



EUROPEAN
CLUSTER COLLABORATION
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CLUSTER COOPERATION MATCHMAKING MISSION

Thessaloniki, Greece

organised by the European Cluster Collaboration Platform and
financed under the COSME Programme¹

13-14 September 2017

Call for

Expression of Interest

(30 June 2017)

Sectors of activity: cultural and creative industries, circular economy, agrofood, smart city, mobility, automotive.

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Objectives

On 13-14 September 2017 the European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROWTH) and EASME will support a Cluster Matchmaking Mission in cooperation with EEN Hellas and Cluster House, with the aim of fostering **intra-European cooperation between clusters**. The business trip is open to cluster and business network organisations from countries eligible for participating in the COSME programme.

The cluster matchmaking event will represent a unique opportunity for representatives of European and COSME-eligible cluster organisations to explore possible common areas of interest for cooperation and complementarities, in terms of sectoral, value chain, and market focus of their SMEs and other companies.

This call for expression of interest is launched to identify a European and COSME-eligible delegation composed of representatives from cluster organisations from different **industry sectors such as cultural and creative industries, circular economy, Agrofood, multi-media, e-gaming, smart city and mobility industries as well as the automotive industries**.

This call is published on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform ECCP <http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/> and expressions of interest to participate in this mission must be **submitted electronically by midnight (CET) on the 28th of July 2017** at the latest to m.veilletlavallee@inno-group.com. Please, find more information on the mission and how to submit your expression of interest further below. Applicant clusters will be informed in the best delays on the results of the selection and an official confirmation on the business trip and details will follow.

Context

This mission is designed to support European and COSME-eligible clusters intent to explore and establish intra-European cooperation for the benefit of their members, notably SMEs, in their approach to open up new markets, develop new value chains and provide first relevant contacts to their members, notably via other European cluster partners.

As part of an approach aimed at promoting international cluster cooperation for the benefit of SMEs, the Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs of the European Commission is continuing its support to international cluster cooperation through the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) by organising specific cluster matchmaking missions; it is currently funded under the EU COSME Programme.

The European Cluster Collaboration Platform provides a visible framework for cluster collaboration and for subsequent events. The ECCP is the cornerstone of the European strategy in support of SME

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internationalisation through clusters. It provides a wide range of information and services to facilitate the interaction between clusters not only within Europe but also with international partners.

The organisation of this matchmaking event is facilitated by a consortium led by inno TSD (France).

CLUSTER COOPERATION MATCHMAKING MISSION in Thessaloniki, Greece

The cluster matchmaking event is organised in the context of the 82nd Thessaloniki International Fair one of the largest such fairs in south east Europe. Participants to the cluster event will have access to the fair if they so wish in the framework of this business delegation (see draft agenda below). The matchmaking event will be held in Thessaloniki from 13-14 September 2017 (final dates subject to confirmation).

The event aims in the first instance to promote cluster and network cooperation between cluster organisations from Europe and COSME eligible countries to explore common visions and seek partnerships at the cluster and network organisations level and on behalf of their members. 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 collaborations. Ultimately the goal for the cluster and network organisations is to act as a catalyst for their SMEs and companies to help them engage in collaborative projects.

The following sets out a **preliminary draft agenda** for the event; this programme is provisional and still subject to change.

Day	Timing	Event
13 September 2017	9-11 AM	Introduction to the seminar by the European Commission and the local government/RDI/actors (TBD). Pitch session Animated by European Cluster Collaboration Platform
	11:30-13.30 Am	Parallel seminars (possible themes) -Cooperation seminar on Balkans -Cooperation seminar on Creative industry (e-gaming etc) - Cooperation seminar on smart cities
	13:30-15:00	Lunch break
	15:00-17:30 PM	Visit to the Foundation for Research and Technology of Hellas or similar (TBC)/other visits

	17:30 PM	informal networking event
14 September 2017	9:00-12:30 AM	In cooperation with EEN (TBC), cluster-to-Cluster (C2C) and Cluster-to-Business matchmaking sessions and appointments in the Expo
	12:30-13:00	Debriefing with cluster delegation
	13:00-14:30	Lunch break
	14:30 PM onwards	C2C and B2B activities continued

Who can participate?

This call is addressed to cluster and network organisations that are interested in engaging in cluster collaboration with European and COSME-eligible countries in areas such as **creative industries, multi-media, circular economy, e-gaming, smart city and mobility industries as well as the automotive industries**.

Clusters operating outside these fields should duly motivate their application towards a reserve list to be decided in due time. Participation of Cluster organisations involved in European Strategic Cluster Partnerships - Going International (ESCP-4i) is strongly encouraged. Up to 50 % of the places may be available for cluster organisations that are members of an ESCP-4i. Applications from key south east European cluster networks and programmes are encouraged (such as Interreg, Adriatic-Ionian, Western Balkan and Black Sea and Central East Europe...).

Selection criteria

To be selected:

- The cluster or business network organisation shall be registered on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) <http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/> **with a complete profile** (the print screen or link to the complete cluster profile of each applicant registered on the ECCP shall be provided together with their application);
- The cluster or business network 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”*

- Each cluster or business network organisation has to currently provide direct cluster or network support services to businesses and should be identified on the basis of a **legal entity** established in a COSME participating country.

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 questionnaire provided in annex and to be submitted with the application;
- On the willingness and preparedness to engage in closer cooperation with other cluster and network organisations from Europe to better support SMEs and companies in global competition through joint efforts.
- Clusters operating outside the fields indicated should extensively motivate their application towards a reserve list to be decided in due time.
- In this context, the participation in a COSME funded or non-funded European Strategic Cluster Partnership is considered as an asset. For further information visit the following link:
<http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/>

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 expected to attend the full programme of the EU Cluster Mission where EU cluster organisation representatives are invited to as well as the Cluster Matchmaking Event (Plenary opening ceremony, C2B and C2C activities). **Participation in the full programme and provision of feedback on the event and collaboration opportunities discovered (through debriefing session and specific debriefing forms) are a requirement for reimbursement of costs (see below).**

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

Cost and expenses

This action covers the travel and accommodation costs for one representative of the cluster or network organisation (for a maximum of 25 clusters and business organisations), with a maximum amount of 800 €. The reimbursement will be based on actual expenses related to travel. Please note that local travel costs and meals are **not** reimbursable. Attendance to the full programme of the mission, as well as feedback requirements are a prerequisite to the reimbursement of the costs.

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Application

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

Please submit your expression of interest **by midnight 28th of July 2017 (CET)** to:

- Morgane Veillet Lavallée, m.veilletlavallee@inno-group.com

The expression of interest should encompass:

- a **completely filled out questionnaire (template annexed)** on the cluster or network organisation profile with proof/ evidence of the legal entity;
- the print screen/link to the completed **cluster profile** registered on the ECCP;
- a **short presentation** of the cluster organisation in English language, using PowerPoint
- (1-3 slides).

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

For further information, please contact:

- Morgane Veillet Lavallée, m.veilletlavallee@inno-group.com

And/or Marc Pattinson, m.pattinson@inno-group.com

Or visit the ECCP <http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/>