High-level US Business Association, Research and Innovation Network, and Cluster Mission to the EU

including

a US – EU Cluster Knowledge-sharing Roundtable

and

Cluster visits to Denmark, Sweden, Belgium and The Netherlands

organised by

BILAT USA 4.0

*Financed by the Directorate General Research & Innovation*

6-9 November 2018

Call for
Expression of Interest
Objectives

The High-Level US Business Association, Research and Innovation Network and Cluster Mission to the EU seeks to support transatlantic cooperation for strategic Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) and business partnerships. As part of this mission, a US-EU knowledge-sharing roundtable will be organised to present the experiences of existing EU-US cluster collaborations and to exchange good practices regarding industry internationalisation capacities development. Three days of the mission will be dedicated to visits to cluster organizations and RDI members in several EU countries (Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, The Netherlands).

The objectives of the planned mission are:

➢ To enhance EU-US cluster, business association, and research and innovation network cooperation for the benefit of their members: European and US clusters, business associations, and research and innovation networks will identify potential areas of common interest for cooperation and synergies, in terms of the sectoral, value chain, and market focus of their SMEs and other members, and formalise cooperation (MoU) wherever relevant, on future actions of cooperation.

➢ To enhance EU-US industry and academia-industry collaboration in Research, Development, and Innovation (RDI) through clusters, business associations, and research and innovation networks. The clusters and organizations will identify potential areas of RDI cooperation for their members (academia, research organizations, industries...).

➢ To support the excellence of sector management and innovation support services in Europe and the US through the exchange of good practices, experience, and knowledge between EU and US clusters, business associations and research and innovation networks.

This call for expression of interest is launched to identify a US delegation composed of representatives from clusters, business associations and research and innovation networks from different industry sectors such as:

- Clean Energy,
- Clean Tech,
- Sustainability,
- Smart Cities,
- E-mobility / Transport, and
- other sectors / key enabling technologies which present opportunities for collaboration involving the above sectors.
This call is published on the BILAT USA 4.0 website http://www.euusciencetechnology.eu/ and promoted through the communication channels of this project.

The expressions of interest to participate in this mission must be submitted electronically by midnight (EDT) on the 9th August 2018 at the latest to jessica.avery@sri.com and roland.stephen@sri.com.

Additional information on the mission and how to submit your expression of interest can be found below. Applying clusters, business associations and research and innovation networks will be informed about the results of the selection with an official confirmation on the business trip by 20th August 2018. More details about the trip will follow at that time.

### Context and approach

This mission will take place in the context of the BILAT USA 4.0 project. The BILAT USA 4.0 project includes a series of activities focused on opportunities for cluster cooperation and benefits to their Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), their research actors, as well as innovation projects. It is organized as a follow-up event to the successful EU Cluster Mission to the US held in May 2017.

The BILAT USA 4.0 project is funded by the European Union DG Research and Innovation, and started on 1 February 2016. BILAT USA 4.0 continues the activities started by the predecessor projects BILAT USA and BILAT USA 2.0 with the aim to enhance and develop science, technology, and innovation (STI) partnerships between the US and Europe. A particular focus of the project activities concerns the intensification of interactions between EU and US researchers and innovators as well as the support to clusters, networks and companies going international. The BILAT USA 4.0 project plans to involve cluster organizations as relevant intermediaries to facilitate international Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) cooperation. With the following activity, BILAT USA 4.0 aims to build on the existence of cluster organizations on both sides of the Atlantic, especially those which are supporting research and innovation activities, to enhance transatlantic RDI cooperation and business internationalisation.

### Draft agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday-Monday 4-5 November</td>
<td>All day</td>
<td>Travel from US to the EU – Arrival in Copenhagen, Denmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 6 November</td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Cluster visit in Denmark</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Cluster visit in Denmark</td>
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Wednesday, 7 November

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Knowledge-sharing roundtable on good practices: showcase of EU-US cluster collaboration opportunities and success stories, and discussion of good practices in terms of cluster management for the benefit of RDI activities, in Denmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Travel to Malmö, Sweden and cluster visit in Sweden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Travel to Brussels, Belgium</td>
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Thursday, 8 November

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Cluster visit in Belgium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Cluster visit in Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Travel to Rotterdam, The Netherlands</td>
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Friday, 9 November

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Cluster visit in The Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Debriefing on the visits and roundtable activity</td>
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Saturday, 10 November

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Travel from EU to US</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The agenda of the delegation visit will be elaborated in more details upon confirmation of relevant cluster organizations to host the visits in the EU and proposed activities; activities suggested for each of the visits are subject to changes.

Who can participate?

This call is addressed to business associations, clusters, and research and innovation network organizations that are interested in engaging in cluster collaboration with the US in industry sectors such as:

- Clean Energy;
- Clean Tech;
- Sustainability;
- Smart Cities;
- E-mobility / Transport; and
- Other sectors / key enabling technologies which present opportunities for cross-sectoral collaboration involving the above sectors.

The event is open to 15 participants with partial funding support. More participants can be accepted upon confirmation and at their own cost.

Clear priority will be given to applying clusters, business associations, and research and innovation networks. If seats remain available, selected associations can suggest an SME member to join.
Eligibility and selection criteria

To be selected:
- The cluster, business association, or research and innovation network organization should comply with the definition given in the section 1.3 (s) on 'innovation clusters' in Annex I of the new “EU Framework for State Aid for Research and Development and Innovation”¹

Each cluster, business association, or research and innovation network has to be involved in offering or channelling sector or network support services to research institutes or businesses and should be identified on the basis of a legal entity established in the US.

Applicants should meet the following criteria: (1) cluster, business association, or research and innovation network organization from the US, (2) with a will to engage in US-EU cluster cooperation, (3) in the clean energy, clean tech, sustainability, smart city, or e-mobility/transport sectors, or presenting opportunities for collaboration in these sectors (4) with an important component dedicated to RDI activities / innovation support.

Participant: Cluster organization, business association, or research and innovation network manager, responsible for internationalisation or for RDI support – 1 participant per organization. It can be proposed to travel with one SME member (optional, tbc according to total number of applicants).

Applications will be selected according to the following qualitative criteria:
- The potential to maximise collaboration opportunities through participation in this mission, based on a clear description of the type of partnership the applicant organizations are looking for and on the potential for establishing tangible cooperation as an outcome of the event. This expression of interest for collaboration shall be clearly articulated in the questionnaire provided in the annex and is to be submitted with the application.
- The willingness and readiness to engage in closer cooperation with other cluster and network organizations from the EU to better support SMEs, larger companies and research actors in global competition through joint efforts, and to help them initiate new projects.

¹ 2014/C 198/01. According to this definition:
('innovation clusters' means structures or organised groups of independent parties (such as innovative start-ups, small, medium and large enterprises, as well as research and knowledge dissemination organizations, non-for-profit organizations and other related economic actors) designed to stimulate innovative activity by promoting sharing of facilities and exchange of knowledge and expertise and by contributing effectively to knowledge transfer, networking, information dissemination and collaboration among the undertakings and other organizations in the cluster.)

The decision on the selection of applicants will be based both on the requirements above, qualitative merit of each application, and balanced geographical and sectoral coverage of the US.

Participants are expected to attend the full programme. The selection of the applicants based on the criteria above will be made by the BILAT USA 4.0 cluster activity team.

Cost and expenses

- Travel costs for transatlantic flights, travel costs between the different EU locations of the delegation visit (Copenhagen–Brussels and Brussels–Rotterdam), accommodations in the EU, and subsistence costs during the delegation visit will be funded at 100% of the real costs up to a maximum amount of 1800€ per participant.²

NB: Information on travel between the different EU locations, as well as the accommodations in the different cities will be provided by the delegation organizing team in order to ensure common travel and accommodations for the whole delegation. Each participant will take care of his or her own booking according to these indications; expenses will be reimbursed under the conditions specified above.

Application

To apply for this event, clusters, business associations, and research and innovation networks should keep the following dates in mind:

Please submit your expression of interest by 9th August 2018 midnight (EDT) to:

- Jessica Avery, jessica.avery@sri.com and
- Roland Stephen, roland.stephen@sri.com

The expression of interest should include:

- a completed questionnaire (template annexed) on the cluster, business association, or research and innovation network with proof / evidence of the legal entity;
- a short presentation of the cluster, business association, or research and innovation network in English language, using PowerPoint (1 slide only, using the template provided).

Please make sure to provide complete, accurate data and contact details.

Visit BILAT USA 4.0 to learn more about EU-US research and innovation collaboration opportunities and support: http://www.euussciencetechnology.eu/

² Please note: Real cost amounts of accommodation costs and subsistence are limited to the per diem rules currently applying for the EU.