

# Transformation, with Urgency

Climate KIC strategy  
**2024-2030**



# Executive Summary

## CLIMATE KIC'S MISSION: CATALYSE SYSTEMIC CHANGE

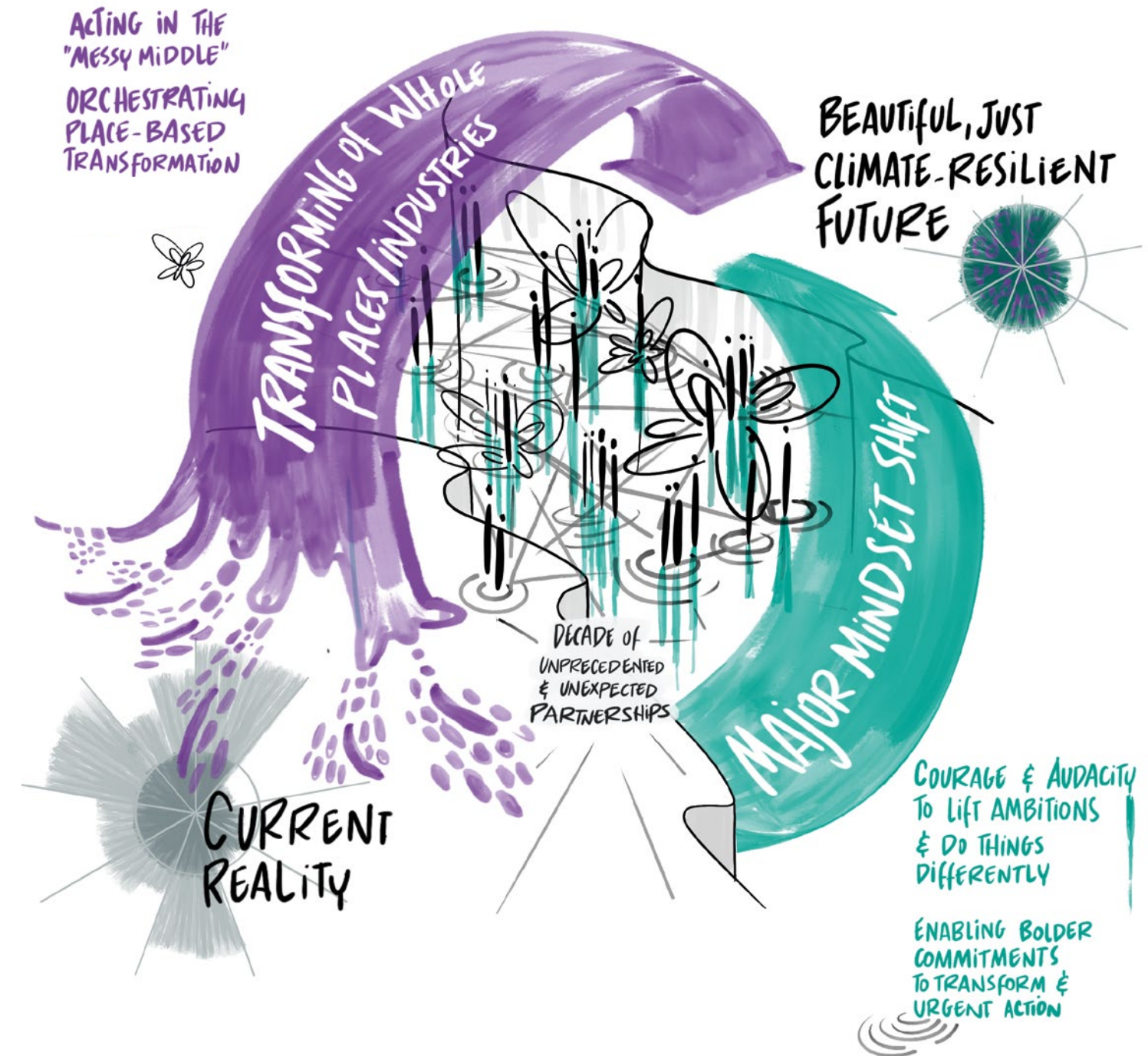
Climate KIC is Europe's leading climate innovation agency and community, supporting cities, regions, countries and industries to meet their climate ambitions through systems innovation and place-based transformations.

We were created by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) in 2010 to be a knowledge innovation community (KIC) focused on climate change. Over the last decade, we have collaborated with over 400 partners in 60 countries around the world, managing €80-100M annually in grant budgets to foster climate entrepreneurship, nurture education and learning, and drive innovation to mitigate climate change and enable adaptation. Our 2024-2030 Strategy describes how we will meet the unprecedented need and duty for radical transformation required not only to limit the catastrophic effects of global heating, but to shift fundamentally mindsets and practices to allow humans and nature to thrive. It elaborates the way in which we help to bridge the implementation gap between climate commitments and current reality, making change happen in the 'messy middle': the place of on-going tensions, profound uncertainty and altering timeframes between where we are and where we need to be.

The social, political and environmental impacts associated with each tenth of a degree of temperature rise increase volatility and complexity, as well as opportunity. Isolated approaches and single-point solutions are not enough to address this. We must act now to achieve transformation at the scale and speed needed to impact the climate crisis, by testing, learning and sharing comprehensive, systemic climate change solutions.

Our 2030 goal is to transform over 400 cities, regions and countries in Europe and beyond into just, climate-resilient, and regenerative places, partnering with large and small businesses in those contexts. We will foster collaborative partnerships between citizens, leaders, civil society and the public and private sectors. We will enable the cities and regions we support to mobilise approximately €10-15 billion each for large-scale programming. We will enable transformation in the places we work through Deep Demonstrations of iterative experimentation, collaborative learning and systems innovation.

Climate KIC orchestrates place-based transformations that ground climate action at the local level. By prioritising solutions developed and implemented in local contexts, we build momentum and inspire action. We make systems transformation meaningful by enabling change in the places where people live and work, creating a positive feedback loop for change. With our partners, we generate, implement and integrate climate solutions by mobilising finance, new business models, institutional change and behavioural change. Large-scale demonstrations employ iterative cycles of innovation and learning to build resilient communities, prove what is possible and trigger exponential decarbonisation.



## PRINCIPLES:

"WHERE THERE IS A WAY,  
THERE IS A WILL"

"LEARNING  
BY DOING"

"RADICAL  
COLLABORATION"

"CHANGING EVERYTHING,  
NEEDS EVERYONE"

Self-assessment, experience and deep reflection on the scenarios we see ahead, led us to the following eight strategic choices that will allow us to guide places and industries through the 'messy middle.'

- Systems innovation to catalyse positive tipping points for change
- A combination of depth and breadth to build momentum
- Emphasis on learning to create adaptive capabilities
- Radical collaboration to overcome fragmentation and competition
- Illustrations of viable common futures to engage imagination and aspiration
- Innovations to allow people to live well with less (starting in the Global North)
- Technology advances and nature-based solutions to lower emissions and build resilience
- Financial mobilisation and new institutional forms to stimulate and shape investment.

Climate KIC will use these strategic choices to navigate tensions and trade-offs that will occur as society and nature shifts in unpredictable ways. Across all our work, we reject simplistic binaries for interdependent, interdisciplinary and composite solutions that acknowledge the web of local and global relationships that shape how we live. We will use our eight strategic choices to move us forward while balancing the tensions inherent in our work. These strategic choices and considerations will inform annual business plans with progressive implementation targets linked to monitoring and evaluative learning, deeply informed by those that we are serving.

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8



# 2024-2030: An Unprecedented Opportunity and Duty

The world is in a race against despair and division. We face the greatest array of challenges and complexities humanity has ever known. Scientists warn of rapidly approaching planetary tipping points that are leading to irreversible climate impacts and poly-crisis characterised by extreme heat and disastrous weather events, food and water scarcity, mass migration, conflicts and political polarisation.

We now see climate impacts driving widespread social, political and geopolitical tensions including the breakdown of trust in public institutions. Polarisation, coupled with disinformation fuels perceptions of disenfranchisement or paralysis.

As volatility drives profound uncertainty, societies, especially those on the climate front lines, face existential questions about health and wellbeing, community cohesion, social justice, and the survival of cultures rooted in the land.

At the same time, this moment presents unprecedented opportunity to create a better world. We are already seeing colossal shifts in the energy and mobility sectors. The more positive choices we make, the more we trigger exponential rates of regeneration and transformation. The decade of action is the decade of choice.

Across all of our work and networks, we see the pre-eminent importance of local action. Crisis sparks micro-local mobilisation and new forms of multi-level governance. Cities and regions drive this movement; they shift the paradigm from national self-interest to local solutions that meet the needs of people and nature. Together, these movements can create

new possibilities for planetary collective action. As local leadership tackles community issues, we still experience a collective failure to address global climate change at the pace and scale needed. Geopolitical rivalries, supply chains and vested interests protecting access to key resources such as hydrocarbons, minerals and metals are likely to continue to thwart meaningful intergovernmental progress. Deliberate disinformation campaigns and false narratives about climate action are stagnating action: delay becomes the new denial. Information and facts from reliable sources are increasingly met with distrust or apathy.

Varying theories of change, fragmentation and division may limit the climate movement as it tries to create common messages. The need to balance between a reliance on nature and trust in technology and markets, between sufficiency and reindustrialisation, will be greater than ever. Disciplines such as psychology, epigenetics, ecology, and behavioural science begin to play a key role. Justice and equity must be centred within meaningful climate solutions. Ignoring marginalised voices is not a viable option. The pressure to benefit the few at the peril of the most vulnerable will be high. Anticipating and responding to unintended consequences will be an ongoing challenge.

The 'messy middle' brings both challenges and opportunities. We see an opportunity to rectify the behaviours that underpin the climate crisis. The climate action agenda is expanding beyond greenhouse gas (GHG) equivalent emissions impact calculations. Many, including the United Nations, now acknowledge the interdependence of humans and nature and the rights of nature. More effort will be placed on learning from nature, through multiple forms including biomimicry and green chemistry, and from communities who have coexisted sustainably with nature for millennia. Understanding more about critical materials such as metals, minerals and biome will become essential.

Despite the many divergent paths and critical decisions ahead, the next five to ten years may be the period when crisis catalyses and unites. This will be the decade for unprecedented and unexpected partnerships. We will need explore every possible solution with the courage and audacity to do things differently.

It is in this context that we understand the choices that Climate KIC makes now. We embrace the opportunity to accelerate integrated action on climate, nature, economy and community for the good of all. Crucially, through example and demonstration of new possibilities, innovation can provide the hope, courage and imagination to act.





# Climate KIC's Mission and Value Proposition

Climate KIC's mission is to catalyse systemic change for climate action through innovation. Our approach is holistic and systemic and place-based. We integrate sustainable economic development, social change, new institutions and technology solutions to advance climate mitigation, adaptation and environmental regeneration. We see these elements as interdependent. Through collaboration, Climate KIC mobilises large-scale demonstrations to show how innovation and learning, woven together, can trigger exponential decarbonisation and build resilient communities. We build momentum by demonstrating what is possible.

Over the past decade we have learned that individual solutions like solar PV, carbon removal technology or a carbon tax, no matter how brilliant, cannot achieve the systemic transformations we need at the scale and speed necessary to impact the climate crisis. Our 2019-2022 Strategy focused on designing, developing, combining and deploying innovation approaches to catalyse systemic change by matching a growing demand for change with a supply of solutions. We created the conditions for intersectoral approaches that lead to changes in policy, regulations, infrastructure, procurement, and planning and design as well as logistics and supply chain transformation and social and behavioural shifts in perception, demand and awareness. Our 'systems innovation as a service' model is delivering positive change scaled to cities, regions, countries, communities and industry value chains. It is designed to support and implement 'outcome-led or mission-led' approaches to transformation, grounded in the contexts where change can be seen and community-led.

In line with to our commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in the next decade we will bring learning, insights and knowledge from existing transformation work streams. We lead consortia of partners implementing the EU Mission Climate Neutral and Smart Cities, EU Mission on Climate Adaptation and EU Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe', supporting over 100 cities and 150 regions across Europe to deliver on breakthrough climate goals. We have developed Deep Demonstrations of change in Ireland, Spain, and Slovenia, and in industrial value chains in Spain and Poland. We work with local partners throughout the world, with a particular focus on Africa and Latin America to build innovation ecosystems that support local development of solutions in the Global South.

Our innovation portfolio creates compelling investment opportunities that include single investable assets such as start-ups and projects as well as strategic investment portfolios that span multiple asset classes and are designed to catalyse the transformation of specific systems. Together with our community and partners, we empower the transition. We incubate. We implement. We create the conditions to shift mindsets and behaviours, to stimulate decision makers and investors to act. We build skills to accelerate learning and to identify where innovation can best transform systems and bridge siloes. This is Climate KIC's work of orchestration.

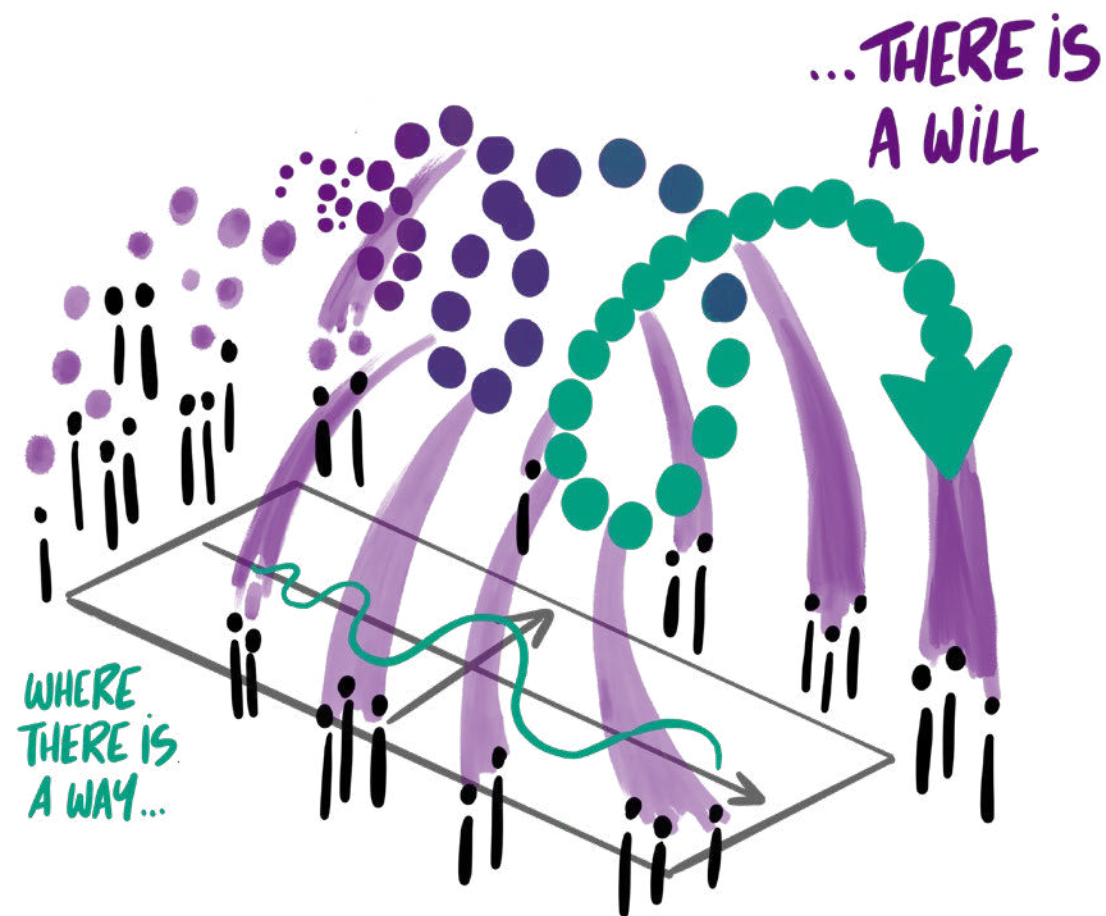
We work every angle to make connections, search out promising solutions, bring people together, facilitate collaboration, attract finance, and integrate different pieces of the puzzle. We know that the whole can be greater than the sum of the parts.





## Climate KIC Community

Climate KIC is a community comprised of individual members, consortia, clusters and subcommunities united in a shared purpose. Climate KIC members learn, connect, collaborate, facilitate funding and investment access, influence, strengthen new market development, and celebrate local solutions. Climate KIC delivery teams and a dedicated community team support these activities as facilitators, orchestrators, connectors, listeners and storytellers. The community operates from the following shared principles.



### Our Principles

#### “Where there is a way, there is a will”:

We nurture demonstrations of positive change across Europe and beyond, helping people to believe in a sustainable, equitable future by proving that large-scale transformation is possible.

#### “Learning by doing”:

We nurture learning practices and mindsets by capturing insights, intelligence, knowledge and emergent understanding from iterative trialling of new approaches in diverse contexts. We facilitate policy sandboxes and create ecosystems where organisations can test and learn without penalties for failure, encouraging experimentation, curiosity and risk-taking.

#### “Radical collaboration”:

We nurture relationships of deep trust and partnership with the organisations and challenge owners we support, implement with and learn from. There are no pre-defined roadmaps for complex change, only individual and collective journeys of discovery, and no one has all the solutions for this global crisis. The climate crisis demands that we go faster and further, and more fairly, together.

#### “Changing everything needs everyone”:

We nurture systemic, inclusive and equitable transformation wherever we work. We pursue solutions that prioritise justice and equity and we acknowledge the global and interconnected nature of the climate challenge. We assume responsibility, as an enabler of systemic change and collaborative learning, to nurture innovations and balanced partnerships that address the impact of the Global North on the Global South.



# Climate KIC's Strategic Choices for 2024-2030: impact in the 'messy middle'

A just, climate-resilient, beautiful and sustainable future is possible if we - the generations alive now - put our minds to it; and innovation is key to creating this future.

Our vision demands a profound shift in mindsets and unprecedented collective action. We need to change our human design for life. We need to transform places and industries so that people can see and aspire to a sustainable future. We need collective ingenuity and innovation that turns the unlikely into the possible. We need systems change.

Systems change isn't easy. To bridge the gap between climate ambition and current reality, we must embrace the complexity and unpredictability of the 'messy middle:' the place of on-going tensions and altering timeframes between where we are and where we need to be. We describe this as 'messy' because there are no clear pathways between the two, especially in the onset of climate change effects, and we can't rely on a single plan to get from here to there. We must invent, experiment, test bold solutions, learn from experience, commit resources, test for resilience and learn again. Working in the messy middle requires different mindsets and approaches, and new ways of living.

Climate KIC orchestrates place-based transformation through innovation. We support cities, regions, countries and industries to navigate the 'messy middle' by implementing systems innovation to meet climate ambitions and adapt to altered climate conditions. For us, innovation is more than technology. Technology is crucial, but policy and regulation, governance, organisation, finance and ecosystem services all present opportunities for innovation.

By showing what transformation means in practice, we can make change at the scale needed to halt global warming and, in time, heal the effects of climate change in cities, communities, regions and countries.

In the next seven years, Climate KIC will deepen and accelerate implementation with partners who set ambitious and transformational goals to deliver climate positive, resilient places to live and work.



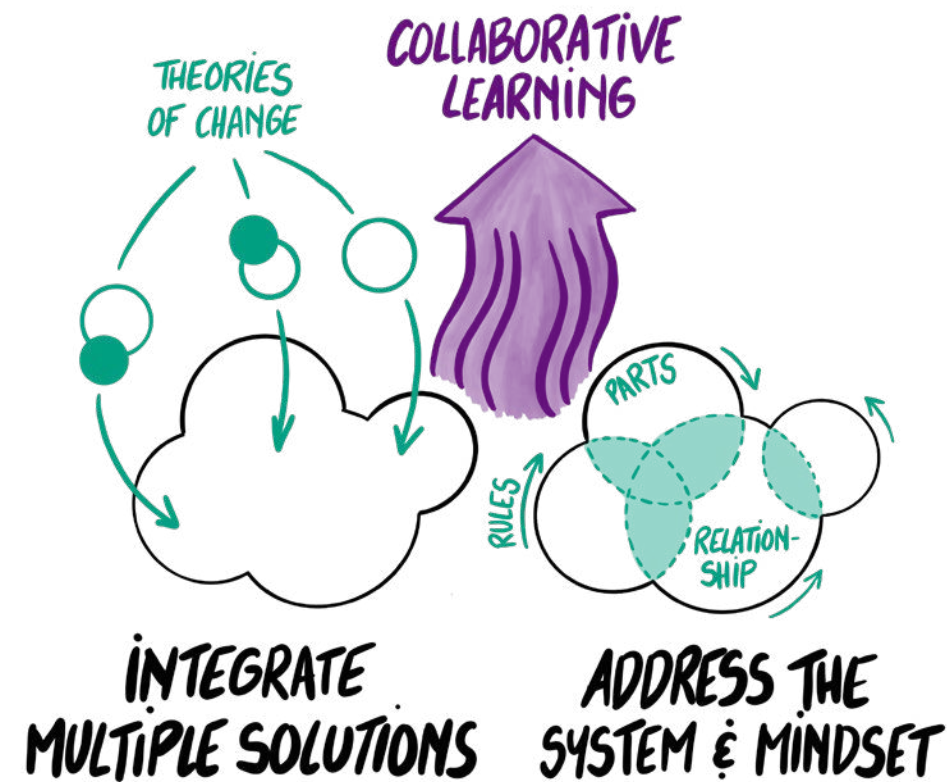
Our 2024-2030 Strategy focuses on implementation and demonstration of large-scale transformation of cities, regions, landscapes (including forests, rural and marine), businesses and industry value chains. We will work through place-specific Deep Demonstrations to show that transformation is possible and beneficial. We will leverage and connect multiple places and value chains, thus accelerating learning, connecting efforts across siloes and sectors, and addressing wicked intersectional challenges.

## Our Strategic Choices

These choices reflect our understanding of what we can offer in the context of the unfolding poly-crisis. We choose to focus our implementation efforts on several key elements for transformation, recognising that these need concerted attention and further investment to achieve their desired outcomes.



# Systems innovation to catalyse positive tipping points for change

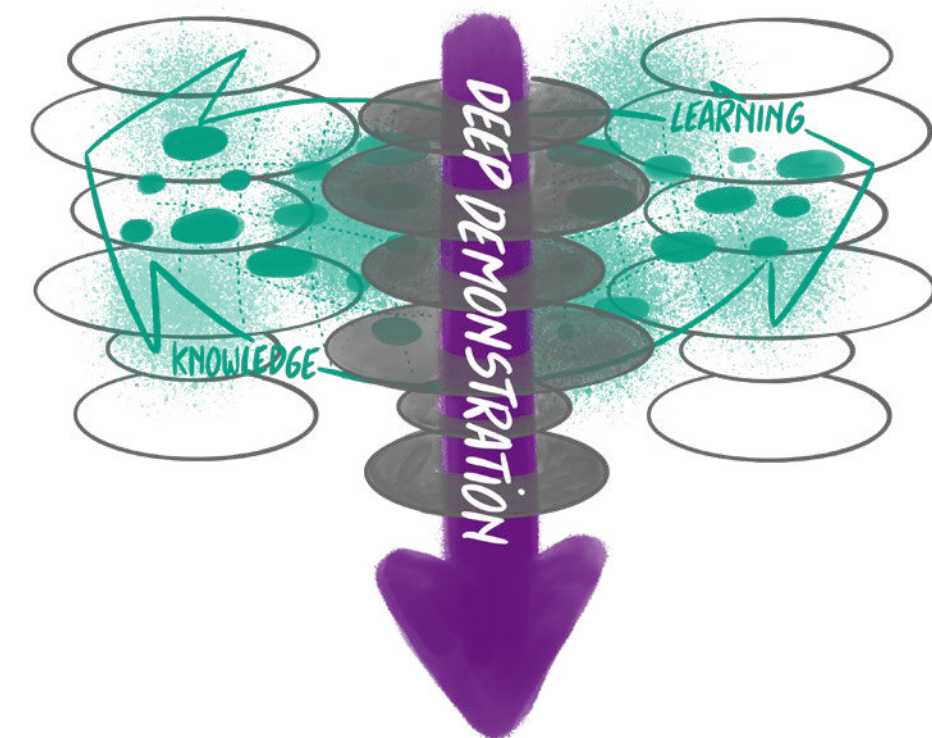


Place-based transformations require connected and integrated solutions. Climate KIC's practice of systems innovation integrates technology, digital intelligence, governance, policy and regulation, finance, business models, new institutions and new economic thinking, storytelling, justice and social equality. Instead of relying on single solutions, transformative outcomes are achieved through the combination and integration of multiple solutions and theories of change, addressing the parts, the relationships and the rules of systems (e.g. urban planning and construction or food and agriculture) as well as the mindsets that drive root-cause issues.

Over the next seven years, our approach to innovation will focus on learning how to activate positive dynamics and tipping points for change to mobilise sustainable wellbeing in all senses. We will incorporate different ways of knowing and being that complement or challenge dominant world views. We will create the conditions for more effective multi-level, multi-scale and multi-actor governance, convening diverse voices across sectors. We will partner with selected investment funds to build the field of systemic investing, guiding capital to support new, sustainable industries and economies.

Our objective: to achieve effects that are greater than the sum of their parts.

# A combination of depth and breadth to build momentum



Domains, sectors, industries, philanthropic 'verticals' and other forms of specialisation allow for depth and expertise in particular areas but contribute to fragmentation and siloes. Both breadth and depth are necessary for successful change, especially in order to achieve systemic outcomes through uncertainty and volatility. Learning from implementing place-based change can and must benefit from the learning and scaling opportunities that occur when working across multiple places and sectors. Climate KIC offers the unusual expertise of working on the combination of depth and breadth. Our systemic approach focuses on understanding and influencing the multi-dimensional relationships that shape our economies and societies by pursuing deep experiences of place-based transformation.

With patience and stamina, over the next seven years, we will assemble the elements for place-based innovation portfolios, local leadership capability building, policy innovation, sustainable and regenerative business models and financing in key locations. This will yield best practices and living case studies that set new precedents for what is possible. In parallel, we will leverage our experience working across Europe and internationally to facilitate rapid sharing, adoption, adaptation, and accelerated learning from one place and value chain to another, catalysing movements for change and mimesis.

Our objective: to join the dots within places and across multiple places.



## Emphasis on learning to create adaptive capabilities

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The blueprint for sustainable and regenerative living for nine to ten billion people remains unclear. Some elements exist. Other climate solutions are emerging though not yet incorporated into structures, institutions and economies. Moving towards a new future will be messy, with every action subject to debate and critique. As the physical, social and political effects of climate change accelerate, the ground will shift under our feet.

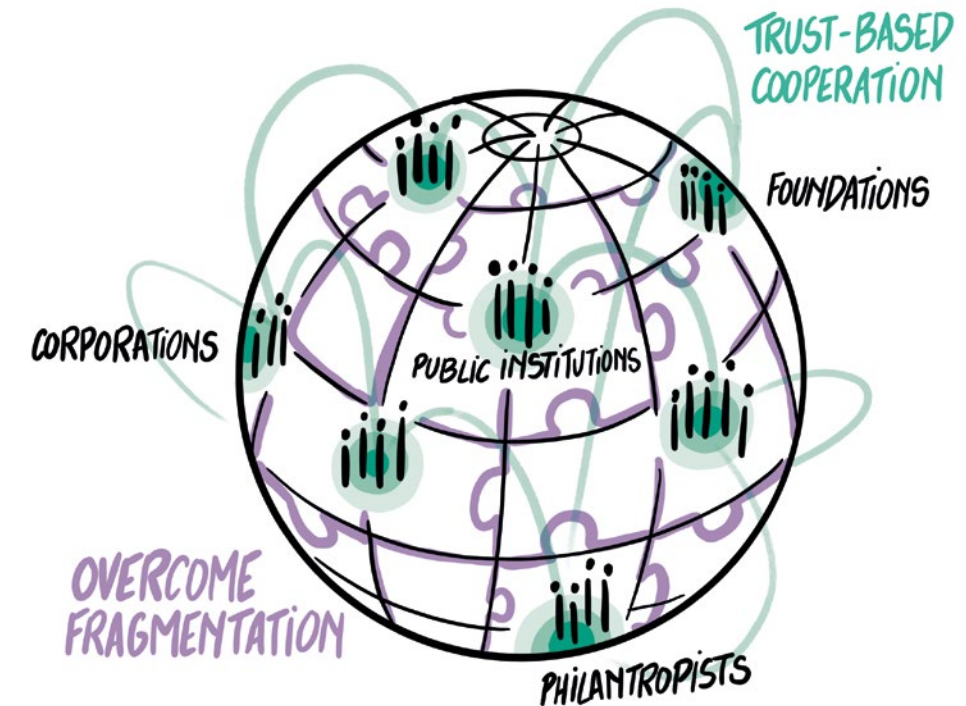
Our solution is to create a constant cycle of discovery, experimentation, and adoption, thus facilitating replication and movement-building across the short, medium and long-term. We will need to test and learn by doing. While doing, we will discover and adapt to limits, unintended consequences, and

intensifying climate change effects. We will need to find meaning in new ways of living. Building institutional capability for continuous adaptation and self-transformation, using principles of sustainability and regeneration is one of the most important contributions we can make. We will build expertise in human social systems, such as communities, cities, regions and countries and support their evolution through experimentation, discovery and emerging opportunities.

Our objective: we see innovation and learning as two sides of the same coin; when leveraged together, they spur transformation in the face of uncertainty.

## Radical collaboration to overcome fragmentation and competition

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Climate and environmental tipping points will trigger social unrest, political instability and a breakdown in social cohesion. In such a context, the friction cost of competition among organisations and communities working to solve the climate crisis becomes increasingly irresponsible. None of us can do enough alone. Now is the time to intensify the move from fragmented actions and solutions pursued in siloes. To go faster, further and more fairly, we must go together.

In the next seven years, the Climate KIC Community will redouble our efforts to collaborate and learn with others. We will maximise existing resources and collective capabilities. We will strengthen our voice to influence policy and shape climate action. The next chapter of Climate KIC will consolidate

principles of radical collaboration into sustained trust building and shared risk-taking across ecosystems. As a founding member of the Systemic Climate Action Collaborative, among other initiatives, Climate KIC affirms its commitment to address fragmentation and competition. The Collaborative convenes foundations, philanthropists, corporations, public institutions, and other donors to commit significant funding for climate action. It harnesses the complementary capabilities of diverse implementing partners and communities to achieve a symbiotic partnership.

Our objective: to facilitate efficient, effective, integrated action and a shared knowledge base, allowing us to learn continuously and collaboratively from our global experiences.



## Illustration of viable common futures to engage imagination and aspiration

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For decades, scientists and climate advocates operated under the assumption that climate risk information would lead to climate action. This has not been the case. Emissions rose even as the science became more robust. Information and knowledge alone do not catalyse change. Global inaction results from a deficit of imagination, reinforced by deliberate and well-coordinated efforts from fossil fuel and other vested interests to undermine, misinform and delay progress.

In the next seven years, Climate KIC will complement our innovation efforts with powerful storytelling, well-placed anecdotes and acts of imagining to bring new narratives

about sustainable and regenerative living to the places and value chains where we work. This is not one future nor one theory of change, but place-specific and distinctive illustrations to inspire and give meaning to work done on the ground. To change views and behaviours, we will build from existing efforts by strengthening connections across creative industries, arts, media and culture. We will build alliances in and with film and television, the metaverse, local artists and media to enter the story war.

Our objective: to guide the discussion about change toward pre-political common ground, emphasising wellbeing, sufficiency, education, work, nature, and health.

## Innovations to allow people to live well with less (starting in the Global North)

6



Climate change is a symptom of an unsustainable design for human life. To address the climate crisis in a just and respectful way, most people, particularly those in the Global North, must change their relationship to nature, learning to live well using less energy, resources and materials. This will require innovating lifestyles, drawing inspiration from natural ecosystems, addressing the uneven distribution of materials and minerals, nurturing new markets and promoting sufficiency-based economics. Climate KIC will direct climate innovation and action to reshape citizen and consumer demand while expanding the range and combinations of solutions to achieve rapid decarbonisation, sustainable development, environmental regeneration and effective climate resilience.

This is the work of human transformation. In the next seven years, we will work to accelerate that transformation through three types of interventions:

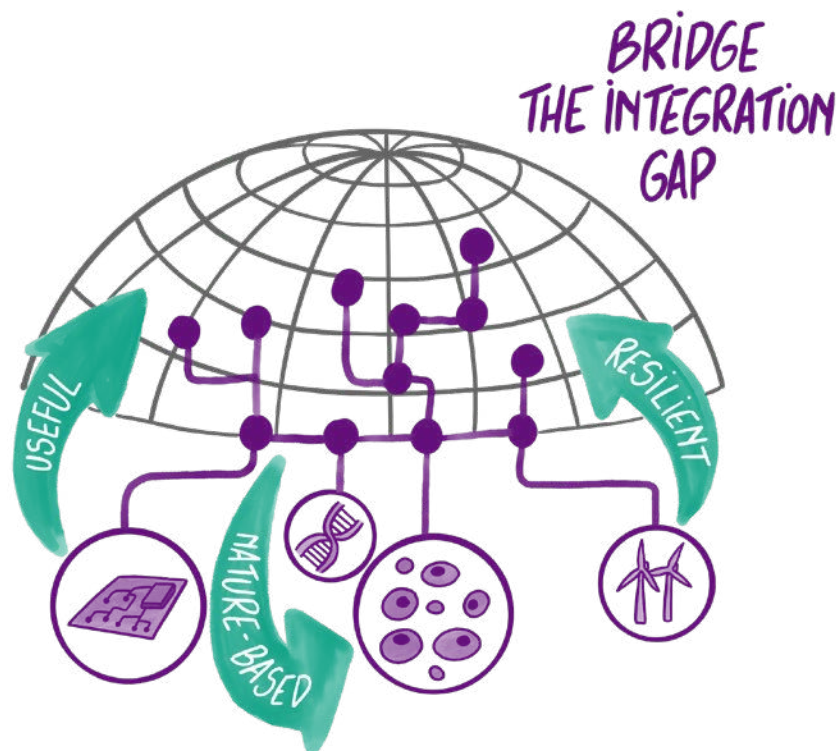
- matchmaking demand and supply of climate solutions through innovative systems approaches;
- generating more resource-efficient and regenerative solutions; and influencing the demand on resources;
- courageously addressing root causes by evolving and shifting modern expectations and requirements.

Our objective: to foster new restorative and regenerative paradigms.



## Technology advances and nature-based solutions to lower emissions and build resilience

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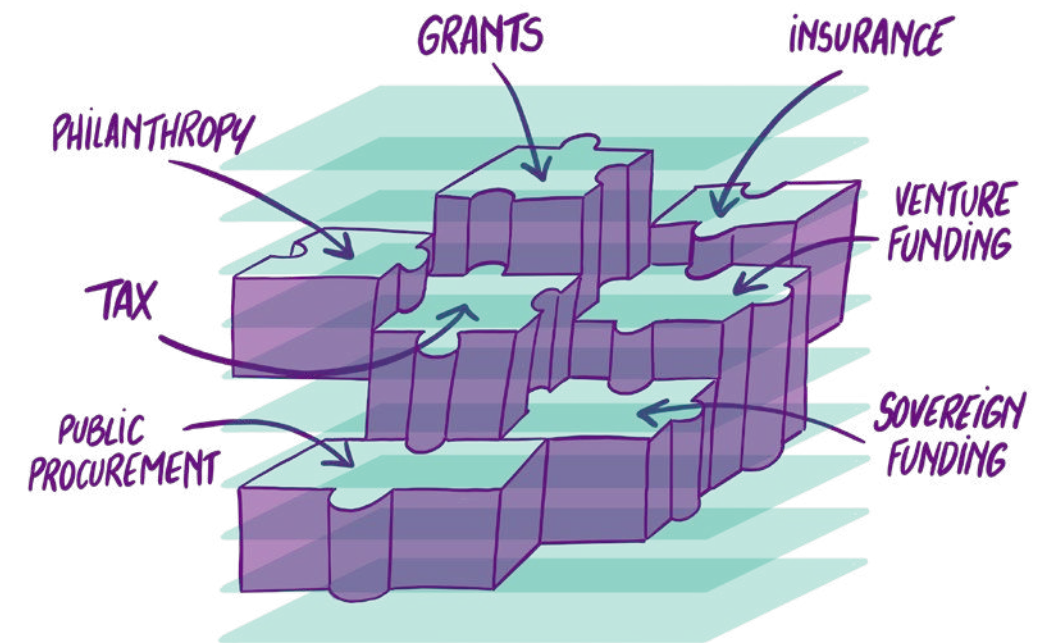
Bending the emissions curve requires sustained, on-going investment in new and emerging technologies and nature-based solutions. Recent advances in artificial intelligence (AI), other exponential technologies, biomimicry solutions, nanoscale interventions, advanced manufacturing, green chemistry, carbon extraction and psych-tech offer exciting yet daunting possibilities. Climate KIC will research emerging solutions poised to impact emissions reduction and removal, adaptation and resiliency and environmental regeneration. These are the components of urgent massive action. We will conduct global portfolio reconnaissance utilising networks and partnerships to identify relevant pathways for cities, regions and businesses to engage

with new combinations of interventions. We will support decision-makers to plan flexibly and mitigate risks around technology adoption, including unintended consequences and interdependencies such as skills development. Technology is a means to achieve sustainable, meaningful, and human and nature-centred ways of living. Policy frameworks are needed to harness exponential technologies for the common good.

Our objective: to provide insight and leadership drawn from our expertise in managing complexity while developing technology across multiple fields.

## Financial mobilisation and new institutional forms to stimulate and shape investment

8



Additional funding and finance is needed at an unprecedented scale. Each of the mid-sized European cities within the EU Cities Mission require approximately €10-15 billion to meet their climate goals by 2030. Climate KIC tests finance mobilisation strategies and the new institutional forms needed to stimulate, create, and shape these markets. We will address the challenges that occur between the 'learning' phase of innovation, often financed by public grants and philanthropy that do not require short-term financial returns, and the 'scaling' phase, where a blend of concessional public and private funding requires de-risking to 'underwrite' investment portfolios. De-risking might include new regulatory approaches, the creation of new markets such as nature-

based solutions or carbon, or increased citizen adoption of new technologies. Climate KIC will bring finance sector actors together with city, regional and national decision-makers to test, learn and scale the institutional forms and financial models that deliver both public goods (jobs, inward investment, clean air and water, healthy soils) and private value, at real cost and sustainable across short, medium and long returns.

Our objective: to unlock the trillions needed to decarbonise, build resilience and give birth to sustainable economies.



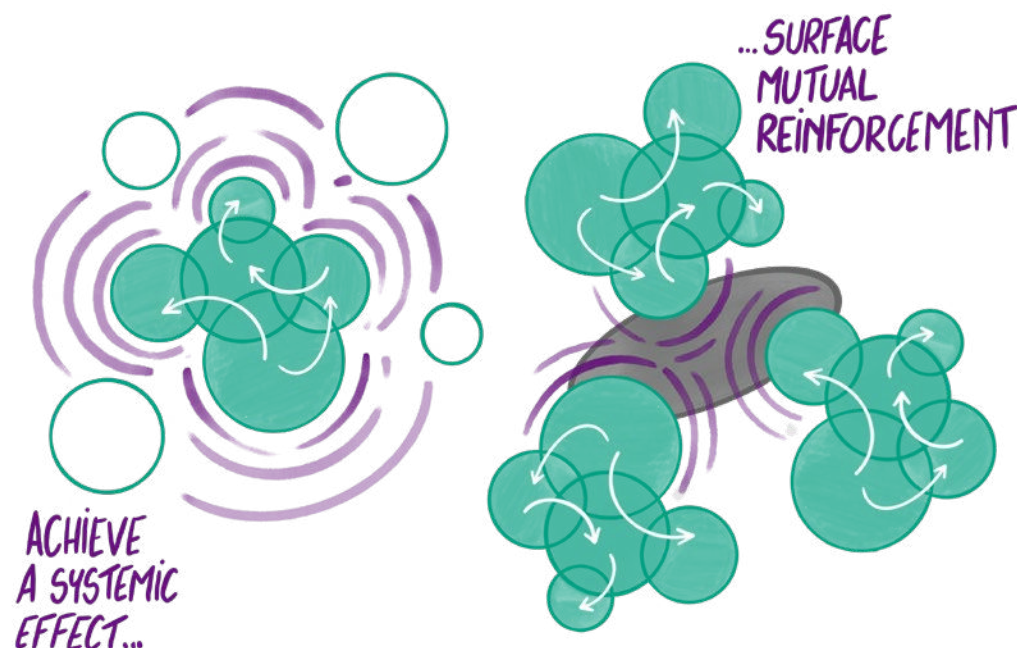
# Deep Demonstrations – a holistic systems change methodology

We believe that large-scale, place-based demonstrations of sustainable, regenerative living help societies learn how to survive and thrive.

These Deep Demonstrations form the heart of our strategy. We launched Deep Demonstrations in 2019 as test beds for ambitious climate action. Conducted in partnership with city and regional governments, institutional stakeholders, industry and local communities, Deep Demonstrations focus on place-based systems innovation designed to enable learning and adoption. The Deep Demonstration methodology supports decision makers and innovators to plan, map, analyse, engage, design, test and invest in a portfolio of solutions in cities, bioregions and value chains. Deeply rooted in the communities they serve and learn from, they demonstrate how the interrelated actions of systemic change can benefit all.

## Portfolios of innovation options

Deep Demonstrations employ a portfolio approach to accelerate experimentation and learning in specific contexts. The portfolio approach shifts attention from the merits of individual projects to the potential for integration: facilitating synergies across and between projects to effect systemic change. The methodology begins with an intention to transform a place, encompassing for example, the built environment, transportation, pollution and waste management. Diverse interventions, including those that address supply chains, fiscal incentives and regulations, behaviours, capabilities or cultural practices are selected and combined in mutually reinforcing ways,



to address interdependencies and discover how to catalyse change in that place. The portfolio approach accelerates the discovery of credible, viable, scalable and investable innovation options. Climate KIC works upstream and downstream across these portfolios to generate and source diverse innovations, build capability, and convene, orchestrate and create the conditions for systemic outcomes and effects to be understood. This includes sourcing finance and integrating policy, regulation and procurement to build markets. We partner with governments, communities and businesses to provide decision makers and investors with viable alternatives to drive transformation.

## Three building blocks are key to Deep Demonstrations:

### 1. Civic legitimacy and participation:

local communities must be involved from the outset through participatory work on innovation options, risks and rewards for all concerned.

### 2. Investment mindset:

a strategic investment mindset needs to be

cultivated among all actors to make sense of counterfactual risks and the upfront costs required to deliver multiple financial and social benefits over time, both in public goods (health, wellbeing and social capital) and in public and private wealth.

### 3. Multi-level action:

multi-level governance mechanisms and enabling regulatory frameworks are needed to set and deliver on ambitious climate goals across communities, nations, and international markets. We spotlight when and where government intervention is needed to achieve mutually reinforcing effects and seek to influence relevant policy.

Deep Demonstrations offer funders, policy makers, government and industry actors a framework for joint agenda-setting and a unique capability to bridge the investment gap.



# Climate KIC's Transformation Goals

Science tells us that we are already breaching the global warming threshold of 1.5°C agreed in the Paris Agreement. We know that human survival and wellbeing are at stake with every tenth of a degree of global warming.

Climate KIC takes seriously a moral obligation to future generations, to vulnerable communities, cultures and species to do as much as possible through innovation to limit and reverse warming and to enable communities and businesses to build resilience to climate change effects. Our strategic choices serve the transformational change we want to see.

We are deeply committed to the transformation of 400+ cities, regions and countries in Europe and beyond into climate-resilient, carbon-neutral and ecologically sustainable places. By 2030, with our support, these places will implement large-scale integrated climate action in line with transformative trajectories. They will set new standards as healthy, equitable and thriving places to live, work and play. These have the potential to lead to significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Achieving the decarbonisation objective of the EU Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission, for example, on scope 1 and 2 emissions alone, would mean 0.7 gigatons of avoided emissions between now and 2040.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Based on study by Material Economics, average city with 100K people with emissions of 390KT. Assuming linear decline of emissions from now until 2030, and ten years of net zero emissions.

Our estimate of total emissions avoided potential through the work that Climate KIC is doing has the following targets:

- **1 gigaton of GHG emissions**
- **70 million citizens thriving in safe, healthy and climate-resilient environments**
- **30 million hectares of land-based ecosystems restored through locally led solutions**

By 2030, we expect to see the following key signals of transformation in the places where we work:

1. Novel partnerships of leaders, citizens, the private sector, civil society and public institutions are mobilised towards delivering climate targets in a just way.
2. Public, private and institutional investments averaging approximately 10-15 billion euros per city are leveraged and allocated for ambitious large-scale programmes and practice on the ground.
3. Shifts in prevailing behaviours, norms, narratives and values.
4. Active citizen engagement in the design, testing and scaling of local and global solutions.



**Collaborative learning powers all these levers of change.** New relationships and radical collaboration will guide us to work effectively in the “messy middle”, acting to close the implementation gap and providing the ‘glue’ of systems change.

While our focus remains in Europe, learning and action can be accelerated through thoughtful collaboration with Global South actors. Implementation and policy initiatives will seek to build equitable and effective partnerships between Europe and Global South nations. Adverse climate impacts resulting from European consumption, production and management need to be considered and tackled in our broader EU initiatives.

In the next seven years, we will help bring about **Collaboration Outcomes** in and across places we work. These include:

- Greater diversity in who we and our partners engage with, particularly for our work impacting marginalised communities and citizens of the Global South.

- Bold, distributed and commons-orientated leadership of individuals and institutions.
- ‘Learning by doing’ innovations such as policy labs, new financial models, new technology adoption, and new market development at scale change incentives structures, opportunities and norms.
- Dissemination of insights gleaned from transformative pilots and large-scale demonstrations, contribute to iterative experimentation across and within distinct geographies.

Climate KIC is committed to not just tracking the quality of our engagement and the impact we have in the world but to nurture an understanding on how systemic change is unfolding and the contribution we make to it. Our impact framework guides our organisational efforts and will evolve over time as we continue learn how to observe, catalyse and connect systemic change outcomes.



# Organising and planning for complex action

Systems change requires interconnected transformations – across scales and siloes, across hearts and minds. Our work takes shape at the level of place-based innovation where we look for integration and leverage points across in all relevant sectors.

## The Role of Climate KIC

In this work, Climate KIC acts as an orchestrator, coordinating components to ensure that the outcome of the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. We instigate new initiatives with ambition and intent to transform. We design and facilitate experimentation; enable and support learning and mindset shifts through reflection, sensemaking and knowledge generation. We support decision making, mobilise finance and influence policy making. We actively encourage new economic thinking and market creation to accelerate transformation. We help develop solutions.

We commit to resource and invest in the enabling components of systems innovation for transformative change, including capabilities to deliver, learn, engage, lead, and empower. Our team of talented and passionate people, from all over the world, will work with the Climate KIC Community and partners to cultivate trust, nurture new relationships and the conditions for effective collaboration.

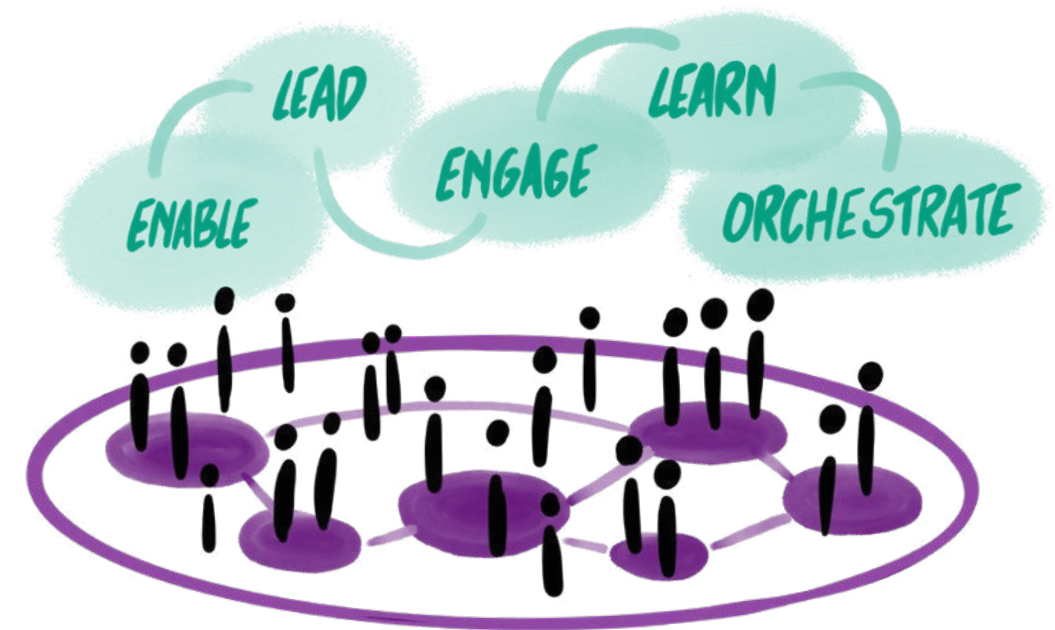
By coordination of the parts and 'orchestration', we refer to: connecting and integrating solutions and related interventions; aligning policies, decision makers, and users; ensuring that scalable business models are embedded in enabling infrastructures;

shaping regulatory direction, government accountabilities, and institutional redesign; mobilising appropriate capital; and working through evidence, storytelling and skill-building to catalyse shifts in mindset and behaviour. These interventions act intentionally on the parts, the relationships, and the rules of human systems, and seek to alter mindsets and mental models. In this way we work to lift the ambition of decision-makers and communities to make meaningful change in a context of extreme urgency.

## Capabilities and Ways of Working

Climate KIC is organised to work with a 'team of teams' model so as to maximise our agility and our responsiveness. Our work is multi-faceted and complex and demands ways of working that are effective in complexity.

Our objective is to be an organisation that develops and enables the skills needed to amplify innovation to achieve systems change, including deep listening, creativity, adaptive learning and integrative mindsets. We draw inspiration from deliberately developmental, 'teal' organisations, holacracy and leadership in complexity approaches. We seek to enable every team member in Climate KIC to work effectively through distributed leadership, self-management, and intelligent risk-taking.





**Climate KIC seeks to be...**  
**an organisation that engages in diverse but complementary work – a sense of the whole and the parts.**

<b>Good at serving the specific needs of real places:</b> change is complex and must be made meaningful by working at the hyperlocal scale and at the same time connecting that learning to regional, national and global scales.	<b>Good at innovation:</b> experimenting, designing, developing and taking action with unexpected actors and unknown things and making lessons available	<b>Good at attracting and managing the resources for innovation:</b> deployment of public and private funds; and new ways of blending financing for impact.
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**Climate KIC seeks to nurture...**  
**a coherent culture and a shared set of principles, norms and ways of working** characterized by a strong emphasis on human-centred development, appreciation for diversity, growth mindset, empowerment and deliberate learning.

<b>Collaborative, cross-disciplinary work</b> as the means by which we get things done.	<b>Distributed responsibility and accountability</b> close to the fields where we are working; attentive relationship management, listening and sensemaking skills.	<b>Taking care of one another, of those we work with and of the world we make.</b> This translates to optimal use of resources for impact and responsible risk taking.	<b>Agility to respond, build capability and contribute different perspectives</b> to work.	<b>An institutional capacity for organisational learning to engage</b> effectively in systems change and to maximise the value of being a community organisation.
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## The Role of the Climate KIC Community

The power of the Climate KIC Community lies in its diversity, commitment and action orientation. The community consists of members across three broad categories – demand, supply and enablers – whose purpose is to work actively together to create the conditions for transformative innovation in support of the mission of Climate KIC as a whole. The objective of the Community is to achieve thriving, resilient places to live and work.

As a whole, the Community offers a transformational force to support the most ambitious leaders to create change faster than predicted. Community members connect with each other – city to city, region to region, industry to industry, solution providers with challenge owners – to take climate action together and discover what is possible. Community members work together to match solutions to demand, to lift ambition and to deliver transformative solutions to help meet climate goals. We work to integrate and combine solutions in local contexts. The Community is connected to and interacts with the EU policy and regulatory landscape, shaping markets in the EU and beyond. Community members learn from each other, generate insights and knowledge and work together to bring about funding at the scale and speed required.

## Geographic Scope

Climate KIC embraces the global and interconnected nature of the climate challenge and therefore our work. Our scope of reflection and interaction with others is worldwide; the scope of our action is grounded in the places and partnerships where we believe we can make a significant difference.

In the next seven years, Climate KIC will act to realise European climate, nature, social and industrial policy commitments in European member states and in countries neighbouring Europe. In addition, we will enable climate action and environmental regeneration in countries across the world, through local and regional partnerships, with particular attention to the Global South. We will act in support of European commitments to balanced partnership in service of sustainable development and climate resilience in Africa, Latin America, India and South-East Asia.

As a European organisation, we acknowledge the responsibility of our origins. We will leverage our experience and expertise to nurture innovations that address the impact of the North and its consumption patterns on the South through regulation, procurement, materials and supply chains, creating systemic mechanisms to ensure accountability. We commit to local impact and support for vulnerable communities through action partnerships, knowledge exchange and collaborative learning, focusing our work in support of systemic, inclusive and equitable transformation. We are keen to learn, reflect and build on local competencies and the wisdom of diverse partnerships, ready and able to act where needs and opportunities arise to achieve consequential, systemic outcomes.



# Call to Action

At a time of global emergency, this is an urgent call to join forces with us in enabling and financing transformative change.

We are all at risk from the climate emergency. Given the slow pace of global action and the exponential effects of atmospheric warming and biodiversity collapse, we now face a series of deadly events including food and water systems crises, extreme livelihood volatility and the breakdown of social, economic and political stability across the world. Destruction of value, stranded assets, mass migration and conflict are already on the horizon. We are not prepared for the consequences of our inaction, nor are we prepared to change, rebalance and restore.

And yet we still have a window to act. We can mobilise individuals and communities to think and live differently. We can achieve structural change in business models and industry models. We can direct our financial resources into the sustainable economies of the future, regeneration of the natural environment and societal wellbeing.

It is time now to make every effort to raise ambition and to expand the space of climate action. Systems thinking and acting are essential to achieve structural change. We need innovation, skills, transformational mindsets, new economic and material models, creative destruction of the old, and radical collaboration to bring about the new. Climate KIC is committed to building place-based and value-chain based evidence of how to live sustainably and restore our planet. We want transformation to go viral, providing the precedents, best practices, and investable assets needed to accelerate us toward positive tipping points for change. We know that self-transformation is possible. We renew our commitment to transformation, with urgency.

Working together, we can contribute to breakthrough progress on climate action and help build prosperous, inclusive, climate resilient societies where people can flourish with respect for the living systems on which our future depends. The time is now.







[www.climate-kic.org](http://www.climate-kic.org)

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