

**18th EBN Congress
FEZ - Morocco**

24 - 27 June 2009

***“Creative Ideas, Smart
Solutions, Pragmatic Tools!
What else?”***



Organised by



I. Generic Theme of the Congress

One of the priorities of the European Union is to ***strengthen and accelerate the Euro-Mediterranean partnership***, and to create more and better synergies between European, Mediterranean, North-African and Middle-East economic and knowledge players. The current global economic and financial crisis reveals the need for ***“Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship”*** to tackle the global recession.

As they did in the mid Eighties, during the industrial crisis, the EBN community and the BICs should take this opportunity to confirm their position as one of the key localized & networked mechanisms capable to ***turn the pervasive negative perception*** and reasoning ***into a positive momentum*** by highlighting the power of creativity and innovation.

The “European Year of Creativity & Innovation 2009” has been launched by the European Commission with a lot of enthusiasm and hopes, and we share the view that this initiative could reveal and diffuse the power of creative thinking & ideas generation, the need for drastic behavioral changes, the positive impact of collaborative mechanisms & networks, and the importance of creative & professional tools & methods.

This is precisely the focus of the 18th edition of the 2009 EBN annual congress: ***“In search of Creative Ideas, Smart Solutions and Pragmatic Tools”***. This becomes a pivotal element of the “modus operandi” deployed by BICs in their mission to generate economic, social and knowledge values.

The ***core missions of the BICs: creating*** new entrepreneurs, creating new enterprises, creating new projects, creating new clusters, and creating new opportunities – entails undoubtedly a ***creative mission!*** Following this reasoning, we have decided to explore the roots of creative inspiration, and the patterns of creation (of ideas, values, arts, knowledge), leading us to professional disciplines that are located at the vicinity of our core business (i.e. design, architecture, graphical design, fine arts, gastronomy, music, sciences, ...). These disciplines which – by the way - have flourished during centuries and keep developing within the human communities settled in the city and region of Fez, an exceptional crossroad for knowledge, sciences, arts & ideas.

Areas and subjects such as: urban regeneration (Fez has the UNESCO label for its architectural universal heritage), digital revolution (Fez is investing massively in ICT & telecoms), decorative arts & fine craftsmanship (Fez being the heart of fine arts), advanced food and fine gastronomy (Fez is known as a gastronomic hotspot and close to most advanced Moroccan & North-African agro-food valleys), music and cultural tourism (Fez is the host of a famous world/sacred music festival), and knowledge-based strategies for emerging/developing economies (Fez is hosting the oldest University of the Western world, and the first “Euro-Mediterranean University”), are just a few examples extracted from the ***Fez Excellence & Moroccan traditions*** and who could feed our inspiration and idea-box. Beside the positive impact on the intercultural dialogue, these fascinating ***creative disciplines*** and ***lateral way of thinking***, entailing a great dose of innovation & entrepreneurial spirit, are good examples to bring us back to the roots of innovation and of business creation, knowledge, idea and arts.

Taking profit of this ideas re-generation exercise, the EBN Congress will then bring us back to reality, i.e. the challenges faced by the BICs, and by the entrepreneurs communities, and will propose to delegates a comprehensive journey throughout a selection of ***pragmatic tools, good practices and new methods***, which can be deployed as catalysts to unlock entrepreneurship, to steer creativity, and to master innovation management.

Themes such as “Creativity centre”, “Scenario planning”, “Design centre”, “Core Competencies”, “Economic intelligence”, “Road mapping”, “Lead Markets”, “Knowledge-intensive services”, “Virtual innovation platforms”, “Focus groups”, “Heuristic Chart”, “Prioritizing matrix” etc., could be subject to presentations and exchanges between delegates, innovation and incubation professionals, experts and speakers.

This classical transversal approach (enabling to discover generic methods and tools) will be mixed with a ***sector-specific approach***, thanks to which we will pay particular attention to three sectors/clusters: ICT & Telecommunication, Food & related Biotechnology, and Tourism & advanced Hospitality-Services.

Having become a tradition at the EBN annual congresses; the EBN 2009 BIC Awards will recognize the BIC best practices and tools that have resulted in a quantifiable long term economic impact in their region. For this occasion the short listed BIC Award nominees will be invited to share their experience with other partners in the format of a “BIC2BIC” exhibition forum.

II. General Congress Schedule

General congress Schedule			
Wednesday 24 June <i>"Thematic Groupings"</i>	AM	Registration	
	PM	Thematic Working Group Meetings	
	Evening	Welcome cocktail	
Thursday 25 June <i>"Creative Ideas"</i>	AM	Official Opening & Plenary Session	
	PM	Parallel Sessions & AGM	
	Evening	Gala Dinner	
Friday 26 June <i>"Tools & solutions"</i>	AM	Parallel Workshops	
	PM	Best Tools Awards/ Closing & Award Ceremony	
Saturday 27 June <i>"Social Networking"</i>	Social Program		Muralla de Fez 

Wednesday 24 June - EBN Thematic Working Group (TWG) meetings

Venue: Jnan Palace, Fez

At the end of 2008, EBN has successfully launched various “Thematic Working Groups” (TWG) as an interactive and collective feature for the animation of the Network. This initiative increase massively the rate of real participation of members into the EBN life, and provide a basis for a more “bottom-up” feedback mechanism.

AM	Registration	Registration	Registration
	9.00 to 12.00	9.00 to 12.00	9.00 to 12.00
12.00 – 14.00	Lunch Break		
A F T E R N O O N	Agro-Food TWG	Environment & Energy (E&E) TWG	ESINET
	14.00 to 17.00	14.00 to 17.00	14.00 to 17.00
	Public Workshop	Public Workshop	Public workshop
	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.	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.	The European Space Incubators network (ESINET) has been developed by EBN, on behalf of ESA (European Space Agency) with the aim to deploy and brand a sector-specific and thematic community of Incubators and BICs developing all-round applications which have “space & sat”-related characteristics
	Creative Industries TWG	Maritime BICs TWG	ICT BICs TWG
	14.00 to 17.00	14.00 to 17.00	14.00 to 17.00
	Public Workshop	Public Workshop	Public Workshop
	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 in the area of creative industries (serious games, graphical design, etc.). And of course, they will meet in Fez!	As 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.	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.)
16.30 – 18.00	EBN Board of Directors Meeting (restricted to Board Members)		

Welcome Cocktail

Venue: Salle Fès Medina (19.00 -21.00)

Thursday 25 June - Congress day 2

Venue: Jnan Palace, Fez

09.00 – 09.30	Registrations & Welcome coffee		
09.30 – 11.00	<p>Opening Ceremony</p> <p>“The Creativity & Innovation Challenge: the EU, the Mediterranean and the Moroccan perspectives”</p> <p>Welcoming speeches by both EBN and the Governor of the Fez-Boulemane region, who will officially open the 18th EBN Congress, will be followed by keynote official addresses by the representatives of the European Commission, the Moroccan government and by other key officials. The 2009 European Year of Creativity & Innovation will be highlighted as a catalyst, symbol and lever for this challenge to happen!</p>		
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee Break		
11.30 – 13.00	<p>Plenary Session 1</p> <p>“Creative innovation in an economic downturn”</p> <p>Creativity provides one of the most powerful sources of innovative ideas and new business opportunities, and may contribute to boost the economic and human capital recovery/revival. Creative thinking & ideas generation may lead to positive behavioral changes, through the use of collaborative mechanisms & networks, and the implementation of creative & professional tools & methods. What are the main trends on these subjects?</p>		
13.00 – 14.30	Networking Lunch		
14.30 – 16.30	<p>Parallel Workshop 1</p> <p>Lessons learned from Creative Artists & Cultural Entrepreneurs</p>	<p>Parallel Workshop 2</p> <p>The creative drive of IT - multimedia high-tech applications</p>	<p>Parallel Workshop 3</p> <p>Creative solutions for Socio-economic innovations</p>
16.30 – 17.00	Coffee Break		
17.00 – 18.30	<p>AGM – EBN Members General Assembly</p> <p>The AGM will also open the vote for the election of the destination for the congress in 2011</p>		
<p>Gala Dinner</p> <p>Venue: Batha Museum (20.00-23.00)</p>			

Friday 26 June - Congress day 3: Tools & Solutions

Venue: Jnan Palace, Fez

<p>09.30 – 11.00</p>	<p>Parallel Workshop 4</p> <p>Creativity Tools</p> <p>Creativity techniques are indispensable boosters because finding and sorting new ideas is not spontaneous and is not only a question of individual talents, but largely depends on the way the creative process is organized, shared and powered.</p> <p><i>A panel of 1 moderator and max 4 experts (to be confirmed) will host the workshop</i></p>	<p>Parallel Workshop 5</p> <p>Innovation Management Tools</p> <p>Is there a standard recipe, a quality manual, a checklist for the pilot of the innovation process? Of course not, but there has been a lot of "creativity" in the development of Innovation Management Techniques (IMT), providing methods in mastering pipelines, milestones, portfolios, quality, conformity, value, benchmarks, etc.</p> <p><i>A panel of 1 moderator and max 4 experts (to be confirmed) will host the workshop</i></p>	<p>Parallel Workshop 6</p> <p>Design & Prototyping tools</p> <p>Design is becoming a central object in the innovation & creative economy, and this is good news. The power of ICT-based design software, collaborative platforms, and 3-D simulation/virtual reality tools, is unbelievable. The same applies for rapid-prototyping and other technology centers facilities. But design is also a new way of thinking, in search of distinctive assets.</p> <p><i>A panel of 1 moderator and max 4 experts (to be confirmed) will host the workshop</i></p>
<p>11.00 – 11.30</p> <p>Coffee Break</p>			
<p>11.30 – 13.00</p>	<p>Parallel Workshop 7</p> <p>Human Resources Management Tools</p> <p>The human factor is the corner stone of the innovation process, and requires top-class HR Management skills. This collective creative revolution pushes any organization to improve their collaboration, motivation, and vocational training methodologies.</p> <p><i>A panel of 1 moderator and max 4 experts (to be confirmed) will host the workshop</i></p>	<p>Parallel Workshop 8</p> <p>Technology & Economic Watch</p> <p>Watching competitions, collecting updated data, looking at market trends, accessing strategic information, understanding key relevant technologies, etc.: this is an increasingly complex challenge. Let's have a look to new instruments providing progress on "monitoring", "data mining", "trend-spotting", "foresight analysis", "key-technologies", etc.</p> <p><i>A panel of 1 moderator and max 4 experts (to be confirmed) will host the workshop</i></p>	<p>Parallel Workshop 9</p> <p>Intellectual Property & trademarks</p> <p>Amazingly, knowledge-based firms and Intellectual Property are not always very well synchronized. It might well come from a wrong approach of patenting, fear for licensing, too little interests for standards, and not enough appetite for Trademarks. A review.</p> <p><i>A panel of 1 moderator and max 4 experts (to be confirmed) will host the workshop</i></p>
<p>13.00 – 14.30</p> <p>Networking Lunch</p>			
<p>Best Tools Awards Ceremony & Closing session</p>			
<p>14.30 - 15.30</p> <p>Best Tools Awards Ceremony</p>			
<p>15.30 – 16.00</p> <p>Official Closing session</p>			
<p>Saturday 26 June - Social Program (optional)</p>			

III. Why a congress in Fez?

▪ Congress Objectives

In line with the concept and reasoning behind this year's congress theme(s) described above, the main objectives of the 18th EBN annual congress could be defined as follows:

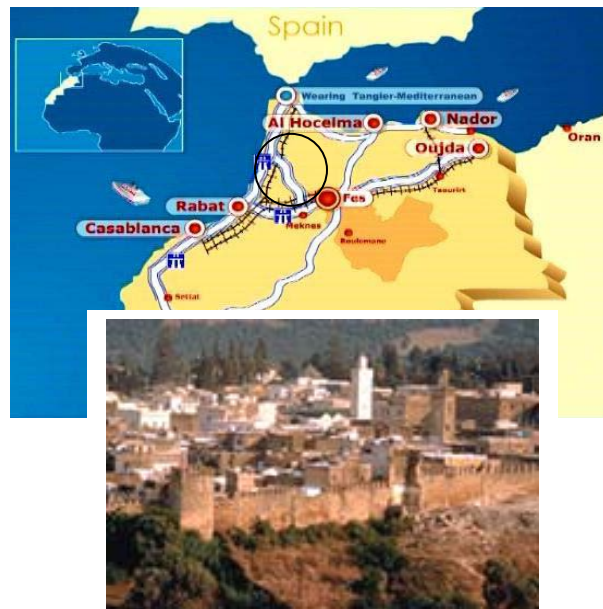
- In line with one of the priorities of the current Czech EU presidency: ***Create new synergies*** and ***strengthen and/or build relations*** between European, Mediterranean, and North African BICs and SMEs, where there is an ongoing need to strengthen and improve existing partnerships in order to boost innovation incentives;
- ***Improve linkages*** between regional innovation partners and businesses in order to foster global economic survival and growth;
- Take advantage of ***the European year of Creativity and Innovation*** to lobby for a good, straightforward EU policy, strengthening and stressing the importance of the role of SMEs and their need to innovate in order to tackle the global crisis;
- ***Raise the level of participation*** by Mediterranean incubators and innovators in European and international collaborative projects.

▪ **Why Fez?**

Fez, Morocco, North-Africa; out of all candidates, why did we choose Fez to host the 18th EBN annual congress? First of all, this has been the choice of the EBN Board Members, who voted for the 2009 candidate during their annual meeting in Budapest, June 2008. But besides the fact that the elected regional partner – the Regional Center for Innovation of the Fez-Boulemane Region - delivered a strong proposal, of course other important elements played a decisive role. Just to name a few:

Unique features of Fez:

- **UNESCO universal heritage**
→ Medina
- 1st Euro-Mediterranean university
- Oldest University
- 1200 years
- Infrastructure & hospitality
- **City of arts, artistic creation, knowledge & science, spirituality & tolerance, world music, etc.**



Indeed, taking place in Fez, the congress will be hosted for the first time on the African continent, in the Maghreb region. It is indeed a challenging place to host a “European Business Network for Innovation Centres” congress in the hart of Morocco, but at the same time it is exactly that what EBN wants to promote: **reaching out** to the European border countries, and **reducing** the **barriers** for their members and the SMEs to conduct business in a broader geographical radius, in line with the current EU policy priorities. Moreover Fez forms a great example for European innovators and entrepreneurs, as it offers and treasures a refined and **extraordinary mix of tradition and modernism**.

V. Practical Details

Dates & Timing

24-26 June 2009 (cfr. congress schedule)

- Wednesday, 24th June 2009: 9.00 – 21.00
- Thursday, 25th June 2009: 9.00 – 23.00
- Friday, 26th June 2009: 9.30 – 16.00
- Social program: Saturday, 27th June 2009

Venues



Salle Fès Medina



Batha Museum

Target Audience



Congress

Jnan Palace

Avenue Ahmed Chaouki
30000 Fez - Morocco

Welcome Cocktail

Salle Fès Medina



Jnan Palace

Gala Dinner - Thursday 25th June 2009

Batha Museum

We expect ***around 450 delegates*** to be present during the 3 days congress. Besides EBN European members, the congress traditionally welcomes participants and speakers from all over the world (Canada, US, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, China, India, Russia, South-Africa, etc.), going for a resolute ***international cross-cultural approach***, with particular emphasis on the Mediterranean and North-African region to ***boost cross-border innovation activities amongst all stakeholders***, such as there are: BICs, incubators, innovation centres, entrepreneurship centres, local & regional Development agencies, SMEs, policy makers, but also researchers, academics and creative minds from different sectors and regions.

VI. Contact Details

If you would like to have more information on the on any of the above, please don't hesitate to contact us at:

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www.ebnfez2009.com (under construction)

**Looking forward to welcoming
you in Fez!!!**