

Project proposal concept paper

**INDUSTRIAL SYMBIOSIS FOR REGIONAL GROWTH TOWARDS A CIRCULAR ECONOMY - SYMBI
INTERREG EUROPE programme 2014-2020 - Call 2015**

REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL SYMBIOSIS FOR THE TRANSITION TO CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Circular economy is based on two pillars: a) the "cradle to cradle" principle, focusing on product design and regenerative modes of consumption, and b) industrial symbiosis, which involves territorial synergies to share services, utilities, and by-product resources. The territorial aspect of industrial symbiosis brings regions to the forefront of the transition towards circular economy; new solutions and business models will depend on the absorption capacity and innovation potential of EU regions and cities.

BENEFITS OF INDUSTRIAL SYMBIOSIS FOR EU REGIONS

EU regions need to explore such solutions to remain economically sustainable and competitive. Industrial symbiosis can support growth and job creation through: a) considerable material savings, b) new business models that involve revenue streams from reusable resources, and c) the mitigation of risks associated with the volatile global economy and proliferating signs of resource depletion.

EXISTING REGIONAL BARRIERS TO BE ADDRESSED

Industrial symbiosis requires regions to address multifaceted challenges across the supply and value chains of their economy:

- Lack of investment (and skills) on recovery infrastructure.
- Weaknesses in policy coherence (e.g. bioenergy & waste policies).
- Lack of sustainable procurement incentives.
- Lack of internalisation of externalities and resource pricing, inhibiting the efficient use of resources.
- Lack of waste separation at source.
- Lack of incentives to improve cross-cycle and cross-sector performance.
- Lack of harmonisation of transport flows systems between municipalities.

OVERALL GOAL OF THE PROJECT

SYMBI aims to support the implementation of policy instruments and measures for the diffusion of industrial symbiosis, to add value, reduce costs, and improve the environment. SYMBI will foster: a) the exchange of experiences between regions and actors involved regional supply and value chains, b) the integration of lessons learnt into regional policies and actions plans, and c) the joint development of benchmarking methodologies and synergetic schemes.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- Promote the use of secondary raw materials, and the emergence of regional secondary raw materials markets.
- Identify measures enabling businesses to pursue industrial synergies, and to strengthen the role of regional support centres.
- Unlock investments by regional and local financial actors.
- Prioritise green procurement.
- Build consensus between regional stakeholders.
- Explore and assess current practices in eco-systems of industrial innovation.
- Incentivise regional waste processing systems.

PARTNERSHIP COMPOSITION AND TARGET GROUPS

- National, regional and local public authorities responsible for environmental quality and resource efficiency.
- Regional development agencies.
- Environmental agencies.
- Business support actors and SME/business community representatives.
- Universities, knowledge, research and higher education institutes.
- Other public authorities, bodies governed by public law or private non-profit bodies involved in resource efficiency.

PLANNING ISSUES AND DURATION

- Priority axis 4: Environment and resource efficiency.
- Specific Objective: 4.2 “Improve the implementation of regional development policies and programmes, in particular programmes for Investment for Growth and Jobs and, where relevant, ETC programmes, aimed at increasing resource-efficiency, green growth and eco-innovation and environmental performance management”.
- Deadline for proposal submission: **Mid July 2015**.
- Likely start date of the project: 1st quarter of 2016.
- Duration: 3 to 5 years, including both implementation and monitoring activities.
- Total estimated funding: €1.500.000 to €2.000.000.
- Funding sources: 75-85% EU and 15-25% national (pending Member States decisions).
- Funding model: Reimbursement of actual costs, 6 months period reporting.
- Partnership size: 7-10 partners.