



# TII Newsletter

## 20 August 2008

### **A SMALL BUSINESS ACT FOR EUROPE**

On 25 June the European Commission unveiled its plans for a "Small Business Act" for Europe (SBA) which aims to promote entrepreneurship, make legislation SME-friendly and help SMEs to grow. The SBA includes an ambitious set of measures to allow SMEs to benefit fully from the Single Market and expand into international markets by orienting more resources to **SMEs' access to finance, R&D and innovation**. A new statute for a **European Private Company** (known as the "Societas Privata Europaea") will allow SMEs to start up and operate according to the same company law provisions throughout Europe, thus making it cheaper and easier for SMEs to engage in cross-border business activities within the EU. The European Investment Bank will increase its range of financial products offered to SMEs, particularly mezzanine finance. In addition, more funds will be made available by the Commission for **micro-credit and cross-border venture capital**. A new code of best practice for public procurement will facilitate SMEs' access to public procurement contracts (which account for 16% of the EU's GDP). A new **General Block Exemption Regulation** will simplify the rules and allow a higher level of state aid to smaller companies, which does not need to be notified to the EC. To simplify existing provisions and ensure that SMEs get paid within 30 days, the Commission proposes a revision of the **Late Payments Directive**. New and budding entrepreneurs may now gain experience and insight by spending time in an SME in a different country. "**Erasmus for young entrepreneurs**" will help them improve their skills and contribute to networking SMEs across Europe. In May 2009 a "European SME Week" will raise awareness about the role of entrepreneurs and provide practical information on support for business. An EU network of female entrepreneur ambassadors will help inspire women to launch themselves into business. The proposal on **reduced VAT rates for locally supplied services**, e.g. for hairdressers, restaurants, domestic care services, should benefit mainly SMEs. In addition to the standing commitment to **cut administrative burdens by 25% by 2012**, the time needed to **start a new company** should be no more than one week, the maximum time to obtain **business licenses** and permits should not exceed one month and **one-stop-shops** should assist to facilitate start-ups and recruitment procedures. For more information:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/sba\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/sba_en.htm)

## **EIT GOVERNING BOARD APPOINTED**

At the beginning of August the European Commission officially appointed the Governing Board of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). The board will hold its first meeting on 15 September in Budapest, Hungary, the new home of the EIT. **The 18 members of the new board are professionals from various fields in research, academia and industry.** At next month's meeting, the Board will set in motion the process that will lead to the establishment of the first two to three partnerships known as 'Knowledge and Innovation Communities' (KICs), which should be launched by December 2009. The KICs are the operational centres of the EIT. More explicitly, the Board will select, coordinate and assess the KICs. As integrated public-private networks, these centres will prove beneficial for key players, in particular by providing strategic European resources for industry, research and academia stakeholders. The KICs will work at fuelling innovation for both the economic and social sectors. Important activities include the generation, dissemination and exploitation of new knowledge products and best practices in the innovation sector. The EIT should be instrumental not only in increasing the EU's capacity to transform research and education results into tangible business innovation opportunities, but also in strengthening innovation between the EU and its competitors abroad. For more information:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/eit/>

## **PORTUGAL ANNOUNCES CHANGES TO PATENT LAW**

As of 1 October 2008 Portugal will introduce a number of changes to its Industrial Property Law in order to facilitate worldwide access to its national system and to reduce prices. **The change which will have most impact on universities is the institution of a provisional patent application similar to the one in the USA.** This will allow knowledge transfer offices to establish priority and acquire patent pending status quickly when faculty pressures for publication. All that is required to obtain a valid priority date is an enabling description of the invention. As in the USA this will not be examined and must be converted into a full application, with claims, before one year elapses. If the claims are not fully supported by the early description the date of the provisional application will not be awarded in the full application. Contrary to the USA, there is the possibility, at the applicants' request, for the Patent Office to prepare a search report within 6 months based solely on the provisional application. Furthermore, the provisional patent application may be submitted in English and in electronic form and foreign applicants are no longer required to have legal representation in Portugal in order to communicate with the Patent Office. The provisional application will not extend the life of the patent beyond the current 20 years. The Patent Office announced in an official statement that

fees for the service will be very low but the exact prices are yet to be published.

## **WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

Five new members joined the association since the publication of the June newsletter. They are

- HUNGARY: South Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency, fostering innovation in local SMEs and networking regional innovation support players, represented by Anita Derjanecz - anita.derjanecz@ddriu.hu
- ITALY: Giuseppe Autorino of University of Naples Federico II, COINOR, knowledge transfer to local firms, clusters, entrepreneurship - gautorino@gmail.com
- PORTUGAL: Alexandre Ulisses of Agência de Inovação, national agency supporting innovation, entrepreneurship and technology transfer - aulisses@adi.pt
- SLOVENIA: Kosezi d.o.o., regional development and innovation support consultancy, represented by Jana Stanic - janastanic@gmail.com
- UNITED KINGDOM: Centre of Process Innovation Ltd., promoting commercialisation in advanced processes, functional materials, low carbon energy and printable electronics, represented by Karen Bennett - karen.bennett@uk-cpi.com
- 

## **TII IMT MASTER CLASS**

Our next IMT Master Class will be held on the occasion of the "Salon Créer" exhibition for entrepreneurs on 9 September in Lille. Hosted by TII member Réseau de Diffusion Technologique Nord-Pas de Calais, the IMT Master Class forms part of the associated workshop programme "Rendez-vous de l'innovation" which is being organised during the exhibition from 8 to 10 September. **This new IMT Masters features four Innovation Management Techniques which are particularly tailored to the needs of universities and research centres in their quest to manage more effectively their intellectual assets.** They are

- CREEVAL - an approach to evaluating and prioritising the commercialisation potential of universities' research results
- My IP - a software programme for managing the intellectual property of a research centre or company
- MERCATT - a web-based platform for promoting technology transfer within an Open Innovation framework
- Project NetBoard - a web-based software for developing and managing R&D projects, including FP7

The format of the master class provides both a comprehensive introduction to the IMTs featured in the programme and the opportunity for discussion between the presenters and the audience on both operational issues and the

possibilities to acquire access to the tools. Exceptionally, this IMT Master Class will be held in **French** (except for My IP which will be presented in English). We therefore look forward to welcoming a good representation from among our French-speaking members. Participation is free of charge, but pre-registration is compulsory both for the master class and the exhibition "Créer". Further instructions may be found at [http://www.tii.org/2008IMT\\_Lille](http://www.tii.org/2008IMT_Lille) and <http://www.saloncreer.com>

•

### **BALTIC DYNAMICS 2008**

is the annual international conference organised in rotation by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania focusing on innovation and competitiveness topics. **This year the conference will be held in Tartu, Estonia from 3 to 5 September under the title of "Innovation - Key from Slowdown to Growth"**. It will address the challenge which Baltic States and many other European countries face - how to address economic slowdown and find new strategies for growth. The main topics will include Innovation and Competitiveness on a global scale, challenges and constraints in the environment and energy sectors and their contribution to innovation, novel and innovative approaches to the changing role of science and technology parks, security, the internet and innovation and cases of inter-regional cooperation to stimulate innovation. More information can be found on <http://www.balticdynamics.com> or from the organising team at [info@balticdynamics.com](mailto:info@balticdynamics.com)

•

### **7TH HEIDELBERG INNOVATION FORUM**

MFG Baden-Württemberg, the Public Agency for Information Technology and Media, has launched a call for proposals for its upcoming Seventh Heidelberg Innovation Forum, Europe's innovation convention for the commercialisation and financing of IT research projects, which will be held on 25 November 2008. Until 15 September, **the organisers are looking for R&D and IT business ideas with high market potential** to be presented to investors and potential business associates at the matchmaking event in November. In previous years the Forum has successfully enabled the creation of several spin-offs, licensing deals and public-private R&D partnerships. The theme of this year's event is "The Living Enterprise - Intelligent Business Process Management" and it is planned to present some 30 solutions/ideas which support intelligent processes and decision-making in modern-day companies, from traditional ERP systems to innovative semantic technologies. Information and submission documents may be found at <http://www.heidelberg-innovationforum.com>. An early-bird registration fee offering a 25% discount is available until 31 October 2008.

## **8TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE-TO-BUSINESS MARKETING**

- and Successful Research Commercialisation will be held on 1-2 October 2008 in Muenster, Germany, on the theme "Extracting the Value out of University-Industry-Interaction". The conference is part of the European Trans2Tech project and the German Austauschprozess project. At the conference, **a 3-dimensional model called TechAdvance™ enabling organisations to assess and develop technological innovation** will be presented. The model was developed and validated within the EU funded project Trans2Tech by Münster University of Applied Sciences, in association with partners from France, Spain, Italy and Belgium. Another key component of the conference is the presentation of new data resulting from a major technology transfer survey on customer satisfaction with research institutions across Germany and compared with previous data collected in other countries (including Australia, Japan and South Africa). TII Members interested in attending the conference are offered a 50% reduction on the conference fee (by mentioning TII membership on the registration form). Further information at: <http://www.austauschprozesse-conference.com>

-----  
TII - Technology Innovation International  
3, rue Aldringen  
L-1118 Luxembourg  
Tel: +352 46 30 351 • Fax: +352 46 21 85  
Web: <http://www.tii.org>; email: [tii@tii.org](mailto:tii@tii.org)

*"The Global Gateway to Innovation - the network that takes you further"*  
-----