



PRESS RELEASE

High-level mission to the EU: Exploring research, development, and innovation collaboration opportunities for US clusters and their members!

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Group photo of the cluster delegation and organizers



BILAT USA 4.0 organizing team from inno TSD and SRI International

From the 6th to the 9th of November 2018, BILAT USA 4.0 (www.euussciencetechnology.eu) led a delegation of 11 American business associations, R&I networks, and cluster organizations in a high-level cluster mission to the European Union (EU). The four-day event entailed a rich program of cluster visits and a roundtable (both organized by BILAT USA 4.0 partners inno TSD and SRI International).

The primary objective of the High-Level US Cluster Mission to the EU was to promote and support transatlantic cooperation for strategic research, development, and innovation (RDI) and business partnerships. The program was also intended to help American cluster-like organizations internationalize their and their members' business cooperation, research, and innovation activities.

As part of the High-Level US Cluster Mission to the EU, delegation members had the opportunity to engage with 23 clusters, government representatives, and research organizations in Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, and The Netherlands. The trip offered the US delegation the opportunity to learn about the role and operations of cluster organizations in the EU, gather insight into the RDI environment in the EU, and engage with peers and experts during a roundtable held as part of the event. [A separate report on the roundtable is available on the BILAT USA 4.0 website.]

The 12-member US delegation represented 11 cluster-like organizations in the fields of clean energy, clean tech, sustainability, smart cities, and e-mobility. Through participation in the High-Level US Cluster Mission to the EU, delegation members sought cooperation with the clusters and other stakeholders of the RDI ecosystem in the EU. The US representatives were selected through a competitive process following a Call for Expression of Interest published on the BILAT USA 4.0 website for which 14 applications were received. The selected organizations represented the following states: California, Colorado, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Washington.

The host organizations and representatives included in the itinerary were selected to match both the sector-focus and activity interests of the US participants. The organizations represented a range of actors in the EU's RDI ecosystem: cluster organizations, research institutes, economic development organizations, and government innovation programs.

The US delegation first visited Copenhagen, Denmark, on the 6th and 7th of November 2018. The mission began with a roundtable on sharing of good practices and co-creation. The following is a short summary of the roundtable, but a comprehensive report on the roundtable is available separately.



Roundtable panelists

US perspectives on transnational business-academia collaboration and relevant support tools. The session also brought together five panelists who presented their organizations' successful international collaborations and then participated in an interactive discussion with the audience. At the end of the roundtable, Cluster Excellence Denmark led attendees in a session on "Co-creation and idea generation: Building New Transatlantic Cluster Collaborations," which enabled participants to co-develop ideas for new transatlantic collaborations.



Participants in the co-creation session

In the afternoon of the 6th of November, the delegation met two Danish clusters: Lifestyle and Design Cluster and House of Energy. Discussions focused on energy opportunities in Denmark and the potential for cross-sectoral activities among design, clean energy/tech, and sustainability clusters.

The morning of the 7th of November began with a visit to the House of Green in Copenhagen, where delegation members heard presentations from two Danish clusters, State of Green and Cluster CLEAN. In the afternoon, the delegation traveled to the offices of Business Region Skåne



Presentation at Business Region Skåne

in Malmo, Sweden, where they met with four organizations

focused on the development of the clean tech, clean energy, and sustainability industries in Sweden and Norway. At the end of the day, the delegation traveled to Leuven, Belgium.



Delegation members at House of Green

The following day (the 8th of November) was dedicated to lively visits in Genk and Antwerp, Belgium. In the morning, the delegation visited EnergyVille, a collaborative research center in Genk dedicated to supporting the development of a market-based, sustainable energy system for large urban areas. Participants met with EnergyVille researchers and administrators and were able to tour several of the working labs.



Delegation members at EnergyVille

The delegation then traveled to Antwerp, where The Beacon hosted participants for an afternoon of presentations and exchanges on Antwerp's, and more broadly Belgium's, clean energy, smart city, and sustainability efforts. In total, the US delegation met with six Belgian organizations: The Beacon, Flux50, City of Antwerp, Imec, University of Antwerp, Bopro/Blue Gate Antwerp, and DSP Valley.



Group photo in Antwerp

On final day (the 9th of November), the cluster mission participants travelled to Rotterdam in The Netherlands, where they were hosted by Clean Tech Delta. The delegation heard from seven organizations active in the same fields and interested in research and innovation: Clean Tech Delta, International Cleantech Network, Roadmap Next Economy, Interreg SCALE-UP, Rotterdam



Participants in Cambridge Cleantech's collaboration exercise



Group photo at Clean Tech Delta

Partners, InnovationQuarter, and Cambridge Cleantech. During this time, delegation members learned about several international collaboration efforts coming out of Rotterdam. Following the presentations, Cambridge Cleantech led participants in a collaboration building exercise. Participants broke into small groups to generate and prioritize ideas for trans-Atlantic collaboration in clean tech, clean energy, sustainability, e-mobility, and smart cities. At the end of the exercise, each group presented a year-long action plan for their top idea.

Overall, participants appreciated the opportunity to meet stakeholders in the local RDI ecosystems of Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, and The Netherlands. The delegation members walked away with a greater understanding of the role and operations of cluster organizations in the EU. Throughout the mission, they made numerous contacts, many of which they hope to continue to engage and transform into larger collaborations. The High-Level US Cluster Mission to the EU can be considered a great success as confirmed by the positive feedback collected from participants.

About BILAT-USA 4.0

The BILAT USA 4.0 project, funded by the European Union under the Horizon 2020 Programme, started on 1 February 2016. It aims to enhance, support and further develop research and innovation cooperation between the European Union and the United States of America.

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