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CLUSTER COLLABORATION
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EU-IRAN

CLUSTER COOPERATION MATCHMAKING EVENT

Tehran, Iran

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

17-18 October 2016

Call for

Expression of Interest

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Objectives

On 17th and 18th October 2016 the European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs should support an **EU-IRAN cluster matchmaking event**, with the aim to foster cooperation between clusters from Europe with Iranian clusters, industrial associations or development agencies.

The cluster matchmaking event will represent a unique opportunity for representatives of European cluster organisations interested in cluster collaboration with the IRAN 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 delegation composed of representatives from cluster organisations from different **industry sectors of common interest such as sustainable construction, automotive and mobility, textile, chemicals, raw materials, environmental technologies and tourism** that are willing and committed to participate in a EU-IRAN Cluster Matchmaking Event.

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 7th September 2016** at the latest to c.vidaud@inno-group.com. Please, see find more information on the mission and how to submit your expression of interest. 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 should follow.

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

Context

This mission is designed to support clusters intent to explore and establish international cooperation with Iranian clusters for the benefit of their members, notably SMEs, in their approach to open up new markets and provide first relevant contacts to their members. The re-opened Iranian market is of relevance to clusters of a number of EU industry sectors and economic actors show high interest in the re-initiation of close relations.

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 (DG GROWTH) is continuing its support to international cluster cooperation through the European Cluster Collaboration Platform by organising specific cluster matchmaking missions. This is carried out in support to cluster organisations to develop partnerships and business cooperation in

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European and global markets, for the benefit of their members, and it is currently funded under the EU COSME Programme.

The NEW European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP), launched on the 8th March 2016, provides a visible framework for it and for subsequent events. The ECCP is the cornerstone of the European strategy in support of SME internationalisation through clusters. The new ECCP 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), in collaboration with Iranian clusters.

EU-IRAN CLUSTER COOPERATION MATCHMAKING EVENT in the framework of the ECONOMIC MISSION to Tehran, Iran

The event aims in the first instance to promote cluster and network cooperation between cluster organisations from Europe and IRAN to explore common visions and seek partnerships at the 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 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 matchmaking event will be primarily for the representatives of the selected European Cluster organisations and the equivalent IRAN counterparts to meet bilaterally, but there will also be the opportunity for them to seek information on the Iranian business environment in general during the Economic Mission.

The event should be held in Tehran (Iran) from Monday 17th and Tuesday 18th October 2016. The European Commission, DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, should further organise a series of meetings as indicated below where EU clusters should be invited as appropriate.

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

Day	Session	EU delegation
16 October Tehran	18:00 – 20:30	Arrival/ Team building meeting/ cocktail. Slovak Embassy in Tehran (EU Presidency) in presence of invited Ambassadors of Member States and both EU and Iranian business organisations, TPOs, Federal sectorial associations
17 October Tehran	09:00 – 12:30	<p>Conference on EU-Iran investment opportunities and business environment</p> <p>09:00</p> <p>Welcome and introduction</p> <p>Mr/Ms, Director General, Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade, Iran (tbc)</p> <p>Mr/Ms, Slovak Ambassador (representing the EU, tbc)</p> <p>Keynote speeches</p> <p>Mr Mohammad Reza NE'MATZADEH, Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade, Iran (tbc)</p> <p>Ms Elżbieta BIEŃKOWSKA, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, European Commission</p> <p>Mr Ali TAYEBNIA, Minister of Economy, Iran (tbc)</p> <p>10:00 – 10:40</p> <p><i>Business climate, investment opportunities and challenges in Iran,</i></p> <p>Mr Mohsen Jalalpour, President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries & Mines and Mr/Ms, representative from Iranian entrepreneurs association (tbc)</p> <p>10:40 – 11:10</p> <p><i>External Lending Mandate of the European Investment Bank (EIB) to Iran as "potentially eligible" country, Mr/Ms, EIB official (tbc)</i></p> <p><i>11:10 – 11:30 Coffee break</i></p> <p>11:30 – 12:10</p> <p><i>EU-Iran business relations in the post sanction lifting era, Mr Richard WEBER, President of Eurochambres (tbc)</i></p> <p>12:10 – 12:30</p> <p>Conclusions by Mr/Ms, Slovak Ambassador and Mr Eric Mamer, Director, DG GROW (tbc)</p>



	14:00 – 16 :00	<i>Track reserved to clusters</i>	<i>Economic mission</i>
		14:00 – 16:00 Cluster introduction session Cluster collaboration support and individual cluster presentations	14:00 – 14:45 Bilateral meeting between Commissioner Bienkowska and Mr Mohammad Reza NE'MATZADEH, Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade (tbc) 15:15 – 16:00 Bilateral meeting between Commissioner Bienkowska and Mr Ali TAYEBNIA, Minister of Economy, Iran (tbc) <i>Both bilateral meetings with the participation of a limited number of representatives of Iranian industrial associations, EU business organisations, MS Chambers of Commerce, TPOs, MS Ambassadors, EBOs, Federal sectoral organisations (tbc)</i>
	16:15 – 18:00	Workshops with Iranian and EU experts on different topics to be defined (construction, raw materials, automotive, textile, tourism) (tbc)	
18 October	09:30 -13:00 13 :00 – 14 :00 All day (in parallel)	Cluster-to-cluster matchmaking: Bilateral meetings between EU clusters and Iranian business organisations Cluster Debriefing session Site visit to company in Tehran (in a sectors such as automotive, textiles, construction, chemical products, other) having business with the EU or to a European company (<i>feedback on the company name to be received from the Iranian Embassy</i>) Cultural visit: National Archeological Museum and Jewelry Museum, Teheran	
19 October		Flight back to Europe	

Who can participate?

This call is addressed to cluster and network organisations that are interested in engaging in cluster collaboration with the IRAN in areas such as:

- Construction
- Automotive and mobility

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- Textile
- Chemicals
- Raw materials
- Environmental technologies
- Tourism

Clusters operating outside these fields should duly motivate their application towards a reserve list to be decided in due time.

The business trip is open to cluster and business network organisations from countries eligible for participating in the COSME programme.

Participation of Cluster organisations involved in ESCP-4i (European Strategic Cluster Partnership for internationalisation) is strongly encouraged.

Up to 50 % of the places may be available for cluster organisations that are members of a "European Strategic Cluster Partnerships - Going International (ESCP-4i)". Strand 2 ESCP-4i partnerships are required to identify if Iran is among their target countries of their internationalisation strategy.

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"²

³ 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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- 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 the COSME participating countries.

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 prepradness to engage in closer cooperation with other cluster and network organisations from IRAN 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-IRAN Economic Mission where EU business representatives are invited to as well as the Cluster Matchmaking Event (Conference on EU-Iran investment opportunities and business environment, Workshops with Iranian and EU experts and Meetings between EU clusters and Iranian business organisations).

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*, three nights' accommodation costs for one representative of the cluster or network organisation (for a maximum of 18 clusters and network organisations), with a maximum amount of 1 500 €. 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 programme of the mission is required for the reimbursement of the costs.

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

Application

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

Please submit your expression of interest **by 7th September 2016 midnight (CET)** to:

- Camille Vidaud, c.vidaud@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 (3/4 slides only).

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

For further information, please contact:

- Camille Vidaud, c.vidaud@inno-group.com
And/or Eva Fadil, e.fadil@inno-group.com

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

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