



bioXclusters
European Innovation Worldwide

The Strategic Cluster Partnership (ESCP) for Personalised Healthcare



Report on the "EU-Japan Cluster Matchmaking Event" held at BIO-Europe, Frankfurt, Germany 3rd November 2014

"Incoming Mission: Japan" supported by



bioXclusters started as a European initiative (N° 3/G/ENT/CIP/11/C/N04C011; co-funded for two years 2012-2014 by the European Commission), uniting four European bioregions with one single overarching aim - increasing the competitiveness of SMEs by supporting the internationalization process and by creating a single European entry point for global players in the life sciences health sector. The four clusters involved are Biocat (Catalonia, Spain), BioM (Bavaria, Germany), bioPmed (Piemonte, Italy) and Lyonbiopole (Rhône-Alpes, France).

Strengthening and promoting the international competitiveness of life sciences SMEs beyond Europe are essential tasks in an increasingly globalised environment. Therefore, the aim of the initiative is first to help European SMEs to access competitive target markets. Second, bioXclusters actively cross-links European clusters and cluster managing companies with selected global life science hot spots. This furthers the competitiveness of companies and R&D centers on both sides and non-European regions benefit from an expert gate to the life science health market in Europe.

For two years, bioXclusters targeted its actions mainly on three carefully selected crucial markets: **China, the United States and Brazil**. Today, the alliance continues to welcome further non-European regions to create links for win-win collaborations of their companies and research organizations. Japan, with its second largest pharma market of the world and cutting-edge life science research, represents a very attractive market for European companies and research groups to work with. At the same time, the Japanese pharma industry can benefit greatly from the innovative European biotech and R&D sector.

Due to **strong differences in business culture** and an introverted Japanese pharma market, the threshold for European companies to establish business relationships with Japanese partners is extremely high and processes are time intensive. Clusters are the ideal facilitator to lower this threshold by creating opportunities to establish first business relations – a very important process in Japanese culture. Thanks to the support of the European Cluster collaboration platform and the European Commission, the partners had the opportunity to obtain financial support to organize such a "first contact" matchmaking session to foster links between Japanese health cluster organizations and industry associations and European cluster managers – distributing the information to their large SME networks.

The EU-Japan Cluster Matchmaking Event – financially supported by the European Commission (<http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/>) – was held at BIO-Europe in Frankfurt (Germany) on November, 3rd. The networking workshop targeted European life science clusters or managers of EU / Japan companies.

Organizing committee:

Coordinator of the event: BioM Biotech Cluster Development (Germany) - www.bio-m.org –

Dr. Stephanie Wehnelt, wehnelt@bio-m.org

Biocat (Spain) – www.biocat.cat

bioPmed (Italy) – www.biopmed.eu

Lyonbiopole (France) - www.lyonbiopole.com

2/ Preparation of the workshop

Thanks to a long term relationship between BioM (Bavaria, Germany) and Japanese biotech key players like JBA (Japanese Biotech Association), the event program could be set up during summer 2014 (*see annexes and details below*).

The purpose was to give first the floor to Japanese cluster organizations who rarely present in Europe together, in order to offer to European companies or players a good overview of the key elements of the Japanese healthcare & biotech economic sector and to exchange business contacts. Speakers from four leading Japanese life science clusters and from Japan Bioindustry Association (JBA) were invited to present the vast array of opportunities that the Japanese pharma and health market offers to European companies. BioM negotiated with EBD (BIO-Europe conference coordinator) free or reduced conference attendance for the Japanese speakers, which enabled them to participate in the EU-Japan Matchmaking Event. The opportunity was also to promote the bioXclusters initiative as a gateway to innovative health care companies in Europe.

Thus, the overall aim of this event was to build first bridges between EU and Japan cluster organisations and industry associations, and path the way for potential collaborations – and long-term to make it easier for SMEs to achieve R&D projects, licensing opportunities, attracting joint partnerships, developing small scale, high value manufacturing projects, developing commercial activities and establishing a presence in the Japanese market by using soft landing facilities.

In order to maximize visibility, the EU-Japan Matchmaking Event was organized as a parallel session during BIO-Europe, the largest European biotech healthcare trade show, which took place in Frankfurt, Germany, 3-6 November 2014. The consortium was extremely lucky to be able to organize a satellite event during this highly recognized convention. The event was advertised in the official BIO-Europe fair program, reaching out to the entire BIO-Europe community interested in this event.

3 / Communication & promotion of the event

After elaborating the program in cooperation with Japanese peers, **the event was promoted through several channels**. The information was posted on the bioXclusters blog which has continuously maintained alive by the partners after the end of the official project duration. Then the information has been spread through the CEBR (Council of European Bio Regions) website and newsletters, through emailing campaigns to our cluster partners, through the ECCP website and newsletter, through the EU-Japan center newsletter. Then, the information has been sent to our respective cluster company members in order to invite them to discover key figures and facts about the Japanese market. So each cluster partner posted the information in their newsletter, on their website, and through target emails to companies that get registered to Bio Europe.

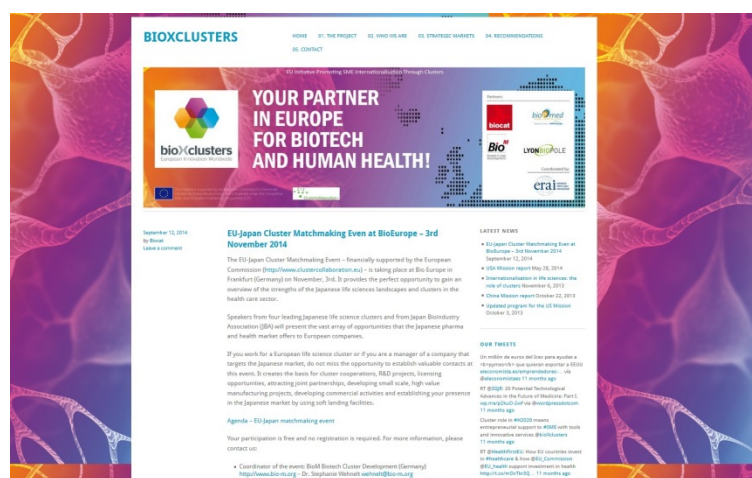
The EU-Japan event was advertised in the following ways in Europe (newsletters attached):

- ✓ EU-Japan Newsletter goes to >15,000 recipients
- ✓ CEBR Newsletter goes to 423 cluster organizations & network partners
- ✓ BioM-Newsletter goes to 10,333 recipients
- ✓ BioM sent twice personalised e-mails to 700 SME managers in Bavaria and an extra mailing went to 67 SME managers in Bavaria who have a special interest in Japan
- ✓ Lyonbiopole newsletter goes to 3,800 recipients - weekly e-mailings sent to 1,679 contacts of company members
- ✓ BioPmed e-mailings to 445 local companies + 10 Italian clusters
- ✓ Biocat newsletter goes to 9,832 contacts (companies, institutions, hospitals, research centers, press media, etc.)

The project partners updated the communication and marketing tools developed during the bioXclusters project in order to adapt them to the messages after its termination and send key messages to new potential markets targeted. Thus the project partners worked on new messages valorizing the bioXclusters project results and presenting the continuity between the past actions and open approach to new markets like Korea, Japan. Thus, **new kakemonos** have been created for the organization of the common booth in Bio Europe Spring and the EU-Japan workshop. The consortium also worked on the adaptation of the bioXclusters flyer presentation. Marketing materials such as table flags and roll-ups have been produced for the workshop organization.



Finally, in order to keep the blog alive, **documents and market reports** were posted throughout the year. Thus the documents related to the EU-Japan cluster workshop have been posted through the blog: <http://bioxclusters.eu/>



In addition to the above described, intensive marketing of the EU-Japan event, the activity was also advertised in four leading Japanese health clusters: Tokyo, Yokohama-Kanagawa, Osaka and Fukuoka - as well as in the wide pharma and biotech network of the Japanese Biotech Association (JBA).

The **power and importance of this wide marketing campaign** in Europe and Japan should not be under-estimated. European-Japanese relationships grow very slowly and high-profile activities such as this, supported by the European Commission, leave a great impression in Japan. The benefit is a long-term one and cannot be measured directly – especially in the extremely long-lasting negotiation processes unique for the health and drug development sector.

4 / Workshop organization and conclusions

The EU-Japan Cluster matchmaking event has been organized on November 3rd, 2014 from 15:00 to 18:00 hrs, in the Prisma Room as a parallel session within the BIO-Europe conference center. It was divided in two parts, one dedicated to the presentations, and a second one – most important in Japanese business culture – focusing on business card exchanges, formal introductions and networking. The activity benefited from the support of the EU-Japan Center which is an initiative supported by the European Commission and the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade & Industry (METI) since 1987, having a great experience in business support activities between EU and Japanese players.

**Programme of the "EU-Japan Matchmaking Event" (Incoming Mission: Japan)
3rd of November 2014, Room Prisma, BIO-Europe conference center, Frankfurt, Germany**

15:15 – 15:30	Welcome address: European Commission-funded support tools Jessica Michelson, EU-JAPAN CENTRE for Industrial Cooperation
15:30 – 15:45	The role of Personalised Health Care in Europe Fabrizio Conicella, The European Strategic Cluster Partnership (ESCP) for Personalised Healthcare "bioXclusters"
15:45 – 16:15	Key-note: Opportunities for European biotech ventures in Japan Dr. Tsuneaki Sakata, Vice president , All Japanese Bio Regions Committee
16:15 – 17:00	Japanese life science health clusters Metropolitan Bionetwork (Tokyo), Yokohama-Kanagawa Bio-Business network (Kanagawa), Protein Mall Kansai (Osaka), Fukuoka BioCluster Project (Fukuoka)
17:00 – 18:00	Networking (business card exchange) around hot drinks & snacks
18:00	Start of Exhibit Hall Hospitality Reception

Quotes from presentations:

Tsuneaki Sakata, Ph.D. underlined *“that the Japanese society is endorsing the same issues as the European population regarding declining birth rate and ageing population.”*

On the economic point of view, Japan faces the similar issue as European SMEs: *“since the Japanese bio-ventures are relatively young, pharmaceutical companies need to play a role in nurturing seeds originating in academia”*. He also highlighted some tips for EU companies to know if they want to work with Japan: *“the fact that Japanese work on trustful relations, they are cautious about the relationship with representatives from competitor companies, they take time to think through decisions carefully, etc.”*

JBA emphasized that about *“22 industrial cluster projects are running nationwide several target fields. These are developing close cooperation with over 18,000 regional SMEs, more than 560 universities including industrial colleges. The purpose is to deepen exchanges and tie-ups with overseas clusters in 30 countries and 60 regions around the world.”*

As the first EU-Japan event of its kind, it can be regarded as a good success, with 28 participants filling the room available, including 14 Japanese representatives and 14 European organisation representatives (7 from Cluster organisations – Biocat, BioPmed, BioM, Lyonbiopole, Leiden Bio Science Park, Biowin, Toscana Life Science and 6 European representatives) - (list of participants and visit cards see annex).

The event was a unique opportunity for European companies to receive such a comprehensive overview of the Japanese key trends and regions in the health sector and meet people being entry

points offering to help with building valuable connections with otherwise difficult to approach Japanese companies.

As expected, all participants took the opportunity to make first contact, exchange business cards and formally introduce themselves to each other during the adjacent networking get-together.



Some remarks from the participants and conclusions:

Jessica Michelson from the EU-Japan Center said at the end of the meeting: *“The workshop was a wonderful opportunity for me to learn more about the life science sector in Japan”*.

Dr. Tsuneaki Sakata said: *“The EU-Japan matchmaking workshop is a perfect starting point as a first stone for building future collaborations and bridges across our respective markets”*.

Dr. Tamio Sugawara from Osaka/Kansai cluster emphasized that this was the first time that Japanese health clusters came together to introduce their business opportunities to European contacts.

Mr. Hironori Tanaka, Director of JBA voiced his wish to continue with this type of event in the future in order to build upon the awareness that this activity has achieved in Europe and Japan.

Concluding remarks:

The "Incoming Mission: Japan" organized by the bioXclusters initiative benefited from the experience and the trustful relation built by BioM for years with Japanese players for the organisation of this EU-Japan Matchmaking event, which has also been made feasible thanks to the support of the ECCP and the European Commission. A wide marketing campaign for the event across Europe and Japan raised awareness of the immense potential that SMEs can tap into. The valuable and condensed information provided by the Japanese speakers will be distributed in the EU. The concept of the EU-Japan Matchmaking Event, which was to lower the high threshold of starting business relations with Japanese players, was a success, setting the start for similar events in the future. bioXclusters will maintain contacts with the Japanese players and look into more formal cooperation agreements.

List of annexes:

1. Programme of the event (pdf; bound paper copies on request)
2. Mainstreaming examples (CEBR, ECCP...)
3. Speaker presentations
4. List of participants + copies of business cards