

## EIT Culture & Creativity launches 100-to-Watch, spotlighting Europe's most innovative ventures in culture and creativity

- **Inaugural edition features 33 investment-ready startups**
- **Key sectors include architecture, audiovisual media, cultural heritage, fashion and gaming**
- **Ventures tackle pressing issues such as climate action, ethical AI and social cohesion**

Cologne, 11 December 2025 - EIT Culture & Creativity – the institutional partnership for Europe's cultural and creative sectors and industries (CCSI) supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union – has released the first edition of its 100-to-Watch, setting a new benchmark for innovation and investment potential in culture and creativity.

Innovations span bio-based materials in fashion, carbon-cutting solutions in architecture, XR tools rediscovering cultural heritage and AI applications transforming the film and gaming industries. Together, they reflect the ambition of a new generation of entrepreneurs driving Europe's green, digital and societal transitions.

"The European cultural and creative sectors and industries are producing some of the most transformative innovations to address our greatest challenges. Yet these ventures are still underfunded, which holds back not only the sector but Europe itself. The 100-to-Watch demonstrates that high-impact investment in the CCSIs is not just possible, it's a crucial opportunity to shape our future", stated **Anette Schaefer**, CEO of EIT Culture & Creativity.

The ventures are selected from EIT Culture & Creativity's flagship incubation, (post-)acceleration and innovation programmes, supporting cutting-edge startups to become investment-ready and commercially viable. Many of these ventures are at the pre-seed or seed stage, with some having secured over €500,000 in early-stage financing, demonstrating innovation and market traction.

Beyond serving as a seal of excellence, the 100-to-Watch highlights a huge investment opportunity. Contributing 5.3% of EU GDP<sup>1</sup> and projected to reach 10% globally by 2030<sup>2</sup>, the CCSIs are poised to attract serious investment and fuel Europe's sustainable and inclusive growth.

Bringing these ventures together in one place proves that early-stage companies in culture and creativity are not niche or experimental, they are already developing market-ready solutions with clear demand. As new ventures join EIT Culture & Creativity's programmes, the 100-to-Watch portfolio will continue to evolve, helping investors spot scalable ideas, understand the breadth of the pipeline and connect with founders who are prepared for growth.

Download the full 100-to-Watch list [here](#).

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.eif.org/InvestEU/guarantee\\_products/ie-ccs-market-study.pdf](https://www.eif.org/InvestEU/guarantee_products/ie-ccs-market-study.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://unctad.org/news/creative-economy-takes-center-stage>

## About EIT Culture & Creativity

[EIT Culture & Creativity](#) is the institutional partnership dedicated to transforming Europe's Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries to become more sustainable, resilient, and competitive. Established in 2023 by the **European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)**, an EU body, the organisation offers funding, knowledge, and tailored support.

As part of Europe's largest innovation ecosystem, we connect research, industry, academia, and cultural institutions to drive systemic innovation. Our vision is to empower the CCSI as a vital force for economic, social, and environmental transformation. Our mission is to drive responsible growth through innovation, education, business creation, and societal impact.

Our initial strategic focus is on five sectors — **architecture, gaming, fashion, cultural heritage**, and **audiovisual media** — offering targeted support to innovators to scale ideas, translate innovation into impact, and redefine entrepreneurship for the creative economy.

EIT Culture & Creativity operates in over **30 countries**, with its **headquarters in Cologne** and **regional hubs** in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Bologna, Helsinki, Košice, and Vienna.

We believe **culture and creativity are not luxuries** — they are essential infrastructure for resilience, renewal, and sustainable economic growth. Whether you're a creative entrepreneur, a university, a cultural institution, a policymaker, or simply someone passionate about shaping Europe's future, we invite you to join us.

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