



An initiative of the European Union

CLUSTERS MEET REGIONS

CHARLEROI
BELGIUM

27 · 28
NOVEMBER 2024

DRIVING THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC REVIVAL IN EUROPE:
AGORADA+ DISCUSSES INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS IN LIFE SCIENCES,
CLEANTECH AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AGENDA

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AGORADA+ 2024
EURADA event



18th Clusters meet Regions edition

Driving the Regional Economic Revival in Europe

AGORADA+ discusses innovation ecosystems in life sciences, cleantech and advanced manufacturing for regional development

IGRETEC premises
Boulevard Mayence 1
6000 Charleroi, Belgium

27 & 28 November 2024

27 NOVEMBER 2024

08:45	REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS AND WELCOME COFFEE
09:00	Opening Session – Welcoming Address <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Renaud Moens, General Director, IGRETEC• Jakub Boratynski, Director, Network & Governance DG GROW European Commission• Cristina Oyon, Vice-President, EURADA• Teodora Jilkova, ECCP representative Master of Ceremonies: Isa Hofmann , EURADA
09:35	Setting the Scene: From regional to local priorities for economic development. The key role of clusters and European funds Presentation of the EURADA-OECD Survey of Regional Development Agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roberta Dall’Olio, Director, EURADA• Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) representative (TBC) Presentation of the ECCP input paper on the Walloon Region (and its clusters) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Jan-Philipp Kramer, Partner at Prognos AG and Team Leader Data & Policy at the ECCP
10:05	Panel discussion 1°: Connecting regional and local economic development strategies with clusters Walloon Government (TBC) How Wallonia works, together with regional development agencies such as IGRETEC, to support the coherent implementation of the regional recovery plan, through over 100 investment and restructuring projects.

	<p>Two types of structures support the Walloon Region’s clustering policy: business clusters and competitive clusters. Where the business clusters are financed to develop economic activities and promote innovative partnerships, whether of an industrial, commercial or technological nature, the competitive clusters are mainly supported for the realization of investment, R&D or development projects, training in line with the competitive positioning strategy that they themselves have defined.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sophie Bourez, Co-director of Wagralim & Coordinator of the Walloon Competitive Clusters Network ● Sébastien Durieux, Board of Direction, Wallonie Entreprendre ● Philippe Lachapelle, Director of Innovation Networks and Technological Partnerships, AWEX ● Lionel Bonjean, General Director, Public Service of Wallonia ● Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship VLAIO (TBC) <p>Moderator: Marc Pattinson, Innovation and Research Policy Expert for the Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform and director GAC Group</p>
10:50	COFFEE BREAK
11:10	<p>The transition of industrial zones into an integrated renewed territorial ecosystem</p> <p>Charleroi Métropole Catch Turbo Plan</p> <p>The Catch Turbo Plan (Catch Turbo) is Charleroi Métropole’s strategic plan to support regional attractiveness. The Committee of Strategic Development at the request of the Wallonia government created it. It includes five priority areas: advanced manufacturing, health and biotech, airport and logistics, creative and digital, as well as food. The priority areas are in line with the work of the key players that have been driving Charleroi Métropole’s development for the past 20 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thomas Dermine, Belgian Federal Government, State Secretary for Economic recovery and strategic investments ● Morena Vulpi, Project Management Officer, Charleroi Entreprendre
11:35	<p>Panel discussion 2°: International practices, experiences, and success stories from adversity to Clustering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Valeria Tudisco, Head of Brussels office of Sviluppumbria (RDA Umbria) ● ADR Nord-Est in Romania ● Jorge Gonzalez, Director of TICBIOMED ● Daniel Janeiro, Coordinator of external relations at ADRAL <p>Moderator: Valeria Bandini, Europe and Internationalisation Area Manager, ART-ER</p>
12:15	LUNCH BREAK
13:15	Pitching session: start-ups, clusters, & European funding opportunities
13:45	<p>Insights from multidisciplinary actors on urban regeneration planning</p> <p>Cluster Cleantech: cutting-edge sector from the industrial past</p> <p>The reconversion of 100 hectares of industrial wasteland at Porte Ouest (urban regeneration plan supported by the European Regional Development Fund) is the subject of a new masterplan recently created by a number of multidisciplinary actors. The plan aims to revamp economic activity in the area by diversifying the sectors operating on four key sites. It is an essential element of the region’s industrial transition.” Porte Ouest” site will host the “District Cleantech.</p>

<p>14:15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stéphanie Toussaint, Project Manager, Charleroi Métropole sc ● Marc Van Den Neste, Project Manager, District Cleantech <p>Insights from multidisciplinary actors on urban regeneration planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dr Cécile Nouet, ULiège, Coordinator of IIS “Waste2Bio”, Walloon initiative ● Sylvie Russel, COO, Cambridge Cleantech ● Nadia Jacobs, R&D coordinator, AGC Glass ● Eric Moens, Transition Finance Network (TFN) ● Dominique Pierard, Greenwin, Head of Development A.I. ● Irena Łobocka, Sustainable Infrastructure Cluster in Kraków <p>Moderator: (TBD)</p>
<p>15:00</p>	<p>COFFEE BREAK</p>
<p>15:15</p>	<p>Fostering collaborative ecosystems as a major partner for industry</p> <p>The Advanced Manufacturing sector in Wallonia</p> <p>Wallonia, home to the Pole Mecatech, the leading cluster in advanced manufacturing, is spearheading Europe’s transition towards greener and smarter industrial processes. By fostering innovation in key areas such as automation, robotics, materials, and eco-friendly technologies, Mecatech drives the region's contribution to the green and digital transition. With a strong commitment to reducing environmental impact, optimising resource efficiency, and enhancing competitiveness through digitalization, Wallonia's advanced manufacturing ecosystem plays a pivotal role in shaping a sustainable and technologically advanced future for Europe’s industries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sophie Schmitz, International Project Manager, Mecatech <p>A6K, the success-story of an umbrella infrastructure</p> <p>A6K brings together industrial companies, start-ups, universities, institutional players, research centres and training operators under one hub at the heart of the city to foster innovation in the field of engineering. Its main objective is to provide a conducive environment for technological and industrial players to encourage collaborative growth and nurture high value-added projects in the fields of energy, communication, and operational transformation towards Industry 4.0.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Abd-Samad Habacchi, Director, A6K <p>Panel discussion 4°: The twin transition of the European industry: initiatives and challenges in advanced manufacturing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Carlo Morettin, Group Head of Environment and Decarbonization, Aperam Group ● Simona Moraglia, R&D Manager, Officine Meccaniche Aeronautiche ● Loïc Marin, Project Officer, CIMES / GEMSTONE ● Cristina Oyon, Director of technology, innovation & sustainability, Basque Business Development Agency ● Stelian Brad, President, Cluj IT Romania <p>Moderator: Andreea Leru, Expert on EU funding and innovation at ADR North-East and Vice-President of EURADA</p>
<p>16:30</p>	<p>Tools for clustering “How to accelerate economic and scientific ecosystems for regions and territories?”</p>

	<p>JRC ACTIONbook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlos Torrecilla Salinas, Head of Unit Joint Research Centre Innovation policies and economic impact
16:50	<p>Wrap up Day 1 and information about Day 2</p> <p>Isa Hofmann, EURADA</p>
19:00	<p>Evening programme</p> <p>Address: Quai 10, Quai Arthur Rimbaud – 6000 Charleroi</p> <p>Welcome words</p>
19:10	<p>MIT Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program (REAP)</p> <p>The MIT programme is a capstone global initiative, which helps regions accelerate economic growth and promote social progress through innovation-driven entrepreneurship (IDE).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lars Froelund, Research Director of MIT Innovation Initiative & Expert for the European Commission and the European Innovation Council
19.30	<p>“Charleroi Métropole, an unsuspected tourism destination”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valérie Demanet, Director “Maison du Tourisme du Pays de Charleroi”
19:45 -	<p>Networking and cocktail reception</p> <p><i>A shuttle bus at 22:00 and 22:30 will be made available for the participants to come back to the hotels</i></p>

28 NOVEMBER 2024

09:00	REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS AND WELCOME COFFEE
09:30	<p>Kickstarting the innovation value chain towards a high-tech leading European ecosystem</p> <p>The Brussels South Charleroi BioPark</p> <p>Belgium is a global leader in biotech and biopharma R&D innovation, clinical trials, and cutting-edge biomanufacturing platforms. Together, they have driven numerous medical breakthroughs. Over the last three decades, R&D spending in Belgium has grown faster than Japan, Europe, and even the US. With €5.7 billion invested in R&D in 2022 alone, the EU's European Innovation Scoreboard ranks Belgium as an 'innovation leader'.</p> <p>With a strong expertise in the field of clinical trials, Belgium is consistently ranked as a European leader in clinical trials per capita, trials testing cancer drugs, and trials testing rare diseases. Recent growth in the country's biotech industry is mostly being powered by the expansion of cutting-edge biomanufacturing companies, including those at the forefront of the remarkable CDMO (Contract Development Manufacturing Organisation) expertise for cell and gene therapies.</p> <p>Across the country, a wide variety of science parks and research centres accelerate and amplify breakthrough innovation, bridging the gap between research and business excellence.</p> <p>The Brussels South Charleroi BioPark is a shining example of this type of parks. It encompasses the full biotech innovation chain from target identification to commercial bio manufacturing with the presence of leading university research institutes, service providers, fast growing companies, world-class venture capital players and international business expertise. This provides a rich environment in which to collaborate and grow businesses. It also creates a dynamic, highly qualified talent pool.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dominique Demonté, CEO, Biopark <p>Panel discussion 5°: European challenges, opportunities and collaboration in the field of biotech</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daria Brembilla, Executive Scientific, Manager Cube Labs TBC • Frédéric Druck, General Director, Essencia • Emmanuel Amaury, Managing Director, GSK • Clémence Foltz, Project Manager PRECISEU at Clust-ER Health • Eurasante (TBC) <p>Moderator: Stamatiki Kritas, Manager Director, European Bioregions Council</p>
10:30	COFFEE BREAK
10:45	<p>Biotechnology for food: a potential towards a resilient and sustainable food system in Europe</p> <p>Founded in 2006 as a non-profit association, Wagralim is one of the 6 competitiveness Walloon's clusters. Their mission is to accelerate value creation in the agri-food sector through innovation, partnership and openness to the world. Wagralim coordinates the S3 European partnership "Ingredients for a Circular Economy", which has led to the I3 Biotech4Food project that supports companies in</p>

	<p>implementing biotechnologies in the agri-food sector. This project also aims to define three new value chains that will be presented.</p> <p>Wagralim will focus on the new ambition launched on March 2024, by the European Commission. The aim is Building the future with nature: Boosting biotechnology and biomanufacturing in the EU.</p> <p>FoodWal, as part of the Win4Excellence 2022 program by the Public Service of Wallonia (SPW), which aims to support the financing of excellent collaborative research between universities and accredited research centres in French-speaking Belgium, the FoodWal portfolio was proposed. Created for the benefit of the Walloon economic fabric, the FoodWal portfolio consists of three projects entitled MICROBoost, PEPTIBOOST, and PROTEBoost, focusing on the current challenges faced by economic actors in Wallonia in the field of future food.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Betty Milano, European Affairs Officer, Wagralim • Aline Ferain, Project Manager Officer, FoodWal <p>Moderator: Isa Hofmann, EURADA</p>
11:30	Pitching session: start-ups, clusters, & European funding opportunities
12:00	<p>Closing remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giovanni Emma, European Commission - DG GROW • Fabrice Eeklaer, co-President Charleroi Métropole sc • Theo Föllings, President of EURADA • Teodora Jilkova, ECCP representative
12:30	<p>Transfer to lunch venue (on foot) A6K / Square des Martyrs, 1 / 6000 Charleroi</p>
12:45	LUNCH BREAK
13:45	<p>Organisation and transfer to study tours (pre-booking required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tour 1: Cleantech <p>The District Cleantech (www.districtcleantech.be) in Charleroi, located at Porte Ouest, invites you to an immersive visit at the heart of an ambitious and innovative project. Formerly an industrial brownfield site, this historic location is undergoing a major transformation to become a dynamic ecosystem dedicated to energy transition, sustainable renovation, and circularity.</p> <p>We'll go to the site by tram departing from A6K to discover the buildings <i>Les Vestiaires & La Centrale</i>.</p> <p>By rehabilitating this historic site, the District Cleantech exemplifies an innovative transformation approach, where the industry of the past meets the technologies of tomorrow.</p> <p>You will also discover the ongoing and upcoming projects (around H2, sustainable housing and soil remediation) that will be established on this site, further reinforcing its role as a catalyst for projects aimed at accelerating decarbonization and promoting circular models. The District's ambition is to become a major hub for industrial and environmental innovation, bringing together businesses, start-ups, researchers, and public stakeholders in a fertile ecosystem conducive to the creation of future solutions. Today, the ecosystem already counts 80 active members.</p>

Practical information: As this is a former outdoor industrial site with certain hazards, **helmet and safety vest will be provided**. We also recommend that you **bring suitable footwear**

- **Tour 2: Biotech**

Charleroi BioPark (www.biopark.be) houses around a hundred companies and involves 3,300 individuals in research, development, and production of new drugs, medical devices, and diagnostic methods. These endeavours span diverse fields, including oncology, immune diseases, cell and gene therapy, vaccines, and neurodegenerative diseases, among others. Charleroi BioPark accommodates subsidiaries of major international corporations ([Catalent](#), [Thermo Fisher Scientifics](#)...), SMEs from various countries (France, Spain, Canada, China,..) and Belgian companies that have ascended to global leadership positions like the [Univercells Group](#) supported by the [Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#) or [Iteos Therapeutics](#) a Nasdaq listed company.

The **Center for Microscopy and Molecular Imaging** (CMMI – www.cmmi.be) is an integrated preclinical imaging facility providing services and training to academic and industrial partners. Their multidisciplinary team offers a wide range of services covering the entire workflow: sample preparation, image acquisition and analysis. (microscopy, digital pathology, in vivo Imaging and Image processing

Created jointly by universities of Brussels (ULB) and Mons (UMons) with the financial support of the European Union and the Walloon Region (FEDER program), the CMMI is located in the Biopark Charleroi Brussels South, a site that hosts two academic institutes and several companies active in the field of life scienceS

The Institute of Pathology and Genetics (IPG – www.ipg.be) is a company specialised in Anatomical Pathology, Clinical Genetics and Molecular and Cell Biology medical diagnosis.

The aim of anatomical pathology is to establish a precise diagnosis based on smears and material from cytological punctures, endoscopic biopsies or surgical specimens. Its scope covers the whole human body and includes many types of pathology: infection, inflammation, and benign and malignant tumours (oncopathology). As centres recognised in the field of human genetics, IPG provides genetic consultations to anyone faced with or worried by the risk of a genetically-based disease (constitutional, prenatal, cancer genetics, metabolic disorders). HisDepartment of Molecular and Cell Biology is interested in technologies for the cytogenetic and/or molecular diagnosis of different hereditary or acquired human pathologies.

- **Tour 3: Aperam A Leader in Sustainable Stainless Steel Production**

Aperam Châtelet (www.aperamchatelet.be) is a core part of Aperam's European stainless steel production network, responsible for processing one in four tons of stainless steel in Europe. This site plays a key role in advancing the company's sustainability agenda. Aperam leads in circularity, with more than 90% of certain steel grades made from recycled materials. The company also prioritizes decarbonization, achieving outstanding results in reducing CO2 emissions (Scope 1 and 2), and has earned the prestigious ResponsibleSteel certification, the first stainless steelmaker to achieve this.

Stainless steel is a durable product by excellence, making Aperam an essential actor in the green transition. The Châtelet plant has invested over €90 million since 2011 in sustainable innovations and workforce development, employing around 750 workers along with 200 subcontractors. Their commitment to health, safety, and the environment is embedded in their operations, creating a safer and more sustainable workplace while producing steel that meets the evolving needs of modern society.

By continuously improving its processes, Aperam Châtelet is well-positioned to address the challenges of tomorrow's industry, making stainless steel a key component in sustainable infrastructure projects and energy solutions.

14.00	Study tours
16:30	End of the study tours Come back to A6K building End of the CmR Programme
17:00	EURADA General Assembly (<i>EURADA members only</i>) Address: IGRETEC premises, Boulevard Mayence 1 - 6000 Charleroi <i>For the participants leaving in the evening of the 28th, a shuttle to Charleroi Sud Airport will be made available and leaving at 17:00 from A6K</i>
18:00	Apéro for EURADA members