EU4Digital

EU4Digital: supporting digital economy and society in the Eastern Partnership

Guide for the EaP stakeholders on joining the EU networks and platforms

April 2022

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1   About this Guide

This guide provides an in-depth overview of the possibilities for stakeholders of the six Eastern partner countries to join the selected specialised EU networks and platforms in the area of ICT Innovation.

The **goal** of this guide is to further support the integration of the EaP stakeholders with EU networks and platforms introduced during a series of EU4Digital networking events with lead EU organisations on the policy topics prioritised by the Eastern partner countries. The policy topics were as follows:

- Intellectual property rights management for digital innovations.
- New organisational forms for supporting ICT Innovation.
- Digitising industry (digital transformation of SMEs in traditional sectors).
- Digital innovation SME's access to finance.
- ICT innovation ecosystems for startups and scale-ups.

In addition to this guide, the EU4Digital facilitated the joining of the EaP organisations to the **selected priority EU networks and platforms**: I4MS and European DIGITAL SME Alliance. The organisations were selected based on the defined criteria: the size of the network/platform; the added value for the range of stakeholders in terms of proposed services and tools; and ease of joining the organisation for EaP stakeholders (e.g., timing and membership fees). The profiles of priority organisations are provided in the beginning of this guide.

The guide presents the profiles of the following EU networks and platforms:

1. Innovation for Manufacturing SMEs (I4MS).
2. European DIGITAL SME Alliance.
3. Startup Europe Regions Network (SERN).
4. European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP).
5. European Business Angels Network (EBAN).
6. Business Angels Europe (BAE).
7. European Crowdfunding Network (ECN).
8. European IP Helpdesk.
9. European IP Office (EUIPO).

2   Innovation for Manufacturing SMEs (I4MS)

I4MS	**Policy area:** Digitising industry (digital transformation of SMEs in traditional sectors) **EU4Digital networking topic**: Networking with EU Digital Innovation Hubs to enable the development of competence centres, platforms, tools and services supporting digital transformation of SMEs

Organisation details

- **Short description:** The I4MS is the EU initiative to digitalise the manufacturing industry (SMEs and mid-caps). It is promoted by the European Commission to expand the digital innovation of manufacturing SMEs in Europe and is one of the key initiatives of the European Commission to shape the pan-European network of Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs). 84% of its industrial members are SMEs, to whom I4MS provides an opportunity to apply for technological and financial support to experiment with different technologies and services, to improve the innovation skills of staff and the technologies and services that the company provides. I4MS maintains the community of experts, the working groups and the contact points across Europe. Finally, I4MS has support partners such as FundingBox Accelerator which is a non-profitable initiative promoting and launching technological and innovative businesses in Europe.

- **Mission statement:** The main goal is to support manufacturing SMEs and mid-caps in the widespread use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in their business operations. The objective is to accelerate the uptake of digital technologies in processes across Europe focused on extending the transformative impact to companies, regions and sectors, and supporting personalised and cost-effective small-scale production based on secure digital technologies.

- **Priority topic(-s):** Technological areas related to the digital transformation of manufacturing SMEs such Smart modelling, Robotics, Internet of Things, Cybersecurity and others (see for more here).

- **Community:** I4MS connects and collaborates with many organisations across Europe, including different types of organisations such as SMEs (the biggest group constituting 40% of the network), DIHs (a second largest group with about 30% of organisations), which connect I4MS indirectly with the SMEs and facilitate support to SMEs, intermediary support organisations, public administration, corporates, industry associations.

- **More detailed** presentation of the organisation can be found here.

Potential beneficiaries

Ultimate goal: Provide more opportunities for EaP manufacturing SMEs to get access to finance and expertise for digital transformation.

Main beneficiaries addressed by EU4Digital activity:

- *Business associations* and organisations that can support local manufacturing SMEs by promoting I4MS services, such as cascade funding and testing of technologies.

- *Competence centres* and organisations with specialized technological expertise that can develop their capacity to support SMEs in digital transformation by accessing specialized trainings for their experts, through knowledge exchange and transfer of service toolkits from European DIHs.

Additional beneficiaries:

- Manufacturing SMEs (directors, managers, specialists, others) who can deepen their knowledge and get access to tools/services for digital transformation.

- Training and technology providers, individual experts in the area of supporting digital transformation of traditional SMEs who can increase and promote their expertise by joining the I4MS online community, working groups and using training opportunities.

Available services and tools

(services/tools description and eligibility criteria)

1. **Joining the online community**
    a) **Service description:** Knowledge-sharing platform to connect start-ups and SMEs informally with fellow innovators, entrepreneurs and professionals, including information on funding opportunities, experience gain from other organisations' projects, opportunity to find a partner for the project.
    b) **Eligibility/target group:** individual experts in the area of digital transformation regardless of their country looking for useful information about Industry 4.0 and connections.
    c) **How to join?**
        - Sign up to FundingBox ID.
        - Explore Members directory – connect with the community members' profiles; create chat groups; join existing and create new communities.

2. **Brokerage system (by FundingBox)**
    a) **Service description:**
        - The system allows SMEs *from any country* to view and contact the relevant innovation and technology adoption projects financed by the European Union.
        - SMEs *from eligible countries* can get access to financial resources to test new technologies and access to training to upskill workers.
    b) **Eligibility/target group:** Manufacturing SMEs that would like to improve their technology adoption cycle more quickly and smartly. To be eligible for funding, SME or mid-cap should be legally established i.e. be located in the Member States of the European Union and its Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT), in Associated Countries to H2020, which currently includes Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia and Armenia (see Guide for Applicants).
    c) **How to join?**
        - Watch the video Brokering System Application Guide.
        - Sign up to receive your FundingBox ID and then fill in the application form.

3. **Projects and cascade funding**
    a) **Service description:** SMEs can apply for technological and financial support to conduct experiments, happening during open calls. As a result, SMEs can test Industry 4.0 technologies and assess the impact of scaling them up within their companies. More details about the projects are below:
        - Short project durations of approx. 6 months with immediate results.
        - Offer between 50% and 100% of equity-free funding to SMEs, mid-caps, and DIHs.
        - The funding is organized and provided through Innovation Actions (introduced in service No 4 below), which makes the evaluation process much quicker and effective.
    b) **Eligibility/target group:** Manufacturing SMEs and mid-caps from eligible countries (vary among projects). To be eligible, SME or mid-cap should be legally established i.e. be located in the Member States of the European Union and its Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT), in Associated Countries to H2020 (see Guide for Applicants).
    c) **How to join?**
        - Check the calendar of open calls to choose the relevant project.
        - Sign in with your Funding Box ID and apply for the relevant open call.
        - In addition, explore the open links to I4MS projects and I4MS contact points on the map.

4. **Testing with one of the technologies supported by I4MS via Innovation Actions initiative (under HORIZON 2020)**
    a) **Service description:** Enabling SMEs to implement Application Experiments (AEs) based on specific I4MS technologies and deploying a pilot project to test its implications in a particular business process. To explore more see: list of I4MS technology providers, Catalogue of latest technological proposals created under I4MS umbrella and examples of successful AEs, tableau

of best practices of AEs, Database of Application experiments covering the range of custom manufacturing sectors.

b) **Eligibility/target group:** Cross-border consortia formed by combinations of manufacturing SMEs, tech providers and DIHs. To be eligible for funding, organisations should be legally established i.e. be located in the Member States of the European Union and its Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT), in Associated Countries to H2020 (see Guide for Applicants).

c) **How to join?** Sign up to receive your FundingBox ID.

5. **Strategic Working Groups**
   a) **Service description:**
      - Suggesting policy recommendations to advise EC, regional and national policymakers on new programmes and strategies: WG1 - Best Practices and supporting mechanisms (mostly for policy-makers) and WG2 - Upskilling challenges in the manufacturing industry (mostly for training providers).
      - Participation allows face-to-face meetings with covered expenses; be showcased at the 'I4MS Talks' webinar series; connect I4MS stakeholders & community; set joint strategies to leverage investments; tackle specific challenges and draw policy recommendations, and others.
   b) **Eligibility/target group:** individual experts from companies or organisations from any country.
   c) **How to join?** Fill in the online form.

6. **Training opportunities**
   a) **Service description:**
      - Catalogue of training opportunities provided in different modes by I4MS members related to different technological areas as IoT, Robotics, AI, HPC, Cloud and others.
      - Trainings cover all Technology Absorption Cycle stages (e.g. awareness of technology, configuration, implementation and operation).
   b) **Eligibility/target group:**
      - Manufacturing SMEs and mid-caps (from directors to engineers and operators).
      - Digital innovation hubs, competence centers, other organisations supporting digital transformation of traditional SMEs.
      - Individual experts supporting digital transformation of traditional SMEs.
      - Note: organisations can submit proposals to include their training into the catalog, except trainings from private institutions and those that are part of the official curricula (e.g. Masters) are not being promoted.
   c) **How to join?** Search for training opportunities and submit the proposal for new trainings to the Training Catalogue via online form (subject to validation by I4MS team).

7. **Network of I4MS Contact Points**
   a) **Service description:** Becoming a part of exclusive I4MS contact points network, which brings together all key actors of smart manufacturing in Europe who are working for the digitalisation of manufacturing SMEs and taking the initiative to disseminate information on opportunities provided by I4MS on the national level. The list of potential benefits as a contact point and contribution opportunities are provided below:
      - Formal links to I4MS initiatives to replicate solutions and services.
      - Provision of access to first-hand information about the latest market trends and funding opportunities.
      - Access to training.
      - Exclusive activities for members only (e.g., webinars, I4MS Ambassadors).

- Possibility to host Industry 4.0 workshop (the best performing I4MS Contact Point will be offered the opportunity to host one of these events).
- Possibility to select a type of partnership: cross-dissemination partnership via Silver Plan (free of charge), or extended I4MS technologies partnership via the Golden Plan (for more details see here).
- Possibility to contribute by leading the online discussions and providing feedback to policy recommendations and surveys.
- Possibility to contribute by sharing key contents and opportunities of I4MS (open calls, news, articles, etc.) in your communication channels.

b) **Eligibility/target group:** actors from eligible countries covering Associated Countries to H2020, which includes Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine:

- I4MS Innovation Action consortia members.
- Digital Innovation Hubs or other EU projects.
- University/Research & technology organizations.
- SMEs and mid-caps.
- Large enterprises.
- Intermediaries supporting SMEs (Chamber of Commerce, EEN, BIC, cluster).
- Corporates/private investor organisations.
- Public Administrations.

c) **How to join?**

- Fill in the Application form for DIHs/ I4MS Innovation Actions or Application form for other entities from eligible countries.

Contacts and links

Contact Person: Maria Roca, Senior Project Manager

Phone: +34 678 051 118

Email: maria.roca@fundingbox.com

Direct contact at I4MS Community

I4MS Contact Points across EU countries

Twitter; LinkedIn

Subscribe to the newsletter and participate in events.

3 European DIGITAL SME Alliance

European **DIGITAL SME** Alliance	**Policy area:** ICT Innovation ecosystems for start-ups and scale-ups **Networking event topic:** Facilitate the development of expert communities and increase their involvement into policy design and implementation

Organisation details

- **Short description:** The European DIGITAL SME Alliance ("DIGITAL SME") is established as a non-for-profit international association. It is the largest network of ICT SMEs in Europe, representing more than **45,000** SMEs. The alliance is a joint effort of 30 national and regional SME associations from EU member states and neighbouring countries to put digital SME at the centre of the EU agenda. DIGITAL SME is implementing initiatives of general interest for the ICT SMEs in Europe, monitoring EU policies and regulations on ICT and informing its members. Also, the network is raising SMEs awareness on standardisation process, supporting access to SME funding, facilitating B2B and matchmaking processes, carrying out actions in third countries, especially in matters relating to the support and training of local ICT enterprises.

- **Mission statement:** DIGITAL SME is the voice of ICT SMEs in Europe, and the main objectives of network are to provide information to the members on EU policies and to represent their interests and stances vis-à-vis the institutions of the European Union, to support networking and knowledge sharing among the members and their SMEs, and facilitate their access to EU funds, SME B2B activities, etc.

- **Priority topic(-s):** Digital skills; Sustainable B2B Digitalisation; Digital Innovation Hubs; Cybersecurity and Data protection; ICT Standards for SMEs; Intellectual Property; Future Technologies and Artificial Intelligence; Internet of Things; 5G; Cloud; Trade and Competition etc.

- **Network:** The European DIGITAL SME Alliance is a member of Small Business Standards (SBS), the European Association of Crafts and SMEs (SMEUnited), European Cyber Security Organisation (ECSO), Alliance for the Internet of Things Innovation (AIOTI), the European Artificial Intelligence Alliance, International Association for Trusted Blockchain Applications (INATBA); European Internet Forum, and other digital market associations. DIGITAL SME also contributes to or works closely with the international organisations including EUIPO; OECD; EP; EC; ENISA; ISO; ETSI; CEN-CENELEC; LKDF; UNIDO; World Economic Forum; IEEE; Scale-up Europe.

- **More detailed** presentation of the organisation can be found here.

Potential beneficiaries

Ultimate goal: Integration of EaP associations of ICT/digital SMEs with the community of like-minded EU associations, to foster cooperation of EaP and EU digital SMEs and joint work on digital markets development.

Main target group: National associations of ICT/digital SMEs in EaP countries can enhance their capacity as executive bodies to support their member SMEs in cross border B2B collaboration opportunities as well as to contribute to policy and ecosystem activities for EaP digital markets development.

Additional target groups:
- SMEs, startups and researchers who innovate in ICT or want to accelerate their digital transformation; they could network for joint innovative projects and initiatives.
- Associations of non-ICT SMEs; they could collaborate via digitalisation promotion initiatives.
- Policy-making organisations in EaP countries; they could benefit from enhanced dialogue with EaP digital business community.
- Other organisations sharing the values and objectives of European DIGITAL SME Alliance and seeking for synergies can implement ecosystem building projects (NGOs, public bodies, research organisations, non-formal networks, etc).

Available services and tools

(services/tools description and eligibility criteria)

1. **Membership as an association**
   a) **Service description.** Member package for organisations includes:
      - Opportunities to participate in EU-funded projects: Horizon Europe (previous Horizon2020), Erasmus+, tenders or other financial support schemes. These are usually invitations to become a partner of existing consortia that develop project proposals in response to specific calls. Such invitations are directed either to member associations or to their SME members. Examples of projects:
        - European Digital Skills and Jobs Platform - A key platform for boosting digital skills in Europe. It will offer information, resources, overview of training and funding opportunities and a community space for networking and collaboration both on European and national level.
        - EUHubs4Data - The European federation of Data Driven Innovation Hubs project aims to foster collaboration between data driven initiatives in Europe, facilitate federating solutions in a global catalogue of data services, and sharing data across borders and sectors.
        - For more projects see here.
      - Letters of Intent (support letters) for members to participate in EU projects.
      - Support in promoting project outputs of the members or other important info within DIGITAL SME network.
      - Annual calls for experts to participate in standardisation activities co-funded by Small Business Standards (SBS).
      - Calls for experts (at the request of European institutions) to workshops, high level working groups and similar, with payment of allowances.
      - Support in business to business (B2B) collaborations opportunities (DIGITAL SME liaises between its represented SMEs and helps them to make a first contact, collaborate or form consortia, including SMEs from other sectors than ICT).
      - Opportunities to participate or speak at international events.
      - Privileged access to trainings (free for members).
      - Participation in Working Groups.
      - Other services provided specifically for the organisations from the EU:
        - Representation vis à vis the European institutions and bodies. This includes organising direct meetings between members and EC officials or MEPs.
        - Tailored information and policy analysis on relevant EU policies. Participation in policy and research activities. Actual EU policy overviews prepared for dissemination by the executive body of associations to member digital SMEs and national policy-makers, for example, the following papers prepared in 2021: Response on Digital Decades Targets 2030 Consultation; Response to the Consultation on the Proposal for a Revised Directive on Security of Network and Information Systems; Position Paper on the Digital Services Act; Position Paper on the eIDAS Regulation; Position Paper on the Digital Governance Act; Position Paper on the Digital Markets Act; Position Paper on the Digital Tax.
   b) **Eligibility/target group for a service:** The following organisations can be eligible for *Associate Membership*:
      - Associations of ICT SMEs in countries that are not members of the European Union;
      - Any other organisation not fulfilling the conditions.
      - Associate members may take part in the Association's meetings, but without voting right.
   c) **How to join?**
      - Fill in the form and upload the organisation Statutes.
      - Wait for secretariat to contact you.
      - Specific membership fee will be calculated based on the number of organisations that the applicant associates.

2. **Membership as an enterprise - European Digital Innovators Club**
   a) **Service description:** Benefits provided for European Digital Innovators Club members are listed below:
      - Access to DIGITAL SME's working groups (e.g. Focus Group - Artificial Intelligence, the Task Force Blockchain, or Working Group CYBER). See all working groups here.

- Funding opportunities.
- Networking events.
- Possibility to nominate experts for high-level meetings, workshops, and conferences.

b) **Eligibility/target group for a service:** Membership is open to the following organisations:
- All enterprises that fulfil their respective national or the European Commission's SME definition.
- Other interested stakeholders like researchers, policymakers, or journalists (upon review by DIGITAL SME).
- Members of DIGITAL SME's member associations enjoy free access to Innovators Club functionalities until 2022, when new Club-only services will be offered.

c) **How to join?** Joining the club is possible under the link.

3. **Working groups**
   a) **Service description:** The European DIGITAL SME Alliance maintains the operation of the Working Groups that elaborate policy papers for EU and national bodies, as well as joint initiatives and project proposals in their related topics. The working groups are as follows:
   - **WG SKILLS** covers a variety of topics related to skills development, re-skilling and easier outsourcing, which help to close the digital skills gap in Europe. WG SKILLS' expertise includes digital skills, social dialogue, movement of workers, competence centres, work-life balance, and other areas.
   - **WG DIGITALISATION** operates to enable the digital transformation of European industry. In order to foster innovation, WG contributes to policy debates and European initiatives on Industry 4.0, Digital Innovation Hubs, IoT, AI, building information modeling, cloud computing, blockchain and other technologies.
   - **WG STANDARDS** focuses on providing SMEs access to the European standardisation process. As the sectoral representative of Small Business Standards (SBS) in the field of ICT, DIGITAL SME helps small business representatives to actively participate in expert working groups and technical committees. WG STANDARDS develops positions and consultations for EU institutions and standardisation bodies.
   - **Other Working groups:** WG CYBER & DATA, WG Software Patents & Intellectual Property Rights, Focus Group Artificial Intelligence, Task Force Blockchain & DLT and Focus Group Sustainability.

   b) **Eligibility/target group for a service:** Representatives of Associate Members of DIGITAL SME and their member SMEs, members of European Digital Innovators Club.
   c) **How to join?** Register and wait for approval.

Contacts and links

Contact Person: Justina Bieliauskaite

Phone: +32489610767

Email: j.bieliauskaite@digitalsme.eu; office@digitalsme.eu

Address: 123, Rue du Commerce, 1000, Brussels, Belgium

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Track Position & Policy papers

4 Startup Europe Regions Network (SERN)

STARTUP EUROPE REGIONS NETWORK	**Policy area:** ICT Innovation ecosystems for start-ups and scale-ups **Networking event topic**: Facilitate the development of expert communities and increase their involvement into policy design and implementation

Organisation details

- **Short description**: Startup Europe Regions Network (SERN) is a non for profit association, a network of regions dedicated to support the start-ups, promoted by the EC Startup Europe initiative. The purpose of SERN is to reinforce the links between regional authorities, development agencies, universities and associations who build and enable the start-up ecosystems at the regional level in Europe as well as to promote a culture of start-up friendly regions. The membership of SERN is open to any local or regional entity, development agencies, universities or any other legal entities that contribute to the development and implementation of regional policies towards start-ups and entrepreneurship in Europe. The activities of SERN include promoting support initiatives to start-ups and entrepreneurship, collecting and highlighting the best regional practices, facilitating networking of regional decision makers and mobilising regional resources to address relevant barriers to start-ups' growth.

- **Mission statement:** The non-profit purpose of SERN is to reinforce the links between regional authorities, development agencies, universities and associations who build and scale up the startup ecosystems at regional level in Europe. The focus of the activities will be on the mapping and promotion of support activities to startups conducted at regional level across Europe and in mobilizing regional efforts to address relevant barriers to startups' growth, such as harmonization of policies and regulations, access to talent and to major research infrastructures.

- **Priority topic(-s):** Originally focused on ICT and web start-ups, SERN has recently broaden its scope to all startups. Priority topics cover Workplace Innovation; Regional Ecosystems; Innovation Procurement; ICT & Arts; Financial instruments.

- **Network:** SERN collaborates with a number of organisations across Europe that can be found here.

- **Projects:**
  - o 'Start at Best' - a project funded by Horizon 2020 programme with a focus on Workplace Innovation, aimed to raise the awareness of the relevance of workplace innovation for business competitiveness among SMEs and Startups; develop a repository of startup inspired case studies of workplace innovation to help SMEs develop their ideas and concepts; promote, fund and support small scale projects for the development of workplace innovation in SMEs; disseminate results at EU scale and promote the replication of successful initiatives.
  - o 'Self-reflection Tools for Smart Universities Acting Regionally' (RE-ACT) is an Erasmus+ project that aims to exploit the potential of existing self-reflection tools, particularly HEInnovate, for the design and implementation of RIS3.
  - o Learning Technology Accelerator (LEA) project has a goal is to accelerate knowledge transfer, dialog and awareness raising of innovative procurement within the learning technology sector by creating a European wide learning technology procurers' network.
  - o 'Enhancing SME growth by the integration of Artists in ICT projects – RegionArts' - an Interreg Europe project aiming to strengthen the competitiveness of SMEs by combining technological development and innovation with artistic and creative talent, fostering cross-functional mindset and interdisciplinary collaboration to increase productivity and performance within ICT SME's.
  - o 'Financial Instruments for Innovation' (Innova-FI) - the Interreg Europe project aims to improve the design and implementation of Financial Instruments as a delivery mode of Structural Funds, so that they best meet and serve the financing needs of innovative and RTDI-driven businesses in all the stages of their start-up and growth.

- **More detailed presentation** can be found here.

Potential beneficiaries

Legal entities that build and enable the start-up ecosystems and/or contribute to the development and implementation of national and regional policies toward startups and entrepreneurship.

Main beneficiaries:

- National authorities.
- Development agencies.
- Universities.
- Incubators.
- Associations.

Available services and tools

(services/tools description and eligibility criteria)

1. **Membership**
   a) **Basic membership (free of charge) service description:**
      - Raising profile of the organization, promoting its activities and events.
      - Using SERN to put forward ideas, find potential partners, identify strategic partnerships, be informed of funding opportunities, and implement joint projects with EU funding.
      - Policy Guidance of SERN to anticipate relevant EU policies and receive early information on policy.
      - Using collective Intelligence of SERN members and public consultations.
      - Monthly updates via newsletter.
      - Regular surveys and consultations on entrepreneurship policies in Europe opportunities to participate in policy papers (thematic activities).
      - First-hand updates about SERN initiatives, projects and calls for proposals (e.g., 'Start at best').
   b) **Gold membership (€485/year) additional service description:**
      - Special 'infoweekly' update on funding opportunities for regions and start-ups.
      - Preference in joining SERN led proposals to EU programmes and initiatives as invited partner, and access EU funding.
      - Free access to SERN Partner Search Tool for EU programmes.
      - Helpdesk Support in applying to EU programmes and initiatives.
   c) **Eligibility/target group:** Membership of SERN is open to any legal representative of European Regions, development agencies, universities, or any other legal entities (incubators; regional organizations; universities / higher education establishments; further education organisations; non-for-profit organisations; other types) that contribute to the development and implementation of regional policies toward startups and entrepreneurship in Europe.
   d) **How to join?** Fill in the application form.

Contacts and links

Contact person: Barbara Bento

Phone: +32 (0)2 8080 322

Email: barbara.bento@startupregions.eu; info@startupregions.eu

SERN – Startup-Europe Region Network

Avenue des Arts 24, BE – 1000 Brussels, BELGIUM

Twitter; LinkedIn

Newsletter

Participate at events

5 European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP)

EUROPEAN CLUSTER COLLABORATION PLATFORM	**Policy area:** New organisational forms for supporting ICT Innovation **Networking event topic**: <u>Networking of ICT innovation clusters in EU and EaP countries to support cluster organisations development and regional cooperation</u>

Organisation details

- **Short description:** <u>European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP)</u> is the central EU platform for cluster organisations and initiatives, including tools and information on key European initiatives, actions and events for clusters and their SMEs. ECCP network consists of more than 1,200 clusters in various sectors of the economy. The ECCP acts as a service facility aiming to provide cluster organisations, cluster partnerships, initiatives and networks, cluster associations and resource efficiency support actors with a variety of modern tools.

- **Mission statement:** ECCP mission is to be the European online hub for cluster stakeholders and the reference one-stop-shop for stakeholders in third countries aiming to set up partnerships with European counterparts.

- **Priority topic(-s):** innovative clusters, industrial clusters, cluster organisations, cluster policies.

- **More detailed presentation** of organisation could be found <u>here.</u>

Potential beneficiaries

Integration of EaP organisations that support SMEs in innovation and digitalisation with the digital innovation hubs (DIH) in the EU, would facilitate capacity building and evolution of the DIHs in Eastern partner countries.

Main beneficiaries:

- Cluster organisations (COSME and non-COSME) management and members;
- European cluster partnerships and initiatives;
- National associations of clusters;
- Meta clusters and networks of clusters.

Additional beneficiaries:

- Training providers on clusters development;
- Cluster policy makers at regional, national or international levels.

Available services and tools
(services/tools description and eligibility criteria)

1. **<u>Cluster mapping</u>**
   a) **Service description:**
      - Dynamic mapping of over 1,200 profiled cluster organisations worldwide. Find partners and potential collaboration opportunities <u>in Europe</u> by filtering organisations. The platform also facilitates the development of collaboration transnationally <u>(within Europe)</u> and <u>internationally <u>(beyond Europe).</u></u>
   b) **Eligibility/target group:**
      - To be mapped <u>within Europe</u>, the organisation should be legally established (located) in <u>the Member States of the European Union and its Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT)</u> or <u>Associated Countries to Horizon Europe</u>, which currently includes Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine.
      - To be mapped <u>internationally (beyond Europe),</u> the organisation should be legally established (located) in one of the other countries (territories), currently including Azerbaijan and Belarus.
      - **Validation criteria**. Registration as **a cluster organisation** is subject to compliance with <u>definitions</u> of clusters. The validation criteria for organisations' profiles in EU/COSME countries can be waived for cluster organisations that are officially recognised by

regional/national cluster policy programmes or are recognised as social economy clusters by the European Commission (DG GROW). For more on validation criteria, see [here](#).

c) How to join?

- [Create](#) an account.
- [Register](#) your profile. Your member profile will only become visible on the ECCP when your membership is accepted by the profile administrator of the corresponding cluster organisation(s) or/and after validation by the ECCP team.

2. **Funds for [cluster organisations development](#)**

a) Service description:

- ECCP keeps clusters informed about the [funding opportunities](#) as well as [European Cluster Partnerships (ECPs)](#) that are launched by the European Commission through financial incentives (under COSME programme) to encourage clusters from Europe to intensify collaboration across regions and sectors.

- [Explore](#) the overview of open calls covering EU funding, national and regional funding as well as private funding and tender opportunities (see below *How to join).*

b) Eligibility/target group:

- To be eligible, the organisation should be legally established (located) in [the Member States of the European Union and its Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT)](#) or [Associated Countries to Horizon Europe,](#) which currently includes Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine.

c) How to join?

- [Create](#) an account.
- [Register](#) your profile.

3. **Resources and knowledge database**

a) Service description:

- An extensive knowledge database of [publications](#) developed by the ECCP, European Commission, academia and larger community, as well as the EREK knowledge database with best practices of environmental and resource efficiency technologies.

- [Overview](#) of best practices and cluster policies in Europe and beyond, including the most up-to-date information on [green](#) and [digital policy](#), [social economy](#), [economic resilience](#) and [industrial ecosystems](#).

- Cluster management support by finding [Training Partners](#).

b) Eligibility/target group:

- Cluster organisations managers, policy-makers and public authorities.

c) How to join?

- [Create](#) an account.
- [Register](#) your profile.

4. **Events and initiatives to foster international collaboration of clusters**

a) Service description:

- [Matchmaking events in Europe](#) and [international matchmaking events](#) supporting the development of cooperation between clusters.

- Dedicated pages supporting [international cooperation](#) including profiles of selected countries of strategic interest.

- The [European Cluster Conference](#) and [European Expert Group on Clusters](#) bring together cluster actors to discuss and share current and future priorities for cluster policies and developments to support sustainable industrial development and interregional cooperation and to build connections between Europe's value chains, clusters and ecosystems.

- European Cluster Partnerships (ECPs) – partnership groups of different sectors to intensify the collaboration between regions and areas of activity (e.g., innovation, smart specialisation and others).

b) **Eligibility/target group:**

- Interested cluster managers, cluster members and policy makers can make use of matchmaking events, partner search facilities and relevant international cooperation activities.
- Eligible for participation (as a visiting representative or a host organisation) in a transnational exchange via ClusterXchange are:
  - o Cluster organisations and similar business network organisations;
  - o Scaling-up support organisations (such as tech centres, research institutes, digital innovation hubs, fab labs, creative hubs, resource-efficiency service providers, incubators, accelerators) that are cluster members;
  - o Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that are cluster members;
  - o All participant organisations must be from countries participating in the COSME programme. Eligible countries are listed here.

c) **How to join?**

- To access ClusterXchange facility, pass the steps of registration as a visiting and/or host organisation; accessing the online catalogue of all registered participants available for exchange and finding your best match; reach an agreement for the exchange with your matched partner, plan your exchange, get validated, and conclude a financial agreement.
- To access ECCP, first, create an account and register your profile.

Contacts and links

E-mail: contact@clustercollaboration.eu

www.clustercollaboration.eu

Phone: +43 699 17203124

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6 European Business Angels Network (EBAN)

	Policy area: Digital innovation SME's access to finance **Networking event topic**: Integration of business angels and venture capital (individuals and associations) into the EU and global networks and their capacity building to increase digital SMEs access to finance in EaP region

Organisation details

- **Short description**: European Business Angels Network (EBAN) is the pan-European representative for the early-stage investor community gathering over 150 member organisations in 50+ countries today. Established in 1999 by a group of pioneer angel networks in Europe with the collaboration of the EC and European Association of Development Agencies (EURADA), EBAN represents a sector estimated to invest 11.4 billion Euros a year and playing a vital role in Europe's future, notably in the funding of SMEs. EBAN has dedicated its efforts to providing first-class documentation, resources, statistics, and many more benefits to its members. The robustness and the credibility of these documents were built on several years of experience and expertise in the early-stage investing market. Additionally, EBAN has established EBAN CEE Community that gathers all the main early-stage investment networks in Central and Eastern Europe, including organisations from the EU associated member countries. The goal of EBAN CEE is to foster cross border cooperation in the region, best practice sharing and international syndication between investors.

- **Mission statement:** EBAN mission is to drive successful and responsible Angel Investing in Europe via the number of activities mentioned in Articles of Association (article 3).

- **Priority topic(-s):** building angel ecosystems; supporting scaleups.

- **Partnerships:** EBAN is committed to supporting the development of a strong European early stage investment ecosystem and partners with various private, governmental and investor/startup organisations, including partners of angel network and entrepreneurial ecosystem and sponsors.

- **More detail** presentation of organisation can be found here.

Potential beneficiaries

Main beneficiaries: Business angel networks and federations; angel syndicates; other early stage venture capital and seed funds.

Additional beneficiaries: Business angels; business accelerators and business incubators; electronic funding platforms and stock exchanges; early stage venture capital; governments and chambers of commerce; corporates; associate members.

Available services and tools

(services/tools description and eligibility criteria)

1. **Membership package**
    a) **Service description:** Benefits for members include:
      - Connecting and building new relationships with business angels/investor groups in 50+ countries.
      - Being part of or leading **EBAN Communities**, which focus on different industries and regions, connecting like-minded investors and entrepreneurs.
      - Hosting or getting special access to EBAN events and workshops; exclusive access to worldwide investor events, tech and startup conferences and high-level policy meetings.
      - Accessing **EBAN Knowledge Center:** statistical data reports, and monthly newsletter for update information about the trends in the early-stage investment market.
      - Receiving tailored support from EBAN including guidance on how to implement your initiatives, tips for organising events for business angels and growing your network, facilitation of direct connections with investors and innovation experts globaly.
      - Contributing to angel and entrepreneurship policy discussions on national and international levels; receiving EBAN's support in producing impact on the legislative and fiscal environment angel investment in your country.

- Gaining visibility in the EBAN community by having members' initiatives, news and events shared through EBAN newsletters, social media channels and website, reaching more than 20,000 readers.
- Access to deal flow and cross-border investment opportunities, syndication platforms (e.g. Gust).
- EBAN's "Scaleup of the Month" Logo initiative designed to give visibility to the best EBAN *member portfolio companies* actively raising follow-on investments to scale. Winners of the Scaleup of the Month get complimentary passes and a pitching slot to one of EBAN's flagship events as well as premium visibility within the EBAN network.

b) **Eligibility/target group:**
- *Full Members:* Business angels networks, federations of networks set up to promote the angel market, business angel groups, angel funds or angel syndicates; other early stage equity investors comprising but not exclusive to Venture Capital Seed Funds, Co-Investment Funds, Business Accelerators, E-Funding (Crowdfunding) Plarforms. Only the full members benefit from full voting rights.
- *Affiliate Members:* Business angels/private individuals who have invested or intend to invest in SMEs.
- *Associate Members*: Organisations which do not meet the before mentioned criteria for the full membership, but who have evident interest in the business angel industry.

c) **How to join?**
- Fill out the membership application form and email it to info@eban.org.
- Companies eligible for the Scaleup of the Month can apply via the online form.

2. **Building local angel ecosystems via joint projects**
   a) **Service description:** EBAN works with both public and private organisations to help them set up local angel networks, train and professionalise individuals and business angels, develop local angel ecosystems. Also, EBAN inspire fiscal and policy reform at national levels and assist public actors in setting up financial instruments and investment schemes to co-invest with angels, with a goal to improve the working environment of early stage investors and entrepreneurs.
   b) **Eligibility/target group:** Public and private actors aiming to develop local angel ecosystems based on best EU practices, including non-members.
   c) **How to join?** Approach EBAN via email/phone with a request to discuss the possible implementation frameworks.

3. **EBAN Academy**
   a) **Service description:** EBAN Academy offers knowledge and best practices on how to professionally invest in startups as a business angel. EBAN Academy brings four different initiatives for a tailored learning experience led by some of the most experienced investors in EBAN community with the best in Europe and the world. EBAN Academy includes four different paths that you may find here.
   b) **Eligibility/target group:** Any private and public actors interested in the early-stage investment, including non-members.
   c) **How to join?** Check website for registration opnenings. Contact EBAN for more information.

4. **Supporting cloud-based scaleups**
   a) **Service description:** Within the scope of its partnership with Amazon Web Services AWS Activate, EBAN, together with partner organisations implements the AWS Activate Offer for Startups: awards $10,000,000 Amazon Web Services Promotional Credits to 1,000 cloud-based startups that have received investment. Credits can be used for 2 years to buy software relevant for business, cloud space, AI/Machine learning technologies, advisory services, technical and business support etc.
   b) **Eligibility/target group:** Only startups that meet the following criteria will be eligible to participate in the AWS Activate Programme:

- Interested in using AWS cloud technology for building and launching their company and business model. It is not required for the startup to have past experience with Amazon.
- Strong business model and proven traction, with good prospects for raising VC investment, or entering an acceleration programme.
- The startup must have received an equity investment (loans and grants do not qualify) from an investor, such as a business angel, a business angel syndicate or network, an early stage VC, an accelerator, an incubator, or an equity crowdfunding platform.
- Further terms and conditions are stipulated here.

c) **How to join?** Eligible companies should fill out the application form, sign it, and send it as a PDF document to operations@eban.org.

7 Business Angels Europe (BAE)

BAE BUSINESS ANGELS EUROPE	**Policy area:** Digital innovation SME's access to finance **EU4Digital networking event topic**: Integration of business angels and venture capital (individuals and associations) into the EU and global networks and their capacity building to increase digital SMEs access to finance in EaP region

Organisation details

- **Short description:** Business Angels Europe (BAE) is the European Confederation of Angel Investing. BAE works with, represents and connects the leading business angel networks from the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal and the Benelux. BAE does intensive networking through specialized (online) events, research and data sharing with institutions like the European Investment Fund, as well as deal flow sharing with BAE Club.

- **Mission statement:** BAE aims to represent and give a unified voice for the business angel community they represent in Europe. BAE's objectives are:
  - Creating a connected ecosystem for angel investing across Europe, working with key players across the finance and business community.
  - Advocating for supportive fiscal and regulatory framework for angel investing across Europe.
  - Promoting the growth of the angel market in Europe and raising awareness of angel investing to individuals with the capacity to invest.
  - See more in the Articles of the Association.

- **Priority topic(-s):** Business angel investment and entrepreneurial culture.

- **Partnerships:** BAE collaborates with a number of organisations across Europe such as EuroQuity, Dealum and other.

- **More detailed** presentation of organisation could be found here.

Potential beneficiaries

Main beneficiaries:

- Federations and national associations representing the business angel (BA) community;

- BA networks, syndicates or relevant groups;

- Other organizations sharing BAE objectives, in particular:
  - Actors that intend to set up a Business Angel network or federation;
  - Government agency trying to boost entrepreneurial and access to finance ecosystem;
  - Actors building targeted programmes to stimulate women angel investing.

Available services and tools

(services/tools description and eligibility criteria)

1. **Membership package:**
    a) **Service description:** BAE activities in favour of members include:
       - Raising awareness to the general public, BAN, angel groups and syndicates, concerning the role of business angel investment in all its forms.
       - Promoting the contribution of BANs and BAs to an entrepreneurial culture.
       - Encouraging and actively promoting the exchange of experience among business angel federations and trade associations and business angel networks, as well as encouraging to share and use the best practices and quality/professional standards.
       - Acting as the reference point for reliable data relevant to the BA activity and the European angel financing market.
       - Assisting members in their representation activities with their local and regional governments.

- Proactively connecting the European business angel market with the global business angels ecosystem and acting as a counterpart for relevant organisations in the world for benchmarking purposes, and cross-border collaboration.
- Reinforcing the role and supporting the creation of federations and trade associations in countries across Europe.
- Upon enquiry BAE provides consultancy services, e.g. performs studies, consults on ecosystem building, participates in pan-European programmes and more. To better exploit the potential of business angels across Europe and beyond, BAE is involved in numerous research and capacity building programmes.

b) **Eligibility/target group**:
- *Affiliate members* *(see Article 4.2)*.
- *Associate members* *(see Article 4.3).* Associate members include the organisations that do not meet the criteria for affiliate membership.

c) **How to join?** Provide your requested to join the organisation via email. Your application will be submitted to an admission committee for further process of validity of the membership and final approval.

2. **The BAE Club:**

a) **Service description:** The BAE Club brings together the most active Business Angel Networks from around the European continent and beyond. Together, they share their network, best practices, data and deal flow, and facilitate the collaboration among investors across borders, to accelerate the growth of portfolio companies. Objective of the BAE Club is to help BAs to develop cross border contacts and support the international development of investee companies. BAE Club regular activities include monthly calls about practical issues; 3 Cross-Border E-Pitches per year; one yearly benchmarking event.

b) **Eligibility/target group:** A prospective member must be a network with a strong track record: at least €1.5 million invested per year in the last 3 years.

c) **How to join?** Provide your request to join the club via email.

Contacts and links

Contact Person: Jan Debets, Head of Operations

Phone: +32 2 2173086

Email: jan.debets@businessangelseurope.com; secretariat@businessangelseurope.com

BUSINESS ANGELS EUROPE

Avenue des Arts 6, 1210 Brussels, Belgium

Twitter; LinkedIn

Newsletter subscription, news and community signup

Participate at events

8 European Crowdfunding Network (ECN)

EUROPEAN CROWDFUNDING NETWORK	**Policy area:** Digital innovation SME's access to finance **Networking event topic**: Integration of business angels and venture capital (individuals and associations) into the EU and global networks and their capacity building to increase digital SMEs access to finance in EaP region

Organisation details

- **Short description**: The European Crowdfunding Network AISBL (ECN, or EUROCROWD) is an independent, professional network executing initiatives aimed at innovating, representing, promoting and protecting the European crowdfunding industry as a key aspect of innovation within alternative finance and financial technology, including crypto assets and distributed ledger technologies. ECN helps developing professional standards, providing industry research, as well as professional networking opportunities in order to facilitate interaction between its members and key industry participants. ECN maintains a dialogue with public institutions and stakeholders as well as the media at European, international and national levels.

- **Mission statement:**
    - o Promote crowdfunding as a viable offering of job creation, social innovation and boost to entrepreneurship to the European public, policy makers and stakeholders.
    - o Provide resources, professional support and a forum for collaborative action regarding crowdfunding.
    - o Publicise community successes, impacts and scale of ambitions, as well as promote innovative financial solutions for funding social and business projects.

- **Priority topic(-s):** Crowdfunding; crowdinvesting; crowdlending, alternative finance.
- **Members:** ECN collaborates with a number of organisations across Europe, read more here.
- **More detailed** presentation of organisation can be found here.

Potential beneficiaries

- Equity / debt / lending platforms;
- Donation / reward platforms;
- Public / semi-public organisations / research centres / universities;
- Private companies.

Available services and tools
(services/tools description and eligibility criteria)

4. **Membership package**
    a) **Service description:**
    For all members:
    - Listing in EUROCROWD membership online directory.
    - Individual member profile on the EUROCROWD website.
    - EUROCROWD Member badge.
    - Free access for up to three staff to all EUROCROWD events.
    - Speaking opportunities at EUROCROWD events, webinars and other activities.
    - Partner search for consortium building phase for EU projects.
    - Join the yearly Assembly of members.
    For platform members only:
    - Be elected to the EUROCROWD Board of non-Executive Directors, guiding strategy and actions of the association.
    For strategic members only:

- Referral to crowdfunding platforms by EUROCROWD

For strategic and professional members:

- Access to capacity building / training on crowdfunding.
- Discounted provision of access to crowdfunding training for citizens, employees, and local stakeholders.

b) Eligibility/target group: Membership is open to legal entities active in the crowdfunding industry. Fees are based on the type of crowdfunding modality in the case of platforms, and in the type and size of the organization for Strategic and Professional Members.

c) How to join? Join by filling and submitting a contact form or via email.

5. **Working groups**

    a) Service description: EUROCROWD organises Working Groups (WG) in line with its core activities and members' needs.

- **WG 'European Crowdfunding Service Provider'** facilitates the dialogue between crowdfunding platforms, Member State authorities and European institutions, with the aim of encouraging a joint effort towards adequate and enabling harmonisation of crowdfunding, including Regulatory Technical Standards and national implementation issues.
- **WG 'Crypto Assets'** facilitates the dialogue between ECN Members, Member State authorities, and provides industry insight to policy makers.
- **WG 'Crowdfunding for European Structural and Investment Funds'** explores the potential of crowdfunding as a blending and match-funding mechanism. The WG facilitates the dialogue between crowdfunding platforms and regional authorities with the aim of encouraging a joint effort towards the design and implementation of innovative funding schemes.

    b) Eligibility/target group: ECN full members and associate members.

    c) How to join? Join by filling and submitting a contact form or via email.

6. **Advisory services**

    a) Service description: ECN is providing technical assistance as well as research and project management services by involvement of its members and network partners.

    b) Eligibility/target group: Interested companies and organisations including development agencies.

    c) How to join?

- Find out more about ECN Technical Assistance offering or contact via email with a query;
- Find out more about ECN Project Management offering or contact via email with a query.

7. **Training opportunities**

    a) Service description: ECN has developed a unique training and educational programme for both investors and entrepreneurs that can be rolled out in cooperation with relevant, committed and professional stakeholders. The programme includes:

- Blended Education;
- Online Courses;
- Monographic Programmes;
- Practical Training.

    b) Eligibility/target group:

- Universities;
- Public authorities;
- Private foundations;
- Industry associations.

    c) How to join?

- Access free of charge online courses;
- Contact ECN staff for queries and ask for proposals on different training opportunities.

Contacts and links

Contact Person: Mauricio Obrien, Regional Development Manager

E-mail: mauricio.obrien@eurocrowd.org

Contact Person: Oliver Gajda, Executive Director

E-mail: oliver.gajda@eurocrowd.org

Address: European Crowdfunding Network AISBL

European Crowdfunding Network AISBL

24 Rue Montoyer

Neo Building, Rue Montoyer 51, Box 7B-1000 Brussels, Belgium

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9 European IP Helpdesk

	Policy area: Intellectual property (IP) rights management **Networking event topic**: Strengthening the capacity of national patent offices, IPR consultants and other innovation ecosystem actors to provide IPR-related services for start-ups and SMEs in EaP region

Organisation details

- **Short description:** The European IP Helpdesk is a service funded by the European Commission and managed by the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA). It supports European SMEs and research teams involved in cross-border business and/or EU-funded research activities manage, disseminate and valorise their IP. Offering a broad range of informative material, a Helpline service for direct IP support as well as on-site and online training, our main goal is to support IP capacity building along the full scale of IP practices: from awareness to strategic use and successful exploitation.

- **Mission statement:** The European IP Helpdesk's main goal is to support IP capacity building along the full scale of IP practices: from awareness to strategic use and successful exploitation.

- **Priority topic(-s):** Intellectual property (IP), IP in cross-border business and/or EU-funded research activities.

- **Partnerships:** The European IP Helpdesk works in partnership with a wide range of organisations.

- **More detailed** presentation of the organisation can be found here.

Beneficiaries

Main beneficiaries: SMEs and research teams involved in cross-border business and/or EU-funded research activities

Stakeholders: EU Research, Innovation & Business Support Providers

Available services and tools

(services/tools description and eligibility criteria)

1. **European IP Helpdesk's Signposting Directory**
    a) **Service description:** The European IP Helpdesk's Signposting Directory is a dynamic database providing access to key institutions and services active in the fields of intellectual property, research and/or business support, at EU level and at national and regional level in each of the 27 EU Member States as well as in the COSME and Horizon Europe countries. It includes contact details for national IP offices, national data protection offices, customs authorities, funding agencies, and more. Use the search tool to browse the database by name, type of organisation, geographical area or types of services provided.
    b) **Eligibility / target group:**
       - National IP offices, EU research, innovation and business support providers.
       - The database is open to COSME countries (Armenia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine).
    c) **How to join?** Register your account to the European IP Helpdesk's Signposting Directory.

2. **European IP Helpdesk Ambassadors**
    a) **Service description:** The European IP Helpdesk has teamed up with the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), the world's largest support network for SMEs. In the framework of this cooperation, EEN advisors particularly skilled in IP matters can become European IP Helpdesk Ambassadors; they are provided with access to all European IP Helpdesk resources at their disposal to ensure the support of SME's IP inquiries in their own language and helping them to integrate IP in their business strategies. Roles and privileges of European IP Helpdesk Ambassadors can be found here.
    b) **Eligibility / target group:** The European IP Helpdesk scheme is restricted to the members of the EEN and at least 2 years of IP experience being the EEN advisors is needed.
    c) **How to join?** Contact European IP Helpdesk Ambassador team by sending an email.

3. **Capacity building**

a) **Service description:** The European IP Helpdesk provides beneficiaries of EU-funded projects and EU SMEs involved in cross-border business activities with the support enabling them to develop their own IP management strategies and processes. The training scheme attracting more than 8,000 participants per year includes webinars, e-learning and special training options.

b) **Eligibility / target group:**
- SMEs and researchers involved in EU-funded research projects
- National patent offices, technology transfer centers and other innovation ecosystem actors providing services for such start-ups, SMEs and researchers on IP-related issues in EU funded projects.

c) **How to join?**
- All regular webinars and the eLearning offer are freely accessible
- To receive individual IP training (available as of 60 registrations) or find an expert on a specific topic during a conference, use the online support request form.

4. **IP resources library**
   a) **Service description:**
   - IP guides - comprehensive overviews on specific fields of IPR and IP management, including practical tips and further resources.
   - Case studies - real-life examples of IP management in different business settings, research fields or sectors; the individual stories and learning curves experienced by innovative entrepreneurs and researchers.
   - IP specials - thematic packages consisting of a bunch of different media formats such as interviews, articles, or infographics that take a closer look at a specific IP topic.
   - Other resources: IP glossary; Fact sheets; Infographics; Video clips; Bulletins and other useful documents.

   b) **Eligibility / target group:**
   - SMEs and researchers involved in EU-funded research projects
   - National patent offices, technology transfer centers and other innovation ecosystem actors providing services for such start-ups, SMEs and researchers on IP-related issues in EU funded projects.

   c) **How to join?** Follow the links above for a direct use.

5. **Helpline for first-line IP support**
   a) **Service description:** The Helpline team provides free-of-charge, first-line support on IP issues related to cross-border business activities within Europe or IP questions specifically linked to EU-funded research and innovation projects.

   b) **Eligibility / target group:**
   - SMEs and researchers involved in EU-funded research projects
   - National patent offices, technology transfer centers and other innovation ecosystem actors providing services for such start-ups, SMEs and researchers on IP-related issues in EU funded projects.

   c) **How to get in touch with the Helpline?** Register for free, send your IP questions and receive a tailor-made answer by IP experts in 3 working days. You can also contact the European IP Helpdesk Helpline by phone or email. Register and submit your question

Contacts and links

Contact Person: Claire Fritz, Senior Project Manager

Email: service@iprhelpdesk.eu

Phone number: +34 965 90 9692 (Helpline)

EURICE – European Research and Project Office GmbH

Heinrich-Hertz-Allee 1, 66386 St. Ingbert Germany

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10 European IP Office (EUIPO)

EUIPO EUROPEAN UNION INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE	**Policy area:** Intellectual property rights management for digital innovations **Networking event topic**: Strengthening the capacity of national patent offices, IPR consultants and other innovation ecosystem actors to provide IPR-related services for start-ups and SMEs in EaP region

Organisation details
• **Short description**: The European IP Office (EUIPO) is a European Union's (EU) agency responsible for managing the EU trade marks and registered community designs. EUIPO registers around 135 000 EU trade marks and close to 100 000 designs annually, offering intellectual property protection to companies and individuals in a market of more than 500 million consumers. The organisation also hosts the European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights that brings public and private stakeholders together in the fight against piracy and counterfeiting. • **Mission statement:** EUIPO is created to offer IP protection to businesses and innovators across the EU. It also cooperates beyond EU borders with IP stakeholders to strengthening IP systems worldwide for the benefit of users and rightsholders. • **Priority topics:** intellectual property, trademarks, registered community designs and enforcement. • **Partnerships:** The EUIPO works in partnership with national and regional EU intellectual property offices, user groups, the European Commission, the European Parliament and other international organisations. Through the European Intellectual Property Network (EUIPN), the EUIPO, together with the national and regional intellectual property offices of the EU, is working with international partners outside the EU, to enable the harmonisation of registration and examination practices for trademarks and designs and the development of common tools. That also includes extending the benefits of EUIPN tools and practices beyond the borders of the EU. The international cooperation initiatives can be found here. • **More detailed** presentation of the organisation see here.
Potential beneficiaries
Main beneficiaries: National and regional IP offices. **Additional beneficiaries:** • Training providers on IP management and other innovation ecosystem actors providing IP-related services for start-ups and SMEs in EaP region. • Business support organisations and associations promoting innovation and IP-related services to tenant SMEs.
Available services and tools
(services/tools description and eligibility criteria)

1. **Projects and initiatives**
   a) **Service description:** The EUIPO provides a gateway to different projects funded by the EU in the field of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). The legal basis for the implementation of geographic and thematic programmes is provided by special funding instruments, For example, EU Georgia Intellectual Property Project (EUGIPP) for Georgia launched on 1 January 2020 aims to support Georgian authorities to stimulate economic development and market opportunities. Over the period 2021-2027, any future programme to support European Commission policies in the IP field will be realized via the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) which also includes the six Eastern partner countries. More information about the ongoing EU funded projects can be found at the international IP cooperation portal,
   b) **Eligibility/target group:** National IP offices.
   c) **How to join?** Contact EUIPO staff for EU funded projects to discuss the country needs in support from EUIPO.

2. **Online services**
   a) **Service description:** Online forms to apply for a trademark, design, launch other relevant procedure offered by EUIPO include built-in help and search options that facilitate the completion of applications.
   b) **Eligibility/target group:** Any physical or legal entity wishing to register the applicable intellectual asset or launch a relevant procedure.
   c) **How to join?** Select the service here and follow the described application procedures (differs depending on the service).

3. **Databases and tools**
   a) **Service description:**
      - *Service area 1.* Databases of registered trademarks and designs:
        o eSearch plus – a database of comprehensive information about trademarks, designs, owners, representatives and bulletins.
        o eSearch case law – database of EUIPO decisions, judgments of the General Court, Court of Justice and national courts.
        o Verify certified copies – a tool to view the original document of a EUTM certificate via entering an Identification Code (ID).
      - *Service area 2.* European Union Intellectual Property Network databases:
        o TMview – database of trade marks of all official trade mark offices which are participating at national and international level.
        o Designview - centralized access point to registered designs information held by any of the participating National Offices.
        o TMclass - the one-stop classification gateway to the Harmonised Database applied in the EU and databases worldwide.
        o Similarity – a tool for assessment of the similarity between goods and services by IP Offices in the EU.
        o DesignClass – a tool to compare the design classification databases of the participating offices.
      - *Service area 3.* Geographical Indications. GIview – a database of comprehensive information about Geographical indications (GIs) registered and extended data.
   b) **Eligibility/target group:** Intellectual property applicants and holders; IP authorities; patent attorneys; judges.
   c) **How to join?** Follow the links of database/tool provided above.

4. **EUIPO Academy**
   a) **Service description:** EUIPO Academy is a learning and knowledge sharing hub targeting the needs of SMEs and IP professionals. It provides:
      - 1000+ online courses including 500+ courses with certificates;

- EUIPO Trade Mark and Design Education Programme (ETMD EP). The ETMD EP aims to create a network of trained IP professionals who will possess advanced knowledge of the EUIPO's practice and tools.
- Professional traineeship programme (Pan-European Seal) is a comprehensive traineeship programme that bridges academia and the labour market in different fields (IP, law, finance, business, etc.). This programme gives high-achieving, young university graduates access to a year-long paid traineeship at either the EUIPO or the EPO.
- IP Teaching Kit developed for university teachers whose students have little or no knowledge of IP, which aims to give a basic yet comprehensive introduction to different IP rights, and the concept of IP as a whole.

b) **Eligibility/target group:**
- For online courses, and materials of IP Teaching Kit no specific eligibility criteria apply.
- To enroll in the EUIPO Trade Mark and Design Education Programme, the applicant should have the status described here.
- For Pan-European Seal, the universities complying with participation criteria and having signed the Memorandum of Understanding can participate (list of current members).

c) **How to join?** The universities interested to participate in the Pan-European Seal can apply by sending an email.

Contacts and links

Contact Person: Álvaro García Alcázar, Team Leader EU-Funded Projects
Phone: +34 965 139 100
E-mail: EU-Funded-Projects@euipo.europa.eu
Avenida de Europa, 4
03008 Alicante, Spain

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