



CCRI Twinning Programme

The CCRI Twinning Programme offers cities and regions across Europe the opportunity to engage in **peer learning** and **knowledge exchange**. It pairs cities and regions at **similar levels of advancement** in their **circular economy** journeys, creating space for them to share experiences, explore best practices, and collaborate on common challenges.

The Twinning Programme complements the range of services offered by the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative.

What is the Twinning about?

Each one-to-one Twinning Journey pairs two cities or regions with shared interests, ensuring meaningful and actionable collaboration by focusing on a specific, clearly defined **topic**. The journey is **structured and facilitated**, with a dedicated facilitator provided by the CCRI, guiding pairs through a series of meetings, and supporting independent self-organised exchanges and work to ensure that learning objectives are achieved.

Through these activities, participating cities and regions will be in the position to accelerate the implementation of **circular systemic solutions** by learning from one another's **good practices** and **challenges**.

What will be the topic of the Twinning?

When applying to the programme, **each Twin will indicate** the specific topic they wish to focus on. This could include a sector, value chain, policy lever, theme, a particular challenge or solution, or a combination of these. There is ample **flexibility**, allowing cities and regions to propose a topic that aligns with their priorities and efforts as practitioners in the circular economy.

Twins will be paired based on the alignment of their proposed topics, ensuring that the exchanges are relevant and provide meaningful opportunities for collaboration.

What activities does the Twinning include?

The Twinning includes a combination of facilitated and unfacilitated exchanges and independent work.

- **Preparatory homework.** Each Twin will prepare a brief presentation outlining their efforts on the selected topic, including key good practices and challenges.
- **Facilitated inception meeting.** The Twinning journey will begin with a facilitated session where both presentations are shared. This meeting will include an exercise to identify 4-5 key items the Twins wish to explore throughout the journey – these could be specific challenges, policies, solutions, or collaboration approaches. Learning objectives will also be defined.
- **Independent exchanges.** Each Twin pair will organise 4-5 self-led exchanges to explore in greater depth the priority items identified during the inception meeting.
- **Facilitated midterm and conclusion meetings.** Two additional meetings will be held with the support of a Twinning Facilitator – one at the midpoint and one at the end of the journey. These will be used to review progress, consolidate insights, and reflect on the experience.
- **Independent work.** Each Twin will carry out individual preparation work prior to both the facilitated meetings and the independent exchanges.

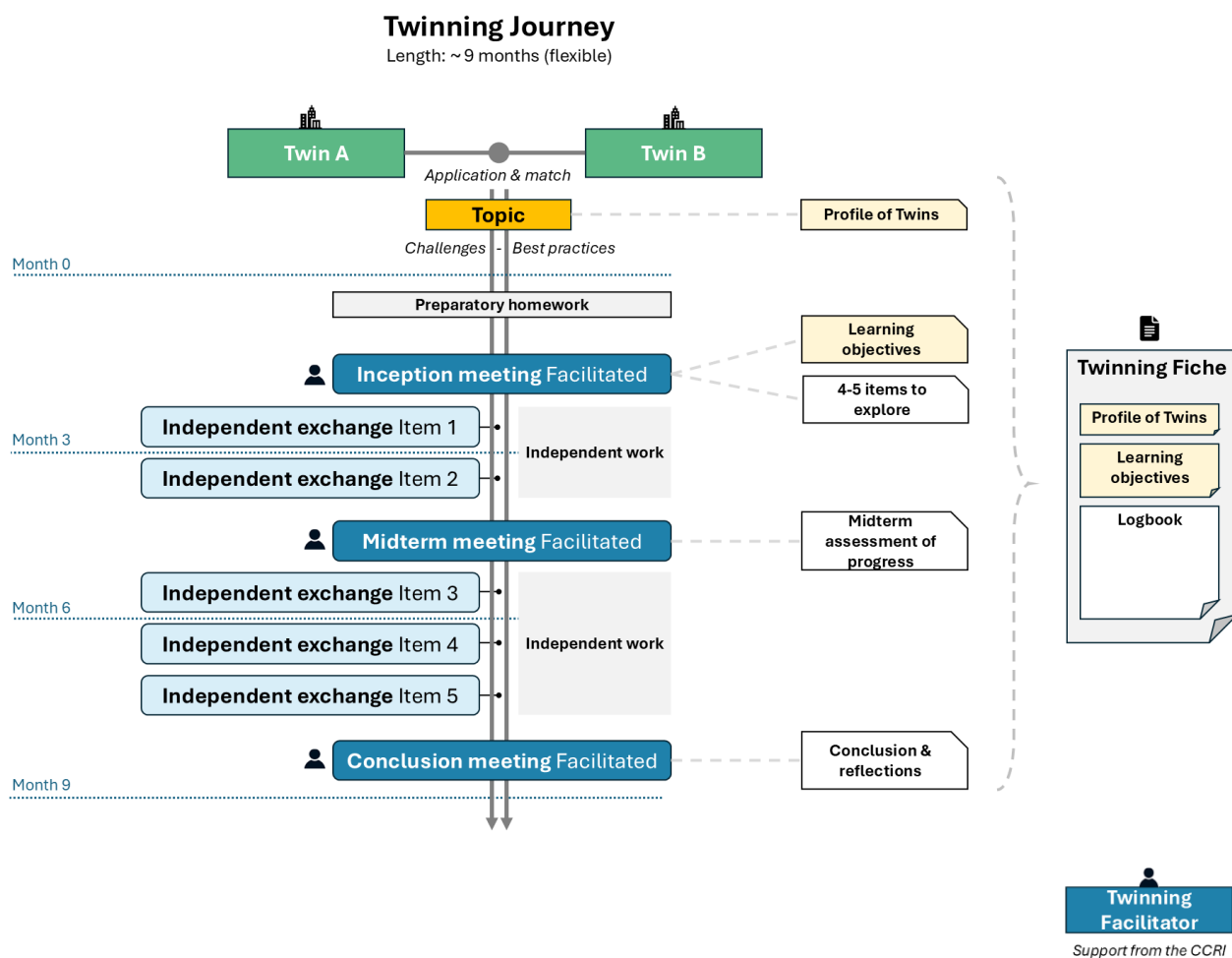
All meetings and exchanges will happen **online**.

What to expect?

As a Twin, you have the opportunity to shape your journey together with your pair and your Twinning Facilitator, co-designing both the structure and the content of each of the activities. The following are key elements of the journey:

- **Duration:** The recommended duration for a Twinning Journey is **around 9 months**, but the final length will be agreed upon by each pair and their Twinning Facilitator, based on capacity, availability, and any existing schedules or phased implementations related to the best practices and challenges to be explored.
- **Time Commitment:** Each Twin is expected to dedicate approximately **6-9 full days over the course of the Twinning Journey** – roughly one full day per month – including participation in both facilitated and self-organised activities, as well as time spent on preparation and follow-ups.
- **Funding:** Participation is voluntary, and **no funding** is available to cover participation costs. There will be no travel required, as all activities will take place online.
- **Guidance and Support:** A dedicated **Twinning Facilitator**, provided by the CCRI, will guide each Twinning Journey and steer all facilitated exchanges. Additionally, each pair will use a light-touch master document – the **Twinning Fiche** – which provides structured yet flexible guidance throughout the programme. It will include the profile of the Twins as drawn from their applications, the agreed learning objectives, and a logbook capturing key discussion points from meetings and exchanges.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** See Annex I.

The Twinning Journey



Associated benefits

As part of a service delivered within the CCRI, Twins participating in the programme will benefit from synergies and broader insights related to their explored topics, as well as receive preference for participating in other CCRI activities such as study visits and capacity-building activities.

Who can apply?

The Twinning Programme is open to **European cities and regions** committed to advancing circular systemic solutions, represented by practitioners working on circular economy efforts – either sector-specific or cross-cutting. Eligible candidates include:

- **Local and regional governments** from EU27 and Horizon Europe Associated Countries.
- **Public agencies or publicly owned companies** operating under their authority – such as utility providers, waste management agencies, or economic development bodies.

The programme offers a **limited number of Twinning slots** (10 pairs) and is therefore competitive in nature. Participation will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- **Commitment:** Active engagement is essential. As a Twin, you are expected to fully participate in the Journey and take ownership of the exchanges with your pair.
- **Relevant Experience:** We seek participants who are already working on the chosen topic, with tangible efforts and practices that can be shared with their pair.
- **Topical and Geographical Diversity:** We aim to cover a broad range of topics, themes, and sectors across the Twinning programme. Additionally, we want to ensure balanced representation from north/south and east/west regions, including both cities and regions.
- **Expanding Access to Support:** Priority will be given to cities that have not previously received extensive support services, rather than those already benefiting from multiple initiatives.

Matchmaking

The programme will match cities/regions primarily based on **topical alignment** and shared **level of advancement**. Language and shared socioeconomic contexts will serve as secondary criteria.

Strong candidates may remain unmatched and, if no suitable Twin is available, may be declined. In such cases, candidatures will be retained for consideration in future matching rounds.

How to express your interest

Simply complete the short application form and we will review your application. If needed, we will reach out to you for clarifications.

[Apply now](#)

Extended deadline for submission: 18/07/2025, 6:00 PM CET.

Any questions or doubts whether this is right for you?

Reach out to info@ccri-communities-of-practice.eu for more information.

Background

Funded by the EU as part of the Circular Economy Action Plan, the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) aims to bring the circular economy to life in cities and regions across Europe. The initiative supports the development of circular solutions that address different sectors and value chains, engage diverse stakeholders, and tackle a range of challenges, such as creating new business models and navigating regulatory impacts. It also seeks to drive positive change across social, economic, and environmental fields.

About CCRI Communities of Practice

The CCRI Communities of Practice's activities complement those already offered by the CCRI Coordination and Support office, the [CCRI Knowledge Hub](#) and other [CCRI partners](#). They are all about bringing cities and regions together to share experiences, learn from each other, and exchange best practices. By fostering peer learning and networking, they aim to broaden the CCRI's impact to more European cities and regions.

Contacts

Twinning lead:

ICLEI Europe, info@ccri-communities-of-practice.eu

CCRI Website: www.circular-cities-and-regions.ec.europa.eu

CCRI LinkedIn page: www.linkedin.com/company/circular-cities-and-regions-initiative

Annex I: Roles and responsibilities

Twinning Facilitator (CCRI)	Twins (cities and regions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as the primary point of contact between the CCRI and each Twin. • Onboard Twins into the Twinning Programme. • Schedule facilitated meetings. • Guide facilitated meetings. • Oversee the development of the Twinning Fiches. • Facilitate knowledge transfer among participating actors. • Identify relevant insights – such as challenges, gaps, and best practices – that can be shared with the broader CCRI community and contribute to the CCRI knowledge base. • Provide administrative support to Twins for programme-related matters, such as facilitating contacts and ensuring all materials are received. • Promote and disseminate exchanges within the broader CCRI. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take ownership of the Twinning Journey, including all exchanges with their respective Twin and mutual learning. • Actively participate in all facilitated activities and leads the exchanges with their Twin. • Schedule and coordinate non-facilitated, self-led exchanges. • Engage in the necessary independent work for either the preparation or follow-up of both facilitated and independent exchanges. • Lead discussions during independent exchanges. • Develop the Twinning Fiches together with their respective Twin.

Annex II: Glossary

The Twinning Programme glossary serves as a comprehensive reference for key terms and concepts relevant to participants engaging in knowledge exchange and collaboration. It aims to establish a shared understanding of terminology used throughout the programme, ensuring clarity and consistency in discussions, documentation, and activities.

Glossary – CCRI Twinning Programme	
CCRI Twinning Programme	Name of the programme.
Twins	Cities/regions participating in the CCRI Twinning Programme.
Twin City/Region	Each of the cities/regions participating in the CCRI Twinning Programme.
Pairs	The designated partnerships formed between two Twin Cities or Twin Regions within the CCRI Twinning Programme. Each pair collaborates throughout the Twinning Journey, engaging in structured exchanges and mutual learning to advance circular systemic solutions.
Topic	Area of focus around which the Twinning journey is centred. This could be a sector, value chain, policy lever, theme, or a combination thereof.
Twinning Facilitator	CCRI officer in charge of pairing the Twins and facilitating their exchanges.
Twinning Journey	The structured process of collaboration and exchange between Twins in the CCRI Twinning Programme.
Facilitated Meeting	Each of the three meetings that will be arranged as part of the programme, with the facilitation of the Twinning Facilitator.
Twinning Fiche	<p>Light-touch master document developed for each pair of Twins, offering structured yet flexible guidance throughout their Twinning Journey. This document serves as a key reference tool, incorporating the following essential elements:</p> <p>Profile Information: Relevant details about each Twin, drawn from their Expression of Interest.</p> <p>Learning objectives (see definition below).</p> <p>Logbook: A concise record of key discussion points from Twinning Meetings, including identified challenges and best practices around the Circular Systemic Solutions (CSSs) explored during the journey.</p>
Learning Objectives	Goals established by each pair of Twins for the Twinning Programme. They will be set in relation to the specific challenges and best practices of their chosen topic. These objectives will be defined during the first facilitated meeting and documented in the Twinning Fiche to guide the collaboration.