

Widening Impacts Spring 2025 Webinar Series

COALition's Story

From Idea Conception to Post-Project Ambitions and Vision



Date: Friday, 07 Mar. 2025

Time: 10:00 – 11:00 CET

Presenters: Chrysovalantis Ketikidis

Registration: [Link](#)

Abstract: *COALition: Promoting Innovation Excellence in Transformation of Coal Regions to Climate-Neutral, Thriving Economies* is a European Union project funded under the Horizon WIDERA call. The objectives for this webinar are to:

- Support the formation of an EH Community;
- Increase awareness of and support for COALition specifically, and EH projects and the Widening Programme more generally;
- Catalyze new collaborations;
- Disseminate best-practices and lessons-learned from elaborating the COALition proposal and executing the COALition project.

The primary target audiences are:

- Other EH projects and their external stakeholders;
- Stakeholders involved in the energy and green transitions;
- 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 COALition concept and consortium creation, 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 project including lessons-learned how the consortium will convert the challenges into solutions. The webinar is intended to consist of a ~35 min. presentation and ~15 min. of Q&A and open discussion.



COALition has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 101087022. Views and opinions expressed are those of the project only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

About COALition

Keywords: Sustainable Energy; R&I Strategy; Coal Regions; Just Transition; Regional Innovation Ecosystems; Excellence Hubs; Joint Action & Investment Plan; Capacity Building; Sustainability Systemic; Energy collection; Conversion and storage; Renewable Energy.

Summary: The EU-funded COALition project is implemented in the three carbon intensive regions of Western Macedonia (Greece), Centru (Romania) and Southeastern Bulgaria. The project will establish one excellence hub in each region; the aim is to deliver support in R&I, entrepreneurship and reskilling/upskilling of the affected workforce, as part of a European initiative to strengthen regional innovation excellence in placed-based innovation ecosystems by cross-border collaboration on a common strategy and alongside value adding chains. Since participating regions are situated in the heart of ecosystems in transition, challenges and opportunities therein will be dealt within the context and potential synergies with the Just Transition Fund to raise the level of innovation and financially support excellence in sectors related to sustainable energy.

Objectives: Energy efficiency, Renewable Energy Sources, Energy Storage/Batteries, Hydrogen, Efficient Buildings, climate neutrality, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and decarbonization of industries & coal regions are in the heart of European Policies for the new programming period (i.e., Green Deal, EU Strategic Energy Technology Plan, Twin Industrial Transition etc.). Many financial instruments have been setup to support these objectives that have a common denominator in sustainable energy. EU alliances across the value chains (e.g., EBA), IPCEIs (e.g., Decarbonization & Hydrogen, Batteries) and Research & Policy Platforms e.g., Coal Regions in Transition), are dedicated to facilitate the advancement of R&I in the field through the collective effort of EU members, and enable the transformation of EU regions to climate neutral, thriving economies.

This context finds a lot of countries striving to comply, especially challenging those that traditionally have economies heavily dependent on fossil fuel mining and exploitation; a major shift has to be done in a short amount of time, putting at risk the balances in the local economies and making years-long expertise and well-established skills become obsolete. COALition intends to strengthen the regional innovation ecosystems in coal-dependent areas through the creation of regional excellence hubs and the definition of a joint strategic agenda for sustainable energy so as to facilitate their transition in a just and inclusive way. The regions have been carefully selected (Western Macedonia – GR; Centru – RO; and Southeastern - BG) among the under transition EU states that are also characterized as Widening, in an attempt to maximize the long-term impact of the joint R&I strategy that will be developed within the project, as those territories are about to amass large amounts of funding and COALition aims to create multiplier effects in the given investments by attracting and mobilizing external investments.

Follow, More Information, and Contact:

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/coalition-hubs>

Project Website: <https://www.coalition-hubs.eu/>

EU Cordis Website: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101087022>

Contact: Chrysovalantis Ketikidis, ketikidis@certh.gr

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

Feb. 21 FINEST Centre: From Idea Conception to Post-Project Ambitions and Vision

[Watch](#)

FinEst Centre is a Teaming Project to Establish a Smart City Center of Excellence

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.

Mar. 7 COALition: Promoting Innovation Excellence in Transformation of Coal Regions to Climate-Neutral, Thriving Economies

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

Mar. 28 CARBONICA: Carbon Initiative for Climate-resilient Agriculture

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

June 13 CHAngeing: Connected Hubs in Ageing: Healthy Living to Protect Cerebrovascular Function

June xx 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

CHESS Cyber-security Excellence Hub in Estonia and South Moravia

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** Strengthening 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

Email List*: <https://groups.google.com/g/wideningimpacts>

*At most 1 email/week using Google Groups

Website: <http://www.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.