CREDIT4CE
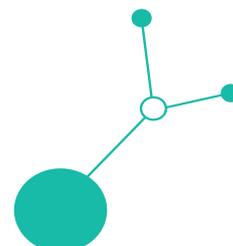
RESEARCH COMMERCIALISATION PROGRAMME

INFORMATION PACK FOR APPLICANTS

About the CREDIT4CE Project

The CREDIT4CE project strengthens the capacity of Central European regions to accelerate decarbonisation and advance the green transition. By working with SMEs, researchers, universities, and innovation actors, the project speeds up the development, commercialisation, and adoption of innovative green technologies needed to achieve climate neutrality.

A key pillar of CREDIT4CE is the creation of a **new support framework for green-tech innovators**, combining:

- research commercialisation and technology transfer support, and
- targeted business support for early-stage ClimateTech startups.

Through these interventions, CREDIT4CE accelerates the transfer of cutting-edge technologies from laboratories to the market and supports the scaling of impactful green solutions across Central Europe.

The CREDIT4CE project brings together 10 leading institutions and organizations from across six European countries and integrates education, research, and innovation:

- Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency – Slovakia
- G-Force – Slovakia
- Primorska Technology Park - Slovenia
- Confindustria Emilia Area Centro - Italy
- Wroclaw University of Science and Technology - Poland
- North-West Croatia Regional Energy and Climate Agency - Croatia
- Energy and Sustainable Development Cluster - Italy
- Zagreb Innovation Centre - Croatia
- Adam Mickiewicz University Foundation - Poznan Science and Technology Park - Poland
- Weizer Energie- Innovations- Zentrum - Austria

Programme Introduction

The **CREDIT4CE Research Commercialisation & Technology Transfer Programme** is designed to empower **academic staff, researchers, scientists, and university innovation professionals** with the practical competencies needed to successfully commercialise research outcomes.

While Central Europe has a strong scientific and technological base, many promising research results fail to reach the market due to:

- limited exposure to market-driven thinking,
- lack of structured commercialisation pathways,
- uncertainty around IP protection and ownership, and
- insufficient interaction between academia, industry, and investors.

This programme directly addresses these challenges by providing **hands-on, practice-oriented training**, real-case discussions, and expert support focused on translating research into real-world impact.

The programme aims to support **30+ participants** working on technologies and innovations enabling the transition to a net-zero society.

Programme Objectives

By the end of the programme, participants will be able to:

- assess the market potential of their research and technologies,
- identify and validate real customer needs,
- understand and manage intellectual property strategically,
- select the most suitable commercialisation route (licensing, spin-out, consultancy),
- interact more confidently with industry partners and investors,
- contribute more effectively to their institution's technology transfer activities.

What the Programme Offers

The CREDIT4CE Research Commercialisation & Technology Transfer Programme provides participants with a **structured, supportive learning journey** to help them explore, assess, and develop the commercialisation potential of their research.

The programme does not require participants to have a market-ready technology or a defined business idea. Instead, it supports researchers in **understanding whether and how their research could create real-world impact,** and in navigating possible pathways from lab to market.

Selected participants will benefit from **a structured learning journey that combines expert-led workshops, interactive sessions, and real-world case applications.**
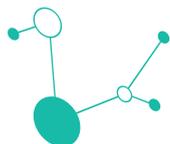
Core Training Modules

MODULE 1: MARKET ANALYSIS

A series of workshops focused on validating whether technology solves a real, valuable problem.

- **Design Thinking and Validation (8 hours spread over 2-3 workshops)**

Identify customer pain points, develop customer personas and ideal customer profiles, conduct interviews, prototype rapidly, and validate demand before building.

- **Introduction to Pitch (8 hours spread over 2-3 workshops)**

Develop and practice:

- 30-second elevator pitch
- 3-minute customer pitch
- 10-minute investor pitch

  with a strong focus on clarity, problem-solution fit, and impact.

- **Business Plan Fundamentals (8 hours spread over 2-3 workshops)**

Build a lean business plan that covers the value proposition, customer segments, revenue model, pricing, vision, mission, and simplified financial planning.

MODULE 2: IP ASSESSMENT

Focused on protecting research results and avoiding common commercialisation pitfalls.

- **Introduction to IP Protection (2 hours)**

Fundamentals of patents, trademarks, copyrights, and navigating university IP policies.

- **Case Studies and Best Practice Examples (1 hour)**

Real examples of successful and unsuccessful commercialisation cases from Central Europe.

MODULE 3: COMMERCIALIZATION ROUTE

Helping participants choose and execute the right pathway to market.

- **Go-to-Market Strategy (2 hours)**

Define beachhead markets, update ideal customer profiles, and plan pilot customer acquisition.
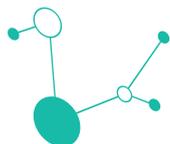
- **Marketing and Branding (3 hours)**

Learn how positioning, messaging, and branding differentiate technologies in competitive markets.

- **Introduction to Sales (2 hours)**

B2B sales fundamentals, negotiation techniques, objection handling, and pilot agreement closing, with role-play exercises.

- **Introduction to Investment Readiness (1 hour)**

Overview of funding options, including grants, angel investors, and venture capital.

Networking Event with Investors and Industry Players (4 hours)

Structured networking and pitch feedback sessions with investors, corporates, and innovation stakeholders.


Delivery Approach

- **Format:** Online
- **Language:** English
- **Methodology:** Highly interactive, case-based, and practice-oriented
- **Focus:** Real research projects and concrete commercialisation challenges of participants

Workshops are designed to encourage active participation, peer learning, and direct application to participants' own research or institutional context.

Programme Duration & Time Commitment

CREDIT4CE Accelerator is designed to meet the pace and needs of scientists/research staff looking to commercialize their research and/or help their students/assistants/young scientists to do the same, as well as early-stage deep-tech startups.

- **Estimated Time Commitment:**
  Approximately **1-2 days per module**, spread over April and May 2026
- **Participation:**
  Modular – participants can attend the entire program or select specific modules based on their interests and needs. If a team joins the program, team members can participate in workshops interchangeably.
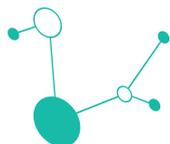
Who Can Apply?

The programme is open to **academic staff, researchers, scientists, and university employees** based in **Central Europe**, as defined by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme: Austria, Germany, Poland, Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Italy, Slovenia.

Eligible applicants include:

- PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, lecturers, professors, and research staff,
- University and research institution employees involved in technology transfer, innovation management, or industry collaboration,
- Individuals or **small research teams** applying jointly.

Applicants must be affiliated with an institution located in one of the following **Central European countries**: Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

Participants may come from a wide range of research fields relevant to the green transition, including (but not limited to) renewable energy, biomass, materials science, agriculture, engineering, waste management, environmental technologies, and related disciplines.

Research projects can be at **different stages of development**, including:

- early-stage research,
- proof of concept,
- lab-validated results,
- prototype development,
- or early field testing.

Prior experience in entrepreneurship, business development, or commercialisation is **not required**. The programme is specifically designed for participants who wish to **learn, explore, and better understand** how their research could translate into real-world impact.

Deadline to Apply

The application deadline is:

March 31, 2026 (23:59 CET)

Don't miss your chance to apply!

How to Apply?
Startups must complete <u>a short online application form</u>:

<u>Apply here!</u>

Selection Criteria:

Applications will be assessed qualitatively, with a focus on:

- relevance of the research to green technologies and decarbonisation challenges,
- potential (or interest) for research commercialisation or technology transfer,
- motivation and openness to engage in market-oriented learning,
- diversity of research fields, institutions, and career stages among participants.

A minimum of **30 participants** will be supported through the programme, both teams and individuals.

Privacy & Terms
The CREDIT4CE project's Consortium is committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. The privacy policy complies with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation – GDPR) of the European Parliament and the Council, relating to the processing and disposal of personal data. By submitting the application form, the applicant authorizes the CREDIT4CE team to collect and process personal data for the purpose of the application. Data will be retained for 5 years after the end of the project. Personal information submitted through the form will be used for selection, communication, and administrative purposes related to the CREDIT4CE project, as well as for communication regarding future activities of the partners' organisations. By applying, the Applicant consents to the processing of their data for program purposes.