

TRANSFORMATIVE INNOVATION CAMP SERBIA 2026

From Smart Specialisation to Transformation: Tackling Societal Challenges through Innovation

Belgrade, 20 October 2026

Science and Technology Park Belgrade

WHAT

The Transformative Innovation Camp Serbia 2026 is a participatory policy dialogue bringing together innovation-support organisations, policy-makers, researchers, businesses, and other key stakeholders to explore how Serbia's research and innovation system can better respond to major societal challenges and contribute to longer-term transformative change.

The Camp is organised as a special session of the International Scientific Conference on Innovation Economics, Policy and Entrepreneurship, hosted by the Institute of Economic Sciences, in cooperation with the Science and Technology Park Belgrade and the SAIGE project. The activity is implemented within the framework of the Horizon Europe POLICY ENLARGE project, supporting dialogue, learning and capacity building around new approaches to research and innovation policy.

Building on the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP) that has accompanied the development and implementation of Serbia's Smart Specialisation Strategy 2020–2027, the Camp takes this participatory approach a step further by introducing a stronger transformative innovation perspective.

WHY

Serbia's current Smart Specialisation Strategy 2020–2027 is entering its final year of implementation. This creates an important opportunity to reflect not only on what has been achieved, but also on how the next generation of Smart Specialisation can respond to a changing economic, technological and societal environment.

The emerging S3 2.0 approach places greater emphasis on transformation, sustainability, resilience and the capacity of research and innovation systems to address complex societal challenges. Preparing the next strategic cycle therefore requires moving beyond the identification of priority domains towards questions of directionality, coordination, policy experimentation and transformative change.

The Transformative Innovation Camp provides a space to begin this discussion. Rather than attempting to design the next Strategy, it will bring together different parts of the Serbian innovation system to explore selected challenges and identify possible directions for future policy action.

In this sense, the Camp represents both a contribution to the final phase of implementation of the current S3 and an exploratory input into discussions on Serbia's future Smart Specialisation framework beyond 2027.

HOW

The Camp is designed as an intensive, small-scale participatory process based on three real policy challenges. Participants will work in three groups, bringing together perspectives from government, research

organisations, innovation-support institutions, businesses, startups and other relevant stakeholders. Each group will explore one challenge through a facilitated process that begins with understanding the problem and identifying systemic barriers and opportunities, before developing transformative ideas and translating them into possible actions and next steps.

The main objective is to identify promising directions for experimentation and policy action, relevant actors and possible pathways towards longer-term transformation.

CHALLENGES TO BE EXPLORED

The Camp will focus on three interconnected challenges relevant to the future development of Serbia's research and innovation system:

- **Challenge 1** – How can Serbia move from fragmented innovation support towards coordinated ecosystem action that enables innovation, scaling and responses to shared societal challenges?
- **Challenge 2** – How can Serbia better mobilise its scientific and research capacities to address societal challenges and contribute to transformative change?
- **Challenge 3** – How can Serbia strengthen regional innovation ecosystems by leveraging regional strengths and capabilities to advance national smart specialisation priorities and address place-based societal challenges?

AGENDA

Time	Programme
09:00-09:15	Welcome and Opening Remarks • Marija Gnjatović, State secretary, Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation • Viktor Nedović, Serbia S3 coordinator, Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Growth Entrepreneurship (SAIGE) Project, Director • Dijana Štrbac, Institute of Economic Sciences, POLICY ENLARGE project
09:15-09:50	Opening Perspective: From Smart Specialisation to Transformative Innovation • Alasdair Reid, Executive Director, European Future Innovation Systems (EFIS)
09:50-10:00	Introduction to the Camp methodology, challenge groups and expected outcomes • Lazar Živković, Institute of Economic Sciences
10:00-11:00	Challenge Group Work – Part I: Understanding the Challenge • Participants work in three parallel groups to explore the selected challenges, identify underlying problems and opportunities for transformative change.
11:00-11:15	Coffee Break
11:15-12:20	Challenge Group Work – Part II: From Challenges to Action

	Groups develop and discuss possible solutions and interventions, identify relevant actors and consider practical steps towards implementation.
12:20-12:30	Camp Wrap-up Brief reflections and key messages from the three challenge groups
12:30-13:30	Lunch Break
13:45-14:15	Transformative Innovation Camp Highlights Conference Plenary Presentation of the solutions and key messages emerging from the three challenge groups.