# Press release

Eureka approves the new ECP and participation of ITEA 4 – strengthened collaboration for greater impact

The Eureka High Level Group approved the new Eureka Clusters Programme (ECP) and the participation of ITEA 4. The ECP, which will start on 1 July 2021, has been established to give the Eureka Clusters a new boost and to strengthen collaboration and dialogue with all stakeholders.

Intensifying the collaboration - within Eureka and the Eureka Clusters, and between the Clusters and the Public Authorities - is one of the focus points of the new ECP to improve international collaboration opportunities and impact. This had already been initiated before the start of the ECP, for example by setting up the joint Eureka Clusters Calls for AI in 2020 and 2021 with available funding from fourteen countries.

Frans Verkaart, current Eureka Chief Operations Officer explains: *“ITEA is a very good example of a Community with a strong industrial base whose collaboration is founded on trust and visionary research. This is all facilitated by a network that enables people to find each other and work together - and is well supported by the ITEA Office. Such elements are and remain valuable. They are the essence of a Cluster Community. And the Community is part of a broader Eureka whole, working together with other Communities and with the Public Authorities. And it’s this link that is vital and lies at the root of the Eureka Clusters Programme.”*

## ITEA 4 software innovation and sustainable growth

Within the ECP, ITEA will continue to stimulate software innovation, the digital transition and sustainable growth. ITEA’s mission is to spawn innovative, funded projects of high quality that, catalysed by the ITEA label and coaching, deliver game-changing solutions through software innovation and ensure the fast as well as long-term exploitation of results.

*“ITEA has a proven track of success with impactful research projects with concrete results for industry, economy and countries such as worldwide standards, new products that ease human life in healthcare or new services that shortens the lifecycle of productisation in industry,”* emphasises ITEA Chairwoman Zeynep Sarılar. *“All these success stories are built by the ITEA Community with their ambition to research in order to build a better world and contribute to a better life by trusting in the value of collaboration.”*

The ambition for ITEA projects is to:

* Provide concrete global solutions with tangible results to tackle the urgent challenges and trends of society defined by international consortia to the benefit of all stakeholders.
* Accelerate the sustainable growth of industry through innovative products, services, platforms and standards.
* Push for new and upcoming trends in software innovation including AI, Big Data, Machine Learning and such.
* Create crossover innovations through ITEA’s open innovation Community and by cooperating with other Eureka Clusters.

## Enhancing from established roots

ITEA will enhance the roots established during the past 23 years and continue to **increase customer orientation** and **accelerate market impact**. ITEA Advisory Boards are being established for a set of ITEA key challenges to create a dialogue and guide ITEA projects in a successful way, to test the innovation at an early stage on a full scale and to prepare the market for the next innovation.

**Sustainability** will also play a more dominant role in ITEA 4 as it becomes an integrated part of the project coordination process and with the incorporation of a new challenge ‘Smart energy’ in the ITEA Living roadmap. Sustainability is also one of the topics that offers great opportunities for crossover innovation that will result from increased collaboration between the different Eureka Clusters.

### Strong support

The strong backing from both industry and Public Authorities is once again underlined by the 14 Board members and 16 countries that are already committed to supporting ITEA 4 within the new ECP:

*“ITEA is a unique trusted community that helps us to broaden and deepen our international innovative network, and to set up successful R&D&l cooperations; ITEA is consistently focusing on ground-breaking innovations with maximum impact for economy and society. Moreover, in ITEA, project evaluation, monitoring and coaching are done by experienced industry experts and it provides a unique flexibility for industry to stay tuned with market developments.”*- Henk van Houten, Chief Technology Officer at Philips

*“Thanks to ITEA, Siemens has a faster and steeper learning curve in new topics. It provides good means for collaboration within a consortium of experts, customers and suppliers covering the full value chain. Finally, ITEA adds to the visibility and the creation of an innovative image in R&D Community.”*- Thomas Scheiter, Head of Technology Field 'Internet of Things' at Siemens

*“For the Netherlands, the ITEA programme is of great value: ITEA fulfils one of our policy goals, which is to facilitate the construction of European-wide ecosystems for high-tech research and development in which SMEs can play an important role.”*
- Wilbert Schaap, ITEA Public Authority representative for The Netherlands, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy

*"As a small country, it is very important for Sweden's industry and research institutions to be part of international high-performance innovation ecosystems. Our global competitiveness relies on it.  The ITEA programme enables us to do just that regarding one of our highest priorities, which is software-intensive innovation."*- Fredrik Weisner, ITEA Public Authority representative of Sweden and Programme Manager at Vinnova, Sweden's innovation agency

*Editorial notes*

### About ITEA

Since 1998, ITEA is the Eureka R&D&I Cluster for software innovation, enabling a large international Community to collaborate in funded projects that turn innovative ideas into new businesses, jobs, economic growth and benefits for society. It is industry-driven and covers a wide range of business opportunities facilitated by digitisation like smart mobility, smart health, smart cities and communities, smart energy, smart industry, engineering and safety & security. ITEA pushes important technology fields like artificial intelligence, machine learning, big data, simulation and high-performance computing into concrete business applications. ITEA projects have a proven track record of being innovative, providing unique solutions to the current trends and having potential to impact society and the market.

ITEA Board members are: Atos, Barco, Bosch, Enerim, Ericsson, Esri Canada, KoçSistem, Nokia, NXP, Philips, Saab, Siemens, Software AG and Turkcell.

More information: <https://itea4.org>

### About Eureka

Eureka is the world’s biggest public network for international cooperation in R&D and innovation and is present in over 45 countries.

* Eureka provides access to public funding: as the national funding body in your country, Eureka give you access to public funding for your R&D projects.
* Eureka drives international collaboration: Eureka can help you find international partners, build your ideal project consortium and choose the best programme.
* Eureka boosts expansion into new markets: Eureka will support you as you access new markets by providing tools and advice for expansion.
* Eureka offers personalised advice: the Eureka national project coordinator (NPC) in your country can advise, support and guide you from the development of your project idea to its commercialisation.

It is Eureka's mission to enhance competitiveness and strengthen R&D&I ecosystems by supporting cross-border research and innovation collaboration between SMEs, large companies, universities and research organisations.

More information: [https://www.eurekanetwork.org](https://www.eurekanetwork.org/)

### About ECP

The Eureka Clusters Programme (ECP) is industry-driven and shared between the complementary thematic Cluster communities of:

* Celtic-Next: Next-generation communications for a secure, trusted and sustainable digital
 society
* Eurogia: Low-carbon energy technologies
* ITEA: Software innovation and digital transition
* SMART: Advanced manufacturing and production technologies
* Xecs: Sustainable digital transformation in electronic components and systems

The ECP stimulates international collaborative R&D projects, within and between the different Cluster communities, advancing high-quality innovations beyond the state-of-the-art. The goal is the creation of products, processes and services for economic, environmental and societal benefits.

The Eureka Clusters remain open and flexible, both individually and collectively, to be the best tools for international collaborative innovation support and funding.

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