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Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)

## **Guide for Applicants**

**Call for proposals: COS-EEN-2014-2-04**

**COSME Enterprise Europe Network 2015/2020**

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## **Introduction**

Established under the Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (COSME) (2014 - 2020), the Enterprise Europe Network is an important instrument of the European Commission to support the competitiveness and growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SME).

COSME in general as well as the Enterprise Europe Network in particular are part of the wider policy framework designed to foster growth, employment and competitiveness in the Single Market. It fully supports the aims of the Europe 2020 strategy, which recognises the crucial role of SMEs in delivering a high level of employment, social cohesion and the transition to a low carbon, resource and energy efficient economy and social cohesion.

In this context, and against the background of the "Small Business Act for Europe", which sets the EU policy framework for strengthening SMEs, the Enterprise Europe Network contributes to an SME support system in Member States and their regions that provides high quality services to the satisfaction of client companies.

To this end, the Network will provide value-added business support services that help SMEs do business in the Single Market and that are designed to improve the competitiveness of European SMEs. These services are described in and will be supported by the COSME programme. At the same time, the Network can help achieve SME-related objectives of other EU programmes like Horizon 2020 and is encouraged to contribute to the development of a stronger SME support system in the regions of the European Union – creating synergies, where relevant, with the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) or the European Social Funds. In case other Union programmes decide to make use of the Network and provide the required additional resources, Network partners may be invited to propose separate work programmes for the required activities. The Network will be notified of the rules and procedures applying in such cases.

The Network will be established as follows:

A Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) covering the years 2015-2020 will be signed with consortia of organisations that demonstrate their ability to set up and operate the Network, based on the principles described in Article 10 of the COSME Regulation. Furthermore, Specific Grant Agreements (SGA) covering periods of two years will be established with those consortia. To this end, applicants are requested to propose a preliminary work programme for the first two years (2015 – 2016).

Proposers are therefore asked to provide a coherent strategy for the entirety of the services they intend to deliver, integrating all relevant activities into a single framework where synergies between the different European funding programmes are exploited to the benefit of SMEs.

### **I. Content of the proposal**

Proposals should explain in detail how the objectives of the call can be reached with the proposed means. To this end, proposals are expected to include:

- An **implementation strategy** for the entire period (2015 – 2020) defining the area covered by the proposed project, the role of each host organisation in the consortium, specific regional objectives. The implementation strategy must explain how the specific objectives and operational requirements laid down in the present call and in the Guide for Applicants - including activities carried out in the framework of other EU programmes- will be addressed.

This implementation strategy shall be based on an analysis of the requirements of the SMEs in the geographic area covered by the proposed project. The existing support infrastructure (regional economic approaches, smart specialisation strategies and business and innovation support services) and its quality have to be taken into account to define the added value the project can bring to the region. Based on this, proposers shall devise a strategy for ensuring that all services provided within the framework of the Enterprise Europe Network are seamlessly integrated into the regional context, avoid duplication of activities and provide added-value for the regional economy. Additionality to and synergies with core activities of the host organisations; plans for cooperation with local stakeholders, SME service providers and actions to increase the quality of support services for SMEs in the region shall also be explained.

The implementation strategy shall furthermore indicate whether, and if so, to what extent, the consortium envisages in the medium and long term to draw on European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) or other European programmes in order to finance certain activities. A guide for combined financing from European Structural and Investment Funds and Union programmes will be made available in due course. The implementation strategy shall include a vision for creating and exploiting synergies for the benefit of local SMEs between different European programmes.

The implementation strategy will constitute an annex to the Framework Partnership Agreement if the proposal is retained. A template is provided in annex 1A.

- A **work programme** for the services described in and supported by COSME. The work programme shall cover the first two years of operations, translating the implementation strategy into concrete and detailed activities in 2015-2016 and including a corresponding estimated budget. Realistic performance targets for all indicators specified in chapter XII shall be included. Furthermore, the impact on European SMEs generated by the project in terms of their competitiveness, their capability to evolve in the Single Market and their innovation capacities should be demonstrated. A template is provided in annex 1B.

## II. **Structure of the Network**

The Enterprise Europe Network will be a single, coherent and collaborative European network organised at regional level and will consist of consortia of host organisations established in all regions of the European Union and other countries participating in COSME<sup>1</sup>. Its primary target

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to receipt and positive evaluation of relevant proposals. While it is intended to ensure that all regions referred to above are covered by the Network, proposals of insufficient quality will be rejected even if there is no (better) alternative bid for the same region.

audience are European small and medium sized businesses interested in carrying out international activities<sup>2</sup> and/or engaging in innovation. The Network is to be fully integrated into the regional business and innovation support infrastructure, to which end it shall cooperate efficiently with all relevant regional stakeholders, service providers and other European Networks.

Once the composition of the Network is known, the Commission will define governance arrangements for the future Network. The Executive Agency for Small and Medium Enterprises (EASME) will coordinate the operational aspects of governance, putting in place the necessary governance and Network support structures (see also chapter XV). Governance mechanisms will include channels for both Network partners and stakeholders to advise the European Commission and the Executive Agency on the operational aspects of the Network and on its strategic direction, as well as a range of networking and capacity building activities (annual conference, training facilities, internal communication tools, a common IT infrastructure and intranet, etc.).

#### **a) Geographic structure and coverage**

Subject to receipt and positive evaluation of relevant proposals, the Enterprise Europe Network shall be present in all regions of the European Union and other countries participating in COSME to provide its services in close proximity to SMEs.<sup>3</sup>

Following a first call for proposals published in January 2014<sup>4</sup>, Framework Partnership Agreements were awarded to consortia covering the majority of the territory the European Union and countries participating in the COSME programme under Article 6 of the COSME regulation. The purpose of the present, second, call is to establish the Network in the remaining geographic areas.

In most countries, it is expected that the typical area covered by a proposal will correspond more or less to NUTS1<sup>5</sup> regions. While consortia are expected to serve the entire area covered by their consortium, individual partner organisations within a consortium may be assigned smaller geographic areas (for example at NUTS2 level), provided that this does not result in any service gaps in the full area covered by the proposal.

Should the NUTS1 level not correspond to domestic structures or consortium requirements, coverage of alternative geographic areas of comparable size may be considered. Consortia in smaller countries with several NUTS1 regions may consider a nationwide coverage, provided this contributes to a higher degree of efficiency and accessibility. For the same reason, consortia spanning across several NUTS1 regions may be acceptable in larger countries.

#### **b) Network partners**

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<sup>2</sup> In this context, activities are considered as international if they involve at least two countries (including the country of origin of the client company).

<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, partner organisations will be sought in a number of third countries, as specified in chapter X.

<sup>4</sup> COS-WP2014-2-01

<sup>5</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 establishing the common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS).

For more information, see

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts\\_nomenclature/introduction](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction)

The Network is made up of units or departments of individual host organisations who are referred to as "Network partners". The type of host organisations represented in the Network varies according to regional and national circumstances. However, all consortia must be in a position to deliver high quality support services to businesses and must have a proven track record of working with SMEs.

An indicative and non-exhaustive list of typical host organisations for Enterprise Europe Network partners includes:

- SME support organisations
- Business organisations, representative organisations of SMEs and other intermediaries
- Regional development agencies
- Innovation agencies
- Research organisations or foundations
- (Business support units of) higher education institutions
- Other bodies whose aim it is to improve the access of SMEs to support services for business partnering, internationalisation and innovation projects, access to finance, and other topics that are relevant to this call.

Applicants are encouraged to include SME representative organisations because of their ability to reach into the SME community. This may be done by involving them in the delivery of services where they have the capacity; or by including them in the governance arrangements of the consortium. It should be demonstrated why the chosen approach is the most efficient way of providing high quality services.

#### **Coherence with other host organisation activities and visibility within the host organisation**

Network partners will be embedded in host organisations that will account significantly for the support needed to implement the proposed actions. Host organisations must coordinate their core tasks with the proposed Network activities in order to contribute to the excellence of the Network and the services to be delivered.

A strong positioning of the Enterprise Europe Network within the host structure is essential to ensure a sense of ownership and avoid potential conflicts of interests or overlaps with other departments in the same organisation. The host structure should demonstrate its interest in the project and highlight how existing host organisation activities can be linked to Enterprise Europe Network services to achieve synergies and added value for SMEs.

Host organisations are expected to provide strong support for the implementation of the proposed actions and to contribute to the excellence of the Network and the services to be delivered.

The management of Network host organisations<sup>6</sup> is required to integrate the Network as a strategic element in their organisation's portfolio and to ensure that Enterprise Europe Network activities receive a high degree of visibility and 'connectivity' with other activities carried out by different departments of the same organisation.

At the same time, Enterprise Europe Network staff members are encouraged to maintain a regular flow of information and collaboration with other relevant departments in the host organisation in order to keep them informed and involved in strategic matters, and in order to highlight the added value of the Network vis-à-vis the host organisation.

The Network and its host organisations play an important role as intermediaries between the enterprise community – especially SMEs - and the European Commission. From time to time, the Commission may highlight this role by organising specific meetings for high level representatives of the host organisations.

### **c) Target audience**

The Network's primary target audience are small and medium sized enterprises. All SMEs shall be entitled to turn to the Network for assistance, regardless of their size, sector or business cycle. General services of the Network, such as, for example, awareness raising and simple automated information services, including innovative services based on social media, must be aimed at all SMEs.

For more tailor-made services, the Network should primarily target companies with a high potential for internationalisation and/or innovation. Given the aim and nature of the Network, it is expected that the majority of SME clients for the Network's deeper support services will be SMEs with high ambitions and a potential to grow, to innovate, to engage in business and technology partnering activities and to exploit new opportunities in the Single Market and beyond.

Network partners may also tailor certain specialised activities to sectors that are particularly important in their region, or to companies with a particularly high potential.

While SMEs remain the primary target audience for the Network, some services might be directed at other organisations<sup>7</sup>. These include:

- Clusters and cluster organisations. Substantial synergies and efficiency gains can be achieved for certain Network services by working with clusters<sup>8</sup>;
- Public and private providers of support services to SMEs;

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<sup>6</sup> And host organisation departments, where applicable

<sup>7</sup> Organisations may not be Network partners and clients of the Network at the same time.

<sup>8</sup> Depending on local circumstances, the cooperation might be carried out via the cluster manager/organisation or directly with cluster members.

- Public authorities and public enterprises (for example by strengthening their capacities for innovation- and SME-friendly public procurement), provided the activities are designed to benefit SMEs;
- Research institutes or higher education institutions (only for activities designed to make knowledge, skills and technologies available to SMEs);
- Sectoral business associations or other organisations that are part of the SME support infrastructure (e.g. for the organisation of seminars, workshops, information days and trainings);
- Specifically for actions carried out in the framework of the SME Instrument (see activity 4 in chapter V), the Network will address beneficiaries of the SME Instrument and interact with lead coaches and other relevant actors in the context of the implementation of an SME Instrument programme.

#### **d) Consortia**

The Network needs to have expertise in different types of business and innovation support. It is therefore expected that the majority of proposals will come from consortia consisting of a range of different types of host organisations. The mix of host organisations within individual consortia should, however, be balanced and reflect a joint strategy for integrated business support covering the full range of Network services.

Partner organisations should confirm their intention to participate in the project at the application stage.

Proposals from single organisations are only acceptable if these organisations are able to provide the full range of services described in the call and in the guide for applicants in the entire geographic area covered by the proposal.

The first and foremost aim in putting Network consortia together should be to deliver high quality services to SMEs in an efficient way. Applicants are expected to decide the right mix of host organisations for this purpose, based on the prevailing regional conditions and the local business and innovation support infrastructure.

Any future changes to the composition of an existing consortium must not jeopardise the continuity of business and of the quality of the services delivered by the consortium.

No consortium shall comprise more than 15 partner organisations, unless the proposal clearly demonstrates and justifies the need for a larger consortium. An efficient service delivery shall be the only determinant factor in establishing the adequate size of a consortium.

In order to facilitate coordination and co-financing, some regional proposals may be linked up or grouped under a common trans-regional coordination. In such cases, all individual regional proposals need to meet the quality criteria on which the evaluation is based. Any added value resulting from the trans-regional coordination will be taken into account in the evaluation. Competing bids (i.e. bids that are not linked up in the trans-regional coordination structure) will

be assessed on the basis of their quality and the added value provided for the geographic area they address.

### **III. Local and European cooperation plans**

#### **a) Cooperation with regional and national stakeholders**

It is expected that most Network consortia will not formally include all organisations supporting SMEs in their region. At the same time, applicants must ensure that their activities do not duplicate existing services provided by other organisations in the same geographic area.

It is therefore necessary that Network services are embedded in the respective regional business and innovation support service infrastructure. Indeed, ensuring the coherence of Enterprise Europe Network activities and their seamless integration in the regional environment is a priority and a strategic issue for all consortia.

Applicants shall provide a mapping of the existing services that are relevant for the target audience and describe the proposers' strategy for collaboration with other local stakeholders/support service providers to create a seamless, high quality business support environment.

The aim of this approach is threefold:

- To seek complementarities and avoid duplication with existing services;
- To create a basis for positioning the Enterprise Europe Network as 'specialists for the European dimension' in the regional support environment;
- To identify and provide added value services with a European dimension that fit into and complement the existing regional business and innovation support system and contribute to its quality

This implies a high degree of regular stakeholder involvement in Network activities at all levels (local, regional, national) and constant dialogue with other support service providers. This could be carried out in a variety of ways, including, for example, regional working groups involving all relevant stakeholders, or the establishment of advisory boards or regular meetings of relevant bodies.

All relevant major service providers in the region dealing with both SMEs and European affairs should be invited. Depending on the local conditions, this could include actors such as local authorities, associations; representative organisations of SMEs; Business and Incubation Centres; universities; certification bodies; regional development agencies; National Contact Points (NCP) for SMEs (as well as regional and/or thematic NCPs where appropriate) for the EU research framework programme; innovation agencies and chambers not involved in the Network; organisations promoting trade and foreign direct investment; clusters; bodies providing advice on issues such as intellectual property rights, access to finance, internationalisation, energy and resource efficiency, and any other relevant support service providers.

A local stakeholder agreement may help structure the relationship between local stakeholders and the Enterprise Europe Network consortium. If concluded, such a document should outline the principles underpinning the mutual collaboration and commit the Network partners and other actors in their region that are not part of the consortium to minimum standards in the areas of:

- Mutual signposting to direct client companies to service providers that are not part of (but related to) the Network's range of activities
- Mutual assistance in promotional activities or joint promotion of events
- Joint activities or events if desired
- Regular exchange of information
- Any other relevant issue in the regional context

Such agreements, which may also be concluded at national Network level, with National Contact Points for Horizon 2020, national trade promotion bodies, bilateral chambers of commerce and/or other relevant SME support organisations may also be foreseen.

Irrespective of whether the cooperation is formalised in writing or not, each consortium shall invite relevant SME stakeholders to at least one meeting every six months to provide an update on current EU-related issues, Commission initiatives and services.. Furthermore, the cooperation strategy and the procedures foreseen to implement it should be reviewed regularly.

In order to facilitate communication between all relevant actors, each consortium should nominate a staff member<sup>9</sup> who will coordinate regional collaboration and positioning actions and who will be the first interlocutor for regional stakeholders.

## **b) Collaboration with other European networks or initiatives in the region**

Enterprise Europe Network consortia are encouraged to work closely with representatives of other European networks (for example Europe Direct<sup>10</sup>, EURES<sup>11</sup>, Solvit<sup>12</sup>, the European Business and Innovation Centres<sup>13</sup>, or relevant macro-regional strategies<sup>14</sup>) in their region and to liaise with them on a regular basis in order to provide a coherent European support service to citizens and businesses. Mutual agreements to signpost clients to the most suitable service provider should be considered where appropriate.

The EU Representations are also useful interlocutors for the Enterprise Europe Network and may help ensure the coherence of different European initiatives in the Member States. Where possible, it is therefore recommended that Network consortia agree on a national or regional

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<sup>9</sup> Within three months of the beginning of the project

<sup>10</sup> [http://europa.eu/europedirect/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/europedirect/index_en.htm)

<sup>11</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/eures/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.ebn.eu>

<sup>14</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperate/macro\\_region\\_strategy/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/macro_region_strategy/index_en.cfm)

approach (depending on national circumstances) for liaising with the EU Representation(s) in their country.

### **c) Cooperation partners at European level**

The Commission may furthermore decide to conclude separate bilateral agreements with other organisations acting at European level that are in a position to support the operations of the Network as a whole. These organisations may become associate members which will provide services to the Network. Associate members will not be entitled to provide Enterprise Europe Network services directly to SMEs or to enter into competition with the Network<sup>15</sup>, but will be available for collaboration with Network partners in the specific areas of their expertise (sectoral or otherwise). Network partners are encouraged to embrace this support service where this can help make their service delivery as efficient as possible.

In addition, specific Memorandums of Understanding may be concluded with international organisations that provide the Enterprise Europe Network with a substantial input, for example of new technologies or innovation opportunities. Particularly close collaboration between the Network and the respective bodies promoting the uptake and exploitation of such opportunities is encouraged.

## **IV. Requirements for partner organisations**

The success and quality of the Enterprise Europe Network's actions depend to a large extent on the skills and capacities of Network partners. They must have the organisational competences and suitably skilled staff to deliver the services of the Network locally, in close proximity to SMEs and with all due reference to regional business and innovation conditions.

### **a) Organisational competences**

Host organisations of the Enterprise Europe Network project must be highly committed to the aims of the Network and to have all the necessary skills and expertise to implement the required activities. The professional capacity to successfully support, advise and inform SMEs and a long-standing experience in those areas are key qualifications for Network partners.

In order to demonstrate their capacity, applicants are required to:

- Show that they have the capacity to reach out to all SMEs interested in receiving services enhancing their competitiveness and innovation capacities, and to address all parts of the SME community, including services and crafts. To this end, Network consortia should avail of a wide, suitable client base<sup>16</sup>;

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<sup>15</sup> Such agreements are dependent on the needs of the Network and cannot be concluded in the context of this call. Applications to become associate members will not be considered at this stage.

<sup>16</sup> The 'client base' criterion applies at consortium level as the roles of some individual partners may not require a strong SME client base – e.g. provision of highly specialised thematic support or purely administrative/coordinating roles.

- Demonstrate how they provide value added information and advisory services through a clearly defined, documented and monitored impact-driven delivery process. This should include a description of the following capacities:
  - Experience in assisting and advising enterprises on EU legislation in order to allow them to become active in the Single Market and beyond (e.g. CE marking, product conformity, Services Directive, VAT, public procurement)<sup>17</sup>.
  - Experience in assisting companies in transnational commercial and/or technology and research oriented partnerships from identification of specific needs to the signature of long term business and technology cooperation, including access to specific tools for the provision of such services and for ensuring their quality.
  - Experience in contributing to SME feedback mechanisms that collect the opinion of SMEs on EU policy options<sup>11</sup>.
  - Experience in assisting SMEs undergoing periods of high growth and international expansion based on innovative products and services<sup>12</sup>.
  - Experience in providing information and advisory services about research and innovation, including activities linked to the EU's recent Framework Programmes for R&D including exploitation of results<sup>11</sup>.
  
- Prove their ability to work with foreign organisations in a European, international business and technology oriented Network. Specific knowledge of European initiatives and the ability to share expertise and to build complementarities and synergies with other partners in diverse sectors shall also to be demonstrated. To this end, applicants shall show:
  - Their experience in working in trans-national projects supporting international business co-operation, research and innovation.
  - Their capacity to organise general or specific brokerage events and focused or sectoral company visits abroad and their experience in using dedicated tools (including those for follow-up and reporting).
  
- Explain how they are embedded in the regional SME/innovation support environment. This should include a description of:
  - Their experience in working with regional and national organisations, including cooperation with other national/regional business service providers relevant for the proposed activities.
  - Their experience in working with regional and national public authorities in order to ensure that the implementation strategy fits into the wider context of the national and regional strategy of the country.

A matrix based on the six standard types of activity should be provided. It will give an overview of activities to be performed by each partner in the consortium and will form a basis for the assessment of the overall capacity of the consortium and the expertise of each Network partner.

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<sup>17</sup> Only required for Network partner who are involved in this activity.

A service delivery process bar chart should also be provided, showing the involvement of each Network partner at the different stages of the delivery process.

## **b) Staff**

Host organisations must demonstrate that they are able to assign sufficient resources and staff members with relevant competences for each type of activity. They shall commit to allocate sufficient, suitably experienced and adequately qualified staff to the Enterprise Europe Network throughout the entire duration of the project and in line with their proposal.

The staffing requirements are expressed in terms of competence (qualification, experience and skills), in terms of capacity (total full-time equivalent (FTE), personnel availability) and FTE-distribution/balance. CV outlines must be provided in the proposal for all employees assigned to the Network<sup>18</sup>, with the exception of administrative, secretarial and other support staff. Each host organisation shall ensure that the staff members listed in their proposal are effectively available and assigned to the Network when the project begins.

The relation between full time equivalents (FTE) and the actual number of staff members should be as 'compact' as possible, while nonetheless taking into account all the requirements for competence and capacity. In other words, in any host organisation, the total number of Network staff should be as close as feasible to the total number of Network FTE. The following FTE fractions per position are considered reasonable<sup>19</sup>:

- Project management and coordination staff members: at least 80% of the working time of the concerned staff member(s)
- Staff in senior operational and Network service positions, i.e. all staff members who are regularly involved in Network activities and who carry out tasks that are central in the delivery of Network services: at least 50% of the working time of the concerned staff member(s)
- Experts in highly specialised areas may spend a lower share of their working time on the Network. For sectoral experts in core sectors of the consortium, a share of about 20% of the working time of the concerned staff member(s) is considered adequate.

The distribution of senior personnel across the consortium should reflect the tasks of each partner. For example, organisations delivering standard services of the Network should appoint at least one senior staff member with at least 5 years of experience in a relevant field.

Staff members must operate primarily in the geographic area covered by the consortium.

Host organisations are encouraged to support a high degree of staff continuity within the Network. Proposers should therefore explain their strategy to motivate and retain staff

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<sup>18</sup> CVs should preferably be provided in the Europass format (<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/home>).

<sup>19</sup> In duly substantiated cases, exceptions may be granted, provided the proposed discrepancies remain within a reasonable margin.

members of the Network. Regular staff training and capacity building within the framework of the Network are considered as assets in this context. Host organisations should therefore encourage their staff members to participate regularly in relevant training events organised for the Network. Furthermore, staff members should have access to internal training opportunities within their organisation to ensure a continuous enhancement of relevant knowledge and skills.

Host organisations are required to ensure that all staff members assigned to the Enterprise Europe Network project have adequate qualifications to fulfil their tasks to high quality standards. A large proportion of staff members should have experience in working directly with SMEs. They should be able to analyse the needs of SMEs and help implement appropriate support services on the basis of this analysis. A mix of senior and more junior staff is generally expected, with a high proportion of 'front-office' positions supported by a small number of 'back-office' positions. Staff involved in communication activities should have proficient knowledge of media and online services and should have access to social media for project-related activities.

Consortium and project coordination tasks should be carried out by senior staff members with sufficient authority to represent the Network *vis-à-vis* the management of the host organisation, the European Commission, the EASME and other Network partners.

Although no formal language regime is established, experience shows that the working language for the international activities of the Enterprise Europe Network tends to be English. Host organisations should therefore ensure that core staff members as well as project management and coordination staff have a strong command of the English language to interact efficiently at professional level with colleagues of the Network from other countries.

Furthermore, the host organisation should make sure that Enterprise Europe Network staff and activities will not be subject to any internal rules that conflict with the Network's standard activities and tasks (see activities 1-6 in chapter V). There should not be any restriction on international travel to attend Network training sessions, events and meetings requested by the EASME. Staff members should be free to engage in any international communication that is required for the services to operate in a trans-national context.

#### **New staff**

Staff continuity is considered very important in the Network. Where staff changes are unavoidable, however, the integration of new staff should be facilitated as much as possible. Host organisations should therefore operate procedures for transferring knowledge to new staff members. In terms of competence and seniority, new staff members carrying out Network tasks should fulfil the same criteria as the staff member they replace. Training courses provided by the EASME should be seen as an addition to the (essential) induction of new staff provided by the host organisation. The latter should at least include information about the consortium and its work programme, the regional environment and the services provided by the Network in general and the host organisation in particular.

## **V. Scope and range of activities**

## a) General principles

The description of activities shall be in line with the objectives, the justification and the implementation strategy of the consortium.

In their proposals, applicants should show that they respect the principle of additionality which stipulates that in order to achieve a genuine economic impact, the EU funding contribution may not replace public or other equivalent expenditure by a Member State. In other words, the EU funds may not replace national or regional funding, but must be additional to these.

Furthermore, applicants should describe the European dimension and European added value of the proposed activities and achievements. European added value means that the goals, methodology and nature of the co-operation is not merely confined to local, regional or national interests, but has a European scope. Applicants should also show how they will make use of this European dimension.

Applicants are also asked to explain the expected impact of their project (the impact-driven principle), in particular in terms of increasing the competitiveness and innovation capacities of European SMEs and enhancing their ability to become active in the Single Market and beyond.

All consortia shall carry out the following six types of activity ("standard activities") and describe these in their work programme.

1. Advice, support and information activities;
2. Cross-border partnering activities for business cooperation, technology transfer and innovation;
3. SME feedback activities;
4. Specific activities in the context of innovation support (Horizon 2020)<sup>20</sup>;
5. Promotion of Network services and communication activities;
6. Network building and reinforcing the Network.

These six types of activities are mandatory: every consortium shall guarantee that the full range of activities is provided in the region covered by the proposal. It is understood that within a consortium, individual partners are not obliged to run all types of activity. Partners may focus on and specialise in a limited number of activities.

The application should clearly identify the role of each partner in the consortium in order to ensure compliance with the 'no-wrong-door' principle described in the Code of Conduct<sup>21</sup>. This concept lays down basic rules for service delivery to clients, signposting of clients and building synergies with complementary service providers. It specifies that all necessary arrangements

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<sup>20</sup> This activity is supported by Horizon 2020 and will be subject to a separate grant agreement. It shall therefore not be described in the work programme submitted in the context of this call.

<sup>21</sup> See annex 2 as well as chapter XI

must be made to provide fully integrated services across the regional consortium: overall service delivery must be cohesive and seamless from the client's point of view. Clients must always be guided to the most appropriate service provider for their needs.

Applicants should demonstrate the specificity of the services provided and avoid any overlap with the existing business support offer in the geographic area covered by the proposal.

Furthermore, they should show how well inputs and means will be converted into activities, in terms of quality, quantity and time. They should ensure that the range of services is cost-efficient and provides the best value for money for achieving the results of the project.

The standard services of the Network (as identified in chapter V) will be provided free of charge to SMEs. However, registration fees for events, seminars and workshops may be charged. Likewise, additional services for SMEs that substantially build on and make use of knowledge built up during the Enterprise Europe Network project may be provided against a reasonable fee. Fees or travel and accommodation expenses incurred by client companies are not eligible under the Network project.

The Network will play an important role in carrying out activities that help implement European policies in support of business, innovation and internationalisation. Its success in doing so depends on the skills of Network partners and their host organisations.

Network partners will also be involved joint activities that create a network of excellence and generate value added services through a strong network effect.

## **b) Balance of activities**

Although the requirements of the target audience vary from region to region, it is important for the overall coherence of the Network that all consortia maintain a similar balance of activities and services. Applicants are therefore required to respect certain minimum thresholds in terms of the share of total full time equivalent (FTE) commitment for each of the individual service types listed below (with the exception of services provided with Horizon 2020 funding, where the budget is pre-determined).

1. Advice, support and information activities (at least 20% of the total FTE effort; advice and support should account for three quarters of the FTE assigned to this activity)
2. Cross-border partnering activities for business cooperation, technology transfer and innovation (at least 25% of the total FTE effort)
3. SME feedback activities (between 3% and 5% of the total FTE effort)
4. (not applicable – see below)
5. Promotion of the Network's services and communication activities (between 10% and 20% of the total FTE effort)
6. Network building and reinforcing the Network (between 10% and 20% of the total FTE effort)

In addition, management activities accounting for up to approximately 5% of the total FTE effort must also be foreseen.

The remaining share of the total amount of FTE may be distributed to any of the activity types as the consortium sees fit. Regional requirements and conditions should be taken into account and explained.

A separate budget will be made available from Horizon 2020 for services covered under activity 4 (specific activities in the context of innovation support (Horizon 2020)), which should not be included in the calculation outlined above.

**c) Activities carried out in collaboration with other organisations**

A limited range of specialised services that are part of the six standard types of activity of the Enterprise Europe Network can be provided by organisations that are not formal members of the consortium. This is primarily the case where Enterprise Europe Network services would duplicate an existing service available in the region or if the expected demand for an individual service is so limited that a full integration of the provider into the consortium would not be justified.

Collaboration with local organisations in order to give access to (rather than provide) specialised services could for example be organised along the following lines:

- Service level agreement without financial implications: these often reciprocal agreements ensure that clients are “handed over” from one service provider to another in a smooth way and at the appropriate juncture.
- Subcontracting could be used to provide Enterprise Europe Network clients with highly specialised services that are not normally available within the consortium. Proposals have to explain clearly why subcontracting would be the most beneficial solution.

#### d) Activities of the Network

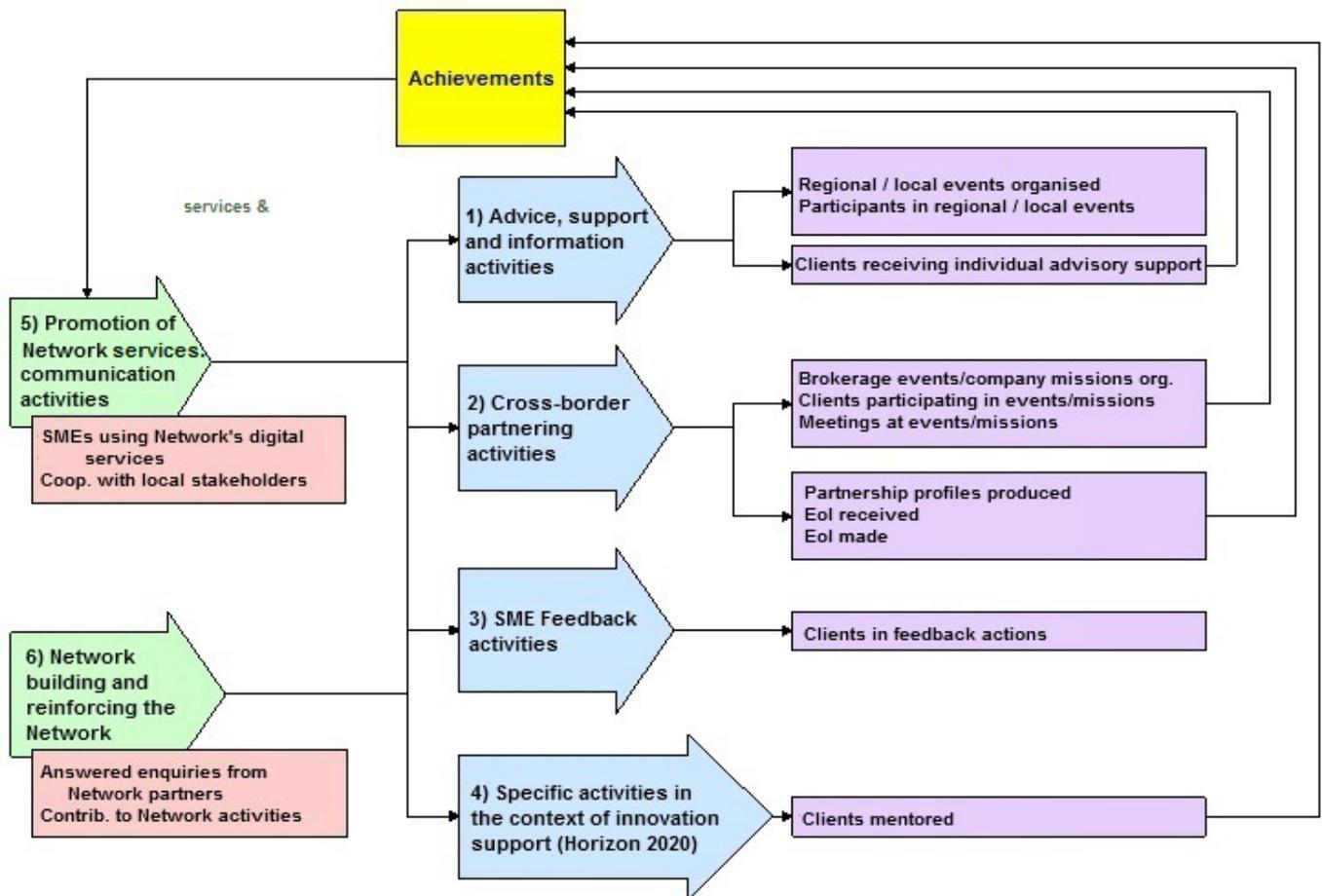


Figure 1: Activities of the Network and expected outputs and outcomes

#### Service Activities

##### 1. Advice, support and information activities

The Network's primary aim is to provide added-value services that help increase the competitiveness and innovative capacities of European SMEs. In this context, Network partners will provide advice, support and information services focusing on EU programmes, policies and legislation that are relevant to SMEs.

##### a) Value-added advice and support activities for SMEs and other relevant target audiences on matters related to EU policies, legislation and programmes

The Network will offer advisory services on innovation and technology transfer, EU legislation and standards, EU policies and programmes, access to finance, internationalisation and access to markets, enhancement of management capacities, and cooperation with clusters.

In line with the Commission's commitment to mainstream climate-related actions in EU programmes, the Network shall also address energy efficiency, climate and environmental

issues that help SMEs adapt to low-carbon, climate-resilient and energy and resource efficient business models. Where appropriate and in the client's interest, the Network should also promote open innovation models and guide SMEs through the related processes. The Network shall focus on the European dimension of these topics.

Activities in this context could include:

- Value-added advisory services and support to clients or to other Network partners enquiring on behalf of their clients (individual tailor-made advice and support, including answers to complex questions)
- Business, technology and innovation reviews of companies to ascertain their support requirements
- Events (including clinics and workshops where customised individual advice, training and other relevant Network services are provided to businesses)
- Preparatory visits and discussions with clients to establish their requirements in the framework of the project
- Other relevant activities designed to increase the capacity or knowledge of SMEs with regard to their internationalisation or innovation performance and their competitiveness in the Single Market
- Services to other providers of SME support and activities contributing to the quality of the regional SME support system, in particular activities connecting them to European quality initiatives and encouraging them to take up good practices. Introducing new and better practices in the regions would support the investments done by the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) and the European Social Fund.

Advisory services provided by the Network primarily focus on EU topics and on all matters related to the services of the Enterprise Europe. The ultimate aim always remains to increase the competitiveness of SMEs. Value-added services in the subject areas listed below must be included in the service range of all consortia. Topics covered in this context should include:

- EU legislation and policies, standards in the Single Market, EU policies, tender opportunities, public procurement, etc.
- EU programmes and European funding opportunities (in particular COSME, programmes for research and innovation, internationalisation and the Structural Funds<sup>22</sup>)
- Innovation and technology transfer services to facilitate cross-border innovation and technology transfer activities. Services guiding companies in open

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<sup>22</sup> Proposal-writing is explicitly excluded from the range of eligible Enterprise Europe Network activities.

innovation processes, design-driven innovation, eco-design and innovation management processes may be included. The primary target audience includes SMEs engaged in innovation and SMEs with a high potential for innovation and technology adoption.

- In order to help companies access international markets and business opportunities, advisory services supporting the partnering process are required, focusing for example on market intelligence, identification of suitable growth markets, local business conditions, and on capacity building for SMEs.
- Access to finance for SMEs: In addition to providing advice on EU funding (including the financial instruments of COSME and Horizon 2020 as well as the European Structural and Investment Fund), all consortia should provide basic services and information about public finance schemes for SMEs and give access to specialised advice on other sources of funding and access to finance.

More advanced services include a detailed mapping (including private financing) and complex services with a focus on individual advice, SME investment readiness programmes and advice on related matters such as business planning.

Consortia should provide access to all these services, if this is feasible under national legislation and does not overlap with other services available in the region. If need be, it is acceptable to begin with basic services if a strategy to expand the service offer over time is foreseen.

The Network shall also provide information about the proposed SME initiative (if implemented) that will help support lending to SMEs.

- Support for improving the management capacities of SMEs in order to raise business performance and achieve sustainable growth - in particular with a view to withstanding the competitive pressures on the Single Market and on international markets.
- Raising awareness of intellectual property (IP) issues and provision of support to facilitate the use of IPR (intellectual property rights) and help SMEs trade and exploit their intellectual assets at international level.

Furthermore, the Enterprise Europe Network will have privileged access to and relations with the European IPR Helpdesk and the IPR Helpdesks for ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations), China and MERCOSUR (Common Market of the South – free trade association of Southern America comprising Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela and Bolivia). Cooperation with them is strongly encouraged. The Network will act as a multiplier for the IPR Helpdesks, providing SMEs with access to their IP services (including joint training events and mutual signposting of clients).

Consortia or host organisations that are not able to deliver IP services for legal reasons may rely on collaboration agreements with other providers outside the consortium (as described in chapter V.c).

- Energy and resource efficiency: Network partners should provide services that help SMEs understand and embrace the long-term benefits of improving their resource efficiency. Services in this context also include advice on access to finance and technology transfer in the areas of eco-innovation and green entrepreneurship. The European Commission may carry out actions related to resource efficiency in SMEs in cooperation with the Network.
- Other advisory services on topics identified by Network partners as relevant in the respective regional context.

In addition to the services listed above, Network partners are encouraged to carry out some of the following services, reflecting the needs of their local client base:

- Organise study visits, seminars or workshops for specific sectors, where associations and clusters may also be involved.
- Provide technology and/or legislation watch services

#### **b) Information activities**

All Enterprise Europe Network consortia are required to provide general information services on EU subjects that are relevant to SMEs. It is expected that the majority of these services will be delivered electronically. Network partners shall use the most adequate technological solution to increasingly enable clients to benefit from highly customisable (automatic) electronic information services. Information services should focus on the priorities defined for the Network and should attempt to reach as wide an audience as possible.

As general information on EU subjects for businesses is readily available on the internet, Network partners shall focus on more added-value information services and shall exploit synergies with existing complementary platforms such as the Your Europe – Business portal<sup>23</sup>. Regionally relevant EU information, taken from various sources, should be filtered and processed by Network partners in order to provide real added value.

SMEs may be re-directed to the Enterprise Europe Network from general information sources such as the Your Europe – Business portal. Network partners shall provide them with support on EU subjects. Network partners receiving such re-direction requests have to reply within their normal response time. Closer synergies with and input from Enterprise Europe Network consortia will be sought to enhance the quality and usability of the Your Europe – Business portal.

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<sup>23</sup> See <http://europa.eu/youreurope/business/>

Joint information services developed in collaboration between several partners and/or consortia should also be considered in order to ensure a high degree of cost-efficiency.

Furthermore, Enterprise Europe Network consortia will act as key communication channels to SMEs for the European Commission, the EASME and other related services. Applicants should therefore foresee to promote and participate in European campaigns on EU policies, legislation and actions. Potential activities include media relations, awards, information campaigns and events and will be based on annual priorities established by the European Commission. Actions to promote information sources about COSME, Horizon 2020 and other European programmes that are relevant for SMEs (including the European Structural and Investment Funds) should also be foreseen.

From time to time, Network partners may also be consulted on suitable promotional messages and/or other aspects of the organisation of a campaign in their region.

Delivery channels to be used by the Network include:

- Consortium website as well as all other suitable media (for example newsletters, e-mails, newsletters, social media, other suitable online tools, radio, TV, etc.)
- Answers to general questions on EU matters from businesses
- Provision of documentation to SMEs about relevant EU topics
- Cooperation with information multipliers and stakeholder networks
- Events and other local actions drawing a large audience, organised by a Network host organisation or by other bodies, where European topics could deliver added value.

## **2. Cross-border partnering activities for business cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and research**

Partnering services are at the core of the Enterprise Europe Network. The aim is to help clients (primarily SMEs) engage in successful partnering processes in

- Business / commercial collaboration
- Innovation / technology transfer
- Collaboration fostering R&D activities of SMEs and leading to the participation of SMEs in European research programmes (such as Horizon 2020 or Eureka Eurostars)

The Network's assistance covers the entire partnership process, from the identification of suitable partnering opportunities to accompanying advisory services and assistance to ensure a successful entry into the target market(s) or sector(s).

Some of the activities carried out in this context may be aimed at increasing resource efficiency in SMEs, thereby working towards a triple benefit: 'greener' SMEs, increased competitiveness and new innovation and business opportunities.

The Network's partnering services comprise:

- Drafting of high quality partnering profiles (offers and requests), following a prior in-depth analysis of client's needs and capacities;
- Entry of these into the Network's partnering opportunities database in order for them to be disseminated;
- Active dissemination of profiles entered by other Network partners to local companies and potential business partners, as well as an active search for matching companies;
- Assistance and advice in the conclusion of transnational partnership agreements and follow-up of the partnering process from start to end, including cross-border cooperation with other Network partners to clarify the partnership needs of their clients and integrated services to help Network clients resolve other matters related to their cooperation venture (legal and administrative formalities, standards, etc.);
- Organisation of transnational brokerage and matchmaking events for SMEs, including sectoral events and large brokerage events that might be linked to international fairs. Such events should be organised in cooperation with other Network partners. Sector Groups (see chapter IX) are likely to play a coordinating role;
- Organisation of inward and outward company missions for SMEs from/to other countries covered by the Network;
- Use of the Network's central brokerage tools in the organisation of the events or activities, as well as assistance to SME participants with the necessary preparations;
- Follow-up: ensure that feedback on the outcome of the activities is provided by participating SMEs and that a track record of the impact on the company is kept and duly reported to the EASME as required. Particularly successful cases can be highlighted in success stories;
- Help SMEs exploit and use research results from public programmes, in particular the European programmes. To this end, the Commission may conclude collaboration agreements with relevant European or international bodies. This activity should primarily be aimed at bringing new products to the market or at significantly improving existing processes or products.
- Specific priorities for innovation partnering activities include:
  - Inward transnational technology transfer partnerships with foreign suppliers and related services to help businesses acquire the necessary competences to manage the technology transfer process;

- Outward transnational technology transfer aimed at opening new international markets for solutions produced in the region of an Enterprise Europe Network consortium;
- International cooperation for innovation and technology based on networking and open innovation;
- While these services primarily address SMEs, they may also involve cooperation between SMEs and research organisations, clusters, large corporations or other actors in technology-based industries.

The provision of partnering services may evolve over time as new methodologies or technologies may change the way businesses get in touch with each other. Network partners are invited to adapt their services to changing client requirements throughout the programme period<sup>24</sup>. In some cases, this may mean that Network services shift away from the traditional one-to-one contact brokering towards guiding and animating international groups of potential business partners. Network partners may therefore also explore the possibility of new forms of brokerage services. This should, however, not occur at the detriment of the Network's standard partnering services as long as these are in sufficient demand.

### **3. SME Feedback activities**

The Enterprise Europe Network is a key communication channel for SMEs towards the European Commission. It will therefore gather feedback from SMEs on selected EU policies, actions and legislation, in response to specific priorities announced by the European Commission and complementing the role of other business organisations in this context. All consortia should nominate at least one SME feedback contact person who will act as an intermediary in relation of the above mentioned activities.

Network consortia are expected to:

- Contact, inform, invite and consult SMEs in the framework of SME consultations;
- Collect the opinion of clients and submit it to the SME Feedback database and/or redirect to SOLVIT;
- Promote on-line consultations launched by the European Commission (organise events and provide advice or support to SMEs for understanding the consultation and encouraging them to respond), and inform SMEs of evaluations, roadmaps and consultations on new Commission initiatives that are likely to affect businesses;
- Disseminate the results of this feedback in their region, when applicable (for instance to sector-specific organisations, regional and national authorities, etc.);

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<sup>24</sup> Coherence with the Network's common approach and any joint European scheme that might be used for this purpose shall be ensured.

#### 4. Specific activities in the context of innovation support (Horizon 2020)

In addition to the innovation-related services referred to in activities 1 and 2, the Horizon 2020 programme calls upon the Network to provide in-depth services enhancing the innovation capacity of SMEs.

Two distinct types of activities are envisaged, which shall be provided as comprehensive seven day service packages following the processes and guidelines that are laid down for this purpose (see annex 4). They shall be delivered by suitably qualified senior innovation experts. They shall be fully integrated into the work programme and linked to the other support services of the Enterprise Europe Network. The number of support packages available in any given region depends on the size of that region and will be published in advance by the EASME. In each region, the available service packages shall be distributed across the two types of activity described below, reflecting demand from local companies.

##### a) Key account management under the SME Instrument of Horizon 2020

All **beneficiaries of the SME Instrument** are entitled to receive key account management services from the Enterprise Europe Network. The aim of the service is to:

- identify weaknesses in the innovation capacities of the beneficiary that hinder the realisation of growth opportunities and of the full commercial potential of SME Instrument participants
- identify suitable coaches (based on the assessment above) to address the identified weaknesses and moderating the coach-client relationship
- accompany the beneficiary through the SME instrument project

Key account managers have the responsibility to ensure that beneficiaries of the SME Instrument receive the most appropriate support services which enhance the probability of a successful exploitation of the innovation project and which are conducive to the sustainable growth of the beneficiary beyond their participation in Horizon 2020. Their services are deployed throughout phases I and II of the SME Instrument. Companies continuing into phase III shall be provided with access to general Enterprise Europe Network services described in the other activities (such as partnering services, access to markets, internationalisation and access to finance).

An indicative service process and description is available in annex 4 and at <http://een.ec.europa.eu/about/tendersandcalls>.

Key account management services are only accessible to beneficiaries of the SME Instrument. Network partners will be informed about successful applicants for the SME Instrument in their region and are expected to get in touch with them in order to arrange for the deployment of key account management services.

##### b) Services to enhance the innovation management capacities of SMEs

Service packages not required to deliver key account management services may be used by Network partners to help particularly promising SMEs **enhance their innovation management capacities**. The purpose of this activity is to carry out a diagnostic audit of selected SMEs that are capable of growth and successful internationalisation in order to develop and implement a tailored action plan to improve the SME's capacity to manage innovation processes.

This service is aimed at SMEs with significant innovation activities and a real potential for international growth via product, process, service or business model innovation who lack the knowledge, skills or ability to manage innovation activities.

The objective of the service is to make the innovation system, as defined by the CEN/TS 16555-1 standard<sup>25</sup>, in the company more efficient and effective. This includes the full innovation process from idea generation to market introduction and generation of profit. The general practices and skills of the company for external cooperation for innovation are an integral part of the analysis. Based on an action plan agreed with the client, the Enterprise Europe Network shall address some or all identified bottlenecks and/or accompany and supervise the work of other public or private sector consultants addressing these bottlenecks. Any cost arising from such third party involvement is not eligible under the Enterprise Europe Network project and therefore has to be covered by the SME receiving the service.

The selection of suitable recipients will be made at regional level by consensus between all senior Enterprise Europe Network innovation experts nominated for these in-depth services. In this context, it is irrelevant whether the potential recipient has ever been awarded support from the SME Instrument. The impact of the service package on the capacities of the SME must be demonstrable and reported to the EASME. An indicative service process and description is available in annex 4 and at <http://een.ec.europa.eu/about/tendersandcalls>.

The two types of service packages may not be provided to the same client in parallel.

If proposers are in a position to demonstrate that there is no capacity in their region for providing the required services, they may propose a training strategy that would build up the required capacities<sup>26</sup> at the beginning of the project and within a reasonable period of time.

In order to ensure integrated services for SMEs, it is important to establish a suitable cooperation with the National Contact Points for SMEs and the financial instruments under Horizon 2020. Each consortium should therefore ensure an adequate link with these National Contact Points.

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<sup>25</sup> See <http://een.ec.europa.eu/about/tendersandcalls> for further details

<sup>26</sup> The training and certification environment of "IMP3rove – the European Innovation Management Academy" may be considered as a possible tool in this context (for further information on IMP3rove, please consult <http://een.ec.europa.eu/about/tendersandcalls> and <http://www.improve-innovation.eu>)

## **Enabling activities**

### **5. Promotion of the Network's services and communication activities**

Each consortium must enhance the visibility of the Network, highlighting the quality and the value to SMEs of its services, and the successful results and impacts on SMEs.

It is furthermore recommended to make use of cost-effective promotional activities, including social media and online services. Communication partnerships, for example with the media, representative organisations with a wide reach into the SME community or with organisations in charge of important events for SMEs, such as large trade fairs, are encouraged.

All Network consortia are expected to develop a solid communication strategy (see chapter VIII) and to contribute to the promotion of the Network's services, quality, brand and common identity. They are furthermore required to take part in Enterprise Europe Network activities and to coordinate communication activities at national level (see chapter VIII).

Participation in EU-wide activities reinforcing the visibility of the Network as a whole is expected from each consortium.

In order to facilitate promotional activities for the entire Network, all consortia should contribute to the collection of success stories, promotional tools and data on the visibility of the Network.

### **6. Network building and reinforcing the Network**

Interactive support between Network partners is a key factor for the quality and success of the Network as a whole. Therefore, Network partners should dedicate sufficient resources to collaborating with other Network partners.

#### **Participation in Network activities**

All Network partners must provide adequate resources for participating in Enterprise Europe Network meetings, training sessions, groups addressing specific interests within the Network, conferences and other events. This includes an active participation in relevant structures of the Network and direct, swift and professional collaboration with other Network partners.

- All participating countries shall organise national Enterprise Europe Network meetings to which each partner should send at least one representative. In larger countries, additional coordination meetings involving only project management or coordination staff (or their representatives) may also be organised.
- Participation in Annual Conferences of the Enterprise Europe Network;

- Participation in staff exchange or receiving mentoring within the dedicated mentoring scheme<sup>27</sup>;
- Participation in meetings of *ad hoc* or standing Network groups, for example working groups or steering groups which create added value for the whole Network. Such groups will be convened by the EASME if and when the need arises;
- Participation in Sector Group meetings and activities (see chapter IX);
- Exchanges and use of good practices, knowledge and/or tools; contributing own expertise for strengthening the Network as a whole; knowledge-sharing within internal Network communities (see chapter IX); quality reviews of working tools such as partnering profiles (carried out by Network partners selected by the EASME); etc.
- Maintain constant links with other Network partners and extend mutual know-how;
- Joint transnational activities of Network partners;
- Participation in internal Network events at regional, national and European level (i.e. events organised for the benefit of the Network, not for clients);

#### **Participation in Network training activities**

Participation in training and mentoring programmes of the Network is considered essential for maintaining high quality service levels and activities of the Network. The EASME will put in place a training programme, active participation in which is required from all partners. Activities carried out in this context include training events in Brussels and other locations where the Network is present. Existing e-learning opportunities should also be used.

In particular, new staff members of the Network should attend a newcomer's induction course organised by the EASME shortly after joining the Network. Other Network staff members should attend training events reflecting their professional orientation within the Network.

Consortia are furthermore encouraged to organise training events in their region which are open to the whole Network.

## **VI. Consortium management**

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<sup>27</sup> The staff exchange is designed to help Network staff members broaden their competencies by working in a different Network partner for a short period of time (several days), thereby learning about new working methods and approaches. In the mentoring scheme, individual experienced (usually senior) Network staff members are at the disposal of less experienced Network partners in order to train them in the agreed working methods of the Network. The respective rules and guidelines will be made available to all Network partners once the Network is established.

Where applications are submitted by a consortium, the respective roles of co-ordinator and partners need to be explicitly defined. The Framework Partnership Agreement will provide details of the respective responsibilities.

In order to ensure efficiency, clear internal procedures and rules for internal consortium governance are needed. This includes a minimum number of consortium meetings, the definition of activity leaders<sup>28</sup> in each partner organisation and at consortium level, efficient communication flows, clear internal workflows to ensure effective cooperation between partners, and mechanisms for a systematic feedback from other Network events to all relevant Network staff members (such as Network training events, national Network meetings, meetings of a consultative steering group representing Network partners, etc.).

Each consortium should hold regular consortium meetings in order to discuss the common strategy and actions for implementing the project.

It is essential for each consortium to ensure a proper management of client relations in line with the principles of the Network's partnership process. To this end, a common mechanism for recording and following up on service delivery to clients is required in each consortium<sup>29</sup>.

#### **a) Consortium coordinators**

Each Network consortium shall nominate one organisation as consortium coordinator. The grant agreements will specify this organisation and the staff member (and a back-up) in charge of consortium coordination. This person will also be the EASME's main interlocutor in contractual issues.

The consortium coordinator oversees the general functioning of the consortium and ensures that the procedures laid down in the consortium agreement and the common workflows between consortium partners, other Network partners and the EASME are respected. It is also the consortium coordinator's role to make sure that there is a constant and adequate flow of information between all consortium partners and to promote a collaborative working environment within the consortium.

The consortium coordinator is requested to monitor the production of contractual deliverables by the consortium, ensure that deadlines are kept, raise any risk of delays or underperformance with the partner(s) concerned and inform the EASME in case the issues cannot be settled within a reasonable time within the consortium. However, all consortium partners remain responsible for carrying out the agreed work programme. This role of the coordinator does not in any way affect the role or responsibilities of the EASME with regard to monitoring the quality and service delivery of the Network.

The consortium coordinator is also in charge of raising any need for contract amendments with the EASME in good time.

#### **b) Consortium agreement**

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<sup>28</sup> A staff member who is in charge of ensuring the delivery of the respective activity.

<sup>29</sup> The chosen procedures should take into account applicable legislation on data protection.

In order to ensure a proper functioning of the consortium, the partner organisations shall conclude a consortium agreement establishing their rights and obligations. This agreement should define, inter alia:

- the internal organisation of the consortium;
- the distribution of European Union funding among consortium partners;
- the respective responsibilities of each partner to carry out the activities stipulated in the Work Programme
- rules on signposting of clients within the consortium and on effective collaboration to provide integrated services to SMEs and other clients of the Network
- the settlement of internal disputes, including cases of abuse of power;
- liability, compensation and other legal arrangements between the consortium partners.

The partners of the consortium may make all arrangements in the consortium they deem fit, provided those arrangements are not in conflict with the grant agreements, the COSME Regulation, the European Union Financial Regulation and the Rules of participation in Horizon 2020.

## **VII. Additional activities and services**

Enterprise Europe Network consortia may carry out a range of additional activities that go beyond the mandatory range of service activities every consortium is required to deliver (see chapter V). Such additional activities have to fall within the overall scope of the Enterprise Europe Network and can only be carried out by clearly identified Network partners. No subcontracting or other types of service delivery through third parties are allowed. Additional services can cover needs identified by the Network consortium which are not met by existing local services, be driven by requirements of the European Commission or contribute to the quality of the Network.

1. **EU-driven additional activities** will generally be subject to a separate restricted call within the Enterprise Europe Network, and will be launched by the European Commission or the EASME. Proposers should therefore only foresee the possibility of carrying out such additional activities, rather than providing a detailed planning. They can be deployed to:
  - Adjust the Enterprise Europe Network's existing services to changing political priorities at EU level
  - Include new services in the range of Enterprise Europe Network activities to respond to changing political priorities at EU level
  - Carry out larger scale activities in cooperation with other EU programmes not specified in the present call.

EU-driven additional activities are typically funded through a specific action with a separate budget.

2. Additional activities may also be proposed by Network consortia in order **to address specific requirements of their local client base**. Such additional activities have to stay within the overall scope of Enterprise Europe Network activities and should be fully connected to the standard integrated services provided by the Network. They must not overlap with existing services in the respective region and may consist of:

- Provision of deeper support services to address specific needs of local companies or particular sectoral needs that have a high economic relevance in the region. These services could also reflect a particularly high level of expertise of a host organisation that might allow the consortium to provide more extensive services in that area than the service range covered in the Network's types of activities 1 -4.
- The organisation of technical missions allowing SMEs to give their feedback to policy- and decision makers.
- Reinforce the local business and innovation support infrastructure in case significant gaps are identified (provided the proposed Enterprise Europe Network services retain a sufficiently strong European dimension)
- If compatible with the mandate of the host organisation and desirable in the regional context, Network services designed to enhance the quality of the existing business and innovation support infrastructure may also be provided, for example by acting as an intermediary between European programmes or networks and local actors (e.g. promoting good practice, assisting the uptake of proven methodologies from other regions, supporting the integration in European quality initiatives, or establishing links with other European initiatives).

Additional activities of this type need to be clearly identified in the work programme and are considered as eligible activities funded within the normal Enterprise Europe Network budget.

3. The third type of additional activities covers **substantial contributions to the operation and quality of the Network**, including (but not limited to):

- Chairing Sector Groups and/or working groups in order to provide a coherent framework for the members, to ensure the efficient operation of the group and to liaise with the EASME.
- Acting as mentor (with the Network's formal mentoring scheme) for other Network partners, including third country partners (also see chapter X)
- Provision of (advanced) trainers: the EASME may set up a pool of trainers, consisting of staff members who will be called upon to contribute to the Network's training programme.
- Participation in special actions led by the EASME and designed to enhance the Network.

Additional services addressing internal Network needs that require a strong contribution and significant involvement of an individual staff member of the Network are usually subject to an expert contract with the EASME. The need for these activities arises sporadically throughout the lifetime of the Network. Proposers should therefore only foresee the possibility of participating in such activities. Regularly recurring activities such as the revision of partnering profiles can, however, be considered as eligible activities if included in the work programme.

Notwithstanding the possibility of carrying out advanced activities designed to enhance the quality of the Network, every Network partner is expected to ensure the involvement of their staff members in standard networking activities that are standard procedure for all partner organisations and therefore cannot be considered as advanced activities (for example activities listed in chapters V and VI above, participation in national Network meetings or the Annual

Conference, participation in Sector Groups or working groups (as a member), responding to enquiries from Network colleagues, etc.).

## VIII. Visibility and promotion of the Enterprise Europe Network

The Enterprise Europe Network has the potential to reach a much wider audience of SMEs and achieve higher visibility than in its first phase. Applicants must demonstrate how they will achieve this, taking into account the situation in their region.

Network partners should also promote the Network and its services to the wider business support system in the region and organize joint promotion activities with key local partners. Promotion messages should highlight the Network's services, stressing that the Network is there to provide added value, not to create competition (see also chapter III).

### a) **Communication strategy and work plan**

Network partners must coordinate their communication activities in order to attract the widest number of potential clients in their region. A communication strategy at consortium level and a work plan at partner level are therefore required. This should include:

- A commitment from host organisations to give adequate visibility to the Network and its services and to ensure that the Network is clearly featured on the host organisation's website;
- A commitment to follow the Network's branding guidelines in full;
- A clear definition of Network-related promotional and public relations activities, as opposed to host organisation activities;
- Target audiences, draft messages, proposed tools, channels, resources and indicators;
- A description of how effectiveness will be evaluated;

The plan should be reviewed on an annual basis.

Each consortium is furthermore obliged to maintain a common consortium website.

The consortium's communication activities may be carried out by one or more partner organisation(s) fully or partly devoted to promoting the Network in the region covered by the consortium.

In countries with more than one consortium, all consortia are asked to coordinate **at national level** and carry out common communication actions in addition to individual regional activities. Examples include a national event, media relations or promotional campaigns. A commitment to taking part in national and EU-wide visibility activities should also be made.

A **national communication correspondent** must be nominated by each country and should work with a national communication working group. These correspondents will act as national interlocutors for the EASME and DG ENTR's communication activities and promote good communication within their own country. The correspondents must have sufficient experience and

seniority to ensure good collaboration. The selection of the respective correspondents will occur as soon as possible in 2015 in consultation with all concerned consortia.

A common **national Enterprise Europe Network website** is required (in countries where there is only one Network consortium, one website with a national reach is sufficient). The website should be available in the national language(s) and in English.

For reasons of coherence, all consortia are asked to create a generic e-mail address following the same structure in all consortia. This address should be "info@consortiumwebaddress"<sup>30</sup>. While it does not have to be the only e-mail address used by a consortium, it should be monitored every day and enquiries sent to it should be forwarded to the most appropriate consortium partner.

#### **b) Branding**

Consortia are required to follow the Enterprise Europe Network's branding rules in full and to give prominence to the name and emblem of the European Commission and the Enterprise Europe Network on all their publications, electronic communication products, posters, programmes and other communication and event material realised under the co-financed project. Each Network partner shall also place the Enterprise Europe Network logo and an explanatory text of the project on a principal and widely visited page of their website. The full range of Network services must be described on dedicated regional and national Enterprise Europe Network webpages.

Furthermore, partners shall show their membership in the Enterprise Europe Network by placing the Network logo in an easily and publicly visible place outside their premises and advertise the related services in an adequate fashion.

Host organisations will be required to comply with the branding guidelines to be provided by the EASME. These will provide for co-branding between the Network and host organisations. Tools, templates, training and support will be provided by the EASME once the Network is operational.

#### **c) Success stories**

Consortia must regularly provide the EASME with solid and validated examples of success stories for SMEs derived from the Network's services. They will be produced and promoted at EU level, depending on the needs.

#### **d) Communication within the Network**

All Network partners are required to play an active role in communicating with the rest of the Network. To this end, all core staff members should connect regularly and frequently (at least twice a week) to the Network's intranet, which is the main communication channel within the Network and with the EASME. Furthermore, an online directory of Network staff members providing professional and contact details will be made available. All Network partners are required to provide the relevant information for their staff members and to keep them updated.

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<sup>30</sup> The term "consortiumwebaddress" shall be replaced by the domain name of the regional Network website.

## **IX. Sectoral and thematic specialisation**

### **a) Sector Groups**

The sectoral knowledge of Enterprise Europe Network staff members is a key asset for the Network. In order to make particularly efficient use of existing expertise, and to facilitate networking and cooperation across consortia, all Network consortia are encouraged to take part in Sector Groups covering economic sectors that are particularly relevant in their region.

Sector Groups are groups of Network partners (represented by nominated Enterprise Europe Network staff members) who commit to work together in order to meet the specific needs of their clients operating in a particular sector. Sector Groups therefore represent a framework to plan and implement collaborative activities in a particularly efficient way.

The primary aim of Sector Groups is to give a specific sectoral focus to Enterprise Europe Network activities while at the same time recruiting clients for Network services and contributing to the defined outcomes and objectives of the Network. Sector Groups will also play a strong role in the implementation of annual (sectoral) priorities set by the Commission for the Network. They are also designed to enhance cooperation and to pool the resources the Network has at its disposal to address a specific segment of clients.

Although Sector Groups unite experts from the same economic sectors, particular attention should be paid to promoting cross-sectoral business and innovation opportunities.

Membership in Sector Groups is voluntary, but conditional on a sufficient degree of activity, which is monitored by the chairperson of the Sector Group in cooperation with the EASME. Host organisations should therefore be willing to allow Enterprise Europe Network staff members to use an adequate proportion of their working time for Sector Group activities.

All Sector Groups follow the same common guidelines and procedures (see <http://een.ec.europa.eu/about/tendersandcalls> for further details).

### **b) Thematic contact points**

In addition to specialised sectoral issues, a number of cross-cutting topics concern all Network consortia. They range from internal Network matters to broad issues concerning most clients of the Network. In order to create a better networking environment and to encourage contacts between experts in the Network, contact persons specialising in those topics will be appointed by each consortium. Staff members should be appointed on the basis of their professional expertise and their role within the Network<sup>31</sup>. They will act as a point of contact for other Network partners sharing an interest in the respective area and as an interlocutor for a mutual flow of information and

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<sup>31</sup> The enrolment will occur via the Network staff directory at the beginning of the project. An indicative list of topics is available at <http://een.ec.europa.eu/about/tendersandcalls>. It may be amended at any time in order to accommodate changing priorities for the Network.

feedback with the EASME and the European Commission. Suitable internal online communication channels will be made available.

#### **X. Cooperation with third countries**<sup>32</sup>

Emerging and established third country markets hold a significant but underexploited potential for European SMEs. The Enterprise Europe Network will therefore comprise a number of partner organisations in third countries, who will join the Network without European Union funding from COSME. They will be selected in a separate procedure. The list of countries and partners will be published in due course.

Furthermore, and in line with the Commission's approach to supporting the access of SMEs to international markets<sup>33</sup>, the Network will work together with other business support mechanisms outside the EU (including the EU SME Centres, bilateral chambers of commerce, IPR Helpdesks, European Business Organisations, etc.) to help European SMEs access selected third country markets. Duplication of existing national and European services shall be avoided.

While the standard tasks of the Network remain focused on countries participating in COSME (in particular Member States of the European Union), Network partners are also expected to carry out some activities targeting other countries.

The activities of the Enterprise Europe Network in third countries will mainly focus on partnering activities and provision of market information. Applicants should explain and justify their respective approach clearly in the implementation strategy.

The following activities could be considered for eligibility, provided they aim to help European companies exploit new opportunities in third country markets:

- Activities targeting countries that do not participate in COSME but where Enterprise Europe Network partners are present are only eligible under this project if they are carried out in close collaboration with at least one of the local Enterprise Europe Network partners in the target country.
- Activities targeting third countries where there are no Enterprise Europe Network partners are not normally eligible under this project. They can only be considered in the Work Programme if they are duly justified and substantiated in terms of objectives and added value for the Network.
- Purely bilateral activities (e.g. company missions) organised by host organisations that are not explicitly related to Network activities will not be eligible under the Enterprise Europe Network grant agreement.

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<sup>32</sup> "Third countries" in this context are defined as countries outside the European Union that do not participate in the COSME programme.

<sup>33</sup> Commission Communication "Small Business, Big World – a new partnership to help SMEs seize global opportunities"; COM (2011) 702 final

Furthermore, Network partners may from time to time be required to focus business partnering activities in third countries to specific events or missions organised by the European Commission, such as the Missions for Growth<sup>34</sup>. In those cases, Network partners throughout the EU are requested to promote the Missions for Growth and encourage European businesses to participate. These missions may take place in countries not covered by the Network. In this case, activities are eligible under this project, provided the EASME has given prior notification to this effect.

## **XI. Principles of quality management and Code of Conduct**

The Enterprise Europe Network will be a network of excellence. Consequently, all Network partners are expected to perform to the highest quality standards, both in terms of their delivery of services to client companies and in terms of their compliance with internal procedures and workflows of the Network. Host organisations are required to put in place adequate quality management procedures and are expected to strive to continuously raise the quality and impact of their activities and services.

A Code of Conduct (see annex 2) is established for the Network. This key document outlines the working methods and principles shared by all Network partners. It will be included as an annex in the Specific Grant Agreement and shall be respected by all consortia. It shapes a common understanding and may therefore be considered as a pre-requisite for an effective and successful operation of the Network as a whole.

By adhering to the Code of Conduct, the Network partners commit to operate with the same core values, to apply the same operational principles and to abide by the quality principles with regard to relationships within the Network and with clients of the Network.

In order to monitor and assess compliance with the set of quality principles, consortia will carry out a self-assessment and submit it together with each quantitative report. This self-assessment will become a basis for a dialogue focusing on improvement opportunities for individual Network partners. If necessary, partners will be required to participate in ad-hoc assistance meetings, training and mentoring. Benchmarking exercises (including peer-to-peer reviews) may also be set up. The aim is to ensure that the basic quality principles remain central building blocks of all relationships within the Network.

## **XII. Indicators of output, outcome and impact**

The Network's performance will be measured on the basis of output, outcome and impact indicators. Output indicators are designed to measure the level of activity of Network partners and consortia, while outcome indicators are used to measure the concrete results of support activities triggered by outputs. Impact indicators measure the positive effects of Enterprise Europe Network activities and services on businesses; this will be a primarily qualitative assessment.

### **a) Output and outcome indicators**

The six common types of activities will lead to outputs and outcomes that will be measured by a common set of 16 indicators, which are listed below and explained in detail in annex 3.

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<sup>34</sup> Details on current Missions for Growth are available at [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/mission-growth/missions-for-growth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/mission-growth/missions-for-growth/index_en.htm).

Each consortium shall include two-year targets for outputs and outcomes in its proposal. The minimum requirement for these targets is that they must be in line with the compulsory targets for the Network established in the COSME programme, taking into account the relative size of the consortium and the region it covers. Reporting shall be done at aggregated consortium level and at the level of individual partners.

To avoid double-counting outputs, the data reported for data items 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 at consortium level will not necessarily correspond with the sum of the respective values reported at partner level. This will be the case where Network partners operate jointly on one and the same activity in order to reach individuals, or organise local, regional events or missions, or participate in meetings during brokerage events and missions.

## List of output and outcome indicators

<b>Service activities and outputs</b>	
<b>1. Advice, support and information activities</b>	
1)	Regional/local events organised
2)	Participants in regional/local events
3)	SMEs/clients receiving individual advisory support
<b>2. Cross-border partnering activities for business cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and research</b>	
4)	Brokerage events/company missions organised
5)	SMEs/clients in brokerage events/company missions
6)	Meetings at brokerage events/company missions
7)	Partnership profiles produced
8)	Expressions of interest received
9)	Expressions of interest made
<b>3. SME feedback activities</b>	
10)	Clients in feedback related actions
<b>4. Specific activities in the context of innovation support (Horizon 2020)</b>	
11)	Clients mentored
<b>Service outcome</b>	
12)	Achievements
<b>Enabling activities and outputs</b>	
<b>5. Promotion of the Network's services and communication activities</b>	
13)	SMEs/clients using digital services provided by the Network
14)	Cooperation with local stakeholders
<b>6. Network building and reinforcing the Network</b>	
15)	Answered enquiries from Network partners
16)	Active contributions to Network activities

### b) Impact indicators

Impact indicators should provide information about the positive effects of the Network's activities and services on businesses in terms of results (products, services, market shares, etc.), efficiency (cost reduction), employment (job creation or preservation), quality improvement (goods or services, client satisfaction, etc.) or innovation. This will demonstrate the positive impact of the Network and its contribution to promoting growth and strengthening the competitiveness and sustainability of enterprises.

Consortia shall measure five impact indicators during the lifecycle of the project:

1. Market improvement

How has the support of the Network contributed to improving the position of the client company on the market? Typically, this would be shown by an increase in market share or turnover. Support actions by the Network in this context include:

- a. Helping clients reach new markets or customers, or
- b. Helping clients bring new or improved products or services to the market; or
- c. Helping clients enhance internal business processes (or create new ones);

2. Cost savings

How has the support of the Network contributed to reducing production costs (cost of material, energy or labour inputs) linked to a products or service of the client company? Have the cost savings helped the client company become more competitive and have they improved its ability to increase the added value associated to its products/services, to enter into new markets or to consolidate its position on its current markets?

3. Job creation or maintenance

To what extent has the support of the Network contributed to the creation or maintenance of jobs in the client company?

4. Quality improvement

In how far has the support of the Network had a positive impact on the client company in terms of the quality of goods and services, the satisfaction of clients or business partners, or the improvement of the company's environmental record, working conditions, or health and safety standards? Improvements in these areas should result in increased sustainability.

5. Innovation

Has the Network's support enabled the client to improve their competitiveness or sustainability by means of embracing an innovation or an innovative technology or process, or by improving its innovation strategy or innovation (management) capacities?

The data required to ascertain the Network's impact in these areas shall be gathered in two qualitative questionnaires submitted by the Network partner to each client receiving an in-depth Network service.

- **Questionnaire 1:** This questionnaire is submitted to clients together with the achievement form (used to demonstrate service outcome 12 – see table in section a.). It comprises 15 yes/no questions on the expected impact of the services delivered by the Network. Client satisfaction with the Network's services will also be analysed in this context.
- **Questionnaire 2:** This questionnaire is submitted to clients approximately one year after a service leading to an achievement has been delivered. It focuses on the extent to which the expectations described in questionnaire 1 have been attained. This questionnaire will consist of 15 simple questions (combination of yes/no and multiple choice questions)

### **XIII. Monitoring and reporting**

Network consortia shall use a common system to report to the EASME at regular intervals, giving details on the activities carried out on the basis of their work programmes. The processes of reporting and monitoring shall be managed by every partner and consortium. At Network level, the EASME will put in place common processes. The purposes of reporting and monitoring are:

- For project management:
  - To verify whether the work done justifies payment of the stated costs;
  - To justify the good use of funds and secure co-funding;
  - To enhance performance and stimulate continuous improvement of the services provided.
- For external communication
  - To gather key consolidated data showing the main outputs of the Network

A multi-layered monitoring system will be put in place once the Network is established:

- **Continuous monitoring:**
  - Consortium coordinators have the responsibility to oversee the implementation of the work programme and to monitor whether all partners carry out their respective deliverables. They shall raise any risk of underperformance with the partner(s) concerned and notify the EASME if the concerns are not addressed swiftly.
  - The EASME will monitor selected indicators very closely in order to provide a report on the Network's outcomes at regular three-month intervals. Should performance problems become apparent at this stage, the necessary measures will be taken.
  - After the first six months of the project, the EASME will launch a short inception survey, based on a standard checklist to establish whether consortia have begun to implement the activities included in their proposal and to ensure that all conditions are in place to provide the required services. Any adjustments that may be necessary to take into account changed circumstances since the submission of the proposal will be identified in this context.
  - Network consortia will regularly report performance indicators to the EASME, who is thus in a position to detect underperforming partners. This assessment will be done on the basis of the targets agreed in the work programme.
- **On-site monitoring visits:** The progress of the project implementation will be assessed and discussed during periodic on-site monitoring visits performed by the EASME.
- **Assessment at reporting stage:** At the end of each reporting period, the EASME will carry out a risk-based assessment of the performance of the Network. In this context, Network partners whose performance is significantly below Network averages will be identified and suitable training and mentoring procedures will be put in place.

#### **Performance enhancement system**

The common set of 16 output and outcome indicators (data items) listed in chapter XII in conjunction with the five impact indicators referred to in chapter XII.b) form the basis of the Performance Enhancement System (PES). The PES aims at measuring the achievements of the

Network partners for the purpose of monitoring, reporting and enhancing overall Network performance.

The two-year targets for the 16 output and outcome indicators will be included in the Specific Grant Agreement of each consortium.

Information and data collected at different stages of the projects will be checked, consolidated and analysed by the EASME. Summary reports will be made available and discussed with the Network consortia. They will be encouraged to gradually enhance their performance.

The EASME will provide statistics for the two-year targets and the results after 12 and 24 months. These will be made available on the intranet of the Network.

**Main elements of the reporting system (first Specific Grant Agreement):**

- After six months, each consortium shall fill in the inception survey
- After 12 months, each consortium shall submit a quantitative progress report on the actual values of data items and the self-assessment of the consortium.
- After 18 months each consortium shall submit a summary of the conclusions from the completed questionnaires on the extent to which the expectations for months 1 to 6 have been attained.
- After 24 months, each Consortium shall submit a technical implementation report on activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts. This report consists of three components:
  - Quantitative report: the actual values of the 16 data items on outputs and outcomes and the self-assessment of the consortium;
  - Descriptive part: the narrative report;
  - Summary of the conclusions from the completed questionnaires on the extent to which the expectations for months 7 to 12 have been attained.

Reporting documents	Timing in months			
	6	12	18	24
Responses to the inception survey	X			
Quantitative report with the actual values of 16 data items		X		X
Self-assessment of the consortium.		X		X
Summary of the conclusions from the completed questionnaires on the extent to which the expectations have been achieved			X	X
Narrative report				X

#### **XIV. Mid-term review**

The EASME, with the assistance of external experts, will conduct during the year 2018 a mid-term review of the working of the grant agreements. The review will focus on compliance with the Network's quality standards, on the services delivered to client companies and on the attainment of the targets for the output and outcome indicators. Consortia will be informed of the methodology and the criteria to be used for the review well in advance. In the event that a consortium or certain partners of a consortium do not pass the review the EASME may terminate FPA or the participation of a partner in the FPA in accordance with the provisions of the FPA.

#### **XV. The role of the EASME and the European Commission (DG Enterprise & Industry)**

The European Commission (DG Enterprise & Industry) provides political and strategic steering, sets the thematic priorities of the Network and is responsible for all policy-making activities linked to the Network. It also chairs the governance bodies of the Network.

DG Enterprise and Industry fixes priorities for responding to requests from other Directorates-General for cooperation with the Network. The EASME ensures operational implementation, in particular for transmission of information to the Network and cooperation with sector groups. The Commission will also create conditions to achieve coordination and synergies based on the Enterprise Europe Network at national and regional level.

The central (operational) management of the Enterprise Europe Network is carried out by the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). Acting under powers delegated from the European Commission, the EASME is in charge of all project management and financial operations of the Network.

The EASME will provide a wide range of common tools and support services, which are designed to facilitate the Network's operations and to put in place a support infrastructure for the entire Network. This includes:

- A common website as communication platform to enhance the Network's visibility at EU level;
- An intranet for all Network partners, containing, among others, a common knowledge base for the activities of the Network;
- A partnering opportunities database for business cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and research;
- An online contract management and reporting tool;
- A common Enterprise Europe Network brand and visual identity;
- Common working standards, usually designed in cooperation with Network partners;
- A wide range of Network animation services, including sector- and country-specific follow-up of the Network's activities;

- An information feed for professional use by the Network partners for informing their local enterprises or for internal use within the host organisation;
- A training and learning environment for new and experienced staff members;
  - Central Network staff training sessions organised in Brussels by the EASME and decentralised events organised by Network partners, supported by the EASME;
  - Creation of a list of expert Enterprise Europe Network staff members who could act as trainers at central and decentralised training events;
- Network governance structures, including regular steering meetings of a consultative nature involving Network representatives and annual conferences for the Network;
- Provision of a framework for the operation of Sector Groups and expert groups within the Network;

**XVI. Eligibility, exclusion, selection and award criteria**

The eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria are explained in the call for proposals (chapters 6, 7 and 8, respectively). Only proposals that have passed the selection phase (i.e. that meet the eligibility and selection criteria and that are not subject to any exclusion criterion) will be evaluated. Each of these proposals will be considered and evaluated in the light of five main award criteria, reflecting the requirements for the Enterprise Europe Network:

- Relevance
- Quality
- Impact
- Visibility
- Budget and cost-effectiveness

The key elements of each individual award criterion are listed in the table overleaf.

Award criteria	Maximum Score
<b>1. Relevance</b>	<b>30</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How relevant is the proposal for the objectives of the call to provide integrated services to SMEs covering the full service range of the Network?</li> <li>• To what extent does the geographical coverage of the proposal correspond to the requirements of the call?</li> <li>• To what extent are easy access and proximity to SMEs ensured in the proposal?</li> <li>• To what extent is the proposal able to provide the proposed services with a balanced budget allocation between the activities and in the entire geographical area concerned?</li> <li>• To what extent and how does the proposal implement the 'no-wrong-door' concept'?</li> <li>• To what extent do the proposed integrated services realise complementarities and synergies with existing business support services in the geographic area covered by the proposal?</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Quality</b>	<b>30</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How far are the proposed activities and means appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives of the call and expected results?</li> <li>• To what extent are the needs of enterprises in the geographic area covered by the proposal analysed?</li> <li>• In how far is the proposed methodology based on the analysed needs of the target group, its size and the appropriateness of the proposed services?</li> <li>• To what extent is the proposed project coordinated within the consortium and with complementary business support and policy initiatives?</li> <li>• To what extent does the project use self-evaluation and quality control mechanisms?</li> <li>• How innovative are the proposed methodology and services? Do they go beyond the existing range and/or quality of services available in the geographic area covered by the proposal?</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Impact</b>	<b>15</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent does the proposal contain performance indicators for the outcome and impact of the action in compliance with the requirements of the call?</li> <li>• To what extent is the project ambitious and realistic in terms of the major (impact) performance indicators in the relevant geographic area? Are the targets for these indicators clearly quantified and documented?</li> <li>• How effective is the project likely to be in terms of accessing regional SMEs and providing the necessary services?</li> <li>• How much long-term impact is it likely to have (e.g. will it contribute to improving business performance/ competitiveness, innovation performance and feedback to policy development in the geographic area covered by the proposal)?</li> </ul>	

<b>4. Visibility</b>	<b>10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent are the proposed instruments for marketing services and disseminating results suited to reach the largest number of SMEs in the relevant geographic area?</li> <li>Is the project likely to contribute to a European network of business and innovation support services?</li> <li>To what extent does the proposal reflect a strategy to ensure the visibility of one single, coherent Network and its brand?</li> </ul>	
<b>5. Budget and cost-effectiveness</b>	<b>15</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the relationship between the estimated cost and the expected results satisfactory?</li> <li>Is the proposed expenditure necessary for the implementation of the action in the entire geographic area covered by the proposal?</li> <li>Does the project provide sufficient value-for-money?</li> </ul>	
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>

## **XVII. Further information**

### Online information sources

Further information for the preparation of a proposal is available on the internet page of the Enterprise Europe Network at <http://een.ec.europa.eu/about/tendersandcalls>. A number of documents are published in this page as background information, outlining current practice in the Enterprise Europe Network and providing answers to questions asked by applicants in the context of the first call for proposals. While it is not guaranteed that these procedures referred to in these documents will be maintained in their entirety in the new Network from 2015 onwards, they nevertheless provide an important background on current and accepted working practice in the Enterprise Europe Network.

### Enquiries from proposers

The EASME is available to answer questions relating to the content of the present call for proposals and the guide for applicants. All questions must be sent by e-mail to [EASME-COSME-EEN-CALL-2014@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EASME-COSME-EEN-CALL-2014@ec.europa.eu). Answers will be published periodically and within a reasonable period of time on the website mentioned above. There will not be any individual replies.

Questions of a technical nature regarding the electronic submission tool will not be answered by the EASME and should be addressed to the IT helpdesk mentioned below.

An info day on the first call for proposals was held on 6 February 2014. Applicants to the present call may find it useful to consult the recording of this event online at <https://scic.ec.europa.eu/streaming/index.php?es=2&sessionno=4fe5149039b52765bde64beb9f674940>.

### Technical assistance with the electronic submission procedure

Proposals must be submitted electronically via the Research & Innovation Participant Portal. The technical aspects of the electronic submission procedure are explained in the online manual of the Research & Innovation Participant Portal at [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/index_en.htm). Please use the manual with reservation and only for the Participant Portal tools guidance, i.e. Submission service and Beneficiary register, because it is H2020 specific and does not cover COSME rules. For any further technical questions, consortia are invited to consult the IT helpdesk of the Participant Portal (see <https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/api//contact/index.html>).

## **XVIII. Annexes**

1. A) Template for an implementation strategy
2. Code of Conduct
3. Definitions of indicators of output and impact
4. Process and task description for innovation services and key account management
5. Visual identity and branding guidelines
6. Glossary

<b>ANNEX IA – IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY</b>
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<b>COSME</b>
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Call for proposals
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COS-EEN-2014-2-04
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<b>Project acronym:</b>	
<b>Proposal reference number in SEP:</b>	
<b>Project action duration:</b>	FPA 6 years, 2015 – 2020
<b>Start date:</b>	1 January 2015
<b>Coordinating organisation:</b>	
<b>Number of partners:</b>	
<b>Region(s) covered (if applicable indicate NUTS number):</b>	

**Structure**

- All pages should be numbered.
- Each page should be headed with the project acronym and drafting date.
- The document should not exceed 30 pages.

The implementation strategy covers a period of six years and shall be based on a thorough analysis of the needs of the SMEs and of existing services and service gaps in the proposed geographical area. It will constitute Annex I to the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA), which will provide the frame for any specific grant agreements signed during the period from 2015 to 2020.

#### **1. Geographical coverage (max. 2 pages)**

Describe the geographical area proposed with special focus on economic issues regarding specific sectors and SME's policies.

#### **2. Needs of the companies in the proposed geographical coverage (max. 3 pages)**

Provide a thorough analysis of the needs of SMEs in particular and any other target audience when relevant, including:

1. A list of target groups with an estimate of the anticipated number of direct and indirect beneficiaries;
2. An identification of perceived needs and constraints in the target audience, including those related to Horizon 2020 activities and to opportunities in third countries;
3. A description of the relevance of the project to the target audience.

#### **3. Objectives (max. 1 pages)**

Describe the objectives of the project.

#### **4. Organisational and staff competences (max. 5 pages)**

- a) Describe the entity (single host organisation or consortium) proposed to implement the project with regard to the requested competences listed in the Guide for Applicants and in particular with regard to its client base and specificities of Horizon 2020 activities;
- b) Explain the role and place of the Network in the organigram of each host organisation.
- c) Describe the team proposed for the implementation of the project by function (there is no need to include the names of individuals) within each host organisation;
- d) Explain how it is ensured that there is no "overlap" with the normal activities of the host organisation and how the additionality principle is respected in order to be in line with the regulations on European grant funding.

#### **5. Consortium organisation (max. 3 pages)**

- a) Explain how the Network activities complement the existing business support offer of the host organisation.
- b) Explain the project coordination mechanism within the consortium
- c) Explain the role of each host organisation in the consortium including the geographic area covered by their activities;
- d) Insert the matrix mapping the activities to be performed by each partner and their specific competencies
- e) Insert the delivery process bar chart showing the role of each partner and their specific activities and responsibilities in the delivery process

**6. Communication strategy (max. 2 pages)**

- a) *Explain how the communication strategy of the consortium will be set up. Also refer to the consortium's positioning in the region and the country. Describe the process for monitoring the impact achieved by communication activities, in particular, when relevant, social media promotion activities.*
- b) *Describe the process of selection and follow-up of success stories*
- c) *Describe how the consortium intends to make the best use of and provide input to the Network's overall communication strategy.*

**7. Cooperation with local, regional and national stakeholders and with organisations located third countries covered by the Network (max. 2 pages)**

- a) *Explain the role of the consortium in the regional business support environment. Explain how the proposed activities complement the existing business support offer in the geographic area covered by the proposal. (Complete the matrix with the business service offer in the region and highlight the Network's service offer.)*
- b) *Describe the instruments used to network with policy initiatives and other business service providers in the geographic area.*  
*Explain how the consortium will define its strategy with regard to opportunities in third countries that will be covered by the Enterprise Europe Network (the list of countries will be defined at a later stage), for example by addressing specific sectors or types of business, or by engaging in mentoring or staff exchange activities;*

**8. Methodology and justification for the proposed strategy (max. 10 pages)**

- a) *Describe the proposed strategy for implementing the main concepts and activities of the call in order to achieve the objectives set in the call and to maximise its impact ;*
- b) *Describe the implementation methodology;*
- c) *Explain the reasons for the proposed methodology and how the proposed strategy will address the specific needs of SMEs and other target audiences*
- d) *Describe how the project intends to build on a previous project or previous activities (where applicable);*
- e) *Describe and justify the strategy, methodologies and tools that will be implemented and used in the frame of activities related to Horizon 2020 (Chapter V, activity 4)*

**9. Quality principles, internal implementation and control (max. 2 pages)**

*Describe the procedures for internal evaluation and the use of performance indicators (principles of quality management, implementation of the code of conduct, reporting)*

# ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### Preamble

The Code of Conduct is a key document for the Enterprise Europe Network which outlines the principles shared and followed by the Network partners to which they commit as members of the Network.

The concrete implementation of these principles, including recommendations and good practices, will be described in the Operational Manual.

By adhering to the Code of Conduct, the Partners commit to share the same core values, to follow the same operational principles and to respect the quality principles with regard to the key relationships.

### CHAPTER 1 - Core values

#### **PARTNERS**

Professionalism

Adding European Value

Responsiveness

Trust

Network

Encouragement

Relationships

SME focus

#### **Professionalism**

Professionals use their knowledge and skills to the benefit of their clients according to the state-of-the-art of their profession, using protocols when available and appropriate and discretion when needed.

- The manager consulted by his co-workers ensures the efficient use of resources and effective co-operation with other teams, in order to maximise the performance. He

aims to realize the performance targets agreed upon, but never accepts unprofessional work.

- The manager ensures the constant development of the knowledge and skills of himself and his team. He also stimulates the contribution of his co-workers to the development of the profession/discipline.
- The work of the team must comply with quality principles and be assessed regularly by peers.

## **Adding European Value**

European added value means that the goals, methodology and nature of the co-operation undertaken have an aspect that is not merely confined to local, regional or even national interests, but which has a European scope.

It is possible to identify six potential ways to create European added value in Network activities:

- Promoting cross border and transnational activities
- Making the most of the internal market for SMEs in terms of competitiveness
- Assisting SMEs in interpreting and applying EU legislation
- Informing and advising SMEs on accessing EU funding
- Promoting best practices among Network partners
- Contributing to and taking advantage of the Network effect

## **Responsiveness**

Responsiveness means being able to react quickly towards clients as well as other colleagues, by using an appropriate, polite way to acknowledge having received an enquiry and provide details on how quickly the information or support can be provided. A Network staff should be approachable (available on the phone/for meetings, etc.), flexible and knowledgeable on the subjects he/she talks about. The Network staff is mindful and respectful of the needs, drivers and motivations of the client.

## **Trust and trust-building**

Due to the interdependence of their activities, partners often depend on other partners to help their company clients. There is therefore a need for trust.

The Network should be "a place where people trust each other, are high performing, accountable, hold each other to high standards and are honest with each other."

## **Networking**

The Enterprise Europe Network is teamwork at its finest. Hundreds of highly committed people work in the Network, trying to make the internal market work for SMEs. Network partners have only limited time and budgets to do it. They understand the difficulty of their mission and are determined to achieve whatever they can. Members do not all have the

same capabilities but offer a variety of skills, talents, experience and attitudes that enrich their support to their clients and colleagues and provide a broader range of options.

## **Encouragement**

The Network is only as strong as its weakest link. It is therefore important to ensure that all Network partners identify their strengths and areas of expertise, and share this knowledge with their colleagues. It is also important for Network partners to objectively identify weaknesses within their own consortia and find solutions to address them possibly in collaboration with other Network partners. Within this atmosphere of mutual respect of our strengths and weaknesses, and an open approach to sharing best practice, encouragement thrives.

Encouragement is not only restricted to the Network, but should extend to the relationships with clients and stakeholders. Partners have the expertise, knowledge and connections required for a company to innovate, internationalise and grow, and this should be exploited to clients' advantage.

## **Relationships**

Partnerships in business can be challenging. It is widely acknowledged that most partnerships fail. However, the ones that succeed can achieve much greater levels of success more rapidly than if the same individuals tried to achieve the same goals alone.

## **SME Focus: "THINKING BIG FOR SMALL BUSINESSES"**

- What are SMEs?  
Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), are defined as economically independent companies with less than 250 employees and less than €50 million annual turnover (or €43 million annual balance sheet total). There are over 20 million in the EU, representing 99% of businesses.
- Why do we focus on SMEs? Why are they so important?
  - SMEs are responsible for the majority of new jobs created in Europe and contribute to growth and prosperity. Moreover, their capacity for innovation and flexibility in a changing business environment makes them crucial for Europe's success in the global economy.
  - SMEs do not have access to the same resources (financial, human, knowledge) than bigger companies which usually have specific departments to help them fulfil their international ambitions, find out about the legal situation, and obtain market intelligence. The Network can be the added „team” or „department” an SME needs to take their business further.
- Why do we need action at EU level?
  - SMEs around Europe face the same type of problems: administrative burden, difficulty to find financing and skilled labour, or to take opportunity of the Single

Market. Addressing some of these problems together through a partnership between the EU and the Member States can bring considerable and tangible results.

- The Enterprise Europe Network is the gateway to competitiveness for European small businesses. Network partners can help businesses find business partners. They also assist them by raising awareness and by providing access to information needed to develop a business. Promoting transnational technology cooperation and ensuring access to innovative technologies is another priority of the Enterprise Europe Network.

## **CHAPTER 2 Main principles**

The Network partners commit to adhere to the following main principles.

### **Providing a professional service**

It is important for Network partners to provide a professional service for the benefit of their clients, as illustrated by the following actions:

- Recruit staff with at least the minimum qualification and experience required to efficiently deliver the Network's services to their clients.
- Endeavour to continuously update and improve the skills of individual staff members to help enhance the knowledge and expertise of the Network overall.
- Provide the same quality of service to clients of other Network Partners as they would to their own clients.
- Follow agreed Network processes and procedures at all times.
- Respect mutually established deadlines and be accountable for agreed measures and rules of the Network or Network Groups.
- Be realistic in the level of support they can offer to a colleague and communicate any difficulties that arise in delivering this support.

### **Adhering to the “no wrong door” principle**

It is of the utmost importance for Network Partners to adhere to the “No Wrong Door” principle.

This is one of the key principles of the Enterprise Europe Network and entails the implementation of an effective mechanism for signposting towards other providers of services in their region, for the benefit of all clients.

The “No Wrong Door” principle implies the following:

- Each client shall be guided towards the most appropriate service provider for their business needs.

- When the most appropriate service provider is not the Network Partner initially contacted, it will be the responsibility of that Network Partner to signpost the client to the correct service or organisation within the Network.
- When signposting a client to another provider within the Network, Network Partners can depend on their Network colleagues to follow the common values and principles set out in this Code of Conduct relating to response time, follow up and general behaviour which will ensure that their clients receive the best possible service. (See Chapter 3)
- Network Partners will build synergies with other complementary service providers outside the Network in their geographic area.
- Network Partners shall make sure that they know in detail what services other providers can offer, along with the correct contact details, to ensure their clients are signposted confidently and correctly.
- When signposting clients to a service provider outside the Network, Network Partners should attempt to agree in advance what level of service and standards their clients can expect to receive.
- Network Partners must not signpost a client to another service provider outside the Network, unless they are positive that this provider can fulfil a client's business needs with a prompt, high-quality service.

### **Being a cooperative and loyal member of the Network**

- Sharing a common vision, aims and values will enhance the commitment, enthusiasm and effectiveness of the Network, as well as allowing Network Partners to learn from each other and share good practice.
- Make the Network aware of areas of expertise, through Network tools or otherwise, and be prepared to use this expertise when assistance is requested from another Network Partner.

## **CHAPTER 3 Relationships with clients**

In their relationships with their clients, each Network Partner shall commit to:

### **Putting clients' interests first**

The Enterprise Europe Network aims to help businesses become more innovative and internationally competitive; therefore it is crucial that Network Partners give priority to activities and services which will assist their clients in this way.

Network Partners will put clients' interests first by:

- Delivering on all promises in terms of realistic services offered.
- Making sure that all clients have access to all appropriate services.

- Disregarding criteria for membership of Host Organisations and offering the same level of services to all potential clients in the region.
- Considering whether there is another Network Partner or service provider in the region who could better assist the client and signpost them, in line with the “No Wrong Door” principle.

### **Being responsive**

In order to provide clients with a professional and reliable service, Network Partners must respond to all clients’ requests quickly and comprehensively.

The following principles must be implemented:

- Network partners shall acknowledge receipt of messages within a reasonable time limit.
- Network Partners shall always provide a response to the client, no matter what the outcome.
- Network Partners are required to keep the client informed of the progress of their request.
- Network Partners shall inform the clients if their request has been signposted to another service provider and give an approximation of when they can expect to be contacted by this provider.

### **Upholding confidentiality and acting on authority**

Clients must be assured that all the information which they share will be kept confidential and It is therefore imperative that Network Partners protect this information with care and attention and do not pass on company or product details without prior consent.

### **Being open and transparent when outlining services**

To ensure clients have a clear understanding from the onset of the level of support which they will receive from the Network, it is essential for Network Partners to be both honest and realistic about the scope of services.

An outline of services must:

- Draw attention to the benefits of the Network, but prepare the client for both a positive and a negative result.
- Manage expectations with regard to the length of time required to collect comprehensive and good quality information from the Network.
- Clearly establish the terms of the two-way relationship between the Network Partner and the client with regard to limits of the intervention, communication of preliminary information from the client, possible costs for the client and anticipated response times.

- Highlight additional or complementary services which might also be available within the Network or region, in line with the “No Wrong Door” principle.

### **Following up**

To contribute to the professionalism of the Network and to maintain good working relationships, it is necessary for Network Partners to stay in regular contact with the client and react to any changes in situation or any feedback given.

The time frame and the method used for this follow-up will be determined by Network Partners, depending on the service provided and the number of companies to be contacted.

Network Partners should actively seek feedback on the level of client satisfaction and use this as one of the measures of the quality of their services.

## **CHAPTER 4 Relationships between Partners within the Enterprise Europe Network**

In their relationships with other Network Partners and with the Executive Agency, each Network Partner shall commit to:

### **Being pro-active**

Each Network partner should actively build up and maintain relations with other Network partners, particularly in other Member States, in order to facilitate cooperation for providing Network services.

### **Being responsive**

To contribute to the value and effectiveness of the Network, it is essential that Network Partners respond to messages, enquiries and requests promptly and comprehensively.

Network Partners will always provide a response, no matter what the outcome.

### **Being responsible with all correspondence**

To ensure smooth, successful communication within the Network, avoid wasting time and ultimately guarantee a better service for our clients, it is necessary that Network Partners are not only prompt, but also act responsibly with regards to the messages which they both send and receive.

## **CHAPTER 5 Relationships within the Network, at a national level**

In their relationships with other Network Partners at a national level, each Network Partner shall commit to:

### **Keeping in regular contact with other Network Partners in their country**

To develop a strong and cooperative relationship where all Network Partners work together for the benefit of increasing competitiveness and innovation of SMEs in their country, it is

important for the Network Partners to ensure open and regular communication with other network partners in their country.

To maintain this open communication, it is recommended that:

- Network partners are aware of the strengths and expertise of their fellow national Network partners
- Network partners commit to establish and maintain suitable communication at a national level, taking into account each country's specificities.

### **Contributing to Enterprise Europe Network's visibility at a national level**

All Network partners should contribute to the national visibility of the Network, ensuring that both SMEs and national stakeholders are aware of the activities and services of the Enterprise Europe Network in their country.

The following activities should be considered:

- Representing the interests of the Network, rather than individual Network Partners, when communicating with national stakeholders.
- Interacting with the European Commission Representation Office in their country and looking for opportunities for combined activities.

## **CHAPTER 6 Relationships within the consortium**

In their relationships with other Network Partners within their consortium, each Network Partner shall commit to:

### **Creating a common consortium identity at regional level**

To highlight the activities and services provided by the consortium to all clients and stakeholders in a particular region, it is important to publicise the existence of the consortium and to ensure that Network Partners can be identified as being part of the consortium.

### **Being aware of other Partners' expertise within the consortium**

To ensure correct signposting within the consortium, and respect the "No Wrong Door" principle, it is necessary to make sure that each Network Partner has sufficient knowledge of the strengths and competences of their fellow consortium members.

### **Keeping in regular contact with colleagues in the consortium**

In order to establish successful and durable working relationships, Network Partners must stay in frequent contact with fellow consortium members.

### **Sharing important information within the consortium**

A two-way flow of important information between Consortium Coordinators and Network Partners is vital to ensure successful communication with clients, Network Partners, regional

stakeholders and the EACI. Network Partners should inform their Consortium coordinator of any issues impacting the consortium.

### **Ensuring internal consortium management**

Compliance with the internal consortium agreement signed by the partners is essential to ensure that the consortium works together, delivers its activities and fulfils its contractual obligations.

## **CHAPTER 7 Relationships with other business support services**

In their relationships with other business support services, each Network Partner shall commit to:

### **Being knowledgeable about the services of other business support services**

To be able to advise clients on the full range of complementary services on offer in their region, it is necessary for each Network Partner to have sufficient knowledge of all EU business-related support services and other business support organisations active locally.

### **Being cooperative and finding synergies**

To develop stronger working relationships and for the benefit of increasing competitiveness and innovation of SMEs in their country, it is important for the Network Partners to increase collaboration with other business support services and find synergies with their own services and activities.

### **Being proactive**

To enhance the effectiveness of cooperation between all business support services for the benefit of clients, it is advisable for Network Partners to take the initiative in bringing all support services together with the aim of working closer together in the region.

### **Signposting clients to other business support services**

To make full use of all expertise and experience available and to ensure clients receive assistance no matter who they approach and in line with the “No Wrong Door” principle, it is fundamental for Network Partners to actively signpost to the other business support services.

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## Annex 3 – Indicators of output and definitions

### Service activities, outputs and outcomes; enabling activities and outputs

<b><i>Service activities and outputs</i></b>	
<b>1. Advice, support and information activities</b>	
1)	Regional/local events organised
2)	Participants in regional/local events
3)	SMEs/clients receiving individual advisory support
<b>2. Cross-border partnering activities for business cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and research</b>	
4)	Brokerage events/company missions organised
5)	SMEs/clients in brokerage events/company missions
6)	Meetings at brokerage events/company missions
7)	Partnership profiles produced
8)	Expression of interests received
9)	Expression of interests made
<b>3. SME feedback activities</b>	
10)	Clients in feed-back related actions
<b>4. Specific activities in the context of innovation support (Horizon 2020)</b>	
11)	Clients mentored/coached
<b><i>Service outcome</i></b>	
12)	<b>Achievements</b>
<b><i>Enabling activities and outputs</i></b>	
<b>5. Promotion of the Network's services and communication activities</b>	
13)	Number of SMEs using digital services provided by the Network
14)	Cooperation with local stakeholders
<b>6. Network building and reinforcing the Network</b>	
15)	Answered enquiries from Network partners
16)	Active contributions to Network activities

## Definitions of indicators of output and outcome

<p>1) Regional/local events organised</p>	<p>Regional or local events are organised by the Network partner(s)/consortia themselves in their geographic area for existing and potential Network clients with the objective to raise their awareness about Network services, EU policies, EU programmes and funding opportunities, or to train them to enhance their skills and their capacity for internationalisation and innovation.</p> <p>Regional/local events can have different forms: Workshops, seminars, trainings, etc. The event and its objectives should be published in advance and feature one or more speakers. Participants are mainly SMEs, but could also be other kinds of organisation, such as SME support organisations, universities, institutes, business organisations, regional/local authorities and stakeholders when relevant to achieve the objectives of the project.</p>
<p>2) Participants in regional/local events</p>	<p>The participants are the individual people attending the event. The number to be reported by each partner should be the number of people of organisations that are in their client database or customer relation management (CRM) tool.</p>
<p>3) Clients receiving individual advisory support</p>	<p>Clients of Network partners who have received advisory support to increase their competitiveness and their knowledge of financing, EU initiatives and legislation. This support service includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for increasing their competitiveness, e.g. innovation management support, issues related to IPR, technology audits, business reviews, assessing the potential of ideas for new products and services, access to markets, etc.</li> <li>• Support on financing issues, e.g. funding opportunities, access to finance and related EU coaching and mentoring schemes, advice on EU programmes and on how to apply for calls and complete project proposals, etc.</li> <li>• Support on EU initiatives and legislation, e.g. advice on how to comply with EU legislation (VAT, CE marking, public procurements, REACH, Ecodesign), assistance on debt recovery, contract and confidentially agreements, access to energy efficiency, climate and environmental expertise, etc.</li> </ul>

<p>4) Brokerage events/company missions organised</p>	<p>Brokerage events and company missions are organised together with Network partners, either in your geographic region with companies from abroad visiting and meeting your local clients, or abroad in which one or more of your local clients participate, visit and meet foreign companies.</p> <p>Events and missions are registered in the Network database well in advance and are labelled and promoted as brokerage events/company missions of the Network.</p>
<p>5) Clients in brokerage events/company missions</p>	<p>Number of clients of Network partners who have had face-to-face meetings with foreign companies during brokerage events and missions.</p>
<p>6) Meetings at brokerage events/company missions</p>	<p>Number of meetings that clients of Network partners have had with foreign companies during brokerage events and company missions</p>

7) Partnership profiles produced	<p>Partnership profiles are proposals for business cooperation, long term technological cooperation as well as requests from coordinators/participants of European research consortia looking for partners in order to submit proposals for transnational EU R&amp;D schemes. The profiles have to be published in the Network's central database and distributed within the Network via central or local dissemination tools and means with the objective to generate expression of interests leading to long-term cooperation agreements (partnership agreements).</p> <p>There are five types of Partnership profiles: business offers, business requests, technology offers, technology requests and R&amp;D requests.</p>
8) Expression of interests received	<p>Expressions of Interest (Eoi) are requests from clients of foreign Network partners for further information about a client's partnership profile or for the contact details pertaining to such a profile.</p>
9) Expression of interests made	<p>Expressions of Interest (Eoi) are requests from clients of foreign Network partners for further information about a client's partnership profile or for the contact details pertaining to such a profile.</p>
10) Clients in feedback related actions	<p>Clients of Network partners who have given their feedback on EU legislation, programmes or other EU topics, either in direct contact or via other information, invitation or consultation channels. It includes the number of cases submitted to the SME Feedback database, to SOLVIT, or to similar initiatives.</p>
11) Clients mentored	<p>Number of clients receiving support services grouped in the seven-day packages referred to in work package 4 for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key account management</li> <li>• Enhancing innovation management capacities of SMEs</li> </ul>
12) Achievements	<p>An achievement is a result of a service rendered by a Network partner to a client that gives a significant and clearly demonstrable impetus to the client's competitiveness at European level, thus leading to an improvement of its economic situation</p> <p>For individual advisory services, an achievement could be for example be that advisory services on funding/financing opportunities delivered by the Network</p>

	<p>helped a client get a grant or loan to buy new machinery. Other examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advice provided to a client on EU law that helped that client comply with EU law, win a public procurement contract in a foreign country, apply the CE mark correctly, recover a debt, etc.</li> <li>• advice provided to a client on IPR issues that helped the client obtain a patent for their technology.</li> </ul> <p>For partnering activities, achievements are partnership agreements resulting from partnership proposals/profiles produced and disseminated in the Network, or from brokerage events and company missions involving the Network</p>
13) SMEs using digital services provided by the Network	The number of SMEs/client subscribers, followers, fans, members, etc., receiving information via newsletters, business alerts and automated matching tools, tender alerts, RSS feed, or other service provided through social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.).
14) Local/regional stakeholder cooperation	<p>Number of local/regional stakeholder organisations that you are cooperating with.</p> <p>Cooperation means that common issues with local/regional stakeholder organisations – with the Network’s goals and objectives in mind – have been discussed and agreed and that cooperation for both parts could be fruitful. Local or regional stakeholders can include regional authorities, trade/sector organisations, unions, clusters, company organisations/networks, etc.</p>
15) Answered enquiries from Network partners	<p>Answers to enquiries sent by Network partners looking for information on behalf of their clients.</p> <p>Enquiries refer to those posted on Merlin Forum or sent directly to Network partners.</p>

<p>16) Active contributions to Network activities</p>	<p>Contributions to Network activities as speaker, trainer, chairman, coordinator, rapporteur, evaluator, or participation in activities designed to increase the performance, quality and identity of the Network.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in Sector Groups</li> <li>• Participation in Working Groups</li> <li>• Participation in centralised Network trainings and induction courses</li> <li>• Participation and/or organisation of decentralised training events</li> <li>• Follow an e-learning modules provided by the EACI</li> <li>• Participation in official Network events: Annual Conference, Steering &amp; Advisory Group (SAG) (national co-ordination, SAG meetings), Info Days, National meetings, EACI ad-hoc and contact groups.</li> <li>• EU wide promotion campaigns and other events launched by the Commission (not including here the EU consultations)</li> <li>• Participation in Staff exchange</li> <li>• Participation in Mentoring scheme, or other joint consortia meetings, seminars or initiatives.</li> </ul>
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## **Annex 4 - Process and task description for innovation services and key account management**

### **1. Services designed to enhance the innovation management capacities of SMEs**

According to the European Committee on Standardisation, 'Innovation Management' is understood to take the company's perspective as a starting point and assumes that successful innovation projects of all kinds (product, process, organisational innovation) are aimed at raising the company's profitability and competitiveness (CEN/TS 16555-1). An 'Innovation management system' includes the company's innovation processes from idea generation to innovation result, but also 'leadership', management skills and other enabling factors – like the ability to cooperate with third partners like R&D partners, clients and suppliers.

Consulting service offers enhancing the innovation management capacity are not available to SMEs in many European regions as a result of a lack of offers, unaffordable market prices or poor quality. The Network is therefore encouraged to identify promising SMEs capable of growth and successful internationalisation and to carry out a diagnostic audit of the identified SMEs in order to generate and implement a tailored action plan to improve the SME's capacity to manage innovation processes.

This service is aimed at SMEs with a real potential for international growth via product, process, service or business model innovation but who lack the knowledge, skills or ability to manage innovation activities. The aim is to empower those SMEs by helping them to unlock their potential by better managing the innovation process.

SME candidates for this service must be carefully selected by the service providers to ensure that the limited funding resource is used most effectively and that those SMEs selected stand to provide real benefit in terms of jobs, growth and European economic impact. Beneficiaries will be provided with an in depth analysis of their innovation management highlighting the gaps between their innovation capabilities and their innovation goals. This will result in the development of a tailored action plan on how to close the gaps and the provision of related support services to address those gaps.

The service is divided into four distinct steps (following a successful assessment of the SME's suitability for this service):

- Step 1: Assessment of the current status of the innovation management system in the company (0.5 days)
- Step 2: Needs/gaps analysis and action plan development (1 day)
- Step 3: Action plan implementation (5 days)
- Step 4: Final report / closing of the project (0.5 days)

As a rule of thumb this process should be delivered within a period of 12 months, the action plan and its implementation will be delivered and / or managed by suitably qualified Enterprise Europe Network staff.

### **Tasks of Network partners**

- to carry out innovation management capacity assessments using agreed methodologies
- to interpret the assessment results and propose a related action plan addressing the main bottlenecks
- to provide or give access to targeted and tailored support according to the action plan to help the SME increase its innovation management capacities
- to initiate and guide the next appropriate steps

Further background information as well as a detailed description of the key processes envisaged for this service is provided in the information pack published at <http://een.ec.europa.eu/about/tendersandcalls>

## **2. Key Account Management for beneficiaries of the SME Instrument**

### **Background: the SME Instrument**

The SME Instrument is a novel Horizon 2020 tool to fund and support innovation and commercialisation activities in SMEs. It intends to bridge the gap between research, innovation and market outcome by providing funding coupled with targeted business advice and assistance to SME. Only SMEs are eligible to apply for funding from the SME instrument. Single company funding is possible, provided the project can demonstrate a clear European dimension in terms of impact.

### **The SME Instrument has three phases:**

1. Concept and Feasibility Assessment (up to 6 months, with direct, lump-sum financial support for beneficiaries)
2. Demonstration and Market Replication (1-2 years, with direct, financial support for beneficiaries)
3. Commercialisation (with non-financial support for beneficiaries)

Beneficiaries of the SME instrument have access to direct and tailored support services:

- **Key Account Management** including a simple assessment of innovation bottleneck to guide coach selection and facilitating the SME-coach relationship) provided by Enterprise Europe Network throughout Phases I and II of the SME Instrument.
- **Coaching** related to improving business processes, market strategies and innovation-led growth to facilitate the commercial success of the Horizon 2020 SME Instrument project and to carry out wider capacity building in the SME. This will involve the development and implementation of a coaching plan and providing tailored growth coaching to the beneficiary (3 coaching days in Phase I and 12 coaching days in Phase II are foreseen). Coaches will be sourced from a European database and are independent of the Enterprise Europe Network. They should be experts in growth management with a good knowledge of the sector the beneficiary is active in.

## **Key Account Management**

The purpose of the Key Account Management is to ensure that SME Instrument beneficiaries receive the most appropriate services and support to enhance the probability of successful exploitation of the innovation project supported by the Instrument and to leave a footprint for the future sustainable growth of the beneficiary. The Key Account Manager will help the beneficiary identify and source appropriate coaches, facilitate linkages between the company and other innovation support services and work closely with any coaches selected in the process. Towards the end of Phase II of the Instrument, the Key Account Manager will help the beneficiary access relevant regional, national and European SME support schemes to ensure further successful exploitation of the project in Phase III.

Every successful applicant to the SME Instrument will be offered the support of an external expert (the "coach") who will develop and deliver a bespoke coaching plan to strengthen the beneficiary's capacity to carry out the planned innovation project. This support is put in place to fast track the innovation project to the market, enhance its probability of successful exploitation and leave a footprint for the future successful growth of the SME Instrument beneficiary. The Key Account Manager's job is to prepare the selection of a suitable coach, to help the beneficiary lead the project to a successful conclusion and to broker a successful relationship between the SME and the coach throughout the former's participation in the SME Instrument.

The Key Account Management service is delivered entirely in phases I and II of the SME Instrument. In Phase 3 of the SME Instrument the Network will provide beneficiary companies with access to its full range of services (such as partnering, access to markets, internationalisation and access to finances) provided under COSME and is also expected to advise beneficiaries about accessing the financial instruments established under Horizon 2020 and COSME.

The aim of the Enterprise Europe Network's Key Account Management service is to facilitate the coaching process by:

- Convincing the SME Instrument beneficiary of the benefits of taking up the coaching service.
- Helping them to identify and commission the most appropriate coach from a central database.
- Supporting the SME – lead coach relationship.
- Ensuring that the SME is fully and seamlessly connected into the full range of innovation support available regionally or nationally.

Key Account Managers do not provide the coaching, but can advise coach on the key challenges identified for the company which should be addressed by the coaching. Nonetheless, the design and content of the coaching plan, as well as the delivery method and the coaching methodology, remain entirely within the responsibility of the coach. The account management element of the service is divided into five discrete steps, each corresponding with a number of days for delivery attached:

### **SME instrument phase I**

- Step 1: Assess SME gaps and needs (0.5 day)
- Step 2: Identification and selection of a lead coach (1 day)
- Step 3: Facilitate coach-SME interactions to prepare coaching plan (1 day)

### **SME Instrument phase II**

- Step 4: Facilitate the interaction between the lead coach, the SME and the central management body of the SME Instrument (4 days)
- Step 5: Close coaching case and initiate next steps (0.5 day)

The Key Account Management activities are distinct and separate from the coaching days.

### **Tasks of Key Account Managers**

Coaching under the SME Instrument is voluntary. The Network must explain the benefits of coaching service provided by the SME Instrument to the beneficiary.

- Engaging with the beneficiary's management team in an assessment of the strategic and operational circumstances of their business: the aim is to identify gaps and needs in order to facilitate the selection of an appropriate coach by developing a draft scope of work.
- Helping the SME Instrument beneficiary to select the most appropriate lead coach
- Facilitating the SME-lead coach relationship. The Key Account Manager ensures effective teamwork and co-operation between the SME, the coach and external support measures.
- Providing an impartial sounding board to check customer satisfaction throughout the process
- Managing a small but highly intensive portfolio of key relationships
- Facilitating the re-use and creation of knowledge and continuous learning amongst the SME/ coaching / key account managers' community.

In order to allow for similar outcomes and to better track and compare the performance of support providers, a common assessment tool for coach selection will be provided by the EASME. In order to facilitate the selection of the tool, interested applicants will be requested to propose an existing tool or methodology designed to assess the company's strengths and growth barriers as well as any innovation bottlenecks the company may face. The tool must be simple and easy to use and shall specifically address step 1 and step 2 of the Key Account Management process. It must be available and suitable for a wide adoption by the Network. The tool must therefore be available in English (other languages are optional) and must be made available for use by the whole Network. Once an appropriate tool has been selected it is expected to be used by all Key Account Managers. Proposals for such a tool will be invited at a later stage and should not be included in the main proposal for establishing an Enterprise Europe Network consortium.

A detailed description of the key processes envisaged for this service is provided in the information pack published at <http://een.ec.europa.eu/about/tendersandcalls>

### **Staff qualifications for services delivered under activity 4**

Organisations delivering innovation support services under Horizon 2020 (Activity 4) are required to ensure that staff members providing the seven day packages to SMEs this activity have all the specific skills that are required to provide growth-oriented and innovation management support services to companies (see below). For activities designed to enhance the innovation management capacities of SMEs, the required capacities may not be available in all regions. In those cases, it is acceptable to include a strategy to build up the required skills.

Enterprise Europe Network **innovation experts delivering services enhancing the innovation management capacity of enterprises** and staff members acting as **Key Account Managers under the SME Instrument** are required to possess following skills:

- University degree (or equivalent) in a relevant field
- Senior member staff member of the Enterprise Europe Network host organisation with proven experience in the provision of business and innovation support
- Strong understanding / proven knowledge of the concept of innovation management (for providers of services enhancing the innovation management capacity of enterprises)
- At least three years of experience in EU-funded projects (for Key Account Managers)
- Ability to act as a highly credible business and innovation expert with good understanding of the challenges/barriers to growth faced by high-growth businesses
- Familiarity with at least some consulting approaches and tools to recognise and address barriers to successful innovation management
- In-depth knowledge of the support required to enable companies reach their growth potential, and an understanding of the available support infrastructure at all levels.
- Ability to develop strong relationships with senior management in innovative / growth companies and with a wide range of business support specialists
- Refined networking, business development and advocacy skills
- Ability to advise an SME on change management and project management

### **SME Instrument coaches**

For a better understanding of the whole system, the roles of coaches are described below. However, the coaching service is independent of the Enterprise Europe Network, which is only mandated to provide Key Account Management services (Individual staff members of Enterprise Europe Network host organisations may, however, apply to be included in the database of coaches in a personal capacity).

On the basis of the analysis made by the Key Account Manager, SME Instrument beneficiaries may choose a suitable coach, who will play a major role in helping them conclude their project and to successfully deliver an innovation successfully to the market. The Key Account Manager is expected to make a pre-selection of suitable candidates and to verify their credentials and interests.

The coach will do the actual coaching with the SME Instrument beneficiary and will be selected from an available pool of coaches. The role of the Key Account Manager is to create the right conditions for maximising the success of the coaching engagement. This will be done by moderating the coaching process and assisting with conflict resolution between the coach and the beneficiary if necessary. The Key Account Manager will also link the coach and the company to relevant support services outside of the SME Instrument. A close cooperation between the Key Account Manager and the coach is instrumental in ensuring the success of the scheme.

### Role of the coach:

The delivery of high calibre business coaching to beneficiaries is at the core of the SME Instrument. It is primarily provided by coaches appointed for a longer period of time, usually from the selection of a coach in Phase I of the SME Instrument until the end of Phase II. Their task is to develop and implement a detailed coaching plan based on the innovation gaps identified for the beneficiary. In case more specialised coaching is needed, appropriate experts will be recruited upon the advice of the coach. This will be financed by the SME Instrument grant.

## Annex 5 – Visual identity and branding guidelines

Brand identity is the outward expression of the brand, how we want the clients to perceive our Network and our services.

It is about how we create client recognition and/or recall and symbolises the brand's differentiation from competitors. This means the name, logo, slogan, visual identity and any other identifying features.

Everyone working in the Network is delivering our brand promise to our clients and stakeholders on a daily basis. That means we need a well-defined brand identity, reflecting the personality, services and symbolism of our Network and building a good image among our target groups.

**Name:** The Enterprise Europe Network name encompasses its main features, a network for European business. In order to ensure that we can build a strong, recognisable brand, the use of the name in full is **mandatory** in all activities.

**Logo:** The Network's logo uses European symbols (blue text and yellow stars) to clearly express its link with the European Union. The logo must be used with its slogan 'Business Support on Your Doorstep', which is a short description of the Network's mission. See visual identity guidelines for more details.

**Visual identity:** The Network's visual identity is designed to present a fresh, modern image based around the ideas of networking and growth. Separate guidelines on the visual identity are available.

**Reputation:** The Enterprise Europe Network positions itself as the world's largest network helping European companies to improve & innovate through partnership, information and expert advice.

**Origin:** The Network's brand originates in around 600 partner organisations in more than 50 countries, working closely with DG Enterprise & Industry and the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation.

**Personality:** The Network's personality can be described a number of ways. Its brand champions feel it's professional, reliable, international, achievement-oriented, prestigious, cooperative, extrovert.

**Values:** Our brand is created through how we behave and interact with the outside world and each other. See the Code of Conduct for more details.

**Key messages:** As well as the brand's visual identity, we need consistent, clear messages to give to the companies and other stakeholders we work with. This will help build our reputation and credibility as a unique network. A new set of key messages will be produced together with the Network's national communication correspondents in 2014.

## **Annex 6 – Glossary**

This glossary is intended to facilitate the understanding of potential applicants of the present call for proposals and the guide for applicants and to refer them to further sources of information where appropriate. The explanations given in this glossary are purely indicative and cannot be considered as legally binding definitions.

### Brokerage services / events

Enterprise Europe Network services that are designed to bring about transnational partnerships for business, technological, innovation or research cooperation. Brokerage / matchmaking events are a series of pre-arranged transnational meetings organised at a single venue for SMEs. They are often arranged at trade shows, fairs, exhibitions or conferences but can also be stand-alone events.

### Centralised / Decentralised training event

"Centralised" trainings are events organised in Brussels by the EASME for (staff members of) the Enterprise Europe Network.

"Decentralised" training events are supported and approved by the EASME, but organised by Network partners and take place in the country/city of the organising Network partner. They must be open to all other Network partners (within the limits of the space available).

### Client

Any organisation receiving an (intensive) service from one or more Network partners. Clients should be part of the target audience of the Network referred to in chapter 2 d) and are primarily SMEs.

### Company mission

A mission with one or more Network clients visiting and meeting one or more Network clients from a different country with a view to establishing a partnership.

### COSME

COSME is the EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) running from 2014 to 2020, with a budget of €2.3bn.

For more information, please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/cosme>

### Code of conduct

The Enterprise Europe Network has its own Code of Conduct which lays down common operational principles, quality standards and guidelines for the cooperation between Network partners and for the relation between Network partners and client companies. All Network partners are held to comply with the provisions of the Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct is available in Annex 2 of the Guide of Applicants.

### Consortium

A group of host organisations joining their respective expertise in a given region to cover all required services under the Enterprise Europe Network, who agree to submit a joint proposal and carry out all proposed activities in collaboration with each other (provided the proposal is accepted).

### Framework partnership agreement (FPA)

Framework Partnership Agreements are concluded between the EASME and all consortia and provide the broad basis of the implementation of Enterprise Europe Network activities. Normally valid for six years, they include a preamble, special conditions and general conditions. Each FPA also includes (in annex) an implementation strategy, the definition of the geographic coverage of the proposal and a Specific Grant Agreement (see below).

Together with the SGA (see below), the FPA forms the legal basis of the project against which the evaluation and monitoring of the Network's activities and related financial operations take place.

### EASME – Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

The Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME) was set up by the European Commission in 2013 in order to manage on several EU programmes, including COSME and parts of Horizon 2020. It replaces the EACI (Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation) that managed Enterprise Europe Network, Intelligent Energy – Europe, Eco-innovation and Marco Polo. The present call has been published by the EASME, who will also be in charge of the management of the Enterprise Europe Network.

For further information on the EASME, please consult <http://ec.europa.eu/easme/>.

### Europe 2020 strategy

Europe 2020 is the European Union's ten-year growth strategy. More than just trying to help overcome the economic crisis, it is about addressing the shortcomings of Europe's growth model and creating the conditions for a different type of growth that is smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive. Europe 2020 sets five key targets in the areas of employment; education; research and innovation; social inclusion and poverty reduction; and climate/energy.

The strategy includes seven 'flagship initiatives' providing a framework through which the EU and national authorities mutually reinforce their efforts in areas supporting the Europe 2020 priorities such as innovation, the digital economy, employment, youth, industrial policy, poverty, and resource efficiency.

For more information, please consult: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/index_en.htm)

### European Social Funds (ESF)

The ESF invests in projects designed to enhance employment and education opportunities across the European Union and to improve the situation of the most vulnerable people at risk of poverty. Please see [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/thefunds/social/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/social/index_en.cfm) for more information.

### European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)

The regional funds available for investment in the regions of the European Union. Please see [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_en.cfm) for more details.

### Horizon 2020

Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020). Horizon 2020 is also the financial instrument implementing the Innovation Union ([http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm)), a Europe 2020 ([http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm)) flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness. For more information, please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/what-horizon-2020>

### Host organisation

The legal entity which carries out the Enterprise Europe Network activities and in which the department / group of staff members assigned to this activity are employed or otherwise engaged.

### Internationalisation

For the purpose of this call, the term "internationalisation" is understood to refer to international activities of companies in countries outside the European Union that do not participate in COSME (i.e. in "third countries" as defined below).

### Local activity

Activities carried out by an Enterprise Europe Network partner or consortium that do not involve any Enterprise Europe Network partners or consortia from other countries and that take place in the region where the organising partner/consortium is located. They should, nonetheless, have a European dimension.

### Missions for Growth

Targeted diplomatic and economic missions to a range of countries providing (new) market opportunities for European companies, led by the European Commissioner for Industry and Enterprise. Missions for Growth usually involve political and business meetings and discussions in areas of mutual interest in the fields of Enterprise & Industry policy but do not deal with specific trade policy issues. They allow for high-level contacts between the Commissioner, the European External Action Service, European entrepreneurs and political authorities. Typically, a delegation of SME managers (or other leading staff members) accompanies the Commissioner on those trips in order to get acquainted with the respective market(s) and to meet local business people. For more information on Missions for Growth, please consult [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/mission-growth/missions-for-growth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/mission-growth/missions-for-growth/index_en.htm).

### National Contact Points (NCP)

The National Contact Points (NCPs) are the main structure to provide guidance, practical information and assistance on all aspects of participation in Horizon 2020. NCPs are national structures

established and financed by governments of the 28 EU member states and the states associated to the research framework programme. The NCP systems can vary from one country to another from highly centralised to decentralised networks, and a number of very different actors, from ministries to universities, research centres and special agencies to private consulting companies.

#### Network partner

The term "Network partner" refers to the departments, divisions, units or other group of staff members of host organisations that actually perform the work and the activities of the Enterprise Europe Network. Network partners are comprised of all staff members of host organisations who are assigned to the Enterprise Europe Network.

#### No-wrong-door principle

The no-wrong-door principle is one of the key standards of the Enterprise Europe Network and entails the implementation of an effective mechanism for signposting (see below) towards other providers of services in their consortium or region, for the benefit of all clients. The aim is to ensure that all services of the Network are accessible via (not provided by) any Network partner, and that the Network can act as a gateway to the entire SME support system for their clients.

#### NUTS

The abbreviation NUTS stands for nomenclature of territorial units for statistics. It is a hierarchical system for dividing up the economic territory of the European Union and is used in EU (regional) statistics, socio-economic analyses of the regions and the framing of EU policies, in particular the regional policy.

For more information, please consult:

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts\\_nomenclature/introduction](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction)

#### Partnership Profile

All requests for partnerships of Enterprise Europe Network clients are recorded in "partnership profiles", which outline the type, objective and potential outcome of the partnership that is sought. These profiles make up the Network's "partnering opportunities database", the central repository of all partnership requests and offers of companies that are registered in the Network.

#### Region / Regional activity

The term "region" is understood in different ways across the European Union, reflecting the respective administrative arrangements and historical circumstances of each Member State. For the purpose of the Enterprise Europe Network, "regional activities" are those activities carried out by a Network consortium in (and addressing) the geographic area which is covered by the consortium.

The term "region", when used in conjunction with the Enterprise Europe Network, therefore also refers to the geographic area covered by any individual consortium, irrespective of whether this area is congruent with the historical or administrative "regions" of the concerned Member State. In most cases, the geographic area covered by an Enterprise Europe Network consortium corresponds to NUTS1 regions.

### Regional business and innovation support structure

This term refers to the full set of arrangements that are in place in a given region to support business development and innovation (in particular with regard to SMEs). Enterprise Europe Network services are expected to complement and tie in with the existing support offer in the region.

### Sector group

Sector Groups are formed by Network partners who work together on a voluntary basis in order to meet the specific needs of clients in particular sectors. These groups are chaired by Network staff members and provide a forum to discuss, plan and implement activities with an EU-wide relevance for client companies.

### Single Market

The common (single) market comprising all Member States of the European Union in which the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons is ensured and in which European citizens are free to live, work, study and do business.

### Signposting / signposting agreement

When a Network partner is not in a position to deliver a service required by an SME, they should direct the respective SME to the most suitable partner inside or outside the Network consortium (depending on whether the required service can be delivered by anyone in the consortium). This activity is referred to as signposting. Network partners signposting clients to other support providers should ensure that the client receives a high quality services.

In some cases, it may be useful to conclude an agreement with other support organisations to facilitate mutual signposting, especially when there is a high "flow" of clients between the Network consortium and the respective organisation.

### Small Business Act for Europe (SBA)

Adopted in June 2008, the Small Business Act for Europe puts into place a comprehensive SME policy framework for the EU and its Member States, thus reflecting the Commission's intention to better recognise the central role of SMEs in the EU's economy. It aims to improve the overall approach to entrepreneurship, to ensure that the concerns of SMEs are taken into account in all policy making from regulation to public service, and to promote the growth of SMEs. The SBA was reviewed in 2011 to assess progress made until then and to address new challenges resulting from the economic crisis.

For further information, please consult: [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/small-business-act/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/small-business-act/index_en.htm)

### SME

Small and medium sized enterprise. For the purpose of this call, the European definition of an SME outlined in Commission Recommendation C (2003) 1422 is applied: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:124:0036:0041:EN:PDF>

### SME Instrument

A specific instrument of Horizon 2020 designed to support highly promising innovation projects of SMEs. Innovative Small and Medium-sized Enterprises will be supported in Horizon 2020 programme through a new dedicated SME instrument where only SMEs (single SMEs or consortiums of SMEs) will be allowed to apply for funding and support. SMEs can form collaborations according to their needs, including for subcontracting research and development work.

In total, more than 2.8 billion euros will be allocated for the SME instrument from 2014 to 2020, at least 7% of the total budget of the Societal Challenges and Leading and Enabling Technologies (LEIT) blocks of Horizon2020.

### Specific grant agreement (SGA)

Specific Grant Agreements are concluded within the broader context of the FPA and cover a period of two years. They include a work programme and an indicative budget and lay down the details of the implementation of Enterprise Europe Network activities in the period they cover.

- The duration of the action, the total eligible costs and the EU contribution for the period and the payment arrangements with indication on the time for reporting are identified in the SGA;
- In annex, the work programme provides details about the action's implementation, the budget of each individual partner organisation and the consolidated budget for the period covered by the SGA.

Together with the FPA (see above), the SGA forms the legal basis of the project against which the evaluation and monitoring of the Network's activities take place.

### Stakeholder (regional or local)

A regional or local stakeholder is any type of actor (including individual persons) located in a Network consortium's (local or regional) environment that is not a member (or subcontractor) of the consortium but with which the consortium might collaborate within the framework of its activities. Stakeholders may include a wide range of actors, such as for example decision makers, regional/local authorities, other SME support providers, other European networks or (regional/local) representative bodies of enterprises. In some cases, stakeholder involvement may also take a national dimension (for example in countries covered by one single consortium or when required by the nature of the stakeholder).

### Stakeholder agreement

An agreement (formal or informal, written or not) between a Network consortium and any number of stakeholders, outlining the relationship and possible areas of collaboration between the Network consortium and the stakeholders. While Network consortia are free to decide whether they wish to enter into agreements with local stakeholders, experience has shown that such an agreement can be beneficial to collaboration between different organisation and to the overall positioning of the Network in the region.

### Technology transfer

Transnational technology transfer is at the heart of Network activities and services that are provided to assist SMEs in transferring technologies across national and European borders. The aim is to foster innovation in SMEs by helping them adapt existing technologies or apply new ones so they can develop new products or services. For the purpose of the Enterprise Europe Network, technology transfer is therefore defined as the successful application or adaptation of an innovative technology from one organisation or industrial sector to another.

The Network's role is to bring providers and users of technologies together in a technological partnership resulting in a licensing agreement, a joint venture agreement, a manufacturing agreement and/or a commercial agreement with technical assistance.

### Third country

For the purpose of this call, "third countries" are defined as countries outside the European Union that do not participate in the COSME programme.

### Working groups

Working Groups are temporary groups of Network staff members set up as and when required by the EASME in order to create common working standards, guidelines and tools for the benefit of the entire Network. Members of Working Groups are selected on the basis of their personal qualification and knowledge of the required subject matter.