FAQ
Pilot Action – Interregional innovation projects

Who should apply? Only the Leading Region(s) of a partnership of all regions involved?
The "Annex I-Application Form" should be completed by the lead body (mentioned under point 1.1 of the form). The regions involved and all members of the interregional consortium have to be mentioned under points 1.4 and 1.5 of the application form.

What is the definition of "statutory regional authorities"? Are only administrative regions eligible? Can a regional development agency apply?
A statutory regional authority is a regional authority defined by national law. The expression of interest can be submitted by a regional authority or by a body falling under the responsibility and accountable to a regional authority.

Have "Letters of commitment" or "Letters of intention" to be provided in addition to the "Annex I-Application Form"?
The only mandatory document for the application is the "Annex I-Application Form".

How should the partnership be composed?
As mentioned in point 4.1 of the call for expression of interest, the partnership should be composed of regional authorities which represent as much as possible the whole "quadruple helix" (research, business, public administration and end-users) covering the whole value-chain and representing at least 4 different EU countries.

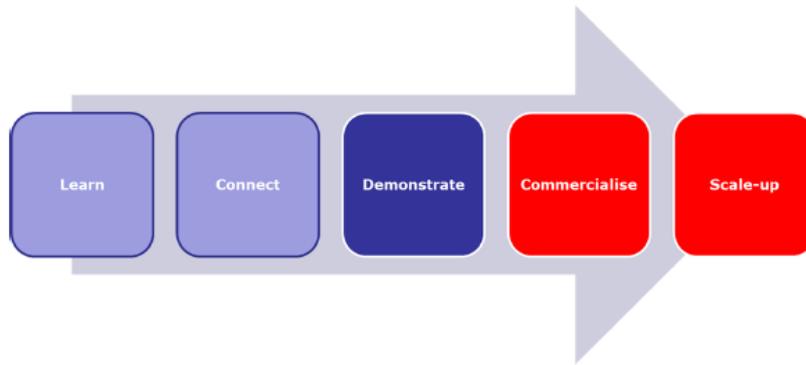**What is the meaning of "end-users"?**
End-users are individuals and organisations which make use of the services provided by the new technologies.

Are regional authorities from non-EU countries eligible to participate in the network?
Yes, provided that the partnership is composed of regional authorities from at least 4 different EU countries.

Are partnerships working on new thematic areas beyond those already existing in the Thematic Smart Specialisation Platforms eligible?
Yes, the call is open to new thematic areas. However, as mentioned under point 1.9 of the call for expression of interest, this should not overlap with areas already developed under the Thematic Smart Specialisation Platforms. It should be coherent with S3 established at national or regional level. As stated under point 3.1 of the call each partnership submitting an application is expected to have already gone through the phases "Learn" (establishment of sub-thematic areas for investments) and "Connect" (mapping of the main actors, know-how, capacities and infrastructures in the regions involved in the partnership) and have launched actions to complete a "Demonstrate" phase with in-depth analysis and concrete results up to the Technological Readiness Level (TRL5 and TRL6).

Is the pilot action focusing only on the more advanced partnerships or can most recent partnerships at an earlier stage apply?

As required by point 3.1 of the call the pilot action will support only more advanced partnerships having already gone through the phases "Learn" (establishment of sub-thematic areas for investments) and "Connect" (mapping of the main actors, know-how, capacities and infrastructures in the regions involved in the partnership) and having launched actions to complete a "Demonstrate" phase with in-depth analysis and concrete results up to the Technological Readiness Level (TRL5 and TRL6).

Can an already established partnership, having gone through the phases of Learn and Connect, invite new members to join the network?

Yes, provided that the partnership complies with points 1.8 and 1.9 of the call.

Can projects financed by other EU-instruments apply?

Yes, provided that the application comes from a partnership as outlined above and that the latter has identified a new thematic area of cooperation for developing or reshaping a European value chain and that this area is not overlapping with areas already identified under the Thematic Smart Specialisation Platforms (as mentioned under point 1.9 of the call for expression of interest).

Some of the bottlenecks might be common to different partnerships. Would the Commission welcome "common applications" submitted by more than one partnership and focusing on specific common bottlenecks?
No, common applications will not be eligible. As foreseen in the call, the pilot action will support only a partnership of regions in one specific thematic area.

What types of services will the Commission offer as "Technical Assistance" support under ERDF?
The Commission will offer partnerships extensive support based on the bottlenecks identified in the application. This may include specialised expertise on legal issues, IPR, business development support, taxation, certification procedures and protocols, on the combination of different public and private funding instruments (grants, lending, debt, equity, etc.).

Will the budget be redistributed among partners?
The support will be provided in form of technical assistance (expertise or service appointed to help partnerships overcoming investment obstacles). In the framework of the call no direct grants will be provided to partnerships.

Within the technical assistance provided to the selected partnerships, will "coordination costs" be covered ? Or will technical assistance be provided for the coordination of the activities?

Coordination activities may, where appropriate, be part of the services provided to the partnership.

Once the partnership is selected what will the procedure be?
The Selection committee will announce the list of the selected partnerships in early December. Launch events are also expected to start to take place in December. The Commission will work together with partnerships to identify specific services required.

By who will be composed the "regional support groups in the Commission"?
The regional support groups in the Commission will be composed by representatives of different DGs of the European Commission.

Can an expression of interest covering several different thematic areas be considered?
The partnership should identify a thematic area of cooperation.

What resources should the partnership use in order to produce the expected outcomes (listed in section 3 of the call) ?
The call does not require the applicants to specify the resources or funding which they intend to use. The support from the European Commission will take form of technical assistance providing services to the partnership.