Widening Impacts
Spring 2025 Webinar Series

FinEst Centre
for Smart Cities

FINEST CENTRE's Story

From Idea Conception to Post-Project Ambitions and Vision

Date: 21 Feb. 2025 Friday

Time: 10:00 – 11:00 CET

Presenters: Prof. Ralf-Martin Soe (teaming proposal and project, 10 min)
Prof. Einari Kisel (FinEst Centre pilots, 10 min)
Dr. Kalle Toiskallio (FinEst research agenda and MAPIT project, 10 min)

Registration: Link

Abstract: FinEst Twins is an EU Teaming project that is building the first global cross-border smart city centre of excellence – FinEst Centre for Smart Cities. The project is funded by the European Union´s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, under the grant agreement No. 856602, by the European Regional Development Fund, and the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research.

The objectives for this webinar are to

- Increase the quality of proposals submitted to the 2025 Teaming call by disseminating best-practices and lessons-learned from elaborating the FinEst Twins proposal and building the FinEst Centre for Smart Cities;
- Increase awareness of and support for the FinEst Twins project specifically, and the Widening Programme more generally;
- Catalyze new collaborations;
- Support the formation of an EH Community.

The primary target audiences are

- Applicants to the 2025 Teaming call;
- Other Widening projects and their external stakeholders;
- Stakeholders with interests in Smart Cities specifically and the Green Transition more generally;
- Stakeholders for the EU Widening Program, including those with interests / activities in writing EU proposals and executing EU projects.

The webinar will begin with the proposal background that led to the FinEst Twins project's concept and consortium, cover the development of the proposal and execution of the project to date, and conclude with the post-project ambitions and vision. The webinar will include key characteristics of the proposal and project including lessons-learned. The webinar is intended to consist of a ~30 min. presentation and ~20 min. of Q&A and open discussion.

About FINEST CENTRE FOR SMART CITIES

Keywords: Smart City; Built Environment; Smart Energy; Smart Mobility; ICT; Urban Analytics; Urban Data; Governance; Digital Single Market; Knowledge Transfer; Cross-Border Services

Summary: The FinEst Centre for Smart Cities (FinEst Centre) is an international research and innovation centre enhancing urban life through smart, human-centric, research-based solutions. At the core of our work are our R&I (Research and Innovation) teams from Estonia and Finland. We connect researchers, city officials, residents, and leaders through collaborative events, projects and high-level piloting programmes (https://finestcentre.eu/innovation-with-cities/pilot-projects). Since 2020, we've piloted six smart city solutions in seven cities, launched a new pilot in 2024, signed licensing deals with two companies and developed two spin-offs. We've published 450+ research papers, supported 50+ PhD students, secured funding from 15+ competitive grants, and delivered over 80 deliverables for the FinEst Twins H2020 Teaming project.

Objectives:

- The FinEst Centre, in collaboration with high-level and experienced researchers, urban developers, and city officials, develops innovative and research-based tools for city planners and decision-makers to create smarter cities and improve living environments across Europe and beyond. By piloting these solutions in partnership with Estonian and foreign cities, we create stronger cross-border collaboration.
- The FinEst Centre is partnering in total of 100 pan-European urban research and innovation pilots in gross volume over 100 million euros carried out between 2021 – 2028. Namely:
  - ✓ FinEst Piloting Programme (15M€, https://finestcentre.eu/innovation-with-cities/pilot-projects)
  - ✓ NetZeroCities (32M€, https://netzerocities.eu)
  - ✓ SGA-NZC (52M€, https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101121530)
  - ✓ European Data Space for Smart Communities (30M€, https://www.ds4sscc.eu).
- In the FinEst Twins project, Finland, especially Helsinki region (Aalto University and Forum Virium Helsinki) as a more developed R&I country have continuously been supporting Estonia to look for successful R&I work and processes, including R&I culture and applying for the R&I funds.

Follow, More Information, and Contact:

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/finest-centre-for-smart-cities/
Project Website: https://finestcentre.eu/
EU Cordis Website: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/856602
Contact: https://finestcentre.eu/contact

The setup of the FinEst Centre for Smart Cities is funded by the European Union´s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, under the grant agreement No. 856602, by the European Regional Development Fund and the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research.

About the Widening Impacts Spring 2025 Webinar Series

Background: The Widening Impacts Spring 2025 Webinar Series was seeded by the SolarHub Excellence Hubs project with an overall aim to increase the impacts of EU Widening Projects by creating a platform for Widening Projects to showcase their capacities, activities, and impacts to a large and diverse set of key stakeholders for the EU's Widening Program. The webinar series' specific objectives are to

- Catalyze inter-project collaborations;
- Create new opportunities by reaching new audiences;
- Increase ecosystem and hub knowledgeability;
- Gain competitive advantage by sharing knowledge & best-practices;
- Better exploit project results and improve project impacts;
- Achieve critical mass when engaging with key funding and policy decision makers at institutional, regional, and national levels.

Watch Completed Spring 2025 Webinars:

Jan. 31 **SolarHub's Story: From Idea Conception to Post-Project Ambitions and Vision**
Watch SolarHub is a Greek-Turkish Solar Energy Excellence Hub to Advance the European Green Deal

Scheduled Webinars for Spring 2025: All webinars are nominally scheduled for 10-11 CET with time to be confirmed. The 1st announcement for each webinar that includes registration information will be released approximately 10 days before the webinar.

Feb. 21 **FINEST TWINS:** Establishment of Smart City Center of Excellence

Mar. 14 **INNO2MARE:** Strengthening the capacity for excellence of Slovenian and Croation innovation ecosystems to support the digital and green transitions of maritime regions

May **WaterWise:** An Excellence Hub on Water in the Circular Economy (*exact date To Be Determined*).

June **METACITIES:** MetaCities Excellence Hub in South-Eastern Europe (*exact date To Be Determined*).

Webinars To Be Scheduled: The following projects have indicated their interest in organizing a webinar, where the dates and times for these webinars are *To Be Determined*.

ADDIT-CE Alzheimer's Disease Diagnostics Innovation and Translation to Clinical Practice in Central Europe

BCThubs Blue Culture Technology Excellence Hubs in EU Widening Member States

CARONICA Carbon Initiative for Climate-resilient Agriculture

CHAngeing Connected Hubs in Ageing: Healthy Living to Protect Cerebrovascular Function

CHESS Cyber-security Excellence Hub in Estonia and South Moravia

COALition Promoting Innovation Excellence in Transformation of Coal Regions to Climate-Neutral, Thriving Economies

DxHub Connecting Greek and Portuguese Innovation Ecosystems to Develop a Hub for Infectious Disease Diagnostic Solutions at the Point-of-Care-Tackling Cross-Border Threats

ECHO Energy Communities excellence Hubs: catalyzing energy innOvation ecosystems

Excel4Pro Strengthening the Capacity of Excellence Hubs of Türkiye, Greece, and Ukraine to Support Innovation Ecosystem of Novel Foods Based on Plant Proteins

GeneH Excellence Hub for Innovation in Gene Therapy

GlaCerHub	Glass ceramic innovation ecosystem for implementation of new research directions in applications
HERIFORGE	Cultural heritage and immersive technologies for innovation forge
LASER-PRO	Excellent laser technologies for the Sustainable Prosperity of Europe
MarTe	Marine Technology Excellence Hub for sustainable blue economy in Baltics
VELES	Strenghtening the South-East Europe Smart Health Regional Excellence and Boosting the Innovation Potential

Additional Webinars: If this webinar series proves successful, it will be opened to other Widening and Widening-Relevant Projects with an ambition to *Leave No Widening Project Behind*.

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YouTube Channel: http://www.youtube.com/@WideningImpacts
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/wideningimpacts
Website: Coming Soon to http://wideningimpacts.eu
Contact: Derek Baker, derek.baker@odtugunam.org

Supporting Projects: The Widening Impacts Spring 2025 Webinar series is supported by the following cluster of Excellence Hubs (EH) projects working to create an EH Community, with all projects being funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation program with GA number in parentheses: ADDIT-CE (101087124); BCThubs (101087146); CARBONICA (101087233); CHAngeing (101087071); CHESS (101087529); COALition (101087022); DxHub (101186531); ECHO (101185725); Excel4Pro (101186662); GeneH (101186939); GlaCerHub (101087154); HERIFORGE (101186573); INNO2MARE (101087348); LASER-PRO (101186838); MarTe (101186498); METACITIES (101087257); SolarHub (101086110); VELES (101087483); WaterWise (101184151).

Privacy Statement: All activities that are part of the Widening Impacts Spring 2025 Webinar series are committed to compliance with GDPR Regulations.

Informed Consent: By attending a webinar all participants consent to the webinars being recorded with the intent to make this recording publicly available using an appropriate channel such as YouTube.

Personal Data: Personal Data will be recorded to manage registration and participation. Participants who Opt-In may receive follow-up communications. The collected data will be used for project reporting purposes to the European Commission (EC). Any data shared outside the webinar organizers (specifically, FINEST TWINS, SolarHub and supporting EH projects) and the EC, such as for project Communication, Dissemination, or Exploitation activities, will first be anonymized by removing information that can be used to identify unique individuals (e.g., email addresses and names). The data collected will not be used for any other purposes outside those stated above.