

Becoming ESCA expert for the benchmarking of cluster organisations

(Terms and Application Forms)

Stuttgart/Germany, July 13/14, 2017

ESCA – The European Secretariat for Cluster Analysis

ESCA promotes cluster management excellence through benchmarking and labelling of cluster management organisations. Its experts have developed a methodology for cluster benchmarking that has been widely acknowledged in Europe and beyond. This methodology has informed the development of a cluster management quality scheme in the context of the European Cluster Excellence Initiative (ECEI).

Since 2007 ESCA experts have benchmarked nearly 1000 cluster management organisations all over Europe and beyond in the context of various projects. The benchmarking is focused on the cluster management organisation that is responsible for managing the cluster and its activities and on the community of the cluster actors. Economic or other effects of the cluster on entire industrial sectors or the development of regional strengths cannot be reliably measured through benchmarking and are therefore not part of the analysis.

The benchmarking covers around 40 questions/indicators that analyse the cluster and the cluster management organisation with regard to six dimensions, including the structure of the cluster, governance and strategy of the cluster, financing of the cluster management organisation, services provided by the cluster management organisation, contacts and interaction with relevant players.

Benchmarking for cluster analysis is based on a personal interview with the manager of a cluster management organisation. Conducted by an impartial benchmarking expert the interview (which takes about three hours) captures data on the different dimensions of the cluster. The data is compared to a portfolio of around 200+ clusters from different countries, regarding clusters in the same technology area, the same country (if enough data is available from the particular country, and particular excellence cases). The results of the analysis will draw a detailed picture of the cluster and the cluster organisation in comparison to its peers in terms of the structure of the cluster, cluster management and cluster governance, financing, services provided by the cluster management organisation and achievements of the cluster management organisation. Based on the findings recommendations for further action are made.

Besides organising the processes for cluster benchmarking and awarding the benchmarked cluster organisation with the “Cluster Management Excellence Label BRONZE – Striving for Cluster Excellence”, ESCA as well manages the processes for assessing and awarding cluster organisations with the higher degree quality labels according to the ECEI methodology, the “Cluster Management Excellence Label SILVER – Dedicated to Cluster Excellence” and the “Cluster Management Excellence Label GOLD – Proven for Cluster Excellence”.



Training of ESCA Benchmarking Experts

Cluster benchmarking interviews are conducted by specifically trained ESCA benchmarking experts. After such a theoretic and practical training the experts have basic background knowledge on the ECEI methodology and are able to conduct the benchmarking interviews and to discuss the results (being documented in a confidential benchmarking report provided by ESCA to the benchmarked cluster organisation) with the benchmarked cluster organisation. Being ESCA benchmarking expert and having gained further practical experience next steps can be to become an ESCA GOLD expert for assessing cluster organisations regarding the higher stages of the ECEI labelling scheme.

ESCA experts always work in cooperation with ESCA headquarters. ESCA headquarters will provide all support related to data management and analysis and will assist the ESCA experts in their efforts wherever possible.

On July 13/14, 2017 ESCA organises a training workshop in Stuttgart/Germany for interested parties to become ESCA expert.

The training can only take place if minimum four and maximum seven trainees register and participate.

Registrations are accepted on a first come – first serve basis and the timely receipt of payment of the participation fee.

In order to participate in the training candidates should fulfil the following requirements:

- Professional experience in cluster and/or network management and/or cluster policy or similar experiences (min. 2 years)
- Fluent English Language Skills (oral and written)
- Signed IP agreement with VDI/VDE-IT (to be signed by the employing organisation of the Benchmarking Expert and the Benchmarking Expert) – payment of the participation fee of the training sessions
- Good knowledge of national and European cluster landscape
- Awareness of individual potential conflicts of interest in relation to acting as a Benchmarking Expert

Participation fee is 750 EUR/trainee.

Upon successful participation in this training each participant will receive a certificate, will be listed as ESCA expert on the ESCA webpage, and is allowed to conduct benchmarking projects in collaboration with ESCA.

Please see programme below for further details.

Programme

Jul 12, 2017, 20:00-21.30 h	Informal Pre-Evening Get-Together
Jul 13, 2017, 09:00-18:00 h	Benchmarking training – the theory part Introduction to cluster benchmarking and the European Cluster Excellence Initiative <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cluster Management Excellence – Success Factor of Clusters• Assessing Cluster Management Excellence – Methodologies and Tools• Introduction to and discussion of the interview guideline and selected aspects of the data analysis and results presentation
Jul 13, 2017, 19:30-21:00 h	Joint Dinner (included in the participation fee)
Jul 14, 2017, 09:00-13:00 h	Benchmarking training – the practical part Real-life benchmarking interview with a cluster manager: Benchmarking of cluster organisation, tbd.
Jul 14, 2017, 14:00-16:00 h	Final discussion – De-briefing Discuss your experiences with the trainer, further procedures

Location of the Training:

Haus der Wirtschaft
Willi-Bleicher-Straße 19
70174 Stuttgart
(walking distance from Stuttgart main train station)

Local contact:
Silvia Palka
Phone +49 711 1233033
silvia.palka@vdivde-it.de

Registration form for trainees
(one per person, please make copies):
Jul 13/14, 2017, Stuttgart/Germany

First name / surname

Organisation

VAT-no. of organisation
if available for
international use

Street address

Postal/zip code

City

Country

Telephone

Fax

E-mail

Signature and date

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- Please attach a current CV indicating your qualifications and professional experiences in the area of cluster management and/or cluster policies.

- Please note that it is mandatory to sign an IP agreement (see enclosure) regarding the ESCA benchmarking methodology and its use prior to the training.

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Please call +49 30 31 00 78 154 if you need further information.

Further important information

ESCA will collect registrations for the training. In the moment the minimum participation is ensured, ESCA will confirm the registration in written form and will as well send an invoice. The decision whether the training takes place will be made June 16, 2017, the latest.

Please go ahead with booking any travel only when you have received a confirmation from ESCA that the minimum trainees have registered and the training takes place!

Logistics - Travel to Stuttgart

Stuttgart can be reached by train (Stuttgart main station) and by air (Stuttgart airport).

Hotel recommendation will be given together with the confirmation that the training takes place.

The location where the training will be held is walking distance from the main station.