Newsletter #12 2026

ekip
EUROPEAN CULTURAL
AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES
INNOVATION POLICY PLATFORM

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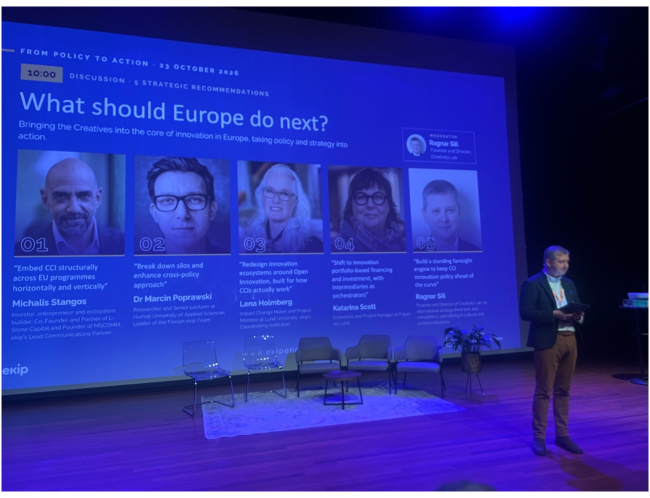
Funded by
the European Union



FROM POLICY TO ACTION · 23 OCTOBER 2026
10:00 DISCUSSION · 5 STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

What should Europe do next?

Bringing the Creatives into the core of innovation in Europe, taking policy and strategy into action.

MODERATOR
Ragnar Siil
Founder and Director, Creativity Lab

01 "Embed CCI structurally across EU programmes horizontally and vertically"
Michalis Stangos
Investor, entrepreneur and ecosystem builder. Co-Founder and Partner of L-Stone Capital and Founder of MSCOMM. ekip's Lead Communications Partner.

02 "Break down silos and enhance cross-policy approach"
Dr Marcin Poprawski
Researcher and Senior Lecturer at Humak University of Applied Sciences; Leader of the Finnish ekip Team.

03 "Redesign innovation ecosystems around Open Innovation, built for how CCIs actually work"
Lena Holmberg
Impact Change Maker and Project Member at Lund University, ekip's Coordinating Institution

04 "Shift to innovation portfolio-based financing and investment, with intermediaries as orchestrators"
Katarina Scott
Economist and Project Manager at Future by Lund

05 "Build a standing foresight engine to keep CCI innovation policy ahead of the curve"
Ragnar Siil

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And just like that, more than three years of ekip brought us to Eindhoven. Last week, we gathered at Dutch Design Week for "From Policy to Action", bringing together the people who have helped shape this work and those who can take it further.

What a morning!

We began with Barbara Koop, Head of Usability at Philips, who opened the conversation before the ekip people got on stage to pitch the five strategic recommendations by ekip.

We here invited the room to discuss what Europe should do next when it comes to putting the CCI's centre stage of innovation.

Our first panel explored the Building Blocks of CCI Open Innovation ecosystems and the different policy areas of ekip. The panel with university representatives discussed if universities might be the "CCI SWARMs best friends" implementing the ekip's recommendations when developing the ecosystems around the universities.

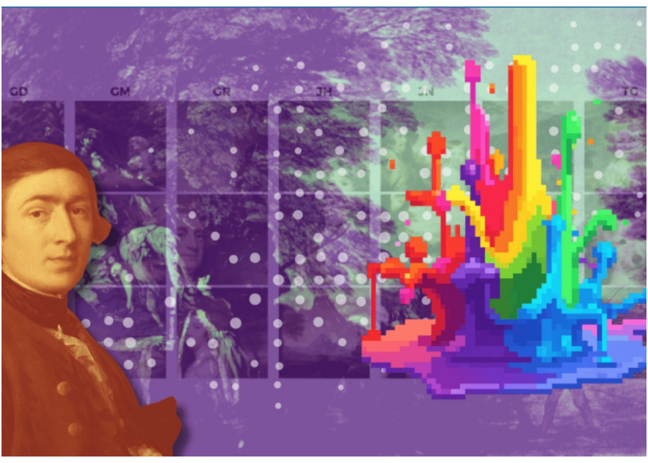
And looking towards the future of creative work ekip's foresight research was reflected by four different Creative sector representatives.

But beyond the stage, what made the morning special was the people in the room. The questions, the different perspectives, the conversations that continued and the shared interest in what comes next.

Europe has the pieces, now we connect them!

A special thank you to the Dutch Design Foundation and everyone who worked behind the scenes to make the event possible.

Read our pre-event broschyr


GD
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Marcin Wilkowski / https://betterimagesofai.org / https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

AI scarping hits heritage

Cultural heritage institutions are struggling with a surge of commercial AI scraping. Research from the ekip Engine is now feeding into the European policy debate through two responses submitted by the University of Edinburgh ekip team. Both responses focus on a fast-moving challenge for cultural heritage institutions: the impact of commercial AI scraping on galleries, libraries, archives and museums.

Read the full article

Policy area: Reimagining Deep-Tech

This is the twelfth policy area that ekip has processed in the policy Engine

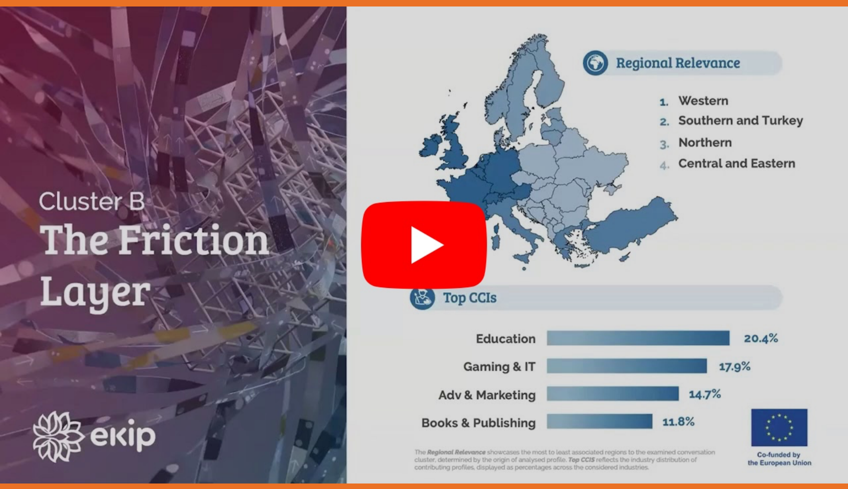
The EU is increasingly positioning deep-tech as a strategic driver for future competitiveness, digital autonomy, and the capacity to address global challenges such as climate change, public health, and societal resilience.

Rooted in advanced scientific andtechnological breakthroughs, deep-tech goes beyond incremental innovation, aiming instead at transformative solutions with long-term impact across industries and society. At the same time, CCIs play a fundamental role in the EU's socio-economic landscape, generating innovation, employment, and cultural value while shaping collective identities and social cohesion.

Read ekip´s Policy Poster

MARCH 2026
ekip
Reimagining Deep Tech
Special Focus #11
Social Media Observatory
NEXTATLAS
Co-funded by the European Union

Learn more about NEXTATLAS social listening


Cluster B
The Friction Layer
ekip
Regional Relevance
1. Western
2. Southern and Turkey
3. Northern
4. Central and Eastern
Top CCIs
Education 20.4%
Gaming & IT 17.9%
Adv & Marketing 14.7%
Books & Publishing 11.8%
The Regional Relevance showcases the most to least associated regions to the examined conversation cluster, determined by the origin of analysed profile. Top CCIS reflects the industry distribution of contributing profiles, displayed as percentages across the considered industries.
Co-funded by the European Union

Stefano Parisi, researcher at TU Delft, participated at ekip´s Policy Lab in Brussels on deep-tech. Photo: Bodil Malmström

Designing materials for a regenerative future

From fungal textiles to living artefacts, researchers and designers are turning to deep tech to rethink what materials can do—and who they are for.

Design is no longer just shaping form, it is increasingly about shaping life itself. In labs where biology meets engineering, a new class of biomaterials is emerging, powered by deep tech and driven by a regenerative agenda.

"Designing biomaterials for a regenerative future is not about minimising harm," says Stefano Parisi, Assistant Professor at TU Delft, Industrial Design Engineering, working with biofabricated and living systems, and active in the fields of biodesign and material-driven design. Stefano Parisi took part in ekip´s Policy Lab in Brussels on Deep Tech.

Read the full article

Julia Heikkinen took part in ekip´s Policy Lab in Brussels focusing on the role of cultural and creative industries in Europe's deep-tech landscape. Photo: Bodil Malmström

Where art meets algorithms: new frontiers in deep-tech and the creative industries

As Europe accelerates its push into deep tech, Finland is emerging as a driving force in connecting it with the Cultural and Creative Industries.

Across AI, robotics and immersive technologies, new models of collaboration are taking shape—where artists, researchers and industry work together to turn technological innovation into shared cultural and economic value.

Read the full article

Avara festival in Finland.

ekip´s 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

They were further mapped against Building Blocks for Open Innovation framework, 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, whilea ddressing systemic barriers for collaboration between the CCIs and deep tech ecosystem.

Learn more about ekip´s policy recommendations

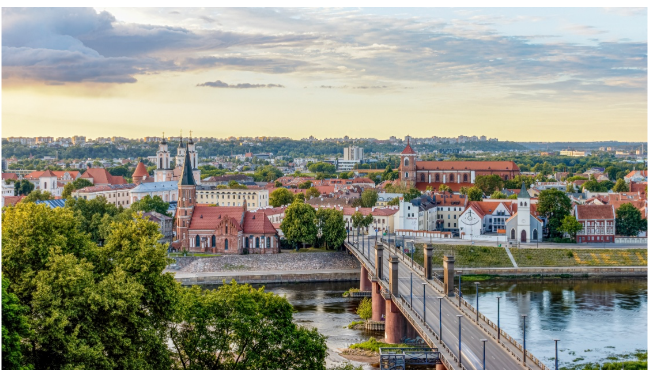
Prototyping innovation in cities

City Case Description: Rotterdam Reimagining Deep Tech

How can cities make funding easier to access for creative practitioners?
In Rotterdam, local stakeholders explored the gaps and complexity in existing support systems, looking at how better guidance, stronger networks, and more targeted funding could help creative organisations and innovators develop over the long term.

Read the full report

Upcoming events



When Open Innovation meets the swarm

How can cities move from talking about innovation with the Creatives to actually making it happen?

At the World open Innovation Conference 2026, taking place in Kaunas on 4-5 November, ekip will present its city prototyping and portfolio approach as an Open Innovation practice.

Learn more about the conference

ekip will take part in The European Creative Industries Summit in Dublin, November 10-12.

It unfolds over three days, under the auspices of Ireland's EU Presidency:
a European Day, an Irish Day, and a day of site visits across the island.

Read full programme

AVARA
Art & Tech

At the AVARA 2026 event in Oulu, European Capital of Culture 2026, you can meet ekip:

Creative Cross-Innovation Session with the ekipengine.eu and Humak.

Thursday 19.11.2026 from 2:15–4:00 p.m.

AVARA brings together professionals in art, culture, and technology. What new emerges when art, innovation, emerging technologies, and social impact intersect?

AVARA´s program with workshops

Want to engage with ekip?

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POLICY & INNOVATION
MAGAZINE

Funded by
the European Union

Europe
redesigns
innovation
ecosystems

THE EKIP ENGINE
EXPLAINED

CITY CASES: LUND,
ROTTERDAM, KOŠICE

POLICY INSIGHTS ON
DEEP TECH & FASHION

TOOLS FOR BUILDING
OPEN INNOVATION
ECOSYSTEMS

Want to learn more about ekip? Read our magazine

In this issue, discover why Europe's innovation ecosystem needs a creative reset—and why creatives are the missing piece.

Explore how ekip works as an engine, making open innovation a default practice rather than an exception.

Learn from real-world cases where the system is already in action, connecting CCI with industry, research, and policy.

And look ahead to the future of cultural and creative industries—and what they can unlock across Europe.

Knowledge Bank

The *ekip* Knowledge Bank is an online repository for policymakers, researchers, investors, and changemakers to shape effective innovation strategies for and with the Cultural and Creative Industries. It supports innovation policy design, implementation, and evaluation, mobilising stakeholders and bridging policy and practice across Europe's open innovation ecosystems.

Innovation doesn't just happen, it needs to be made.

The ekip Knowledge Bank is Europe's go-to platform for tools, case studies, and insights that put Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) at the center of policy transformation.

Designed for policymakers, funders, creative and cultural practitioners, and innovation actors, the Knowledge Bank helps cut through the noise, bridge fragmented approaches, and support evidence-based innovation policies.

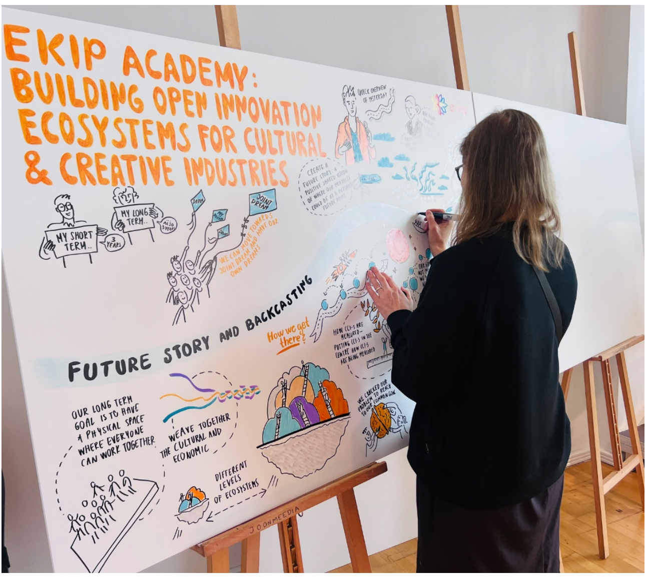
Explore the ekip Knowledge Bank now: knowledge-bank.ekipengine.eu

We welcome contributions that advance understanding and practice around innovation in and with Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs). You can submit your contribution here

Interesting in ekip´s previous newsletter on AI and Cultural and Creative Industries, New European Bauhaus, Immersive Media, Craft-led Innovation and Platformisation of the Music Industry?

Discover how Europe's Culture and Creative Industries are unlocking open innovation.

Read our previous newsletters


EKIP ACADEMY: BUILDING OPEN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS FOR CULTURAL & CREATIVE INDUSTRIES
QUICK OVERVIEW OF YESTERDAY
CREATE A FUTURE STORY: A POSITIVE SHARED VISION OF WHERE OUR PROJECTS COULD BE AT A DEFINED FUTURE POINT
MY SHORT TERM..
3 YEARS
MY LONG TERM..
ALSO 3 YEARS
DREAM
MY DREAM
JOINT DREAM
WE CAN MOVE TOWARDS JOINT DREAM AND HAVE OUR OWN DREAMS
FUTURE STORY AND BACKCASTING
How we get there?
HOW CCI-S ARE MEASURED – PUTTING CCI-S IN THE CENTRE HOW CCI-S ARE BEING MEASURED
OUR LONG TERM GOAL IS TO HAVE A PHYSICAL SPACE WHERE EVERYONE CAN WORK TOGETHER
WEAVE TOGETHER THE CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC
DIFFERENT LEVELS OF ECOSYSTEMS
WE CRACKED OUR PROBLEM TO REACH TO OUR COMMON GOAL
JOONMEEDIA

ekip Academy in Tallinn in June 2026. Photo: Bodil Malmström

ekip is a Horizon Europe initiative designed to revolutionise innovation policies for Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI).

The 18 partners of ekip bring specific competences to the Innovation Policy Platform.

The process of formulating policies is compared to an engine where the data is analysed, prioritized and processed.

ekip will map and categorize 100 policy areas and process at least 13 of them through the whole engine and create recommendations. More than 40 CCI network and organizations across Europe are engaged by defining and giving the engine data about our selected policy areas.

This initiative ensures that supportive ecosystems develop a capacity to handle complex multi-stakeholder innovation processes needed to realize more innovative CCIs in Europe and the behavioral change they drive towards a more green, inclusive and digital Europe

We will equip Europe with all the potential CCIs offer for its future

The ekip Innovation Policy Platform in three parts: How can you be involved? What do we produce? How do we work?

See the full Partners list

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