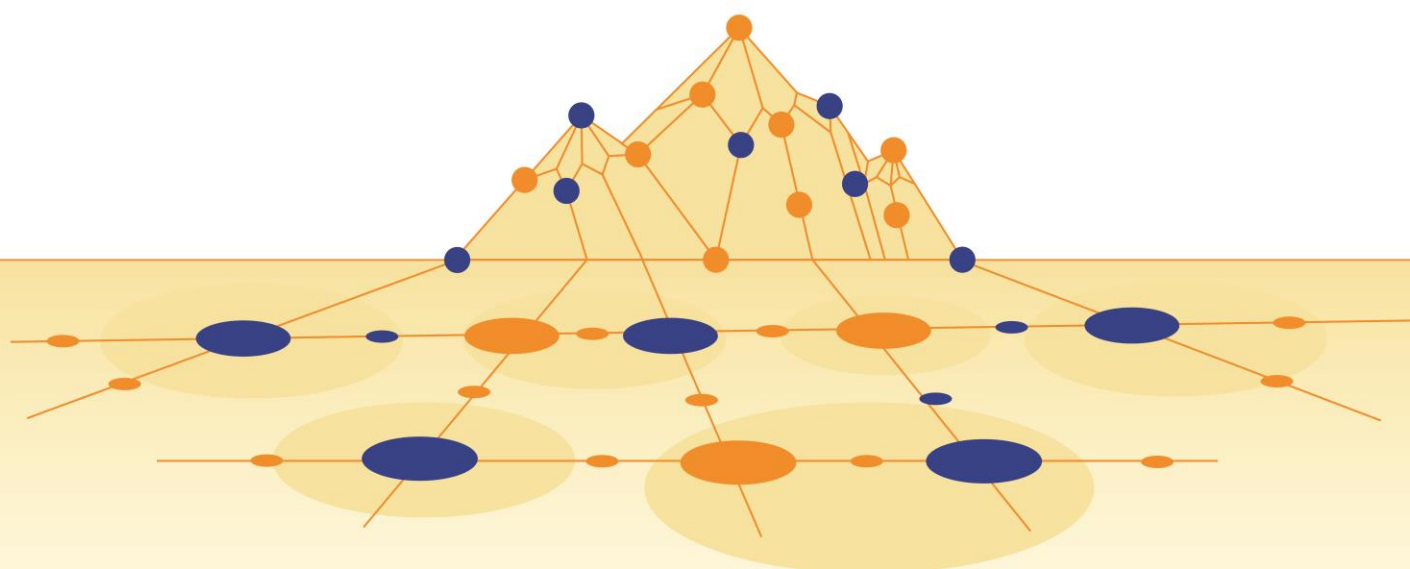


Transformative Activity Cluster Toolbox (TACT)

Cluster Services – 23 Best Practices from the Alpine Space

Silvio Antonioni, Jacques Bersier, Michael Keller, Luca Mion

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Cluster Services - 23 Best Practices from the Alpine Space

Based on the work carried out for a Good Practice Report (Antonioni *et al.*, 2018), 23 best practices of cluster services currently offered by cluster initiatives from the Alpine Space have been selected to be included in the Transformative Activity Cluster Toolbox (TACT) of the S3-Innovation Model. This document presents the selected best practices. The complete Good Practice Report is available on the project website:

Antonioni, S., Mion, L., Keller, M. and Bersier, J. (2018). *Good Practice Report*. Interreg Alpine Space – S3-4AlpClusters. Download: <https://bit.ly/2GF45aC>.

Methodology

The survey targeted 10 regions and 33 related Cluster Initiatives, resulting in 76 collected One Pagers. Among the 76 One Pagers, 23 were selected on the basis of their completeness, soundness, uniqueness trying to extrapolate those that could offer interesting insights. Those 23 activities are considered additional best practices and so-called “Best Practices Subset”.

The subset of the 23 Best Practices were analysed and categorized with the relevant fields of services provided: Education, Innovation, Collaboration, Networking and Growth. The categorization has followed on of the basic models of Cluster Initiatives’ objectives (see Figure 1: Sölvell, Ö. et al., 2003. “The Cluster Initiative Greenbook”). Following the description of the identified fields, Figure 1.

The Survey Regional Contact was provided with an enhanced description with highlight and contact details, aiming to provide the cluster managers with a useful tool to be considered when implementing new services. The Survey Regional Contact group, with the support of the related cluster manager, revised the best practices data sheet and validate it for the publication.

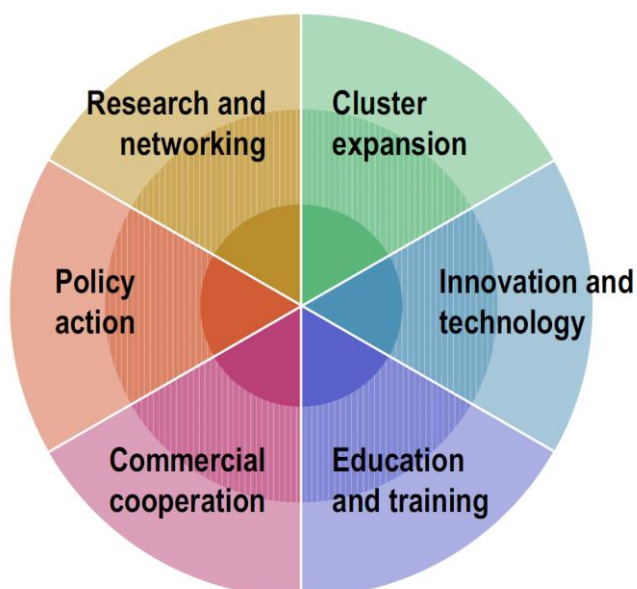


Figure 1: Cluster Initiative Target Board

Source: Sölvell, Ö. *et al.*, 2003. *The Cluster Initiative Greenbook*.

EDUCATION

The Education services are referred to such activities that lead to acquisition of knowledge and skills in the related industry-entrepreneurial area. Those services can be provided by experts such as experts, professors, researcher or consultants.

Education involves both workforce training and management education. Some Cluster Initiative started with workforce training and only later moved into manufacturing practices, purchasing partnerships and international marketing.

INNOVATION

The Innovation are referred to such activities that are at the support of the development of more-effective product, processes, services, technologies or business models. The activities can be referred also at IP protection, R&D support, strategies development and many others.

The Cluster Initiative facilitate improved innovation processes and enhance technology also through following technical trends, setting technical standards, diffusing new technology and improving production processes.

COLLABORATION

The Collaboration services refer to the activities that aim at increasing partnership, mainly among the cluster members, to share the 'know how' among individuals in order to create and sustain a competitive advantage.

Commercial cooperation involves a number of objectives, such as joint purchasing, business assistance, market intelligence and export promotion. Activities included are also the cluster initiative at trade fairs, performing market research for potential export markets, and lobbying government to maintain financing.

NETWORKING

The Networking services are referred to such activities that support businesspeople and entrepreneurs to the formation of business relationships and to recognize and create business opportunities, to share information and to seek potential partners for joint ventures.

The activities rely on also information gathering, publishing cluster reports, sharing information through seminars, inviting speakers, creating websites. Networking is a central aspect of most Cluster Initiatives. It is demonstrated that, in fact, is the most common objective. Sometimes these networks are more general and sometimes they are more targeted. There example of Cluster Initiative that partly aims to facilitate networking between large and small enterprises.

GROWTH

The growth activities are related to the ones that aims at helps cluster members to develop new products or services offered, to reduce barriers to entry in certain markets, to increase the knowledge and the added value of their product or services.

Many Cluster Initiatives promote a certain region by enhancing its “brand image” and actively promoting inward investment by the attraction of multinational corporations and build tight supplier relationships with cluster members. The cluster expansion also involves incubator services and the promotion of spinoff and start-ups.

Presentation of the selected Best Practices

More details on the selected best practices is available here:

Antonioni, S., Mion, L., Keller, M. and Bersier, J. (2018). *Good Practice Report*. Interreg Alpine Space – S3-4AlpClusters. Download: <https://bit.ly/2GF45aG>.

All best practices also include a contact reference for further information about the offered services.

Education Subset

Education Best Practise - Case 1

Title: Program to support woman & career

Cluster: Network Human Resources

Link: www.netzwerk-hr.at

Contact Ref.: Iris Reingruber
Business Upper Austria – OÖ Wirtschaftsagentur Ltd
iris.reingruber@biz-up.at

Description: the activity is run as a Program and targets the female executives and specialists. The program aims to increasing the share of women in senior management due to their proved know-how, creativity and personality in management positions.

The beneficiaries are not only the mentees but also the mentors, which get impulse for improvement of their own leadership and visibility of their own company and competences. In addition, the HR department of the company get benefits through the support of a gender equality and a modern, future-oriented human resources management. The added value for the companies is to get skilled personnel in a shorter time and with higher efficiency, to improve the cross-company cooperation and the HR-strategy and management.

The service is provides via a cross-mentoring activity where a mentor from a company accompanies a mentee from another company, which can be a junior manager or an executive, for an 8-month process.

The program last 9 months, organised once a year, and the related activities include kick-off, mid-time workshop, mentor meetings, mentees meeting, closing event. The expertise to be involved are Human Resources experienced expert and external consultants.

The process to select the mentor-mentee coupling should be accurate and based on their personal profile analysis and related companies position. Important is to raise awareness in the participating companies and specifically with their HR-departments.

Due to the nature of the service, the cross mentoring program could be provided in coordination with other clusters also at cross border level.

Education Best Practise - Case 2

Title: Demanded-oriented qualifications

Cluster: Proplast

Link: www.proplast.it

Contact Ref.: Susana Remotti
PROPLAST- consortium for the plastic culture promotion
susana.remotti@proplast.it

Description: focusing on a specific field, such as polymeric related manufacturing or wood processing, the activity engage high school students, unemployed and employed people for their training in the related specific field. The goal is to provide a training service and a more relevant recruitment activity at disposal to the HR department of the member companies.

The service is planned and managed on the basis of the following principles: continuous monitoring of companies' needs, mainly with the HR departments; strong co-operation between training institutions and companies for the topics and scheduling; involve high quality training professors and consultants; provide practical lessons in laboratories/working environment; follow the final placement of the trainees.

Education Best Practise - Case 3:

Title: Boosting entrepreneur culture

Cluster: Progetto Manifattura

Link: www.progettomanifattura.it

Contact Ref.: Silvio Antonioni
Trentino Innovation Hub
silvio.antonionitrentinoinnovation.eu

Description: the activity is dedicated to "would like to be" entrepreneur, start-up, SMEs (cluster participant and external) and aims at improving the knowledge of the entrepreneurial culture.

The service is planned through an academy covers the topics of business modelling, communication, internationalisation and innovation. The academy last 10 months and is provided by professionals and university professors which include also experimental methodologies such as MOOC (Massive Open Online Course). Since the academy is industry oriented, the lessons should be as possible practice, focused, with real examples and operative guidelines (no theoretical matters). The specific topics and methodology are developed on the basis of the beneficiaries needs in order to structure the topic and scheduling of the academy.

Education Best Practise - Case 4

Title: Mini-Master training

Cluster: Lombardia Aerospace Cluster - LAC

Link: www.aerospacelombardia.it

Contact Ref.: Francesca Sapio
Cluster Technologies for Smart Cities & Communities Lombardy
f.sapio69@gmail.com

Description: the service is dedicated to cluster members, students, teachers, schools, universities and it is realized with the collaboration of important education institutions with expertise on local entrepreneurship and in aerospacial district.

LONG-TERM OBJECTIVE: support to SMEs and large firms cooperation; aerospace skills and competences enhancement; aerospace reality knowledge spread.

MEDIUM-TERM OBJECTIVE: support to teachers and students' professional training and education and training for SME employees.

SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVE: specialized course for Technical Institutes teachers and large firms training courses opened to SMEs employees.

The main topics regards cluster activities, specifically focused on the main issues and challenges of aerospace industry and cooperation opportunities.

Addresses Technical Institutes teachers, University and member companies. The member companies' rule should finalize the needed competences.

The objective is to support the creation of a qualified workforce and to make available technicians and graduates of interest to companies, both small and medium.

Education Best Practice - Case 5

Title: Academy: seminars and training units

Cluster: Cluster Mechatronik & Automation Management gGmbH

Link: www.cluster-ma.de

Contact Ref.: Philip Pfaller
Bavarian Research Alliance Ltd
Pfaller@bayfor.org

Description: The academy wants to offer companies the opportunity to provide their staff with continuous qualification and training in order to be updated on all current technological and industry-related changes. In doing so, participating companies - especially to SMEs - are able to improve their competitiveness and innovativeness. The service is provided to both cluster members (with a discount fee) and non-members and can also be designed as in-house training according to specific wishes.

The academy has a whole-year schedule, offering one activity per week on average. Organization and moderation is performed by the cluster, the expertise is provided by academic researchers and professional experts (focusing on practical real cases and applicable approaches).

The key is to actively involve the cluster network in order to meet its own needs. Therefore, we are eager to establish and maintain strong ties with our network to efficiently use the expert knowledge available in the cluster for the offers of the academy. The most crucial point is to know and address the relevant target groups and interests to reach the most amount of participants.

A future outlook sees the academy as an independent institution with a regional lead in further education for the mechatronic industry.

Innovation Subset

Innovation Best Practise - Case 1

Title: Support in accessing public R&D and innovation calls, grants, tenders (regional, national, EU).

Cluster: Energy and Construction Cluster

Link: energie-batiment.ch/en

Contact Ref.: Jacques Bersier
HES-SO//FR HEIA-FR - INNOSQUARE CLUSTERS
jacques.bersier@hefr.ch

Description: The Energy and Construction Cluster offers support in setting up collaborative projects with the goal of increasing the competitiveness of the regional industries. Projects typically last 1-2 years and include at least three industrial participants (at least half of which should be from the canton of Fribourg) and one academic partner. The industries provide at least 35% of the investment.

The service aims at combining the generation of competitive advantage for the participants with a broader impact on the regional economy through knowledge transfer. The targeted participants, both industrial and academic, are expected to have an entrepreneurial mindset.

Innovation Best Practise - Case 2

Title: Product prototyping for SMEs

Cluster: Allianz faserbasierte Werkstoffe (AFBW) e.V.

Link: www.afbw.eu

Contact Ref.: Konstantin Schneider
VDI/VDE Innovation + Technik GmbH ClusterAgentur
Konstantin.schneider@clusteragentur-bw.de

Description: the service aims at reducing the barrier for the prototyping of medical devices. Commonly this activity could be very expensive for SMEs and the Cluster Initiative offers to manufacture small series production through the local research institutes. Typical consortia is composed by 5-6 companies which share costs and results. Intellectual property rights are regulated by the consortium itself.

The cluster initiatives monitors the project and conducts regular meetings with experts. New prototypes ideas comes from experts, cluster managers and public tenders.

The beneficiaries are the companies and the research institutes in the region and members of the cluster initiative. The Industry needs to be the driver of the project and trust between the participants is absolutely necessary. The process to put together the main participants for such complex projects requires a long term process of trust building

Innovation Best Practise - Case 3

Title: R&D competitive calls

Cluster: SINFONET (Smart and Innovative Foundry NETWORK)

Link: www.retesinfonet.org

Contact Ref.: Giulia Berton
Veneto Region, Research Clusters and Networks Unit
giulia.berton@regione.veneto.it

Description: the main added value is the set up of an interdisciplinary working team on specific R&D topics. The following steps supported by the Cluster Initiative are; 1. project "design"; 2. project "execution". The goals are strictly related to the members filed of operations: efficiency, zero-defect manufacturing, process control and optimisation.

The cluster member can apply to the competitive call and the project participants are involved on the basis of their expertise. The key is to build up a consortium with interdisciplinary competences and with an attitude to cooperation. Consortiums comprised of large groups are well coordinated by small core groups. Committed partners brings the experience to a next level in terms of projects design and execution.

Innovation Best Practise - Case 4

Title: Health Hackathon

Cluster: Cluster Lombardo Scienze della Vita

Link: www.lombardialifesciences.it

Contact Ref.: Francesca Sapio
Cluster Technologies for Smart Cities & Communities Lombardy
f.sapio69@gmail.com

Description: the aim is to bring together innovator

s and healthcare experts in order to foster new ideas and to develop innovative solutions to solve healthcare challenges using emerging technology. The added value is the creation of new knowledge and services for the patients

The service consist in the organization and support a weekend hackathon in the field of Healthcare and consist of managing 200-300 participants where designers and developers collaborate with doctors, nurses, clinic managers and other healthcare professionals to develop prototypes that can be put to test in clinics and hospitals.

The event is a cross-cluster collaboration between Tecnologie per gli Ambienti di Vita and Lombardia Life Sciences which members can participate together with industry professionals, venture capitalists and entrepreneurs.

A private company may sponsor the initiatives and so the event may be free of charge.

Collaboration Subset

Collaboration Best Practise - Case 1

Title: Innovation Days

Cluster: Automotive Cluster - Business Upper Austria – OÖ Wirtschaftsagentur GmbH

Link: www.automobil-cluster.at/en

Contact Ref.: Iris Reingruber
Business Upper Austria – OÖ Wirtschaftsagentur Ltd
iris.reingruber@biz-up.at

Description: the objective is to explore new markets and customers for cluster participants, mainly through the involvement of global OEMs in the “innovation day”. The event, better if organized at OEM site, aims to present companies competences and to foster the collaboration among cluster participants and OEMs. The participants gets several services such as booth space and specific briefing & meetings. The access policy expect the payment of a fee in the range of 3k€-4k€ per company. The organization requires 4 months preparation and: 2 project managers responsible for: planning of the activities, take first contact, review innovation profiles of members, selection process, presentation planning of selected companies, booth planning and b2b meetings organization. A key success factor is to clearly define the OEM demands, to put particular attention to confidential agreements and to focus on “quality” of OEM collaboration.

Collaboration Best Practise - Case 2

Title: Competence Centre

Cluster: Allianz faserbasierte Werkstoffe (AFBW) e.V.

Link: www.afbw.eu

Contact Ref.: Konstantin Schneider
VDI/VDE Innovation + Technik GmbH ClusterAgentur
Konstantin.schneider@clusteragentur-bw.de

Description: the service aims at fostering the collaboration among companies along the textile supply chain through the implementation of a competence centre. The members work intensively on custom solutions and the support for R&D activities are guaranteed by a research institute. The involved companies promote their competences also by common marketing materials and website. A yearly conference helps to engage new clients.

The competence centre could only be established because there was a huge level of trust among the participants, a concrete agreement and agreed innovative topics.

The competence centre is a cooperation project with another Cluster Initiative in the same region.

Collaboration Best Practice - Case 3

Title: Cross-Cluster Collaboration

Cluster: Trägerverein Umwelttechnologie-Cluster Bayern e.V.
and
MAI Carbon

Link: www.umweltcluster.net
www.mai-carbon.de

Contact Ref.: Philip Pfaller
Bavarian Research Alliance Ltd
Pfaller@bayfor.org

Description: As a result of a close collaboration Umweltcluster Bayern and the Bavarian cluster MAI Carbon developed a cross-cluster project, which requires competences coming from both clusters: the recycling and disposal of waste containing carbon fiber residues. It connects waste producers, waste management companies and political authorities in order to discuss unsolved technical and legislative challenges as well as to propose possible solutions. An online tool, which maps the technological competences of relevant stakeholders aims at the triggering of further collaboration. Another highlight of the project was a stakeholder conference, which brought together company and research members of both clusters, political decisionmakers and external experts.

The project lasts around 14 months with an overall budget of 100.000 € (50 k€ for each cluster) and a 50% funding rate by the region ministry.

Collaboration Best Practice - Case 4

Title: Technology Night

Cluster: MAI Carbon

Link: www.mai-carbon.de

Contact Ref.: Philip Pfaller
Bavarian Research Alliance Ltd
Pfaller@bayfor.org

Description: A "Technology" day is organized and the hosting SME gets the opportunity to present its R&D-project development and respective results to a group of about 20 interested cluster members. The goal of this service is to encourage the collaboration of cluster members with major industrial enterprises or other SMEs. The introduction of the SME's daily work makes these events even more attractive.

The time frame of the event is one afternoon session from 5pm - 8pm. The staff costs are covered by the cluster organization. The SME covers the expenses to hold the event.

The event is accessible for all cluster members. The most challenging task is to early engage the key actors of major industrial enterprises.

Networking Subset

Networking Best Practice - Case 1

Title: Technology scouting events

Cluster: IT Valley

Link: www.itvalley.ch / <http://itvalley.ch/fr/techmeetings/>

Contact Ref.: Jacques Bersier
HES-SO//FR HEIA-FR - INNOSQUARE CLUSTERS
jacques.bersier@hefr.ch

Description: the service aims at bringing together best professionals, companies and startups for the identification of trending technologies and participation to technology oriented events. The events are open to everyone and the participants are encouraged to present their expertise on a tech topic, to share their thoughts and learn from others, in a cool and relaxed atmosphere.

The tech meetings are organized 3 or 4 times a year with the support of 2 cluster employees, which prepare the posters, publish the event, book the rooms, maintain the web site, publish the slides on the web site, contact the potential speakers and coordinate all the activities.

Networking Best Practise - Case 2

Title: Tech Exhibition

Cluster: SINFONET (Smart and Innovative Foundry NETWORK)

Link: www.retesinfonet.org

Contact Ref.: Giulia Berton
Veneto Region, Research Clusters and Networks Unit
giulia.berton@regione.veneto.it

Description: the service puts together more than 20 cluster members under the brand of SINFONET, as innovation leader in the foundry sector. The participants get benefit from the joint participation at the most relevant European events under the brand of SINFONET and contacts are set up with new potential partners. The Cluster Initiative organizes also the Italian exhibition hosting B2B meetings (best if organized in advance), technical seminars (short is best, ~ 40 min.) and a conference focusing on the innovation roadmap.

Networking Best Practise - Case 3

Title: Internationalization

Cluster: VITAGORA

Link: www.vitagora.com

Contact Ref.: Florian Boucherie
University of Franche-Comte
florian.boucherie@femto-st.fr

Anne-Céline Renaud
Vitagora
anne-celine.renaud@vitagora.com

Description: the internationalization activities aim at identifying new opportunities for partnership development. The Cluster Initiative supports the companies in orienting their international development, in identifying potential specific markets, supporting their network development for identification of new partners and key stakeholders.

The internationalization activities include international partnership missions, delegation visit, international business attraction events. It is essential to identify and meet in person the relevant international partners for the cluster members. The foreign missions permits also to better understand the market and the opportunities. New partnerships and collaborative projects are the initial results which aims to seek for long-term growth in terms of turnover or employment.

The involved cluster members are SMEs, large companies, academies, other international cluster initiatives.

The service include also the support (from call identification to project proposal definition, project execution, follow-up, involvement of the international development manager as well as the project team manager and communication manager) at participating, or directly participate, to the European collaborative projects which enable the members of consortium to get funds and to develop their network, skills and new opportunities.

One FTE is dedicated to the international activities with the support of two cluster managers.

4 international missions are organized per year, participation to 2 international missions coordinated by other clusters and 2 delegations hosted. The foreign missions are organized 6 to 9 months ahead. This specific activity requires about 25% FTE.

The Cluster Initiative get part of it funds from the COSME project, funded by the European Commission, for the cluster internationalization.

The services are for the cluster members and the Cluster Initiative offers strong network with other clusters in Europe (Portugal, Spain, Italy) and internationally (Canada, South Korea, Japan).

The Cluster Initiative suggest to build and maintain your network at all scales, to identify partners abroad, to build a trust relationship and finally to embark champion SMEs.

Networking Best Practise - Case 4

Title: Ciclo Workshops

Cluster: Lombardia Aerospace Cluster - LAC

Link: www.aerospacelombardia.it

Contact Ref.: Francesca Sapio
Cluster Technologies for Smart Cities & Communities Lombardy
f.sapio69@gmail.com

Description: the service objective are to promote networking among cluster members, to raise awareness, especially to SMEs, about competitive changes connected with dissemination of new technologies and the ones related to Industry 4.0; to create basic knowledge on main technical topics related to Industry 4.0 focusing on verticalization application; to acquaint members with specific economic tools; to promote visiting to leading-edge companies which may represent best practices on technology and Industry 4.0; to create an innovation community.

The beneficiaries are all cluster members. The main activity comprise of organizing a series of technical meetings, also at top leading-edge companies' facility, where members present.

The meetings are held by companies' experts, universities and research centres scientists. All meetings were free of charge for all LAC members and relevant costs were borne by the Cluster. The activities are coordinated by a Technical Scientific Unit, which stimulate debate and brainstorming, focus on transversal scientific fields that may have an impact on the related cluster industry and deals with R&D projects, and the Credit & Finance Working Group, which provided also with financial support

Networking Best Practice - Case 5

Title: International Trade Fair

Cluster: Cluster Energy Technology

Link: www.bayern-innovativ.de/cluster-energietechnik

Contact Ref.: Philip Pfaller
Bavarian Research Alliance Ltd
Pfaller@bayfor.org

Description: the participation with a joint booth at international trade fair, on a specific technology field, aims at fostering the cluster member networking and cooperation. The service is provided to a selected and closed number, around 15 entities, small and medium sized cluster members. The service is organized with the support of the foreign Office for Economic Development located at the country of the trade fair site, the Bavarian Bureau for International Business Relations (Bayern International) at the Bavarian Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy and a regional export-promotion company which supports the match making activity.

To be taken into consideration that trade fairs in some countries (such as United States) are extremely expensive.

Networking Best Practice - Case 6

Title: Networking Events

Cluster: Forum MedTech Pharma

Link: www.medtech-pharma.de

Contact Ref.: Philip Pfaller
Bavarian Research Alliance Ltd
Pfaller@bayfor.org

Description: this service is based on the organization of events, from workshops with 10 to 20 participants to congresses for several hundred participants, and aims at enhancing networking activity (e.g. to initiate R&D projects for developing future innovative products) and acquiring new Cluster Participants.

The added value for Cluster Participants: update on latest trends in technology and applications; guidance on how to successfully participate with their own products and services; direct contact with experts from research facilities and industry.

The events are managed by the Cluster Organization. Operative details: The personnel effort for scientific and event planning range from a few dozen hours for small workshops to a few hundred hours for 2-day congresses. In some cases, Cluster members or other Cluster Initiatives support the activity.

Identifying the most important business and market trends to select the most suitable topics for networking events benefits from the involvement of experts from other Cluster initiatives.

Growth Subset

Growth Best Practise - Case 1

Title: Industrie 4.0 Self Assessment

Cluster: Mechatronics Cluster @ Business Upper Austria - OÖ Wirtschaftsagentur GmbH

Link: www.mechatronik-cluster.at/en/mechatronics-cluster

Contact Ref.: Iris Reingruber

Business Upper Austria – OÖ Wirtschaftsagentur Ltd

iris.reingruber@biz-up.at

Description: a self assessment online software tool was developed within a research project in cooperation the University for Applied Sciences. The tool aims at detecting the maturity of a company in terms of advanced manufacturing. A one-day training guarantee the participant to be able to carry out the survey independently. The overall objective is to motivate and support the entrepreneurs to further develop their processes toward advanced manufacturing and to identify the actual degree of maturity and the intended one. Afterwards recommendations are given in a structured manner.

The added value is to aware cluster members about the raising on potential of advanced manufacturing; to develop and maintain a benchmark database usable by cluster members which can evaluate the current situation in the specific sectors and make a sectoral comparison of the company. The data is stored anonymously in the database. The Cluster Organization is responsible for the further development of the tool, the promotion, the trainings and the maintenance of database.

The activity is financed by regional funds and further implementation is coming from user fees (any enterprise) and the costs are: training for one person + license €1.500/year, license for the following years €500/year.

The Cluster Initiative suggest to deal with entrepreneurs which are willing to transform toward digitalization/advanced manufacturing and to involve the policymakers for an adjustment of the regional policy and financing support. Privacy policy and legal conditions should also be considered with particular attention.

Growth Best Practise - Case 2

Title: HR Benchmark

Cluster: Network Human Resources @ Business Upper Austria - OÖ
Wirtschaftsagentur GmbH

Link: www.netzwerk-hr.at

Contact Ref.: Iris Reingruber
Business Upper Austria – OÖ Wirtschaftsagentur Ltd
iris.reingruber@biz-up.at

Description: a HR-Benchmark activity is carried out every 2 years. The whole activity lasts 1 year including preparation and post processing and involve a project manager, an assistant and one person of IT dept. to support the 40 members involved. The service is open to everyone and for cluster member the fee is € 580. The activity comprises the survey and complementary workshops, meetings for presentation and discussion of the results.

The service aims at benchmark the companies and region in terms of brain drain & experts immigration analyses, analyses of fluctuation of employees; to collect the staff ratios and to create HR-key data indicators and consequently support the management strategy; to exchange best practice; to compare the regions for a regional development/strategy; to improve the efficiency of HR recourses department.

The cluster initiative point outs to get involved experienced and reliable IT support, experts in assessment of the companies and to build HR-network and valuable contacts from HR companies departments.

Growth Best Practise - Case 3

Title: Acceleration Program

Cluster: Vitagora

Link: www.vitagora.com

Contact Ref.: Florian Boucherie
University of Franche-Comte
florian.boucherie@femto-st.fr

Description: the service is an acceleration program open to startups ups nearly ready to launch their product/service throughout the country and abroad. Business leaders, banks, large companies and mentors provided their expertise and support.

The Cluster Organization focus on the steps of industrialization and market launch and provides business contacts, mentoring, R&D expertise, partners for developing, testing, producing and distributing their innovations.

The end goal is to strengthen the business ecosystem and the program is mainly intended to support SMEs needing to manage a pivot in their vision, spinoffs, and entrepreneurial projects coming from large corporations.

The program last 12 weeks of acceleration + 9 months post-acceleration and it is supported by 2/3 people from the Cluster Organization. There is a call for application and the winners are selected after a pitch sessions. The cost for participation is €5.000.

The program is building relations with other acceleration programs outside Europe in order to facilitate internationalization of the SMEs.

Growth Best Practise - Case 4

Title: Business strategies support

Cluster: Cluster Mechatronik & Automation Management GmbH

Link: www.cluster-ma.de

Contact Ref.: Philip Pfaller
Bavarian Research Alliance Ltd
Pfaller@bayfor.org

Description: all cluster participants, especially SMEs, to benefit from the external expertise provided by an experienced expert which provide mentoring services, upcoming trends and professional insight. The objective is to stabilize and increase the SMEs businesses and redirect their activities according to future market requirements, thus raising their competitiveness.

The cluster initiative preside the region with three cluster managers which, through regular and repeated company visits, gain insight in the companies' needs, challenges and strengths. This activity make possible to detect trends, common tasks and interdependencies which are used to support individual cases or to foster partnerships and cooperation.

Key activities are related to the organize frequent on-site meetings, to establish trust and willingness and to cooperate through testimonials.

In order to support international strategies and the launching of possible cross-border collaborations, the activities described can rely on linkages to other external Cluster Initiatives.

S3-4ALPCLUSTERS Partners

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PROPLAST - Consortium for the Plastic Culture Promotion



Cluster Technologies for Smart Cities & Communities
Lombardy Foundation



Autonomous Province of Trento (PAT)



Trentino Innovation Hub



Lombardy Region Government



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Government Office for Development and European
Cohesion Policy



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
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