

HIT joins EIT MANUFACTURING

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The Trentino system of research and innovation in the main initiative that promotes advanced manufacturing in Europe

The **HIT Foundation** – Hub Innovazione Trentino joins the European partnership for the **advanced manufacturing system**, representing the Trentino **research and innovation system**. It does so together with two companies assessed as excellence in the field of innovation in this industry – **Dana** and **Bonfiglioli** – and in collaboration with the most specialized companies in the area in the field of industry 4.0: **University of Trento**, **Fondazione Bruno Kessler** and **Prom Facility** from the **Mechatronics-Trentino Sviluppo Hub**.

EIT Manufacturing is the main partnership at European level that brings together the protagonists of the manufacturing industry in innovation ecosystems aimed at adding value to products, processes and services by promoting **competitive and sustainable global production**. This community of Knowledge and Innovation within the **European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)**, with a **seven-year budget of over 350 million euros**, currently has **over 60 European partners**, among the most important for innovation, training and business creation, from **17 countries**.

The selection process by EIT Manufacturing welcomed HIT into the Southern Europe Hub, which already includes **Politecnico di Milano**, **Politecnico di Torino**, **SUPSI** (Professional University School of Italian Switzerland), and some important companies such as **Avio Aero**, **Brembo**, **COMAU**, **Prima Industrie** and **Whirlpool**.

Fueling discussion between the worlds of scientific research and industrial production, so that companies can innovate by making research innovations their own. HIT – Hub Innovazione deals precisely with this, with technology transfer. It connects those involved in research with those who produce, with the aim of enhancing the work of the University and research institutes and increasing their impact in terms of sustainable progress and employment. Today, HIT's mission is fueled by a new important opportunity that sees it becoming the spokesperson for the Trentino innovation and research system and its connections with the manufacturing sector. Connections that have existed for a long time and that, precisely because of their quality and value, have been chosen to become part of the international EIT Manufacturing community.

The Councilor for Economic Development, Research and Work of the Autonomous Province of Trento Achille Spinelli greeted the news with great enthusiasm:

«Participation in EIT Manufacturing allows Trentino to position itself at the highest European level in a key sector for our economy and our research. HIT and its founders will have the chance to get involved in system innovation opportunities, capable of contributing to the competitiveness of our productive fabric. The development of innovative high-tech solutions for industrial applications is one of the cornerstones of the Rovereto Charter, within the research line “Enabling technologies and digital transformation”. Smart Industry – Mechatronics is also one of the macro-areas of our Smart Specialization Strategy (S3), a tool used throughout the European Union to improve the effectiveness of public policies for research and innovation. I am sure that joining this network is a step to follow up on the planning that, as a Province, we have put in place. We are proud that two important Trentino production companies such as Dana and Bonfiglioli have been selected and we are sure that HIT – as a technology transfer foundation – will be able to best convey the opportunities offered by this network towards our production fabric and our research and higher education institutions”.

[EIT Manufacturing](#) is a “Knowledge and Innovation Community” (KIC) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body created by the European Union. The main task of EIT Manufacturing is to bring together the key European players that revolve around the European manufacturing industry in innovation ecosystems that add unique value to products, processes and services and inspire the creation of competitive and sustainable global manufacturing. The activity of the network is based on three pillars: training – innovation – business creation. Training talented young people who are able to lead the future of production, innovate by designing and developing new products and services for the manufacturing area, start technologically advanced companies capable of offering new jobs.

EIT Manufacturing sees the collaboration of over 60 members, including leading companies in the field of manufacturing and its supply chain, together with international universities and research institutes such as Volkswagen, Volvo, Technical University of Darmstadt, the French Commission for alternative energy sources and the atomic energy (CEA), RISE, Siemens, Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava, Philips, Procter & Gamble, Whirlpool Europe, Fraunhofer, INESC TEC and LMS. EIT Manufacturing operates across Europe through five regional hubs of competence (Co-Location Center – CLC). The geographical areas involved through the regional hubs are: West CLC – San Sebastian (France, Portugal, Spain); Central CLC – Darmstadt (Germany, Benelux, Ireland, Poland), North CLC – Gothenburg (Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Lithuania), South CLC – Milan (Italy, Malta, Switzerland, Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Israel, Kosovo, Montenegro), East CLC – Vienna (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary).

The hub for Southern Europe, which has its headquarters in Milan, includes the Politecnico di Milano, the Politecnico di Torino, SUPSI (Professional University School of Italian Switzerland) and some important companies, including: Avio Aero, a company leader in the aerospace sector; Brembo, a leading company in the production of braking systems for vehicles; Comau, a company that deals with automation and industrial robotics; Prima Industrie, a company for the production of laser systems and machines for sheet metal working and Whirlpool, a well-known multi-national company that produces household appliances.

The Director of EIT Manufacturing for Southern Europe, Gian Mario Maggio, commented:

«EIT Manufacturing, with its international network of partners, aims to accelerate the innovation and digitization processes of the advanced manufacturing sector, which represents a strategic production sector for Europe and Italy. For this reason, participation through HIT, of the Trentino ecosystem is of great relevance as it represents a very significant added value for the initiative both in terms of research and innovation, through organizations of excellence such as FBK, University of Trento and the Mechatronics Hub, and from an industrial point of view through the participation of market leaders such as Bonfiglioli and Dana».

«HIT's operations within EIT Manufacturing – said HIT President Paolo Girardi – will allow us to further support the Trentino research and innovation system. HIT is already part of EIT's four other European Knowledge and Innovation Communities in the areas of climate change, digital technologies, raw materials and the agri-food sector. Through these networks, we create a strong positioning of the Trentino system in the most competitive international research and innovation contexts. We promote funding opportunities for our founding members – University of Trento, Fondazione Bruno Kessler, Fondazione Edmund Mach and Trentino Sviluppo – and for the local area, conveying cutting-edge issues and involving professionals, researchers, students and citizens».

HIT's candidacy to EIT Manufacturing was welcomed together with that of Dana and Bonfiglioli, businesses that become partners of the European network and have been involved partly thanks to the collaboration between HIT and Trentino Sviluppo – Polo Meccatronica.

Dana Italia srl is part of Dana Incorporated, an American multinational that employs 38,000 workers in 33 countries and that in 2020 had a turnover of 7.1 billion dollars. Dana Italia has its legal and administrative offices in Arco and heads two reporting units: GrandArco, with the Trentino plants in Arco and Rovereto and the Lombardy plant in Montano Lucino (CO), that employ about 1,050 workers (758 are in the Trentino plants) and recorded a turnover of about 680 million euros. The company is one of the world's leading manufacturers of components for agricultural vehicles and construction equipment. In 2015, it set up its first research center for mechatronics, the Dana Mechatronic Technology Center Srl, at the Trentino based Rovereto Mechatronics Hub.

With over 3,800 employees, 13 production plants and a turnover of over 960 million euros per year, Bonfiglioli is a global player in the field of motion control and transmission in manufacturing and renewable energy. In September 2011, Bonfiglioli Mechatronic Research (BMR) was established in Rovereto. The research center focuses on the development of innovative solutions in mechatronics, and today employs over 100 people and generates a turnover of 18 million euros.

Among the so-called “connected third parties” that joined EIT Manufacturing, there are the bodies – and founding members of the HIT foundation – that are most involved in training, development and innovation in the industry 4.0 sector in Trentino: the University of Trento, Fondazione Bruno Kessler and Trentino Sviluppo with the ProM Facility laboratory.

For years, the University of Trento has offered prestigious university, doctoral and research courses in the fields of industrial engineering, information technology, materials engineering, mechatronics and industrial innovation. It is part of important international networks for applied research activities and boasts strong connections with businesses in various Industry 4.0 technology areas including control systems, electronics and integration, automation, advanced materials, flexible production, artificial intelligence and predictive models.

Fondazione Bruno Kessler hosts some prestigious research centers including the Digital Industry Center: the center focuses its research on digital technologies for the manufacturing sector by

creating applications for critical systems, adaptive and autonomous systems, advanced perception, diagnostics and prediction systems. Also important is the activity of the Sensors & Devices Center, focused on highly integrated sensors and devices, products of excellence in research and industrial innovation based on MEMS techniques, CMOS, photonics and surface functionalization and interfaces.

The ProM (Mechatronics Prototyping) Facility is a mechatronics prototyping laboratory that researches, produces and tests innovative products capable of combining traditional mechanics with the most advanced sensors and sophisticated virtual prototyping and electronic control systems. It is located in the Mechatronics Hub at Rovereto and deals with additive manufacturing, internet of things, simulation, system integration and control electronics, product prototyping, metrology, qualification and certification.

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- Editorial Staff