

# CALL FOR MEMBERS OF A REFLECTION GROUP

## Establishment of a Reflection Group for developing better cluster policies and practical tools for clusters in the EU

The “*Transnational Alliance of Clusters Towards Improved Cooperation Support*” (TACTICS) project, coordinated by OSEO (FR), is the new INNO-Net project aiming to maintain and further advance a cluster policy dialogue in Europe. It will be funded for the next 3 years under the *PRO INNO Europe* activities of the European Commission’s Competitiveness and Innovation Programme. TACTICS is launching a call for expressions of interest for the appointment of members to the “*TACTICS Reflection Group*” that will be established by this project to provide to TACTICS partners and the whole European Cluster Alliance members with insights and valuable input on cluster policy issues during the project life.

This call consists of five sections:

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### 1. Announcement

A call for expressions of interest for the appointment of members of the Reflection Group to be established under the TACTICS project is now open until 2 November. This call for expressions of interest is addressed to **interested policy makers from ministries, regional authorities, innovation agencies** who are engaged with the development and/or implementation of cluster programmes and initiatives, and calls upon them to express their interest to become a member of the Reflection Group for a period of 3 years.

### 2. Description of the Reflection Group

The aim of the TACTICS Reflection Group is to assist the TACTICS’ partners - (and the European Cluster Alliance members) to analyse, develop and propose new cluster policy actions and methods of implementation, in a number of predefined topics, as defined in the next session. For some topics, the TACTICS Reflection Group will be requested to consider the policy recommendations proposed by the European Cluster Policy Group (ECPG) and identify the best ways for their practical implementation in liaison with their national stakeholders involved in clusters policies. The whole work will be carried out through **6 task forces involving different members** of the TACTICS Reflection Group. Each task force will be dedicated to a specific theme and will hold 2 workshops. Individual members of the Reflection Group should participate in at least 2 task forces over the period of 3 years.

The TACTICS Reflection Group will mainly focus on the following six task force themes:

### ***Striving for excellent clusters***

1. **Fostering international cluster cooperation:** Which policy incentives can be developed to foster international cluster cooperation? How can SMEs be better integrated into such international efforts and what measures can be taken to support SMEs' engagement in world-competitive clusters? What are the barriers for trans-national cooperation within Europe and beyond in the field of clusters and what concrete policies can be recommended to remove them? How to better implement the specific ECPG recommendations in this area?
2. **Evaluating cluster excellence:** How can cluster excellence and world-competitive clusters be defined? Which indicators and data could be used to measure cluster excellence? How does such a methodology depend on different factors such as the cluster sector or the maturity level of the cluster? Develop, test and validate such a methodology in 3 specific sectors. How to better implement the ECPG recommendations in this area?
3. **Supporting cluster marketing and branding:** How to improve marketing in order to increase the clusters visibility in the global market? Are there some specific show cases of such practices in the EU or abroad? How can cluster initiatives support cluster marketing and branding? Which type of expertise is necessary and what is the role of cluster organisations in this respect?

### ***Making better use of excellent clusters***

1. **Using excellent clusters to address emerging industries incl. innovative services:** How can excellent clusters become the regional drivers to better address emerging industries? How can they be used to build strong eco-systems for innovation? How can cooperation between excellent clusters from different sectors be used to develop innovative products and services in the "white fields" of innovation? How to better implement the ECPG recommendations in this area?
2. **Channelling RDI funding through excellent clusters:** Does cluster excellence guarantee a more efficient spending of RDI funding? Are RDI programmes in the member states open enough and appropriate for clusters' participation (both cluster organisations and cluster firms)? What could be the role of EU programmes such as FP8 and CIP II to support excellent clusters? What is the potential of existing mechanisms such as the ERC, the EIT, and the JTIs in this context? Which role for structural funds? How to achieve better synergies between the different European (and national/regional) instruments that support clusters and inter-cluster collaborations?
3. **User-driven excellent clusters:** How can users needs be better accommodated through excellent clusters? How can more user communities (both public and non public) be involved in cluster activities, and what is the role of cluster organisations? How can pre-commercial public procurement be used through excellent clusters? Are there any good practices in the EU and what can we learn

from them? Which policy actions can be proposed to support pre-commercial public procurement through clusters, and how can these be implemented?

### **3. Eligibility and Selection**

In order to be eligible for selection, applicants must represent national and/or regional public authorities, (e.g. ministries) or innovation agencies responsible for the design and/or implementation of cluster programme. All proposed experts must be part of organisations from CIP-EIP eligible countries.

Applicants that have been found eligible will be assessed against the following criteria in order to be considered for inclusion on the list of members of the TACTICS Reflection Group:

- Represent an eligible organisation;
- Demonstrate that the represented organisation has an important role and influence on cluster policy development in his/her country;
- Have a high level and proven track record of professional experience on innovation and cluster policy;
- Have good knowledge and experience on the six topics mentioned above;
- Communicate fluently (oral and written) in English allowing them to contribute to discussions and reporting;
- Be ready to personally participate in at least four two-day meetings over the course of 3 years;
- Preferably have experience in European affairs and working in an international environment;
- Preferably belong to organisations having signed the European Cluster Memorandum and being members of the European Cluster Alliance (ECA) ,or at least be ready to join the ECA;

Based on the applications received, the final selection will be done by VINNOVA (SE) - the work package leader responsible for the Reflection Group - together with OSEO (FR) - the coordinator of the TACTICS INNO-Net - in close association with the TACTICS partners.

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 are accepted) for participation in the TACTICS Reflection Group meetings and accommodation for one night per meeting in the hotel provided by the Reflection Group secretariat.

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

### **4. Instructions on how to submit an application**

Submit your application as a potential member of the TACTICS Reflection Group by simply sending by electronic mail a short letter of interest (1-1½ pages) responding to the above criteria, describing your motivation for becoming a member of the TACTICS reflection group, and indicating the themes in which you are most experienced and interested to participate. In addition, please attach detailed curriculum vitae using the European format.

**Please send your expression of interest to participate in the TACTICS Reflection Group no later than November 2, 2009 at 4 pm CET. The expressions of interest should be sent by e-mail to VINNOVA ([tactics@vinnova.se](mailto:tactics@vinnova.se)). E-mails must be clearly marked: 'Name of the potential participant organisation, address, title: Expression of interest TACTICS. Only applications by e-mail will be accepted.**

Please note that the Kick-Off meeting of the reflection group will take place on 24-25 November in Stockholm.

Please make sure you provide complete, true, accurate and viable data and contact details. More specifically, the INNO-Net TACTICS 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 and the justification note 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 from Cecilia Johansson ([tactics@vinnova.se](mailto:tactics@vinnova.se)).

The call is open from the date of publication namely from 9 October 2009 until 2 November 2009.

## **5. Contact information**

For information related to this call, please contact the work package leader at VINNOVA:

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