

# Call for Applications: 2<sup>nd</sup> Cluster Booster Academy

Submitted by the ECCP Team on 28 April 2023



## DEADLINE: 19 May 2023 (End of day – 23.59)

Following the resounding success of its inaugural Cluster Booster Academy, the ECCP is thrilled to announce the upcoming launch of a **new open call** for participants for the highly anticipated second iteration.

This event will incorporate valuable insights and suggestions provided by the participants from the first edition. This next installment promises to be even more engaging and impactful, offering Cluster Managers unparalleled opportunities for networking, professional development, and cluster innovation. The **Academy is a 4-day event**, consisting of a **2-day online event (06-07 June 2023)** as well as a **2-day in person training session in Torino, Italy (21-22 September 2023)** in collaboration with our venue host, the MESAP Innovation Cluster. With its focus on promoting innovation and competitiveness in the field of Smart Products & Manufacturing, the MESAP Innovation Cluster is a network of more than 200 companies and research organizations in the Piedmont region of Italy.

## Objectives

Managing a cluster requires a large range of skills to ensure efficient support to all cluster members, to balance the needs of different stakeholders and to

build the resilience needed to cope with the challenges of the digital and green transition. Thus, the need for a comprehensive training programme has become increasingly evident. Participation in this 4-day Cluster Booster Academy will equip managers with the knowledge and tools they need to improve the performance of their clusters and to promote innovation and growth within their local ecosystems.

The Cluster Booster Academy **aims to achieve the following objectives:**

- Equip cluster managers with practical skills and knowledge to implement their own cluster action plans by providing coaching sessions and ongoing support throughout.
- Address the needs of European cluster management teams in their daily work by enabling them to offer innovative, highly professional and diversified services to SMEs.
- Improve the skills of cluster staff through a "train the trainers" approach that enables them to disseminate their knowledge more widely, thereby strengthening the cluster ecosystem as a whole.
- Develop skills for effective community building and networking by providing opportunities for participants to connect and collaborate with one another throughout the Cluster Booster Academy.
- Enhance participants' ability to identify and address structural challenges within their clusters by providing tools and resources for clarifying mission, vision, and aims.
- Enhance participants' ability to address real-world challenges by providing case studies and practical examples related to cluster strategy and action plan development.
- Support cluster managers in implementing advanced strategies, growing their clusters and building sustainable business models.
- Foster an understanding of the role of clusters in promoting regional development and economic growth by providing examples and case studies of successful cluster initiatives.

## **Format**

The Academy is an annual event that hosts between 35 to 50 participants. This second Cluster Booster Academy will again be held in a **hybrid format** over the course of four days:

- 2 days of online training sessions – 06-07 June 2023 (which will be organised and hosted by the ECCP team)
- 2 days of in-person training sessions at the MESAP Innovation Cluster Torino, Italy – 21-22 September 2023 (this will provide participants with ample time, approximately 3 months after the virtual sessions, to put their newly acquired knowledge and skills into practice).

In addition to the virtual and in-person training sessions, individual coaching sessions will also be provided to participants.

## **Benefits**

The Cluster Booster Academy is designed to provide a hands-on approach to learning, empowering participants to apply their newfound skills and knowledge in their work as cluster managers. With the guidance of experienced coaches, participants will receive valuable feedback and support throughout their learning journey. The Academy also provides a **unique opportunity for peer networking and collaboration**, with up to 50 cluster managers from across Europe in attendance. By working together to address shared challenges, participants can deepen their learning and establish valuable new contacts. The CBA-Alumni are also available for feedback and questions via a private LinkedIn-Group, providing a supplementary resource that fosters a community of continuous learning and development, while further enhancing the support available to participants.

Additionally, participants can expect to benefit from fruitful synergies with the ECCP, further enhancing their professional development and strengthening their network within the European cluster community.

Let's hear what some of our CBA alumni had to say about their experience:

*"The training provides an opportunity to create a better structure for any cluster, regardless of the number of years [it has been operating]."*

*"Excellent opportunity to understand challenges of other clusters and connect with them."*

*"The training [...] provides a unique opportunity for networking between European Clusters that no other event currently offers."*

## Who can apply?

The Cluster Booster Academy is seeking a diverse group of Cluster Managers who are interested in learning from experts, expanding their network, and sharing their own knowledge, to come together for a unique and enriching learning experience.

The call is only open to cluster managers<sup>1</sup> who are:

- registered<sup>2</sup> on the ECCP as cluster managers;
- managing a Cluster organisation from an EU country or countries associated to the COSME strand of the Single Market Programme;<sup>3</sup>
- motivated and committed to attending all 4 training days, turning on the camera on the virtual days and doing the homework assigned to them between the virtual and the physical training sessions.<sup>4</sup>

Kindly note that we can only approve a **single application per cluster**, which must be submitted by the cluster manager. Bringing other colleagues on board to the training sessions is **not allowed**, nor is sending someone else instead.

## Financial contribution

Participation in the training sessions is free of charge. Furthermore, food and drinks during the in-person training will be covered by the ECCP team. Transport and accommodation costs are to be covered by the participants themselves and cannot be reimbursed by the ECCP team.

To assist with planning, the ECCP team will collaborate with the MESAP Innovation Cluster to provide a comprehensive information pack to participants. This pack will include hotel recommendations, transport options, and other relevant information.

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<sup>1</sup> Cluster Managers are considered those who are responsible for the management of a cluster organisation

<sup>2</sup> In case you are not registered, yet, please do so before your application. If you need assistance, feel free to reach out to [events@clustercollaboration.eu](mailto:events@clustercollaboration.eu)

<sup>3</sup>: [list-3rd-country-participation\\_smp\\_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> Cancelling last minute (less than two weeks before the intended dates) for unjustified reasons or little to no engagement during the 4 days of training and in the timeframe in between might lead to limited participation opportunities to future ECCP events.

If you would like to participate in the second edition of the Cluster Booster Academy, please complete this **application form**.

**Please note that we will contact the final participants during the week following the deadline, after careful evaluation. When applying, please ensure that you have June 06-07 and September 21-22 completely blocked out for this event.**

If you have any additional inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact us at [events@clustercollaboration.eu](mailto:events@clustercollaboration.eu).

**Apply now!**