



Internationalization in life sciences: the role of clusters

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Internationalization, especially in China, is considered by SMEs and clusters sometimes as an issue. But in life sciences it is not an option.

The market is global and also the competition is global. But SMEs don't have the internal skills or the dimension to extract value from such opportunities. Sometimes they need support to identify the appropriate internationalization strategy, to identify goals, to identify skills, resources, entry points and partners. All those aspects are also truer if SMEs targets really far markets. EU and Chinese markets and companies are an example of such paradox: big opportunities but also big challenges. In this scenario which is the role of **clusters**?

Chinese and European clusters and science parks, in the context of [Sino-Europe Bio-partnering](#) event (SEPB) organized in Shanghai in May 2013 and in the context of the EU project [bioXclusters](#), discussed together such topic with the goal to develop a mutual understanding and knowledge

If there is a correlation between the internationalization of clusters and the internationalization of single companies, it will be necessary to develop a new typology of relations between clusters and science parks of different territories.

Clusters are integrating at local level the territorial communities composed by companies, universities and supporting institutions. They could represent not only the one stop-shop for local companies but also an entry point for external companies and institutions. It is sure that such kind of activities, to be successful, have to be based on a win-win approach and on reciprocal trust. They have also to be focused in delivering results to local companies in order to maximize results in term of company development but also in term of cluster and territorial development.

In order to reach such results cluster have to have a proactive approach and have to learn to work together keeping in mind that the final goal of their activities is to support the growth of their respective companies and to assure sustainability and prosperity.

To reach such results cluster of different territories have to manage in a smart way relations at local level with their local stakeholders but also at global level focusing their activities and if necessary to adapt their approaches to specific needs of sub-clusters. Differences in culture and in the level of development are both a threat and an opportunity. Clusters have to be able together to identify strategic paths to offer to their companies the best opportunities. In order to reach such results a relation based on trust, transparency and mutual understanding is a key factor-

Chinese and European clusters are aware of such factors and are committed to set up long term relations in order to exploit all the opportunities and to maximize, for each cluster committed advantages. Clusters are living in a global world; they are fighting, through their companies and universities, global threats. There is no reason to don't work together for the development of common solutions, at company level, at territorial level, at cluster level.