

A Partnership of:



Shaping the Future of INNOVATION

Presents

The Innovation Challenge Facility (grant funding)

managed by:



Issue 12, March - May 2023

News

Welcome to the twelfth issue of the Shaping the Future of Innovation newsletter. Our aim is to contribute to building a culture of innovation and an innovation eco system by sharing news of the project as well as information from Partner programmes and relevant topics around innovation. We hope the content will inspire the local community to put creativity to work for a better quality of life for all.

Innovation must lead to a better quality of life for all. It must be inclusive.

The Innovation Challenge Facility Project Update

Component 1 – The Innovation Challenge Facility (grant fund for business innovation)

The results of the evaluation of proposals under the Innovation Challenge Facility **Second CALL FOR PROPOSALS (2 lots: SMEs and large companies)** will be published early June 2023 following an awards ceremony. Once again, we are excited about the potential impact these projects will bring. For those applicants who did not make it in Call 2 and who wish to try again, the team is happy to

provide feedback from the evaluators to support your resubmission for CALL 3 (2 lots: SMEs and Inclusive Business Innovation). Also, have a look at Newsletter Issue 11 which provided general feedback/ concerns of evaluators:

Key Concerns of Evaluators

In Call 2, for the 24 that did not score enough for stage 2, the **least frequent** concern was technical feasibility. The **most frequent** reason is weak value proposition which relates closely to lack of market research, competitive analysis and an offer that is really addressing needs, followed by concerns about market potential.



Shaping the Future of Innovation and the Innovation Challenge Facility (grant fund)

Partners - Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the European Union (EU) and IDB LAB in collaboration with the Caribbean Industrial Research Institute (CARIRI) as the executing agency.

Aim: to contribute to a diversified economic base in Trinidad and Tobago.

Actions: **Component 1:** The Innovation Challenge Facility (grant fund for business innovation); **Component 2:** Building Industry and Academic Linkages (support for further research and development towards commercialization); **Component 3:** Building the Innovation Network (towards a sustainable innovation eco system).

Funding: over Euro 8 million provided by the European Union and the IDB LAB to support this innovation project in Trinidad and Tobago.

The impact expected: job creation, new skills, increased efficiency / productivity and competitiveness, new markets, export growth, business growth / profit potential and positive environmental, social and inclusive impacts.

Visit: Shaping the Future of Innovation website at: <http://future.cariri4.com/>.

Inclusive Business Innovation Webinar; 9th May 2023



On 9th May 2023, our team hosted a special webinar aimed at sensitising entrepreneurs, innovators, businesses, non-profit organisations and other actors, about Inclusive business Innovation and the opportunities that exist for inclusive businesses. We teamed up with Inclusive Business Partners (IBP), <https://inclusivebusiness.se/> , a Swedish based firm with a global team and outlook focused on Inclusive Business. IBP works with the private sector to scale sustainable, innovative and inclusive business models in developing markets. Our main facilitators were: Ms. Ana Pérez Aponte, Co-founder and Development Director at inclusive business and Mr. Mike Debelak, Executive Director at inclusive business partners.

Ana and Mike presented excellent and relevant content and are willing to work with entrepreneurs and organisations to support their inclusive business concepts. Some key messages about inclusive business and inclusive business innovation:

- These businesses serve the underserved (viably).
- The underserved are included in the process, either as entrepreneurs, producers, employees or as consumers, creating value for all and not just for the business (social and financial value).
- The impact of inclusive businesses is significant and addresses at least 1 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); <https://sdgs.un.org/goals> .
- Inclusive innovations are designed and developed (and tested) together with the communities they serve.
- Need may not translate to demand. Offers must be affordable and meet quality requirements.
- One big difference in serving the underserved and especially the bottom of the pyramid versus higher income groups is: marketers often 'create new needs when targeting higher income groups. When targeting the lower income groups, the focus is on more basic needs.
- Inclusive business design considers the "Impact Inclusive Business Model Canvas" versus just Business Canvas Model.

Ana and Mike also arranged for Isabella Oriani, CEO, The Accessibility Institute www.tai.ngo to present an actual case study on the SafariSeat which has evolved to several new opportunities (SafariCart and SafariWork)

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From left to right: Ana Pérez Aponte; Mike Debelak; Isabella Oriani

If you missed the webinar and would like to see the recording, or if you would like to be in touch with the facilitators, please send us an email: innovationchallengefacility@gmail.com. Tell us something about your business and project.

Component 2 – Building Industry - Academic Linkages is open for Expressions of Interest.



Building Industry and Academic Linkages is operated as a continuous open call, companies are invited to submit Expressions of Interest at any time. The programme is aimed at boosting business-led innovation by providing talented post-graduate Research Associates to work on projects within companies for up to six months. Once an Expression of Interest has been submitted, companies will be supported to define their projects and matched with suitable post-graduate Research Associates. SMEs can now receive 75% funding towards the cost of engaging a Research Associate, and large companies can receive 50%. Host companies and the research associate will be supported by an academic mentor.

The pilot programme is well underway, and the first batch of proposals are being reviewed by the Advisory Panel.

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Here are some tips and pointers for companies looking to apply:

- The host company must define and detail a specific applied R&D / innovation project during the application process for the research associate to support. Research associates cannot be engaged by the host firms to undertake routine / day to day activities.
- All host companies will have to undergo an initial administrative eligibility check – please ensure you can meet all the requirements before making your application. They are detailed in the Guide for Applicants available from the STFOI website: [Industry-Academic-Linkages-Guidelines-v-20_04_23.pdf \(cariri.com\)](https://www.cariri.com/Industry-Academic-Linkages-Guidelines-v-20_04_23.pdf).
- Applicants must consider how they will supervise the research associate and ensure they have access to the resources they need to carry out the project. The funding is available for a maximum of six months.

Research Associates must be studying, or have recently graduated (within the last two years), at Masters or PhD level and are nationals of Trinidad and Tobago.



We have set up a LinkedIn group to facilitate networking and we will be posting suitable opportunities for both Research Associates and

companies as they arise. You can join the group via the following link:

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12783673/>

If you would like to find out if this support is applicable to you, contact:

stfoi@betatechnology.co.uk.

Component 3

Details supplied by Component 3, Building the Innovation Network Innovation Coordinator – Dr. Marcia Brandon.

Building Trinidad and Tobago's Innovation Eco-System - Importance of Commitment to Innovation Policy Framework

The Global Innovation Index (GII) 2022 ranked Trinidad and Tobago innovative capacities at 101st among 132 economies in the world.



GII 2022 statistical confidence interval falls between ranks of 88 (high) and 106 (low).

In 2021, the country ranked 97th and in 2020 it ranked 98th.

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Economies are ranked based on roughly 80 indicators, grouped into innovation inputs and outputs: https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo_pub_2000_2022/tt.pdf.

This low ranking is by no means a reflection on our creativity and level of innovation taking place but rather it reflects the many missing components that make up a country's ability to innovate and lack of reporting on innovation.

Trinidad and Tobago ranks lowest where it comes to

- **market sophistication** (relates to credit, investment, trade diversification and market),
- **business sophistication** (relates to knowledge workers, innovation linkages and knowledge absorption) and
- **creative outputs** (relates to intangible assets, creative goods and services and online creativity. It should be noted on creative goods and services which consider outputs such as the export of creative goods, film, print media where the country's ranking should be good – **there is no information available.**

For innovation to take deep roots in any society, there needs to be an integrated Innovation ecosystem: a network of a variety of interdependent and interconnected communities of stakeholders.



1

The Global Trade and Innovation Policy Alliance (GTIPA) reports that 23 countries and the EU are in the top tier when it comes to innovation policies. Read more here <https://www2.itif.org/2019-national-innovation-policies.pdf>. These countries have implemented effective policies to maximize their own outputs of innovation and have worked within the global economic and trade system to allow their innovation-based industries to flourish by granting access to large international markets, confronting excessive non-market-based competition, and providing robust intellectual property (IP) protections. Their integrated innovation policies designed to drive long-term economic growth and improve standard of living and quality of life are in areas including scientific research, technology commercialization, information technology (IT) investments, education

¹ Mangold, 2022. Power of innovation ecosystem networks

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and skills development, tax, trade, IP, government procurement, and regulation.

At least 50 nations have implemented national innovation strategies including Chile, Ghana, Honduras, and the United Kingdom, with specialised government agencies, councils, and organizations specifically responsible for innovation. Chile created a new National Office of Productivity and Entrepreneurship; Ghana created a Presidential Advisory Council on Science, Technology, and Innovation; and the United Kingdom established UK Research and Innovation to direct the nation's investments in research and innovation funding.

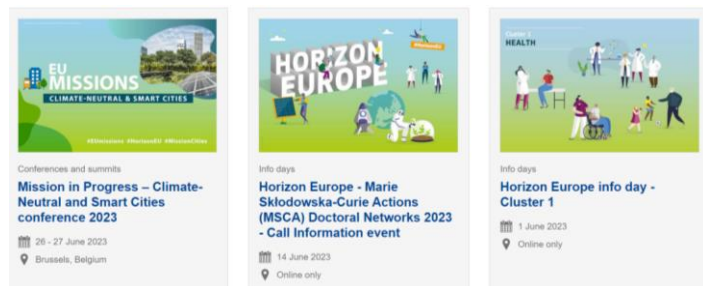
Network News

Learn what is happening in Innovation from Partner Organisations.

Horizon Europe:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en

Horizon Europe is the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation:



A public consultation on the future of EU Research and Innovation programmes

For Shaping the Future of Innovation project, we found it interesting to feature this story for two main reasons: 1. The approach that was applied for the public consultation and 2. The actual results.

Approach

The consultation was conducted over 12 weeks online and in three languages and was considered the largest consultation on the past, present and future of the European research and innovation programmes 2014-2027. A total of 2,788 responses and 265 position papers were submitted. See the invitation to participate: [Now open: Largest public consultation ever held on the past, present and future of the European research and innovation programmes 2014-2027 \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en).



Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth explains why dialogue was so important: - "Science is about dialogue.....so many stories document famous exchanges" among scientists. "These specialised conversations are still today the basis of the trust we have in science because it allows for scrutiny."

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Results

Respondents indicated that the most important societal challenges are **'climate change'**, **'energy supply'**, **'loss of biodiversity'** and **'strained healthcare systems and ageing European population' over the next 10 years.**

IDB

<https://www.iadb.org/en>

Digital Leadership Summit in the Caribbean



The Ministry of Digital Transformation in Trinidad and Tobago (MDT), in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU), host this special summit on Digital Leadership in the Caribbean on May 15-16, 2023, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. The event targets senior policy makers from across the Caribbean to the Digital Leadership Summit. This collaborative event will explore the challenges and opportunities of digital transformation in the region, with a focus on sharing best practices and enhancing the knowledge base for Caribbean digital policy and practice.

Compete Caribbean

[Compete Caribbean Partnership Facility - Promoting A Dynamic Private Sector In The Caribbean](#)

Second Edition – Economics of Innovation Course For The Caribbean Region

Compete Caribbean will host the Second Edition – Economics of Innovation Course for The Caribbean Region via [Second Edition - Economics of Innovation Course For The Caribbean Region - Compete Caribbean Partnership Facility](#). (if you miss it this time, please stay alert for the third edition).

CARIRI

<https://www.facebook.com/caribbeanindustrialresearchinstitute>

DIA Youth Innovation Lab: Registration

The DIA Youth Innovation Lab is a collaboration with CARIRI, The Trust for the Americas, OAS and Citi Foundation. The target group for this lab is youth between the ages 16-34.

Opportunities for being part of the lab include:

- Entrepreneurship Workshops
- ICT Workshops (Programming, Web Design, etc.)
- New Technologies (Robotics, Laser Cutters, etc.)
- Ideathons
- Local and Regional Hackathons
- Pitch Tank Competition
- DIA Summit

Register here: [DIA Youth Innovation Lab: Registration \(google.com\)](#).

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Trinidad & Tobago Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Opportunities

DIA LAB TT PROGRAMME
TRAINING AND MENTORSHIP
Programme begins 5th June 2023

PROGRAMME CONTENT

- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Life skills
- Digital Literacy
- Data Science
- Business Model Canvas
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Financial Literacy
- Computer Science
- New Technologies and Lab practical

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Youth ages 16-34 years
- Students, low income, unemployed, underemployed, women in vulnerable situations, persons with disabilities
- Must have access to internet and a computer device

APPLICATIONS OPEN
Interested persons are invited to sign up via link:
<https://forms.gle/1M6ipj4fZEyqcvH67>

• Duration 2 weeks



NIHERST

Innovation & Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Webinar Series

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Location: Virtual
Cost: FREE

Exploring Partnership, Networking and Synergies within the Regional Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

Event Date: May 16th, 2023
Featured Presenter: Ms. Julia J D Mitille

Global Trends and Opportunities for Upscaling Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Trinidad and Tobago.

Event Date: May 23rd, 2023
Featured Presenter: Dr. Keith Nurse

The Innovation Charter: Promoting Cooperation, Collaboration and Economic Sustainability within the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

30 minute virtual networking session to follow

Event Date: May 25th, 2023
Featured Presenters: Ms. Leanthia Pacquette and Mr. Emerson John-Charles

See post for registration link

<https://www.niherst.gov.tt/>

NIHERST

<https://www.niherst.gov.tt/>

NIHERST is currently hosting this series "Exploring Partnership Networking and Synergies within the Regional Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem." The series is intended to develop awareness and understanding of international best practices among the members of the ecosystem and establish a coordinated effort in achieving common goals.

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Management Firm

The Consortium led by Beta Technology Limited and EUROCHAMTT have been contracted by CARIRI to provide support in the management of components 1 and 2.

Working closely with CARIRI, who are leading the initiative, the ethos of the team is to build capacity for the future and deliver high quality support to businesses, academia and other stakeholders, to unlock the innovation potential in Trinidad and Tobago.

Beta Technology Limited (Beta) is a small innovation company based and registered in the UK. Beta was founded in 1984 by an entrepreneur as a spin out from the University of Sheffield. Its mission is to connect people and knowledge to promote innovation. Beta has worked for over 35 years supporting innovative SMEs across Europe on their innovation journey – from making grant applications to commercialisation and market development.

www.betatechnology.co.uk



EUROCHAMTT was established in February 2013 as a non-profit company and supports companies in three principal areas: (i) advocacy (ii). trade support and (iii). promoting and supporting its members and partners in climate action initiatives. EUROCHAMTT is part of a worldwide network of European Business Organisations (EBO Worldwide Network) and is in close contact with other

European networks facilitating access to expertise, benchmarking and markets.

<https://eurochamtt.org/>



EUROCHAMTT

The Management Team is available to support businesses with queries about the facilities and have set up a dedicated email address for this purpose: innovationchallengefacility@gmail.com