open innovation in your ecosystem.

Who are we? The **EIT Hub Israel** is an initiative of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), aimed to create synergies between the European and the Israeli innovation ecosystem to support the growth of innovative start-ups and increase the number of EU-Israel collaborative projects.

Call for participation

You are invited to apply to a one-of-a-kind, interactive programme and become part of an exclusive European-Israeli active innovation community.

What is Connect & Experience?

The programme encompasses three elements:

1. Intensive 5 day <u>in-person</u> professional training in Israel (7-12 October 2023)
2. European "Connect & Experience Playground" follow up conference (February/March 2024)
3. Full access to the Connect & Experience innovation community network

1. Professional Training in Israel

This full stack 5-day immersion into the Israeli ecosystem goes beyond the usual introductions, and drills down to the key drivers of ecosystem building. Key drivers include government funding schemes, academia and startups, the role of community builders, corporates and more. This deep dive is designed to provide a genuine insight into what could be considered one of the most fascinating ecosystems in the world, all while providing the highest practical value and impact on participants.

The programme is highlighted by the brand names of the Israeli ecosystem who will share their experience and describe their role in making Israel the innovation success it is today. The programme will leverage existing know-how and best practices, will provide a broad access to mentors, hands-on training and tools to commercialize ideas, research and IP to better support your start-ups. It will also focus on how to avoid common pitfalls of ecosystem building and how to build a sustainable system in the process.

The programme will end with "C&E Capsule" – a method that is frequently used by the Israel innovation ecosystem to build ecosystems and create value.

During the programme, EIT Hub Israel is also hosting "The Ecosystem Summit": global daily conference providing a platform for the latest global trends and challenges for ecosystem leaders, questioning and challenging their role at each stage along the startup journey, and offering a fresh perspective and take on ecosystem management.

2. "Connect & Experience Playgroung" Follow up Conference

The annual highlight of the C&E community network - European Playground is a professional conference that offers practical tools and strategies to develop and manage innovation communities and start-up support systems, bringing together professionals from all across Europe and Israel.

Members will be offered the opportunity to design and co-facilitate content and workshops with an Israeli/European peer who has experience in connecting the public and private sector, as well as start-ups and corporate players. As such, the playground can be used as a testbed for new ideas and initiatives, receiving real time feedback and potential collaborations from leading experts in the field.

C&E alumni of 2023 will be entitled to a complementary ticket to the Playground if they are eligible for reimbursement (ticket value EUR 350).

3. Full access to the active C&E Community Network

Connect & Experience offers more than training. The C&E community network is an active EU-IL online and offline community offering easy access to opportunities, curated content, matchmaking, soft landing services and support. The community offers a space for community builders from Israel and Europe to interact, share best practices and collaborate, with the common goal of enhancing your start-up community.

Why should I apply?

- A **leading ecosystem building** programme with a high caliber of participants and expert facilitators;
- **Provides you with top tools to become a leader in your field by** learning best practices of ecosystem management, including community building, tech tools, network leveraging and more;
- **Experience the start-up journey**, and effective tools to support it, developed exclusively for the 2023 cohort;
- Get **immersed** and build sustainable partnerships **in one of the most innovative countries in the world;**
- Become a part of a **closed community network** of strategic players in ecosystem building, get ongoing support, access to events and a matchmaking service from the EIT Hub Israel.

Who should apply?

The ideal participant is a European **experienced senior professional,** at management/decision making level, in an organization boosting European start-up growth, significantly impacting the European ecosystem. The participant should deal with **innovation** or **business creation,** with a minimum of **5 years** of relevant professional experience from at least one of the following sectors: industry, academia, government. As such, they should be able to contribute knowledge, experience and network to the programme and provide added value to their peers.

For example: heads of: accelerators, VCs, innovation agencies, labs, incubators or other business creation activities from academia, industry and government and TTO's.

The programme is <u>not suited</u> for individual start-ups or consultants.

Eligible applicants are divided in to four categories:

1. **EIT KIC Partners**[1] and KIC cooperating entities under the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) from the 5 KIC's involved in the Israel Hub: EIT Health, EIT Climate- KIC, EIT Manufacturing, EIT Digital and EIT Food.
2. **EIT KIC Staff** – from the 5 KIC's involved in the Israel Hub: EIT Health, EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Manufacturing, EIT Digital and EIT Food
3. **Partner/staff from other KIC's** - EIT InnoEnergy, and EIT RawMaterials, EIT Urban Mobility, and EIT Culture & Creativity.
4. **Ecosystem Managers**, non-EIT Partners

Assessment Process:

Each application will be reviewed and ranked by the following criteria:

- Impact of your organization and programme on the European Innovation ecosystem (i.e.- number of start-ups you meet weekly) – 50% of the score
- Professional role and seniority level – 30% of the score
- Motivation and added value to the programme - 20% of the score
- An individual online interview might be scheduled as an additional evaluation criterion.
- The selection will be competitive and based upon excellence and the above noted criteria. The final selection will be made by the EIT Hub Israel Steering Committee

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[1] All 9 KIC's are invited to apply, however funding will be offered to the 5 KIC's active in the Israeli Hub: EIT Health, EIT Climate- KIC, EIT Digital, EIT Food and EIT Manufacturing. See more in the finance section.

(with members representing the 3 KICs EIT Health, EIT Climate- KIC and EIT Manufacturing).

Finance:

The full cost of the programme is 4.000 EUR, however EIT Hub Israel can offer partial funding of the programmes and/or Travel & Accommodation reimbursement based on the following categories:

Category Number	Participant Category	Eligible KIC's	Eligibility for Programme Funding	Eligibility for Travel and Accommodation Reimbursement
1	**KIC Partners** and KIC cooperating entities under the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme(RIS)	5 KIC's: EIT Health, EIT Climate- KIC, EIT Manufacturing, EIT Digital and EIT Food.	Fully funded	Reimbursement up to €1,500 per participant per module
2	**KIC Staff**	5 KIC's: EIT Health, EIT Climate- KIC, EIT Manufacturing, EIT Digital and EIT Food.	Fully funded	Financed by the KIC's own resources
3	**Partner/Staff** from other KIC's	EIT InnoEnergy, EIT RawMaterials, EIT Urban Mobilityand EIT Culture & Creativity.	75% Funded; Price: €1.000	Financed by participant own resources
4	**Ecosystem Manager** (Non EIT)	Any individual professional can apply.	50% Funded; Price: €2.000	Financed by participant own resources

Timeline:

Call for applications:

- Application Opening: **30th May 2023**
- Application Closes: **30th July, 2023 (**23:59, CET**)**

Selection announcement and travel arrangements – **10th August 2023**

Onboarding webinar (for accepted participants) – **21st September 2023, 10:00 CET**

Visit to Israel – **7 -12ᵗʰ October, 2023**

Follow up conference European "Playground" – **February/March 2024**
All communication about the programme will be done through the email address provided
by the applicants in the application form

Agenda Outline for the Israel Visit

*The below agenda is subject to change

Cultural immersion to Israel – Day 0
Begin your journey with a cultural immersion into the human and geographical landscape of
Israel, gaining an understanding of what stands the foundation of this unique ecosystem.

Day 1 – Welcome to the Israeli Ecosystem

The aim of the day is to expose the participants to the unique structure, key success factors
and methods that created the Israeli hotbed of innovation. We will learn the deep
connections and roots of the innovation landscape in the traditional economy and how
incentivized innovation transformed the Israeli industries and society.

Presentations and intimate discussions by ecosystem key-players such as:

- **Israel Innovation Authority** will present their practical tools and funding platforms, and
  share insights on the dynamic and changing needs of the local and international
  innovation ecosystems.
- **Israeli Academia** experts will share their innovation programs and best practices as to
  tech transfer from lab to market.
- Case studies by top Israeli start-ups - successes in commercialization.
- **Funding Platforms**- unique VC funding model developed in Israel that attracts
  substantial international capital and attention.
- Case studies by top Israeli start-ups - successes in commercialization.

Day 2: The Ecosystem Summit

One of the visit highlights will be an interactive conference for the local and global
ecosystem.

The conference will follow the lifecycle of a start-up from ideation to commercialization,
focusing on the role of the ecosystem leader at each stage. Together with over 250 highly
experienced and influential Israeli players, journey through a start-up's journey, facing
challenges such as IP, scaling, funding, mindset and more.

The conference and networking opportunity draws in a community of entrepreneurs, accelerator managers, tech transfer offices and leading industry players.

Day 3 – Leading Innovation Ecosystem

After becoming exposed to the Israeli ecosystem, it's time to bring it home. During a tailored workshop, participants will present and discuss their own ecosystem challenges and initiatives.

The participants will be exposed to a comprehensive ecosystem-management model and will implement it on their own use case, including mapping, leveraging strengths, combating challenges and more. The workshop will be facilitated by local Israeli experts who will share their own challenges and present frameworks and best practices to combat those challenges and boost start-up growth.

Day 4 - Ecosystem development

Venture away from Israel's well known center to Haifa, Israel's third largest city. Known for drawing tech giants (including Amazon, Microsoft and Google) to set-up R&D centers utilizing Haifa's unique university and IDF talent, it faces community growth and capital retention challenges. We will focus on Haifa as a great learning ground for ecosystem development and learn from the people that have managed to create a supportive and nurturing environment against all odds. We will meet key figures from organisations such as Road2 and Technion University who will share how to build a sustainable, organic ecosystem by balancing MNCs, start-ups and talents.

Following the visit, we will continue to the "C&E Capsule" – focused on reflecting and planning on your next steps. The Capsule combines professional and mental growth tools to help you and your ecosystem thrive and community to form.

Day 5- Moving Forward

After you were exposed to the Israeli Ecosystem, it's time to reflect and think of what's next.

We will also discuss how we can tailor the lessons and opportunities learned in Israel to your unique ecosystem characteristics. We will expose the C&E community and share future plans and events.

How to apply?

- Apply HERE
- Applicants will be required to include in their submission: CV and a letter of support signed by their organization.
- As detailed above, participants will be assessed according to their European innovation impact, seniority level, professional experience and motivation. An individual online interview might be scheduled as an additional evaluation criterion.
- Final selection of participants is expected by **10th August 2023.**

- For any questions please contact: tal.caspi@eithubisrael.eu

FAQ

- **Does the programme require me to physically attend the week in Israel?**
  Yes, participation physically in Israel is required, and it is the core Connect & Experience event that provides you with professional training, and builds the community. You will have the chance to travel round the country, meet Israeli peers and learn from one if the world's leading innovation ecosystems.

- **Who will we meet during the programme?**
  The cohort will be comprised of ecosystem leaders from all over Europe that were carefully selected to join the programme. You will meet peers and ecosystem leaders from Israel, top speakers and lecturers on a number of different topics, executives from global companies active in Israel, and many more.

- **Who is considered an ecosystem leader?**
  An ecosystem leader is an experienced senior professional, at management/decision-making level, in an organisation boosting European start-up growth, significantly impacting the European ecosystem. They should deal with innovation or business creation in any of the following sectors: industry, academia, government. For example, VCs, TTOs, heads of: accelerators, innovation agencies, labs, incubators, or other business creation activities from academia, industry and government.

- **What topics will be covered during the bootcamp in Israel?**
  The programme encompasses a wide variety of subjects, including an overview of the Israeli ecosystem and meetings with leading figures from the industry. You will have the chance to get your hands 'dirty' and delve into an ecosystem building workshop, learn the dos and don'ts of branding, visit academia and governmental offices, meet with VCs, and become inspired by the many opportunities that will expose themselves.

- **How much does the programme cost?**
  This depends on a financial category that varies from participant to participant. Check out the finance section for more information.

- **What does the selection process looks like?**
  The applicants will be ranked according to the criteria noted here and the final decision as to the participants will be made by the Global Outreach steering committee. Applicants will receive responses by 10th August.

  If you wish to submit a complaint about the answer you got following the selection process, you can email Tal: tal.caspi@eithubisrael.eu
  Please explain your complaint as clearly as possible, deadline: 16 August, 2023.

- **What can I expect as an outcome of the programme?**
  Past participants have established long standing collaborations with both experts they met in Israel and members of the cohort. You can expect to be left with a change of mindset that will enable you to approach your day to day activities with a new found sense of purpose, as well as a tangible toolkit to establish the best practices you were exposed to. The Connect & Experience community is extremely active with joint ventures taking place on a weekly basis, you can expect to expand your network and be part of a supportive and professional group of people.

- **Why Israel?**
  The Israeli ecosystem renowned as the 'Start-up Nation', has the highest number of start-ups per capita in the world. The country is known for its unique sense of national community, sharing knowledge and information and working together to support start-ups. The country's entrepreneurs are considered great mentors, many of them are over 30 years old and have founded at least one company. Considered broadminded and fearless, they are known as high risk takers and use failures as motivation.

Annex 1: Sub-grant Agreement