

Vienna, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022

 Federal Ministry  
Republic of Austria  
Climate Action, Environment,  
Energy, Mobility,  
Innovation and Technology

 Federal Ministry  
Republic of Austria  
Digital and  
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## EIT Manufacturing in Vienna links Eastern European countries with the industrialized nations of Europe

On 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022, the Austrian branch of the Knowledge and Innovation Community EIT Manufacturing, the Co-Location Center (CLC) East, was officially opened. With its offer, the CLC East connects the manufacturing industry in Eastern Europe with the industrialised European countries. Federal Minister Ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Martin Polaschek (BMBWF), Federal Minister Leonore Gewessler, BA (BMK), Secretary General & Head of Cabinet Dipl.-Ing. Michael Esterl (BMDW), as well as Martin Kern, Director of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), were among the guests in Seestadt Vienna.

Vienna, 14 March 2022. Global manufacturing innovation is led by Europe – this is the stated goal of [EIT Manufacturing](#), a knowledge and innovation community of the [European Institute of Innovation and Technology \(EIT\)](#), a body of the European Union. Created by the EU in 2008, the EIT is an integral part of Horizon Europe, the EU's framework programme for research and innovation, and aims to strengthen Europe's innovation capacity. With a budget of more than € 3 billion in the current funding period, the EIT contributes to the realisation of the Horizon Europe strategic plan and supports the development of dynamic pan-European partnerships between leading companies, research institutes and universities. With more than 2,900 partners, the EIT is the largest innovation ecosystem in Europe, connecting innovators and organisations.

**Martin Kern**, Director European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) says: *“The EIT continues to grow as Europe’s largest innovation ecosystem with the welcomed addition of this newest innovation hub here in Vienna. The doors are open for Europe’s brightest students, entrepreneurs and innovators to come together and co-design the future they wish to see! I also invite new partners and organisations to join, innovate and develop their skills through the activities of EIT Manufacturing. I cannot wait to see how this new hub will facilitate cooperation in Austria’s diverse innovation ecosystem and generate new innovations, tech talents and skills that will directly respond to Europe’s green and digital transition.”* The Co-Location Center (CLC) East of EIT Manufacturing is the first location of the EIT in Austria and was established with the support of the Austrian Federal Ministries BMBWF, BMDW and BMK in Seestadt Vienna. *“Austria is one of the strongest industrial regions in Europe and has always been considered a bridge between Eastern and Western Europe. In this strategically important location for the manufacturing industry, our local team does an excellent job of making EIT Manufacturing’s wide range of services accessible in the region,”* says **Klaus Beetz**, CEO of EIT Manufacturing.

With around 200 guests from Austria and abroad, including representatives of the EIT, EIT Manufacturing and its network, numerous delegates and supporters from industry, business, science, research, education, public authorities and diplomatic missions, the EIT Manufacturing Co-Location Center East in Vienna was officially opened on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

### Austria as strategic location for innovations in the manufacturing industry

CLC East is located in the middle of the industry ecosystem. With its offices in the Technology Center in Seestadt Vienna, the international team consisting of 14 experts is very well connected and operates in the midst of innovative start-ups, established industrial companies and technological infrastructures.



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With its diverse programmes, EIT Manufacturing strengthens the European manufacturing industry, which is also a key to growth in Austria, contributing 21% to the gross domestic product. The strength of the Austrian industry is clearly evident in the EIT Manufacturing ecosystem. In the first two years of EIT Manufacturing's operational activity, Austrian organisations were involved in about 20 % of all funded projects. *"Innovation-based manufacturing is a key driver for Austria's prosperity and competitiveness. EIT Manufacturing and its CLCs offer a strong network for innovative companies, start-ups and SMEs and targeted measures to accelerate innovation within the European manufacturing sector,"* says **Dipl.-Ing. Michael Esterl**, Secretary General and Head of Cabinet of the Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs ([BMDW](#)).

In order to accelerate these measures especially in Austria, the BMDW and the BMK have provided additional funding for the EIT Manufacturing CLC East via the FFG as part of the RTI initiative "Production of the Future". The innovation laboratory "[MIT.IC.AT](#)" integrated in the CLC East pursues the goal of more quickly integrating Austrian companies from the manufacturing environment, especially SMEs and start-ups, into the largest European knowledge and innovation community EIT and to anchor EIT Manufacturing comprehensively and strongly in Austria.

Research and innovation projects to come up with new solutions for CO<sub>2</sub> reduction are crucial for achieving Austria's climate targets and climate neutrality and for its independence from fossil energies. The manufacturing sector has enormous potential to contribute massively to climate protection through the technological developments of Industry 4.0 by means of transformation processes and new, digital production technologies, while at the same time implementing the goals of the Green Deal.

*"Climate-friendly innovations and technologies are important allies in the fight against the climate crisis. They play a crucial role in finding and implementing the technologies and solutions for a secure and environmentally friendly energy future, create value and also make a valuable contribution to becoming less dependent on fossil fuels, especially oil and gas. With the EIT location in Austria, we have gained a valuable partner that will enable us to network and cooperate more closely and with whom we can work together on a climate-friendly future for Europe,"* says **Leonore Gewessler**, Federal Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology ([BMK](#)).

To be able to respond precisely to the needs of the market and to push innovation in particularly important fields, EIT Manufacturing has defined four focus areas for innovation projects with the help of its network in 2021. These are primarily aimed at optimizing the competitiveness and sustainability of the European manufacturing industry, as well as increasing the digitalization of the sector and the collaboration between people and machines. *"Innovative impulses are urgently needed for future-proof solutions to current challenges such as more flexible production systems, environmentally friendly production or more collaboration on digital platforms. Close European cooperation in the knowledge triangle of education-research-innovation is essential to create these impulses. I am therefore delighted that the wide range of services offered by EIT Manufacturing will be used through the new Co-Location Center East directly in Vienna,"* says **Dr. Martin Polaschek**, Federal Minister of Education, Science and Research ([BMBWF](#)). The BMBWF coordinates the Horizon Europe Programme in Austria, and therefore also the activities of the EIT. The Federal Minister emphasizes the added value of the EIT network and encourages organizations in the manufacturing sector to take advantage of the EIT Manufacturing offers.

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*“The support of the BMBWF, BMDW and BMK is essential for the EIT Manufacturing Co-Location Center East in Vienna. With the help of the three ministries, we were able to establish and position ourselves in the regional innovation ecosystem within a very short time to address the needs of the market with our initiatives,”* says **Johannes Hunschofsky**, Managing Director of EIT Manufacturing CLC East. *“We are very proud of our excellent cooperation basis with the representatives of the ministries and the City of Vienna and thank them for their trust in our work.”*

### Numerous activities already implemented

Following the keynote speeches and the panel discussion, the participants were able to get an overview of the current activities, initiatives, and programmes of EIT Manufacturing in the areas of innovation, education, business creation and [RIS \(Regional Innovation Scheme\)](#). For example, a mobile air purification device with integrated disinfection function was demonstrated, which was funded in 2020 in the course of a special project call and developed with the participation of the Institute of Production Technologies and Photonic Technologies at TU Wien. Supported start-ups (SentryNode), the winner of the [LEADERS](#) competition, Angela Ivanova (LAM'ON), and project leaders of funded projects (among others [DeCoTe](#)) were also present to showcase their innovations and achievements. In addition, the CLC East team presented the projects MIT.IC.AT and [EuProGigant](#). EuProGigant, in which CLC East is involved as a project partner, is the Gaia-X lighthouse project in the manufacturing environment for smart and sovereign use of data in production. The team informed interested participants about the next planned activities, for example the Manufacturing Day on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022 as part of the ViennaUP'22 and the start-up program "Discover Vienna: Manufacturing Edition", which is already taking place for the second time.

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## Background Information EIT Manufacturing

The [European Institute of Innovation and Technology \(EIT\)](#) 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.

[EIT Manufacturing](#) is supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union. It is one of eight innovation communities within EIT. EIT Manufacturing's main goal is to bring European stakeholders focused on manufacturing together in innovation ecosystems that add unique value to European products, processes and services and inspire the creation of globally competitive and sustainable manufacturing. EIT Manufacturing brings together more than [70 organizations](#) (universities, research institutes and business).

[EIT Manufacturing East GmbH](#) is one of the five Co-Location Centers (CLC) of EIT Manufacturing, located in the Technology Center Seestadt in Vienna, Austria. CLC East serves twelve countries in Central and Eastern Europe: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Slovenia, of which eleven are EIT RIS eligible countries, being considered modest and moderate innovators according to the European Innovation Scoreboard. Therefore, the Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) Pillar Leadership and its eight local Hubs in the CLC East Region are strongly involved in the CLC East network and its activities. CLC East works in close cooperation with its ten full members from industry, research and academia: Atos, the Czech Technical University in Prague, Industry Innovation Cluster (IIC), Joanneum Research, Jožef Stefan Institute, LMS – Laboratory for Manufacturing Systems & Automation, Magna, the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava, the Technical University Vienna, and voestalpine High Performance Metals, and its network partners AM-Austria, EuroCC Austria, Platform Industry 4.0 Austria, Vestbee and the Vienna Business Agency. EIT Manufacturing CLC East is additionally supported by three Austrian Ministries (Federal Ministry Digital and Economic Affairs; Federal Ministry Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology; Federal Ministry Education, Science and Research) as well as the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG).

## EIT Manufacturing — Making Innovation Happen!

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