

European Innovation Partnership on Smart Cities and Communities

INVITATION FOR COMMITMENT

Executive summary

Prospects and Benefits of Smart Cities

Cities are the major source of European economic activity and innovation. Smart technologies and services at the intersection of urban transport, energy and ICT offer vast prospects and business opportunities to make urban environments cleaner and healthier to live in, to make them more sustainable and to foster city competitiveness, economic growth and employment.

Many cities have been developing new forms of public-private partnerships and have experimented with innovate procurement and finance, planning and management processes to drive forward the Smart City agenda. Innovative actions of this kind are also financed under the EU's Horizon 2020 programme. But more concerted action between cities and industries is now needed so to accelerate large-scale roll-out of promising technologies and services and get markets moving.

Helping to build up these markets is a core ambition of the *European Innovation Partnership on Smart Cities and Communities (EIP)*.

The European Innovation Partnership of Smart Cities and Communities

The EIP is a stakeholder-driven initiative (see also http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?pg=eip). Its steering body is a High-Level Group comprising key European stakeholders from cities, ICT, energy and transport sectors as well as civil society and research; it is chaired by the Commission's Vice-Presidents Neelie Kroes, Commissioner for the Digital Agenda, and Siim Kallas, Commissioner for Transport, as well as Günther Oettinger, Commissioner for Energy. The Group adopted the EIP's Strategic Implementation Plan in October 2013, which recommends eleven priority areas including recommended actions to better integrate ICT, energy and transport and mobility sectors in the urban context (http://ec.europa.eu/eip/smartcities/files/sip_final_en.pdf).

Seeking commitments

Now, the EIP launches an *Invitation for Commitment* (deadline 15/06/2014) to kick-start building a vibrant market-place for Smart City action in the EU. It invites interested parties to join the EIP by stepping forward and supporting its objectives in any of the eleven focus areas. A commitment is an intention to provide a measurable and concrete engagement in support of one or more focus areas over the next year or a longer period of time, linking energy, transport and ICT in the urban context.

The *Invitation for Commitment* will bring forward cities and communities, industry, innovative SMEs, research organisations and civil society actors and should provide a meaningful and needed push for the smart cities strategic agenda in the EU.

Submitting a commitment offers several opportunities for learning, partnering, efficiency gains and new creation of new business:

- promote your actions on a European scale
- engage with others to get new ideas and feedback on your actions
- learn from others and exchanges best practices
- partner with others to jointly shape new or existing projects, create cost savings and attract new private-sector funding

Guidelines for submitting commitments through an online application form are given in the text of the *Invitation for Commitments* itself. The guidelines stipulate that commitments should demonstrate that they address the following key points:

- *Engagement*: does the commitment underwrite the objectives of this EIP?
- *Inclusiveness and Partnership*: does the commitment involve relevant stakeholders?
- *Delivery*: does the commitment clearly outline planned activities?

In the follow-up, successful applicants are likely to be invited to become part of working groups, called 'Action Clusters', so to facilitate close operational cooperation and exchange - across sectors and between the supply and demand sides – possibly leading up to joint work plans on a voluntary basis.