**sme internationalisation through clusters**

**Cluster Matchmaking Event**

**Naples, Campania, Italy**

**organised in the context of the Mission for Growth under the auspices of Stefano Caldoro - President Regione Campania, Luigi de Magistris – Mayor of Naples and Mr Antonio Tajani, Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Industry and Entrepreneurship**

**March 13th to 14th, 2014**

**Call for Expression of Interest**

**Focus Sectors:**

* **Aerospace;**
* **Biotechnology and Life-Sciences;**

# Background

On 13th and 14th of March 2014, Mr. Tajani Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for Industry and Entrepreneurship will lead the European “Mission for Growth” to Naples (Italy, Campania) with the aim of promoting business partnerships between companies in Campania and European countries that are active in priority sectors. The event is organized with the President of the Campania Regione and the Mayor of the City of Naples with the support of regional clusters and the local EEN partner (please see attached the draft agenda). This mission represents a real opportunity to foster cooperation between European clusters, and if possible beyond, as a means of supporting their internationalisation even if the mission is not organised outside Europe. This would help the SMEs that are associated with the clusters.

This call for expression of interest is launched to identify a European delegation composed of up to 30 representatives from cluster organisations that are willing and committed to participate in a cluster matchmaking mission to Naples (Campania, Italy) in the field of:

* Aerospace;
* Biotechnology and Life-Sciences;

This call is published on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform ([**www.clustercollaboration.eu**](http://www.clustercollaboration.eu)) and Expressions of interest to participate in this mission must be **submitted electronically by the 26th of February 2014** at the latest. Please, see below for more information on the mission and how to submit your expression of interest.

# Context

As part of a new policy aimed at promoting international cluster cooperation for the benefit of SMEs, DG Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission launched in 2012 an initiative that contributes to the organisation of specific cluster matchmaking missions to support cluster organisations and their Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) members in their efforts to develop partnerships and business cooperation on global markets.

These events seek to prepare the ground for practical cluster cooperation across borders and make a more strategic use of transnational cluster cooperation. The European Cluster Collaboration Platform is the cornerstone of the European strategy in support of SME 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. In view of fostering closer cooperation worldwide, the ECCP has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with international partners and more such collaboration agreements are envisaged in the coming months. The organisation of the matchmaking events is facilitated by a consortium led by the Fondation Sophia Antipolis (France) in partnership with Clusterland (Austria), ERAI (France) and inno AG (Germany).

# Cluster Matchmaking Event in Naples (Campania) Italy

The mission aims in first place to promote cluster and network cooperation between cluster organisations to explore common visions and seek partnerships at cluster and network organisations level. Letters of Intent, Memoranda of Understanding, other types of partnership agreements are expected to be initiated and agreed upon with roadmaps on how to sustain the collaboration. Ultimately the goal for the cluster and network organizations is to act as a catalyst for their SMEs to help them engage in collaborative projects.

The event will be held in Naples (Italy) on March 13th and 14th, 2014. The conference venue is Mostra d'Oltremare, Viale J.F. Kennedy, 54 - 80125 – Napoli (for further information see at: <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/mission-growth/missions-for-growth/antonio-tajani/europe/italy-campania/index_en.htm> ).

This mission targets the following industry sectors, corresponding to the main regional Walloon clusters:

* Aerospace,
* Biotechnology and Life-Sciences,

The following Italian clusters have already confirmed their participation:

* Campania Aerospace District <http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/web/dac>
* Technapoli: <http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/web/consorzio-technapoli>

The mission will be structured as follows:

* Participation to the conference (March 13th)
* Cluster to cluster meetings, and cluster to business meetings (March 14th)
* Debriefing session (March 14, afternoon)
* Dedicated thematic/cluster visits in the Campania region (March 14)

As cluster organizations, do not hesitate to mobilize your SME members. On March 14th, in parallel to the cluster to cluster matchmaking event, specific one-to-one business matchmaking meetings for SMEs will take place. Interested SME can register on[**b2Match website for the match-making event**](http://www.b2match.eu/m4g-italy-campania) (<http://www.b2match.eu/m4g-italy-campania>) **.**

# Who can participate?

The mission is open to cluster and network organisations from countries participating in the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programmes (CIP) **[[1]](#footnote-1)**. Thiscall is addressed to cluster and network organisations that present the highest potential for cooperation in the context of this event.

# Selection criteria

To be selected:

* The cluster or network organisation shall be registered in the European Cluster Collaboration Platform ([www.**clustercollaboration**.**eu**](http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/)**www.clustercollaboration.eu**) **with a complete profile** and should comply with the definition given in the section 5.8 of the “*Community Framework for State Aid for Research and Development and Innovation*”[[2]](#footnote-2).
* The core activity of the cluster or network organisation should correspond to the targeted thematic area of the mission mentioned above.
* Each cluster or network organisation has to be involved in offering or channelling cluster or network support services to businesses and should be identified on the basis of a **legal entity** established in the CIP participating countries**[[3]](#footnote-3)**.

Applications will be selected according to the following qualitative criteria:

* On the potential to maximize matchmaking opportunities based on a clear description of the type of partnership the cluster organisations are looking for through the participation to this mission and on the potential for establishing cooperation agreements as an outcome of the event. This expression of interest for collaboration shall be clearly articulated in the questionnaire provided in annex and to be submitted with the application;
* On the willingness to engage in closer cooperation with other cluster and network organisations from CIP participating countries to better support SMEs in global competition through joint efforts. In this context, the participation in a pilot European Strategic Cluster Partnership is considered as an asset (for further details, see at: <http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/european-strategic-cluster-partnerships>).

Participants are expected to attend the full programme. The participants' selection will be made by the competent European Commission services.

# Cost and expenses

This action covers for up to 75% of the travel\* and two nights accommodation costs for one representative of the cluster or network organisation, with a maximum amount of Euro 800 per representative. The reimbursement will be based on actual expenses related to the travel.

\* Air travel: economy class fares on the basis of the shortest and most economical fare available at the time of the grant notification.

# Application

To apply for this business trip, clusters and network organisations should keep the following dates in mind:

Please submit your expression of interest **by February 26th, 2014 to:**

* Christoph Reiss-Schmidt ([christoph.reiss-schmidt@clusterland.at](mailto:christoph.reiss-schmidt@clusterland.at))

The expression of interest should encompass:

* a completely filled out questionnaire on the cluster or network organisation profile with an evidence of the legal entity;
* the full cluster profile registered in the European Cluster Collaboration Platform;
* a short power point presentation of the cluster organisation in English language, using PowerPoint (3/4 slides only).

Please make sure to provide complete, accurate data and contact details.

For further information, please contact:

Marc Pattinson ([m.pattinson@inno-group.com](mailto:m.pattinson@inno-group.com)) or Soraya Bernard ([s.bernard@inno-group.com](mailto:s.bernard@inno-group.com))

or visit ECCP ([www.clustercollaboration.eu](http://www.clustercollaboration.eu))

1. CIP participating countries include: (1) EU Member States, (2) non-EU-member countries participating in the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP) of the CIP programme including Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia and Turkey. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2006:323:0001:0026:EN:PDF [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. CIP participating countries include: (1) EU Member States, (2) non-EU-member countries participating in the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP) of the CIP programme including Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia and Turkey. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)