

DANUBE TECH SUMMIT

AGENDA & TOPICAL FRAMEWORK

PART I: INTERACTIVE WORKING SESSIONS

(UPON SEPARATE INVITATION ONLY)

9:00 – 9:15 **OFFICIAL OPENING OF PART I**

Opening remarks by:

VAZIL HUĐÁK, Vice Chairman of GLOBSEC Board of Directors

9:15 – 10:40 **WORKSHOP 1 Part 1**

DIGITAL ENERGY: VOLATILITY & FLEXIBILITY AS DRIVERS OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGY MARKETS IN THE ERA OF TWIN TRANSITION

POWERED BY: TTTECH & PIONEERS

Key resources, businesses, and consumers are facing massive shifts in energy generation as renewable production grows along with the need for increased digital intelligence. However, digitalization in the energy ecosystem is lagging behind. For industries to secure a competitive upper hand, applying digitalization to the energy transition will be a key advantage. This session will explore ways in which companies can capitalise on this trend, by exploring questions such as: What digitalization processes and technologies should be deployed in the energy sector? What is the potential of Decentralised Energy Systems? What new business models are most fit for the digitalisation of energy? What should digital energy technologies companies invest in?

WORKSHOP 2

UNLOCKING THE POWER OF ECOSYSTEMS: CATALYZING SPIN-OFFS IN THE DANUBE REGION FOR A GREENER FUTURE

POWERED BY: VERBUND

Research institutions play a significant role in advancing new technologies, materials, and methods that can accelerate the green transition. Nevertheless, there exists a challenge in effectively translating this research for the benefit of society. A vital component in this translation process is the emergence of academic spin-offs, which serve as a pivotal force for transformation and a fundamental element in the global pursuit of innovation. This session is dedicated to accelerating the establishment of spin-off ventures from research institutions and aims to bridge the gap between academic research and business, ultimately facilitating the transition to a greener future.

WORKSHOP 3

ENHANCING ACCESS TO FINANCE AND NURTURING INNOVATION ACROSS DANUBE REGION

POWERED BY: RBI

The European entrepreneurial sector holds immense potential, but its growth is hindered by the absence of a robust capital market for scaling up projects, including the emergence of unicorns. To address this challenge, it's crucial to acknowledge the funding gap caused by underdeveloped capital markets within the EU. Mere increases in public funding are insufficient; a comprehensive approach is needed to rejuvenate the capital market. Additionally, public funds, particularly those from the EU, are directed toward enhancing the entrepreneurial competitiveness of the Union through an ambitious innovation agenda. However, despite a thorough evaluation of the region's strengths and weaknesses, efforts and resources dedicated to improving Central and Eastern Europe's (CEE) competitiveness have yet to meet expectations. Why do these resources remain out of reach for CEE countries, and what potential solutions can various stakeholders offer to overcome these limitations? What is the nature of the existing gap in funding distribution between Western and Eastern Europe, and who is actively working to bridge this divide? How can public and private funding work together to complement each other in the effort to close this gap?

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10:40 – 11:00 COFFEE & NETWORKING**11:00 – 12:20 WORKSHOP 1 Part 2****DIGITAL ENERGY: VOLATILITY & FLEXIBILITY AS DRIVERS OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGY MARKETS IN THE ERA OF TWIN TRANSITION**

POWERED BY: TTTECH & PIONEERS

Key resources, businesses, and consumers are facing massive shifts in energy generation as renewable production grows along with the need for increased digital intelligence. However, digitalization in the energy ecosystem is lagging behind. For industries to secure a competitive upper hand, applying digitalization to the energy transition will be a key advantage. This session will explore ways in which companies can capitalise on this trend, by exploring questions such as: What digitalization processes and technologies should be deployed in the energy sector? What is the potential of Decentralised Energy Systems? What new business models are most fit for the digitalisation of energy? What should digital energy technologies companies invest in?

WORKSHOP 4**SECURITY OF SUPPLY OF GREEN HYDROGEN FOR THE EUROPEAN INDUSTRY - HOW TO BUILD HYDROGEN CORRIDORS AND LOCAL ENERGY PROJECTS?**

POWERED BY VERBUND

Green hydrogen is considered a game changer for the energy transition. The long-term establishment of diversified import corridors is essential for supplying green hydrogen to the hard-to-abate sectors of the industry. How to accelerate the development of a hydrogen infrastructure, production, and market? What is the potential of hydrogen for the green transition and regional growth by deploying a cross-border hydrogen ecosystem? In this session, we will explore the preconditions in CEE countries for hydrogen projects and implementation options for import models.

ROUNDTABLE**UNITE TO INNOVATE – BUILDING THE DANUBE TECH VALLEY**

As incubators for start-ups, cities play a pivotal role in entrepreneurship and the advancement of new technologies. Should cities strive to become interconnected hubs? What are the key challenges facing the 'cities of the future'? What should be the role of local governments in developing business and innovation opportunities? Finally, how can cities become exemplars of successful, holistic local innovation ecosystems and pave the way for a new, sustainable way of life?

12:20 – 13:30 LUNCH**PART II: IDEAS IN FOCUS****13:30 – 13:40 OFFICIAL OPENING OF PART II**

Opening remarks by:
WILHELM MOLTERER, GLOBSEC

13:40 – 14:00 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

MARTIN KOCHER, Federal Minister of Labour and Economy of the Republic of Austria

14:00 – 14:10 VIDEO MESSAGE

ILIANA IVANOVA, EU Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

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14:10 – 14:20 DANUBE TECH VALLEY HUB PRESENTATION
TBC

14:20 – 15:30 PANEL DISCUSSION 1

TRANSFORMING THE DANUBE REGION INTO THE NEW EUROPEAN INNOVATION HOT SPOT: A TURNING POINT FOR THE CEE

In the past decade, the Danube Region has undergone remarkable development, with certain countries emerging as noteworthy innovation hubs on European and global stages. However, several challenges persist, particularly in the realms of business, environmental sustainability, attractiveness, and education policies. The region can effectively address these obstacles by implementing a comprehensive strategy and fostering collaboration among stakeholders. Ultimately, the overarching objective should be the creation of an environment conducive to innovation, digital transformation, and economic prosperity, not only for the technology industry but for the entire region.

As we aspire to bridge the divide between the East and the West, the key lies in identifying government strategies and shaping policies at both national and regional levels to stimulate entrepreneurial endeavours in CEE and the broader Danube region. How can we foster mutual inspiration and collaboration, shifting away from a competitive mindset, in order to authentically establish the Danube Innovation Valley?

15:30 – 16:00 COFFEE & NETWORKING

16:00 – 16:15 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

16:15 – 17:30 PANEL DISCUSSION 2

DANUBE DYNAMICS: NAVIGATING THE INNOVATION CURRENTS FOR A THRIVING ECOSYSTEM

In pursuit of fostering a thriving innovation ecosystem in the Danube Valley, we envision a landscape brimming with creativity and untapped potential. The strategy hinges on forming strong collaborative partnerships with both emerging startups and unicorns that have successfully exited and are now committed to giving back to the community. These entrepreneurs can serve as mentors, sharing their invaluable experience and resources to nurture the next generation of innovators. However, we acknowledge that there is a missing piece to this puzzle – the investment angel. To truly harness the innovation potential of the region, we must address the capital gap by attracting more investors willing to support early-stage ventures. By closing this investment gap and fostering a culture of cooperation, the aim to keep the Danube Valley at the forefront of innovation and economic growth can be reached. What are the characteristics of the current ecosystem, and what are the prevailing trends in the Danube Valley region? Who are the key stakeholders in shaping the regional innovation ecosystem, and what roles do they play in its development and sustainability? What are the crucial missing elements that need to be addressed to create a thriving ecosystem in the Danube Valley? What barriers hinder the effective transfer of technology, which is a fundamental building block in the progression of innovation within the region?

17:30 – 19:00 COCKTAIL RECEPTION

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