



EUROPEAN CLUSTER
COLLABORATION PLATFORM

Call for Expression of Interest

EU – South MED Matchmaking Event in
Frankfurt, Germany 2024

An initiative of the European Union





Call for Expression of Interest Clusters



EU – South MED Matchmaking Event

In the frame of [ACHEMA expo](#)

11-13 June 2024

Frankfurt, Germany



OBJECTIVES

The European Commission (EC) will organise the **EU – South MED Matchmaking Event** in the frame of [ACHEMA expo](#) which will be held on 10-14 June 2024.

The **EU – South MED Matchmaking Event** itself will take place on-site in Frankfurt, Germany 11-13 June 2024.

The event will be jointly organised by the European Commission through the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP), in collaboration with ANIMA Investment Network, as part of the Euromed Clusters Forward project, Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) and Chamber of Commerce and Industry Frankfurt am Main.

The **EU – South MED Matchmaking Event** will bring together cluster organisations and SMEs from the European Union (EU), non-EU countries participating in the Single Market Programme/COSME Strand¹, and South MED countries: Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Tunisia. It will provide participants an excellent chance to promote Cluster to Cluster (C2C), Cluster to Business (C2B), and Business to Business (B2B) collaborations.

The overall objective of the event is to promote the exchange of information and provide networking opportunities for European cluster organisations and their members with counterparts from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia; particularly in the fields of Green techs and energy, Digital techs and ICT, Mechanical engineering and manufacturing, Pharma and biotech.

The objectives for the participants include:

- Strengthening EU-South MED cluster cooperation for the benefit of their members, including a seminar, a cluster matchmaking event, and site visits.
- Identifying potential areas of common interest for cooperation and synergies, in terms of the sectoral, value chain, and market focus of their SMEs and other companies.
- Improving, through clusters, the EU-South MED industry and academia-industry collaboration in research, development, and innovation. For its members, the clusters will identify possible areas of RDI collaboration (academia, research organisations, industries...).

The call for expressions of interest is being launched to identify a European delegation made up of representatives from cluster organisations ([please see section “Who can participate” below](#)) who are willing and committed to participate in the EU-South MED Matchmaking Event.

By submitting an expression of interest in response to this call, you are indicating your acceptance of the call's terms.

Further details about the event, the eligibility requirements, and how to submit an expression of interest can be found below.

¹ [list-3rd-country-participation_smp_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)



This call is published on the ECCP website. Expressions of interest to participate in this event must be submitted electronically by 25 April (Wednesday) 2024, 23:59 Brussels time – first cut-off date and 16 May (Wednesday) 2024, 23:59 Brussels time – second cut-off date (the second cut-off date will be available in case of still available places after the first round of evaluation after the first cut-off date – see more details in section *Selection process* below) through:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUSouthMedMMEFrankfurt>

Late applications could be accepted for participation, if eligibility criteria are fulfilled and that costs are borne by the participants. Late applications are accepted until 4 June 2024, 23:59 Brussels time at the latest through:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUSouthMedMMEFrankfurt>

The organisers reserve the right to close the application process once the maximum capacity for participants is reached.

This call is targeting only cluster organisations and business network organisations. A separate call exists for SMEs. So, if you are an SME you should respond to the call that is available at

<https://clustercollaboration.eu/content/eu-south-med-matchmaking-event-2024-call-expression-interest-smes>

CONTEXT OF THE INITIATIVE

The Event will take place in the context of the ECCP activities. The European Commission facilitates international cluster cooperation through the ECCP including the organisation of specific cluster matchmaking events and policy development actions. The objective is to support cluster organisations to develop partnerships and business cooperation in European and global markets, for the benefit of their members, especially of SMEs. The events are currently funded under the EU Single Market Programme (SMP)/COSME Strand. As the cornerstone of the European strategy in support of SMEs' internationalisation through clusters, the ECCP provides a wide range of information and services to facilitate the interaction between clusters not only within Europe, but also with international partners.



ACTIVITIES & AGENDA

The EU – South MED Matchmaking Event will include the following activities:

- **Preparatory Webinar** – an opportunity to receive information on undertaking business with South MED and guidance on how to participate successfully in the planned event. (date tbc)
- **Technical Webinar** – a session helping future participants of the matchmaking event to make the most of their profiling in the B2Match tool and explain the procedures to optimise the booking of meetings. (date tbc)
- **Site visits** (date tbc)
- **Seminar** on knowledge exchange to foster EU- South MED cooperation. (11 June 2024)
- **Pitching and Matchmaking meetings** between cluster organisations and SMEs from EU (and non-EU countries participating in SMP/COSME Strand) countries and South MED Countries. (11 June 2024)
- Debriefing session to collect **feedback and testimonials** from cluster participants. (11 June 2024)
- **Participation at the** global leading digital summit [ACHEMA expo](#) – 12 – 13 June 2024

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

This invitation is addressed to cluster and business network organisations interested in collaborating with South MED counterparts in the following sectors:

- Green techs and energy
- Digital techs and ICT
- Mechanical engineering and manufacturing
- Pharma and biotech

The event will support funded participation of up to 25 representatives. More participants can be accepted upon confirmation and at their own cost. Late applications could be accepted for participation, provided that the eligibility criteria are fulfilled and that costs are borne by the participants. Late applications are accepted until 4 June 2024, 23:59 Brussels time at the latest.

The organisers reserve the right to close the application process once the maximum capacity for participants is reached.

PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible:

- The cluster or business network organisation must be registered in the **European Cluster Collaboration Platform** (ECCP) (www.clustercollaboration.eu) (or have requested to be



registered until one week prior to the Call for EOI²) **with a complete profile** (a link to the complete cluster profile of each applicant (registered) on the ECCP should be provided through the application:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUSouthMedMMEFrankfurt>

- The cluster or business network organisation must be engaged in providing or channelling cluster or network support services to SMEs and certify that they meet the description of 'innovation clusters' in the "EU Framework for State Aid for Research, Development, and Innovation"³; and
- The cluster or business network organisation must be a legal entity established in a European Union Member State or other country participating in the Single Market Programme/COSME Strand (see the list of non-EU participants [here](#))

SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated qualitatively using the following selection criteria:

- Cluster activity in the target sectors.
- The potential to maximise matchmaking and collaboration prospects via participation in this mission, as shown by a detailed explanation of the sort of partnership sought by the applicant and the likelihood of developing practical cooperation as a result of the event. This declaration of interest in cooperating must be concisely stated in the questions in the application form.
- The desire and capacity to collaborate more closely with other South MED cluster and network organisations in order to better support SMEs, larger firms, and research actors in their global competitiveness via collaborative efforts, as well as, to assist them in initiating new projects.
- Clusters operating beyond the stated sectors should extensively motivate the argument for their application to be added in a reserve list that will be determined in due time.

The selection of applications will be based on the afore mentioned criteria and information provided in the application form; in cases of equal merit, the balanced geographical and sector coverage of the EU and SMP/COSME Strand participating countries will be considered. Furthermore, in cases of equal merit, organisations participating for the first time at the ECCP matchmaking event will have priority. Moreover, priority will be given to those organisations that have previously **not unjustifiably** cancelled the participation to matchmaking events organised by the ECCP.

By **13 May 2024** at the latest, selected clusters in the first cut-off must explicitly reconfirm the intent to participate to the event and **by 22 May 2024 at the latest** confirm that the flight ticket or train ticket for the purpose of participating at the event has already been bought. In case the confirmation is not received by the indicated date, the organisers reserve the right to exclude the selected organisation from the European delegation and invite the organisation(s) on the reserve list instead. The confirmation dates for selected clusters from the reserve list and/or in the second cut-off will be communicated to those concerned in due time.

The organisers reserve the right to ask for additional information from the applicants, if necessary.

² Deadline: 25 April 2024, 23:59 Brussels time.

³ for more information, please follow the link:

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014XC0627\(01\)&from=EN](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014XC0627(01)&from=EN).



Attendance at the seminar, the matchmaking event, the debriefing session, and the site visits are all compulsory.

Cluster and Business Network Organisations selected to participate in the Event must send a commitment e-mail agreeing to attend the preparation webinar, the on-site seminar, conduct at least four meetings, attend the on-site visits and engage in the final 30-minute debriefing session.

SELECTION PROCESS

This Call for Expression of Interest has two cut-off dates (deadlines):

1. 25 April 2024, 23:59 Brussels time and
2. 16 May 2024, 23:59 Brussels time (the second cut-off date will be available only in case of still available places after the first round of evaluation after the first cut-off date).

First cut-off

Applicants will receive a notification whether their application is selected, put on the reserve list or rejected within two weeks after the first cut-off date. Applications on the reserve list may be edited and resubmitted until the second cut-off date – the last submitted application will be considered in the evaluation.

Second cut-off (only available if necessary)

Applicants will receive a notification whether their application is selected or rejected within one week after the second cut-off date.

Applicants that are not selected may participate at their own cost if they fulfil the eligibility criteria of this call.

Applications on the reserve list of the first cut-off will be evaluated together with the applications received by the second cut-off date.



COSTS AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

- **Return flight or train to Germany** (without local transport), will be compensated based on actual costs but **up to the limit of 650€/participant** and up to the cost of the economy fare for plane tickets/ 1st class for train tickets for the selected EU participants. Any upgrade on the fare will be at the cost of the participant.
- **A maximum 3-night stay in a hotel** will be funded as 100% of the actual costs but up to the limit of 125€/night for the selected EU participants.

Note that if more than one person from the same organisation participates and requests reimbursement of expenses, only one person per organisation can be reimbursed.

The organising team will take care to inform duly selected participants on agreed discounted rates for accommodation, as well as available airline offers.

Essential requirements to qualify for reimbursement of expenses:

- Attendance throughout the whole of the two-day agenda (11-13 June 2024)
- Completing at least four bilateral matchmaking meetings
- Attending local on-site visits
- Submitting a debriefing questionnaire at the event's debriefing session and/or completing an online survey immediately after the event, and a follow-up questionnaire provided as an online survey to assess follow-up activities four months following the event, with all areas filled in a sufficient amount of detail.

Cluster organisations participating in the EU – South MED Matchmaking Event will not have to pay the conference fees to attend ACHEMA Expo 2024.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Expressions of interest should be submitted by **25 April (Wednesday) 2024, 23:59 Brussels time – first cut-off date and 16 May (Wednesday) 2024, 23:59 Brussels time – second cut-off date (the second cut-off date will be available in case of still available places after the first round of evaluation after the first cut-off date.)**; through the following link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUSouthMedMMEFrankfurt>

The expression of interest should include the following:

- A fully completed Cluster questionnaire on the profile of the cluster.
- Proof/evidence of the completed cluster profile and registration in the ECCP (link to your cluster profile)

Please ensure that you submit full, accurate, and up-to-date information and contact information.

Please note that this event is completely free of charge.

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<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ClustersCallforExpressionofinterestEUSouthMedMMEFrankfurt>



To take the maximum of your participation and benefit from all planned pre-event activities and meetings available during the EU-South MED Matchmaking Event, we encourage you to send your Expression of Interest at your earliest possible and avoid last minute registrations.

Should you have any queries, do not hesitate to contact the ECCP team at eumatchmaking@clustercollaboration.eu.

For further information about cluster cooperation and assistance, please visit the [ECCP Website](#).

Your personal data is processed in accordance with **Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725** on the protection of individuals regarding the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data.