

EIT HEI – Event Management Services: In-Person Community Event Brief

Purpose

This document should serve as a brief to convey the concept for a planned in-person community event under the EIT Higher Education Initiative Community to tenderers in the procurement procedure “Event Management Services in the framework of the EIT Higher Education Initiative”. Agencies shall take the guidelines set out in this brief into account when preparing their tender concept according to section 6.4.1 of the invitation to tender.

Please note that the tender concept is **subject to review and evaluation according to section 8 of the invitation to tender**.

Connect

It is intended to hold a community-building event, not a formal conference or speaker-led summit. Its purpose is to strengthen the relationship between the initiative and its community, increase the visibility of the initiative as an active community enabler, and create meaningful in-person interaction among community members. The agency’s services include: support venue sourcing, feasibility assessment, budget comparison across format options, logistical design, room and flow planning, and practical recommendations on how to make the event work well.

Audience

The event will use open registration, supported by active invitation of priority participants. The must-have audience consists of project partners and people working on initiative-funded projects.

A broader mix of higher education representatives, researchers, business representatives, and other relevant stakeholders is welcome, but current expectations are that attendance will likely be dominated by project-related actors.

If demand exceeds capacity, final attendance decisions will be taken internally by the organiser.

City and location

For planning purposes, the EIT Higher Education Initiative considers Europe to be broadly divided into four regions: Northern, Central and Eastern, Western, and Southern Europe.

As part of this tender, the agency is requested to develop a concept for a regional community event in Central and Eastern Europe and recommend the most suitable host city. The recommendation should be justified based on accessibility, connectivity by rail and air, venue availability, cost efficiency, and the ability to attract participants from across the region.

The agency should optimise for the lowest realistic overall travel burden, accessibility, and value for money. The proposed concept should be scalable and transferable, serving as a blueprint for future regional community events in the other European regions. Attendee accommodation is not funded. For the lunch-to-lunch format, an affordable hotel with integrated meeting facilities is considered particularly attractive.

Budget

The available budget is € 80,000 all-in.

This should be treated as covering venue, catering, AV, agency travel, logistics, onsite staffing, signage / light branding, and any external speaker cost if one is included.

EIT HEI staff travel, most communications, invitations, registration handling, and potentially photo/video can be covered elsewhere (i.e. outside the budget) or handled internally if necessary.

The agency should test the realism of both format options A and B and both attendance scenarios (see further below), identify pressure points, and recommend simplifications where needed.

Note: As a general principle, the EIT Higher Education Initiative does not cover travel and accommodation costs for external speakers or guests. However, if budget allows and there is a clear strategic justification, the agency may propose inviting a limited number of exceptional guests and include the associated travel and accommodation costs.

Format options under consideration

Item	Option A: One-day	Option B: Lunch-to-lunch	Agency input needed
Timing	~09:00 start, formal close ~17:00, evening reception after	Day 1 start around 13:00– 14:00, Day 2 closes after lunch	Compare attendance- friendliness and value for money
Networking	Moderate	Stronger	Assess whether extra time justifies cost
Travel logic	Compact but may be awkward for same-day travel	Supports one-night stay better	Assess participant practicality
Complexity	Lower	Moderate	Advise on operational implications
Budget risk	Possibly lower	Needs assessment	Provide realistic cost comparison

Attendance scenarios

Scenario	Attendance	Programme implication	Planning note
Scenario A	Up to 50	Single-track format	Should still feel full, intentional, and worthwhile
Scenario B	Above 50 up to approx. 100	Possible split-track fishbowls and/or workshops	May require more rooms and more active flow management

Key risk note: low attendance is the biggest concern. The agency is explicitly asked to advise on the minimum viable attendance, how to best avoid an empty-feeling event, and how to choose a venue that still works well if turnout is lower than hoped.

Programming logic

The event should be community-led, discussion-oriented, practically useful, low on formal plenary, and high on peer exchange and informal interaction.

The organiser will own topics, content, workshop design, and speaker selection from within the community. The tenderer does not need to design content, but may advise on agenda flow, transitions, pacing, and participant journey.

Potential sessions

Component	Importance	Agency implication
Community case-study input	Medium	Need basic presentation setup
Fishbowl discussion	High	Flexible seating and sound support
One workshop	High	Single workshop room sufficient
Two workshops in parallel	Conditional	Breakout capacity required
Structured networking exercise	Low–Medium	No design ownership required
Informal networking	High	Breaks and catering must support this

Room and setup requirements

The venue should support flexible room logic: ideally a flexible main room, or several adjacent rooms that allow easy movement between formats.

Fishbowl discussions require flexible chairs and circle / semi-circle arrangements. Workshops should support round tables, clustered tables, or flexible open workshop space.

The evening reception should happen in the same venue and should not require moving to a restaurant or second location.

Catering and hospitality

Catering should be practical, budget-conscious, mostly vegetarian-forward if possible, and ideally sustainable and local.

Coffee, water, and soft drinks should be continuously available during the day. Alcohol, if served at all, should be limited to the evening reception and only included if budget allows.

Catering assumptions

Format	Arrival	Midday	Evening	Day 2
One-day	Coffee + pastries	Warm lunch	Finger food / buffet reception	n/a
Lunch-to-lunch	Coffee and possibly light cold lunch	n/a	Finger food / buffet reception	Warm lunch before close

AV and technical requirements

Standard AV is sufficient. The event likely needs projector or simple presentation capability, basic sound, and possibly handheld microphones for larger fishbowl discussions.

It does not require a stage, livestream, hybrid setup, or advanced scenic production.

Accessibility and practical standards

The venue should ideally be wheelchair accessible, easy to navigate, and suitable for networking and movement. Light branding is welcome if budget allows.

Agency role: Expected planning

The agency should provide venue sourcing, feasibility review, cost comparison across options, room and logistics planning, catering proposal, AV planning, onsite logistics support, and practical recommendations on participant journey and event design.

Key risks

Main current risk: low attendance.

Secondary risks include a venue that feels too large for actual turnout, an overcomplicated format relative to participant numbers, too much agenda density reducing networking value, and budget pressure if the lunch-to-lunch option proves too expensive.

Response points

Topic	Question
Format	Which option makes more sense: one-day or lunch-to-lunch?
Attendance	Which format is more likely to support turnout?
Budget	What are the cost implications of both formats?
Venue type	What type of venue is best suited in the proposed location?
Hotel logic	Is an all-in-one hotel venue the strongest solution?
Space planning	How should the event be spatially designed for both attendance scenarios?
Risk management	How can the event be designed to work well even with low turnout?
Concept quality	What are the current concept’s weaknesses or blind spots?
Simplification	What could be simplified, improved, or made more robust?

Open decisions

Decision area	Current status	Current leaning
Final format	Open	Lunch-to-lunch
Venue type	Open	Affordable hotel with in-house meeting rooms if possible
Parallel sessions	Conditional	Only if attendance justifies it
Fishbowl count	Open	One or two
Workshop count	Open	One or two
Documentation	Open	Nice-to-have, not essential
Alcohol	Open	Only evening, only if budget allows

Summary: The event should be designed as a practical, community-centered in-person gathering that works at both lower and higher attendance levels, prioritizes meaningful exchange over formal staging, and is realistic within an €80,000 all-in budget. The tenderer is expected to help identify the best format, the right venue mode in the Central/East Region and the smartest way to reduce the risk of a weak or under-attended experience.