



EU-Japan Centre
for Industrial Cooperation
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EU-Japan Clusters and Regions Cooperation Event

Policy Learning, Matchmaking & Sustainable Connectivity

Strasbourg, France

Organised by PwC in collaboration with the
European Cluster Collaboration Platform on behalf of the
European Commission and financed under the COSME Programme¹

April 27th – 29th, 2020

Venue: European Parliament (TBC)

Call for Expression of Interest

Biotechnology / Digital industries /

Environmental technologies and Circular Economy/ Agrofood/

Sustainable Tourism

¹ EU Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs 2014-2020

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Objectives

The European Commission's DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW), the EU Japan Regional Cooperation Helpdesk in cooperation with the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation and the European Commission's DG for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) will organise the EU-Japan Clusters & Regions Cooperation event. The event will take place from the 27th to the 29th of April 2020 in Strasbourg, France, and is organised in collaboration with PwC and the European Cluster Collaboration Platform.

The event's main objective is to support clusters, European regions and Japanese prefectures in their function of networking organisations by fostering the creation of long-term strategic partnerships between European organisations and Japanese partners. With the aim of achieving mutual economic growth, the event will promote business opportunities between Japan and COSME countries.

Dedicated to clusters with *a focus in biotechnology, digital industries, environmental technologies and circular economy related technologies, agro-food and sustainable tourism*, the event is an opportunity for clusters and regions seeking to find partners for establishing collaboration on a cross-sectoral level.

For this call, clusters and regional representatives originating from European Union Member States and other COSME participating countries² are eligible to apply.

This call is published on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP): <http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/>. Find below more information on the event, its eligibility criteria to participate and an instruction for registration.

Context

The EU and Japan's Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)³ has entered into force on February 2019, followed by the signature of the first-ever bilateral framework agreement between the EU and Japan, the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA)⁴. Moreover, in September 2019,

² For a complete list of all COSME participating countries eligible for this call, please visit:

<http://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/27019>

³ <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/in-focus/eu-japan-economic-partnership-agreement/>

⁴ https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/ep/page22e_000707.html



Prime Minister Abe and President Juncker signed the EU-Japan Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity⁵ in Brussels in September 2019. This event will enable EU and Japan clusters, EU regions and Japanese prefectures, which play an important role in the internationalization of businesses to collaborate together to support their members, notably SMEs, to take advantage of the EPA and SPA provisions and the Sustainable Connectivity Partnership.

Participants will be invited to attend the 3-days event, including a policy learning conference on the first day, the matchmaking sessions on the second day and the site-visits on the third day.

The following sets out a **draft agenda** for the event:

Day 1 – Conference

11:00 – 21:00	Policy seminar organised by the <i>EU Japan Regional Cooperation Helpdesk</i> and the <i>EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation</i>
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Day 2 – Cluster matchmaking event and business matchmaking event

09:00 – 10:30	Pitch session of European and Japanese clusters and regional representatives
11:00 – 12:30	Face-to-face meetings between European and Japanese cluster delegates and regional representatives
12:30 – 14:00	Networking lunch
14:00 – 16:30	Face-to-face meetings between European and Japanese cluster delegates and regional representatives
16:45 – 17:45	On-site visit
18:00 – 18:30	Debriefing session with European cluster delegates and regional representatives
19:00 – 21:00	Walking dinner

Day 3 – Cluster tour

09:00 – 15:00	Site visits to two or three European clusters in Strasbourg and/or its surroundings
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⁵ <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000521432.pdf>



Who can participate?

Cluster and business organisations from COSME countries whose SME members are interested in developing business collaborations with Japanese clusters and companies are encouraged to

respond to this call. Furthermore, as part of the event's goal to encourage region-to-region cooperation between Japan and European countries, regional representatives are invited.

The event is open up to 25 representatives of cluster organisations and 25 regional representatives from the EU and other COSME countries.

Participation of cluster organisations involved in the ESCP-4i programme (European Strategic Cluster Partnership-Going International) is strongly encouraged. Strand 2 ESCP-4i partnerships are required to clearly mention whether Japan is among the target countries included in their internationalisation strategy.

The sectoral and technological areas covered include:

- **Biotechnology**
- **Digital industries**
- **Environmental technologies/ Circular Economy**
- **Agrofood**
- **Sustainable Tourism**

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Selection criteria

To be selected, the applying cluster:

- Shall be registered on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) <http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/> with a **complete profile** of its cluster organisation;
- Should comply with the definition given in the section 1.3 (s) on 'innovation clusters' in Annex I of the new "EU Framework for State Aid for Research and Development and Innovation"⁶;
- 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 COSME participating countries
- Should operate in one or more of the sectors covered by the present call for Expression of Interest;
- Should have the desire to engage in EU-Japan cluster cooperation.

Applications will be selected according to the following qualitative criteria:

- On the potential to maximise matchmaking opportunities, through the participation to this mission, based on a clear description of the type of partnership the applicant cluster organisations are looking for, and on the potential for establishing tangible cooperation as an outcome of the event. This expression of interest for collaboration shall be clearly articulated in the application form;
- On the willingness and readiness to engage in closer cooperation with other clusters and network organisations and prefectures in Japan to better support SMEs, and to help them initiate new projects.
- Cluster organisations which can liaise with regional representative counterparts and be accompanied by their regional representative to the event, will be selected with priority.

⁶ 2014/C 198/01. According to this definition: 'innovation clusters' means structures or organised groups of independent parties (such as innovative start-ups, small, medium and large enterprises, as well as research and knowledge dissemination organisations, non-for-profit organisations and other related economic actors) designed to stimulate innovative activity by promoting sharing of facilities and exchange of knowledge and expertise and by contributing effectively to knowledge transfer, networking, information dissemination and collaboration among the undertakings and other organisations in the cluster. See at: [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014XC0627\(01\)&from=EN](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014XC0627(01)&from=EN) with further information available at: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/modernisation/rdi_framework_en.pdf and; http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/legislation/horizontal.html, amending the Community Framework (2006/C 323/01 see at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2006:323:0001:0026:en:PDF> a reference of section 5.8 of which was included in the COSME Work Programme regarding the "innovation clusters" definition)

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The decision on the selection of applicants will be based both on the requirements above and qualitative merit of each application; the balanced geographical coverage of the COSME participating countries will, in case of equal merit, be taken into consideration.

Participants are encouraged to attend all sessions and to participate in follow up surveys.

Participants are expected to attend the full programme of the first two days of the **EU-Japan Clusters and Regions Cooperation Event** as well as providing feedback on the event and the collaboration opportunities discovered (through debriefing session and specific debriefing forms).

The selection of the applicants based on the criteria above will be made by the EASME and the European Commission services, with the support of PwC.

The application process will be open until the 17th of January 2020.

Cost and expenses

Participation to the event is free of charge and catering is provided. Costs and expenses for travel to and accommodation in France will be taken in charge by the organising authority according to the standard EU rules for experts invited to attend meetings.

- Maximum one representative per cluster organisation will be eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses and daily allowances.
- Regional representatives will not be eligible for cost reimbursement.
- Members of European Strategic Cluster Partnerships for Going International (ESCP-4i) in phase 2 with a budget allocated to meet with Japanese stakeholders will not be reimbursed if they are covered by an ESCP-4i project.
- Travel expenses: all selected participants representing clusters shall be entitled to reimbursement of their travel expenses to the place of the meeting, by the most appropriate means of transport given the distance involved. This shall be economy class air travel for participants from COSME countries.
- Daily allowance: the daily allowance paid for each day of the meeting is a flat rate to cover all expenditure at the place where the meeting is held, including for example meals and local transport (bus, tram, metro, taxi, parking, motorway tolls, etc.), as well as travel and accident insurance. The daily allowance shall be EUR 92.00.
- Accommodation allowance: selected participants shall also be entitled to an accommodation allowance. This allowance shall be EUR 100.00 per night. The number of nights may not exceed three.

To be eligible for reimbursement, participants must attend the full event and provide the feedback questionnaire at the end of the event.

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Application

To apply for this event, clusters and network organisations are asked to follow the following process:

- You will need to reply to the call for the matchmaking as a first step. In order to reply to this call, you should express your interest in the matchmaking event by filling out an identification form, under this on-line form: <https://eujpc2020.converve.io/>
- Within this online form, you will be asked to provide the link to your ECCP profile.
- A virtual webinar for selected participants will be organised prior the event to share profiles and to explain main organisational aspects.
- All participants will be informed on the final programme, the venue and possible travel arrangements.

For further information, please contact:

- japan-clusters@lu.pwc.com

or visit the European Cluster Collaboration Platform at:

- <http://www.clustercollaboration.eu>

All personal data provided will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, and on the free movement of such data.

Please submit your expression of interest by Friday, 17th of January 2020, and make sure to provide complete, accurate data and contact details.

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