EUROPEAN CULTURAL
AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES
INNOVATION POLICY PLATFORM

EKIP POLICY LAB

Reimagining deep tech – What creatives make possible

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM *EKIP* POLICY LAB 11

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Key Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Establish a participatory collaboration framework for creative deep tech ecosystems.

Recommendation 2: Support scaling models that combine market viability with European value retention, ensuring that Deep Tech innovations and social-driven visions can grow without relocating ownership, production, talent, or economic benefits outside Europe.

Recommendation 3: Create long-term collaboration mechanisms between CCIs and Deep Tech actors to move partnerships beyond short-term networking and into applied experimentation.

Recommendation 4: Keep investing in and expanding networks of agile, localised CCI innovation testbeds that enable secure environments for rapid experimentation while embedding scalable human-centred accountability.

Recommendation 5: Restructure tiered funding programs to boost the amount of creative deep tech ecosystem ventures.

Recommendation 6: Establish a unified, transparent data infrastructure that maps cross-sector capabilities and tracks the socio-economic impact of CCIs in deep tech[1].

Recommendation 7: Strengthen ecosystem conditions for intellectual property, ownership, and fair value distribution in AI-driven deep tech and CCI value chains[2].

[1] This recommendation is suggested to be approached before actualising other recommendations related to networking, role designation, and participatory collaboration frameworks.

[2] *This recommendation will be fed into the final ekip Policy Lab on CCIs and Digital Commons (9 September 2026, Linz, Austria)*

1 Introduction

This document presents the policy recommendations for Open Innovation that emerged from the EKIP policy lab "Reimagining Deep Tech: What Creatives Make Possible," held on 6 May 2026. It begins by outlining the context and rationale behind selecting deep tech as a thematic focus for innovation in the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs), situating this choice within the broader ambition of strengthening Open Innovation between deep tech and the creative sector. It then describes the methodology used to gather input and develop recommendations for the policy lab, discusses the challenges and opportunities identified by the invited stakeholders in bringing deep tech and the CCIs closer together through Open Innovation, and concludes with the final set of recommendations co-created through this process. While this report is addressed primarily to the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD), its policy recommendations are intended to be taken up by the European Commission together with the broader ecosystem of actors – including national and regional policymakers, funding bodies, deep tech and research institutions, and CCI networks – whose collective engagement is essential for Open Innovation between deep tech and the creative sector to take root, and for the CCIs to thrive in this open, collaborative, and interoperable ecosystem.

The policy lab takes place as part of the policy recommendation formulation step in the ekip engine[3], following a systematic scoping of the deep tech area to identify underlying challenges for the CCIs. It is further embedded in the broader context of ekip's work on cross-innovation in cities, such as city prototyping on deep tech for the CCIs conducted in Rotterdam on May 22nd[4], which worked to identify where the domain of deep tech and cultural and creative industries intersect. The policy lab therefore not only builds on stakeholder discussions around deep tech and the creative sector, but also on the broader lessons emerging from EKIP's experimentation with cross-innovation.

[3] https://ekipengine.eu/about-us/ekip-engine/
[4] https://knowledge-bank.ekipengine.eu/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/Deep-Tech-Rotterdam-City-Case.pdf

2 Context and rationale: why a Policy Lab on deep tech and the CCIs

The cultural and creative industries are increasingly engaging with deep tech as a critical force shaping their future. In the context of the Cultural and Creative Industries, we define deep tech as an intentional application of frontier science and engineering to drive purposeful societal progress in order to deliver breakthrough innovation[5], encompassing several types of technologies, including quantum, AI, advanced materials, biotech, and robotics. The European Commission, in its recent report *Unleashing the Potential of the Cultural and Creative Industries*[6], identifies two defining research questions for the upcoming years: how new technologies will reshape economies and societies, and how societies in turn will shape the trajectory of those technologies. At the heart of this mutual relationship lies a pressing challenge – equipping the CCIs to harness cutting-edge technologies effectively – while ensuring that innovation remains open and human-centric: developed, understood, and guided by the very people who set it in motion.

For *ekip,* this represents a critical intervention point. It is an opportunity to reposition CCIs not merely as facilitators or late-stage adopters of deep-tech, but as **active shapers of purposive innovation.** Unlike conventional production, **CCI-led innovation is deeply rooted in societal progress;** it prioritises not only *what* is being developed, but *how* it will impact the human experience. In this context, the cultural and humanistic layer provided by the CCIs is not decorative, but foundational. Indeed, CCIs possess the potential to make technology more intentional, transforming deep-tech from a system that dictates human behaviour into one that is purposefully shaped by it. Beyond this, CCIs's contribution serves in ensuring value alignment in different ways, including ensuring sustainable, democratic, fair, and responsible tech development. As the need for reimagination[7] emerges as a primary challenge for deep-tech ventures, the vision of creative CCI professionals becomes vital in the pursuit of truly human-centric alternatives. By merging advanced technologies with societal-driven approaches, deep-tech innovators can deliver genuine and tangible impacts[8]. To ground the Policy Lab on Deep Tech in a policy-relevant context and in current trajectories of deep tech development and diffusion, we explored these interactions through two perspectives:

- **A more short-term perspective on already impacting technologies.** Understanding the role of CCIs as innovative explorers for current technologies, evidencing that they both benefit each other. How can CCIs play a role in shaping powerful technology, driving adoption and innovation in deep tech fields?
- **A more long-term perspective on technologies at an emerging stage.** Here, we think about the impact of the creative CCI mindset when contributing during the early stages of deep tech development. How can they be used for tuning a desirable future? How can they inspire innovation that positions Europe in the lead while pushing forward the human-centric factor as a major requirement?

[5] For more detailed information, please see ekip's scoping note on Deep Tech.

[6] Unleashing the Potential of the Cultural and Creative Industries (2025): https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/372efc5e-7e43-11f0-9af8-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

[7] Hello Tomorrow / Boston Consulting Group – BCG (2021) https://hello-tomorrow.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/BCG_Hello_Tomorrow_Great-Wave.pdf

[8] The EIT Deep Tech Talent Initiative - DTTI (2025) https://eit-culture-creativity.eu/latest-news/2025-03-14-eit-deep-tech-talent-call-training-proposals-2025-open-0

3 Methodology for the policy lab and recommendations

To translate these questions to the design approach for the Policy Lab, three directions were proposed that positioned CCIs not as peripheral supporters of deep tech, but as actors whose involvement is essential for fulfilling an EU policy vision in which technological progress is guided by creativity, societal relevance, human-centred values, and the EU's capacity to lead in responsible open innovation. Each direction targets a different stage of the deep tech trajectory and constituted the basis for the policy lab discussions:

- **Direction 1: Shaping technological trajectories through early CCI engagement as a com petitive strategy.** This direction argues that CCI professionals should be shaping the earliest stages of technological trajectories, when emerging technologies are still being framed and their purpose and mission are still open.
- **Direction 2: Embedding CCIs in the development of deep tech into human-centred propo sitions**. This direction argues that CCI professionals should be embedded in the development stage, where emerging technologies need to be turned into human-centred propositions.
- **Direction 3: CCIs as enablers of deep tech diffusion across sectors and society.** This direc tion argues that the CCIs should play a central role in the diffusion of deep tech across sectors and into society in order to make these opportunities more graspable.

To facilitate the discussions, each direction was turned into a future-forward scenario that positioned the CCIs as already active enablers of each direction. As a policy platform, *ekip* treats foresight-driven recommendations as an integral component of the open innovation process and as a collective sense-making process that enables stakeholders to shape innovation. The scenarios can be found in Annex 1.1.

Participants, including artists, deep tech experts, SMEs, academia, and CCI networksworked back-wards from these scenarios to the present through a backcasting exercise, identifying the enablers and barriers to achieving these scenarios by 2040 across areas such as infrastructure, financing, research and innovation, and education. Finally. participants were asked to turn these enablers and hurdles into policy recommendations.

4 Enablers for CCIs in shaping, enabling, and diffusing deep tech

This section highlights the enablers that could help understand how CCI sectors are key active players for supporting breakthrough innovation in collaboration with deep tech ventures based on previous analysis and insights from the Policy Lab discussions.

Direction 1: shaping technological trajectories

CCI professionals who could give shape to a more human-centric trajectory for emerging technologies are not structurally involved in strategic conversations. Even within corporate R&D and startup teams that claim to be problem-oriented, the experts specialised in understanding human problems and lived experiences are rarely present at the critical stage of problem definition. Participants highlighted the underused potential of CCIs for generating critical engagement and anticipating future scenarios with societal implications, which tend to be hard to visualise for traditional tech players when starting new ventures. Alternative and flexible funding and governance models were claimed to be needed in order to turn the situation around, as conventional frameworks hinder these collaborations to happen or to be successful in the long run. At this stage, CCI practitioners (especially those navigating creative disciplines) bring four distinctive capabilities here:

- **Envisioning societal futures:** The disciplined practice of imagining alternative futures, creating scenarios that reveal the societal implications of a technology when it can still be redirected. In the context of deep tech, this point is relevant because deep technologies often have far-reaching societal consequences that are difficult to predict once the technology is already deployed.
- **Starting from societal relevance:** Deep tech typically asks *"what can this technology do?"*, while CCI practitioners may ask *"what should this technology be for?"*; starting from human experience and well-being rather than from technical capability.
- **Giving form to the not-yet-existing:** Emerging technologies are abstract. CCI practitioners give them provisional form through prototypes, visualisations, and experiences, making their potential and consequences graspable for policymakers and business actors since the early stages.
- **Creating the tools for deliberation:** Scenarios, speculative prototypes, and design provocations are the instruments through which a society can discuss, contest, and shape a technological trajectory before it hardens into infrastructures and definite features.

Direction 2: embedding CCIs in the development of deep tech

Ultimately, the development stage is where scientific potential needs to acquire form and a clear relationship to the contexts it will serve. Some deep tech areas, like AI, have reached the market while many others, such as brain-computer interfaces for creative applications and next-generation immersive display technologies remain primarily confined to research and demonstration environments[9]. And even when Europe invests significantly in deep tech research, the capacity to turn that research into human-centred propositions remains underdeveloped. Thus, alternative opportunities rely on seeking stronger involvement of societies and communities, among which CCIs are expert navigators.

[9] https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/human-neuroscience/articles/10.3389/fnhum.2025.1516776/full

One of the main reasons that full scalability is not yet taking place is the gap between technological breakthroughs and their successful translation into market-ready, user centred and societally accepted solutions[10]. What is more, the need to shift desirability for repurposed objectives and common goals may be as important as the capability of the innovation itself (which was stressed during the discussion within this group). For instance, the Draghi report on the Future of European Competitiveness[11] evidences the need for urgent innovative applications, domain in which CCIs can greatly contribute to, however there is no direct mention to the potential role of the creative industries for such purpose. Therefore, CCI practitioners could deliver three pivotal improvements if they were appropriately integrated:

- **Simplifying and translating:** Deep tech propositions are often locked in the language and logic of their scientific/technical foundation. CCI practitioners can translate complex technical potential into understandable formats, making it possible for non-specialist partners, investors, and policymakers to understand what a technology offers and what it requires.
- **Co-creating and orchestrating different perspectives:** A viable deep tech proposition does not emerge from a single discipline. It requires bringing together technical, business, regulatory, and societal perspectives into a shared creative process. CCI practitioners can facilitate this through co-creative methods that enable diverse stakeholders to jointly shape what a technology becomes.
- **Prototyping and iterative experimentation:** Turning a scientific breakthrough into something that people and organisations can actually use requires repeated rounds of building, testing, gathering feedback, and improving. CCI practitioners are well equipped to support this process. Through rapid prototyping, hands-on experimentation, user testing, and early-stage concept development, they help explore multiple possible applications before major investments are made. This makes it easier to identify what works, discard what does not, and reduce the risk of pursuing unconventional ideas without narrowing too quickly towards a single solution.

Direction 3: diffusing deep tech across sectors and society

Europe excels at deep tech specialisation but struggles with diffusing technologies in ways that translate scientific and technological breakthroughs into widely adopted solutions across sectors, markets, and society. Current policy addresses this primarily through market mechanisms like venture funding, IP protection, and demand-side incentives. But diffusion is not only a market process, but a cultural process. Spreading deep tech opportunities across sectors and user groups requires making them graspable, meaningful, and adaptable to contexts that do not share the same technical language. During the discussion, attendees acknowledge that CCI professionals serve as essential connectors, translators, and drivers of meaningful innovation, capable of turning raw technical capabilities into human-centred propositions that accelerate mass-market tech adoption. Again, conversations pointed to the role of city and regional partners for expanding opportunities and building unified, cross-sector ecosystems and network that can lay the groundwork for long-term marketplace acceptance. This is because, when that cultural layer is missing, even well-developed propositions encounter resistance, indifference, or adoption limited to a narrow specialist community.

CCI players could bring the capabilities to make that happen, but are rarely part of diffusion strategies. This direction emphasises that CCI professionals and actors, whose expertise is to build literacy, create diverse applications, and foster informed societal engagement, could address this throughout the following streams:

[10] https://hello-tomorrow.org/crossing-the-valley-of-death-a-call-for-a-shift-in-the-european-deep-tech-ecosystem/

[11] The Future of European Competitiveness https://commission.europa.eu/topics/competitiveness/draghi-report_en

- Building literacy and creating meaning: Many deep technologies remain inaccessible because they are poorly understood, and even when understood, people struggle to see why they matter. CCI professionals/actors can make complex technologies graspable for different audiences — through visualisations, interactive experiences, (serious) games, exhibitions, and compelling narratives — building both the literacy needed to engage with these technologies and the cultural connection that makes them meaningful to people's values, concerns, and aspirations.
- Enabling cross-sector application: CCI professionals/actors can develop diverse applications of deep tech across different sectors and contexts, namely not single solutions but evolving portfolios of uses, adapted to the specific needs and logics of each sector, through rapid piloting and experimentation. This widens the base of sectors and organisations that can work with the technology.
- Fostering informed societal debate: Deep tech adoption shapes the future, but too often that shaping happens without public awareness or deliberation. CCI professionals/actors can open up that conversation through speculative design, scenario exercises, and public engagement formats like exhibitions and festivals. This enables citizens, policymakers, and organisations to critically examine what a technology implies for society before its effects become irreversible.

5 Hurdles for CCIs in shaping, embedding and diffusing deep tech

During the Policy Lab, key challenges impeding stronger integration between deep tech and CCIs were discussed in breakout groups. The main themes are indicated below. Although presented separately, they should be understood as interlinked rather than isolated.

One theme was that **existing decision-making structures and EU instruments are not well suited to CCIs or the realities of deep-tech innovation.** Tools such as Technology Readiness Levels (TRL), formal commission processes, and current funding structures move too slowly relative to the pace of technological development and tend to reinforce silos rather than break them down. They are indeed less effective at supporting the interdisciplinary collaboration, experimentation and user-centred development needed to translate deep-tech breakthroughs into widely adopted solutions. Existing EU projects were also described as favouring positivist and metric-driven approaches, which can limit understanding of how CCIs actually work and contribute.

This hurdle was linked to a **tension between public interest approaches to innovation and competitiveness or venture capital-driven models,** which participants viewed as particularly acute in the deep-tech space. Existing funding often pushes projects toward venture capital logic, and SMEs and start-ups are frequently bought out before they fully develop. Several participants noted that large companies have unused innovation capacity, including prototypes already on the shelf, but little incentive to implement or scale them because current business models still work. This was considered a major barrier to the deployment of deep tech solutions needed to address societal challenges. Participants also flagged a lack of incentives for tech engagement and also pointed to regulation and lobbying as a barrier. New legislation was seen as a necessary push, but strong lobbying has weakened or delayed it, and risks harming small actors while large enterprises adapt more easily, creating an uneven playing field.

Participants repeatedly highlighted fragmentation as a key challenge. This fragmentation exists across value chains, among research institutions, and between different CCI sub-sectors and the wider innovation ecosystem. Deep tech solutions typically require the combined efforts of researchers, designers, manufacturers investors, policymakers, testbeds, and end users. Some parts of the arts sector were described as being relatively disconnected from wider society, while participants also noted that "culture" and "the arts" are often treated differently, which can affect how they are integrated into broader policy and innovation processes.

This fragmentation was also linked to gaps in industrial infrastructure. For example, limited access to facilities for spinning, weaving, testing, and other production-related activities means that production is often outsourced rather than developed within local or European ecosystems.

Many good prototypes and test cases were described as not scalable. Participants also identified a need for a digital tool or platform to connect siloed researchers, solutions, and industries, and for mapping infrastructure and capabilities across Europe to identify complementary facilities and enable joint ventures at EU level.

Economic accessibility and equity concerns also came up. Sustainable, high-storytelling products remain expensive, with value concentrated in high-end niches. This ties into a wider concern about inequality and inclusion in how deep tech and CCI collaborations are structured and who benefits from them.

Participants also pointed **to weak trust and limited mutual understanding between sectors.** Understanding around technologies for facilitating initiatives is not always shared, and researchers and solutions remain siloed across faculties, institutions, and sectors. A mindset shift was described as crucial to closing this gap, but not yet mainstream, and still a missing element in current practice.

Competition with other regions was raised as a separate concern. Participants noted that publicly funded research might eventually be acquired by non-EU actors, without the long-term benefits of that innovation remaining in Europe.

Finally, **gaps in evidence and coordination infrastructure** were also highlighted. Participants noted limited impact measurement frameworks, which make it difficult to demonstrate what is working. Collaborative structures, including in city-level innovation settings such as testbeds and regulatory sandboxes, were described as still limited, even though these spaces are seen as valuable for experimenting with radical ideas. Policy uncertainty and fragmented funding, along with asymmetric economic models between different actors, were also named as ongoing obstacles to more coordination.

6 Policy recommendations

Based on the above hurdles and enablers, the following recommendations were drawn following each direction for CCI involvement.

6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSING DIRECTION 1: SHAPING

The following recommendations address Direction 1: shaping technological trajectories from an early stage through CCIs as a competitive strategy. Through the integration of CCI professionals into processes linked to creative deep tech ecosystems and promoting strategic scalability, these recommendations focus on the role of the CCIs framing technologies at the early stage of their development.

Recommendation 1: Establish a participatory collaboration framework for creative deep tech ecosystems

Policy actions

- **Designate an orchestrator role:** Assign an intermediary in innovation ecosystems to coordinate the collaboration framework. Existing EU bodies are already saturated and not best structured for cross-sector matchmaking[12]. The body should be responsible for bridging the gap between CCIs and deep tech by e.g. matching CCI professionals to deep tech opportunities and running selection mechanisms.
- **Create an evidence repository for best practices:** Conduct a review of existing CCI-deep tech collaborations to identify what worked and why. This should be used to build evaluation criteria and support mechanisms, not assumptions. This knowledge can be aggregated in an evidence repository that brings together operational best practices of CCI x deep tech ventures, successful business cases, and evidence-based research, connecting siloed innovators across the EU.
- **Decentralised governance:** Set up a collaboration framework that allows CCIs and emerging deep tech actors to work together on equal terms. The framework should make it easier to access infrastructure, data, funding, and develop joint projects without depending too heavily on dominant incumbents or slow public procedures.
- **Collaborative selection mechanisms:** Select diverse CCI representatives and deep tech experts through inclusive procedures. Explore alternative selection mechanisms, such as rotating or randomised elements, that avoid repeatedly favouring the same actors who typically get selected. The orchestrator administers this process.
- **Standardise cooperation protocols:** Develop shared guidelines for joint programmes to harmonise working methodologies, terminology, and communication strategies across fragmented sectors. Add a recurring reporting system, managed by the orchestrator, tracking the efficiency of the framework (e.g. active collaborations, time-to-match, etc.). These results should feed back into periodic guideline revisions.

Why this matters[13]

- **Adaptive models:** Current regulatory frameworks are misaligned with the rapid evolution of deep tech; new models must prioritise rapid, adaptive processes to remain relevant.

[12] Input from the community review session, held on June 17th, 2026

[13] Input from the policy lab, held on May 6th, 2026

• **Strategic positioning:** By embedding participatory processes into the development of these guidelines, the resulting technology is better aligned with societal needs, human values, and cultural relevance from the outset. Shifting from siloed project-based funding to independent, collaborative frameworks fosters an environment where innovation is co-designed rather than externally imposed.
• **Siloed operations:** Breaks down the barriers that prevent effective navigation and knowledge sharing between the creative and technical sectors.
• **Developmental lag:** Aligns the speed of project execution and policy oversight with technological advancement.

Who should drive this?

• A dedicated intermediary body, acting as an orchestrator, together with EU innovation agencies (e.g., EIC, EIT), pan-European intermediary organisations, such as S+T+ARTS at EU level and independent partner institutions at local level, academic institutions, and European institutions

Recommendation 2: Support scaling models that combine market viability with European value retention, ensuring that Deep Tech innovations and social-driven visions can grow without relocating ownership, production, talent, or economic benefits outside Europe.

Policy actions

• **Address financial sustainability in scalability beyond public funding:** Many CCI actors excel at experimentation and early-stage innovation, and EU innovation programmes already encourage scalability for funded projects through the integration of market readiness objectives. However, CCIs often struggle to reach sustainable scalability once public funding ends[14]. Design support structures that address this continuity gap, so scalability does not collapse when public money stops.
• **Explore alternative innovation strategies leveraging CCI strengths:** Assess and understand EU capabilities and priorities, and consider prioritising refining, scaling, de-risking, and improving existing deep tech concepts over competing against big global players.
• **Narrative-led scaling:** Use CCI expertise to build compelling, desire-driven narratives around consumption models to drive mass-market adoption (such as regenerative fashion, repair-and-recycle). Pair this with a shared understanding of overall context and common goals across the team, so members can support and trust each other's competencies, not only align on narrative.
• **Value-driven integration:** Create regulatory and incentive structures that bind technology companies to European human-centric values and sustainability standards.

Why this matters

• **Market viability:** Moving beyond *on-the-shelf* research requires a shift in mindset where scalability is treated as a core design principle rather than an afterthought.
• **Societal desire:** Creatives are essential in transforming abstract technical upgrades into tangible, appealing consumer experiences, which is critical for scaling circular and regenerative solutions.
• **Strategic retention:** By fostering innovation cycles that are tied to European ecosystems, Europe can ensure that public investment produces sustainable, long-term regional prosperity rather than "leaking" key technologies to external markets.
• **Business lock-in:** Reduces reliance on rigid, proprietary technology silos by encouraging interoperability and scalable, open innovation strategies.
• **Competitive stagnation:** Addresses the lack of integrated structures by aligning research, creative desirability, and industrial scaling under a unified European agenda.

[14] Input from the community review session, held on June 17th, 2026

Who should drive this?

• The European Commission in collaboration with e.g., the European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS)
• National Ministries of Economy, regional competitiveness hubs

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSING DIRECTION 2: EMBEDDING

The following recommendations address Direction 2: Embedding to turn deep tech breakthroughs into societally relevant propositions to be adopted by the public. Moving initiatives from early-stage achievements to propositions that can be adopted by the public by the help of CCI tools, whether it is from an idea to an experiment, or from a pilot to a full-scale product.

Recommendation 3: Create long-term collaboration mechanisms between CCIs and Deep Tech actors to move partnerships beyond short-term networking and into applied experimentation

Policy actions
• **Prioritise ecosystem continuity:** CCIs intervention in deep-tech ventures tend to be episodical and of short-term duration[15]. Shift focus toward the sustained development of long-term, stable innovation ecosystems. Building a strong portfolio can motivate long-term engagement, since outcomes, impact, and outreach are recorded and can be proven over time. Context mapping, a visual, design-led research method to map out external and internal factors, should be used as a coordination tool: it clarifies the logic behind each alliance, when partnerships make sense, and who is responsible for coordinating them.
• **Empower dedicated intermediaries for CCI-deep tech collaboration:** Set up specific entities or clusters focused on helping CCIs connected with deep-tech ecosystems and scale promising innovations, rather than assigning this to bodies with other primary mandates (e.g. EIT). Direct resources to the intermediaries best positioned to execute, not just those with the widest remit[16] and build matchmaking expertise to identify relevant potential partners, especially when their work cuts across sectors that do not usually overlap[17]. These intermediaries should be equipped with the expertise needed to identify and connect with the right partners. This requires strengthening facilitator skills beyond coordination, including running ecosystems, managing access and IP, and handling new developments. These are a different skillset from technology transfer or innovation roles, and therefore the people leading this process need the right training for it[18].
• **Strengthen local innovation governance:** Increase the competences and resources assigned to city-level innovation institutions to manage collaborative environments.
• **Implement incentive frameworks:** Introduce targeted financial and regulatory incentives (e.g., joint lab grants and pilot-project subsidies) to support sustained collaboration between deep tech firms and CCIs. Track development on an ongoing basis rather than only measuring impact once the collaboration has ended. Ongoing tracking is a better indicator of outreach, particularly for local-level impact[19].

[15] Input from the community review session, held on June 17th, 2026
[16] Input from the community review session, held on June 17th, 2026
[17] Input from the community review session, held on June 17th, 2026
[18] Input from the community review session, held on June 17th, 2026
[19] Input from the community review session, held on June 17th, 2026

Why this matters

• **Cultural diversification:** Deep tech development should move beyond purely technical and market driven priorities by integrating cultural, philosophical, and societal perspectives to ensure broader societal relevance.

• **Structural alignment:** Because CCIs and Deep Tech operate through different working models – creative and audience-led experimentation on one side, and research commercialisation, IP, technical validation, and scale-up pathways on the other, EU innovation ecosystems should support structured collaboration mechanisms to harmonise common goals and strategies.

• **Process over product:** By funding the collaborative network rather than just the final technical outcome, this mechanism prioritises the development of long-term, resilient innovation infrastructure.

• **Value misalignment:** Corrects limited understanding of mutual value by inviting ongoing interaction rather than one-off contact.

• **Engagement barriers:** Overcomes the current lack of incentives for deep tech players to interact with CCIs by providing structured, low-risk collaborative platforms.

• **Infrastructure fragmentation:** Resolves the limitation of collaborative structures by providing a dedicated network of hubs that handle coordination.

• **Inclusivity gaps:** Creates standardised entry points for diverse creative practitioners to participate in tech innovation, mitigating systemic inequality.

• **Avoid implementation dependency on large firms:** solutions and prototypes developed by large companies do not remain unused or absorbed into close corporate pipelines but have clear pathways for further development.

Who should drive this?

• Municipal & regional development agencies, Research & Innovation Councils.

• National CCI umbrella organisations, private sector innovation networks

Recommendation 4: Keep investing in and expanding networks of agile, localised CCI innovation testbeds that enable secure environments for rapid experimentation not just at the technology design stage, but also with business models, adoption, and scaling while embedding human-centred accountability.

Policy actions

• **Empower city-enabled testbeds:** Incentivise municipalities to serve as CCI & deep tech innovation playgrounds by investing in local testbeds that provide the physical and digital infrastructure for cross-industry pilot projects.

  ◦ Cities, as well as regional government bodies, are considered good enablers and supporters of ecosystems, but not leaders of innovation. While cities should play a central role in coordinating stakeholders and managing testbed environments, innovation activities should be driven by ecosystem actors, including CCI firms and startus and research organisations.

• **Assign more competencies to intermediaries:** Support CCI intermediary organisations (innovation hubs, universities) to act as the operational leads for public-private and cross-industry experimental alliances.

• **Shield regulatory flexibility:** push for CCI-related regulatory sandboxes where innovators have the freedom to prototype creative deep tech innovations with reduced administrative burden, specifically designed to foster human-centred R&D without the rigidity of formal commercial protocols.

- Not meant to limit exploration, but instead for leveraging those initiatives that may potentially reach market deployment.

Why this matters

• **Dare to innovate:** By isolating the testing phase within controlled environments, Europe can accelerate the speed of CCI deep tech development without compromising its commitment to ethical, human-centred standards.

• **Operational agility:** By allowing actors to iterate quickly, we are supporting a culture of co-creation that is currently stifled by traditional bureaucratic cycles.

• **Prototyping for prosperity:** These playgrounds function as a bridge between theoretical research and real-world implementation, allowing for the refinement of business models and societal impact before large-scale deployment.

• **Anchored policy & funding mindset:** Provides a new roadmap for experimentation, advocating for reducing the risk associated with investing in unconventional innovation projects.

• **Bureaucratic deceleration:** Bypasses the slow pace that commission structures usually follow, which currently hinder technological development.

Who should drive this?

• Municipal governments, regional urban planning authorities .

• Regional & National innovation agencies/institutes, university innovation labs.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSING DIRECTION 3: DIFFUSING

The following recommendations address **Direction 3: Diffusing.** They focus on enabling deep tech-related knowledge and research to spread across sectors and society without confining technological excellence to predefined niches. This requires making innovation opportunities graspable, meaningful, and adaptable across contexts that may not share the same language, priorities, or ways of working.

Recommendation 5: Restructure tiered funding programs to boost the amount of creative deep tech ecosystem ventures.

Policy actions

• **Tiered funding trajectories:** Build on EU cascade funding and EIC staged support models by offering low-barrier seed grants that enables networks of specialised SMEs, CCIs, and deep tech actors to collaborate in cross-sector innovation projects. While maintaining high standards of innovation excellence, reporting requirements should remain proportionate to project size, escalating to larger capital deployments upon successful demonstrated collaboration, user validation, and proof of concept.

• **Independent allocation bodies:** Establish a specialised funding body to support cross-sectoral initiatives. This entity should ensure equitable resource distribution by using tailored criteria that understand and account for the nature of non-traditional and interdisciplinary projects.

- **Streamlined funding access:** Leverage existing and develop specialised, user-friendly resources for CCI and deep-tech stakeholders to help them easily locate funding opportunities specifically suited to their needs (e.g., CulturEU Funding Guide[20], CREATIVESUNITE[21]/ So you need money![22]).

[20] https://culture.ec.europa.eu/funding
[21] https://creativesunite.eu
[22] https://creativesunite.eu/synm/

• **Framing clarification:** Provide clearer guidance on existing funding programs. By increasing specificity, we can minimise confusion and ensure that high-potential opportunities are not overlooked due to a lack of understanding.

• **Conditional funding frameworks:** Embed collaboration requirements within funding rules, requiring applicants to demonstrate proactive and multidisciplinary collaboration as a prerequisite for support.

• **Strategic creative mapping:** Expand eligibility criteria for deep tech funding programmes beyond just tech-related CCI sectors to include other creative sectors with high deep-tech potential, such as filming, gaming, immersive media, or music, guided by strategic mapping of their unique value contribution.

• **Alternative innovation funding:** Leverage funding not only to foster new coalitions between CCI and deep-tech sectors but also to support companies already operating at the intersection of creativity and technology.

Why this matters

• **Democratised access:** Tiered models lower the barrier to entry, allowing non-traditional actors and smaller creative ventures that are currently excluded by administrative burdens to participate in the innovation cycle.

• **Strategic alignment:** Connecting funding frameworks directly to CCIs in collaboration with deep tech opportunities ensures that capital is not just fuelling technology but is actively shaping the societal and cultural application of those tools.

• **Asymmetric distribution:** Reverses the current imbalance where financial resources are disproportionately captured by large incumbents, creating a more level playing field for creative enterprises.

• **Venture capital dependency:** Mitigates the pressure on projects to conform to short-term, high-growth venture capital models, allowing for longer-term research and societal impact.

• **Policy & structural fragmentation:** Addresses the unpredictability of the current funding landscape by providing a clear, continuous, and reliable roadmap for project maturation.

Who should drive this?

• The European Commission, National Innovation Funds and Research Councils, Philanthropic Organisations and other entities supporting research and innovation

Recommendation 6: Establish a unified, transparent data infrastructure that maps cross-sector capabilities and tracks the socio-economic impact of CCIs in deep tech. This recommendation is suggested to be approached before realising other recommendations related to networking, role designation, and participatory collaboration frameworks.

Policy actions

• **Infrastructure mapping:** Develop a comprehensive EU-wide registry that maps both technical assets and creative capabilities for CCIs to catalyse cross-sector joint ventures.

• **Indicator development:** Develop indicators that measure impact of the technical assets and creative capabilities of CCIs beyond the direct product itself. These instruments should aim to measure value creation and social impact in specific areas.

• **Mandatory collaborative reporting:** Require the production of competitive collaboration portfolios upon project completion to codify learning outcomes and facilitate the scaling of successful partnerships. Further monitor revenue streams and value distribution throughout the entire lifecycle of a project.

• **Impact measurement modernisation:** Formalise new evaluation and tracking methodologies for CCI x deep tech innovation, prioritising data processing networks such as Eurostat and the European Audiovisual Observatory to quantify the societal and economic contributions of CCIs.

Why this matters

• **Evidence legitimacy:** Building a repository of verified evidence is essential to secure long-term corporate and institutional buy-in for creative-led deep tech.

• **Quantifiable impact:** By leveraging standardised data streams, advocates can provide the hard metrics needed to demonstrate the ROI of CCI integration.

• **Operational transparency:** Standardising the visibility of value chains ensures that the benefits of deep tech diffusion are fairly distributed and clearly understood by all stakeholders.

• **Impact measurement gaps:** Resolves the inability to quantify the qualitative contributions of creative industries using traditional economic metrics.

• **Transparency deficits:** Addresses the lack of trust and traceability in value distribution, protecting creators from losing visibility over their contributions and revenue.

• **Infrastructure fragmentation:** Overcomes the silo effect by creating a single, navigable interface for promoting creative capabilities with technical infrastructure.

Who should drive this?

• European Commission (DG RTD/CNECT/EAC, Eurostat) in collaboration with e.g., the European Audiovisual Observatory.

• National statistical agencies, university research departments, any other platform-development consortia responsible for building cross-European digital innovation registries.

Recommendation 7: Strengthen ecosystem conditions for intellectual property, ownership, and fair value distribution in AI-driven deep tech and CCI value chains[23].

Policy actions

• **Resolve IP ambiguity around AI:** Clarify legal standards for AI-generated works, specifically regarding ownership, value chains, and the distribution of rights in hybrid human-machine outputs.

• **Assess fair compensation:** Establish robust compensation models that ensure creators are equitably rewarded when their works are utilised in AI training datasets and generative production.

• **Guarantee standards:** Promote mechanisms that ensure creators maintain visibility and control over how their copyright-protected works are deployed in AI systems, such as the Authorisation, Remuneration, and Transparency model (ART).

• **Link ownership to value-chain thinking:** Develop practical guidance that clarifies how ownership, rights, and remuneration are distributed across AI-enabled value chains, from creative input and data use to model development, platform deployment, and downstream commercialisation.

• **Reform economic frameworks:** Strengthen policy to move toward economic structures that prevent value extraction by dominant market players at the expense of individual creators and the underlying public digital infrastructure.

• **Promote digital education:** Restructure professional and academic curricula to include training on digital ownership, rights management, and the economic value of creative assets in the deep tech era.

[23] This recommendation will be fed into the final ekip Policy Lab on CCIs and Digital Commons (9 September 2026, Linz, Austria)

Why this matters

• **The *gray zone* resolution:** As AI continues to flood the market, many uncertainties threaten creative livelihoods; regulatory intervention is required to define the boundaries of AI utilisation.

• **Equitable value distribution:** By enforcing transparent compensation and remuneration models, the EU can transition from an extractive model to a sustainable one that rewards the foundational contributors of AI-generated content.

• **Ownership across the value chain:** Ownership should not only be addressed as an isolated legal question, but also as part of wider value-chain thinking. This means clarifying where creative value is generated, who captures it, and how creators can retain rights, visibility, and remuneration as their work moves through AI training, production, distribution, and commercialisation.

• **Skills-based empowerment:** Beyond regulation, the creative workforce must be empowered through education to navigate complex ownership models, ensuring that creators act as informed, active participants in the digital economy.

• **Skills and capacity gaps:** Directly addresses the lack of knowledge regarding IP and digital ownership, ensuring that the creative sector is equipped to leverage, rather than suffer from, deep tech integration.

Who should drive this?

• European Commission (DG CNECT, DG GROW), the European Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO).

• National copyright offices, creator unions/associations, industry representative bodies.

7 Alignment with building blocks for Open Innovation

The policy recommendations were developed with Open Innovation principles that position cultural and creative industries at the forefront of Europe's innovation cycle by engaging the CCIs from an early stage of new technological developments[24]. They were further mapped against the *ekip* Building Blocks for Open Innovation framework[25], which reflect critical tensions at the intersection of competitiveness and sustainability and are essential to the development of functional and sustainable Open Innovation ecosystems as a whole. These serve as a foundation for designing targeted and actionable policy responses and have therefore been used to illustrate the extent to which the proposed recommendations contribute to strengthening the key enabling conditions for Open Innovation, while addressing systemic barriers for collaboration between the CCIs and deep tech ecosystem. Table 1 presents the overview.

Table 1. Policy Recommendations for Deep Tech mapped against the ekip Building Blocks for Open Innovation

Building blocks	Description of dimensions	Recommendations for Deep Tech related to building block
Sustainable competitiveness	• *Collaboration, networking & cross-sectorality* • *New business models* • *Support to start-up & SMEs (including IPR, internationalisation)* • *Innovation culture & mindset*	• *Establish cross-sector collaboration frameworks between CCIs and deep tech actors.* • *Support scalable business models that retain value, talent, ownership and economic benefits in Europe.* • *Strengthen matchmaking and intermediary capacity to connect CCIs, SMEs, start-ups and deep tech ecosystems.* • *Use CCI expertise to develop market narratives that support adoption of sustainable and regenerative solutions.*
Regulation & governance	• *Regulatory barriers to transition & governance model (e.g. partnerships)* • *Directionality, vision & coordination of ecosystems (incl. multi-level & multi-actor coordination for co-creation & co-design of strategy)* • *Standardisation* • *Policy experimentation and reflexivity (including technology foresight)*	• *Create decentralised governance models enabling CCIs and deep tech actors to collaborate on equal terms.* • *Assign orchestrator/intermediary roles to coordinate partnerships, selection mechanisms and reporting.* • *Develop shared cooperation protocols, common terminology and standardised collaboration guidelines.* • *Use regulatory sandboxes and flexible experimentation frameworks to reduce administrative barriers.* • *Clarify IP, ownership and remuneration rules for AI-driven creative and technological value chains.*

[24] https://knowledge-bank.ekipengine.eu/resource/open-innovation-3-0-empowering-europe-through-cultural-and-creative-industries/

[25] For a deeper discussion of the building blocks, see European Commission (2022) Blueprint for the development of transition pathways for industrial ecosystems. https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/49407

Building blocks	Description of dimensions	Recommendations for Deep Tech related to building block
Social dimension	• *Social implication of transition (e.g. digitalisation impacting jobs)* • *Human-centricity of innovation & ethical development* • *Involvement of end-users* • *Connection to Just Transition*	• *Embed human-centred, ethical and culturally relevant perspectives in early-stage deep tech development.* • *Involve end-users and creative practitioners in shaping, testing and validating technologies.* • *Support inclusive participation by lowering barriers for smaller CCIs and non-traditional innovation actors.* • *Link innovation to societal value, fair compensation and just value distribution across creative and technological ecosystems.*
R&I, techniques & technological solutions	• *New products, Tools, methods, processes* • *Interdisciplinary & trans- cross disciplinary* • *Valorisation of R&I results & uptake of technologies*	• *Promote interdisciplinary experimentation between CCIs, deep tech actors, research organisations and innovation labs.* • *Support the development and uptake of new tools, methods, products and processes through testbeds and pilot projects.* • *Strengthen pathways from research results to market validation, adoption and scale-up.* • *Build repositories of best practices and evidence from CCI-deep tech collaborations.*
Infrastructures	• *Availability & access to specific infrastructures* • *(Technical) services and support (tools, methods, space etc.)*	• *Invest in localised innovation testbeds, labs and shared physical or digital experimentation spaces.* • *Map technical assets and creative capabilities through an EU-wide data infrastructure.* • *Improve access to infrastructure, data, tools and support services for cross-sector projects.* • *Strengthen city and regional ecosystems as enabling environments for experimentation.*
Skills	• *Adequacy of skills in the workforce* • *Adequacy of curricula and upskilling offer* • *Soft skills & cultural mindset*	• *Build intermediary skills for ecosystem orchestration, matchmaking, IP management and cross-sector facilitation.* • *Integrate digital ownership, rights management and creative asset valuation into education and training.* • *Strengthen soft skills, mutual understanding and shared working cultures between CCI and deep tech actors.* • *Support upskilling for creative SMEs to engage with deep tech opportunities.*
Investment & funding	• *Access to funding & financing* • *Innovation procurement*	• *Develop tiered funding pathways, from low-barrier seed grants to larger scale-up support.* • *Create funding criteria that reward multidisciplinary collaboration and user validation.* • *Improve access to funding information through clearer guidance and dedicated resources.* • *Support financial continuity beyond public funding to avoid collapse after pilot phases.* • *Use innovation procurement and targeted incentives to support long-term CCI-deep tech collaboration.*

8 Conclusion

In conclusion, the successful deployment of these recommendations will require a phased and strategic approach that prioritises the most impactful recommendations rather than attempting to address all challenges simultaneously. As a first step, stakeholders should focus on consolidating and disseminating existing best practices, evidence, and case studies, while building a stronger understanding of the ecosystem actors capable of acting as intermediaries, brokers, and orchestrators of collaboration. Once these foundations are in place, efforts should focus on supporting cross-innovation portfolios and collaborative experimentation that enable creative and technological actors to jointly explore, validate and scale innovative solutions. Cities and regions play an important enabling role by providing the real world environment in which experimentation takes place while open innovation itself remains driven by collaborative ecosystems and market actors.

The overarching objective should be to strengthen the enabling conditions within the ecosystem, creating an environment in which innovation can emerge, be tested, and scale. A critical success factor will be the presence of effective intermediaries[26] and orchestrators operating across the collaborative ecosystem. These actors can facilitate experimentation through testbeds and sandboxes, connect creative and technological stakeholders through dedicated support structures, and help unlock and channel funding through more flexible and innovation-friendly regulatory frameworks. Together, these functions will be essential to improving competitiveness and ensuring that innovation opportunities can be effectively translated into tangible outcomes for the cultural and creative sectors.

[26] https://ekipengine.eu/building-innovation-ecosystems-the-case-for-intermediaries/

9 Annex

9.1 METHODOLOGY

The policy recommendations were co-created using the *ekip* Policy Lab methodology. The process followed two consecutive steps: first scoping and problem identification, then policy formulation and validation through stakeholder co-creation[27].

The first step consisted of a scoping phase aimed at identifying and framing the core problem areas. This phase combined desk research, six semi-structured interviews with CCI infrastructure operators and policy experts, input from consortium partners, a social listening exercise, and the Policy Corner. It resulted in a structured understanding of key challenges and opportunities related to CCI infrastructures, spaces, and ecosystems, and informed the development of the initial problem statements used in the Policy Lab. A scoping document was prepared and shared with participants in advance of the Policy Lab to ensure a shared baseline understanding of the topic[28].

The second step took place during the Policy Lab itself and focused on policy formulation. The Policy Lab functioned as a co-creation space with stakeholders, aimed at developing and refining policy responses to the identified challenges. The in-person policy lab, held on May 6th, 2026, focused on validating and refining the problem statements through a scenario planning exercise, identifying key roots and effects of the key challenges. Stakeholders were divided into three working groups, each corresponding to one of the proposed directions. Each group was first introduced to its respective scenario and invited to adapt and expand it based on participants' own experiences and perspectives. After this exercise, participants focused on co-developing policy recommendations based on the validated problem framing. The policy lab gathered 35 participants in person.

Following the Policy Lab, a community review session was organised on June 17th, 2026, to further validate and refine the draft recommendations with a broader group of stakeholders. Feedback from this session was integrated into the final set of recommendations presented in this report. This session gathered 10 people[29].

9.1.1 SCENARIOS FROM THREE DIRECTIONS

The Policy Lab discussions delved around a specific future scenario accommodated for each direction, from which different activities were used to spark debate, reflection and ultimately collect policy recommendations. Below are listed the descriptions which were shared with participants in preparation for the Policy Lab session.

Future scenario for Direction 1 - SHAPING: Integrating CCI in the early stages of a technological trajectory as a competitive strategy.

By 2037, quantum technologies have become central to our national security and economic governance, offering a powerful solution to one of the era's greatest challenges: the preservation of human legacy. As quantum-enhanced AI accelerated the production of synthetic content, Europe launched a program in 2035 to safeguard the veracity of quantum-archives (data storage systems designed to protect long-term information against attacks from quantum computers), the European Central Cultural Vault.

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[27] Deliverable D10.1 Methodology of Policy Labs

[28] The scoping document for this Policy Lab is available at https://ekipengine.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/EKIP_Policy-lab_Infra_Scoping-note-Final-version.pdf

[29] More information on this Policy Lab is available at https://ekipengine.eu/policies/spaces-infrastructures-and-ecosystems-for-ccis/

Unlike previous databases, the ECCV wasn't written by coders alone. It was co-developed by a committee of journalists and design thinkers who were integrated into the early stages of the vault's development. They helped design a human verifiable watermarking embedded directly into the quantum fabric of the data. This ensures that when a 20th-century speech is retrieved in 2040, the quantum protocol itself provides a reliable proof of origin that people can intuitively verify, preventing AI from hallucinating details into the gaps of the data.

Tech(s) involved		quantum, AI
CCI(s) involved		media (journalists), design (theorists, researchers), heritage experts
Value creation	**Tech industry**	technological adaptability, new market opportunities, mitigation of risks, attracting funding investment
	CCI sectors	strategic and decisive roles, new working opportunities, legacy and IP protection
	Government & public institutions	heritage preservation, public trust and stability, proactive regulation, digital sovereignty
	Society	information trust and reliability, digital rights, cultural and human legacy protection

Future scenario for Direction 2 - EMBEDDING: Embedding CCI in the development of deep tech into human-centred propositions.

By 2040, the global fashion industry completed a radical realignment, evolving from the fragile "take-make-waste" model into a moderate regenerative ecosystem. The severe resource depletion and strict legislative bans on high-emission processes triggered the industry to abandon the linear production in favor of a near-zero carbon footprint, placing bio-based innovation and local resilience at the heart of design and utility alike.

The pinnacle of this transformation is visible in the evolution of the world's fashion capitals. By 2038, Milan transitioned from hosting traditional runway shows to the Milan Bio-Expo, an event where brands no longer compete on aesthetic trends, but on the diversity index of their fabrics. A design firm showcases their new collection using a bio-based fiber grown from ecological bug farming and dyed using bacteria that produce pigment without water. At the end of its life, the garments are not thrown away; they are returned to local municipalities to be dissolved into a nutrient-rich slurry and used to fertilise the city's vertical gardens.

Tech(s) involved		Bio-based materials, advanced materials
CCI(s) involved		Fashion, design
Value creation	**Tech industry**	production de-risking, new product opportunities, new network alliances, innovation leadership
	CCI sectors	novel design opportunities, more funding investment, new service models, research-to-market acceleration
	Government & public institutions	achievement of climate milestones, sustainable competitiveness, efficient green regulation
	Society	health and well-being improvement, societal sensitisation and education, natural heritage preservation

Future scenario for Direction 3 - DIFFUSING: CCI as enablers of deep tech diffusion across sectors and society.

In the early 2020s, blockchain was synonymous with volatile JPEGs and financial speculation. However, the focus shifted from trading assets to managing rights as AI began to flood the internet with unverified content, making society face a reality crisis. The "crypto-hype" faded, and the creative industries repositioned blockchain from a reluctant tool into the essential infrastructure that would eventually secure the digital economy. Creative professionals acted as the primary diffusion enablers, turning complex concepts (distributed ledger techs, smart contracts) into intuitive content experiences.

By 2034, musicians, filmmakers, and designers overcame the stigmatised NFT label and popularised other resources such as the Digital Product Passports (DPPs) for media content, using it as an alternative to manage intellectual property rights and automate transparent royalty distribution, including for AI training and content generation. This made the technology relatable; a fan didn't need to understand cryptography to accept that they enjoyed a true piece of their favourite artist's legacy. This cultural onboarding not only democratised remuneration within the creative sector but also built the mass-market tech literacy and density required to sustain Europe's entire digital economy.

Tech(s) involved		Blockchain, cryptographic
CCI(s) involved		Art and audiovisual sectors, designers
Value creation	**Tech industry**	new market opportunities, supply chain integrity, reduce transaction frictions, procedure standarisation
	CCI sectors	financial autonomy, IP agency, market trust and fairness, outreach expansion
	Government & public institutions	accepted digital infrastructure, supportive regulation, mitigation of grey zones, fair competitiveness
	Society	accessibility to new markets, consumer protection, investment democratisation, user-friendly complexity

9.2 AGENDA OF THE POLICY LAB

Time	Session
09:30-10:00	Registration and welcome coffee
10:00-10:20	**Opening words** • ***Introduction to ekip - European Cultural and Creative Industries Innovation Policy Platform*** • ***Introduction to the workshop theme and scope and scenarios***
10:20-11:15	**Input presentations on creative sectors and deep tech** You will hear from engaging speakers at the intersection of deep tech and creativity in an engaging panel. • **Julia Heikkinen,** Oulu University of Applied Sciences, Project Manager of AVARA • **Stefano Parisi,** Industrial Design Engineering Professor, TU Delft • **Dora Jean Gillespie,** CEO and Founder, Starilum • **Roel Heremans,** Transdigital Artist and Keynote Speaker
11:15–11:30	• **Giuliana Defrancesco and Maria Claudia Bodino,** European Commission, Research and Innovation on Democracy, Culture and Equality, DG RTD
11:30–11:40	Approach to the breakout groups
11:40-12:00	Coffee break
12:00-12:45	**Breakout round –Deep tech and CCI futures** Participants divide in multiple groups to develop and discuss future scenarios at the intersection of deep tech and culture and creativity, identification of new signals.
12:45-13:45	Lunch
13:45-14:30	**Breakout round – Diving into challenges and opportunities** Participants select one or more of the identified scenarios and work in multiple groups to identify the core challenges and opportunities arising from them.
14:30-15:15	**Breakout round – Designing actions** Participants work in multiple groups to select actions to be taken that lead to a desirable future by 2040.
15:15-15:30	Coffee break
15:30-16:00	**Collective wrap up** *In this final plenary, groups will present their scenarios and the suggested recommendations to lead to the most desirable futures.* **Closing**
16:00 – 17:30	Networking reception

9.3 AGENDA OF THE COMMUNITY REVIEW WORKSHOP (JUNE 17TH, 2026)

Time	Session
11:30-11:45	Introduction to *ekip* and the policy lab methodology
11:45-11:50	Recommendations overview
11:50-12:55	Providing feedback to the recommendations
12:55-13:00	Next steps

9.4 PARTICIPANT LISTS

Table 2: Participant list of the Policy Lab session on May 6th, 2026

Name	Organisation
Adriana Badau	Technopolis Group Belgium
Alfonso Martin Mateo	TU Delft
Anastasiia Legenka	France Clusters
Anna Talley	University of Edinburgh
Annica Ryng	Society of Audiovisual Authors (SAA)
Apolline Sauvignet	Cité du design-Ecole supérieure d'art et design Saint-Etienne
Åsa Grunning	Lund University
Birgitta Persson	Future by Lund
Bodil Malmstrôm	Lund University
Carlo Vuijlsteke	IDEA Consult
Charlotte Lorentz Hjorth	Lund University
Corentin Lecroart	ST'ART SA - FONDS D'INVESTISSEMENT DANS LES ENTREPRISES CULTURELLES ET CRÉATIVES
Dora Jean Gillespie	starilum
Elisa Gréban	CLUSTER TWIST
Garrick Stark	Starilum
Giulia Calabretta	Delft University of Technology
Giuliana Defrancesco	European Commission, DG RTD
Isjtar Vandebroeck	CREW
Jeroen van der Aa	TU Delft
Julia Heikkinen	OAMK
Katarina Scott	Future by Lund
Katerina Kalimera	MSCOMM

Name	Organisation
Laura Galante	Technopolis Group
Lena Holmberg	Lund University
Lennart Stoy	Technopolis Group
Maïté DEBRY	CLUSTER TWIST
Marcin Poprawski	Humak University of Applied Sciences
Maria Claudia Bodino	European Commission, DG RTD
Rania Alasghar	Technopolis Group
Rasmus Wiinstedt De Moraes Tscherning	Creative Business Network
Roel Heremans	Studio Roel Heremans
Ruba Saleh	ICHEC Brussels Management School
Seddouk Rachid	R_AI
Stefano Parisi	TU Delft, Industrial Design Engineering
Suzanne Mangeot	Creative District

Table 3: Participant list of the Community Review session on June 17th, 2026

Name	Organisation
Adriana Badau	Technopolis Group Belgium
Alfonso Martin Mateo	TU Delft
Charlotte Lorentz Hjorth	Lund University
Dora Jean Gillespie	Starilum
Elena Gentilini	Progetto Arcadia
Garrick Stark	Starilum
Katarina Scott	Future by Lund
Laura Galante	Technopolis Group
Louis Rodeck	Europe Analytica
Rania Alasghar	Technopolis Group