EIT Climate-KIC business support programmes at ECCI

FAQs

Please read these before contacting us - chances are, we have already answered your question below!

1. What is the relationship between ECCI and EIT Climate-KIC?

ECCI is the leading low carbon innovation and impact hub for Scotland and beyond. We became a EIT Climate-KIC partner early in 2017. This means we get to deliver a range of exciting EIT Climate-KIC business support programmes and projects. We are one of four EIT Climate-KIC UK&I partners, the others are: London, West Midlands and Dublin.

2. I am interested in your programmes. What do you look for in a business idea?

Great news! ECCI is all about innovation and carbon reduction. We look for feasible and scalable ideas, that are well thought through and which respond to a clear market requirement. You must be able to demonstrate that your product or service will reduce carbon. We look for established ideas and expect applicants to have started a lean business model canvas or business plan, to have considered who their customers/end users are and to have an appropriate team together. There are thematic areas we are particularly interested in, such as Urban Transitions, Sustainable Production Systems, Decision Metrics & Finance, Sustainable Land Use (check out 'EIT Climate-KIC's Areas of Focus online) as well as Landuse/Water and Data/Innovation. Importantly, we look for entrepreneurs that are driven, dynamic and team players.

3. What would I get if I was part of the Accelerator programme?

The Accelerator Programme is split into three stages. Most of our activities focus on the later stage, for more advanced businesses.

STAGE 1: Developing your business model
Duration: 5 weeks

A comprehensive business support package, which includes:
- One-to-one monthly mentoring with an industry expert
- Online workshops on business models, structure, and presentation
- Grant funding (up to 500 EUR)
- Dedicated desk space at ECCI (if the University re-opens their buildings; dependent on the Covid-19 situation at that time)
- Access to European Masterclasses (fully funded)
- Access to funded student placements
- Legal and IP support from our sponsors S+W

STAGE 2: Validating your business model
Duration: 4 months

A comprehensive business support package, which includes:
- One-to-one monthly mentoring with an industry expert
- Monthly workshops on business growth, most likely online due to Covid-19
- Grant funding (up to 5,000 EUR)
- Dedicated desk space at ECCI (if the University re-opens their buildings; dependent on the Covid-19 situation at that time)

- Access to European Masterclasses (fully funded)
- Access to funded student placements
- Legal and IP support from our sponsors S+W
- Access to EIT Climate-KIC's Investor Marketplace

STAGE 3: Piloting, scaling up and investment
Duration: 6 months

A comprehensive business support package, which includes:
- One-to-one monthly mentoring with an industry expert
- Tailored workshops on business growth
- Grant funding (up to 15,000 EUR)
- Dedicated desk space at ECCI (if the University re-opens their buildings; dependent on the Covid-19 situation at that time)
- Access to European Masterclasses (fully funded)
- Access to funded student placements
- Legal and IP support from our sponsors S+W
- Access to EIT Climate-KIC's Investor Marketplace

4. How much funding would I get in each programme?

We provide grant funding in each programme, however this varies slightly year by year due to our EIT Climate-KIC funding allocation. The grant funding differs for each partner organisation delivering the programmes. Funding is confirmed once you have been awarded a place on the programme and is subject to change until you receive a contract.

5. What could I spend my grant funding on?

On all of the Accelerator you can spend the funding on consultancy work, interns, research, travel to conferences, meet with potential customers, equipment match funding for awards or memberships of an organisation. You are allowed to spend up to 50% on salary costs (subject to conditions).

The grant will be paid as a lump sum. The allocation of the financial support should be discussed with your mentor and outlined in Annex 2 of your sub-grant agreement.

6. I'd love to apply. What's the application process like and when does it open?

We like to keep things simple, so our application form will be a straightforward survey on the ECCI website. It should take around 1 – 2 hours to complete. Once you have submitted your application, we will shortlist candidates and invite them to a pitching interview. The interview consists of a 10 minute business pitch, followed by a 15 minute Q+A from a panel of industry experts. All panelists will sign an NDA if required (ECCI provide this – we cannot accept individual NDAs).

7. Can you give me any advice before applying?

We would advise all candidates to take a look at EIT Climate-KIC's thematic priorities for 2020 to make sure your business idea aligns with their interests. It's always helpful to focus on:

- What's innovative about your idea?
- How do you save carbon emissions?
- How do you intend to generate revenue?
- What progress have you made to date?
- Does your team have the right skillset?

8. Am I at the right stage for the Accelerator programme?

For Stage 1 and 2 we look for ideas that are a bit refined: you have a basic business model that's a work in progress; you have more than one team member; you have done some research on your competitors and your product; you may have a prototype; you have engaged with end users; you are starting to consider IP issues and starting to think about your pricing and product development.

9. Can I apply for all stages in the Accelerator programme?

No. Anyone can apply for Stage 1 and Stage 2. However, all start-ups must go through Stage 2 to be allowed to pitch for a chance on Stage 3 (it is not open to applicants).

10. How many start-ups do you support in each programme? How many start-ups apply?

It depends – we would love to take you all! We get between 25-35 applications per programme – it is highly competitive! We take on approximately (please note this varies every year):
- Accelerator 1: up to 12 start-ups
- Accelerator 2: up to 9 start-ups
- Accelerator 3: up to 4 start-ups

11. Do I have to register a business to apply for your EIT Climate-KIC programmes?

Short answer is no. You do not need to register a business for Accelerator Stage 1, but we would expect you to register your business **during** the Accelerator Stage 1 programme.

You should be a registered business for Accelerator Stage 2 and 3.

12. Are there eligibility criteria for the programmes?

For Accelerator programmes your business **must** be registered in the UK (for Stage 1 do not worry if you haven't registered yet, when you do it will have to be in the UK). Also you should be motivated, UK-based and ideally with more than one person involved in the business.

13. Can I participate in the EIT Climate-KIC programme as well as other business support programmes?

Yes of course, but we do ask that you commit the time required to the EIT Climate-KIC programme – we issue contracts that outline commitments that must be kept to unlock your full grant funding.

14. Do you offer business support out with EIT Climate-KIC?

I'm afraid we do not offer advice or support out with these programmes... as much as we would love to we don't have the time.

Any more questions?

Feel free to get in touch – please note we can't provide advice or support on your business idea if you are not on the programme, but we are more than happy to chat about the programme itself: info@edinburghcentre.org.