



EUROPEAN CLUSTER  
COLLABORATION PLATFORM

# Call for Expression of Interest - SMEs

EU – South MED Matchmaking Event 2023

*An initiative of the European Union*





# Call for Expression of Interest SMEs



## EU – South MED Matchmaking Event

Part of Euromed Clusters Forward's  
TechDays in the context of the [GITEX AFRICA](#)

31 May to 2 June, 2023

Marrakech, Morocco



## OBJECTIVES

The European Commission (EC) will organise the EU – South MED Matchmaking Event as part of Euromed Clusters Forward's TechDays during the [GITEX AFRICA](#) which will be held on 31 May – 2 June 2023.

The **EU – South MED Matchmaking Event** itself will take place on-site in Marrakech, Morocco on 31 May – 2 June 2023.

The event will be jointly organised by the European Commission through the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP), in collaboration with the StartUp Maroc for Euromed Clusters Forward and the Enterprise Europe Network.

The **EU – South MED Matchmaking Event** will bring together cluster organisations and SMEs from the European Union (EU), non-EU COSME countries, and South MED countries: Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Tunisia. It will provide participants an excellent chance to promote Cluster to Cluster (C2C), Cluster to Business (C2B), and Business to Business (B2B) collaborations.

The overall objective of the event is to promote information exchange and networking opportunities for European cluster organisations and their members with counterparts from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia, particularly in the fields of Agri-food & Cosmetics, Textile, CleanTech & Renewable energy, and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The objectives for the participants include:

- Strengthening EU-South MED cluster cooperation for the benefit of their members, including a seminar, a cluster matchmaking event, and site visits.
- Identifying potential areas of common interest for cooperation and synergies, in terms of the sectoral, value chain, and market focus of their SMEs and other companies.
- Improving, through clusters, the EU-South MED industry and academia-industry collaboration in research, development, and innovation. For its members, the clusters will identify possible areas of RDI collaboration (academia, research organisations, industries...).

This call for Expression of Interest is launched to identify small and medium-sized enterprises from EU (and non-EU COSME) countries (please see section “Who can participate” below) who are willing and committed to participate in the EU-South MED Matchmaking Event.

**By submitting an expression of interest in response to this call, you are indicating your acceptance of the call's terms.**

This call is published on the ECCP website. Expressions of interest to participate in this event must be **submitted electronically by 22 May 2023, 23:59 Brussels time** at the latest through <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/SMEsCallforExpressionofInterestEUSouthMedMatchmakingEvent>

**The organisers reserve the right to close the application process once the maximum capacity for participants is reached.**



**This call is targeting only SMEs. A separate call exists for cluster organisations and business network organisations. So if you are a cluster organisation or a business network organisation you should respond to the call that is available at <https://clustercollaboration.eu/open-calls/eu-south-med-matchmaking-event-2023-call-expression-interest-clusters>**

## CONTEXT OF THE INITIATIVE

The Event will take place in the context of the ECCP activities. The European Commission facilitates international cluster cooperation through the ECCP including the organisation of specific cluster matchmaking events and policy development actions. The objective is to support cluster organisations to develop partnerships and business cooperation in European and global markets, for the benefit of their members, especially of SMEs. The events are currently funded under the EU Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs Programme (COSME).

The ECCP provides a visible framework for this matchmaking event and for subsequent events. As the cornerstone of the European strategy in support of SMEs' internationalisation through clusters, the ECCP provides a wide range of information and services to facilitate the interaction between clusters not only within Europe, but also with international partners.



## ACTIVITIES & AGENDA

The EU – South MED Matchmaking Event will include the following activities:

- **Preparatory Webinar** – an opportunity to receive information on undertaking business in South MED and guidance on how to participate successfully in the planned event. (date tbc)
- **Technical Webinar** – a session helping future participants of the matchmaking event to make the most of their profiling in the B2Match tool and explain the procedures to optimise the booking of meetings. (date tbc)
- **Site visits:** [Mohammed VI Polytechnic University](#) on 31 May, and more to be confirmed on 1 June)
- **Seminar** on knowledge exchange to foster EU- South MED cooperation. (1 June)
- **Matchmaking meetings** between cluster organisations and SMEs from EU (and non-EU COSME) countries and South MED Countries. (1 June)
- Debriefing session to collect feedback and testimonials from participants.
- **Participation at the** global leading digital summit [GITEX AFRICA](#) – 31 May - 02 June, 2023 – **free of charge**
- **Optional participation at the at the** [Aromaplant Expo \(2 June\)](#)

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

This invitation is addressed to SMEs interested in collaborating with South MED counterparts in the following sectors:

- Agrifood & Cosmetics
- Textile
- ICT
- CleanTech & Renewable energy

The organisers reserve the right to close the application process once the maximum capacity for participants is reached.

## PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible:

- The applicant must be an SME according to the [SME definition](#) of the EU.
- The SME must be a legal entity established in a European Union Member State or other COSME country. See list of non-EU participants in the COSME programme here: <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/39579>



## SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated qualitatively using the following selection criteria:

- The SME's willingness and capacity to maximise matchmaking opportunities via participation in this event, based on a detailed description of the sort of partnership sought by the applicant and the likelihood of developing practical collaboration because of the Event. This indication of interest in cooperating must be clearly articulated as responses to the questions in the application form.
- The SME's activity in the target sectors.
- SMEs operating beyond the stated fields should extensively motivate the argument for their application to a reserve list that will be determined in due time.
- The desire and capacity to collaborate more closely with South MED SMEs and network organisations in order to better global competitiveness via collaborative efforts.

Organisations that have not participated before in the ECCP matchmaking events are encouraged to apply.

The selection of applications will be based on the afore mentioned criteria and information provided in the application form; in cases of equal merit, the balanced geographical and sector coverage of the EU and COSME participating countries will be considered. Furthermore, in cases of equal merit, organisations participating for the first time at the ECCP matchmaking event will have priority.

The organisers reserve the right to ask for additional information from the applicants, if necessary.

**Attendance at the seminar, the matchmaking event, the debriefing session, and the site visits are all compulsory.**

**SMEs selected to participate in the Event must send a commitment e-mail agreeing to attend the on-site seminar, conduct at least four matching meetings, and engage in the final 30-minute debriefing session.**

## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Expressions of interest should be submitted by 22 May 2023, 23:59 Brussels time through the following link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/SMEsCallforExpressionofinterestEUSouthMedMatchmakingEvent>

The expression of interest should include the following:

- A fully completed SMEs questionnaire on the profile of the SME.

Please ensure that you submit full, accurate, and up-to-date information and contact information.

Please note that no fee will be charged to participate in this event.



However, no funding is offered for SMEs to cover any travel and accommodation costs related to participation at the event.

**To take the maximum of your participation and benefit from all planned pre-event activities and meetings available during the EU-South MED Matchmaking Event, we encourage you to send your Expression of Interest at your earliest possible and avoid last minute registrations.**

For further information about cluster cooperation and assistance, please visit the [ECCP Website](#).

Should you have any queries, do not hesitate to contact the ECCP team at [eumatchmaking@clustercollaboration.eu](mailto:eumatchmaking@clustercollaboration.eu).

**Your personal data** is processed in accordance with **Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725** on the protection of individuals regarding the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data.