2021

CHANGE TOMORROW TODAY

SOCIAL PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE
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2021 IN NUMBERS

Social Innovation Tournament

| 283  | applications from 28 countries |
| 17   | training sessions |
| 12   | SITolarships for SIT Alumni projects |
| 8    | impact entrepreneurs at the EVPA Annual Conference |

Webinars

| 9    | webinars |
| 700+ | participants |

Philanthropy

IT DONATIONS

| 1,748 | pieces of IT equipment donated to |
| 105   | schools and NGOs |
| 993   | additional pieces of IT equipment donated to the Close the Gap programme |

HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHES

| €2.23m | in humanitarian grants |
| €1.76m | for natural and climate-related disasters |
| 11 | beneficiaries |

The Social Innovation Tournament, the flagship initiative of the Institute’s Social Programme, recognises and supports Europe’s best impact entrepreneurs.

2021 applications 283 2020 215 2019 165

Number of applications

2021 2020 2019

Number of countries 28 30 27

Mentoring bootcamp

| Vienna, Austria | Online* | Amaranthe, Portugal |

Pitching competition

| Lisbon, Portugal | Hybrid | Dublin, Ireland |

Special category

| Sustainable living | Environment with a special emphasis on biodiversity and ecosystem conservation | Sustainable production and sustainable consumption |

* Online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

SIT 2021 APPLICATIONS

12% Circular Economy
8% Climate and environment
16% Education and youth
5% Employment
7% Health
9% Inclusion
8% Sustainable consumption and production
8% Sustainable living
26% Others
Change Tomorrow TODAY!

Societal Challenges
- education
- health
- environment
- ageing
- inclusion
- and more...

Social Innovation Tournament

Call for Impact VENTURES!
$5$ Finalists Join SIT Alumni
Mentoring, Bootcamp,
Improving ideas, solutions and pitching skills
Final Event
The Winners are!

Societal Transformers

Access to finance
Investor's Fair
Visibility & Recognition
Networking
Mentoring
Impact Bootcamp

SIT Alumni Network: Tools to Scale Impact
Orange Fiber (Italy) and Vortex Bladeless (Spain) won an award to attend the INSEAD Social Entrepreneurship programme.

1st Prize
General Category
Magrid is a language-free educational training programme designed to develop early maths skills. It removes the language barrier in maths education for second language learners in multilingual school settings.

2nd Prize
General Category
The Institute for Inclusive Education offers three-year vocational qualifications in inclusive education for people with intellectual disabilities. This enables them to work as university lecturers, delivering seminars to help students develop their inclusion skills.

1st Prize
Special Category
CELLUGY is developing high-performing sustainable biomaterials (EcoFLEXY) to meet the performance requirements of packaging and chemical companies. These biomaterials are recyclable, biodegradable and can be composted in the current waste management system, enabling circularity.

2nd Prize and Audience Choice Award
Special Category
Orange Fiber has a patented process to transform citrus juice by-products into yarns and textiles with a silk-like appeal, saving land and water and reducing fertiliser use and environmental pollution.
The SIT Alumni network brings together Europe’s best social entrepreneurs. It helps connect all SIT finalists and other selected social entrepreneurs, building bridges across sectors, countries and ecosystems. It offers numerous learning opportunities, participation in conferences and webinars, training and funding opportunities, and closed alumni events.

**PROGRAMME**

**SPECIAL CATEGORY TOPIC**

Blue and green economy

**TWO-DAY MENTORING BOOTCAMP**

28-29 June 2022
Vienna, Austria

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

17 January to 24 February 2022

**REHEARSAL BOOTCAMP**

27-28 September 2022
Vienna, Austria

**15 FINALIST PROJECTS**

Announced on 16 May 2022

**PITCHING COMPETITION**

29 September 2022
Vienna, Austria
TESTIMONIALS

We have participated in many contests and the SIT is by far one of the best. It will improve your business and you become a member of the SIT Alumni network, which gives you a lot of opportunities.

BeeOdiversity, SIT 2020
Michael van Cutsen

Thanks to the Social Innovation Tournament, we had the chance to access many training opportunities and meet investors and outstanding mentors.

Margherita Vigo

Being an SIT alumnus is a great opportunity. It is a way to meet ambitious entrepreneurs from all over Europe, to be part of a great network and to further accelerate your development.

Konexio, SIT 2018
Jean Guo

Being an alumnus in the SIT network is amazing. You are introduced to other great social entrepreneurs and join a group that understands what it is to be a social entrepreneur.

Peppy Pals, SIT 2015
Paulina Olsson

We are thrilled to be part of the SIT Alumni network! Although Wheelmap has existed since 2010, we have learned that external mentoring and support can indeed take our efforts to a whole new level.

Wheelmap, SIT 2021
Holger Dieterich

EXCLUSIVE ACCESS TO HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

SITolarships

SITolarships are granted based on the level of impact in addressing a societal or environmental problem. They can be used for attendance at conferences and business fairs and participation in training sessions, and to hire consultancy services.

Total grants allocated in 2021:
€54,000 to 12 impact ventures in 8 countries.

SPEAK (Portugal) benefited from a SITolarship to finance a two-day training course for SPEAK founders from 20 cities, who are implementing SPEAK locally as social franchising units.

The training took participants through different modules: personal branding, public speaking, self-awareness and negotiation, combining these with ongoing sharing of best practices so they can develop their skills and potential as social entrepreneurs.

EIB GROUP EXPERTS PROGRAMME

SIT Alumni have access to a network of experts from the EIB Group who voluntarily dedicate time to helping social entrepreneurs in various fields. Services include impact measurement and management, fundraising, digital marketing, legal services, accounting, financial services, HR management, IT skills, web development, and translation and editorial services.

In 2021, four SIT Alumni (Orange Fiber, Goodbag, Mattecentrum and Recosi) turned to the EIB network of experts for consultancy services.

“What I appreciate the most is sharing my experience as a former entrepreneur in the circular economy and as a venture capitalist, and benefiting from the drive and vision of a new world from the great leaders and innovators selected by the EIB Institute, which I support. The world will only get better as this community gets stronger, and I feel privileged to be a part of it.”

Thomas Ferré, EIB
PRO-BONO CONSULTING SERVICES

SIT Alumni can benefit from the services of Cuora Consulting, a pro-bono management consultancy whose members are talented university students and young professionals offering services in the following areas: digital strategy and social media strategy; key stakeholder analysis; market analysis; strategic planning and financial planning; fundraising and mapping with potential investors; performance analysis and balanced scorecards.

In 2021, four SIT Alumni (Hera, Usitoo, Peppy Pals and Ultraspecialisti) benefited from Cuora Consulting services.

“We developed a great partnership with Cuora Consulting during the spring of 2021. The team of individuals were all very professional and their dedication to supporting us in the fundraising of soft grants for Peppy Pals was evident in all aspects of the project. We really appreciated their creative input on applications and the speed at which they got into the project, which enabled us to apply for grants we otherwise would not have been able to.”

Paulina Olsson, Peppy Pals, SIT 2015

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

WEBINARS

In 2021, nine open webinars were held:

Raising Venture Capital with Impact
Wladimir Nikoluk
1. Introduction
2. The discovery of impact: how traditional VC firms came to care
3. VC 2.0: how a new generation of VCs is challenging the status quo
4. Measuring what matters: how to create genuine impact and monetise it
5. Strategic and tactical lessons for building your impact management system

The Role of Certificates in Communicating Impact
Francisco Granja de Almeida and Inês Villar

Business & Human Rights: From Theory to Practice
Francisco Granja de Almeida and Maria Folque

EU Funding for Impact Entrepreneurs
Marco Zappalorto

Business & Human Rights: The Gender Dimensions of the UN Guiding Principles
Francisco Granja de Almeida

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES (E-TRAINING)

IMPACT MEASUREMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (IMM)

Impact measurement and management remains a significant challenge for non-profits and social enterprises around the world. In partnership with inFocus, the EIB Institute provided SIT Alumni with a dedicated e-learning course designed by experienced practitioners on the topic and digital education experts from the University of Edinburgh. It includes a three-level programme (introduction, foundation and builder) with a total of 18 hours of online content on impact measurement and management. In addition, InFocus launched new e-learning modules for all SIT Alumni that had completed the foundation and builder courses in 2020.

DIGITAL MARKETING

In partnership with Media Trust (trainer: Andrew Davis), the Institute hosted a series of three e-training sessions on digital marketing: content marketing, writing for the web and SEO, and influence marketing.

HOW TO COMMUNICATE IMPACT

The Institute offered an exclusive training course for the SIT Alumni network, delivered by Kim van Niekerk.

The training course comprised six content-rich videos and a live wrap-up and Q&A session held online. It covered content, language, audience, storytelling, trends in slide decks and gravitas.
FINDING A FLOW STATE FOR WORK

Kim van Niekerk developed a bespoke training programme for SIT Alumni, who embarked on a journey of deep reflection and personal growth.

Delivered over eight weeks, the course was designed to provide regular “microdoses” of learning and reflection to the participants. It comprised weekly short videos, daily tasks and daily short conversations, completed with a weekly live 30 minute session and a final live session to close the course.

STRATEGIC AND FINANCIAL PLANNING PROGRAMME BY IES, DESIGNED EXCLUSIVELY FOR SIT ALUMNI.

This training course, delivered by IES Social Business School, covered four core modules: strategic planning and impact, financials for impact, business plan and investment assessment, and talent management. The format included pre-recorded videos, live online sessions and one-to-one follow-up sessions.

TRAINING SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SIT ALUMNI

DIGITAL MARKETING, SOCIAL MEDIA AND ANALYTICS: AN OMNICHANNEL STRATEGY

In partnership with IE Business School.

The training course covered diverse topics such as the buyer persona, the stages of the customer journey, omnichannel strategies including SEO, SEM and social media campaigns, the measurement of results, and digital marketing trends and technologies.

“IT was a great experience for me to participate in this course, as it gave me the chance to build up my knowledge in the digital marketing field and gain the confidence needed as a professional. Learning from the experts how to develop a stable marketing strategy and about the marketing trends of the near future made us realise that evolution is the key to success.”

Nikoleta Koutsotheodori, GVMED

DATA SCIENCE AND VISUALISATION FOR BUSINESS

In partnership with IE Business School.

Participants discovered the basics of data science through data insights and visualisation. Students applied statistical concepts underlying data analytics to create meaningful displays that improve decision-making. They benefited from real-time guidance, feedback and professional insights from professors as well as professionals from companies with solid data expertise.
VISIBILITY AND NETWORKING

SIT ALUMNI PARTICIPATION IN EXTERNAL EVENTS

Several SIT Alumni presented their projects at high-impact online or in-person events and won major prizes.

Some highlights include:

- **Breeze Technologies, CM Fluids, MIWA, Soil Steam International, Sponsh, Usitoo, WADI (HELOZ)** at **CHANGENOW — MAY 2021**
- **Glowee, Lixeia, Zouri Shoes** at **REYKJAVIK GLOBAL FORUM — NOVEMBER 2021**
- **Toit2Ages, Walk With Path** at **FUTURE OF AGEING AND THE SILVER ECONOMY — NOVEMBER 2021**
- **Fazla Gida, Fedora, Goodbag, HeHop, IRIS — Incubadora Regional de Inovação Social, Koiki, Konexio, Walk With Path** at **SHOWCASING HIGH IMPACT VENTURES — NOVEMBER 2021 (PORTO, PORTUGAL)**
ACHIEVEMENTS BY SIT ALUMNI

In 2021, SIT Alumni won many prizes and awards:

**Adopta un Abuelo, Aprendices Visuales, Auara and WhatsCine** were nominated in the Forbes Spain list of the 100 other fortunes of Spain — a list of individuals who seek to bring value to others rather than accumulate fortunes for themselves.

**MyAbility** won the Austria’s Leading Companies special prize for outstanding entrepreneurial achievements in the integration of people with disabilities into professional life.

**Tucuvi**, led by **Maria González** and **Marcos Rubio**, won the Entrepreneur XXI Award from CaixaBank.

**LuxAI** (formerly QTrobot Autism Therapy Store) won a Smart Toy Award with the World Economic Forum in the category “Smart toy for children with disabilities.”

**Jean Guo**, CEO and co-founder of **Konexio**, was recognised as one of the 50 committed leaders under 40 by the Palmarés Giverny — Le Point.

**Lise Pape**, founder of **Walk with Path**, was awarded the title of “visionary British female entrepreneur” by the UK government.

**Celmira Macedo**, CEO, of **EXUI** was granted the status of Ashoka Fellow by Ashoka Spain.

**Altoida** has been awarded the FDA Breakthrough Designation for the development of its Precision Neurology Device and AI-based prediction of Alzheimer’s disease.

**SkilLab** is one of the three winning projects of the European Social Innovation Competition 2021, organised by the European Commission in partnership with the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA).

**Johan Wendt** won the Entrepreneur of the Future 2021 competition, hosted by SvD and Carnegie Investment Bank for the venture **IRRIO**.

**Wasser 3.0** was selected as one of the three winners of the Next Economy Award 2022, organised by the German Sustainability Award Foundation.

**Tahereh Pazouki** won the 2021 Creative Entrepreneur of the Year Luxembourg award with the venture **Magrid** Learning Solution.

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SOCIAL INCUBATOR

ASSOCIAÇÃO IRISOCIAL INCUBADORA DE INOVAÇÃO SOCIAL

To foster regional development through social innovation, in 2017 we launched IRIS, the first Portuguese regional social innovation incubator with funding from Partnerships for Impact (Portugal 2020 funds) and with the support of other partners.

In June 2020, IRIS became a non-profit association, promoted by the EIB Institute as an honorary member. The change in structure enables IRIS to further refine its impact mission, and continue to support the development and strengthening of the Portuguese social entrepreneurship ecosystem.

IRIS launched the acceleration programme **Porto Scale Up Social** in partnership with the Municipality of Porto, running acceleration and capacity-building programmes for entrepreneurship and social innovation projects. In 2021, two editions were held with the participation of ten impact initiatives.

As part of its new incubation model, IRIS launched a **membership programme** that gives social entrepreneurs access to support, training, a network of experts, co-working spaces, special partnership offers, etc.

EDUCATION

IRIS designed and launched a new educational programme called **Mudar o Mundo (Change the World)** for primary school children in Portugal. It teaches them about the most pressing social and environmental challenges, and helps them understand and experience social innovation and put their ideas into action. The goal is for children to feel empowered to change the world for the better, prompting them to become future social innovators.

The programme offers content for children and families as well as training materials for schools and teachers to implement the programme in classrooms.

PARTNERS

IRIS has a network of institutional partners to support its work on developing impact initiatives: legal (Vieira de Almeida & Associados); financial (Montepio); communication and marketing (Essência - Comunicação Completa); accounting (Calculus 3S); volunteering (Pista Mágica); impact measurement (Aplixar); crowdfunding (PPL); technology (AWS Amazon Web Services) and fundraising (Academia Be Responsible). IRIS is also part of the Portuguese National Incubator Network.

MAIN HIGHLIGHTS

- 13 innovation advisors and a network of 33 experts.
- 10 projects participated in the incubation programme.
- 49 participants attended 5 workshops designed for purpose-driven organisations.
- 4 training programmes.
We believe in digitalisation as a means of progress; however, there is still a huge need for equipment to make this possible, even within Europe. This is why the Institute donates decommissioned EIB IT equipment (laptops and desktops) to EU-based not-for-profit organisations and schools. And these are some of the replies we receive from the recipients:

“Your donation is priceless! This IT equipment is often the only way for our children to access the outside world which they would otherwise not be able to connect with, living in small and remote villages. ... the laptops enable them to participate in our programme, which enables them to perform better at school.”

**E-Tanoda programme, Hungary**

Close the Gap is an international non-profit organisation that aims to bridge the digital divide by offering high-quality, pre-owned computers donated by European companies to educational, medical and social projects in developing and emerging countries. The EIB has donated some 4 000 pieces of IT equipment to the organisation since 2014.

In 2021, the Institute donated the following to Close the Gap:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IT equipment donated</th>
<th>1 748 pieces donated</th>
<th>16 countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>299 desktops PCs</td>
<td>52 schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 211 laptops</td>
<td>53 NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>241 other pieces of IT equipment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COUNTRIES OF INTERVENTION**

- Germany
- Belgium
- Luxembourg
- Tunisia
- Madagascar
- India
- Haiti
- Croatia

**FLOODS IN NORTHERN EUROPE**

Following the unprecedented flash floods in northwestern Europe, the EIB donated €500 000 through the EIB Institute for flood relief and disaster preparedness in Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg. Of this €500 000 donation, the Red Cross entities in Germany and Belgium each received €175 000, and €150 000 was earmarked for the development of a disaster preparedness programme in the Greater Region.

As of December 2021, the Red Cross teams were still extremely active throughout the disaster area, working non-stop seven days a week.

**TUNISIA (COVID-19)**

A €250 000 EIB donation went towards helping Tunisia tackle the devastating COVID-19 crisis and providing some relief to the overwhelmed health system.

The donation was channelled through Unicef Luxembourg and Red Cross International to purchase some 200 oxygen concentrators and to send several mobile units (doctors and nurses) to remote rural areas to provide oxygen and treat COVID patients who would otherwise have no access to healthcare over six months.
LIFE SKILLS

GREECE

HELITFIN PROJECT

The HELITFIN programme promoting financial education among Greek pupils, which was run by Greek NGO ActionAid Hellas and sponsored by the EIB Institute, came to an end in September 2021 after two successful years.

In partnership with:

and in collaboration with:

Grant: €100 000

Duration: September 2019 to September 2021

Objectives: Training and mentoring sessions and awareness-raising activities for students to learn basic economic and financial concepts and have the opportunity to apply those skills in their own lives.

Achievements: 547 teachers received the training and more than 6,250 pupils across Greece have already benefited from the project — the target is to reach up to 10,000 pupils in the months to come.

Set up in September 2019, the programme developed a set of comprehensive training materials on financial education for teachers and pupils in Greek upper primary and lower secondary schools. It also included a mentoring scheme for teachers and a digital version of all the materials, which proved very successful during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Financial literacy gives people the opportunity to participate in life; it enables them to become critical thinkers and to understand their collective and personal responsibility and their power and right to change it.”

Gerasimos Kouvaras, Country Director of ActionAid Hellas.

OTHER GRANTS

KENUP FOUNDATION

The Institute donated €3,000 to the KENUP Foundation to partially finance the cost of a research study on the anti-vaccination campaign, with a special focus on the potential impact on the use of COVID-19 vaccines. The study was carried out by the KENUP Foundation in partnership with the Swiss Academy of Sciences.

EUROPEAN CHESS ACADEMY

Following the performance of the EIB team at the first online World Corporate Chess Championship, the Institute donated €4,000 to the European Chess Academy for an educational training course for young people in Europe.

Organised by the European Chess Union and executed by the European Chess Academy Maribor, the course was delivered with the participation of six grandmasters and international masters.

The training was awarded to 62 young people divided between two age categories (under 14 and under 18), all winners of the European Online Amateur Chess Championship.

RELAIS POUR LA VIE

The Institute donated €4,000 to Fondation Cancer in Luxembourg following the annual sporting event Relais pour la Vie.

EIB Group employees have been participating in Relais pour la Vie for several years.

DONATION TO SERVICE PROVIDERS

To thank and support the EIB’s service provider staff who work hard to ensure a safe, clean and comfortable work environment even in times of crisis, the EIB Institute organised a donation campaign. Thanks to the 775 EIB staff who made a contribution, €48,235 were raised.

The proceeds were distributed to the 623 service provider employees in the form of LetzShop vouchers, an online marketplace of Luxembourg retailers.

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MICROFINANCE AND ALTERNATIVE FINANCE

The EIB Institute complements the activities of the European Investment Bank Group (EIB and EIF) in the area of microfinance and alternative finance, fostering the diversity of financing.

MICROFINANCE CENTRE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The MFC Annual Conference took place online between 14 and 16 September, with nine sub-events organised by the EIB Group (panels, moderated talks and presentations), hosting EIB Group representatives and a broad range of EIB clients. Some 300 social finance professionals attended the event and listened to 100 speakers over three days. Topics included EU funding in the new budgeting cycle, innovative technical assistance for microfinance companies, adapting to the new normal and the role of social/impact entrepreneurship in society.

DIGITAL BOOTCAMP LABS

The EIB Institute funded the Digital Bootcamp Labs, which were launched in May 2021. Organised by the Microfinance Centre to tackle key topics around digitalisation in support of microfinance institutions, the topics included getting clients’ attention through digital channels, digital payments for microfinance institutions, automated credit scoring and building innovative teams.

The series of eight labs aimed to provide practitioners with an opportunity to test and develop their digital solutions. The 117 participants from 66 institutions benefited from a hands-on methodology, dealing with practical examples and case studies and sharing their experiences with their peers, accompanied by a digital expert.

The labs were open for EIB Group microfinance clients and SIT Alumni as well.

Organiser:

PORTUGAL

COOPERATION WITH FUNDAÇÃO CUPERTINO DE MIRANDA

The EIB Institute signed an agreement with Fundação Cupertino de Miranda, a Portuguese family foundation, to make all the materials for S.A.V.E. 2.0 available in Portuguese.

The materials have been included in the financial education programme run by the foundation and are now reaching more than 15 000 pupils in northern and central Portugal to further extend basic financial education and sustainable consumption education.

MONEY LEARNING (MOLE)

In partnership with:

Objective: Part of the EIB Institute’s financial education programme, the MOLE initiative was launched in 2016 to promote the teaching of financial concepts to schoolchildren.

The project focuses on organising visits to the Museo del Risparmio (savings museum) for schoolchildren aged 10-11 years. Although schools were permitted to organise cultural visits, the coronavirus restrictions still led many teachers to postpone educational trips.

In 2021, nine schools participated in the project, which reached 310 pupils and 34 teachers in Italy.

MUSEUM ON WHEELS — S.A.V.E (SUSTAINABILITY, ACTION, VOYAGE/VIRTUAL, EXPERIENCE) 2.0

In partnership with:

The educational project, created by the EIB Institute in partnership with Intesa Sanpaolo’s Museo del Risparmio di Torino, was adapted to a digital format and has now been deployed throughout Italy.

SAVE 2.0 is a fun virtual course aimed at raising young people’s awareness of the conscious use of financial and environmental resources, the circular economy and social inclusion.

Since January 2021, a dedicated website has offered online courses on sustainability, the circular economy and inclusion (via videos, an app and a tutorial for conducting live workshops in classrooms) for primary, middle and secondary school pupils and teachers.

740 classes from 334 schools subscribed to access the teaching materials, reaching approximately 13 446 pupils and teachers, mainly in secondary schools (ages 14-18).

Covering the whole of Italy, the project has been particularly popular in Piedmont, Lombardy, Apulia and Veneto.

ITALY

The COVID-19 situation caused frequent closures of Italian schools and school visits to museums and other locations to be cancelled or postponed. This situation impacted the implementation of both the MOLE and SAVE projects, which nevertheless continued throughout this challenging year.

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The materials have been included in the financial education programme run by the foundation and are now reaching more than 15 000 pupils in northern and central Portugal to further extend basic financial education and sustainable consumption education.

MONEY LEARNING (MOLE)

In partnership with:

Objective: Part of the EIB Institute’s financial education programme, the MOLE initiative was launched in 2016 to promote the teaching of financial concepts to schoolchildren.

The project focuses on organising visits to the Museo del Risparmio (savings museum) for schoolchildren aged 10-11 years. Although schools were permitted to organise cultural visits, the coronavirus restrictions still led many teachers to postpone educational trips.

In 2021, nine schools participated in the project, which reached 310 pupils and 34 teachers in Italy.

MUSEUM ON WHEELS — S.A.V.E (SUSTAINABILITY, ACTION, VOYAGE/VIRTUAL, EXPERIENCE) 2.0

In partnership with:

The educational project, created by the EIB Institute in partnership with Intesa Sanpaolo’s Museo del Risparmio di Torino, was adapted to a digital format and has now been deployed throughout Italy.

SAVE 2.0 is a fun virtual course aimed at raising young people’s awareness of the conscious use of financial and environmental resources, the circular economy and social inclusion.

Since January 2021, a dedicated website has offered online courses on sustainability, the circular economy and inclusion (via videos, an app and a tutorial for conducting live workshops in classrooms) for primary, middle and secondary school pupils and teachers.

740 classes from 334 schools subscribed to access the teaching materials, reaching approximately 13 446 pupils and teachers, mainly in secondary schools (ages 14-18).

Covering the whole of Italy, the project has been particularly popular in Piedmont, Lombardy, Apulia and Veneto.

ITALY

The COVID-19 situation caused frequent closures of Italian schools and school visits to museums and other locations to be cancelled or postponed. This situation impacted the implementation of both the MOLE and SAVE projects, which nevertheless continued throughout this challenging year.

MICROFINANCE AND ALTERNATIVE FINANCE

The EIB Institute complements the activities of the European Investment Bank Group (EIB and EIF) in the area of microfinance and alternative finance, fostering the diversity of financing.

MICROFINANCE CENTRE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The MFC Annual Conference took place online between 14 and 16 September, with nine sub-events organised by the EIB Group (panels, moderated talks and presentations), hosting EIB Group representatives and a broad range of EIB clients. Some 300 social finance professionals attended the event and listened to 100 speakers over three days. Topics included EU funding in the new budgeting cycle, innovative technical assistance for microfinance companies, adapting to the new normal and the role of social/impact entrepreneurship in society.

DIGITAL BOOTCAMP LABS

The EIB Institute funded the Digital Bootcamp Labs, which were launched in May 2021. Organised by the Microfinance Centre to tackle key topics around digitalisation in support of microfinance institutions, the topics included getting clients’ attention through digital channels, digital payments for microfinance institutions, automated credit scoring and building innovative teams.

The series of eight labs aimed to provide practitioners with an opportunity to test and develop their digital solutions. The 117 participants from 66 institutions benefited from a hands-on methodology, dealing with practical examples and case studies and sharing their experiences with their peers, accompanied by a digital expert.

The labs were open for EIB Group microfinance clients and SIT Alumni as well.

Organiser:

PORTUGAL

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LEADERS IN DIGITAL ERA

With the Institute as a supporting partner, the Microfinance Centre has launched Leaders in Digital Era (LiDE), a series of training webinars specifically designed for microfinance institutions, SIT Alumni and EIB Group (EIB and EIF) customers.

The LiDE series aims to equip leaders with the necessary skills and tools to effectively manage and inspire a team in the new volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous digital world ushered in by the pandemic.

LiDE webinars are free of charge, conducted by experts in their field and open to the public. They are co-financed by the EFSE Development Facility and the European Commission. In total, 186 individuals took part in 12 LiDE webinars in 2021 (314 participants in total for all the webinars). They represented 87 organisations.

“\textit{I liked that we could interact with the speaker and express our ideas about the topics being discussed. There were also numerous direct examples of situations in order to help understand how to be more efficient.}”

\textit{Cristina Arhip, Marketing Specialist, MicroInvest, Moldova}

“\textit{I liked the approach, it was very practical and inclusive for all the participants to share experiences. I believe it’s a great way to better absorb new information and apply new ideas to concrete experiences.}”

\textit{Arber Balla, Project/Methodology and Organisation Manager, NOA Albania

EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE NETWORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The EIB Institute — together with the EIB and the EIF — supported the 2021 European Microfinance Network Annual Conference, held in Brussels in October 2021, under the theme “Inclusive Finance for an Inclusive Future.” The conference is a major meeting on the sector’s agenda, bringing together players involved in European microfinance.

For this edition, the event offered a series of workshops on microfinance key topics, as well as keynote speeches and networking opportunities that brought together stakeholders to exchange views and practices.

Organiser: EIB Institute

ALTERNATIVE FINANCE FORUM

The Alternative Finance Forum, sponsored by the Institute, was held on 13 October in Thessaloniki as a hybrid event, under the theme “Money. Technology. Purpose.”

Professionals from the alternative finance space worldwide — impact investors, microfinance and micro-equity providers, social and fintech entrepreneurs, crowdfunding experts and NGOs — discussed the current and future societal and environmental challenges, and the role of money and technology in solving these.

Organisers: EIB Institute, microSTARS

“\textit{The EIB Institute played a catalytic and instrumental role in the Alternative Finance Forum’s success, by being the lead sponsor of the event, which attracted other sponsors. The Institute was also instrumental in identifying novel projects as well as fintech and social entrepreneurs who are developing new approaches to financial solutions. By bringing together a multitude of very different players in the alternative finance space, the event contributes to the diversity of the financial sector.}”

\textit{Agni Pagouni, Head of Thessaloniki Office, microSTARS

EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE DAY

The seventh European Microfinance Day took place during the European Microfinance Network Annual Conference in 2021, under the theme “Keeping the doors open for all entrepreneurs,” to reflect on the positive contribution of microfinance in combating poverty and social exclusion.

The European Microfinance Day initiative was launched in 2015 as a tool to highlight the impact of the microfinance sector in Europe from a social and economic perspective.

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**CONFERENCES**

**SPONSORSHIPS AND PARTNERS**

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**OCTOBER DAYS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The October Days, organised every year since 2015 by the Institute, the University of Luxembourg and other partners, contributes to the global debate on the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The seventh edition of the October Days for Sustainable Development focused on the theme “Rethinking Cities: From Smart to Human.”

Relying around SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), the online conference focused on ways to create and shape more resilient and inclusive communities, cities and other settlements, by looking at the built and the natural environment.

“The focus needs to shift from economic growth to achieving a better quality of life for all people.”

Maimunah Sharif, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN-Habitat, speaking at the 2021 October Days for Sustainable Development Conference.

The event discussed how the cities of the future might look like, showcasing innovative solutions, discussing burning issues and answering the audience’s questions. A model centred on people and community (as opposed to economic growth) was the overarching theme.

Organised by the EIB Institute and:

With the financial support of:

In collaboration with: