

COLLABORATION BETWEEN DIGITAL INNOVATION HUBS AND THE ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK

A QUICK OVERVIEW OF POSSIBLE SYNERGIES

WHAT IS THE ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK?

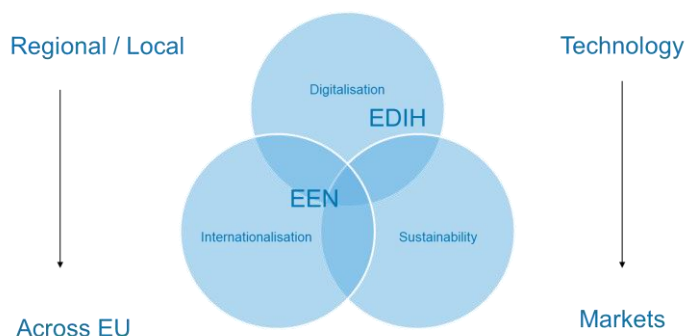
The [Enterprise Europe Network](#) (EEN) helps businesses innovate and grow on an international scale. It is the world's largest support network for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with international ambitions.

WHO ARE THE PARTNERS OF THIS NETWORK?

The partner organisations of the Enterprise Europe Network are genuine business & innovation support organisations (e.g. chambers of crafts, chambers of industry and commerce, regional development agencies, innovation agencies, research organisations, universities, regional/national promotional banks) that were selected following a competitive call for proposals. The EEN partners are organised in consortia covering at least a NUTS-2 region, which receive co-funding from the EU COSME Programme. There are almost 100 EEN Consortia active in 73 countries around the globe with more than 600 partner organisations. Its services are grouped in 3 categories; business advisory services, partnership services and innovation services.

WHO ARE THE TARGET GROUPS OF THE ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK?

The general target group of the EEN are SMEs with a potential for international growth; a subgroup among these SMEs that are particularly relevant to the digital innovation hubs are the SME that have a high potential of innovation through digitalisation.



WHY IS COLLABORATION NECESSARY?

Highly digitized SMEs are more competitive on international markets, whereas digitalisation and sustainability are recognised as the main changing drivers for SMEs. Moreover, the EC Communication “Strengthening Innovation in Europe’s Region: Strategies for resilient, inclusive and sustainable growth” recognises the negative impact of the current fragmentation on innovation support and urges for state-of-the-art facilities in regional ecosystems to foster cross-regional partnering and access to competences.

HOW COULD DIGITAL INNOVATION HUBS ACROSS EUROPE BENEFIT FROM ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK AND VICE VERSA?

The collaboration between (E)DIHs and EEN offers a win-win situation by reinforcing the synergetic service offerings of the two networks. As for the form of cooperation, EDIHs and EEN nodes that are operating in the same territory could conclude a service-level cooperation which clearly describes how the two will complement each other and will work synergistically together, offering a seamless service to SMEs. This will also avoid the problem of double funding the same activities through different projects.

Possible activities that could be considered

- **Access to finance for digitalisation**
EEN partners provide guidance to SMEs on access to regional, national and european funding and financing schemes. This could be beneficial in order to further support SMEs access to programmes like Horizon Europe, DIH dedicated calls, access to EU financial instruments (Invest EU / Cosme LGF + EISF), access to other local/national programmes including ERDF etc.
- **Access to investment**
EEN partners often have longstanding business relations with investors, some EEN partners are even promotional banks managing financial instruments funded by the ERDF operational programmes, which can be of benefit to organise joint investor related events. Beyond that, EEN partners also have experience in preparing SMEs for their pitching in front of an investor panel.
- **Organisation of common trainings/workshops/info-days for SMEs**
EEN partners can (co)organise trainings for SMEs together with EDIHs or B2B matchmaking events.
- **Referrals of SMEs (from EEN to EDIHs and from EDIHs to EEN)**
EEN partners can enhance the SME outreach of the EDIHs and can refer SMEs to the regional/national members of the EDIH network. EEN partners can also match businesses with EDIHs in a cross-border context. Equally, for further specialised services such as internationalisation the EDIHs can also signpost businesses to EEN partners.
- **Digitalisation audits/assessments**
EEN partners carry out digital audits (basic assessment of digital transformation potentials) with the [Digital Innovation Quotient tool of the IMP3ROVE Academy](#) – the action plan as a result of the digital audit should include EDIH service offerings whenever appropriate. These Audits could also be carried out by joint teams of local/regional EDIHs and EEN partners.

MORE INFORMATION ON ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK

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