

CIP-EIP Work Programme 2009

PRO INNO Europe® – Phase 2

Action 5: European Innovation Weeks

RATIONALE

Citizens' support for innovation is important for a fertile environment for innovation and for motivating young people to make their career choices in favour of innovation. More than ever, innovation is the result of combining different skills and talents. **Globalisation has increased the competition on the location of businesses even more so than before**. Regions compete worldwide for investments by offering the best possible conditions for living and working in a "war for talent". Clusters build upon such regional strengths and provide a promising way to respond to these challenges of global competition.

Clusters are not a new concept. What is new is the pace and intensity of competitive pressures and economic changes which call for world-class excellence and a high degree of adaptability which also raises the stakes for clusters. Only the combination of entrepreneurial dynamism and strong linkages with top-level knowledge institutions and excellent educational systems will ensure the future competitiveness of the European economy. To attract or keep the best people and investments, regions have to showcase their innovation potential and attractiveness for people and investors with the view to building a **strong and unique "regional innovation identity"**. As shown by the Innobarometer 2006, creating a positive image of a region ranks high on the wish list of innovative enterprises.

Under the PRO INNO Europe® initiative, very successful "European Innovation Weeks" have been organised in 2007 across the European Union (EU) with about 100.000 visitors, which helped raising innovation awareness of citizens in regions and promoting an innovation culture throughout Europe. It is proposed to build upon these successes and to launch another series of innovation awareness weeks that will make known to the widest possible extent a region's innovation potential. This requires **joint efforts of business, academia and public administration** identifying and presenting practical examples of their innovativeness.

As a **common theme** for such awareness actions it is proposed to demonstrate the important role of networking – both within a region and with other parts of the world – to stimulate innovation. This action supports the strive for excellence of clusters in Europe and their ambition to be "best in class". Through the organisation of "European Innovation Weeks", regions and cities should provide showcases of excellence and role models of which they and their citizens can feel proud.

This also supports the **European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009** to which this action may be regarded as a contribution.

This action shall be implemented through an open Call for proposals as an **"INNO-Action" under the PRO INNO Europe® initiative**.

<p>OBJECTIVES</p>	<p>The main objective of the “European Innovation Weeks” is to bring innovation to the citizens , by showcasing regional excellence and innovativeness. This will raise interest in innovative institutions and enterprises, in particular if it will be demonstrated in a simple manner how innovation can respond to societal needs and challenges. As a result, citizens will be more open towards innovative solutions and professions that drive innovation.</p> <p>The organisation of the “European Innovation Weeks” requires coordinated efforts of different actors, all contributing in different ways to the innovation potential of a city or region.</p> <p>Experience from previous innovation awareness actions funded under PRO INNO Europe® shows that this can effectively stimulate the regional dialogue and bring different institutions and organisations, often for the first time, closer together, thus strengthening regional innovation systems and the overall commitment towards innovation.</p> <p>Through the “European Innovation Weeks” citizens and enterprises will find out more about the many different innovation activities in their own city or region.</p> <p>It is a declared objective of this action to highlight the innovation potential of companies in a given region, as well as the important role of external collaboration, e.g., with university and other firms , which is central to “open innovation”. This is not only of interest for the citizens of this region but also for attracting potential business and financing partners from other parts of the world.</p> <p>The “European Innovation Weeks” shall help to raise the international profile of a city or region and thus contribute to building a strong region innovation identity .</p> <p>Finally, the “European Innovation Weeks” will help to better understand regional and cultural differences in the perception of innovation and offer better strategies on how to better bring innovation to the citizens in the future .</p>	
<p>ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>The activities (1) and (2) are both mandatory and will be launched through a call for proposals, resulting in one grant agreement.</p>	
<p>(1) Organisation and documentation of “European Innovation Weeks”</p>	<p>Tasks</p>	<p>The organisation of “European Innovation Weeks” shall be undertaken by one consortium that brings together partners from a minimum of six regions from different Member States that will each organise an innovation week. At least two events should be organised in 2009.</p> <p>The “European Innovation Weeks” shall consist of a series of actions that will showcase the innovation excellence in a city or region, based on a common concept and using a common logo and communication strategy.</p> <p>The “European Innovation Weeks” shall include all innovation stakeholders in a city or region, including public administration, large businesses, SMEs, universities, schools and colleges, public and private research organizations, NGOs, clusters organisations, business associations and others.</p> <p>The organisers of the “European Innovation Weeks” shall mobilise to the widest possible extent these stakeholders to present excellence in innovation and to engage into a dialogue with citizens.</p>

	Tasks	<p>The organisation of “European Innovation Weeks” may include the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparatory and mobilisation activities: Stakeholder and citizen's groups in a city or region should be actively involved in the planning, organisation and implementation of the “European Innovation Weeks”. In preparation of the events, dedicated media campaigns in TV, newspapers and radio should be organised, aiming at the widest possible public attention. Furthermore, meetings and brainstorming sessions with stakeholders should be organised and information material prepared. These mobilisation activities should be supported by the development of a common logo and other communication tools to build a strong regional innovation identity. • Organisation of an innovation week: Open events organised in a city or regions are the core of the “European Innovation Weeks”. These events shall encourage citizen to experience innovation and to participate actively in discussions. The presented showcases of excellence should provide the region with the possibility to build a strong “innovation identity” that can be further valorised in the future. There is no proposed format for the local events. They should however be designed to attract the largest possible number of citizens in central places in a city or region and receive full political support. A strong presence from partners from other regions shall be ensured to give them a European or international dimension.. • Communication and documentation activities : A local media partnership shall be established to promote and communicate all activities during the preparation and execution of the “European Innovation Weeks”. This media partnership shall document and present identified showcases of excellence in innovation and role models both in print media and multimedia formats, including brochures, flyers, video clips, virtual guides to regional innovation actors, etc. To this end, a specific website shall be established and maintained for a suitable duration.
	Outcome	<p>The main deliverable is the preparation and organisation of 6 innovation awareness weeks, which will be supported by show cases of excellence in innovation to be made available in paper form and online.</p>
(2) Recommendations for the further development of the concept of innovation weeks	Tasks	<p>The consortium shall establish a common approach towards the organization of the “European Innovation Weeks”, by sharing information and jointly assessing the impact of the actions. Based on the experience of the different events, recommendations on how to raise innovation awareness in Europe shall be provided, taking into account regional specificities and differences. To further promote the concept of the “European Innovation Week”, a joint website shall be developed and maintained for a suitable time, making specific reference to the “European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009”.</p>
	Outcome	<p>A joint communication platform shall be established and maintained. Furthermore, a report summarising the highlights of the different innovation weeks shall be provided, together with recommendations on how to best involve citizens in discussions on innovation.</p>

<p>CONSORTIUM COMPOSITION</p>	<p>Organisation</p>	<p>One consortium will be contracted for the organisation of 6 “European Innovation Weeks”. One partner in the consortium shall be responsible for the overall coordination and reporting to the European Commission. In order to organise the “European Innovation Weeks” in 6 cities or regions in different countries, it is indispensable that at least one partner in the project has its base in each region and is able to mobilise stakeholders locally or regionally. Although there is no maximum size for the consortium it is recommended to keep the overall size manageable.</p> <p>Possible partners in the consortium may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public authorities; • Organisations including public or private bodies managing innovation programmes; • Other innovation intermediaries such as private institutions, foundations, associations, NGOs, organisations of public interest but <u>not</u> private companies (these may however be engaged as subcontractors). <p>Partners in the project shall be based in CIP-EIP eligible countries (see http://ec.europa.eu/cip/thirdcountries.htm). Partners are required to have a proven record of mobilization of stakeholders and access to citizens on the innovation topic.</p> <p>Subcontracting by the consortium to third parties will be possible only after the signature of the grant agreement based on a detailed ex -ante description of work .</p>
<p>REFERENCES</p>	<p>This action should build upon experiences of the Innovation Circus (IC) initiative and in the “European Cluster Memorandum” that was prepared in September 2007 by the High Level Advisory Group on Clusters.</p> <p>Link to IC website: http://www.innovationcircus.com/</p> <p>The text of the “European Cluster Memorandum” is available at: http://www.proinno-europe.eu/NWEV/uploaded_documents/European_Cluster_Memorandum.pdf and the report is available at http://www.europe-innova.org/index.jsp?type=page&cid=8702&lg=en</p>	