



EUROPEAN CLUSTER  
COLLABORATION PLATFORM

## Call for Expression of Interest - SMEs

EU – Canada Matchmaking Event in Montreal,  
Canada 2024

*An initiative of the European Union*





# Call for Expression of Interest SMEs



## EU – Canada Matchmaking Event

In the context of [ALL IN](#)

10-12 September 2024

Montreal, Canada



**Corrigendum (20 May 2024): “Representatives from clusters organisations” has been replaced with “representatives from SMEs” in the Objectives Section.**

**Corrigendum (20 May 2024): The following selection criteria have been removed from the Section: Selection Criteria**

- The SME's willingness and capacity to maximise matchmaking opportunities via participation in this event, based on a detailed description of the sort of partnership sought by the applicant and the likelihood of developing practical collaboration because of the Event. This indication of interest in cooperating must be clearly articulated as responses to the questions in the application form.
- SMEs operating beyond the stated fields should extensively motivate the argument for their application to a reserve list that will be determined in due time.
- The desire and capacity to collaborate more closely with Canadian SMEs and network organisations in order to better global competitiveness via collaborative efforts.

## OBJECTIVES

The European Commission (EC) will organise the **EU – Canada Matchmaking Event** in the context of [ALL IN Event](#) which will be held on 11-12 September 2024.

The **EU – Canada Matchmaking Event** itself will take place on-site in Montreal, Canada 10-12 September 2024.

The event will be jointly organised by the European Commission through the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP), in collaboration with Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Government of Canada, Scale AI, and Enterprise Europe Network (EEN).

The **EU – Canada Matchmaking Event** will bring together cluster organisations and SMEs from the European Union (EU), non-EU countries participating in the Single Market Programme/COSME Strand<sup>7</sup>, and Canada. It will provide participants an excellent chance to promote Cluster to Cluster (C2C), Cluster to Business (C2B), and Business to Business (B2B) collaborations.

The overall objective of the event is to promote the exchange of information and provide networking opportunities for European cluster organisations and their members with counterparts from Canada, particularly in the fields of Artificial Intelligence, Advanced manufacturing, Digital Technology and Quantum Technology.

The objectives for the participants include:

- Strengthening EU-Canada cluster cooperation for the benefit of their members, including a seminar, a cluster matchmaking event, and site visits.
- Identifying potential areas of common interest for cooperation and synergies, in terms of the sectoral, value chain, and market focus of their SMEs and other companies.
- Improving, through clusters, the EU-Canada industry and academia-industry collaboration in research, development, and innovation. For its members, the clusters will identify possible areas of RDI collaboration (academia, research organisations, industries...).

The call for expressions of interest is being launched to identify a European delegation made up of **representatives from SMEs** (please see section “Who can participate” below) who are willing and committed to participate in the EU-Canada Matchmaking Event.

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<sup>1</sup> [list-3rd-country-participation\\_smp\\_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)



**By submitting an expression of interest in response to this call, you are indicating your acceptance of the call's terms.**

Further details about the event, the eligibility requirements, and how to submit an expression of interest can be found below.

This call is published on the ECCP website. Expressions of interest to participate in this event must be **submitted electronically by 28 May (Tuesday) 2024, 23:59 Brussels time** at the latest through [https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUCanadaMME\\_SMEs](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUCanadaMME_SMEs)

**Late applications arriving after 28 May 2024 could be accepted for participation if provided eligibility criteria are fulfilled by the participants and in case of still available places until 20 August 2024, 23:59 Brussels time at the latest through:**

[https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUCanadaMME\\_SMEs](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUCanadaMME_SMEs)

**The organisers reserve the right to close the application process once the maximum capacity for participants is reached.**

**This call is targeting only SMEs. A separate call exists for cluster organisations and business network organisations. So if you are a cluster organisation or a business network organisation you should respond to the call that is available at:**

<https://clustercollaboration.eu/content/eu-canada-matchmaking-event-2024-call-expression-interest-clusters>

## CONTEXT OF THE INITIATIVE

The Event will take place in the context of the ECCP activities. The European Commission facilitates international cluster cooperation through the ECCP including the organisation of specific cluster matchmaking events and policy development actions. The objective is to support cluster organisations to develop partnerships and business cooperation in European and global markets, for the benefit of their members, especially of SMEs. The events are currently funded under the EU Single Market Programme (SMP)/COSME Strand.

The ECCP provides a visible framework for this matchmaking event and for subsequent events. As the cornerstone of the European strategy in support of SMEs' internationalisation through clusters, the ECCP provides a wide range of information and services to facilitate the interaction between clusters not only within Europe, but also with international partners.



## ACTIVITIES & AGENDA

The EU – Canada Matchmaking Event will include the following activities:

- **Preparatory Webinar** – an opportunity to receive information on undertaking business with Canada and guidance on how to participate successfully in the planned event. (date tbc)
- **Technical Webinar** – a session helping future participants of the matchmaking event to make the most of their profiling in the B2Match tool and explain the procedures to optimise the booking of meetings. (date tbc)
- **Site visits** (10 September 2024)
- **Seminar** on knowledge exchange to foster EU- Canada cooperation. (10 September 2024)
- **Pitching and Matchmaking meetings** between cluster organisations and SMEs from EU (and non-EU countries participating in SMP/COSME Strand) countries and Canada Countries. (10 September 2024)
- Debriefing session to collect **feedback and testimonials** from cluster participants. (10 September 2024)
- **Participation at the [ALL IN Event](#)** – 11 – 12 September 2024

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

This invitation is addressed to SMEs interested in collaborating with Canadian counterparts in the following sectors:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Advanced manufacturing
- Digital Technology
- Quantum Technology

The organisers reserve the right to close the application process once the maximum capacity for participants is reached.

## PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible:

- The applicant must be an SME according to the [SME definition](#) of the EU.
- The SME must be a legal entity established in a European Union Member State or other participating in the Single Market Programme/COSME Strand (see the list of non-EU participants [here](#))



## SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated qualitatively using the following selection criterion:

- The SME's activity in the target sectors.

Organisations that have not participated before in the ECCP matchmaking events are encouraged to apply.

Priority will be given to those organisations that are participating for the first time and those that have previously **not unjustifiably** cancelled the participation to matchmaking events organised by the ECCP.

The selection of applications will be based on the afore mentioned criteria and information provided in the application form; in cases of equal merit, the balanced geographical and sector coverage of the EU and SMP/COSME Strand participating countries will be considered.

The organisers reserve the right to ask for additional information from the applicants, if necessary.

**Attendance at the seminar, the matchmaking event, the debriefing session, and the site visits are all compulsory.**

**SMEs selected to participate in the Event must send a commitment e-mail agreeing to attend the preparation webinar, the on-site seminar, conduct at least four matching meetings, and engage in the final 30-minute debriefing session.**

## COSTS AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

**All expenses related to the participation of SMEs are at their own charge. No reimbursement of costs is offered.**

SMEs participating in the EU – Canada Matchmaking Event will not have to pay the conference fees to attend **ALL IN Event 2024**.

## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Expressions of interest should be submitted by 18 June 2024, 23:59 Brussels time through the following link:

[https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUCanadaMME\\_SMEs](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUCanadaMME_SMEs)

The expression of interest should include the following:

- A fully completed SMEs questionnaire on the profile of the SME.

Please ensure that you submit full, accurate, and up-to-date information and contact information.

Please note that no fee will be charged to participate in this event.

**Late applications after 18 June could be accepted for participation if provided eligibility criteria are fulfilled by the participants until 20 August 2024, 23:59 Brussels time at the latest through:**

[https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUCanadaMME\\_SMEs](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUCanadaMME_SMEs)



**To take the maximum of your participation and benefit from all planned pre-event activities and meetings available during the EU-Canada Matchmaking Event, we encourage you to send your Expression of Interest at your earliest possible and avoid last minute registrations.**

For further information about cluster cooperation and assistance, please visit the [ECCP Website](#).

Should you have any queries, do not hesitate to contact the ECCP team at [eumatchmaking@clustercollaboration.eu](mailto:eumatchmaking@clustercollaboration.eu).

**Your personal data** is processed in accordance with **Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725** on the protection of individuals regarding the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data.