



Press Release

## EU-US Cluster Matchmaking Event: Opportunities for Collaboration and Growth

Hannover Messe, Germany, 25-26 April 2016

High level policy presence and active participation of over 70 EU and US clusters and economic development organisations (EDOs) made the EU-US Cluster Matchmaking Event at Hannover Messe, Germany, on 25-26 April 2016 a great success

With over 140 bilateral meetings between EU clusters and U.S. clusters, EDOs, businesses, universities, and R&D institutions during the Matchmaking Event, the [EU-US Cooperation Arrangement on Clusters](#) signed in April 2015 has clearly succeeded in laying the foundations for concrete cooperation to take place.

The EU-US Cluster Matchmaking Event organised in the heart of the Hannover Messe on 25-26 April 2016 by the European Commission, DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, and the U.S.

Department of Commerce, and facilitated by the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) in collaboration with the Enterprise Europe Network, was a tangible and practical opportunity for EU clusters and business representatives to meet their U.S. counterparts. The matchmaking sessions allowed the participants to discuss opportunities for R&D and business partnerships, enquire about potential for bilateral cluster to cluster Memoranda of Understandings to be concluded, plan for forthcoming study visits and soft landing packages for cluster SMEs.

Besides the matchmaking meetings, a **high level policy seminar** on “**Clusters in the EU and the USA: Opportunities for Collaboration and Growth**” set out the joint ambition to pursue and deepen the transatlantic cluster cooperation and provided the ca. 100 strong audience with learnings and experiences on transatlantic co-operation.



First row from left to right: Tshanda Kalombo, US Department of Commerce; Bruce Andrews, US Deputy Secretary of Commerce; Charles Hull, Co-Founder and Chief Technology Officer of 3D Systems, US; Christiane Egger, Deputy Manager Oekoenergie-Cluster, Austria; Caroline Pin, Director of International Business at Plastipolis cluster, France; Noel Nevshehir, Director of International Business, Automation Alley – Michigan, US; Matthias Machnig, State Secretary of Germany Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy

[www.clustercollaboration.eu](http://www.clustercollaboration.eu)



The seminar was opened by **Matthias Machnig**, State Secretary of Germany Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, who welcomed the participants to Hannover Messe where the USA were this year's official Partner Country. After having stressed the power of clusters in helping transform the image and competitiveness of regional economies through the example of the "photonics valley" in Jena, Saxony, Germany, he shared his hope that the cluster collaboration

event was the opportunity to "give new impulses to cluster based EU-US collaboration".

US Deputy Secretary of Commerce **Bruce Andrews** underlined the importance of innovation, saying "if we hope to keep growing, we have to keep innovating" and put forward the role of clusters as "the power to drive the process". He said the signature of the EU-US cluster collaboration arrangement has opened "a new and promising chapter in transatlantic collaboration".



**Elżbieta Bieńkowska**, EU Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs confirmed the European Commission's support to cluster collaboration, as well as transatlantic partnerships between Research and Development Organisations' and SMEs, saying "clusters are a great opportunity of cooperation and the EU and the US are natural partners for this".

After the presentation of Best Practices and Experiences on Transatlantic Cluster Collaboration by several experienced cluster managers and company representatives – including 3D printing inventor **Charles Hull**, Co-Founder and Chief Technology Officer of 3D Systems, US – the US Cluster Map and Registry ([www.clustermapping.us](http://www.clustermapping.us)) and the European Cluster Collaboration Platform ([www.clustercollaboration.eu](http://www.clustercollaboration.eu)) were presented. The speakers then answered questions from the audience in a panel exchange moderated by Marc Pattinson, inno TSD, France, ECCP coordinator. The final panel was joined by **Slawomir Tokarski**, Director on Innovation and Advanced Manufacturing, DG GROWTH, who urged the cluster participants "to use the EU-US Hannover Messe matchmaking mission to prepare the ground for establishing cluster-to-cluster MoU's as the basis of a bottom-up based cooperation framework". **Bryan Borlik**, Director, US Economic Development Administration/Department of Commerce, highlighted also the importance of sharing experiences, such as cluster definitions and how US Economic Development Agencies can offer EU clusters a gateway towards US clusters. Furthermore, DG GROWTH of the European Commission in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Commerce will continue to facilitate policy exchanges and create the opportunities for intensifying cluster cooperation as part of the ongoing implementation of the EU-US Cluster Cooperation Arrangement.

Find the event report and agenda [here](#).

Profiles of the EU and US cluster/EDOs delegations can be found on [www.clustercollaboration.eu](http://www.clustercollaboration.eu) and [www.clustermapping.us](http://www.clustermapping.us)

The photo gallery and seminar speakers' presentations can be found [here](#).

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