



EUROPEAN
CLUSTER COLLABORATION
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EU-US Cluster Matchmaking Event, Hannover Messe, 25-26 April 2016

Report

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European
Commission



The Hannover Messe 2016 with its focus on industry 2.0 and this year's official Partner Country USA was the opportunity to put the [EU-US Cooperation Arrangement on Clusters](#) into practice. The ECCP decided to use this opportunity to facilitate cluster based industrial, trade and investment cooperation in a cross-sectoral matchmaking approach.



The Hannover Messe Opening Ceremony was held on Sunday 24 April in the presence of US President Barack Obama and Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel.



On 25-26 April 2016 took place the EU-US Cluster matchmaking event, organised jointly by the European Commission, DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, and the US Department of Commerce and facilitated by the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) in collaboration with the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN). The event brought together over 70 EU and US clusters / Economic Development Organisations that took the opportunity for bilateral exchange. Within the cluster-to-cluster (C2C) and cluster-to-business (C2B) matchmaking sessions, over 250 face-to-face meetings involving clusters were scheduled (114 EU clusters-US clusters/EDOs meetings, 27 EU clusters-US R&D institutions and businesses meetings, 110 EU clusters-EU clusters/businesses meetings) as well as numerous business-

to-business (B2B) meetings that were held in parallel during the Technology Transfer Days, organised by EEN.



During the event debriefing session cluster participants confirmed the high interest the event had for them, enabling them to start discussions regarding various collaboration ideas that are expected to be put into practice during the forthcoming months.



The successful matchmaking sessions were complemented by a high level cluster policy seminar on “Clusters in the EU and the USA: Opportunities for Collaboration and Growth”, that was a highlight of the EU-US cluster matchmaking mission. The first three presentations identified some of the key challenges and priorities that need to be addressed within the framework of the EU-US Cluster memorandum and in particular how to drive forward transatlantic cluster cooperation.

Matthias Machnig, State Secretary of Germany Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, drew attention to the power of clusters in helping transform the image and competitiveness of regional economies and highlighted the success of the “photonics valley” centred around Jena in the region of Saxony in Germany.



Bruce Andrews, US Deputy Secretary of Commerce, presented progress on the establishment of clusters in the USA and notably the recently established 24 “Investing in Manufacturing Communities” named by the U.S. Department of Commerce. He cited a number of examples of SMEs who had been able to secure new markets thanks to the support received from cluster ecosystem partners.

Elżbieta Bieńkowska, EU Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs summed up the first discussions by emphasising the important role clusters can play in helping SMEs internationalise and concluded by stating that “the signed EU-US Cluster Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) provides a strong framework for facilitating transatlantic cooperation and I hope that the C2C matchmaking sessions will provide the basis for sustainable cluster based business development to enhance the competitiveness of regions in Europe and the USA”.

Other key speakers included **Charles W. Hull** the Co-Founder and Chief Technology Officer of 3D Systems. Chuck is the inventor of the solid imaging process known as stereolithography, the first commercial 3D printing technology. He highlighted the important role clusters had played in helping develop business partnerships in Belgium.



A number of EU and US cluster managers presented their experiences regarding cooperation good practices. **Caroline Pin** from the French cluster Plastipolis believed that the establishment of formal cluster partnership MoU's, for example with clusters in Ohio, was an important element of creating "trust based and long term cooperation opportunities". **Christiane Egger**, from the Oekoenergie-Cluster, Austria, illustrated how partnerships with State authorities and technology partners could pave the way to help companies access US markets. Finally, **Noel Nevshehir** from Automation Alley, Michigan, also highlighted the pitfalls to avoid such signing MoU's just for publicity and press coverage and lack of follow up.



Meanwhile **Bryan Borlik**, Director, US Economic Development Administration/Department of Commerce, gave the audience an update regarding the development of the US cluster mapping tool and the forthcoming cluster registry. He highlighted the importance of sharing experiences, such as cluster definitions and how US Economic Development Agencies can offer EU clusters a gateway towards US clusters. Finally, **Marc Pattinson**, representing the ECCP and the European Cluster Observatory, highlighted the role of the ECCP in helping clusters identify potential partners across Europe and the various sector and technology search parameters that can be used to identify particular cluster ecosystems and potential business and innovation partners.

The seminar ended with a round table discussion led by **Slawomir Tokarski**, Director on Innovation and Advanced Manufacturing, DG GROWTH, European Commission, who urged the cluster participants present "to use the unique EU-US Hannover Messe cross sectoral matchmaking mission to lay the ground for establishing cluster to cluster MoU's as the foundation of a bottom up based cooperation framework". Furthermore, the Commission services will continue to facilitate policy exchanges and create the opportunities for developing a common and shared cluster vocabulary as part of the ongoing implementation of the EU-US Cluster Memorandum.



The high interest in the cross-sectoral cluster matchmaking event from both the EU and the US clusters/EDOs illustrated that the EU-US Cooperation Arrangement on Clusters is now being actively implemented. Participants, as well as policy stakeholders stated that they would welcome and support a follow-up matchmaking mission for EU-US cluster collaboration, that could probably be organised in the US in 2017.



Further contacts:

European Cluster Collaboration Platform Team: contact@clustercollaboration.eu

EU cluster profiles can be found at www.clustercollaboration.eu and US clusters at www.clustermapping.us



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AGENDA



CLUSTERS IN THE EU AND THE USA: OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION AND GROWTH

SEMINAR

Monday, 25th April 2016

Hall 2, 1st floor on the gallery of hall 2, Rooms 02.01.12 and 02.01.13

Moderator: Marc Pattinson, inno TSD

14.15 Registration for seminar

14.45 Welcome and Introduction on EU and U.S. Cluster Priorities

- ✓ **Matthias Machnig**, State Secretary of Germany Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy
- ✓ **Bruce Andrews**, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Commerce
- ✓ **Elżbieta Bieńkowska**, EU Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

15.15 Best Practices and Experiences on Transatlantic Cluster Collaboration

- ✓ **Charles Hull**, co-Founder and Chief Technology Officer of 3D Systems, US
- ✓ **Caroline Pin**, Director of International Business, Plastipolis, France
- ✓ **Noel Nevsherir**, Director of International Business, Automation Alley – Michigan, US
- ✓ **Christiane Egger**, Deputy Manager Oekoenergie-Cluster, Austria

15.50 Tools and Services for Transatlantic Cluster Collaboration

- ✓ **Marc Pattinson**, the European Cluster Collaboration Platform and European Cluster Observatory, inno TSD
- ✓ **Bryan Borlik**, the U.S. Cluster Map and Registry, Director, U.S. Economic Development Administration/Department of Commerce

16.05 Panel and Open Discussion

- ✓ **Slawomir Tokarski**, Director on Innovation and Advanced Manufacturing, DG GROWTH, European Commission
- ✓ **Bryan Borlik**, Director, U.S. Economic Development Administration/Department of Commerce
- ✓ **Joined by the four speakers from the Best Practices session.**

16.30 End of Seminar

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EU – U.S. CLUSTER-TO-CLUSTER MATCHMAKING

Monday, 25th April, 2016

Hall 2, Europe Enterprise Network Stand (next to “Forum Area”)

11.45 Registration

12.00 -14.30

- ✓ Each C2C matchmaking meeting will last 25 minutes with 5 minutes to move between meetings.
- ✓ Coffee/tea/refreshments provided.

16.30 – 18.00

- ✓ Each C2C matchmaking meeting will last 25 minutes with 5 minutes to move between meetings.
- ✓ Coffee/tea/refreshments provided.

EU – U.S. CLUSTER-TO-BUSINESS MATCHMAKING

Tuesday, 26th April, 2016

Hall 2, Europe Enterprise Network Stand (next to “Forum Area”)

10.00-13.00

- ✓ Each C2B matchmaking meeting will last 25 minutes with 5 minutes to move between sessions
- ✓ Coffee/tea/refreshments on demand.

13.00 -13.30

- ✓ Cluster Matchmaking debriefing for EU Clusters with EU Event Coordinators.
- ✓ Cluster Matchmaking debriefing for US Delegation with US Event Coordinators.
- ✓ Location: 1st floor on the gallery of hall 2, rooms 02.01.12 and 02.01.13

The seminar and matchmaking events were jointly organized by the European Commission, DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, and the U.S. Department of Commerce