

26-27/02/2015 Brussels, Belgium – FOCUS Kick-Off Meeting: project gets off to a flying start!

The Kick-Off meeting for one of the European Commission's (EC) newest CSA (Coordination and Support Action) projects got underway in Brussels with representatives from all consortium partners being present and ready for action! The FOCUS project aims to support methods for improved exploitation of FoF project results from its five participating FoF clusters – Zero Defect Manufacturing, Clean Factory, Robotics, High Precision Manufacturing, and Maintenance & Support by achieving the following objectives: -

- Providing pro-active support to disseminate the projects' tangible outcomes to support industrial exploitation and take-up within the clusters.
- Review the state of the art and formulate future FoF priorities.
- Deliver a model and associated methodology for effective cluster creation, execution and monitoring in future FoF PPP clusters.
- Deliver a model and associated methodology for industrial exploitation and take-up of future FoF PPP projects.



Figure 1: FOCUS initiatives and partner responsibilities

Odd Myklebust of NTNU, Project Coordinator, opened the meeting with all partners already feeling highly motivated for two years of hard work and said *"It is exciting to think that the FOCUS project will be giving recommendations and guidance on cluster creation and structure and having a direct impact on the future of research in Europe."*

Discussions during the meeting raised several important and very interesting thoughts needing early consideration: -

- What is the level of take-up of shared exploitation within the current clusters?
- How do we deal with projects within clusters starting and ending at different times?
- What happens when a project within a cluster finishes?

This was followed by the five cluster leaders presenting the background and status of their cluster, and also summarising the benefits of collaboration. All cluster leaders agreed that the networking opportunities, increasing the impact and visibility for the EC, and avoiding repetition of activities were the key benefits gained from clustering. But they also warned that when members of the cluster are in competition with each other, Intellectual Property is hugely important.

After the second day of sharing ideas and experiences, partners left with a clear direction on the work planned for the next six months, which will certainly be busy ones!



Figure 2: Consortium partners, ready for action!

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For further information please visit:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/industrial_technologies/factories-of-the-future_en.html

Factories of the Future is a EUR 1.2 billion program in which the European Commission and industry are collaborating in research to support the development and innovation of new enabling technologies for the EU manufacturing sector.

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