



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)

Call for Expressions of Interest

'Business Cooperation Centres' in third countries for the Enterprise Europe Network

COS-Art-7-001

2015/2020

This call for expressions of interest addresses leading business and innovation support organisations located in third countries other than those participating in the Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (COSME)¹. The objective is to establish 'Business Cooperation Centres' for the Enterprise Europe Network² in international markets in order to form a unique international network of excellence facilitating business cooperation, technology transfer and research collaboration.

Version
02/02/2015



About the 'Enterprise Europe Network'

The 'Enterprise Europe Network' is a European Union flagship initiative aimed at providing business and innovation support to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Europe and important international growth markets. To date, the Enterprise Europe Network remains the world's largest business and innovation support network and currently consists of 600 partner organisations located in 54 countries. More than 4500 internationalisation experts and technology transfer practitioners offer a wide range of business and innovation support services to enterprises. The partners of the Enterprise Europe Network are chambers of commerce, regional development organisations, SME organisations, research institutes, universities, technology centres and innovation centres. Their specialised knowledge of the local and regional business environment ensures that their services offer real added-value to their clients, mainly SMEs.

¹ Under Article 7 of the COSME Regulation; and excluding those participating under Article 6 of the COSME regulation.

² The Enterprise Europe Network was originally established in 2008 under the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (2007-2013) – official website: <http://een.ec.europa.eu>. In its current phase the Network will operate until the end of 2014. Following a recent call for proposals, the Network will continue in a second phase from 2015 to 2020.

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1. Background

Established under the Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (2014 - 2020), known as "COSME³", the Enterprise Europe Network, hereinafter referred to as "the Network", is an initiative of the European Commission to support the competitiveness and growth of European small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs⁴), and managed by EASME under powers delegated by the European Commission – DG Enterprise and Industry.

This is part of a wider policy objective to foster growth, employment and competitiveness in the European Single Market. The COSME programme supports the aims of the Europe 2020 strategy⁵, which recognises the crucial role of SMEs in delivering a high level of employment, the transition to a low carbon, resource and energy efficient economy and social cohesion.

In this context, and in line with the "Small Business Act for Europe" which sets the EU policy framework to strengthen SMEs, the Enterprise Europe Network contributes to an SME support system in EU member states and their regions that aims to provide high quality services to client companies.

To this end, the Network provides value-added business support services to help SMEs do business inside and outside the European Single Market and that are designed to improve their competitiveness. A call for proposals to establish the Network in EU member states as well as non-member State countries participating in COSME (under Article 6 of the COSME Regulation) was launched on 22 January 2014⁶.

Pursuant to Article 7 of the COSME regulation, entities established in non-EU countries (other than COSME-participating countries) may also participate in actions under the programme, including cooperating with the Enterprise Europe Network. However, these entities are not entitled to receive a European financial contribution. EASME shall support these entities by making available the appropriate coordination and operational support.

This call for expressions of interest seeks to establish 'Business Cooperation Centres' in third countries⁷ to cooperate with the Enterprise Europe Network in order to facilitate business, technology as well as research partnerships between SMEs in their own country and European SMEs. This cooperation will be based on common interest and mutual benefit.

2. Objectives

The Enterprise Europe Network will contribute to the objectives of the COSME programme by facilitating SMEs' access to international markets by providing business and innovation support services that help strengthen their competitiveness and sustainability. The Enterprise Europe Network seeks to foster the development of internationally competitive companies and will stimulate the innovation management capacities of SMEs.

The 'Business Cooperation Centres' will contribute to partnership activities of European SMEs in international markets. The purpose of this call for expressions of interest, based on Article 7 of

³ Regulation (EU) No 1287/2013 of 11 December 2013 (Official Journal of the European Union 2013/L 347/33 of 20 December 2013)

⁴ For the purpose of this call, the European definition of an SME is applied. See Commission Recommendation C (2003) 1422 of 6 May 2003 (Official Journal of the European Union OJ L 124/36 of 20.05.2013).

⁵ COM (2010) 2020 final of 3 March 2010

⁶ See official webpage of European Commission – DG Enterprise & Industries:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=7229&lang=en&title=COSME-Enterprise-Europe-Network-2015%2F2020

⁷ Countries other than EU member states and COSME-participating countries.

the COSME regulation, is to establish 'Business Cooperation Centres' in third countries for the Enterprise Europe Network for the period 2015-2020 by

- Selecting organisations with the necessary operational and financial capacity;
- Signing cooperation agreements with organisations hosting the 'Business Cooperation Centres' in third countries in order to cover the activities and services to be delivered in the framework of this call.

To this end applicants shall submit:

- An implementation strategy for the period 2015 – 2020. This document should specify how the applicant will implement the Enterprise Europe Network project in the country; the implementation strategy will also include a work programme for the first year in the Network.

3. Activities⁸

In order to achieve the above objectives, 'Business Cooperation Centres' will engage in the following activities:

Service activities

- Cross-border partnership services to enhance business cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and research cooperation between SMEs established in the EU (and COSME participating countries) and in third countries;
- Support and information services related to partnership building between SMEs;

For organisations in third countries participating in Horizon 2020 only:

- *Services to enhance the innovation management capacities of SMEs;*

Enabling activities

- Promotion of the Network and communication activities;
- Network building and reinforcing the Network.

4. Why doing business in the European Union?

In addition to regions such as North America, East/South-east Asia, Latin America and other international markets, the European Union is an important 'hub' for commercial activity, technological advancement and research and development. In order to preserve their competitive edge, companies need to take full advantage of opportunities in both European and international markets.

The following reasons make the European Union an attractive place to do business:

- The European Union boasts the world's biggest knowledge-based economy with over 500 million consumers accounting for 18.6% of the world's GDP expressed in Purchasing Power Standards⁹;

⁸ The Horizon 2020 programme will finance certain services provided by the Enterprise Europe Network, namely those enhancing the innovation management capacity of SMEs. Organisations from countries eligible to participate in Horizon 2020 will also implement these specific activities in the context of Enterprise Europe Network innovation support services.

⁹ Eurostat International Comparison Programme

- In 2013, the nominal average GDP per capita in the European Union was 25.700 euros (€),¹⁰ this being a key indicator of the purchasing power of European consumers;
- The European Union is a world leader in research and innovation, accounting for 24% of world expenditure on research, 32% of high impact publications and 32% of patent applications¹¹;
- In a globalised world, SMEs need to take advantage of the new market opportunities that international markets can provide and to confront increased competition. There is a direct link between internationalisation and increased SME performance.

5. Reasons to cooperate with the Enterprise Europe Network

Organisations based in third countries that host 'Business Cooperation Centres' for the Enterprise Europe Network will have privileged access to Europe's leading business and innovation support organisations (i.e. chambers of commerce, technology institutes, innovation agencies, regional development agencies, SME organisations, universities, research centres, etc.). These contacts will lead to business and innovation opportunities for SMEs in the European Union and in third countries.

About 4500 SME internationalisation experts and technology transfer practitioners work for the current Enterprise Europe Network in Europe and beyond. In addition to its main goal of providing support to thousands of European SMEs, the Network has also brought benefits for universities or other leading technology suppliers such as the European Space Agency (ESA)¹² or the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN)¹³ by providing them with the opportunity to publish research results relevant to SMEs in the Network's technology database.

For companies in third countries, the Enterprise Europe Network and their 'Business Cooperation Centres' will serve as gateway to:

- Access a vibrant market with over 500 million consumers;
- Exchange technologies required to make products or production facilities more competitive on international markets;
- Identify suitable European business partners;
- Find research partners to participate in Europe's research framework programmes (e.g. Horizon 2020¹⁴);
- Channel investment ventures to Europe better and more effectively.

6. Structure of a 'Business Cooperation Centre' consortium¹⁵

In a majority of cases, 'Business Cooperation Centres' are expected to consist of a consortium of host organisations that together will deliver the services required. One of these organisations will be the coordinator but all will be contractual partners.

¹⁰ EUROSTAT

¹¹ Innovation union scoreboard 2013

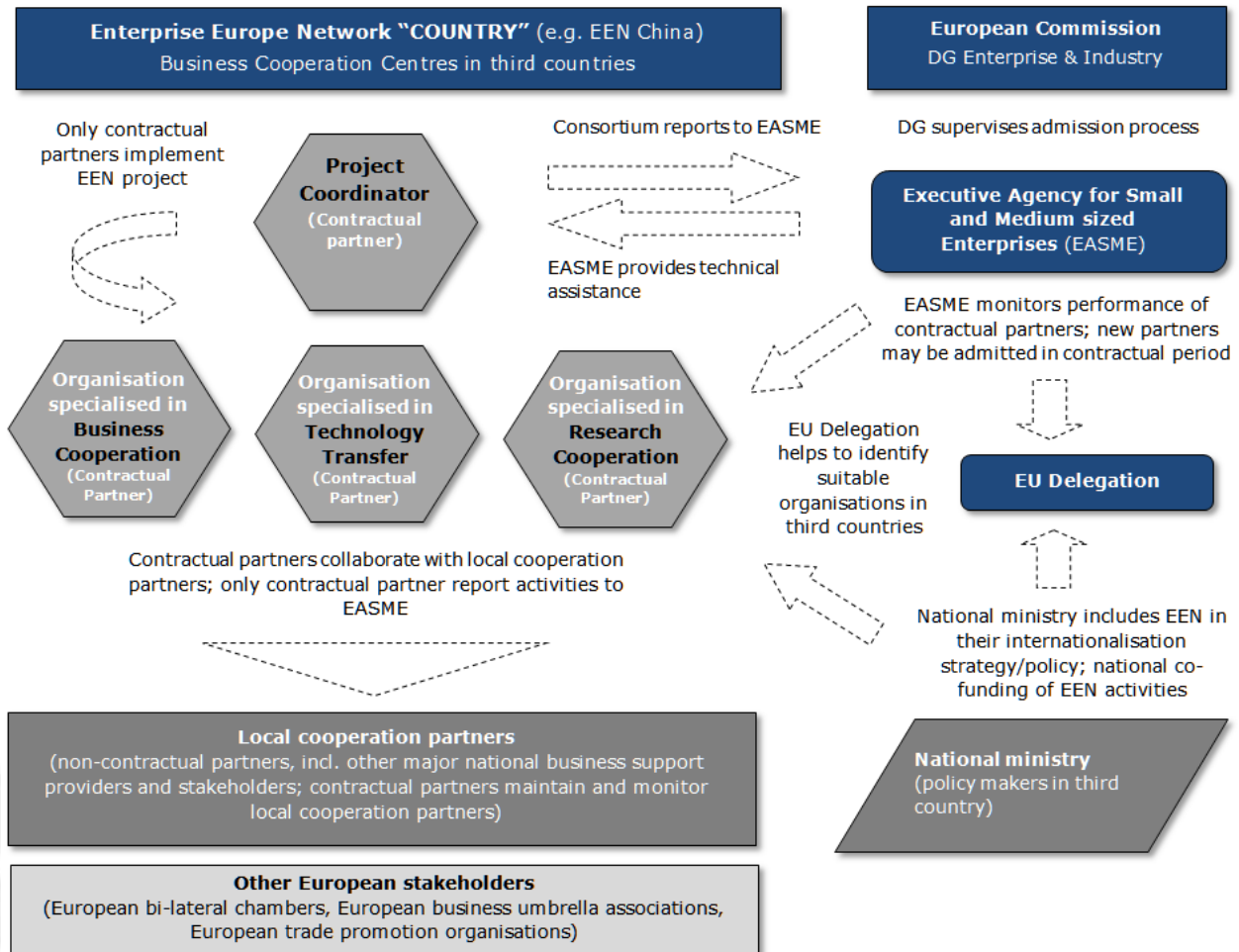
¹² <http://www.esa.int/ESA>

¹³ <http://home.web.cern.ch/>

¹⁴ Horizon 2020 is the EU's Research and Innovation programme with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2021) – in addition to the private investment that this money will attract.

¹⁵ Under COSME Article 7

Figure – Sample structure of a 'Business Cooperation Centre' consortium in third countries



The size of consortia in third countries is to be determined on the basis of the country's population (or the region covered by the consortium in case of very large countries):

- Population below 30 million: 2-3 partners in the consortium;
- Population between 30 and 100 million: 3-4 partners in the consortium;
- Population over 100 million: 4-5 partners in the consortium.

More than five organisations from one country will be admitted only in exceptional cases and needs to be well-justified by the applicants in their implementation strategy.

Organisations admitted to host an Enterprise Europe Network 'Business Cooperation Centre' are also encouraged to collaborate with additional interested organisations as part of a group of local cooperation partners or stakeholders. There is no contractual relationship needed with EASME for these local cooperation partners.

a. Geographical coverage

Applicants should submit their application as one consortium per country, which shall comprise a maximum five partners and must be able to provide services to SMEs throughout the entire country. The 'Business Cooperation Centre' consortium is made up of units or departments located within individual host organisations, each one having access to a large pool of local

clients¹⁶. Only in exceptional and well-justified cases it will be possible to accept consortia with more than five partners or more than one consortium per country (each covering a different region in particularly large countries).

b. Organisations eligible to become 'Business Cooperation Centres'

Different types of host organisations in third countries will be eligible to become 'Business Cooperation Centres'. The common trait is that all consortia must be able to deliver high quality support services to businesses and must have a proven track record of working with local and foreign SMEs and of interacting with European organisations and businesses. An indicative and non-exhaustive list of typical host organisations for 'Business Cooperation Centre' consortia in third countries may include:

- SME organisations (*including also EU-based business organisations or representative organisations of SMEs with a clear presence in the third country*);
- National development agencies;
- Innovation agencies;
- Research organisations or foundations;
- Business and technology transfer support units of higher education institutions such as universities;
- Foreign direct investment and/or export promotion agencies;
- Other bodies tasked with improving the access of SMEs to support services for business partnering, internationalisation and innovation projects and other topics relevant to this call for expression of interest.

Moreover, EU-funded internationalisation initiatives¹⁷ such as SME centres or other business support networks in third countries will be eligible either to coordinate or participate in consortia. European bi-lateral chambers, EU trade promotion organisations or European business and umbrella associations present and operational in third countries may also participate in the activities of the Network in third countries, as consortium partners, coordinators or local cooperation partners of the 'Business Cooperation Centres'. In particular, organisations already cooperating with EU Network partners in specific third country markets may also become local cooperation partners of 'Business Cooperation Centres'. Organisations intending to cooperate with 'Business Cooperation Centres' - but which are not part of the consortium - are encouraged to formalise this through collaboration agreements.

c. Coherence with other host organisation activities and visibility within the host organisation

'Business Cooperation Centres' will be embedded in host organisations that will account significantly for the support needed to deliver the services provided in response to this call. Host organisations should coordinate their core tasks with the proposed Network activities in order to contribute to the excellence of the Network and the services to be delivered.

A strong positioning of the 'Business Cooperation Centres' within their host organisation is essential to ensure a sense of ownership and avoid potential conflicts of interests or overlaps with other departments in the same organisation. The host organisation should demonstrate its interest in the project and highlight how its existing activities can be linked to the Network's

¹⁶ In the implementation strategy, applicants have to indicate the number of local company contacts contained in their clients' database or client relationship management tool.

¹⁷ EU Delegations will be able to provide further information on EU internationalisation initiatives such as centres or networks in the given country. Applicants are encouraged to contact these centres or networks to discuss their participation in the consortium.

services, in order to achieve synergies and added value for SMEs. Host organisations are expected to provide strong support to implement the proposed actions and to contribute to the excellence of the Network services.

The management of 'Business Cooperation Centre' host organisations is required to integrate the Network as a strategic element in their organisation's portfolio and to ensure that activities for the Enterprise Europe Network receive a high degree of visibility and 'connectivity' with other activities carried out by different departments of the same organisation.

Staff members of 'Business Cooperation Centres' will maintain a regular flow of information and collaboration with other relevant departments in the host organisation, namely in order to involve them in strategic matters, and to highlight the added value of the Network vis-à-vis the host organisation.

d. Target audience

The Network's primary target groups in third countries will be SMEs interested in doing business, technology transfer and/or research collaboration with European companies. 'Business Cooperation Centres' will support SMEs with high potential for international business cooperation, technology transfer or research collaboration regardless of their size, sector or business cycle.

While SMEs remain the primary target of the services provided by 'Business Cooperation Centres', some services may be delivered to other organisations with a view to enhancing cooperation between European SMEs and third country partners. These include:

- Clusters and cluster organisations;
- Public authorities and public enterprises (for example for tendering opportunities);
- Research institutes or higher education institutions such as universities;
- Sectoral business associations.

e. Consortia

The 'Business Cooperation Centres' should have expertise in the different types of partnership and information support services described in this call. It is therefore expected that proposals will come from consortia including different types of host organisations. The mix of host organisations within individual consortia should reflect a joint strategy for providing the full range of services.

Proposals from single organisations are only acceptable if such organisations are able to provide the full range of services as described in the call. All applications will be assessed on the basis of their quality and the added value provided for the Network. In order to facilitate coordination and to avoid overlaps of different applications covering a country or specific regions in a given country, consortia may be asked to link up or re-group under a common coordination. If linked-up consortia have an excessively high number of partners, EASME will make recommendations to limit the composition of the consortium to the organisations which best meet the quality criteria for the evaluation of applications.

f. Local cooperation partners

'Business Cooperation Centres' may identify further local business support organisations or intermediaries in the country with which they plan to formally collaborate, e.g. to achieve better coverage of the country or to optimise the delivery of services to SMEs. However, these organisations shall not sign the Cooperation Agreement with EASME. Local cooperation partners will not be eligible for operational and technical support from EASME and will fully

depend on the knowledge and technical assistance provided by the 'Business Cooperation Centres' or by Network partners based in the European Union (for organisations linked with EU partners). Deliverables and targets outlined in the implementation strategy and annual work programmes will be reported only by the contractual partners. 'Business Cooperation Centres' are strongly encouraged to sign formal collaboration agreements with their local cooperation partners specifying the exact terms of the cooperation and what contribution these organisation make to the project implementation.

7. Cooperation with other relevant stakeholders

The consortium should establish close working relations with other relevant major service providers in the country or region dealing with both SME and European affairs. Depending on the local conditions, this could include actors such as

- Local authorities (e.g. regional or local governments);
- Organisations cooperating and having links with EU partners (which may be proposed by EU partners for specific initiatives)
- Business associations;
- Representative organisations of SMEs;
- Business and Incubation Centres;
- Universities;
- Clusters and cluster organisations;
- Certification bodies;
- Regional development agencies;
- Where applicable: National Contact Points (NCP) for the EU research framework programme Horizon 2020;¹⁸
- Innovation agencies or research institutions;
- Chambers of commerce which are not part of the Enterprise Europe Network;
- Organisations promoting trade and foreign direct investment;
- Bodies providing advice on intellectual property rights and other technical expertise appropriate to enhance the internationalisation of SMEs;
- Other relevant support service providers.

In addition to these stakeholders, consortia are required to regularly exchange information with the EU Delegation in their country on their respective activities and planned events.

8. Content of the applications

Applicants will explain in detail how the objectives of the call can be reached. Applications are expected to include an implementation strategy for the entire contractual period (2015 – 2020) defining the geographical area covered by the consortium, the role of each organisation within the consortium and the methodologies used to implement the planned activities. This implementation strategy must be based on an analysis of the particular needs of the SMEs in the country or region to be covered. The application shall also comprise an annual work programme for activities and the expected use of resources (available budget, staff members and man-hours).

9. Requirements for 'Business Cooperation Centres'

The success and quality of the Network activities depend to a large extent on the skills and capacities of the partners. They must therefore have the organisational competences and suitably skilled staff to deliver typical Network services to SMEs.

¹⁸ For countries that will be associated to Horizon 2020.

a. Organisational competences

Host organisations of the 'Business Cooperation Centres' must be committed to the aims of the Enterprise Europe Network and have all necessary skills and expertise to implement their activities. The professional capacity to successfully provide international partnering services, to support and inform SMEs and a long-standing experience in those areas are key qualifications for Network partners.

In order to demonstrate their capacity, applicants must be able to:

- Show that they have the capacity to reach out to all SMEs interested in receiving partnering services, and to address all relevant parts of the SME community. To this end, Network consortia should have access to a large and suitable local client base;
- Demonstrate how they provide value-added information and support services (as described in section 'Scope and range of activities' below) through a clearly defined, documented and monitored impact-driven delivery process. This should include a description of the following capacities: Experience in assisting companies in international commercial and/or technology and research oriented partnerships from the identification of specific needs to the signature of long term business and technology cooperation;
- Prove their ability to work with European organisations in an international business and technology-oriented network of excellence;
- Demonstrate their experience in working in international projects supporting business and technology co-operation
- Show their capacity to organise general or specific business-to-business (b2b) brokerage events (or matchmaking meetings) and focused or sectoral company visits abroad and their experience in using dedicated tools (including those for follow-up and reporting).

b. Staff

Host organisations must demonstrate that they will assign sufficient resources and staff members with relevant competences. They will allocate adequately qualified and suitably experienced staff throughout the entire duration of the project and in line with the activities proposed in the application. In order to ensure the availability of adequate human resources to successfully implement the activities, each partner in the consortium must

- Assign a project manager dealing with daily operational issues and acting as official contact person for the European Commission, EASME and other European partners. The contact details must be visible in the Network's staff directory at all times;
- Nominate at least one more staff member acting as back up and ensuring that the knowledge and expertise acquired about the Network is not lost in case of staff changes. Equally, contact details must be visible in the Network's staff directory;
- Make available additional staff in particularly busy periods, e.g. for the organisation of brokerage events and/or company missions in the framework of the Enterprise Europe Network;

English remains the main working language of the Enterprise Europe Network. Therefore, organisations should demonstrate in their application that staff members have a strong command of the English language in order to interact efficiently at professional level with colleagues of the Network from other countries.

Host organisations are encouraged to ensure staff continuity and make certain that all staff members assigned to the project have adequate qualifications to fulfil their tasks to high

quality standards. A large proportion of staff members should have experience in working directly with SMEs. They should be able to analyse the needs of SMEs and help implement appropriate support services on the basis of this analysis. Staff training and capacity building are assets in this context. Staff allocated to provide Network services should be fully available to travel and participate regularly in training events organised within the Network and to participate actively in other support services offered to them such as mentoring. Staff members should have access to internal training opportunities within their organisation to ensure a continuous enhancement of relevant knowledge and skills.

Where staff changes are unavoidable, the integration of new staff should be facilitated. Host organisations should therefore have in place the necessary procedures for transferring knowledge to new staff members. Training courses provided by the EASME should be seen as an addition to the essential formal induction of new staff provided by the host organisation.

The CVs for the assigned project manager for each partner in the consortium need to be part of the application. Each host organisation must ensure that the project manager listed in the application is effectively available and assigned to the Network when the project starts. If the project manager is replaced, his/her successor is expected to demonstrate equivalent skills.

10. Scope and range of activities

a. General principles

The scope of activities for 'Business Cooperation Centres' in third countries¹⁹ differs slightly from the European Network partners, being more focused on typical partnering services. In the implementation strategy, applicants need to demonstrate their operational capacity to deliver services covering the entire internationalisation and innovation partnership process of SMEs. Tools and methodologies for these services have to be well-described in the implementation strategy. It is understood that within a consortium, individual partners are not obliged to run all types of activities and may hence specialise in certain activities.

b. Activities of the 'Business Cooperation Centres' in third countries

Service Activities

Cross-border partnering activities for business cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and research

Partnering services are at the core of the Enterprise Europe Network. The aim is to help clients (primarily SMEs) engage in successful partnering processes in

- Business / commercial collaboration;
- Innovation / technology transfer;
- Cooperation related to R&D activities of SMEs and leading to the participation of SMEs in European research programmes (such as Horizon 2020 or Eureka Eurostars).

The Network's assistance to its clients covers the entire partnership process, from the identification of suitable partnering opportunities to accompanying assistance to ensuring a successful entry into the target market.

The Network's partnering services comprise:

¹⁹ Operating under Article 7 of the COSME regulation.

- Drafting of high quality commercial, technological and research partnership profiles (offers and requests), following a prior in-depth analysis of client's needs and capacities;
- Entry of these profiles into the Network's partnering opportunities database in order for them to be disseminated;
- Active dissemination of profiles entered by other Network partners to local companies and potential business partners, as well as an active search for matching companies;
- Assistance in the conclusion of international partnership agreements and follow-up of the partnering process from start to end, including cooperation with European Network partners to clarify the partnership needs of their clients and services to help Network clients resolve other matters related to their cooperation venture;
- Participation in EU events and the organisation of international brokerage and matchmaking events for SMEs, including sectoral events and large brokerage events that might be linked to international fairs. Such events must be organised in cooperation with European Network partners.
- Organisation of inward and outward company missions for SMEs from/to European countries;
- Use of the Network's central brokerage tools for the organisation of the events or activities, as well as assistance to SME participants with the necessary preparations;
- Follow-up: ensure that feedback on the outcome of the activities is provided by participating SMEs. Particularly successful cases should be highlighted in success stories;
- Specific priorities for technology transfer activities include:
 - Technology Transfer from the EU: International technology transfer aimed at opening new international markets for solutions produced in the region of an Enterprise Europe Network consortium;
 - Technology Transfer towards the EU: Technology transfer partnerships between Businesses in the EU and suppliers and related services from third countries.

While these services primarily address SMEs, they may also involve cooperation between SMEs and research organisations, clusters or other actors in technology-based industries. The provision of partnering services may evolve over time as new methodologies or technologies may change the way businesses get in touch with each other. 'Business Cooperation Centres' are invited to adapt their services to changing client requirements throughout the programme period in coherence with the Network's common approach.

Support and information activities

'Business Cooperation Centres' should provide support and information for local company clients in their country or for European Network partners and their SME clients to facilitate internationalisation, especially partner searches for business ventures. In return, Enterprise Europe Network partners will provide support to 'Business Cooperation Centres' to clarify the requirements of their SME clients and other information relevant to the partnership process.

Activities in this context should comprise:

- Support and information services to local clients or to European Network partners enquiring on behalf of their clients (i.e. providing individual support and market access information);
- Individualised partnering support to help local companies (or other types of clients) to do business in Europe;

- Support to facilitate international technology partnership activities (including business, technology and innovation reviews of companies to ascertain their support requirements);
- Cooperate with Enterprise Europe Network partners to ensure that possible Intellectual Property issues related to partnerships between EU and third country businesses are clarified and resolved before partnership agreements are concluded, referring clients to specialised services and helpdesks where appropriate.²⁰

Important notice for countries associated to Horizon 2020:

The Horizon 2020 programme also calls upon the Enterprise Europe Network to provide in-depth services enhancing the innovation management capacity of SMEs. In particular the Network should provide the 'key account management services' related to the SME instrument. Proposals for grants by the SME instrument can only be made by SMEs registered in countries associated to Horizon 2020. As a consequence, 'Business Cooperation Centres' in countries that will be associated to Horizon 2020 should work on the assumption that they will be expected to provide these services. 'Business Cooperation Centres' in these countries will become eligible for a grant to provide support services to enhance the innovation management capacity of SMEs, provided they have proven that they have the required operational capacities and skills.

Enabling activities

Promotion of Network services and communication activities

Each consortium must ensure the visibility of the Enterprise Europe Network and promote the services offered vis-à-vis local companies or other typical Network clients.

Each partner is hence expected to develop:

- An internal communication strategy aimed at promoting the activities and achievements of the Network such as international partnership agreements to executives and other relevant departments of the host organisation;
- An external communication strategy aimed at promoting the opportunities and services of the Network to companies and other future client SMEs.

Each consortium should set up an Enterprise Europe Network website in the national language (and some content in English) with a summary of the services provided and the contact information for SMEs. It is recommended to use the following domain structure for the webpage: "www.business-country-EEN.cc" (e.g. "www.business-china-EEN.cn"). The webpage should provide information on the contact person(s) and services offered to SMEs by the partners in the consortium. The national Network website should be used to promote upcoming brokerage events and partnership proposals. Partners are encouraged to build on the good practices for Network webpages developed by European partners and the graphical guidelines provided by EASME²¹. In the implementation strategy, partners should describe in detail all important features of the planned website (email alerts for commercial and technological partnership offers or requests in a specific sector, etc.) and how social media will be used for promotion. The Enterprise Europe Network name, logo and the services offered should also be promoted on the official host organisation website.

For reasons of coherence, all consortia are asked to create a generic email address following the same structure as in European consortia: "info@business-country-EEN.cc" (e.g.

²⁰ Organisations from China, ASEAN or Mercosur countries (incl. Chile) should cooperate with the European IPR Helpdesks covering the region.

²¹ See guidelines from EASME:

http://een.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/visual_identity_guidelines_2013.pdf

"info@business-china-EEN.cn"). While it does not have to be the only e-mail address used by a consortium, it should be checked every day and enquiries sent to it should be forwarded to the most appropriate consortium partner.

Consortia will follow the Enterprise Europe Network's branding rules for all related activities giving prominence to the name and logo of the Enterprise Europe Network (e.g. on publications, electronic communication products, posters, etc.). Moreover, in order to facilitate promotional activities for the entire Network, all consortia should contribute to the collection of success stories, i.e. concrete examples of companies having made business deals with the help of the Network.

Network building and reinforcing the Network

Mutual support among Network partners and 'Business Cooperation Centres' is a key factor for the quality and success of the Network as a whole. All 'Business Cooperation Centres' must provide resources as appropriate for participating in Enterprise Europe Network meetings, training sessions or conferences, this comprises:

- Participation in Annual Conferences of the Enterprise Europe Network;
- Participation in staff exchanges²² or receiving mentoring²³ within the dedicated mentoring scheme;
- Participation and contribution to training sessions organised by EASME in Brussels or de-centralised training sessions by European Network partners;
- Participation in Sector Groups²⁴ of the Enterprise Europe Network;
- Exchanges and use of good practices, knowledge and/or tools contributing own expertise for strengthening the Network as a whole;
- Quality reviews of working tools such as partnering profiles (carried out by Network partners selected by the EASME);
- Maintain constant links with European Network partners;
- Joint activities with European Network partners;
- Participation in Network events organised for the benefit of the Network.

Participation in training and mentoring programmes of the Network is considered essential for maintaining a high quality service for SMEs. In particular, new staff members are strongly advised to attend a newcomer's induction course organised by EASME. Other Network staff members should attend training events reflecting their professional orientation within the Network.

All assigned staff must connect at least twice a week to the Network's intranet, which is the main communication channel within the Network and with EASME. An online directory of Network staff providing professional and contact details will be made available. All 'Business Cooperation Centres' are required to provide the relevant information for their staff members and to keep the directory updated.

²² The staff exchange is designed to help Network staff members broaden their competencies by working for a different Network partner for a short period of time (several days), thereby learning about new working methods and approaches.

²³ In the mentoring scheme, individual experienced (usually senior) Network staff members are at the disposal of less experienced Network partners and 'Business Cooperation Centres' in order to train them in the agreed working methods of the Network. All 'Business Cooperation Centres' in third countries will be offered mentoring from established European Network partners.

²⁴ Sector Groups are formed by Network partners who work together on a voluntary basis in order to meet the specific needs of clients in particular sectors. These groups are chaired by Network staff members and provide a forum to discuss, plan and implement activities relevant to client companies. 'Business Cooperation Centres' also participate in these groups.

c. Project coordination and consortium management

Where applications are submitted by a consortium, the respective roles of co-ordinator and co-partners need to be explicitly defined. The agreement to be signed with EASME will provide details of the respective responsibilities (see annex 'Cooperation Agreement' below).

In order to ensure efficiency, clear internal procedures and rules for internal consortium governance are needed. This includes a minimum number of consortium meetings, efficient communication flows, clear internal workflows to ensure effective cooperation between partners and mechanisms for a systematic feedback from Network events to all relevant staff members (such as Network training events, national 'Business Cooperation Centres' meetings, meetings of a steering group representing the 'Business Cooperation Centres' local cooperation partners, etc.).

Each consortium should hold regular consortium meetings in order to discuss the common strategy and actions for implementing the project. It is essential for each consortium to ensure a proper management of client relations in line with the principles of the Network's partnership process. To this end, a common mechanism for recording and following up on service delivery to clients is required in each consortium²⁵.

Each consortium will nominate one organisation as consortium coordinator. The agreement signed with EASME will specify this organisation and the staff member in charge of consortium coordination. This person will also be EASME's main interlocutor in contractual issues. The consortium coordinator is also in charge of raising any need for contractual amendments with EASME in good time.

The consortium coordinator oversees the general functioning of the consortium and the common workflows between consortium partners, European Network partners and EASME are respected. It is also the consortium coordinator's role to make sure that there is a constant and adequate flow of information between all consortium partners and to promote a collaborative working environment within the consortium.

The consortium coordinator is requested to monitor the production of contractual deliverables by the consortium, ensure that deadlines are kept, raise any risk of delays or underperformance with the partner concerned and inform the EASME in case the issues cannot be settled within a reasonable time within the consortium. All partners in the consortium remain responsible for carrying out the planned activities. This role of the coordinator does not in any way affect the role or responsibilities of EASME with regard to monitoring the quality and service delivery of the Network.

In order to ensure a proper functioning of the consortium, EASME recommends partners to conclude a consortium agreement establishing rights and obligations. This agreement should define, the

- internal organisation of the consortium;
- respective responsibilities of each partner to carry out the activities stipulated in the implementation strategy and annual work programme;
- rules on signposting of clients within the consortium and on effective collaboration;
- settlement of internal disputes.

²⁵ The chosen procedures should take into account applicable legislation on data protection.

The co-partners may make all arrangements in the consortium they deem fit, provided those arrangements are not in conflict with the Cooperation Agreement signed with EASME and the COSME regulation. EASME shall not be involved in this process.

11. Equality of conditions

For matchmaking and brokerage events or company missions organised in third countries, European companies and partners will pay the normal registration fees applicable to any participant. As a general rule, 'Business Cooperation Centres' may not charge any fees to European partners or EU companies for services delivered that are part of the common set of activities of the Enterprise Europe Network as described in this call text. EASME will ensure that all partners follow this essential principle. Repeated disregard may lead to the termination of the agreement signed with EASME (see also annex 'Cooperation Agreement' below).

12. Requirement to secure sufficient financial resources

As stipulated in the COSME regulation (Article 7) entities in third countries not participating in the COSME Programme will not be entitled to receive financial contributions from its budget. The partners themselves must secure the required financial resources to implement the activities of 'Business Cooperation Centres' for the Enterprise Europe Network and will demonstrate to EASME that they are able to secure sufficient financial resources.

13. Principles of quality management and the Network's 'Code of Conduct'

The Enterprise Europe Network will be a network of excellence providing assistance to SMEs. 'Business Cooperation Centres' are expected to perform to the highest quality standards, both in terms of their delivery of services to client companies or other Network partners and always in compliance with agreed internal procedures and workflows. Host organisations are required to apply adequate quality management procedures to strive to continuously raise the quality and impact of their activities and services for the benefit of clients.

The Enterprise Europe Network has established a 'Code of Conduct' outlining working methods and principles shared by all organisations that are members of the Network. The main principles of the code of conduct constitute an important part of the Cooperation Agreement to be signed with EASME and must be respected by all consortia (see Annex 'Cooperation Agreement' below). It shapes a common understanding and may therefore be considered as a pre-requisite for effective and successful operation of the Network as a whole. By signing the agreement, 'Business Cooperation Centres' commit themselves to adhere to these principles and to operate with the same core values, to apply the same operational principles and to abide by the quality principles with regard to relationships within the Network and with clients of the Network.

14. Performance indicators of output and outcome

The level of activity and the contribution made by 'Business Cooperation Centres' in third countries to the overall performance of the Enterprise Europe Network will be measured on the basis of specific output and outcome indicators. Output indicators are designed to measure the level of activity of partners and consortia, while outcome indicators are used to measure the concrete results.

Table - Performance indicators of output and outcome

Activity(ies)	Output(s)	Outcome(s)
Cross-border partnering activities for business cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (Co-)organisation of brokerage events & company missions ▪ Generation and dissemination of partnership proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brokerage events/company missions organised ▪ SMEs in brokerage events/company missions ▪ Meetings at brokerage events/company missions ▪ Partnership proposals produced ▪ Expressions of interest received ▪ Expressions of interest made 	Partnership Agreements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partnership Agreements Commercial ▪ Partnership Agreements Technological ▪ Partnership Agreements Research
Support and information activities (related to the partnership process)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Answered enquiries from EU Network partners 	
Promotion of the Network's services and communication activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SMEs registered in official Enterprise Europe Network client database 	
Network building and reinforcing the Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active contributions to Network activities 	

Definitions of performance indicators (output and outcome)

Brokerage events/company missions organised

The number of brokerage events / company missions (co-)organised in the framework of the Enterprise Europe Network. Brokerage events and company missions are organised together with Network partners, either in your geographic region with companies from abroad visiting and meeting your local clients, or abroad in which one or more of your local clients participate, visit and meet foreign companies. Events and missions are registered in the Network database²⁶ well in advance and are labelled and promoted as brokerage events/company missions of the Network.

SMEs in brokerage events/company missions

The number of companies recruited for brokerage events / company missions (co-)organised in the framework of the Enterprise Europe Network (i.e. the number of clients of Network partners who have had face-to-face meetings with foreign companies during brokerage events and missions).

Meetings at brokerage events/company missions

The number of business-to-business meetings facilitated at brokerage events / company missions in the framework of the Enterprise Europe Network (i.e. the number of meetings that clients of Network partners have had with foreign companies during brokerage events and company missions).

Partnership proposals produced

The number of commercial, technological and research partnership proposals encoded in the Network's database. Partnership proposals are proposals for business cooperation, long-term technological cooperation as well as requests from coordinators/participants of European research consortia looking for partners in order to submit proposals for transnational EU R&D schemes. The proposals have to be published in the Network's central database²⁷ and distributed within the Network via central or local dissemination tools and means with the objective to generate expression of interests leading to long-term cooperation agreements (Partnership Agreements). There are five types of partnership proposals: business offers, business requests, technology offers, technology requests and R&D requests.

²⁶ Event database of the Enterprise Europe Network: <http://een.ec.europa.eu/tools/services/EVE/Event/ListEvents>

²⁷ Partnership Opportunities Database of the Enterprise Europe Network: <http://een.ec.europa.eu/tools/services/SearchCenter/Search/ProfileSimpleSearch?shid=32db25cb-726f-43b0-8b5f-7742d0935799>

Expressions of interest received

The number of expressions of interest received from EU companies for partnership proposals encoded in the Network's database. Expressions of Interest (EoI) are requests from clients of foreign Network partners for further information about a client's partnership proposal or for the contact details pertaining to such a proposal.

Expressions of interest made

The number of expressions of interest made on behalf of clients for partnership proposals from EU companies. Expressions of Interest (EoI) are requests from clients of foreign Network partners for further information about a client's partnership proposal or for the contact details pertaining to such a proposal.

Answered enquiries from EU Network partners

The number of enquiries answered from EU Network partners on typical market access issues to facilitate the partnership process.

SMEs registered in official Enterprise Europe Network client database

The number of local clients registered in the official Enterprise Europe Network client database to in order to express interest in a partnership proposal and/or receive email alerts containing newly published partnership proposals and/or Network events.

Active contributions to Network activities

The number of contributions to Network activities including participations in annual conferences, training sessions, steering & advisory group meetings, sector groups, working groups, exchanges and mentorship scheme or other relevant Network events.

Partnership Agreements

The number of commercial, technological and research partnership agreements achieved between EU companies and local clients. Partnership Agreements are the main and most important performance indicators for 'Business Cooperation Centres' of the Enterprise Europe Network. They are at the very end and the direct outcome of the partnership process. Normally it takes several months to conclude a transnational partnership agreement between two companies or other typical clients of the Network.

15. Monitoring and reporting

Together with the implementation strategy, 'Business Cooperation Centres' will provide a work programme for the first year. For the following years, EASME will consult 'Business Cooperation Centres' annually on work programmes. The consultation will follow a separate procedure²⁸ and should conform to the instructions and guidance notes published by EASME. The yearly work programmes should be in line with the implementation strategy and work programme of the first year of operation. In agreement with EASME, subsequent annual work programmes may evolve over time depending on changing needs from SMEs in the country/region.

'Business Cooperation Centres' will also submit yearly activity reports. The assessment of the annual activity reports in comparison with the agreed work programme targets will be the basis for the assessment of the performance and whether the contractual obligations were met by the partners. Further to these yearly reports, partners will receive feedback on whether EASME judges the activities carried out to be in line with the agreed work programme. In the event that a consortium or particular partner repeatedly fails to meet agreed work programme targets, EASME reserves the right to terminate the agreement in accordance with the provisions of the Cooperation Agreement (see annex below).

The annual consultation and reporting procedure will be as light as possible in order to reduce administrative burdens to a minimum and allow partners to spend more time delivering

²⁸ EASME will collect targets and activity reports from partners via online IT tools.

services to local SMEs. 'Business Cooperation Centres' will report mainly figures. Additional to the performance indicators only short narrative reports will be expected.

The main purpose of the monitoring system employed by EASME is as follows:

- To further enhance the performance of 'Business Cooperation Centres' and stimulate continuous improvement of the services provided;
- To gather key consolidated data showing the main outputs of the Network: The data collected at different stages of the project will be checked, consolidated and analysed by EASME. Summary reports will be made available²⁹ and discussed in order to gradually enhance overall performance of the Network and individual consortia.

Consortium coordinators should oversee the implementation of the project and monitor whether all partners achieve the planned targets. They should raise any risk of underperformance and notify EASME. In order to better assess the performance of partners, EASME may also decide to carry out on-site monitoring visits at the premises of partner organisations.

16. Role and support by EASME

The operational management of the Enterprise Europe Network is carried out by EASME acting under powers delegated from the European Commission (DG Enterprise and Industry). EASME is in charge of the project management of the Network. EASME will also provide a range of common tools and support services, which are designed to facilitate the Network's operations and to put in place a support infrastructure. This includes:

- A common website as communication platform to enhance the Network's visibility;
- An intranet for all Network partners containing, among others, a common knowledge base for the activities of the Network;
- A partnering opportunities database for business cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and research;
- An online reporting tool;
- A common Enterprise Europe Network brand and visual identity;
- Common working standards, designed in cooperation with Network partners;
- A wide range of Network animation services;
- A training and learning environment for new and experienced staff members;
- Network governance structures, including regular steering meetings of consultative nature involving Network representatives and annual conferences for the Network;
- Provision of a framework for the operation of Sector Groups and other expert or working groups within the Network.

17. Eligibility, exclusion, selection and admission criteria

It should be noted that only applications that have passed the selection phase (i.e. that meet the eligibility and selection criteria, and that are not subject to any exclusion criterion) will be evaluated.

General admissibility requirements:

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submitting applications indicated in the timetable below;
- Applications must be submitted in conformity with the procedures and requirements explained in this call text;
- Applications must be drafted in the English language.

²⁹ Dedicated comparative reports to benchmark performances of the different consortia will be made available on the intranet of the Network.

Please note that failure to comply with these requirements will lead to the rejection of the application.

18. Eligibility criteria

a. Eligible countries

Applicant organisations must be established in a country, which is neither a member state of the European Union nor a COSME-participating country. Applicants are recommended to contact the responsible national policy makers to inquire whether the country is participating in COSME, i.e. if the national ministry has signed a memorandum of understanding with the European Commission (DG Enterprise and Industry) to participate in the programme. In this case, these organisations should have responded to the call for proposals (under Article 6 of COSME³⁰) which has now expired.

In the first round of applications for this call for expressions of interest (cut-off date 31 October 2014), priority will be given to applications from organisations in countries outside the EU (and not participating in COSME) that are currently part of the Enterprise Europe Network, and to those at an advanced stage of preparation. Countries that are not ready to apply in 2014 will have the opportunity to submit their application 15 March 2015 and in subsequent years.

Important notice:

- *Organisations from countries participating, or planning to participate, in COSME (period 2015-2020) and which have submitted a proposal for the call COS-EEN-2014-2-01, should not participate in this call.*
- *'Business Cooperation Centres' in countries (that expect to become) associated to Horizon 2020 shall provide services enhancing the innovation management capacity of SMEs, once admitted as 'Business Cooperation Centres' and once the country becomes associated to Horizon 2020. Partners in these countries would become eligible for grants supporting the provision of services enhancing the innovation management capacity of SMEs, provided they demonstrate the required operational capacities and skills.*

From 2015 onwards, organisations from further countries may be invited to submit their applications. Organisations are encouraged to regularly check the webpages of DG Enterprise and Industry³¹ and the Enterprise Europe Network³² for further information.

b. Eligible organisations

Applicant organisations must be legal entities. They can be fully or partly public or private bodies. Private bodies must be properly constituted, present and operational in the country or region covered. All Network activities included in the applications under this call for expressions of interest shall not have any commercial objective (profit making) for the applicant organisations.

c. Eligible activities

The activities proposed in the application must be relevant and contribute to the objectives of the 'Business Cooperation Centres' for the Enterprise Europe Network (please refer to section 'Scope and range of activities'). 'Business Cooperation Centres' shall only provide Enterprise Europe Network services to companies registered within the internationally recognised borders of the country they intend to cover³³. All Enterprise Europe Network support services and

³⁰ For more information on the call for proposal, see official webpage of European Commission – DG Enterprise & Industries: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=7229&lang=en&title=COSME-Enterprise-Europe-Network-2015%2F2020

³¹ http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/index_en.htm

³² <http://een.ec.europa.eu/>

³³ See also guidelines on the eligibility of Israeli entities: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2013.205.01.0009.01.ENG

activities related to this country must take place within these internationally recognised borders.

19. Exclusion criteria

Applicants will be excluded from participating in the call if they are in any of the following situations:

- they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of their state which has the force of *res judicata*;
- they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct;
- they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity.

In the implementation strategy, applicants must make a declaration of honour that they are not in one of the situations referred to above³⁴.

20. Selection criteria

The selection of applicants will be based on their financial and operational capacity to implement the Enterprise Europe Network project in their countries. EASME shall verify the financial and operational capacity of applications on partner and consortium level.

a. Financial capacity

Under this call for expressions of interest, applicants are not eligible for co-financing from the COSME Programme. All organisations submitting an application must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activities throughout the contractual period, and will need to demonstrate credibly that they have the necessary financial resources. Legal representatives of applicant organisations must ensure their commitment for the Enterprise Europe Network.

It will positively influence EASME's verification of the financial capacity, if applicants are able to prove that they will receive co-financing for Enterprise Europe Network activities from national ministries (or regional institutions) responsible for SME internationalisation and/or research & innovation policies.

Moreover, in the annual work programme applicants should present a realistic planning for activities, outputs, outcomes and the needed financial and human resources, i.e.:

- Total annual financial resources committed for activities in euros (€);
- Total number of staff assigned for activities (part-time and full-time);
- Total number of man-hours foreseen for activities.

Any insufficient or exaggerated planning for required financial and human resources would question applicants' capacity to implement the Enterprise Europe Network project.

b. Operational capacity

Applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications to implement all proposed activities. They must be able to implement the activities described in

³⁴ See also annex implementation strategy and work programme below.

the call text and fulfil the requirements for organisations and staff. EASME may decide to exclude organisations from a proposed consortium if they do not fully or only partly fulfil these criteria. Applicants must be directly responsible for the preparation, management and implementation of the project, not acting as an intermediary for other organisations. They may however be assisted by local cooperation partners.

21. Admission criteria

Eligible applications that have passed the selection phase will enter the evaluation phase. The admission criteria and the maximum score of each will be as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| ▪ Relevance | 30 |
| ▪ Quality | 30 |
| ▪ Impact | 20 |
| ▪ Budget and resource availability | 20 |

The key elements of each individual award criterion are listed in the table below:

Admission criteria	Maximum Score
1. Relevance	30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How relevant is the application for the objectives of the call to provide Enterprise Europe Network services in third countries to local and European SMEs? ▪ To what extent is the access and proximity to SMEs ensured in the application? 	
2. Quality	30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How far are the proposed activities and means appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives of the call and expected results? ▪ To what extent are the needs of enterprises in the area covered by the consortium analysed? ▪ In how far is the proposed methodology based on the analysed needs of the target group, its size and the appropriateness of the proposed services? ▪ To what extent does the project employ quality control mechanisms? ▪ What measures are foreseen for ensuring effective cooperation with Enterprise Europe Network partners in the EU 	
3. Impact	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent does the application contain performance indicators for the outputs and outcomes of the project in compliance with the requirements of the call? ▪ To what extent is the project ambitious and realistic in terms of the main performance indicators in the relevant country or region covered? Are the targets for these indicators clearly quantified? ▪ How effective is the project likely to be in terms of accessing regional SMEs and providing the necessary Enterprise Europe Network services? 	
4. Budget and resource availability	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does the application commit adequate financial and human resources to implement the project in the country or region to be covered? ▪ Is the project supported and co-financed by regional budgetary authorities or national ministries in charge of SME internationalisation and innovation policy? ▪ Are the expected outputs/outcomes satisfactory when compared with the estimated use of resources needed to achieve them? 	
Maximum total score	100

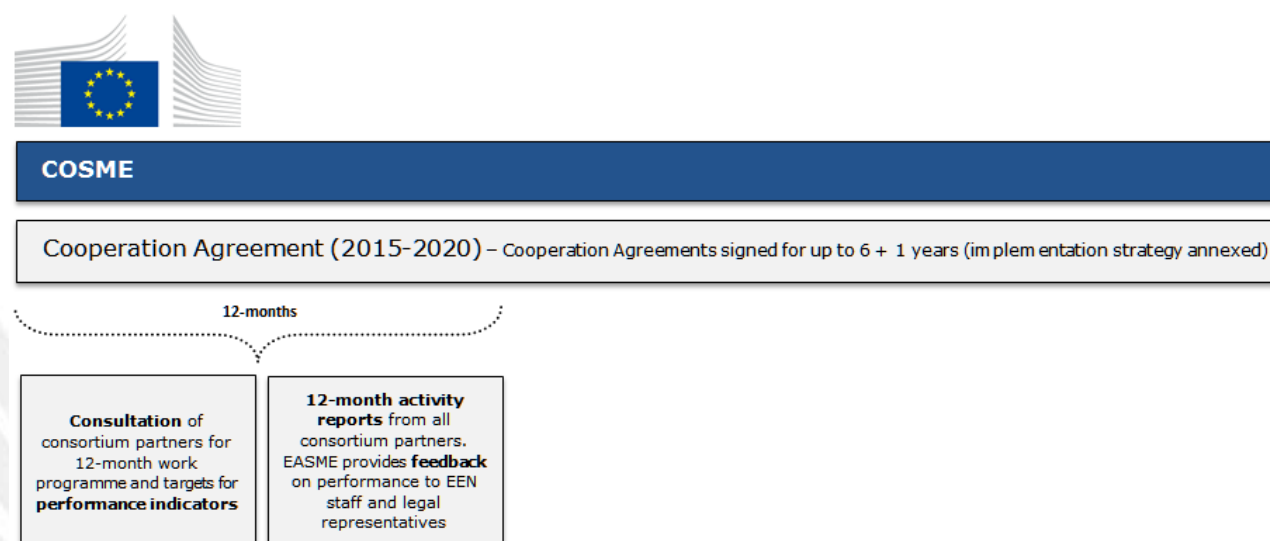
In order to be considered for admission, the application will need to pass an overall threshold of 70% in terms of total score. In addition, thresholds of 50% will be applied to each of the four individual admission criteria described above in order to ensure a consistent minimum quality. In case of multiple applications covering the same area within a given country, applications will be ranked according to their total score. The application with the highest score will be admitted as 'Business Cooperation Centre' for the Enterprise Europe Network. Depending on the number of qualitative applications received, EASME may recommend applicants to combine their applications in order to even further increase the quality. In particular cases, EASME may also reserve the right to exclude some organisations from a consortium application if deemed in the best interest for the overall performance of the

Network. It should be noted by applicants that signature of the Cooperation Agreement with EASME will only follow upon successful completion of a refinement phase.

22. Legal commitments

The Enterprise Europe Network is managed by EASME under powers delegated by the European Commission – DG Enterprise and Industry. 'Business Cooperation Centres' admitted to the Enterprise Europe Network shall sign with EASME a 'Cooperation Agreement' for a period of 6-years. The Agreement is extended for one more year until 31 December 2021 if there are no explicit concerns by either of both parties. The agreement will lay down the general rules of the relationship between EASME and the consortium partners. This agreement includes in an annex the approved implementation strategy (see 'Cooperation Agreement' template below). Moreover, EASME will consult the partners yearly on specific work programmes and request annual activity reports.

Figure – Duration of cooperation agreement and annual work programme consultation



23. Data protection

The reply to any call involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data³⁵. The personal data requested in the context of this call will be processed with the sole aim of evaluating the application and will not be used for any other purpose. It will be treated in accordance with the privacy statement published at:

<http://een.ec.europa.eu/about/tendersandcalls>.

Personal data may be registered in the Early Warning System (EWS) only or both in the EWS and Central Exclusion Database (CED) by the Accounting Officer of the European Commission, should the partner be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision 2008/969 of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (for more information see the Privacy Statement at:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cf;

or

³⁵ Official Journal of the European Union L 8/1 of 12.01.2001.

- the Commission Regulation 2008/1302 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (for more information see the Privacy Statement at

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm.

24. Submission of applications

Applicants will find all relevant documents and links for the submission of applications on the websites of EASME³⁶ and the Enterprise Europe Network³⁷.

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the formal requirements and within the given deadline. The applications must be submitted electronically via the official EUSURVEY online submission form:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/751f0006-400b-c994-eee9-610accf0cc67>

No modification to the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need for additional information, for clarification of certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes, EASME may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process. The link shall be activated only approx. 1 month before the submission deadline.

a. Letter of support from EU Delegation in the third country

Applicants are required to include a letter of support from the Delegation of the EU to the third country.

b. Enquiries from applicants

EASME is available to answer questions related to the content of this call for expressions of interest. Questions should be sent to the following email address: EASME-COSME-EEN-CALL-ART7@ec.europa.eu

Answers will be published periodically on the official websites indicated above.

c. Information day

An information day focusing on this call for expressions of interest will be held in Brussels on 26 September 2014. Registration for the event is compulsory as the number of available places is limited. It should be noted that applicants must receive an official invitation for the information day from EASME. Otherwise they will not be admitted to the event. Unfortunately, we cannot offer any reimbursement for the participation in this meeting.

Depending on the demand, EASME may organise further information days in 2015. Presentations made on the information day will be available on the websites indicated above.

³⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/easme/cosme_en.htm

³⁷ <http://een.ec.europa.eu/>

25. Indicative timetable

The operational period of the Enterprise Europe Network shall start from 1 January 2015.

		Submission date, time or indicative period
1.	Publication of the call	31 July 2014
2.	Information day for applicants in Brussels³⁸ <i>Depending on demand, EASME may organise further information days in 2015</i>	26 September 2014
3.	Deadline for submitting applications <i>Re-opening of call for expressions of interest: For example, for applicants previously rejected by EASME or call for expressions of interest from organisations in countries not yet covered by the Enterprise Europe Network.</i>	<i>1st cut-off date: 31 October 2014 / 18.00h (Brussels time)</i> <i>2nd cut-off date: 15 March 2015</i> <i>3rd cut-off date: 15 Dec 2015</i> <i>4th cut-off date: From Feb 2016 open for further applications. No specific cut-off date set.</i>
4.	Assessment period	<i>1st cut-off date: 1 November 2014 – 14 December 2014</i> <i>2nd cut-off: 15 Mar – 15 Apr 2015</i> <i>3rd cut-off: 15 Dec 2015 – 15 Jan 2016</i> <i>4th cut-off date: between 1-2 months after submission</i>
5.	Informing applicants of the assessment results <i>If necessary, launch of refinement phase with applicants³⁹</i>	<i>1st cut-off date: 15 December 2014</i> <i>2nd cut-off: 15 Apr 2015</i> <i>3rd cut-off: 15 Jan 2016</i> <i>4th cut-off date: approx. 2 months after submission</i>
6.	Signature of Cooperation Agreement (by EASME)	<i>1st cut-off date: 20 December 2014</i> <i>2nd cut-off: 15 May 2015</i> <i>3rd cut-off: 15 Feb 2016</i> <i>4th cut-off date: approx. 2-3 months after submission</i>
7.	Start of operational period	<i>1st cut-off date: 1 January 2015</i> <i>2nd cut-off: 15 March 2015</i> <i>3rd cut-off: 1 Jan 2016</i> <i>4th cut-off date: Depending on date of application.</i>

26. Annexes

- a. Model Cooperation Agreement
- b. Implementation strategy & work programme template
- c. Glossary

³⁸ As the number of places is limited, applicants need to register for the information day. It should be noted that applicants must receive an official invitation for the information day from EASME. Otherwise they will not be admitted to the event. Unfortunately, we cannot offer any reimbursement for the participation in this meeting.

³⁹ EASME may decide to enter into a refinement phase with applicants. Applicants may then only be admitted to the Network upon successful negotiations.

Annexes

a. Model Cooperation Agreement

Successful applicants will be offered to sign a Cooperation Agreement for a period of 6-years (starting from 1 January 2015). The Cooperation Agreement will not end later than 31 December 2020. If no notice is provided by either of the contracting parties at the latest by 30 November 2020, expressing a desire not to renew the agreement, it shall be extended for one more year, ending no later than 31 December 2021.

COOPERATION AGREEMENT UNDER ARTICLE 7 (COSME⁴⁰)

'Business Cooperation Centres' of the Enterprise Europe Network

(Insert project title)
(Insert acronym for consortium)
(Insert country)

ID: (Insert consortium ID)

The Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME) (hereinafter referred to as "the Agency"), acting under powers delegated by the European Commission (hereinafter referred to as "the Commission"), and represented for the purposes of signature of this cooperation agreement (hereinafter referred to as "the agreement") by Mr José Puigpelat, Head of Unit, or his duly authorised representative,

of the one part,

and

(Insert full official name) (ACRONYM)
(Insert official legal form)
(Insert official address in full)

hereinafter called "the co-ordinator", represented for the purposes of signature of the agreement by **(Insert name, forename and function)**

and the following "co-partners":

(Insert full official name) (ACRONYM)
(Insert official legal form)
(Insert official address in full)

represented for the purposes of signature of the agreement by **(Insert name, forename and function)**

⁴⁰ The Programme for the competitiveness of enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (2014-2020), hereinafter referred to as COSME – see regulation (EU) No 1287/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council of 11 December 2013 (Official Journal of the European Union 2013/L 347/33 of 20 December 2013)

(Idem for each co-partner)

collectively "the partners", and each individually identified as "partner" for purposes of the agreement where a provision applies without distinction to the co-ordinator or a co-partner.⁴¹

of the other part,

HAVE AGREED

To an action entitled **(Insert acronym for consortium)** to be carried out in the framework of the agreement established between the parties according to the following provisions.

To the **Preamble**, the **Special Conditions**, the **General Conditions** and the **Annex** which form integral parts of the agreement.

The **Preamble** sets out the context of the agreement established between the parties in the field of services in support of business and innovation.

The **Special Conditions** and the **General Conditions** indicate the subject and duration of the agreement and the operational arrangements for the agreement.

The following document is annexed to the agreement:

Annex I Implementation Strategy

The terms of the Special Conditions, of which the Preamble forms an integral part, shall take precedence over those in the other parts of the agreement. The terms of the General Conditions shall take precedence over those in the Annex.

By signing the agreement, the parties accept its terms.

PREAMBLE

Whereas the Enterprise Europe Network (hereinafter referred to as "the Network") is an important instrument of the European Commission to support the competitiveness and growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SME);

Whereas the Network shall foster the development of internationally competitive companies and will stimulate their innovation capacities through technology transfer and international research collaboration;

Whereas the Agency is responsible for implementing part of the Regulation (EU) No 1287/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December establishing the EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (2014 to 2020) (hereinafter referred to as "COSME regulation") and repealing Decision No 1639/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 ;

Whereas pursuant to Article 7 of the COSME regulation, entities established in third countries may participate. However, these entities shall not be entitled to receive Union financial contributions. The Agency shall support these Network partners by making available the appropriate coordination and operational support. Host organisations established in countries which are not participating in the programme may have the possibility to benefit from this coordination and operational support. The Agency and the Commission will refer to the

⁴¹ Each participating co-partner should sign the agreement itself on the last page.

partners participating in COSME under Article 7 as Enterprise Europe Network 'Business Cooperation Centres';

Whereas it is the aim of the agreement to encourage the provision of services to support cross-border business cooperation, technology transfer and research collaboration;

Whereas the agreement aims also at setting up relationships of cooperation on the basis of mutual benefit;

Whereas the development of typical Network services and the provision of Network databases and other tools shall fall within the scope of the agreement;

Whereas partners should provide services to the highest quality and to their best endeavours;

Whereas countries not participating in COSME will be invited to propose the establishment of a Network consortium on a self-financing basis.

Whereas in the case of countries not participating in COSME but associated with Horizon 2020 (established by regulation (EU) No 1291/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013), the aforementioned Network branch would be eligible for support subject to the terms of a separate grant agreement.

I - SPECIAL CONDITIONS

ARTICLE I.1 - SUBJECT

- I.1.1 The agreement sets the terms and conditions which shall apply to the action entitled **(Insert acronym for consortium)** ("the action") and which are hereby taken note of and agreed to by the partners. The action shall be pursued through the implementation of Annex I and annual work programmes.
- I.1.2 All activities planned in Annex I and the annual work programmes need to target the European Union Single Market and/or associated countries participating in COSME under Article 6 of the COSME regulation. Activities such as brokerage events or company missions targeting third countries equally participating in COSME under Article 7 are not covered by this agreement.

ARTICLE I.2 - DURATION

- I.2.1 The agreement shall enter into force on the date when the last of the two parties signs.
- I.2.2 The duration of the action shall be **(Insert number)** years and **(Insert number)** months from **(Insert date)** ("starting date of the action") ending not later than **31 December 2020**. If no notice is provided by either of the contracting parties at the latest by 30 November 2020, expressing a desire not to renew the agreement, it shall be extended for one more year, ending no later than 31 December 2021.

ARTICLE I.3 – ROLE OF THE PARTNERS

- I.3.1 The partners:
- a) Shall have full responsibility for ensuring that their respective contribution to the action is implemented in accordance with the agreement.
 - b) Shall agree upon appropriate arrangements between themselves for the proper performance of the action through the conclusion of an internal cooperation agreement regarding their internal operation and co-ordination. This internal cooperation agreement shall include all provisions necessary for the management of the partners and the implementation of the action.

- c) Shall support the integration of new or additional partners to the consortium upon recommendation by the Agency or upon invitation by the partners themselves.
- d) May identify further local business support organisations and/or stakeholders in the country with which the partners cooperate in order to better cover all regions of the country or to improve the service delivery. These local cooperation partners may contribute to the activities carried out by the partners but are not contractual members of the Enterprise Europe Network. They are not eligible for technical or operational support from the Agency. Deliverables and targets outlined in Annex I (implementation strategy) and the annual work programmes need to be exclusively achieved by the partners. It is recommended for Network partners to sign formal collaboration agreements specifying the exact terms of the cooperation and what contribution these organisation shall make to the project implementation. The Agency should be regularly informed about the local organisations with which the partners cooperate for the implementation of the action.

I.3.2 The co-ordinator shall:

- a) Be the main intermediary for communication between the co-partners and the Agency in accordance with Article I.10. Any claims that the Agency might have in respect of the agreement shall be discussed with involvement of the co-ordinator, save where specifically stated otherwise in the agreement;
- b) Be responsible for supplying all documents and information to the Agency which may be required under the agreement. The co-ordinator shall not delegate any part of this task to the co-partners⁴² or to any other party. Where information from the co-partners is required, the co-ordinator shall be responsible for obtaining and verifying this information and for passing it on to the Agency;
- c) Inform the co-partners of any event of which the co-ordinator is aware that is liable to substantially affect the implementation of the action.

I.3.3 The co-partners⁴³ shall:

- a) Forward to the co-ordinator the data needed to draw up the reports and other documents provided for in the agreement;
- b) Ensure that all information to be provided to the Agency, in accordance with the agreement, is validated by the co-ordinator, save where the agreement specifically stipulates otherwise;
- c) Inform the co-ordinator immediately of any event liable to substantially affect or delay the implementation of the action of which they are aware.

I.3.4 The Agency shall:

- a) Inform the coordinator and co-partners about the tools and services made available to, or to be acquired by, the partners in order to adequately fulfil the activities outlined in the Annex I and the annual work programmes;
- b) Animate the network: provide partners with technical assistance on communications matters and contribute towards the visibility;

⁴² Where applicable when co-partners form part of the consortium.

⁴³ Where applicable when co-partners form part of the consortium.

- c) Provide access to the Network's intranet website, databases and other online services;
- d) Provide technical assistance for the effective use of Network tools, databases and communications systems;
- e) Authorise the partners, at their own expense, to participate in training sessions and working or sector group meetings organised for the network.

ARTICLE I.4 – OBJECTIVE OF THE ACTION AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES

I.4.1 The main objective of the partners will be to establish sustainable commercial, technological and research related partnerships between European small and medium sized enterprises and companies in their countries fostering economic growth and employment.

I.4.2 In order to achieve the above objectives, the partners will provide cross-border partnership services for business cooperation, technology transfer and research. The partners therefore shall:

- a) (co-)organise brokerage events at important fairs in third countries and/or the EU and facilitate matchmaking meetings (b2b meetings) with European companies;
- b) (co-)organise company missions together with European Network partners with dedicated business-to-business (b2b) meetings;
- c) generate business, technology and research related partnership proposals from clients to be disseminated to European companies using the Network's database;
- d) disseminate business, technology and research related partnership proposals from European companies to local clients using Network's database;
- e) answer questions related to the Network's partnership process and in this regard exchange market access information with European Network partners;
- f) participate regularly in Network events such as annual conference, sector and working groups of the Network, steering & advisory group meetings or any other meetings fostering collaboration with EU partners;
- g) take part in training sessions and build up the necessary operational capacity to effectively use Network's intranet, communication tools and partnering databases as well as to organise brokerage events & company missions conforming to the principles of the Network's partnership process;
- h) promote the service offer of the Network systematically to local company clients as well as to other departments of the host structure incl. management and executive board members;
- i) set up a website in the local language applying the official visual identity of the Network. The website must comprise information on the network services, partnership proposals contained in the Network database and contact address. Alternatively, partners should create a section on the host structure website covering the above mentioned information;
- j) contribute to additional activities in line with the action if human and financial resources are available and there exists a clear mutual benefit for enterprises situated in the European Union and the respective third country.

The partners may only provide Network services to companies registered within the internationally recognised borders of the country they cover⁴⁴. All Network services and

⁴⁴ See also guidelines on the eligibility of Israeli entities: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2013.205.01.0009.01.ENG

activities related to the given country must take place within these internationally recognised borders.

ARTICLE I.5 – FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES REQUIRED FOR ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK ACTIVITIES

Pursuant to Article 7(2) of the COSME regulation, entities referred to in Article 7(1) of the COSME regulation shall not be entitled to receive financial contributions from the Agency. The partners themselves must secure the required financial and human resources to implement the activities planned in the work programme.

With the signature of the agreement, partners assure to have the necessary funding to successfully implement the planned activities from the organisations' own budget. Alternatively, partners may seek funding from regional and/or national governmental budgetary authorities sponsoring Network activities.

In order to ensure sufficient human resources to successfully implement Network activities, each partner in the consortium shall:

- a) assign at least one dedicated Enterprise Europe Network project manager dealing with daily operational issues and acting as official contact person for the Agency and other European partners. The contact details of the project manager have to be visible in the Network's official staff directory at all times;
- b) nominate at least one more staff member acting as back up and ensuring that the knowledge and expertise acquired about the Network is not lost in case of staff changes;
- c) make available additional staff in peak periods, e.g. for the organisation of brokerage events, company missions, etc.

ARTICLE I.6 – ANNUAL REPORTING AND WORK PROGRAMMES CONSULTATION

I.6.1 The action is divided into *yearly* reporting periods.

I.6.2 The Agency will consult partners on annual work programmes including targets for related performance indicators. These annual work programmes need to be in line with implementation strategy outlined in Annex I of the agreement. If this is not the case, the Agency reserves the right to request a revised work programme. Partners who do not submit a work programme, submit a work programme after the given deadline, or fail to submit a work programme in line with Annex I, do not fulfil the obligations incumbent on them under the terms of the agreement.

I.6.3 Yearly activity reports need to be submitted by the co-ordinator and co-partners in a timely manner and in accordance with the deadlines set by the Agency. Further to these yearly reports, partners will receive feedback as to whether the Agency judges the activities carried out to be in line with the agreed work programme. Partners who do not submit an annual activity report - or not within the given deadline - do not fulfil the obligations incumbent on them under the terms of the agreement.

I.6.4 The comparison of the annual activity report with the agreed work programme will form the basis for the assessment of the performance and whether partners have fulfilled their contractual obligations. Partners, who *repeatedly* fail to reach the agreed targets, do not fulfil the obligations incumbent on them under the terms of the agreement.

I.6.5 The content of the work programme consultation and activity reports shall conform to the instructions published by the Agency.

I.6.6 In particular cases where quality and/or performance issues were identified, the partners agree to welcome Agency staff and/or European Network partners to their

premises to verify the internal working procedures and to come up with recommendations how to further improve the project implementation.

ARTICLE I.7 – ADOPTION OF THE ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK 'CODE OF CONDUCT'

The Enterprise Europe Network constitutes a 'network of excellence'. All Network partners perform to the highest quality standards, both in terms of their delivery of services to client companies and in terms of their compliance with internal procedures and workflows of the Network.

With the signature of the agreement, the partners commit to operate with the same core values, to apply the same operational principles and to abide by the quality principles with regard to relationships within the Network and with clients of the Network. Partners who grossly violate the Network's 'Code of Conduct' do not fulfil the obligations incumbent on them under the terms of the agreement.

Providing a professional Network service, partners shall:

- a) assign staff with the qualification and experience required to efficiently deliver the Network's services to their clients;
- b) endeavour to continuously update and improve the skills of individual staff members to help enhance the knowledge and expertise of the Network overall;
- c) provide the same quality of service to clients of other Network partners as they would to their own clients;
- d) follow agreed Network processes and procedures at all times;
- e) respect mutually established deadlines and be accountable for agreed measures and rules of the Network;
- f) be realistic in the level of support they can offer to another Network partner and communicate any difficulties that arise in delivering this support.

Acting as cooperative and loyal member of the Network, partners shall:

- a) make the Network aware of areas of expertise, through Network tools or otherwise, and be prepared to use this expertise when assistance is requested from another Network partner;
- b) share a common vision, aims and values to enhance the commitment, enthusiasm and effectiveness of the Network;
- c) allow Network partners to learn from each other and share good practice;
- d) build up and maintain relations with other Network partners, particularly in European countries;
- e) respond to messages, enquiries and requests from European Network partners promptly and comprehensively within maximum five working days.

Putting clients' interests first, partners shall:

- a) deliver on all promises in terms of realistic services offered;
- b) ensure that all clients have access to appropriate Network services;
- c) acknowledge receipt of messages within a reasonable time limit;
- d) provide a response to the client;
- e) keep the client informed of the progress of their request.

Being open and transparent on Network services, partners shall:

- a) draw attention to the benefits of the Network, but prepare the client for both a positive and a negative result;
- b) manage expectations with regard to the length of time required to collect comprehensive and good quality information from the Network;

- c) establish the terms of the two-way relationship between the Network partner and the client with regard to limits of the intervention, communication of preliminary information from the client, possible costs for the client and anticipated response times.

Keeping in regular contact with other Network members in the country, partners shall:

- a) develop a strong and cooperative relationship with all national Network partners;
- b) be aware of the strengths and expertise of their fellow national partners;
- c) commit to establish and maintain suitable communication at national level, taking into account each country's specificities.

ARTICLE I.8 – USE OF THE ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK SERVICE MARK

I.8.1 The Network's visual identity and its characteristic logo are the property of the Agency. The Agency shall allow the partners to use it free of charge for the term of this contract. Partners commit themselves to follow the instructions and guidance notes published by the Agency.

I.8.2 The coordinator shall ensure that the partners use the logo for all Network activities. Promotion and information products bearing the logo must only contain information which is useful to SMEs, in accordance with the policies and interests of the European Union, and meet the objectives of this agreement.

I.8.3 The partners may not assign the use of the Network's visual identity and its characteristic logo to other organisations not part of this agreement without prior authorisation of the Agency. The partners shall inform the Agency without delay of any improper use of the logo by third parties in their countries.

ARTICLE I.9 - GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

I.9.1. Any communication in connection with the agreement shall be in writing, indicating the number of the agreement, and shall be sent to the following addresses:

For the Agency:

European Commission
Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)
Brussels
Belgium

Ordinary mail shall be considered to have been received by the Agency on the date on which it is formally registered by the Agency unit responsible referred to above.

For the co-ordinator:

Mr/Ms (insert name)
(Insert function)
(Insert official denomination)
(Insert full official address)

I.9.2 Any communication from the Agency to the partners and vice versa should be made via the co-ordinator, save where specifically indicated otherwise in the agreement. This does not exclude direct contacts between the Agency and co-partners. In case of such direct contacts, the co-ordinator should always be informed and/or kept in copy.

ARTICLE I.10 - LAW APPLICABLE AND COMPETENT COURT

The agreement is governed by the European Union law applicable and, on a secondary level, by the law of Belgium.

Where the partner is legally established in a country other than a Member State of the European Union (the 'non EU partner'), the Commission and/or the non EU partner may bring before the Belgian Courts any dispute between the Union and the non EU partner concerning the interpretation, application or validity of the Agreement, if such dispute cannot be settled amicably. In such case where one party (i.e. the Commission or the non EU partner) has brought proceedings before the Belgian Courts concerning the interpretation, application or validity of the Agreement, the other party may not bring a claim arising from the interpretation, application or validity of the Agreement in any other court than the Belgian Courts already seized.

ARTICLE I.11 – DATA PROTECTION

All personal data contained in the agreement, or related to this agreement and its implementation, shall be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the European Union institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Such data shall be processed solely in connection with the implementation and follow-up of the agreement by the Agency, without prejudice to the possibility of passing the data to the bodies responsible for inspection and audit in accordance with European Union legislation.

ARTICLE I.12 – EQUALITY OF CONDITIONS

The partners to the agreement shall provide services and cooperate with European Network members and companies under the same conditions with which they provide them to their local SMEs.

For brokerage events or company missions organised by the partners in third countries, companies and/or Network members from the European Union or operating in the Network under Article 6 of COSME shall pay the normal registration fees applicable to any participant. The partners *may not* charge additional fees for other services related to the organisation of brokerage events or company missions.

As a general rule, the partners may neither charge any fees to European Network members nor to EU companies for the services delivered that are part of the common set of activities of the Enterprise Europe Network as described in the agreement under Article I.4 Objective of the action and scope of activities.

II -GENERAL CONDITIONS

ARTICLE II.1 – UNDERTAKINGS BY THE PARTNERS

By signing the agreement, the partners undertake to:

- Respect the common general objectives, as mentioned in the preamble;
- Fulfil the obligations stipulated in the agreement and under Annex I (implementation strategy);
- Do everything in their power to realise the common general objectives outlined in the agreement;
- Regularly communicate to the Agency information in its possession pertaining to matters of common interest falling within the scope of the agreement;

ARTICLE II.2 – LIABILITY

- II.2.1 The partners shall have sole responsibility for complying with any legal obligations incumbent on them.
- II.2.2 The Commission or the Agency shall not, in any circumstances or on any grounds, be held liable in the event of a claim under agreements relating to any damage caused during the execution of the action. Consequently, the Commission and the Agency will not entertain any request for indemnity or reimbursement accompanying any such claim.
- II.2.3 Except in cases of *force majeure*, the partners shall make good any damage sustained by the Agency as a result of the execution or faulty execution of the action.
- II.2.4 The partners shall assume sole liability towards third parties, including for damage of any kind sustained by them while the action is being carried out.

ARTICLE II.3 – CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The partners undertake to take all the necessary measures to prevent any risk of conflict of interest which could affect the impartial and objective performance of the agreement. Such conflict of interests could arise in particular as a result of economic interests, political or national affinities, family or emotional ties or emotional reasons, or any other common interests.

Any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interest during the implementation of the agreement must be brought to the attention of the Agency, in writing, without delay. The partners shall undertake to take whatever steps are necessary to rectify this situation without delay. The Agency may request information on which measures have been taken with a view to ensuring that the measures taken are appropriate. The Agency reserves the right to instruct the partner to take additional measures, and a timeframe for doing so, if it deems it necessary.

ARTICLE II.4 – OWNERSHIP/USE OF THE RESULTS

- II.4.1 Unless stipulated otherwise ownership of the results of the action, including industrial and intellectual property rights, and of the reports and other documents relating to it shall be vested in the partners.
- II.4.2 Without prejudice to paragraph 1, the partners grant the Agency the right to make free use of the results of the action as it deems fit, provided it does not thereby breach its confidentiality obligations or existing industrial and intellectual property rights.

ARTICLE II.5 – CONFIDENTIALITY

The Agency and the partners undertake to preserve the confidentiality of any document, information or other material directly related to the subject of the agreement that is duly classed as confidential, if disclosure could cause prejudice to the other party. The parties shall remain bound by this obligation beyond the expiry date of the agreement.

ARTICLE II.6 – PUBLICITY

- II.6.1 Any communication or publication by the partners, in any form and medium, shall indicate that sole responsibility lies with the author and that the Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.
- II.6.2 The partners authorise the Agency to publish the following information in any form and medium, including via the Internet:
- a) The partners' name and address,

- b) The subject and purpose of the agreement,
- c) The good practices and success stories achieved,
- d) The main general performance indicators (such as the number of partnership agreements achieved or number of brokerage events organised).

Upon a reasoned and duly substantiated request by the partners, the Agency may agree to forgo such publicity if disclosure of the information indicated above would risk compromising the partner's security or prejudicing his commercial interests.

ARTICLE II.7 – EVALUATION

Whenever the Commission carries out an interim or final evaluation of the action's impact measured against the objectives of the Union programme concerned, the co-ordinator with the support of the co-partners undertake to make available to the Commission and/or persons authorised by it all such documents or information as will allow the evaluation to be successfully completed.

ARTICLE II.8 – SUSPENSION

II.8.1 The partners may suspend implementation of the action if exceptional circumstances make this impossible or excessively difficult, notably in the event of force majeure. They shall inform the Agency without delay, giving all the necessary reasons and details and the foreseeable date of resumption.

If the Agency does not terminate the agreement under Article II.11, paragraph 3, the partners shall resume implementation once circumstances allow and shall inform the Agency accordingly.

II.8.3 The Agency reserves the right to suspend the implementation of the action at any time if exceptional political, economic or societal circumstances should make cooperation excessively difficult. Such circumstances might include situations of civil war in the country of the partners and/or systematic violations of human rights and international law by national authorities. Or, if Network services and activities related to the given country do not take place within internationally recognised borders.

Following the period of suspension the Agency reserves the right to terminate the grant agreement in application of article II.11 or to resume the action should the exceptional circumstance no longer apply.

ARTICLE II.9 – FORCE MAJEURE

II.9.1 Force majeure shall mean any unforeseeable exceptional situation or event beyond the parties' control which prevents either of them from fulfilling any of their obligations under the agreement, was not attributable to error or negligence on their part, and proves insurmountable in spite of all due diligence. Defects in equipment or material or delays in making them available (unless due to force majeure), labour disputes, strikes or financial difficulties cannot be invoked as force majeure by the defaulting party.

II.9.2 A party faced with force majeure shall inform the other party without delay by registered letter with advice of delivery or equivalent, stating the nature, probable duration and foreseeable effects.

II.9.3 Neither of the parties shall be held in breach of their obligations under the agreement if they are prevented from fulfilling them by force majeure. The parties shall make every effort to minimise any damage due to force majeure.

II.9.4 Actions under way may be suspended in accordance with Article II.8.

ARTICLE II.10 – ASSIGNMENT

Claims against the Agency may not be transferred.

In exceptional circumstances, where the situation warrants it, the Agency may authorise the assignment to a third party of the agreement following a written request to that effect, giving reasons, from the partners. If the Agency agrees, it must make its agreement known in writing before the proposed assignment takes place. In the absence of the above authorisation, or in the event of failure to observe the terms thereof, the assignment shall not be enforceable against and shall have no effect on the Agency.

In no circumstances shall such an assignment release the partners from their obligations to the Agency.

ARTICLE II.11 – TERMINATION

II.11.1 Termination by the co-ordinator

In duly justified cases, the co-ordinator, in agreement with the co-partners, may terminate the agreement at any time by giving 30 calendar days' written notice. Where they avail themselves of that right, they must undertake to complete the implementation of any cooperation agreement which has entered into force before the date when termination of the agreement takes effect.

II.11.2 Termination of the participation of a partner

In duly justified cases, a partner may terminate his participation to the agreement at any time by giving 30 calendar days' written notice.

The request should be addressed to the Agency by the co-ordinator on behalf of the concerned partner. The co-ordinator shall include with any such request to the Agency the remaining partners' proposal to reallocate the tasks of that partner or where relevant to nominate a replacement.

The termination of the participation of the partner concerned shall take effect on the date of the Agency's approval. A written amendment to the cooperation agreement shall be concluded between both parties to adapt the action to the new implementing conditions resulting from the partial termination.

II.11.3 Termination by the Agency

The Agency may decide to terminate the cooperation agreement or the participation of a partner to the agreement in the process of being implemented, without any indemnity on its part, in the following circumstances:

- a) In the event of a legal, financial, technical, organisational or auditing change in the partners' or partner's situation that is liable to substantially affect the agreement;
- b) If one or several partners fail to fulfil one or more obligations incumbent on them under the terms of this cooperation agreement including Annex I and the preamble to the agreement;
- c) In the event of force majeure, notified in accordance with Article II.9, or if the action has been suspended as a result of exceptional circumstances, notified in accordance with Article II.8;
- d) If one or several partners are declared bankrupt, being wound up or is the subject of any other similar proceedings;

- e) If one or several partners are found guilty of an offence involving his professional conduct by a judgment having the force of *res judicata* or if it or they are guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any justified means;
- f) If one or several partners are guilty of misrepresentation or submit reports inconsistent with reality;

II.11.4 Termination procedure

The procedure is initiated by registered letter with advice of delivery or equivalent. The co-ordinator shall ensure that all partners are duly informed.

The Agency shall first send an initiation of the termination procedure and shall allow the partner to submit observations within 30 days.

Following the receipt of the reasons, or in case that no statement of reasons has been received following a reminder, the Agency may terminate the agreement with a short notice.

ARTICLE II.12 – SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENTS

- II.12.1 Any amendment to the agreement must be the subject of a written supplementary agreement. No oral agreement may bind the parties to this effect.
- II.12.2 The supplementary agreement may not have the purpose or the effect of making changes to the agreement which might call into question the decision awarding the agreement or result in unequal treatment of applicants for cooperation agreements.
- II.12.3 If the request for amendment is made by the co-ordinator, in agreement with the co-partners, it must send it to the Agency in good time before it is due to take effect.

SIGNATURES

For the co-ordinator

For the Agency

(Insert name of org./acronym)

(Insert name, forename, function)

Head of Unit

(Place & date)

(Place & date)

(Insert name of org./acronym)

(Insert name of org./acronym)

(Insert name, forename, function)

(Insert name, forename,function)

(Place & date)

(Place & date)

b. Template for implementation strategy and work programme

The proposed implementation strategy and work programme for the first year of each applicant consortium will have to be submitted via the [EUSURVEY online form](#)⁴⁵. If approved, the implementation strategy will constitute Annex I to the Cooperation Agreement to be signed with EASME.

The following section will give applicants an overview what information is requested for the assessment. Although it is possible to save draft versions of the implementation strategy online, we recommend to write the implementation strategy offline and only upon completion to copy/paste the text into the online form. Please mind that only plain text can be pasted into the online form (i.e. non-formatted text). It is NOT possible to upload charts or graphs to the online submission form. If you prefer to save your drafts online, you need to bookmark the link indicated after you clicked on the 'save as draft' button. In case you face technical problems during the submission process, please contact EASME using the following email address: EASME-COSME-EEN-CALL-ART7@ec.europa.eu

Important notice: Once you have completed and submitted the online form, please send a signed paper copy of the implementation strategy together with the letter of support from the EU Delegation in your country to EASME. The electronic version of the implementation strategy needs to be submitted via this online form BEFORE the deadline. The signed paper copy of the implementation strategy and the letter of support signed by the EU Delegation must reach EASME no later than 2 weeks after the deadline. Applications should NOT be submitted earlier than 3 months before the deadline for submission indicated in the call text.

Submission of Applications - Call for Expressions of Interest - Enterprise Europe Network: Organisations located in third countries (participating in COSME under Article 7)

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY Annex I - Cooperation Agreement

Date of submission of the application *

Indicate the date of the submission of your application (date: DD/MM/YYYY).

Insert project title *

The project title must include the full name of the Network and name of the country or a particular region of the country (e.g. "Enterprise Europe Network Russia" or "Enterprise Europe Network East China" or "Enterprise Europe Network Shanghai").

Insert acronym for consortium *

The project acronym must include the acronym of the Network and the name of the country or particular region (e.g. "EEN Russia" or "EEN East China" or "EEN Shanghai").

Insert country *

⁴⁵ <http://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/751f0006-400b-c994-eee9-610accf0cc67>

Project duration*

Normally the application should cover a 7-year period starting from 1 January 2015 ending not later than 31 December 2021. Please use the following format to indicate the duration:

Start: DD/MM/YYYY - End: DD/MM/YYYY

1. Organisations

Starting with the Project coordinator, list all organisations implementing the Enterprise Europe Network project in the country (or covered region). You may add up to 10 co-partners to the consortium. Please mind the indicative maximum number of partners per country as outlined in the call text. Any deviation from this indicative number needs to be well-justified in the implementation strategy.

1. Project coordinator

Insert organisation name*

700 character(s) maximum

- Insert name of organisation in English.
- Insert name of organisation in local/national language.

Organisation acronym*

Insert acronym for organisation (e.g. EASME).

Town*

700 character(s) maximum

Indicate the town in which the organisation is located (if applicable, indicate also the towns of the regional branches of the organisation).

Legal status*

Insert legal status

- Chamber of Commerce
- EC / Government Institution
- Other Private Consultancy Company
- Other Public Consultancy Company
- Professional Association
- Regional/National Development Agency
- University/Research Institute

Short description of organisation*

Text of 250 to 700 characters will be accepted

Describe your organisation, i.e. main fields of activity and expertise, services offered to companies, etc. The description will be used to present the organisation to European Network members and on the public Network website. Please don't use more than 700 characters!

Main areas of expertise*

between 1 and 2 choices

Specify the main areas of expertise, which the organisation will contribute to the implementation of the Enterprise Europe Network project in the country. Please specify at least 1 but maximum 2 areas of expertise relevant to the Enterprise Europe Network.

- **Business Cooperation:** the organisation has a proven track record of facilitating cross-border commercial cooperation.
- **Technology Transfer:** the organisation has a proven track record facilitating cross-border technology transfer.
- **Research Collaboration:** the organisation has a proven track record facilitating cross-border research collaboration.
- **Project Coordination:** the organisation has a proven track record in project coordination and management.

Registered legal address*

EASME may request at any time a copy of official documents (official gazette, company register, etc.) showing the name of the organisation, the address of the head office and/or the registration/VAT number given to it by the national authorities. For government or public institutions this may be a copy of the resolution, law, decree or decision establishing the organisation in question. EASME may decide to exclude organisations if they cannot make available the requested documents.

Street name and number

Insert street name and number

Post code

Insert post code

Town/City

Insert Town/City

Country name

Insert country name

Organisation website

Insert link to official website of the organisation

Legal representative *

700 character(s) maximum

Name and contact details of the legal representative of the organisation (in case of changes, EASME must be informed in due time):

- Mr/Mrs/Ms
- Family name, First name
- Function or position (e.g. president, director, etc.)
- Email
- Phone
- Full postal address (in case different from legal address)

Enterprise Europe Network Project manager *

700 character(s) maximum

Name and contact details of the assigned Enterprise Europe Network project manager in charge of all operational issues and acting as main contact person for EASME and European Network partners (In case of changes, EASME must be informed in due time):

- Mr/Mrs/Ms
- Family name, First name
- Function or position (e.g. Head of department, adviser, etc.)
- Email
- Phone
- Full postal address (in case different from legal address)

Curriculum vitae (CV) of Enterprise Europe Network project manager *

(and additional staff members assigned to work on the Enterprise Europe Network project)

700 character(s) maximum

The project manager and at least one more staff member assigned to work on the Enterprise Europe Network project in the organisation must make available their CVs in English, including all relevant previous work experience and employers via LinkedIn. Competences and qualifications of staff should reflect the requirements outlined in the call text. LinkedIn is a business-oriented social networking service. It is used worldwide for professional networking. Official LinkedIn webpage: www.linkedin.com. The web links to the online CVs of the Enterprise Europe Network project manager and other staff members should be copy/pasted in the field below. Alternatively, applicants may make available the CVs of the assigned staff via other online platforms easily accessible to the assessors of the application.

Important notice: It remains the responsibility of the applicant that the web link is valid and that the assessors have access to the online CV of the assigned Project manager. Applications with invalid web links to the CV will receive lower scores in the assessment process. EASME recommends applicants to test the validity of the web links on external computers.

Client database software or client relationship management (CRM) tool used *

700 character(s) maximum

- Specify which client relationship management (CRM) tool is used by the organisation. Describe the functions of the tool or database (filtering of companies for sectors or size, emailing of clients, etc.).
- Indicate the number of local companies (or other typical Network clients) you are regularly serving contained in client database or client relationship management (CRM) tool.

Important notice: Please indicate only the number of local companies contained in the organisation's client database, i.e. those companies which are NOT European owned. One of the most important assessment criteria remains applicants' access to a vast local client base.

2. Co-partner

Add co-partner to the consortium?*

Indicate if the Enterprise Europe Network project will be implemented with further organisations. Please respect the limits to the size of consortia as outlined in the call text.

- Yes
- No

Local cooperation partners

(If applicable) describe group of local cooperation partners and their contribution to the project implementation

Maximum 1/2 page will be accepted

Applicants may identify further local business support organisations or intermediaries in the country with which they plan to formally collaborate, e.g. to achieve better coverage of the country or to optimise the delivery of services to SMEs. However, these organisations shall not sign the Cooperation Agreement with EASME. Local cooperation partners will not be eligible for operational and technical support from EASME and will fully depend on the knowledge and technical assistance provided by the consortium partners. Deliverables and targets outlined in the implementation strategy and annual work programmes will be reported only by the contractual partners. Consortium partners are strongly encouraged to sign formal collaboration agreements with their local cooperation partners specifying the exact terms of the cooperation and what contribution these organisation make to the project implementation.

2. National ministries and/or institutions endorsing application

Name(s) of senior official(s) of national ministry of economy, innovation and/or research endorsing the application of the consortium.

- Mr/Mrs/Ms
- Family name, First name
- Name of ministry
- Function or position
- Email
- Phone
- Full postal address

Important notice: The consortium is strongly encouraged to approach national policy makers to endorse the application. Ideally, the Enterprise Europe Network project should be integrated in the internationalisation and innovation strategy of the ministry in charge and Network activities should be co-financed with national grants. EASME reserves the right to contact national authorities to discuss applications submitted.

Specific support or funding provided by national ministry of economy, innovation and/or research endorsing the application of the consortium.

700 character(s) maximum

In this section, applicants should briefly describe how the national ministry(ies) will support or fund the project implementation (if applicable).

3. EU Delegation endorsing the application of the consortium*

Name(s) of the official(s)/staff member(s) of the Delegation of the European Union endorsing the application of the consortium.

Applicants are required to contact the EU Delegation to endorse the application of the consortium. Please indicate the full contact details of EU Delegation official contacted. Don't forget that the application needs to comprise an official letter of support from the EU Delegation. For more information on the EU Delegation in your country, please see: www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/index_en.htm

- Mr/Mrs/Ms
- Family name, First name
- Function or position
- Email
- Phone
- Full postal address

The application comprises an official letter of support signed by the EU Delegation in the country. The letter of support will be sent together with the signed paper copy of the implementation strategy to EASME.

- Yes
- No

Important notice: Please mind that you can only submit an application IF the EU Delegation in your country has endorsed your application! Applications without enclosed letter of support will be regarded as incomplete and shall be discarded.

4. Geographical coverage*

Geographical coverage of the consortium

Maximum 1/2 page will be accepted

Describe the regions to be covered by each partner and the entire consortium. It needs to be evident to assessors of your application which towns, regions or federal states will be covered by the consortium (and if applicable, which regions are not covered).

5. Funding*

Funding of Enterprise Europe Network project activities

Maximum 1/2 page will be accepted

The applicants are not eligible for co-financing with European Union grants. Explain how planned Enterprise Europe Network activities are to be financed. If applicable, list all organisations, national budgetary authorities, governmental institutions or other donors supporting the project. Applicants need to credibly demonstrate their financial capacity and ability to obtain the required funding for the project implementation. Partners lacking the financial capacity cannot be admitted to the Network! Estimate the annual financial and human resources required in order to effectively implement the planned Network activities. Further details on the expected use of financial resources, the number of staff assigned and man-hours foreseen should be indicated in the appendix 'work programme and expected use of resources' below.

6. Objectives*

Describe the objectives of the project

Maximum 1 page will be accepted

- Describe the objectives of this project with special focus on economic issues concerning the specific sectors and companies in the country or region to be covered. Provide an analysis of the needs of companies in particular and any other Network clients for cross-border business and innovation support services provided in the framework of the Enterprise Europe Network.
- Describe the implementation methodology. Explain the reasons for the proposed methodology and how the proposed strategy will address the specific needs of companies and other target audiences.

7. Organisational and staff competences*

Describe the organisational and staff competences

Maximum 1 page will be accepted

- Describe the specific expertise and experience of the consortium and how each partner will contribute to the implementation of the Enterprise Europe Network with regard to the requested competences listed in the call for expressions of interest.
- Explain the role and place of each partner in the organigram of each host organisation. Explain how Network activities complement existing business support offer of the organisation.
- Describe the team proposed for the implementation of the planned activities by function within each organisation.

8. Description of Work*

In these sections applicants have to describe how the Enterprise Europe Network activities will be implemented. Applicants need to specify:

- *Specific objective of the activity*
- *Target group and audience*
- *Description of work (incl. methodologies and tools to be used)*
- *Role of each partner in the consortium*
- *Outcome and impact*

In the appendix below 'work programme and expected use of resources', applicants should set concrete targets for performance indicators for the first year of operation in the Network.

1. Cross-border partnering activities for business cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and research:

(Co-)organisation of brokerage events & company missions

Maximum 1 1/2 pages will be accepted

Describe how the consortium will organise brokerage events and company missions in the framework of the Enterprise Europe Network (i.e. b2b meetings facilitated together with European Network partners)

- **Specific objective of the activity:** Describe the specific objective of the activity.
- **Target group/audience:** Describe to which target group the activities are dedicated, e.g. companies in general or enterprises in a specific sector, etc.
- **Description of work, methodology and tools:** Describe how partners will contribute to the specific objectives of the activity.
- **Partners should describe the methodology, tools and quality control criteria needed for the implementation of the proposed activity.**
- **Role of each partner:** Describe the role of each partner implementing this activity and the main tasks attributed to them.
- **Outcomes and impact:** Describe the expected outcomes & impacts and explain how it will be measured (e.g. cross-border commercial, technological and research partnership agreements signed between Network clients).

2. Cross-border partnering activities for business cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and research:

Generation and dissemination of partnership proposals

Maximum 1 1/2 pages will be accepted

Describe how the consortium plans to encode commercial, technological and research related partnership proposals from local companies in the Network's 'Partnership Opportunities Database' (POD). The description should include a detailed explanation how partnership proposals from EU companies will be disseminated to local companies.

- **Specific objective of the activity:** Describe the specific objective of the activity.
- **Target group/audience:** Describe to which target group the activities are dedicated, e.g. companies in general or enterprises in a specific sector, etc.
- **Description of work, methodology and tools:** Describe how partners will contribute to the specific objectives of the activity.
- **Partners should describe the methodology, tools and quality control criteria needed for the implementation of the proposed activity.**
- **Role of each partner:** Describe the role of each partner implementing this activity and the main tasks attributed to them.
- **Outcomes and impact:** Describe the expected outcomes & impacts and explain how it will be measured (e.g. cross-border commercial, technological and research partnership agreements signed between Network clients).

3. Support and information activities:

Answering Network enquires related to the partnership process (exchange of market access information with EU partners).

Maximum 1 page will be accepted

Describe how the consortium plans to respond/answer Network enquiries from European partners related to the partnering process. This includes questions received by phone, email or the Network's communication tools.

- Specific objective of the activity: Describe the specific objective of the activity.
- Target group/audience: Describe to which target group the activities are dedicated, e.g. companies in general or enterprises in a specific sector, etc.
- Description of work, methodology and tools: Describe how partners will contribute to the specific objectives of the activity.
- Partners should describe the methodology, tools and quality control criteria needed for the implementation of the proposed activity.
- Role of each partner: Describe the role of each partner implementing this activity and the main tasks attributed to them.
- Outcomes and impact: Describe the expected outcomes & impacts and explain how it will be measured (e.g. cross-border commercial, technological and research partnership agreements signed between Network clients).

4. Promotion of Network services and communication activities **Internal and external communication strategies**

Maximum 1 page will be accepted

Describe the internal & external communication strategy of the consortium.

- Describe how the consortium will target in particular small and medium sized enterprises and how the services of Enterprise Europe Network will be promoted.
- Each partner should describe how the achievements and success stories related to the Enterprise Europe Network will be regularly promoted to the executive board and staff members of other relevant departments of the host organisation (in order to raise the needed awareness about the Network among executives of the organisation and to exploit operational synergies; a well-developed internal promotion strategy is regarded as essential by EASME!).

5. Promotion of Network services and communication activities: **Website and use of social media**

Maximum 1/2 page will be accepted

Describe the content and the features of the national Enterprise Europe Network website to be set up in the local language

- Describe the layout, content and features of the Enterprise Europe Network webpages to be set up in the national language (e.g. promotion of Network brokerage events, dissemination of technological or commercial partnership proposals via email alerts, etc.).
- Describe how the Enterprise Europe Network will be promoted on the host structure webpages.
- Describe how social media will be used in order to promote the Network to large audiences of local companies, entrepreneurs or other clients.

6. Network building and reinforcing the Network

Maximum 1/2 page will be accepted

Describe how the consortium will maintain close contacts and the necessary visibility among European partners by participating in important Network events such as the Annual conference, training sessions, SAG meetings, Sector and/or working groups, staff exchange & mentoring programme, etc. (If applicable) describe further activities planned to improve the consortium's visibility vis-à-vis European Network partners.

7. Project coordination and consortium management

Maximum 1 page will be accepted

Explain the project coordination and management mechanism within the consortium.

- Indicate how often partners will meet per year in order to discuss project related issues.
- Outline how partners will share their expertise (e.g. how will the consortium ensure the transfer of knowledge of staff, which participated in training sessions in Brussels to other partners?).
- Describe the tools & procedures for internal evaluation, monitoring and the use of the Network's performance indicators.
- Outline quality standards and principles.

Important notice for countries associated to Horizon 2020:

The Horizon 2020 programme also calls upon the Enterprise Europe Network to provide in-depth services enhancing the innovation management capacity of SMEs. In particular the Network should provide the 'key account management services' related to the SME instrument. Proposals for grants by the SME instrument can only be made by SMEs registered in countries associated to Horizon 2020. As a consequence, 'Business Cooperation Centres' in countries that will be associated to Horizon 2020 should work on the assumption that they will be expected to provide these services. 'Business Cooperation Centres' in these countries will become eligible for a grant to provide support services to enhance the innovation management capacity of SMEs, provided they have proven that they have the required operational capacities and skills.

9. Further information or explanations supporting the application

Maximum 1/2 page will be accepted.

(Only if deemed necessary) add further elements, explanations or clarifications supporting your application for becoming an official partner of the Enterprise Europe Network.

APPENDIX - Work programme and expected use of resources*

It is mandatory for all applicants to fill in the section below. Applicants must provide a work programme and expected use of resources for the first year of operation in the Network:

From 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015

EASME will consult admitted applicants every year on work programmes including concrete targets for performance indicators. This consultation will follow a separate procedure and must conform to the instructions published by EASME. Future work programmes should to be globally line with the initial work programme. Depending on the specific priorities of partners, the yearly work programmes may deviate from the initial work programme upon agreement with EASME. However, over the years EASME expects Network partners to become more efficient with regard to the achievement of transnational Partnership Agreements. Hence, the number of Partnership Agreements achieved should be constantly increasing in the course of the contractual period.

For definitions see section 'Performance indicators of output and outcome' in call text above)

Important notice: Please follow the same numbering of partners as in the section above. Don't forget to insert the acronym for each partner! Before setting targets for outputs and outcomes, applicants need to thoroughly analyse the time and resources required. Partnership Agreements are highly time intensive deliverables. Experience has shown that the average period needed for successful partnering is longer than 6 months. Applicants with unrealistic high (or low) targets given the resources available shall receive lower scores during the assessment of the application.

	Partner acronym	Brokerage events & company mission	Companies recruited	b2b meetings facilitated	Partnership Proposals	Eol received	Eol made	Enquires from Network answered	SMEs registered in Network client database	Contributions to Network activities	Partnership Agreements achieved	Financial resources committed (Euro)	Number of staff assigned	Number of man-hours
1.	Partner													
2.	Partner													
3.	Partner													

(Performance indicators may be encoded for up to 11 consortium partners)

Declarations of honour*

By ticking this box, the applicant(s) declare on their honour not to be in one of the situations referred to below:

Organisations will be excluded from participating in the call if they are in any of the following situations:

- they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of their state which has the force of res judicata;
- they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct;
- they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity.

Declaration of honour of applicant(s)

By ticking this box, the applicant(s) declare on their honour that they are directly responsible for the preparation, management and implementation of the project and not acting as an intermediary:

Organisations will be excluded from participating in the call if this is not the case.

Declaration of honour of applicant(s)

By ticking this box, the applicant(s) declare on their honour that they will comply with the eligibility criteria laid down in the call text

The applicant(s) commit to comply with the relevant eligibility criteria, as defined in the call text. It should be noted that EASME reserves the right to suspend the Cooperation Agreement at any time in case applicants DO NOT comply with these criteria.

Declaration of honour of applicant(s)

By ticking this box, the applicant(s) confirm that the information provided is accurate and complete:

It should be noted that the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME) reserves the right to terminate the Cooperation Agreement any time in case of missing or false information.

Declaration of honour of applicant(s)

Signature*

.....
Signature of legal representative

The paper copy of the implementation strategy should be signed by the legal representative of the Project coordinator and sent to EASME together with the letter of support by the EU Delegation

End of application / implementation strategy

c. Glossary

This glossary is intended to facilitate the understanding of potential applicants of the present call for expressions of interest and to refer them to further sources of information where appropriate. The explanations given in this glossary are purely indicative and cannot be considered as legally binding definitions.

Business Cooperation Centres (BCC)

'Business Cooperation Centres' are partner organisations participating in the Enterprise Europe Network under Article 7 of COSME. These organisations participate on self-financing basis, i.e. there is no EU financial contribution for their activities carried out in the framework of the Network.

Brokerage services / events

Enterprise Europe Network services that are designed to bring about transnational partnerships for business, technological, innovation or research cooperation. Brokerage / matchmaking events are a series of pre-arranged transnational meetings organised at a single venue for SMEs. They are often arranged at trade shows, fairs, exhibitions or conferences but can also be stand-alone events.

Centralised / Decentralised training event

"Centralised" trainings are events organised in Brussels by the EASME for (staff members of) the Enterprise Europe Network.

"Decentralised" training events are supported and approved by the EASME, but organised by Network partners and take place in the country/city of the organising Network partner. They must be open to all other Network partners (within the limits of the space available).

Client

Any organisation receiving an (intensive) service from one or more Network partners. Clients should be part of the target audience of the Network referred to in chapter 2 d) and are primarily SMEs.

Company mission

A mission with one or more Network clients visiting and meeting one or more Network clients from a different country with a view to establishing a partnership.

COSME

COSME is the EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) running from 2014 to 2020, with a budget of €2.3bn. For further information, [click here](#)⁴⁶.

Code of conduct

The Enterprise Europe Network has its own Code of Conduct which lays down common operational principles, quality standards and guidelines for the cooperation between Network partners and for the relation between Network partners and client companies. All Network partners are held to comply with the provisions of the Code of Conduct.

⁴⁶ <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/cosme>

Cooperation Agreement

The Cooperation Agreement sets the terms and conditions which shall apply to the action. The action shall be pursued through the implementation of Annex I to the agreement (i.e. Implementation Strategy).

Consortium

A group of host organisations joining their respective expertise in a given region to cover all required services under the Enterprise Europe Network, who agree to submit a joint proposal and carry out all proposed activities in collaboration with each other (provided the proposal is accepted).

EASME – Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

The Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME) was set up by the European Commission in 2013 in order to manage on several EU programmes, including COSME and parts of Horizon 2020. It replaces the EACI (Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation) that managed Enterprise Europe Network, Intelligent Energy – Europe, Eco-innovation and Marco Polo. The present call has been published by the EASME, who will also be in charge of the management of the Enterprise Europe Network. For further information, [click here](#)⁴⁷.

Europe 2020 strategy

Europe 2020 is the European Union's ten-year growth strategy. More than just trying to help overcome the economic crisis, it is about addressing the shortcomings of Europe's growth model and creating the conditions for a different type of growth that is smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive. Europe 2020 sets five key targets in the areas of employment; education; research and innovation; social inclusion and poverty reduction; and climate/energy.

The strategy includes seven 'flagship initiatives' providing a framework through which the EU and national authorities mutually reinforce their efforts in areas supporting the Europe 2020 priorities such as innovation, the digital economy, employment, youth,, industrial policy, poverty, and resource efficiency. For further information, [click here](#)⁴⁸.

Horizon 2020

Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020). Horizon 2020 is also the financial instrument implementing the [Innovation Union](#)⁴⁹, a [Europe 2020](#)⁵⁰ flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness. For more information, please [click here](#)⁵¹.

Host organisation

⁴⁷ <http://ec.europa.eu/easme/>

⁴⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/index_en.htm

⁴⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm

⁵⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm

⁵¹

<http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/what-horizon-2020>

The legal entity which carries out the Enterprise Europe Network activities and in which the department / group of staff members assigned to this activity are employed or otherwise engaged.

Internationalisation

For the purpose of this call, the term "internationalisation" is understood to refer to international activities of companies in countries outside the European Union that do not participate in COSME (i.e. in "third countries" as defined below).

Missions for Growth

Targeted diplomatic and economic missions to a range of countries providing (new) market opportunities for European companies, led by the European Commissioner for Industry and Enterprise. Missions for Growth usually involve political and business meetings and discussions in areas of mutual interest in the fields of Enterprise & Industry policy but do not deal with specific trade policy issues. They allow for high-level contacts between the Commissioner, the European External Action Service, European entrepreneurs and political authorities. Typically, a delegation of SME managers (or other leading staff members) accompanies the Commissioner on those trips in order to get acquainted with the respective market(s) and to meet local business people. For further information, [click here](#)⁵².

National Contact Points (NCP)

The National Contact Points (NCPs) are the main structure to provide guidance, practical information and assistance on all aspects of participation in Horizon 2020. NCPs are national structures established and financed by governments of the 28 EU member states and the states associated to the research framework programme. The NCP systems can vary from one country to another from highly centralised to decentralised networks, and a number of very different actors, from ministries to universities, research centres and special agencies to private consulting companies.

Network partner

The term "Network partner" refers to the departments, divisions, units or other group of staff members of host organisations that actually perform the work and the activities of the Enterprise Europe Network. Network partners are comprised of all staff members of host organisations who are assigned to the Enterprise Europe Network.

Partnership proposals

All requests for partnerships of Enterprise Europe Network clients are recorded in "partnership proposals", which outline the type, objective and potential outcome of the partnership that is sought. These proposals make up the Network's "partnering opportunities database", the central repository of all partnership requests and offers of companies that are registered in the Network.

Sector group

Sector Groups are formed by Network partners who work together on a voluntary basis in order to meet

⁵² http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/mission-growth/missions-for-growth/index_en.htm

the specific needs of clients in particular sectors. These groups are chaired by Network staff members and provide a forum to discuss, plan and implement activities with an EU-wide relevance for client companies.

European Single Market

The common (single) market comprising all Member States of the European Union in which the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons is ensured and in which European citizens are free to live, work, study and do business.

Small Business Act for Europe (SBA)

Adopted in June 2008, the Small Business Act for Europe puts into place a comprehensive SME policy framework for the EU and its Member States, thus reflecting the Commission's intention to better recognise the central role of SMEs in the EU's economy. It aims to improve the overall approach to entrepreneurship, to ensure that the concerns of SMEs are taken into account in all policy making from regulation to public service, and to promote the growth of SMEs. The SBA was reviewed in 2011 to assess progress made until then and to address new challenges resulting from the economic crisis. For further information, [click here](#). For further information, please [click here](#)⁵³.

SME

Small and medium sized enterprise. For the purpose of this call, the European definition of an SME outlined in Commission Recommendation C (2003) 1422 is applied. For further information, [click here](#)⁵⁴.

SME Instrument

A specific instrument of Horizon 2020 designed to support highly promising innovation projects of SMEs. Innovative Small and Medium-sized Enterprises will be supported in Horizon 2020 programme through a new dedicated SME instrument where only SMEs (single SMEs or consortiums of SMEs) will be allowed to apply for funding and support. SMEs can form collaborations according to their needs, including for subcontracting research and development work.

In total, more than 2.8 billion euros will be allocated for the SME instrument from 2014 to 2020, at least 7% of the total budget of the Societal Challenges and Leading and Enabling Technologies (LEIT) blocks of Horizon2020.

Stakeholder (regional or local)

A regional or local stakeholder is any type of actor (including individual persons) located in a Network consortium's (local or regional) environment that is not a member of the consortium but with which the consortium might collaborate within the framework of its activities. Stakeholders may include a wide range of actors, such as for example decision makers, regional/local authorities, other SME support providers, other European networks or (regional/local) representative bodies of enterprises. In some cases, stakeholder involvement may also take a national

⁵³ http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/small-business-act/index_en.htm

⁵⁴ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:124:0036:0041:EN:PDF>

dimension (for example in countries covered by one single consortium or when required by the nature of the stakeholder).

Technology transfer

Transnational technology transfer is at the heart of Network activities and services that are provided to assist SMEs in transferring technologies across national and European borders. The aim is to foster innovation in SMEs by helping them adapt existing technologies or apply new ones so they can develop new products or services. For the purpose of the Enterprise Europe Network, technology transfer is therefore defined as the successful application or adaptation of an innovative technology from one organisation or industrial sector to another.

The Network's role is to bring providers and users of technologies together in a technological partnership

resulting in a licensing agreement, a joint venture agreement, a manufacturing agreement and/or a commercial agreement with technical assistance.

Third country

For the purpose of this call, "third countries" are defined as countries outside the European Union that do not participate in the COSME programme.

Working groups

Working Groups are temporary groups of Network staff members set up as and when required by the EASME in order to create common working standards, guidelines and tools for the benefit of the entire Network. Members of Working Groups are selected on the basis of their personal qualification and knowledge of the required subject matter.