

EBN Action Plan *2009*

Collective, Collaborative, Committed

- A.** The EBN executive team has prepared a draft action plan for 2009, which is globally aligned with the work programme established for the year 2008.

A full menu with a variety of added value services, adapted to the various needs of our membership base, combining simple and more sophisticated actions, Brussels-based or decentralized activities, delivered as much as we can by keeping members in the cockpit of our community, and made with conviviality, pragmatism and cost/benefit efficiency.

Maximizing the “EBN collaborative platform effect” stay the name of the package for 2009, in continuity with the last 2/3 years

- B.** The occurrence of the crisis at the end of 2008, the possible global economic recession, but also the understanding of the need to further enhance the value of the EBN activity has led EBN to re-focus its operational priorities on **3 global objectives** , enabling the network to adjust its range of services & support services to the short-term needs of the members:

@ Priority 1 : *Improving the public-sector recognition of the EBN Community members to maximize the opportunity of public-sector funding:*

Maximizing the recognition and reputation of EBN accredited members within the public sector (Local, regional, national, European), and highlighting the relevance of their mission in the particular context of the crisis. This means EBN should increase its “lobbying” efforts, and make full use of the power of the BIC brand through ad-hoc communication tools (new

Web-site, more Newsletters, etc) and initiatives (public-sector targeted events, EBN 25th anniversary cocktail,...)

@ Priority 2: *Maximizing (current) customer care efforts for EBN members:*

Making sure members can have access to useful benchmarks, data, transferable expertise, tools, cases, enabling them to continuously progress, and compete in their environments. Creating an appropriate environment for networking between members, between members, non-members and large corporations, through events, seminars, thematic working groups, sector-specific approaches, pilot-schemes. This means EBN should put in place a systematic “CRM system”, in which the quality system is one element, but not the unique feature of the relationship

@ Priority 3: *Enhancing the EU & Int’l projects activity, with a permanent opportunity spotter behavior, and for the benefit of more members:*

Detecting EC-funded projects opportunities, acting as a broker for short-term consultancy opportunities (for members), offering the EBN expertise as bid-writer, consortium builder; inventing new projects which respond with pragmatic solutions to the priority areas as set up by various EC strategic lines : the EC “Economic Recovery Plan”, the revisited Lisbon strategy, the Small Business Act, FP7, CIP, ...

C. This challenge will be made possible thanks to the enforcement of the TEN following lines of actions:

1. Representation : *achieving a targeted visibility and recognition for the BICs and members at the European institutions level*

- (a) Streamlining the EBN position and identity with reference to the **EC-BIC brand** and licensing contractual relationship with DG Enterprise & Industry

- (b) Maximizing the visibility and recognition of BICs and EBN within the framework of a selection of programs with a particular focus on the CIP, FP7, and structural funds :
- Europe Innova
 - Pro-Inno
 - Cluster policies
 - KIS (Knowledge intensive services) program
 - Lead-markets initiative
 - EEN (Entreprise Europe Network), the new support network resulting from the merge between IRCs and EICs
 - EACI, the new Executive Agency responsible for the CIP
 - The “thematic networks” (DG InfSo)
 - The “ROK” (Region of knowledge) program (DG Research)
 - SME unit of FP7 (DG Research)
 - Interreg IV (A, B and C)
 - The Leonardo program (DG Education & Culture)
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- (c) Building a cooperation with DG Education & Culture, within the framework of the “**European Year of Creativity & Innovation**”; the aim of which being that EBN and its members would benefit from the visibility and recognition of the label (logo) of this initiative
- (d) Exploiting the potential of “**exportation**” of the EC-BIC brand, concept and network outside of the EU, within the framework of EU external policies (through EuropeAid mechanisms, but not exclusively) in areas such as the Mediterranean basin including Turkey and the Middle East, the Balkans (Cards), Russia, etc
- (e) Re-connecting with **DG Regio** at all level, but particularly at “thematic coordination levels”, with a strategy to re-use the DG Regio “institutional communication vector” to disseminate the virtues of BICs to member states and regional authorities which are concerned by both “cohesion” and “competitiveness” objectives

- (f) Continuing the exploration of **ESA** opportunities and being recognized by the “Space & Sat” actors (ESA, **GSA**, EC-Space Units). The EBN vehicle for this is of course the **ESINET** thematic network and the forecasted & ESA-sponsored Road-shows.
- (g) Approaching **Regional authorities** (case by case basis) and National authorities (or Agencies) in areas where there are no BICs is a facilitating factor for the establishment/accreditation of a BIC in these regions.
- (h) Partnering with the “**K4i**” (Knowledge for Innovation) think tank, targeting high level lobbying activities with the European Parliament, and the EC

2. Quality and technical assistance : looking for a better valorisation of the Quality support programme, with more advising + benchmarking + training, through customized on-site technical assistance and help-desk support, with a true customer-relationship and services-oriented role model;

- (a) Management of the current **quality system** :
 - Maintenance of questionnaire for collecting data 2008,
 - BQMC meetings (4 to 5)
 - Permanent feed-back and liaisons with BICs
 - Production and publicity of more attractive BIC’s certificates
 - Management of the experts pool (training, briefing, assessment,...)
- (b) Production of the **content of the observatory report 2008** (see also above), and publication of a promotional (printed and electronic) version.
- (c) Full Members support services (**Quality help-desk**): setting-up of a systematic “CRM system”, in which the quality system is one element, but not the unique feature of the relationship; this will be made with a new “services-oriented style”

- (d) Following the update of the EC-BIC criteria (made in 2008), we'll accelerate the strategic discussion about the **review of the objectives** of the EBN Quality system (initiated end of 2008), involving an ad-hoc "Quality Working Group", and possibly involving a wider range of members
- (e) Preparation of **applications for Full Membership** (EC-BIC accreditation process), including preparatory meetings in Brussels, and **on-site evaluation visits** being subject of a standard evaluation "commercial" contract. Cases are already under preparation or negotiation in Krakow, Zagreb, Meknès, Graz, Sezana, St-Quentin en Yvelines, ...
- (f) Commercialization and implementation of **Technical Assistance (TA) assignments**, on matters aligned with the core competences developed within the quality and TA team and its external pool of experts (members). Cases are under execution in Angers, Castres, Le Havre, Nottingham and in discussion in Rouen, Alençon, Bayonne/Biarritz, ...

3. Events and Seminars : *Congress, seminars and events, with better interactive formats enabling best practices and competences to flow;*

- (a) **One Annual congress , Fez-Morocco** (24-25-26 June 2009):
 - "Creative ideas, Smart solutions, Pragmatic tools"
 - Partnership with CRI Fès-Boulemane
- (b) **Two Best practice seminars on "BIC Management & Quality"** (in partnership with Quality team):
 - "BIC Master Classes: advanced training for BICs' managers & executives" (April 09 or Summer School format, in partnership with Solvay Entrepreneurs)
 - "The BIC concept and method: a review of key-elements"(27 & 28 April 09)
 - NB: we are studying the opportunity to export a customized "quality training course" for the network of Russian IC in Moscow

- (c) **One best Practice seminar on “EC-Projects”** (in partnership with projects team):
 - subject to be defined, December 09, Brussels
- (d) **One EBN Fall Conference**, Rome, September 09, on “Territorial development and creative human capital” (in partnership with BIC Lazio and UNDP)
- (e) **One EBN Winter Conference**, Lahti, November 09, on “Cleantechs and opportunities for start-ups” (in partnership with BIC Lahti and the EBN Environment & Energy TWG)
- (f) **EBN 25th Anniversary cocktail reception**, Brussels, December 09 (combined with an executive committee meeting and the best practice seminar on EC projects- see above)
- (g) Organization of two **Study tours**:
 - One in the EU, for a delegation of Russian Innovation Centres managers (partnership with RUIC)
 - One in China (Chengdu) for a delegation of European BICs managers (partnership with EUPIC)
- (h) **ESINET specific events (3)**
 - Event 1: ESA/Esinet investment forum, La Hulpe Belgium (6 & 7 April 09, partnership with Europe Unlimited)
 - Event 2: Esinet annual meeting (pre-programme Fez congress, 24 June 09)
 - Event 3 : Localized ESA road-shows in 5 european sites (Burgos, Sophia-Antipolis, Barcelona ...)

4. Thematic Working Groups (TWG) : *Active, attractive and diversified Thematic Working Groups and sector-specific initiatives;*

- (a) Already used in the early days of EBN, and tested successfully at the end of 2008, the establishment of “**Thematic Working Groups**” (TWG) is a basic feature for the animation of networks. Together with the increase of the offer of seminars and workshops, this initiative can increase

the rate of real participation of members into the EBN life, and provide a basis for a more “bottom-up” feedback mechanism.

(b) It is proposed to continue the activity with the **three** already-initiated TWGs:

- **Maritime BICs:** an EBN sectorial network for BICs active in the Maritime sector, this thematic group gathers BICs who could play an instrumental role in networking all the respective players in this sector in order to cluster and better exploit the tremendous innovation potential for new and existing businesses in the maritime sector.
- **Agro-Food BICs:** over 50 BICs in Europe actively target innovation in the food sector, and most of them are now taking part to the Agro-Food EBN thematic network in food, already giving access to an existing base of hundreds of biotech/food SMEs across Europe. This group has recently set-up an initiative called FOOD-IES (Innovation-Expertise-Strengths), as a response to an EC request.
- **Environment and Energy(E&E) BICs:** Eco-innovation, sustainable development, renewable energies, energy efficiency, cleantechs, environmental monitoring, biomass, fuelcells, photovoltaics,...the range of possible innovative application is so wide and the subject so strategic! EBN and almost 50 BICs & Associate Members have decided to work together in there areas, proposing events, pilot-actions, B2B initiatives & sector-specific Investment Forums.

(c) **Two new** TWGs will be launched in 2009 on the following subjects:

- **Creative industries BICs:** the Fez congress and the “European Year of Creativity & Innovation” boosted the spontaneous generation of an informal group of EBN Members and stakeholders, willing to accelerate the entrepreneurship & innovation dynamics the area of creative industries (serious **games, graphical design, etc.**). And of course, they will meet in Fez!

- **ICT and Software BICs:** Most of the BICs have – de facto – created real clusters of IT & software start-ups & entrepreneurs. Well-known BICs located in Barcelona, Cork, Sophia-Antipolis, Tampere, Oslo, Birmingham, Annecy, Caen, Darmstadt, Luxemburg, etc. are illustrations of this phenomenon. This thematic group is gathering small-business hot-spots together with ICT leaders (HP, Oracle, etc.) and policy-makers (DG INFSO, etc.)

(d) The following “transversal” subjects might be included

- LE/SME collaboration
- Innovation financing
- Internationalization
- Entrepreneurship (Women, Young, ...)
- Regeneration
- Science-based/University-related Incubation
- Post-incubation for High-Growth “gazelles”

5. Membership Development: *More qualified members on more and relevant geographical locations, a pillar of our financial independence and of our/your position on the market*

- (a) Global objective: **increase by 5 %** of the (real) current income generated by membership fees
- (b) FM estimation : $155 + 10 = 165$ (this progression is directly linked to our capacity to « sell & deliver » the on-site evaluation/accreditation package/contract)
- (c) AM estimation : $75 + 10 = 85$ (with a focus on « candidate BICs »)
- (d) Satellites estimation : $25 + 5 = 30$ (design of a new tarification sytem will be studied in 2008)
- (e) Esinet estimation : $4 + 4 = 8$ (an attractive package should be proposed – see separate note “ESINET Assett”)

- (f) Awareness missions forecasted for **5 target countries** (list tbc): Sweden, Poland, Germany, Turkey and Morocco
- (g) Continuation of efforts targeting **UK**, the country with the highest potential (includes further cooperation with UKBI), and in **Italy** (where we have noticed several structural changes)
- (h) Campaigning at (10) non-EBN **international conferences** (see below § 9 Promotion)
- (i) Active presence at **national committee meetings**, especially for large (or potentially larger) national networks (France, Italy, UK, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Ireland, Finland, Hungary...)
- (j) Ad-hoc exploration of **non-EU membership expansion** opportunities, with a particular attention to North Africa, South Africa, Middle East (Israel, Gulf countries for example), Russia and CIS countries

6. Strategic partnerships : *Building an open network, connected to the public sector, the private sector and the other most relevant networked communities*

- (a) On-Going development of a virtual platform of informal partnership with a selection of **private sector global leaders**:
 - collection of expressions of interest for this with Corporations such as : Orange Labs, Tele-Atlas, H-P, , Procter and Gamble, Oracle, Symantec, BASF, Alcatel Space, Dassault Systèmes, GE, Xerox, Michelin,...
 - possible invitation of some of them as “Associate member/partner and/or as speakers for EBN events
- (b) Deployment of a limited series of **customized cooperations**, which includes “localized SME partnerships”, “BICs awareness road-shows”, “ EBN events sponsoring ” with a limited number of Large Entreprises :

- H-P (through the MAP network and MEA-I)
 - P&G (through their Connect and Develop team)
 - Oracle (through their “VP Innovation” directorate)
 - Auchan (through their R&D division)
- (c) Establishment of partnerships with public authorities and **international agencies**:
- ESA (Through ESINET)
 - GSA (Galileo Supervising Authority)
 - EPO (through IP4inno)
 - UNDP (through the ART initiative)
- (d) Maintenance and opening of informal and formal partnerships with **other networks**, possibly through MOUs:
- IASP –*MOU under discussion*
 - WAINOVA (taking an active part in the Wainova Atlas) – *EBN a founding member*
 - EURADA (RDAs) –*MOU under discussion*
 - EBAN (BANs)-*MOU signed*
 - ERRIN (Regions Rep. in Brussels)
 - PROTON Europe (TTOs) – *MOU signed*
 - ANIMA (Invest in Med)- *MOU signed*
 - ENCADRE (Space & Sat clusters) –*EBN a founding member*
 - NEREUS (Space regions)
 - Eurochambres (CCIs) –*MOU under discussion*
 - INSME (SMEs agencies) – *EBN a Board member*
 - RUIC (Russian union of IC)-*MOU signed*
 - EEN (Entreprise Europe Network)- *MOU signed*
 - MEA-I (Micro-Entreprise Acceleration Institute)- *EBN a Board member*
 - European Innovation Centre on Geo-localization and LBS – *EBN a Board member*
 - ENISA (Information security Agency) – *EBN a Board member*
 - K4i (Knowledge for Innovation)- *EBN a founding member*
- (e) Another specific partnership is currently being studied with **Business Resort Corporation** (BRC), the mother company of Antipolis Innovation campus (AIC), the BIC of Sophia-Antipolis in France, who is developing worldwide (EU,

Balkans, US) an integrated Business Resort and Innovation Campus model, which could be an engine and a catalyst for the promotion of the EBN membership and the diffusion of the BIC model in the private sector, particularly with property developers and hospitality management firms.

7. International projects : *More and better opportunities for more members within the European programs and other international collaborations, thanks to a comprehensive “EBN projects factory support package”*

(a) Mastering the continuation of EC-projects where EBN is the **prime contractor** (coordinator), or an important co-contractor (partner):

- KIS4Sat
- ESINET (ESA)
- Achieve More (St-John IC Cambridge)
- Turkish Business Centres (EuroMed)
- Jordan (Transtec)
- Serbia (Ecorys)

(b) Maximizing the dissemination and networking effects from projects where EBN is a **minority** partner:

- C2C
- Pandora
- Summit 2
- Tunisia
- Training For Growth
- Pegase (GSA-FDC)

(c) **Closing** adequately EC-contracts that have ended at the end of the year 2008 (final reports, cost statements, audits, credit collection, distribution to partners, final dissemination of results ...):

- Euro-office
- IP4inno
- Standards
- Navobs +
- Detect-it 2
- Cluster-net
- Econ-IT

- (d) **Bidding** for new projects/contracts:
- GASD 2 (Interreg 4), with Europe + Foundation
 - IP4Inno 2 (Europe Innova/EEN), with EPO
 - KBBE – Food-ies(DG Research), as leader
 - Novel Tools (Europe Innova-strand 7), as leader
 - Creative Industries (Europe Innova-KIS), with CUE
 - Mobile telecom (Europe Innova), with Atlantis
 - Renewable Energy (Europe Innova-strand 4), with ENEA & Synbea
 - RoK- Clusters (DG Research), with UTC Compiègne
 - Another Pro-Inno project, with Errin, Impiva, and Atlanpole
 - Lebanon, and Ukraine with Transtec
 - SME associations and the ERA (DG Research),with University of Sofia
 - Environment and pollution control (LIFE+), with 3 municipalities and Universities
 - Gallileo applications for SMEs (GSA), with Encadre
 - Geo-Textiles Clustering (Anima- Invest in Med)
 - ...
- (e) The on-going strategy is to **keep detecting** new opportunities of EC-funded strategic pilot actions responding to core needs of EBN members, in field such as:
- Incubation models
 - LE/SME partnerships
 - Inter-regional/cross-borders cooperation
 - Industrial Spin-off
 - University/Research intensive spin-off
 - Innovation financing
 - Innovation management
 - Clustering
 - Creativity
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Sector-specific “*Detect-it* like” projects (Biotech, Agro-food, Software, Health, Space, telecom, Energy,...)
- (f) Improving EBN marketing and members’ interest for “projects-team tools” such as the “**tender-watch e-letter**”, and the “**partner-search flash news**”.

- (g) Enhancing an adjusted “**services to members**” approach with the aim to provide more support for consortium building, partner search, bid writing, dissemination; this might open doors for “success-fee” and “services” based-incomes.

8. Communication : *A brand new portal web-site, from which other applications are generated such as electronic Newsletters, members yearbook, press releases, etc in order to increase the internal communication and the external visibility of the Network and its members*

- (a) Launching of a **new portal web-site** for EBN, aligned with the new corporate identity developed in 2007 (“Innovation in Action, Incubation in Motion”), and including several features and sections such as: “Members’ electronic yearbook”, “Good practices section”, “Newsroom”, “clear access to other EBN web-sites(Annual Congress, Quality, Esinet and projects)
- (b) Launching of new format for **electronic newsletters**, generated from the new portal web-site
- (c) Production of glossy version of “**annual observatory 2008**” (already mentioned above)
- (d) Development of a **new database infrastructure** with multipurpose objective (current members, prospects and contacts, ...), which will include a CRM functionality (see also § 3-Quality help-desk)
- (e) Brussels PR event for the celebration of **EBN 25th anniversary** (see also “events” section)

9. External Promotion of the Network: *a regular and prominent presence of the BICs community at a series of relevant events, with speaking slots, marketing visibility, exhibition opportunities and partnership agreements*

- (a) Proton annual conference, Cardiff, 29-30 January
- (b) INSME annual conference, Dubai, 13-14 April

- (c) NBIA annual conference, Kansas City, 12-14 April
- (d) IASP annual conference, Raleigh, 3-5 June
- (e) WIC 09, La Baule, 3-5 June
- (f) Science based Incubators Conference, Stockholm, December
- (g) Crééz fair and conference, Lille, 14-16 Sept.
- (h) Europa Inter-Clusters conference, Brussels, 3-4 December
- (i) EU-China conference, Le Havre, 1 April
- (j) KIS partnering events, Brussels, 19 February
- (k) DG Regio Conference, Sevilla, 18-19 May
- (l) RETIS annual event, Dijon, 28-29 May
- (m) UKBI annual event
- (n) ANCES annual event
- (o) ADT annual event
- (p)

10. **Network Management and Administration:** *a well governed and transparent organization, with a competent team, guided by a committed Board*