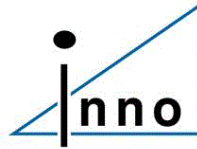# Selected learnings from the CLUSTER COOP Project

Danube Region Strategy

Cluster workshop
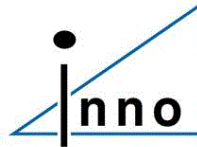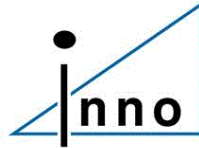
April 30, 2014

Overview

- Motivation for certification?

- Benefits compared to existing ones?
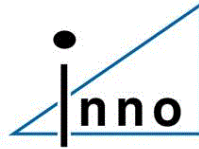
- Outlook

Motivation(1)

- Focus support programmes on strong clusters, but
  - What does strong mean
    - Cluster characteristics (PdC)
    - Cluster management (ESCA)
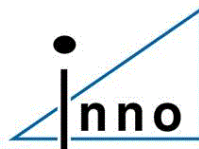   - Cluster performance (HCDP)
  - and who is strong?

What does support mean?

- Eligibility to apply for funding (e.g. for European Strategic Cluster Partnerships)

- Direct support (PdC; German elite clusters)

Motivation(2)

- Ensure sustainable framework for SMEs and clusters
  - Can one trust clusters as a "channel" to reach SMEs?

Motivation(3)

- From subsidy to investment

Motivation(4)

- Internationalisation
  - Who to co-operate with? Certification as a means to foster transparency, quality, and trust.
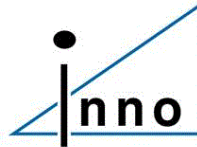
Motivation(5)

- Provide motivation and guidelines to learning
  - ESCA does benchmarking analyses and provides first recommendations
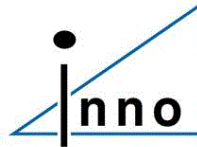 - CLUSTER COOP: mutual learning arena; SAT

Context

- Ambition: Partners sought to create a simple yet effective means for creating effective framework conditions to facilitate cooperation between their clusters;

- The methodology also sought to help MS to idenitify critical issues that will underlie successful cluster cooperation;

- The CE cluster qualification system should not be considered as competing with other labels. It is rather a complementary approach to enhance cluster cooperation in CE countries and a stepping stone towards other methods;
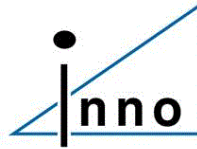
Pilot study

- Analysis of European cluster qualification systems regarding:
  - Methodology
  - Indicators
  - Impact on cluster activities

- Benchmarking case studies:
  - European Secretariat for Cluster Analysis
  - French Competitiveness Clusters
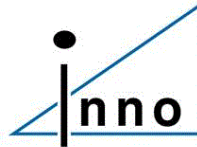 - Hungarian Pole Programme

Concept

- "ClusterCOOP label" granted to Central Europe clusters only.

- Clusters differentiated in three development stages:
  - Emerging cluster
  - Cluster under development
  - World-class cluster

- Cluster managers apply through electronic questionnaire.

ClusterCOOP   CENTRAL EUROPE
COOPERATING FOR SUCCESS.

EUROPEAN UNION
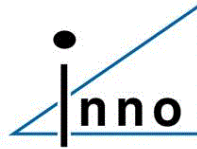EUROPEAN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FUND

Indicators (1)

- Territorial context, e.g.
  - GDP of the cluster territory
  - Proportion of domestic R&D investments in that GDP
- Nature of the cluster, e.g.
  - Technological field
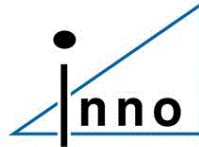 - Number of partners
  - Percentage of SMEs

Indicators (2)

- Cluster organisation, e.g.
    - Number of employees (FTEs)
    - Percentage of private source of funding
- Role of the cluster organisation, e.g.
    - Initiation and/or labelling of funded or not funded R&D projects per year
    - Participation of the cluster in international events
    - Number of thematic workshops and events organised with cluster members
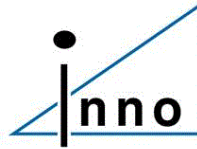
Indicators (3)

- Performance of the cluster, e.g.
  - Number of R&D projects proposals awarded under support schemes
  - Number of patents from the cluster members
  - Growth of average revenue of SMEs since they are member of the cluster

Immediate Next Steps

- Support drive towards inter clustering and excellence by encouraging clusters to participate in CE Qualification System (QS)

- MS can review their own national cluster labelling, funding methods and tools and encourage use of CE QS as a prerequisite for supporting internationlisation and inter clustering actions

- And continue to support the engagement with other networks and labels such as ESCA to facilitate broader EU cluster collaboration.

Themes for future joint projects

- Clusters as institutionalised foresight drivers
- Clusters as engines of cross-sectoral innovation and business
- Assessment of sustainable impact of clusters