

# Technology Transfer and Business Support

*The Enterprise Europe Network helps Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises profit from the single market*

After 1,000 days in business, the Enterprise Europe Network has helped more than 2.5 million companies to make the most of the European Union's Single Market. It has also attracted around 35,000 small businesses to international brokerage events and company missions. Europe's largest business support network contributes to the competitiveness of SMEs by making it easier for them to internationalize, innovate and access EU finance and funding. Close to 600 major players in the business support community have linked up with the network to offer a one-stop service to help companies reach their full potential.

With over 3,000 professionals participating, the EEN is present in every region of the European Union and in twenty-one third country markets to serve the needs of European SMEs. It provides integrated support services designed to help small enterprises do business abroad and find European funding for their research and innovation projects. The Network was created in 2008 by DG Enterprise and Industry and is a key part of the EU's Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Program, which aims to encourage competitiveness in European businesses. It is managed by the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI).



*The Network in Bulgaria consists of 14 partnering organizations in 8 cities; it is coordinated by ARC Fund, and covers the whole territory of the country.*

Enterprise Europe Network – Bulgaria, being part of the network, helps small businesses internationalize, innovate and use better the opportunities of the Single Market.

As in the previous years, the focus was to help the internationalization of Bulgarian SMEs via business partnerships, to encourage and support innovation via technology transfer and modern innovation support services, and to facilitate access for SMEs to research programs and funding.

ARC Fund maintains the internet portal of the Network in Bulgaria, which is the leading Bulgarian portal for business in-

formation and advice, technology transfer and innovation, consultancy and information.

It also contains information on how to participate in national and European funding programs, especially those related to technological development, research and marketing of new products and technologies. Each partner maintains its own regional portal of the network.

The activities of EEN – Bulgaria during 2011 are focused on sectors such as ICT, being the sector that could serve as the basis for the faster development of the entire economy, as well as traditional sectors such as the food industry.

The screenshot shows the Bulgarian website of the Enterprise Europe Network. The header includes the logo and the text 'Ангажиментът на Европа към малките предприятия'. The main navigation bar contains links for 'Начало', 'Новини', 'Статии', 'Контакти', and 'English Version'. The main content area is titled 'Предстоящи събития, организирани от Enterprise Europe Network в Европа' and features a 'Във фокус' section with the article 'Иновации и конкурентоспособност'. Below this, there are sections for 'Успешни проекти' (featuring TOUREG) and 'Избрано за вас' (featuring a seminar on China). A sidebar on the left provides quick access to various services and news. At the bottom right, there is a banner for 'Услуги за управлението на водите и интегрирани решения за хранително-вкусовата индустрия' with the word 'Food' in large letters.

The website of the Enterprise Europe Network, found at [www.enterprise-europe-network.bg](http://www.enterprise-europe-network.bg).

### Brokerage Events

The Applied Research and Communications Fund has organized business and technological brokerage and matchmaking events annually in various economic sectors such as engineering, machine building, ICT, energy efficiency and renewable energy sources, and the food industry. These types of pre-arranged meetings allow for contact between

businesses and research organizations in search of business, technology and project partnerships. Such partnerships can include international projects at the European level, which can take place under different EU programs and initiative, such as the EU framework programs and operational programs under the EU structural funds.

### FutureMatch

The Enterprise Europe Network Bulgaria organized an ICT technology brokerage event during the biggest European exhibition in the field named CeBIT, from March 1st-5th, 2011, in Hannover, Germany.

The event attracted 263 participants, presented 533 cooperation profiles from 35 countries and scheduled 1,323 meetings. The ARC Fund consultants from the network supported the participation of six innovative Bulgarian companies in the bro-



*A glimpse into the FutureMatch event.*

kerage event. They presented several new technological solutions, which included a platform for the achievement of agile business organization, enterprise resource

planning solutions, and accounting and warehouse management software. The presented technologies provoked very high interest and more 90 meetings were held.

### CeBIT Bilişim



CeBIT Bilişim

CeBIT Bilişim Eurasia is the largest and most important ICT trade show in the Eurasian region and covers the entire spectrum of information technology, telecommunications, software and ICT-related services. To overcome the current crisis, In November, the European Commission proposed a new strategy entitled “Small Business, Big World - a new partnership to help SMEs seize global opportunities”.

It states the European small and medium sized enterprises should better profit from fast growing emerging markets outside of Europe. The CeBIT Bilişim Eurasia brokerage event, organized by the Enterprise Europe Network from October 6th-9th 2011, provided very good opportunities to the participating 19 Bulgarian companies to promote their innovative technologies to the Eurasian ICT-world.

### *ANUGA Matchmaking 2011*

The brokerage event “ANUGA Matchmaking 2011” was organized in parallel to the international food exhibition ANUGA on October 10th-11th, 2011 in Cologne, Germany. ANUGA is not only the largest food and beverage fair in the world, it is also the sector’s most

important fair for new markets and target groups. Furthermore, 64 Enterprise Europe Network partners supported the brokerage event as co-organizers. EEN Bulgaria assisted 35 Bulgarian companies in registering and attending the event.

### *STAR-NET TRANSPORT*

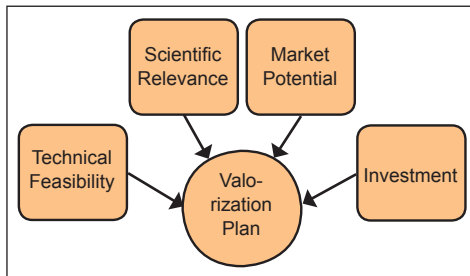
The aim of the Star-Net Transport project, implemented within the EC Seventh Framework Program and finalized in 2011, was to provide integrated support for the innovative development and successful participation of European SMEs in ‘Sustainable Surface Transport’ activities (haulage, logistics, ICT applications, naval technology, car building, railway transport, and the economics of transport). The project network of 16 organizations from the EU and Turkey provided sets of services on promoting call opportunities, assessing the technological state of the potential SME applicants, identifying promising project ideas, developing and disseminating partner search profiles and assisting the inclusion of Transport SMEs in project proposals under the Seventh Frame-

work Program. For the project duration, the consortium assisted more than 400 SMEs and supported the submission of 30 proposals to European programs related to transport, innovation and energy efficiency.

ARC Fund assisted 30 transport SMEs, associations and clusters with information, consultation and partner search services, facilitated the inclusion of 5 Bulgarian SMEs in project proposals to EC programs and organized two awareness raising workshops on financial and partnership opportunities for innovative development. It also nominated 10 technology and partner search profiles, disseminated through the Star-Net Transport network, to potential contractors.

## InterValue

InterValue aimed to establish knowledge, support and inter-regional cooperation mechanisms aiming at the integration of the R&D potential in the South East Europe area. The objective of the project is to help exploit academic research for the sake of R&D sustainability and regional development.



*InterValue Methodology Diagram*

The methodology adopted by the project includes the following steps:

1. Identification of R&D results created by research centers in the region that have some market potential. ARC Fund identified 50 R&D results which are presented in the project platform;
2. Creation of a transnational pool of experts that can offer their advice on the market potential, technical feasibility, scientific relevance and funding opportunities;
3. Assessment by the experts of the market potential of selected R&D results.

The Bulgarian network of experts helped researchers (the most promising 25 of the 50 collected R&D results) to create valorization plans by exploring the technical feasibility, scientific relevance, market potential and investing/funding potential of the R&D results.

4. Development of exploitation plans and valorization agreements for the most promising of the assessed R&D results and support of their valorization potential. The project implementation now is at the stage of selection for those R&D results to be supported on their way to the market;
5. Systematically promote linkages between research and business through focused brokerage events.

Two brokerage events were organized in Bulgaria (on July, 2nd-3rd, 2011 in Gabrovo and on September 26th-27th, 2011 in Plovdiv) aiming to promote the collected R&D results to industry and financial organizations.

These steps are complemented by a multilingual web 2.0 based knowledge site, with complete methodological guides that clarify specific aspects of new product development and intellectual property management.

The web platform is available at [www.researchvalue.net](http://www.researchvalue.net).

## EU Policies for SMEs

In 2011, ARC Fund finalized the project EU Policies for SMEs which had the main objective of facilitating consultations between the European Commission

and SMEs in the EU and EU-accession countries. This was done in order to include their opinions in the EU level policy making process, thus enabling the direct

involvement of SMEs. The project activities included:

- Enhancing the communication channel between SMEs, Enterprise Europe Network partners and the Commission;
- Provide feedback to SMEs on the outcome of the exercise.

To achieve the main objective the project, partners managed to gather and analyse the opinions of more than 150 Bulgarian SMEs on forthcoming policies and

legislation related to SME relevant priority areas in the Commission's Legislative Work Programme (CLWP). The consulted panels included:

1. SME Panel specific action, which is a new legislative framework for the marketing of products where there was a proposal to align 10 product harmonization directives to Decision 768/2008
2. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
3. E-signature and electronic identification

### *Improving SME Competitiveness and Innovation in Serbia*

As a further attempt to enhance its internationalization ARC Fund embarked on a mission to perform Innovation Scanning in Enterprises: Analysis and Policy Development. This mission is carried out for a consortium of organizations, which implement the EU supported project on improving the competitiveness and innovation of Serbian SMEs. In 2011 ARC Fund did primarily preparatory work, such as company visits in Serbia, as well as meetings with Serbian authorities such as the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, National Agency

for Regional Development, Ministry of Education and Science, etc. ARC Fund also carried out a training workshop on international benchmarking methods, presenting the case of the Inovation.bg best practice. In 2012 ARC Fund will contribute to conducting a survey to scan 3000 enterprises, 50 in depth in Serbia. This survey aims to enable the Serbian Ministry of Economy and Regional Development to identify policy measures that might remove existing barriers that prevent SMEs from realizing their full innovation potential.

### *Support for enterprise and business incubators in Eastern Europe and Central Asia*

ARC Fund's IT Group leader, Mr. Todor Yalamov, manages the ECAbit Eastern European and Central Asian Business Incubators and Technology Parks Network as part of the global incubators network of infoDev. The network was founded in May 2005 in Kiev, Ukraine. In 2011, the network carried out numerous training events and provided high-value added services to its members. The highlights of ECAbit's work in 2011 included:

- The Sixth International Conference of the Eastern European and Central Asian Business Incubators and Technology Parks Network (ECAbit), from November 6th-8th, 2011 Chisinau, Moldova;
- The Tambov International Innovative Camp was held for the first time on August 24th-26th, 2011. More than 150 participants attended the camp, including representatives from Germa-

ny, Bulgaria, Belarus and Russia. The main activities of the camp were: (a) the conference “Small and medium-sized entrepreneurship, the revival of its best traditions and employment”; (b) a seminar training “Practice of small innovative business development”; (c) a master-class “Commercialization of ideas: the main problems and solutions”;

- The annual Y2I 2011 competition for

innovative start-ups who are nominated by members of the network from among their tenants;

- ARC Fund’s continual provision of valuable information to its partners in the network by preparing and distributing the ECabit Newsletter in English and Russian. The newsletter contained useful insights from the activities of the network as well as external incubation resources.

## B-CREATIVE

The year of 2011 marked the launch of the **“How To Grow” online platform** of the “Business kit for Creative start-ups in IPR, Venture capital and Entrepreneurial skills” (BCreative) project. The platform aims to provide a number of services and information for startup companies and individuals working within the creative industries (CI) in order to help them thrive in this high-growth sector. Companies and individuals include those working in advertising, architecture, art and antiques, crafts, design, designer fashion, filmvideophotography, musicperforming arts, publishing, software and computer games, television and radio. In order to help overcome challenges to the achievement of goals for those in creative industries, the platform aims to enhance networking opportunities and the identification of business partners, obtain and exchange expert business advice and other useful information, as well as help facilitate access to the financial resources necessary to help those working in these fields turn their ideas into successful companies. The project consists of nine partners from six European countries which include design companies, technology transfer organizations, universities, chambers of commerce and public bodies. BCreative is

a European Commission funded project under the Europe INNOVA Initiative of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Program (CIP).

In order to address networking, informational and financial challenges, the online platform contains distinct areas designed to address them. The first includes a “Building Networks” section, containing a community platform and partner search where users can profile themselves and interact with other users as well as search for potential partners working in similar or complimentary creative areas. The second includes a “Gaining Knowledge” section of the platform consisting of a community forum, “Mediabase” and a “Watch and Interact” page. These sections allow for discussions of CI related topics, downloadable information including case studies, policy documents, business and financial information among others, and interactive streaming videos of CI related presentations from across Europe. Finally, the “Getting Finance” section includes an area where creative projects can be funded through an aggregation of small donations by interested users and also contains a listing of grants and funds available at local, national and European levels. In the coming year, it is foreseen



**HOW TO GROW** B-CREATIVE  
**TOOLS FOR THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY**

Log in New here? Sign up What do you need today?

Getting Finance Building Networks Gaining Knowledge Home About

**Welcome to 'How to Grow'!**  
 This platform is designed to boost the growth of creative companies across Europe. A set of Services and Tools offers you the opportunity to access knowledge and financial resources.  
**PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS A BETA VERSION.** If you would like to stay informed, follow us on Twitter or Facebook, or sign up to our newsletter.

**KNOW HOW**  
 The online conference to grow your creative business.

New here? Sign up!  
 As a registered user of How to Grow you can use our tools and services.

[Join How to Grow](#)

**GAINING KNOWLEDGE**  
 Read, watch and learn about subjects that can enhance your skills, your company's performance and growth. [More >](#)

**BUILDING NETWORKS**  
 Find relevant businesses and people to build a network fine-tuned to your professional needs. [More >](#)

**GETTING FINANCE**  
 In this area you can learn about possible investments, grants and other financial opportunities. [More >](#)

**agorada 2011**  
 Barbara Cruz from How to Grow will give a presentation about crowdfunding on the HtG platform. November 18th, 11h30 CET [Event page >](#)

**News**  
 25-01-2012  
 Cluster Challenge - update!  
 A lot of clusters with an interest in better profiling their activities signed up to the 'Put your cluster on the map' challenge! Thanks everyone!  
 The second part of the competition is now ready to kick off. Designers are invited to c...  
[Read more](#)  
 10-01-2012  
 What IF...we discussed the future of creative industries?

**COMPASS TO GROWTH**  
 Let our Compass to Growth tools help your business grow.  
 Available soon  
 Co-funded by European Commission

European Commission Enterprise and Industry B-Creative

Homepage of the 'How To Grow' online platform of the B-Creative project

that a crowd investments tool will become available, allowing for small investments in CI related projects and businesses. Crowd investment tools will allow many “micro-investors” to contribute to an organisation’s overall funding target and gain equity in a project or company in the process.

The identification and development of these tools was based on an assessment of the existing needs and challenges of creative companies in the partner countries. Now that the platform has been launched, the ways that the tools and services are be-

ing used will be monitored in order to assess and improve their functionality. The creation and moderation of the tools is split among the project partners. For its part, ARC Fund is responsible for leading the moderation of the community forum to ensure a lively and productive discourse among users of the platform.

In 2011, BCreative also worked with other CI support projects, such as the IMMEDIATE project, through activities such the cross-linking of events. This integration is expected to deepen until the project conclusion at the end of 2012.