

INNO-Partnering Forum – INNO-Net for better SME innovation support services: Call for members of the INNO-Partnering Council

The INNO-Net for better innovation support services targeting SMEs (INNO-Partnering Forum) has launched a call for the expression of interest for the appointment of Members of the INNO-Partnering Council.

This document consists of five sections:

1. Announcement
2. The INNO-Partnering Forum initiative and role of the INNO-Partnering Council
3. Eligibility and selection
4. Instructions: How to submit an application
5. Information

1. Announcement

A call for the expression of interest for the appointment of Members of the INNO-Partnering Council of the INNO-Net for better innovation support service targeting SMEs (INNO-Partnering Forum) is now open.

This call for the expression of interest is addressed to interested persons within government mandated innovation agencies, ministries and other public authorities at regional or national level, who are engaged in the development and implementation of support services promoting innovation in SMEs. The INNO-Partnering Council will be set up under the INNO-Partnering Forum in framework of the PRO INNO Europe initiative of Directorate General Enterprise and Industry ¹.

2. The INNO-Partnering Forum and role of the INNO-Partnering Council

The objective of the INNO-Partnering Forum is to *improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of SME innovation support in Europe*. The expected outcomes of the project are:

1. SME adapted policy implementations
 - Improved innovation conditions for innovative SMEs in Europe
2. A sustainable learning platform

¹ See short summary of the project in Annex 1

- A forum for European co-operation on public innovation support for innovative SMEs
- 3. Mechanisms to assess, transfer and exchange better-practices
 - Transferability of proven innovation support schemes in new policy contexts.

An important vehicle for the sustainable learning platform (second point above) is the establishment of the INNO-Partnering Council which will bring key public innovation support and policy actors together for improved collaboration, learning and provision of innovation support to SMEs in regional, national and trans-national contexts. A more detailed description of the INNO-Partnering Forum initiative encompassing the INNO-Partnering Council can be found in Annex 1.

The INNO-Partnering Council will act as a **sounding board** for the INNO-Partnering Forum. In this context, the Council will:

- Provide advice and guidance on the main findings of the INNO-Partnering Forum activities and pro-actively contribute to leverage the relevant results to a Europe-wide community of public stakeholders;
- Foster mutual learning and cooperation between public actors responsible for innovation support in view to accelerate the take-up of the most advanced support systems for innovative SMEs;
- Facilitate strategic discussions between public actors on the challenges facing innovation support for the benefit of SMEs in Europe, considering the main trends, needs and barriers in providing public innovation support and the need to achieve better synergies between the different levels of innovation support in Europe.

The issues to be addressed and discussed by the Council members will be developed and prepared by special task forces dedicated to support the INNO-Partnering Council. The task forces will be led by the INNO-Partnering Forum partners and composed of members of the Council as well as external experts where relevant. The work and meetings of the INNO-Partnering Council will be facilitated by a Secretariat provided by the initiative.

Members of the INNO-Partnering Council are expected to participate in two meetings per year for a period of three years starting November 2009. The working language will be English (no translation). The Council will be composed of around 20 individuals, representing mainly public authorities or organisations acting on behalf of ministries at national or regional level with a clear focus on innovation support services for increased international competitiveness of SMEs. All selected members will receive a special invitation for the PRO INNO Europe® Annual

Partnering event taking place in Stockholm, Sweden on November 24 – 26, 2009. The kick-off meeting for the INNO-Partnering Council is planned to take place during this event.

3. Eligibility and selection

In order to be eligible for selection applicants must represent national or regional public authorities such as ministries or innovation agencies responsible for the design and/or implementation of support services promoting innovation in SMEs (describe these activities in a short note, see details under instructions). All organisations must be from CIP-EIP eligible countries².

Applicants which have been found eligible will be assessed against the following criteria in order to be considered for membership in the Council:

The applicants must:

- Represent an eligible organisation with decision-making power at senior level,
- Demonstrate that the represented organisation possesses a key role in the formulation or implementation of SME innovation policy either at national or regional level,
- Have a high level and proven track record of professional experience in innovation policy development or implementation of innovation support schemes targeting SMEs,
- Have the ability to work and interact in teams,
- Preferably have experience in European affairs and working in an international environment,
- Communicate (oral and written) in English allowing them to contribute to discussions and preparations of reports.
- Be prepared to participate in at least six two-day meetings over the course of 3 years and to actively contribute the preparation of the Council's discussions by participating in therelevant Council's Task forces to be established under the INNO-Partnering Forum.

Based on the applications the final selection will be done by VINNOVA, the coordinator of the INNO-Partnering Forum, together with the project's Steering Committee.

Selected candidates will be contacted by e-mail or telephone and those who accept the commitment in accordance with the present Specification and Conditions will sign an appointment letter.

Successful candidates will be remunerated on the following basis:

- Normal travel expenses (only flight tickets in economy class is accepted) for participation in the Council meetings provided by the coordinator.

Selected candidates are appointed on a personal basis and no substitutes will be allowed.

² For the latest information on participation of non-EU member countries in the EIP, please consult the CIP website (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/international_relations/competitiveness_innovation/index_en.htm).

4. Instructions: How to submit an application

To submit your application as a potential Member of the INNO Partnering Council, simply send, by electronic mail a short (max 1-1½ pages) letter of interest including:

- an indication of which eligible organisation you are representing (see details under eligibility)
- a short description of relevant experience in innovation support schemes targeting SMEs
- your motivation for applying to be a member of the INNO Partnering Council.

In addition, please attach a detailed Curriculum Vitae using the [European format](#),

Please send you expression of interest to participate in the Council by 23 October 2009 at 4 pm CET.

The expression of interests should be sent by e-mail to the project coordinator VINNOVA (innopartneringforum@vinnova.se). E-mails must be clearly marked: “Name of the potential participant organisation, address, title: “Expression of interest INNO-Partnering Council”. Only applications by e-mail will be accepted.

Please make sure you provide complete, true, accurate and viable data and contact details. More specifically, the INNO-Partnering Forum consortium:

- assumes the truthfulness of the information provided in the form;
- may, at all times, request written documents supporting this information;
- cannot be held liable for use of incorrect information obtained via the application form.

By submitting your Curriculum Vitae in [European format](#) to the e-mail address mentioned above, you accept the terms of the call.

Applicants will receive a confirmation of receipt of their application by e-mail.

The call is open from the date of publication until **23 October 2009**.

5. Information

For information related to this call, please contact the project coordinator of the INNO-Partnering Forum:

Dr Jenni Nordborg
VINNOVA, Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems
Telephone: +46 8 473 30 75
e-mail: jenni.nordborg@vinnova.se

Annex 1

Project summary of the INNO-Partnering Forum

The INNO-Partnering Forum will identify, develop and exploit synergies between public innovation agencies in Europe and propose new approaches to innovation support for SMEs. The project will in particular explore and test new ways of service delivery, aiming to accelerate the take-up of the most advanced innovation mechanisms with proven efficiency and impact.

Project Overview

Innovation agencies in Europe are faced with many challenges, including the need to develop new approaches for innovation support and the need to identify better synergies between support measures developed across Europe. It is increasingly important for innovation agencies to work more closely together to search for responses to these challenges, and take concrete steps towards 'better practice' in innovation support.

Intensified mutual learning and practical cooperation between public innovation agencies will help SMEs in Europe to innovate better and faster. The project will explore and test how to better address a number of important European *policy challenges for innovative SMEs* (e.g. growth, internationalisation, capital market readiness, improved innovation processes) and some critical *challenges with regards to efficiency and effectiveness of agencies and policy delivery systems* in supporting innovative SMEs (e.g. better organisational learning, "smarter" public support, stimulation of innovation demand, ease of access to and need-driven public support).

Specific objectives

The objective of the INNO-Partnering Forum is to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of SME innovation support in Europe and has the ambition to become a sustainable learning platform for European co-operation on public innovation support for innovative SMEs.

More specifically, the proposed INNO-Partnering Forum aims to:

- Identify, develop and exploit synergies between public innovation agencies and other public organisations responsible at national and regional level for the development and implementation of innovation support in Europe;
- Propose and test new ways of service delivery as well as new approaches to support innovation in SMEs more efficiently and effectively across Europe;
- Deliver concrete policy recommendations on how innovation agencies, by acting together, can accelerate the take-up of the most advanced support systems for innovative SMEs across Europe.

Activities

- The project establishes the INNO-Partnering Council, a mutual learning and cooperation platform between public actors responsible for innovation support in Europe. The "Council" is composed of around 20 high level representatives from CIP-EIP eligible countries and it will meet twice annually during the project duration. The aim of the INNO-Partnering Council is to provide advice and guidance on the main findings of the INNO-Partnering Forum activities and facilitate strategic discussions between public actors on the main challenges facing innovation support for the benefit of SMEs in Europe;
- The project will facilitate cooperation between innovation agencies as well as other public organisations assigned with the responsibility for designing and implementing innovation support measures across Europe with a view to accelerate the take-up of the most advanced support systems for innovative SMEs across Europe;
- The project will identify and test promising methodological approaches and international practices (eg. peer-reviews of specific instruments, twinning/ transferability exercises, organisational assessment methods, management practices, etc) with a view to help public organisations to support innovative SMEs more efficiently and effectively.