



Manufacturing
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EIT Manufacturing- Slovakia-X-Fund



MINISTRY
OF INVESTMENTS, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
AND INFORMATIZATION
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FOREWORD

Slovakia's manufacturing sector stands at a pivotal moment - one defined by rapid technological progress, the rise of digital innovation, and a growing need for stronger cross-sector collaboration. The EIT Manufacturing – Slovakia – X Fund was created to meet this moment with ambition and purpose. Designed in close partnership with the Ministry of Investment, Regional Development, and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, it reflects our shared commitment to supporting Slovakia as it strengthens its innovation capacity and accelerates its digital transformation.

At EIT Manufacturing, we believe that Europe's industrial future will be shaped by collaboration, bold ideas and the ability to turn innovation into real impact. As we continue this journey together, we view this joint initiative as a cornerstone of our commitment to Slovakia - a commitment to help build a more innovative, digitally enabled and resilient manufacturing sector for the years ahead.

Together, we are shaping a strong industrial future for Slovakia and for Europe.

Johannes Hunschofsky

Managing Director, EIT Manufacturing East

Industry UP! Slovakia

Showcasing industrial innovation

Industry UP! Slovakia was a national competition for innovative technologies in the manufacturing sector, highlighting solutions in digital transformation, AI, AR/VR and cybersecurity. The programme promoted collaboration between research institutions and industry, aiming to strengthen Slovakia's industrial innovation capacity.

The first edition of Industry UP! took place at the National Forum of Productivity 2024, at the Kia Slovakia Training Centre, featuring five exceptional startups: DAITABLE, ECTIVE Automation, OWASmooth, SmartVision, Unite.

The startups presented their solutions to an expert jury and following careful evaluation, the winners of the competition were announced:

🏆 Industry UP! Slovakia 2024 winners:

- 1st Place: ECTIVE Automation
- 2nd Place: DAITABLE
- 3rd Place: OWASmooth

The winners received a two-month tailored growth package, including mentoring, training and access to the European innovation ecosystem, designed to accelerate their ventures and scale their technologies.

Industry UP! successfully showcased Slovakia's industrial tech talent, demonstrating the potential of innovative startups to drive productivity, digital transformation and economic growth in the manufacturing sector.



Business Safari

Supporting digital transformation of SMEs



The Business Safari, a three-days learning journey showcasing how digitalisation is transforming manufacturing across Europe, took place from 14-16 October 2025.

Day 1 – Linz: Innovation at the LIT Factory

At the LIT Factory of Johannes Kepler University, the delegation explored digitalised production systems, sustainable processing methods and innovative recycling solutions, learning how modern engineering supports efficient and environmentally-friendly manufacturing.

Day 2 – Vienna: Production engineering & innovation management

The IFT TEC Lab of TU Wien demonstrated the latest trends in automation, digital manufacturing and connected production systems. The delegation participated in a workshop

on Innovation Management, reflecting how structured innovation and leadership support successful digital transformation.

Day 3 – Vienna: AI and industry in practice

The visit concluded with a presentation how AI can streamline operations, support decision-making and foster creativity, and a visit to EVVA Sicherheitstechnologie, a Vienna-based manufacturer integrating digitalisation and automation into traditional production processes.

Key Outcomes

The Business Safari 2025 highlighted the importance of collaboration between academia and industry, demonstrating that digital transformation is driven as much by people, partnerships and creative thinking as by technology.

Scaling Slovak Innovation

The Scaling Slovak Innovation programme supported Slovak companies aiming to enhance their expertise in innovative small-scale manufacturing solutions. Its primary goal was to provide financial and expert support to help technologies progress from the demonstration stage (TRL 7) to market adoption (TRL 8-9), enabling innovators to bring their solutions closer to industrial deployment.

A total of four startups received support through this call. The assistance included funding, mentoring and access to the network, which ensured that their solutions were not only technically mature but also positioned for commercial adoption and integration into European value chains.

The initiative strengthened Slovakia's innovation ecosystem by bridging the gap between demonstration and market-ready technologies, fostering entrepreneurship, technological advancement and sustainable growth in the manufacturing sector.

By the end of the programme, the Scaling Slovak Innovation Call had successfully transformed TRL 7 demonstration projects into TRL 8-9 solutions, demonstrating the potential of Slovak innovators to compete on a European scale and contribute to the country's industrial competitiveness.





Best Practice Innovation Transfer

The Best Practice Innovation Transfer brought the latest technologies and innovations from the EIT Manufacturing network to Slovak companies, helping increase productivity, sustainability and digital transformation in the local manufacturing sector.

Through this initiative, information documents were shared with Slovak organisations, showcasing successful best practice projects and demonstrating how modern technologies can be implemented effectively.

The programme focused on identifying relevant digital transformation projects from across EIT Manufacturing and sharing their results with Slovak researchers and industry. These examples not only enhanced operational efficiency and sustainability but also encouraged Slovak entities to participate more actively in EIT Manufacturing challenges and other European programmes.

By connecting Slovak companies with proven innovations and European networks, the initiative strengthened the local ecosystem, motivated further collaboration and supported the adoption of modern technologies across the Slovak manufacturing sector.

Research Mobility

The Research Mobility programme supported master's and doctoral students from Slovakia, providing opportunities to undertake research mobilities at leading European universities and research institutes. The aim was to foster collaboration, innovation and knowledge transfer, enabling students to gain international research experience in cutting-edge manufacturing technologies.

Selected participants received financial support covering travel, living costs and research activities during their mobility, along with guidance to help them integrate into European research networks.

The call focused on research in EIT Manufacturing flagship areas, including:

- Flexible production systems for competitive manufacturing
- Low environmental footprint systems & circular economy for green manufacturing
- Digital & collaborative solutions for innovative manufacturing ecosystems
- Human-machine co-working for socially sustainable manufacturing

By the end of the programme, the Research Mobility successfully enabled students to gain hands-on experience in AI, digital transformation and advanced manufacturing, strengthening Slovakia's academic and industrial ecosystem while building skills for the next generation of manufacturing innovators.



Study visit for civil servants



In June 2024, EIT Manufacturing East hosted a three-days study visit for a Slovak government delegation, which focused on innovation strategies, digital transformation and policy implementation at national and regional levels.

Engaging with Austria's Innovation Ecosystem

The delegation, including officials from VAIA, MHSR, MIRRI, SARIO and SIEA, met with high-level representatives from the Austrian Federal Chancellery, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy, and the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology.

Tours and Knowledge Exchange

Delegates visited leading facilities, including:

- TU Vienna Pilot Factory Industry 4.0
- IFT-TEC Lab – Laboratory for Production Engineering
- JKU LIT Factory

They also engaged with regional innovation agencies, clusters and startup incubators to study how local initiatives support broader national innovation goals.

Impact

The visit provided valuable insights into Austria's innovation and digital transformation practices, strengthening Slovakia's approach to industrial policy and fostering collaboration with European innovation networks.

About

The EIT Manufacturing – Slovakia – X Fund is a joint initiative between the Ministry of Investment, Regional Development, and Informatization of the Slovak Republic and EIT Manufacturing East. It supports projects and initiatives that advance digital transformation within Slovakia, in line with the Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation 2021-2027.

The programme channels resources into seven strategic activities, including a startup-focused competition,

“Industry UP! Slovakia”, and a knowledge-sharing programme, “Business Safari”, which draws insights from Austria’s advanced digital manufacturing practices.

The activities take place between 31 January 2024 and 31 December 2025, benefiting both local Slovak organisations and foreign entities operating in the country.

Both partners financially contribute €185,000 each, establishing a strong foundation and enabling future expansion.

EIT Manufacturing

EIT Manufacturing is one of the nine innovation communities supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union. EIT Manufacturing’s vision is to improve people lives through sustainable manufacturing. Its mission is to connect manufacturing

players by promoting talent and entrepreneurship to accelerate sustainable innovation in Europe.

EIT Manufacturing brings together over 200 partners ranging from large corporates, universities, research centres, startups and scaleups.



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