



European Institute of  
Innovation & Technology

A body of the European Union



# EIT WATER



Appointment of

## EIT Water Chief Executive Officer

May 2026



# Chief Executive Officer

## Purpose of the role

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of EIT Water holds overall executive responsibility for leading the organisation in delivering its mission to strengthen Europe's water innovation ecosystem. The role is accountable for strategic leadership, operational excellence, financial sustainability, and stakeholder engagement, ensuring that EIT Water delivers measurable impact aligned with the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and EU policy objectives.

The organisation is being created in 2026. The appointed CEO will have a pivotal role in the establishment of the entire organisation, putting the strategy and vision of members in the ecosystem into practice and building relationships and establishing trust with funders and key stakeholders in the sector. It is a start-up environment where agility, fast-thinking and strong leadership from the front will be crucial for success.

**Reporting to:** Supervisory Board

**Location:** EIT Water is an established Danish Association based in Aarhus and the CEO will be expected to maintain a regular and visible presence in Aarhus. Travel to member sites will be an essential part of this position.

A prerequisite for this role is a work permit for the European Union. Because of the focus on Europe it would be favourable if the successful candidate were from a member state country of the EU, or has extensive experience in working in an EU environment.

## Key Responsibilities

### Strategic Leadership

- Position EIT Water as a leading European platform for innovation in water, marine and maritime and related sectors.
- Develop and implement EIT Water's long-term strategy in line with EIT objectives, EU priorities, and stakeholder expectations.
- Translate strategic goals into actionable programmes, partnerships, and performance targets.
- Establish effective and transparent channels of coordination, communication and reporting within the organisation and with the EIT, key stakeholders and other potential funding bodies.

### Governance & Accountability

- Report to and work closely with the Supervisory and Governing Assembly, ensuring transparent decision-making and compliance with governance frameworks.
- Ensure full compliance with EIT regulations, Horizon Europe rules, EU financial and ethical standards.
- Prepare strategic plans, annual work programmes, budgets, and performance reports for approval.

### Business Development & Revenue Generation

- Lead EIT Water's business development strategy to diversify and grow revenue streams beyond core EIT funding.
- Drive the development of scalable, value-creating offerings for members, including innovation services, programmes, and platforms.
- Negotiate and oversee strategic commercial and quasi-commercial agreements in line with EIT rules and public funding requirements.
- Ensure long-term financial sustainability through portfolio diversification and proactive pipeline management.



## Operational & Financial Management

- Provide strategic oversight of organisational operations and financial performance, ensuring effective resource allocation, strong governance, risk management, and long-term sustainability.

## Ecosystem & Partnership Development

- Build, manage, and strengthen partnerships with industry, academia, research organisations, startups, investors, and public authorities.
- Represent EIT Water at European and international level, acting as the primary ambassador to EU institutions, policymakers, and key stakeholders.
- Foster cross-KIC collaboration and integration with broader European innovation ecosystems.

## Innovation, Education, & Impact

- Lead and oversee the organisation's innovation, education, and venture programmes, ensuring high-impact delivery, robust performance measurement, and continuous improvement aligned with strategic objectives.

## People & Organisational Leadership

- Lead, inspire, and develop a high-performing, diverse, and mission-driven executive and staff team.
- Establish a strong organisational culture based on integrity, collaboration, inclusion, and excellence.
- Ensure effective talent management, succession planning, and organisational development.

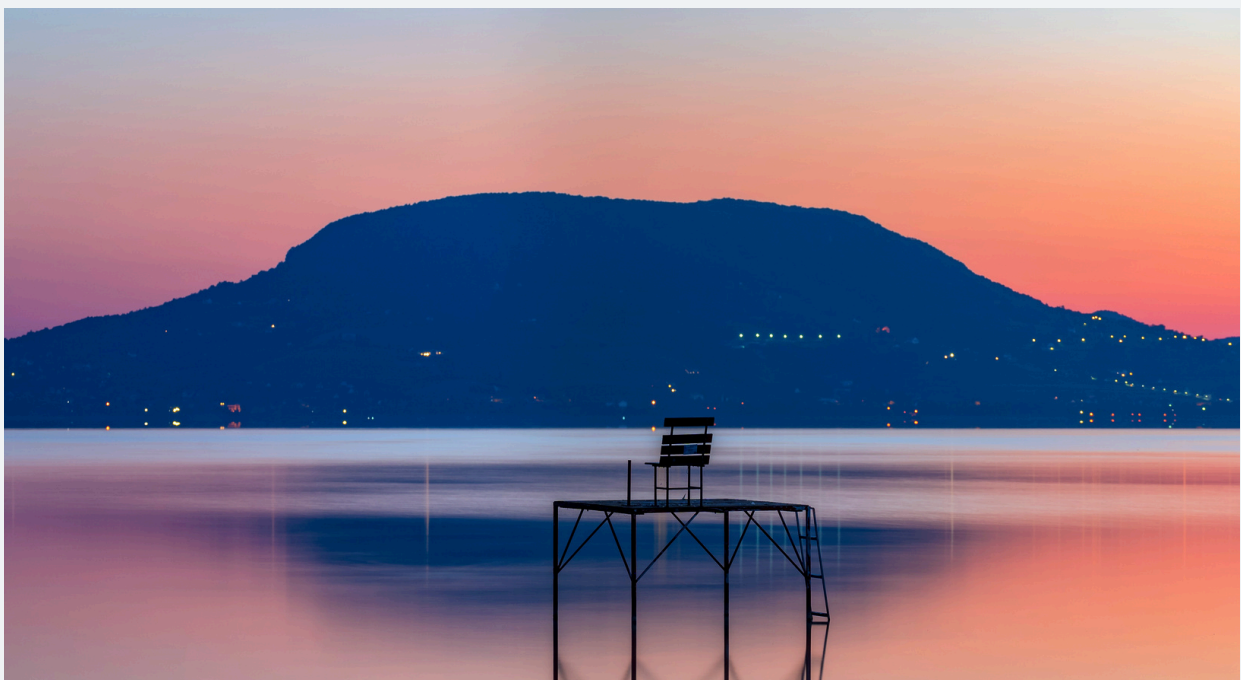


## Key Competencies & Experience

- Demonstrated 15 years of senior executive leadership experience
- Documented domain experience and knowledge within the water, marine or maritime sectors and ecosystems.
- Evidence based experience in entrepreneurship, scale-up ecosystems, and venture or innovation financing.
- Proven experience managing EU-funded programmes or operating within EU institutional frameworks.
- Strong strategic, financial, and operational leadership capabilities.
- Demonstrated ability to work with boards, public authorities, and senior external stakeholders.
- Excellent communication, negotiation, and representation skills at European and international level.
- Track record in building international partnerships across industry, academia, and the public sector.
- Relevant experience of developing networks with investors with the aim of attracting additional financial resources and investment, or the knowledge and capability to develop these networks, and experience of managing large-scale budgets.
- Fluency in English (required); additional European languages highly desirable.

## Leadership Attributes

- Visionary and impact-driven leader with strong ethical standards.
- Politically astute, collaborative, and culturally aware.
- Decisive, resilient, and comfortable operating in ambiguity.
- Strong commitment to sustainability, innovation, and public value creation.





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