

Cooperation Arrangement

Between

The United States Department of Commerce

and

**The European Commission Directorate-General for
Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs**

on

Clusters

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The United States Department of Commerce and the European Commission Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs,

Recognising that the United States and the European Union are each other's largest trade, investment, and research and development partners;

Reaffirming that innovation and technological development has played a significant role in boosting economic growth, creating jobs and improving societal welfare in the United States and the European Union;

Emphasising that clusters, as geographic concentrations of groups of firms, related industries, and other economic and innovation actors that cooperate with each other and have developed specialised expertise and common needs for talent, technology, services, resources and infrastructure, are key drivers of prosperity in local, regional and national economies and are effective springboards for accelerating the internationalisation of small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs);

Recalling the cooperation on SMEs and on innovation established between the United States Department of Commerce and the European Commission Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs under the Transatlantic Innovation Action Partnership and the EU – U.S. SME Dialogue under the Transatlantic Economic Council;

Intending the activities under this Cooperation Arrangement to be implemented for the mutual benefit of organisations including, but not limited to, entrepreneurs, companies, start-ups, government institutes and agencies, research institutes, universities and other educational institutions, trade and industry associations, that are involved in clusters in the United States and the European Union;

Set out their intentions in this Cooperation Arrangement.

I. PURPOSE

The United States Department of Commerce and the European Commission Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs intend to collaborate in order to facilitate linkages between clusters in the United States and the European Union and to exchange best practices in fields of mutual interest in order to promote economic growth and job creation through increased trade, investment, research and innovation partnerships.

II. PARTICIPANTS

The participants in this Cooperation Arrangement are as follows:

- The United States Department of Commerce (USDOC), whose mission includes promoting job creation, economic growth and sustainable development in the United States by working in partnership with businesses, universities, communities and workers to foster innovation and promote U.S. competitiveness in the global marketplace.
- The Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs of the European Commission (DG GROWTH), whose mission includes strengthening the industrial base in Europe; ensuring an open internal market for

goods and services in the EU; encouraging the growth of SMEs and promoting an entrepreneurial culture; promoting industrial innovation to generate new sources of growth; and supporting the internationalisation of EU SMEs.

III. COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES

The Participants intend to undertake the following activities:

- Promote EU – U.S. cluster cooperation in the United States and the European Union at conferences, local events and meetings with local authorities, cluster managers and cluster firms as an instrument for initiating contacts and identifying opportunities for cooperation between cluster partners in the United States and the European Union;
- Include information on European cluster organisations and activities on the U.S. Cluster Map and Registry website and include information on U.S. cluster organisations and activities on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform website;
- Link the European Cluster Collaboration Platform and the European Cluster Observatory websites to the U.S. Cluster Map and Registry website and link the U.S. Cluster Map and Registry website to the European Cluster Collaboration Platform and the European Cluster Observatory websites;
- Regularly update relevant information about cluster developments in the European Union and the United States on the U.S. Cluster Map and Registry and the European Cluster Collaboration Platform websites, with specific sections publishing expressions of interest for cooperation;
- Encourage and facilitate the partnering between cluster organisations and cluster firms, in particular small- and medium-size enterprises, from the United States and the European Union, through the provision of information, and in liaison with EU Member States, facilitation of contacts and/or the organisation of international cluster missions (outgoing and incoming missions) offering matchmaking opportunities in strategic areas of mutual interest;
- Disseminate information on U.S. and EU funding programmes that support international cluster cooperation activities for the benefit of clusters in the U.S. and the EU;
- Exchange best practices on mutually beneficial topics on clusters of interest to both Participants, such as cluster mapping, cluster collaboration, cluster internationalisation, and small- and medium-size enterprises' access to global markets through clusters, drawing upon best practices developed in other related EU – US fora and initiatives.

IV. WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

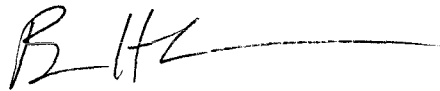

The Participants intend to appoint a number of contact persons to be responsible for coordinating matters relating to this Cooperation Arrangement. It is intended that these contact persons consult on a regular basis on the practical details of facilitating cooperation as intended through this Cooperation Arrangement. The contact persons would also be responsible for consulting and engaging with stakeholders as needed and

appropriate and for reporting in the framework of the EU – US SME Dialogue under the Transatlantic Economic Council where adequate.

V. OTHER PROVISIONS

- Each Participant intends to bear its own costs and expenditures that might be incurred in the course of implementing this Cooperation Arrangement.
- The activities of the Participants undertaken pursuant to this Cooperation Arrangement are contingent on the availability of funds and other resources, and subject to the laws, regulations, and internal policies that govern each of them.
- Each Participant, to the extent provided for by its governing laws and regulations, intends to protect from disclosure personal, proprietary and business confidential information.
- The Participants acknowledge that the cooperation anticipated under this Cooperation Arrangement is to be on a non-exclusive basis.
- This Cooperation Arrangement is not intended to be binding or create any legal rights or financial obligations under international or domestic/national law.
- This Cooperation Arrangement may be modified at any time by the Participants in writing. Either Participant may discontinue the Cooperation Arrangement, endeavouring if doing so to provide prior written notice of 60 days to the other Participant.

VI. SIGNATURES

For the United States Department of Commerce  <hr/> Bruce Andrews, Deputy Secretary Date <i>Apr. 22, 2015</i>	For the European Commission Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs  <hr/> Daniel Calleja, Director General Date <i>15 / IV / XV</i>
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