



AIBC EUROCLUSTERS

**Project: 101074645 – SMP-
COSME-2021-CLUSTER**

Open Call for organizing the AIBC Internationalisation mission to Austin, Texas.

published by AIBC EUROCLUSTERS to Austin, Texas (USA) - July 15th to July 17th, 2024 - for European SMEs and start-ups working on AI and Blockchain



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1 ABOUT THE PROJECT

AIBC EUROCLUSTERS stands for Artificial Intelligence & BlockChain for a greener and more digital economy supported by EUROpean CLUSTERS. It is an EU funded project (GA 101074645) focused on the Open Strand, which invites proposals focused on cross fertilisation of various industrial ecosystems with no specific focus on one industrial ecosystem. Indeed, the AIBC EUROCLUSTERS Project is centred on the Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Blockchain (BC) technologies and aims to:

- Further support the development of AI and BC solutions by European Single Market SMEs and start-ups, especially those solutions that support digitalisation.
- Support the uptake of AI and BC applications by different industrial ecosystems (manufacturing, mobility, logistics, energy) in need of digitalisation, resilience and green transition implementations.
- Help EU AI and BC SMEs access third markets and generate growth from international activities.
- Contribute to the reskilling and upskilling of the cluster human capital across the EU.

The AIBC EUROCLUSTERS Consortium is coordinated by Fondazione Piemonte Innova – FPI (IT), bwcon research (DE), ICT Cluster (BU), Asociacion Cluster de Movilidad y Logistica de Euskadi – MLC (ES), Environment Park - ENVIPARK (IT) and Bydgoszcz Industrial Cluster - BIC (PL).

The AIBC EUROCLUSTERS support is targeted to European SMEs and start-ups working on the AI & BC technologies, and from the manufacturing, mobility, logistics and energy industrial ecosystems interested in adopting AI & BC solutions to be more digital, resilient and green. The project implements Open Calls to select companies and project and thus provide Financial Support to Third Parties. This Open Call is regarding the organization of the **Internationalisation** mission (**this call**) & participation to events (call to be published in February 2024).

Furthermore, the AIBC EUROCLUSTERS project will implement an analytic approach for supporting the:

- Integration and valorisation of information from SMEs, start-ups, local stakeholders from different ecosystems.
- Identification of the most promising opportunities related to AI, Blockchain and twin transition.
- Definition of support programmes and services to accelerate SMEs from digitalisation and developments of new/improve products and services.
- Improvement of management, coordination and collaboration capacity of EU clusters among different industrial ecosystems in the EU single market.

2 OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY OF THIS CALL

This document presents [AIBC EUROCLUSTERS OPEN CALL FOR ORGANIZING THE INTERNATIONAL MISSION](#) which is targeted to **European SMEs and start-ups working on AI & BC technologies**, from the digital, manufacturing, mobility, logistics and energy industrial ecosystems, interested in



participating to **AIBC Internationalisation Mission in USA**. The mission will be held from tentatively **Monday 15th July to Wednesday 17th July 2024 in Austin, Texas**. A maximum number of 15 companies and/or SMEs that have implemented at least a little of AI and BC in their business to enable being more digital, resilient, and greener will take part at the Mission.

The Mission should provide the participants the opportunity to take part to a structured business program, to meet in person potential partners and local technology and market experts, and to develop potential collaborations and cooperation opportunities with different stakeholders in the AI and BC fields from the United States. The requirements of this Mission call will be detailed in the next sections.

2.1 Open Call - service and activities required

The objective of this open call is the organization of an international mission to Austin, Texas, USA involving around 20 participants:

- 3 European Cluster representatives
- 15 representatives from european SMEs and/or start-ups from the industrial sector (ICT, mobility, energy, logistics and manufacturing) using Artificial Intelligence (AI) and/or Blockchain (BC) technology

The service of the applicant should include the following:

- Business/technological partner search and involvement in the mission and support in the evaluation of the companies and start-ups participating in the mission
- Organization of an online preparation meeting roughly at the end of June 2024
- Agenda making for the 3-day mission, including:
 - Overview about recent technology trends in AI and BC technologies.
 - Overview about core business models based on AI and BC technologies.
 - Organization of a B2B matching process with companies from the region using AI and BC technologies and the EU participants
 - Provision of rooms, coffee break (with water, tea, coffee, snacks) and light lunch on July 15th, July 16th, and July 17th.
 - At least two collective sessions on AI and BC strategic market insights as well as exploring future capabilities of AI and BC
 - Organization of two up to five different workshops focusing on data-driven value generation exploiting AI and BC technologies in Austin (optional to include the participating SMEs and/or start-ups in the workshop preparation ahead)
 - One joint dinner or another networking-type activity.
 - Possibly the transit for visiting companies in/around Austin, Texas

2.2 Selection and evaluation criteria

Based on §11 of the Unterschwellenvergabeordnung (engl. Sub-Threshold Procurement) we are committed to contact at least three parties to submit their application. The application



requirements were briefly described in section 2.1 and will be detailed further in this section 2.2.

As visible in the following table, the application consists of four sections, whereof three sections count as *must-criteria* and one section as a *can-criteria*. The three *must-criteria* sections have to be filled out if the applicant wants to be considered for organizing the mission. If left empty or submitted with insufficient content quality, the applicant will receive a statement of why the application is not accepted. The *can-criteria* section refers to the agenda-making for the 3-day mission where the applicant can receive a maximum of 5 points.

The candidate with the highest number of points combined with the fulfilled must-criteria sections will be selected to win this open call.

Table 1 - Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Points
SECTION 1 – Schedule	5
<p>Please draft a schedule for the 3-day mission including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview about recent technology trends in AI and BC technologies. • Overview about core business models based on AI and BC technologies. • Organization of a B2B matching process with companies from the region using AI and BC technologies and the EU participants • Provision of rooms, coffee break (with water, tea, coffee, snacks) and light lunch on July 15th, July 16th and July 17th. • Collective sessions on AI and BC strategic market insights as well as exploring future capabilities of AI and BC • Organization of different workshops focusing on data-driven value generation exploiting AI and BC technologies in Austin • One joint barbecue dinner on July 15th or another networking-type activity. • Possibly the transit for visiting companies in/around Austin, Texas 	5
SECTION 2 – Connections on site	Must criteria
<p>Please state the connections that you have in Austin, TX that could be relevant to the 3-day mission, e.g., companies, startups, experts working in the AI & BC field. Please attach verifiable information for these.</p>	N/A
SECTION 3 – Experience	Must criteria
<p>Please describe experience (e.g., lectures, customer projects) that have been made with business models specifically in these three fields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business models for regenerative operations • Digital business models • Circular Economy 	N/A



(10 lines per project, 12 Arial)	
Please describe your experience and knowledge in AI & BC topics by stating 3 reference projects that have been conducted by/with you in the field of AI and/or BC. (10 lines per project, 12 Arial)	N/A
SECTION 4 – Offer price	Must criteria
Please state an offer price of a maximum of 15.000€ incl. VAT. If the offer price is higher than that, the applicant will not be selected in the evaluation process.	N/A
TOTAL SCORE	5

In case some applicants have equal points, the sections 2 and 3 will decide about the ranking.

The evaluation will be carried out by the Consortium Partners of the AIBC EUROCLUSTERS project. It will take into consideration the defined criteria and will last 2 weeks from the submission deadline. All applicants will be informed of the final results of the evaluation procedure within the first weeks of February 2024.

2.3 *Deadline for applicants*

The Internationalisation Call is open from December 29th until January 31st. Only online applications will be considered eligible. Submission language is English.

The following table shows all the main dates for the open call management.

Table 2 - Main dates for Open Call for organizing the mission

Open Call	Date
Publishing date	Monday, December 29 th , 2024
Deadline for submission	Wednesday, January 31 st , 2024, 23:59 (CET)
Evaluation period	Up to 2 weeks from closing date
Selection communication	Thursday, February 15 th , 2024.
Preparation workshop	Tentatively Monday, June 10 th 2024 (online meeting) – date to be confirmed
Mission to Austin, TX, USA	From Monday July 15 th to July 17 th , 2024



2.4 Expected results

The applicant is expected to

- Organize and participate in the 3 day international mission to Austin, Texas.
- Support the european participants before and during the mission
- Invite potential commercial/technological/research partners
- Help participants with the invitation letter to facilitate the VISA process

2.5 Cost of the service & payment mode

The monetary value of this service amounts to max. 15.000€ (incl. taxes). The amount includes all activities described above, and external costs of logistics for the mission (conference and B2B venue, equipment, experts...). Please specify if any other direct cost related to the mission (e.g. transfer) are included or not in the offer.

Promotion materials, communication campaign for European SMEs involvement, participating SMEs selection are taken care off by AIBC. No extra reimbursement for staff or experts in USA is foreseen (travel and accommodation ...).

The payment process is defined to be: 50% of the payment will be transfered 2 weeks before the first day of the mission and the other 50% within 2 weeks after the last day of the mission. If changes of this procedure occur, the organizer will be updated.

3 PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

3.1 Application form

To participate to this Open Call, each entity must fill out the document [AIBC EUROCLUSTERS APPLICATION FORM FOR ORGANIZING THE INTERNATIONAL MISSION](#) to be requested via email to aibc@bwcon.de

Please send the filled document to AIBC@bwcon.de.

In case an applicant exceeds the maximum defined test size the jury will declare the application form ineligible.

3.2 Language

Proposals must be written in English. All documentation must be written in English.

If the last submitted proposal is declared then non-eligible or fails to reach the thresholds of the evaluation, the other proposals submitted earlier will not be considered for evaluation in any case.



4 CONTACT POINT

For any information, please send an email to AIBC@bwcon.de specifying the topic of the request and the question/doubt/information needed.

Information about the project, its objectives and activities can be found on AIBC EUROCLUSTERS website <https://clustercollaboration.eu/eu-cluster-partnerships/euroclusters/aibc-euroclusters>

5 CONFIDENTIALITY AND GDPR DATA PROTECTION

With submitting the application, the entity consents that the information presented will be shared with AIBC EUROCLUSTERS partners. All partners will treat your information as confidential, according to the Confidentiality and Data Protection described above.

6 GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIBC EUROCLUSTERS	Artificial Intelligence & BlockChain for a greener and more digital economy supported by EUROpean CLUSTERS
BC	Blockchain
EC	European Commission
SME	Small and Medium Company
US / USA	United States of America