



PRO INNO EUROPE

# INNO LEARNING PLATFORM

## **INNO-Learning Platform: Call for expressions of interest for public innovation funding agencies to participate in pilot testing of peer review and exchange of good practice activities**

The INNO-Learning Platform is launching a call for expressions of interest for public innovation funding agencies to participate in the pilot testing of methodologies with regard to the following activities:

1. Peer reviews between innovation agencies on the provision of innovation support services to innovative SMEs
2. Transnational exchange of good practice between innovation agencies based on a twinning concept

The respective pilot testings are aimed at preparing the transition towards the forthcoming INNO-Partnering Forum (to be launched in the next phase of PRO INNO Europe, as from mid 2009) and will focus on the following activities:

### **Pilot testing 1: Peer reviews**

Over the course of 2009, the INNO-Learning Platform will organise a pilot testing of the methodologies and concepts to be applied in conducting peer reviews focused on the way innovation agencies provide and implement innovation support services.

The innovation support measure to be reviewed may stem from the following areas: (1) the use of innovation vouchers, (2) support for innovative high-growth companies or so-called 'gazelles', (3) support for the internationalisation of innovative small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), or (4) another area,.

During the peer review process, the innovation agency running the innovation support measure in question will share insights on its functioning and evidence of its performance, by means of in-house presentations and workshops and/or by visiting the measure's end users who can testify to its effectiveness.

At the same time, two or three visiting innovation agencies will act as (peer) reviewer(s) to examine the effectiveness of the innovation support measure, and point out ways in which the hosting innovation agency can improve the (running of the) measure to maximise impact/benefits for SMEs.

The main aim is to provide innovation agencies with expert opinion(s) on the way they are running innovation support measures and to identify generic lessons for the provision and implementation of effective innovation support mechanisms.

Therefore, the call invites for the peer review pilot testing both innovation agencies that want to present their candidacy to act as review case and innovation agencies that want to present their candidacy to act as examiner/reviewer organization.

In terms of planning, the peer review process will look largely as follows:

**End of March 2009:** the external expert shall submit an input report in which a peer review methodology for innovation agencies is developed in view of the above-indicated purposes. In addition, this input report shall provide a background analysis of the innovation support measure that will serve as review case. The innovation agency that runs the innovation support measure in question shall provide prior inputs for this.

**April 2009:** With advise from the external expert, the innovation agency, whose innovation support measure will be the subject of peer review, shall prepare a peer review visit (agenda and programme for visit, advise on content matters and speeches, workshops, field visits to be included, advise on the information to be supplied to the visiting agencies that act as examiner organizations).

The external expert shall likewise assist the examiner organizations in preparing for their upcoming review tasks during the peer review visit.

In order to prepare the host innovation agency for the peer review visit, the expert will hold a preparatory meeting with it. Also, the expert shall hold a joint preparatory meeting with the different examiner organisations.

**May 2009:** Holding of the peer review visit in which the innovation agency, whose innovation support measure will be the subject of peer review, shall act as host, the visiting agencies shall act as examiner organizations and the external expert shall act as facilitator and rapporteur during the whole peer review visit.

The visit should notably be conceived around the following building blocks:

- The organization, implementation and functioning of the innovation support measure in question.
- The impacts/benefits the innovation support service renders to the targeted beneficiaries.

Assessment of:

- The extent with which the overall functioning can be improved.
- Whether the examiner organizations can profit from uptaking certain of the modalities revealed on the innovation support measure that is reviewed.

**June 2009:** the external expert shall write a report on the outcomes of the peer review visit with inputs from the review case and the examiner organizations.

In order to endorse the findings from the peer review visit, the expert will prepare a report on the outcomes from this visit and hold a discussion meeting with both the host innovation agency and the examiner organisations. The purpose will be to discuss the findings and to determine the methodological and practical implications for peer review processes. Should there be more than one 1 examiner organisation, the expert shall hold a joint debriefing meeting with the different examiner organisations.

**July 2009:** the external expert shall write a final peer review output report along the following lines:

Put in place a peer review manual and an accompanying process framework, plus recommendations and implications for agencies preparing to set up similar actions (notably the INNO-Partnering Forum, to be launched in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2009) based on methodological considerations and practical insights obtained during the pilot test.

Report on lessons learned from the peer review pilot for the review organization and the examiner organizations: is there room for improvement of the review organization's functioning and structuring, and is there an interest on behalf of the examiner organizations to up-take the support measure reviewed? If this is the case, a succinct assessment of the transferability implications shall be made.

In terms of time dedication, the peer review process will roughly require the following from the participating agencies:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Mandays review case</b>	<b>Mandays examiner organizations</b>
Input report	March 2009	1	-
Preparation of peer review visit	April 2009	2	2
Peer review visit	May 2009	3	3
Peer review visit report	June 2009	2	2
Final peer review output report	July 2009	2	1
Total		10	9

## **Pilot testing 2: Trans-national good practice exchange**

Over the course of 2009 the INNO-Learning platform will organize a pilot testing of a twinning concept to be used for the development of a good practice exchange scheme between public innovation funding agencies.

It is proposed that a twinning concept be piloted by matching an innovation agency wishing to implement an innovation support scheme that has been developed abroad with the agency running the measure, and that both agencies volunteer to exchange insights on good practice elements.

This pilot exchange scheme shall, first of all, analyse an innovation support measure that will be subject of the twinning arrangement. Secondly, the pilot exchange shall also test the transferability of the innovation support measure as such, or of its features and modalities. Thirdly, it shall point out which precautions should be taken to secure a successful implementation with similar results for potential beneficiaries.

The innovation support measure to be subjected to the exchange pilot may stem from the following areas: (1) the use of innovation vouchers, (2) support for innovative high-growth companies or so-called 'gazelles', (3) support for the internationalisation of innovative SMEs, or (4) other areas.

During the good practice exchange process, the innovation agency running the innovation support measure in question shall agree to share insights on its functioning and performance, by means of interviews, in-house presentations and workshops and/or possibly by visiting the measure's end users.

At the same time, one or two visiting innovation agencies will be supported by expert advices to assess the possibility for transferring the measure in question in an integrated way, or whether specific features and/or modalities can be exchanged or taken up.

The main aim is to assess the possibility for exchanging or transferring an innovation support measure entirely, or aspects thereof, in a one-way or two-way direction between innovation agencies.

Therefore, the call invites two types of innovation agencies for the good practice exchange pilot test. On the one hand, innovation agencies willing to uptake an innovation support measure developed and implemented by another agency shall present their candidacy by identifying the area from which they would like to uptake an innovation support measure. On the other hand, innovation agencies willing to share insights on good practice elements of an innovation support measure they run are also invited to present their candidacy by indicating the area and innovation support measure they propose to showcase.

In terms of planning, the good practice exchange process will look largely as follows:

**End of March 2009:** the external expert shall submit an input report in which a good practice analysis methodology, a transferability assessment methodology and a twinning concept for innovation agencies towards exchange of good practice are developed. In addition, this input report shall provide a background analysis of the innovation support measure that serves as a good practice case. For this, the innovation agency running this innovation support measure will share prior inputs.

**April 2009:** With advise and support from the external expert, innovation agency/ies acting as host to a good practice exchange visit will prepare such (a) visit(s) – possibly there will be 2: one in two of the participating innovation agencies. The expert shall provide suggestions for the organization of these visits (agenda and programme for visit, advise on content matters and speeches, workshops, field visits to be included, advise on the information to be supplied to the visiting agencies that act as examiner organizations).

The external expert shall likewise assist the examiner organizations in preparing for their upcoming review tasks during the good practice exchange visit.

In order to prepare the participating innovation agencies for the good practice exchange visits, the expert will hold preparatory meetings with them.

**May 2009:** Holding of the good practice exchange visit(s) with both participating agencies and the external expert acting as facilitator and rapporteur during the whole good practice exchange visit.

**June 2009:** the external expert shall write a report on the outcomes of the good practice exchange visit with inputs from both participating agencies.

In order to endorse the findings from the good practice exchange visit(s), the expert will prepare a report on the outcomes from this visit and hold a joint discussion meeting with the different agencies that participated (host innovation agency/ies and the examiner organizations). The purpose is to discuss the findings and to determine the methodological and practical implications for good practice exchanges and twinning processes.

**July 2009:** the external expert shall write a final good practice exchange output report along the following lines:

Put in place a manual for good practice analysis, a transferability assessment manual, a twinning concept manual and an accompanying organizatory framework towards good practice exchange, plus recommendations and implications for agencies preparing to set up similar actions (notably the INNO-Partnering Forum, to be launched in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2009) based on methodological considerations and practical insights obtained during the pilot test.

Report on lessons learned from the good practice exchange pilot for the participating agencies with a succinct assessment of the transferability implications, notably with regard to the eventual need to adapt the existing regulatory and framework conditions.

In terms of time dedication, the good practice exchange process will roughly request the following from the participating agencies:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Mandays innovation agencies</b>
Input report	March 2009	1
Preparation of good practice exchange visit	April 2009	2
Good practice exchange visit	May 2009	3
Good practice exchange visit report	June 2009	2
Final good practice exchange output report	July 2009	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>10</b>

This call consists of three sections:

1. [Announcement](#)
2. [Specifications and conditions](#)
3. [Instructions for submitting an application](#)

## **1. Announcement**

A call for application for the INNO Learning Platform - PRO INNO Europe initiative 2007-2009 is now open.

This call is addressed to innovation agencies that are able to motivate their interest and/or provide a proven track record in line with one or more of the pilot tests outlined above.

For each of the outlined pilot tests, only candidacies that declare to participate actively during the whole process shall be taken into consideration.

## **2. Specifications and Conditions**

### **A) Introduction**

The INNO Learning Platform consortium analyzes policy support initiatives that help to achieve the following objectives:

- a) enhance transnational innovation cooperation

The main aim here is to encourage and find ways to stimulate and set up transnational cooperation between national and regional innovation policy makers and programme, project or cluster managers in specific new fields in order to better address emerging and future societal needs through innovation policy.

- b) enhance the effectiveness of innovation policy support

The main aim here is to support national and regional policy makers to improve the quality of their innovation support mechanisms in order to increase the effectiveness of policy instruments and reduce the administrative burden in implementing innovation support actions. To this end, the alignment and complementarity between actions at different policy levels is a matter of concern, as well as the additionality of supranational policy actions vis-à-vis initiatives at state or regional level and vis-à-vis private market actions and responsibilities. Also, ways to valorize the outcome of policy support action and of disseminating lessons learned from innovation cooperation are a matter of interest in this regard.

The above-indicated pilot tests adhere to these objectives.

### **B) Innovation agency and innovation support measure selection criteria**

Agencies willing to participate either in the peer review (pilot testing 1) or in the good practice exchange scheme (pilot testing 2), shall provide a written motivation explaining why their organization/the measure in question would be suitable for such pilot test. The letter of motivation shall be accompanied by the CVs<sup>1</sup> of the staff members proposed to participate in the pilot test of their choice.

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<sup>1</sup> For reference, detailed Curriculum Vitae of experts in European Format can be found at: [\[download template\]](#).

## **C) Submission of expressions of interest**

Applicants must send:

(1) their letter of motivation, indicating clearly the complete contact details of the innovation agency they represent and the role they apply for among the following options:

- (a) Pilot testing 1 (Peer review): as review case (specify the measure to be reviewed)
- (b) Pilot testing 1 (Peer review): as examiner/reviewer organization
- (c) Pilot testing 2 (Good practice exchange scheme): agency willing to share good practice elements on an innovation support measure they run for a twinning case (please specify the measure in question and the area to which it pertains)
- (d) Pilot testing 2 (Good practice exchange scheme): agency willing to implement an innovation support measure developed abroad by another agency (please specify the measure/area of interest and the name of organization(s) that runs interesting measures in this regard)

and (2) the CVs of the staff members proposed to participate in these pilot testing activities, to:

INNOVA Europe  
Att. Bart Kamp  
e-mail: [b.kamp@innova-europe.eu](mailto:b.kamp@innova-europe.eu)

Only applications by e-mail shall be accepted.

For further information you can contact the INNO Learning Platform consortium. By e-mail via [b.kamp@innova-europe.eu](mailto:b.kamp@innova-europe.eu), or by telephone on +32 2 – 808 03 18.

## **D) Deadline for the submission of applications**

The call is open from the date of publication until:

- the 9<sup>th</sup> of March 2009 before 12h00 CET

## **E) Memorandum of understanding and Reimbursement modalities**

Selected applicants will receive confirmation by e-mail and shall sign a memorandum of understanding complying with the present specifications.

Participation in the pilot testing activities does not entitle the innovation agencies to get a honorary fee for this.

For costs related to attending visits to innovation agencies, the INNO-Learning Platform will mirror the European Commission's "Rules for the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses for outside experts".

Luxembourg's law exclusively applies to this call and the memorandum of understandings, which ensue from this.

Any disputes between parties (including those which are only considered as such by one party), which result from this contract or contracts ensuing from this, shall be dealt with by the court in Luxembourg.

## **F) Information**

For further information related to the INNO Learning Platform, please visit the site of the initiative at <http://www.proinno-europe.eu/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.display&topicID=57&parentID=57>

## **3. Instructions for submitting an applications**

Before sending applications, please read the specifications and conditions of this call ([see section 2](#)) carefully.

Please make sure that you are providing complete, true, accurate and viable data and contact details.

Take note that:

- The INNO Learning Platform consortium assumes the truthfulness of the information provided in the form.
- The INNO Learning Platform consortium might, at all times, request written documents supporting this information.
- The INNO Learning Platform consortium can not be held liable for use of incorrect information obtained via the application form.

## Annex 1: Requested application inputs

Documents that are requested from candidate innovation agencies for their application, accompanied by a validly signed version of the below table with indication of the date of signature:

Application inputs:	
<p><b>1. Letter of motivation (incl. possible presentation of relevant know-how, experience, etc.), indicating the pilot test (1 or 2) in which they want to participate, and the role they apply for (a, b, c or d).</b></p> <p>(a) Pilot testing 1 (Peer review): as review case (specify the measure to be reviewed)</p> <p>(b) Pilot testing 1 (Peer review): as examiner/reviewer organization</p> <p>(c) Pilot testing 2 (Good practice exchange scheme): agency willing to share good practice elements on an innovation support measure they run for a twinning case (please specify the measure in question and the area to which it pertains)</p> <p>(d) Pilot testing 2 (Good practice exchange scheme): agency willing to implement an innovation support measure developed abroad by another agency (please specify the measure/area of interest and the name of organization(s) that runs interesting measures in this regard)</p>	
<p><b>2. The (Europass) CVs of the staff members proposed to participate in the selected pilot testing activities.</b></p>	
<p><b>Date of signature</b></p>	
<p><b>Validly signed:</b></p>	

\* Please mark intended check box