



## Clusters: Drivers for Technology Transfer

### Clusters Meet Regions Conference – Cluj-Napoca 2025

**Day 1 – Tuesday, July 1, 2025**

**Venue: Hotel Radisson Blu, Aleea Stadionului 1, Cluj-Napoca**

09.00 – 09.30	<b>Welcome Coffee and Registration</b> <b>Welcome Addresses</b>
09.30 – 10.00	<p><b>Moderator – Teodora Jilkova, European Cluster Collaboration Platform, Team Member</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bianca Muntean</b>, Smart Transylvania Representative / Transylvania IT Cluster Manager</li> <li>• <b>Csilla Hegedüs</b>, Deputy General Director of the North-West Regional Development Agency</li> <li>• <b>Daniel Coșniță</b>, President of CLUSTERO - Romanian Cluster Association</li> <li>• <b>Doru Pamfil</b>, President of Cluj-Napoca Branch of the Romanian Academy</li> <li>• <b>Istvan Vákár</b>, Vice-president of Cluj County Council</li> </ul>
10.00-11.00	<p><b>Kick-off Speeches: Fostering Innovation for a Stronger Europe</b></p> <p><i>High level policy inputs on cluster support at regional, national, and EU levels.</i></p> <p><b>Moderator – Daniel Coșniță, President of the Romanian Cluster Association (RO)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Daniel David</b>, Minister of Education and Research (online) (RO)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dragoș Pîslaru</b>, Minister for Investments and European Projects (online) (RO)</li> <li>• <b>Mariella Masselink</b>, Head of Unit Industrial Forum, Alliances, Clusters, DG Grow (online) &amp; <b>Giovanni EMMA</b>, Policy Assistant (onsite)</li> <li>• <b>Adrian Curaj</b>, General Director of UEFISCDI – Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development, and Innovation Funding (RO)</li> <li>• <b>Csilla Hegedüs</b>, Deputy General Director of the North-West Regional Development Agency (RO)</li> <li>• <b>Antonio Novo</b>, President of the European Clusters Alliance (ES)</li> </ul>
11.00 – 12.00	<p><b>Session I - Panel Discussion: Innovation in Action - Unlocking the Potential of Clusters</b></p> <p><i>Role of clusters as drivers for competitiveness through business-driven innovation.</i></p> <p><b>Moderator: Felix Arion, Agro Transilvania Cluster Manager (RO)</b></p> <p><b>Input Paper: Jan-Philipp Kramer Team Leader 'Data &amp; Policy', European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP)</b></p> <p><b>Panel Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Agatha Filimon</b>, Head of the Sectoral Specialisation Office, North-East RDA (RO)</li> <li>• <b>Kristina Šermukšnytė-Alešiūnienė</b>, CEO KLASTER LT, CEO AgriFood Lithuania, VP European Clusters Alliance</li> <li>• <b>Sebastian Große-Puppendahl</b>, Team Manager Innovation Policy &amp; Senior Policy Officer to Commissioner for Europe of Minister of Economic Affairs Baden-Württemberg (DE)</li> <li>• <b>Claudiu Filip</b>, General Director of the National R&amp;D Institute of Isotopic and Molecular Technologies - INCDTIM (RO)</li> <li>• <b>Anna Rosenqvist</b>, Interior Cluster Sweden Manager, GO Furniture Meta-Cluster Representative (SE)</li> </ul>
12.00 – 12.30	<b>Coffee Break</b>
12.30-13.30	<p><b>Session II - Panel Discussion: Clusters Shaping the Future of Regional Innovation</b></p> <p><i>Role of clusters as dialogue partners for the development of regional development policy.</i></p> <p><b>Moderator: Lucia Seel, International Cluster Expert (AT)</b></p> <p><b>Input: Alberto Pezzi – Senior Cluster Program of ACCIO - Catalan Government's Agency for Business Competitiveness (ES)</b></p>

	<p><b>Panel Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Gerd Meier zu Köcker</b>, CEO of RegioClusterAgentur Baden-Württemberg, Director of the Innovation Fund Baden-Württemberg (DE)</li> <li>● <b>Irina Călugăreanu</b>, President of the Moldovan Cluster Association - MoldCluster (MD)</li> <li>● <b>Simone Hagenauer</b>, Project Manager at the Lower Austrian Business Agency, Ecoplus (AT)</li> <li>● <b>Ciprian Morcan</b>, Smart Transylvania Representative / Transylvanian Furniture Cluster Manager (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Cristian Otgon</b>, Head of Smart Specialization, State Aid and Financial Instruments Department, North-West Regional Development Agency (RO)</li> </ul>
<b>13.30 – 14.30</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>
<b>14:30 – 15:30</b>	<b>Sessions III - Breakout Sessions:</b>
	<p><b>(1) Advancing gender equity to foster inclusive growth through clusters</b></p> <p><i>This panel will explore how clusters can foster gender equality and promote best practices for enhancing SME competitiveness. Drawing on the experiences and outcomes of four collaborative interregional European projects, the discussion will highlight tools, policies, and inclusion strategies that have proven effective in driving inclusive growth and innovation across regions.</i></p> <p><b>Moderator: Ioana Dragos, North-West RDA Project manager (RO)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Anders Olsson</b>, Former Research &amp; Innovation and S3 Manager at Region Värmland, Interreg Europe DEBUTING project (SE)</li> <li>● <b>Valeria Bandini</b>, Head of Europe and Internationalization Area at ART-ER, Interreg Europe DEBUTING project (IT)</li> <li>● <b>Andra Tanase</b>, Transilvania IT Cluster, Project manager of Horizon Europe GILL project (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Paula Mihai</b>, Transylvanian Furniture Cluster, Project manager of ERASMUS+ Girls4Economy project (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Mirela Greti Puiu</b>, Cluster manager of the Romanian Textile Concept Cluster, Erasmus+ PENELOPE project (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Lucia Seel</b>, International Cluster Expert at Erasmus+ PENELOPE project (AT)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>(2) Clusters &amp; Agri-Industry 4.0: Catalysing Green Energy Innovation</b></p> <p><i>Panel discussion on cross sectoral cooperation between green energy and agrifood sectors.</i></p> <p><b>Moderator: Oana Raita, TREC Cluster Manager (RO)</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Dan Micu</b>, Professor, Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, ENTREC Director (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Daniel Dumitraşcu</b>, Representative of ENERGObit GROUP (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Alina Magdas</b>, Scientific Director, National R&amp;D Institute of Isotopic and Molecular Technologies - INCDTIM (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Felix Arion</b>, Agro Transilvania Cluster Manager (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Zoltan Felföldi</b>, President and cofounder, Terra Gloria (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Nicos Larkos</b>, Founder &amp; CEO - AgroTech Innovations Ltd (CY)</li> <li>● <b>Mugurel Jitea</b>, Dean, Faculty of Horticulture and Business in Rural Development, USAMV CN (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Simina Lakatos</b>, President "Ernest Lupan" Institute for Research in Circular Economy and Environment (RO)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>(3) Clusters Driving Innovation and Digital Transformation within EDIHs</b></p> <p><i>This panel will explore the role that clusters play in driving innovation and digital transformation through European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs). The discussion will highlight successful case studies and best practices from various ecosystems, shedding light on how EDIHs &amp; DIHs and clusters interact, complement each other, and co-create value.</i></p> <p><b>Moderator: Bianca Muntean, Transilvania IT Manager (RO)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Aiga Irmeja</b>, Executive Director of Latvian IT Cluster (LV)</li> <li>● <b>Alexandru Roja</b>, Expert of the European Digital Innovation Hub in Transilvania (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Cristina Baghiu</b>, Hub Coordinator of Digital Innovation Zone (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Antonio Novo</b>, President of European Clusters Alliance (ES)</li> <li>● <b>Costin Lianu</b>, President of Wallachia eHub (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Ion Bodrug</b>, President of DIH of Moldova (MD)</li> </ul>
<b>15.30 – 15.45</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>
<b>15.45 – 17.15</b>	<p><b>Clusters-Powered Pitching &amp; Good Practice Exchange: Technology Transfer Success Stories - From Research to Market</b></p> <p><b>Moderator: Dan Vodnar –President of the University Senate, Professor and PhD Coordinator on Food Biotechnology at USAMV (RO)</b></p> <p><b>Input: Marius Mitroi – Innovation and Entrepreneurship Advisor of UEFISCDI – Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development, and Innovation Funding (RO)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Tshering LHAMO</b>, Lecturer in Food Science, Head of MSc Food Identity (Erasmus Mundus, ESA Angers (FR))</li> <li>● <b>André Catana</b>, Head of the Startup Unit at Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (CH)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Andreea Toma</b>, Project Manager of Hygia (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Diana Chifor</b>, Project Manager of AgroTransilvania Cluster (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Flaviana Rotaru</b>, President at ROHEALTH - The Health and Bioeconomy Cluster (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Rodica Lupu</b>, TEC Cluster Manager &amp; CEO Loop Operations (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Marius Moș</b>, Project Manager of Clustherm Transylvania (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Imre Zilahi</b>, Internationalization Expert of Transylvanian Furniture Cluster (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Octavian Simion</b>, Senior Researcher of Mktechminds (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Daniel Maticu</b>, Owner of River Company (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Laura Hizo-Miloș</b>, Owner of Maximilian Chocolat (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Adrian Tudor</b>, Lemongras (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Carmen Păuna</b>, RuralBioUp, Institute for Economic Forecasting of the Romanian Academy (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Mircea Vadan</b>, BraveX Manager (RO)</li> </ul>
<b>17.15 – 17.30</b>	<b>Wrap up of the 1<sup>st</sup> day.</b> <b>Teodora Jilkova, ECCP Team Member</b>
<b>17.30 – 19.30</b>	<b>Matchmaking Event organised in cooperation with <a href="#">EEN</a> &amp; <a href="#">EU4Digital Facility</a></b>
<b>20.00 +</b>	<b>Networking Dinner</b>

Day 2 – Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Venue: Cluj Innovation Park, str. Tiberiu Popoviciu 2-4, Cluj-Napoca:

- **Furniture Excellence Centre – CEM**
- **Regional Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries - CREIC**

<b>09.00 – 09.30</b>	<b>Sign-In and Coffee Reception</b>
<b>09.30 – 11.00</b>	<b>Parallel Sessions</b>
	<b>Smart Specialisation (S3) Partnership: Boosting Innovation in Design &amp; Furniture</b>  <b>Venue: Furniture Excellence Centre – CEM</b>  <i>Debate on interregional collaboration in the wood &amp; furniture sector. Good practice examples. Moderated discussion towards the creation of a S3 partnership.</i>  <b>Moderator: Ciprian Morcan, Transylvanian Furniture Cluster Manager/ Chairman of the GO Furniture Meta-Cluster (RO)</b>  <b>Input: Petra Szavics, S3 Community of Practice Expert, PhD Researcher Babeş Bolyai University (RO)</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Cristian Otgon (RO)</b>, Head of Smart Specialization, State Aid and Financial Instruments Department, North-West Regional Development Agency (RO)</li><li>● <b>Susanne Israelsson</b>, Project Manager of Interior Cluster Sweden (SE)</li><li>● <b>Peter Friberg</b>, Senior Strategist, Region Jönköping County (SE)</li><li>● <b>Oksana Straz</b>, LVIV Furniture Cluster Manager (UA)</li><li>● <b>Andrii Liudvichuk</b>, Head of the Rivne Furniture Cluster and Head of the Regional Development Agency of Rivne (RO)</li><li>● <b>Eduardo Jiménez</b>, Internationalisation Responsible of HABIC - Habitat &amp; Contract Cluster (ES)</li><li>● <b>Joaquim Solana Monleón</b>, AMBIT - Living spaces cluster manager (ES)</li></ul>
	<b>Clusters Driving Smart &amp; Net Zero City Development. M100 Mirror Mission Hub Romania.</b>  <b>Venue: Regional Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries - CREIC</b>  <i>Role of clusters in driving sustainable city development with a focus on the M100 Initiative, which brings cities, communities, and innovation together for a bold purpose: to make urban life sustainable, resilient, and climate neutral.</i>  <b>Moderators: Daniel Coşniţă, President of CLUSTERO - Romanian Cluster Association (RO) &amp; Elena Simion, Project Manager of UEFISCDI – Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development, and Innovation Funding (RO)</b>

	<p><b>Input:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Ovidiu Cîmpean</b>, Member of the Romanian Parliament (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Adrian Curaj</b>, General Director of UEFISCDI – Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development, and Innovation Funding (RO)</li> </ul> <p><b>Panel Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Marius Geru</b>, Open Hub Cluster Manager (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Rodica Lupu</b>, Technology Enabled Construction Cluster Manager (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Oana Raita</b>, Transylvania Energy Cluster Manager (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Liviu Purtător</b>, Project Manager Cluj City Council (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Valentin Voinica</b>, Project Manager Alba Iulia Municipality (RO)</li> </ul> <p><b>Innovate-EU Knowledge Exchange Event</b></p> <p><b>Venue: Furniture Excellence Centre – CEM</b></p> <p><i>Moderated discussion towards the development of an action plan to improve the regional start up ecosystems in greentech, ICT, healthcare and agritech sectors. Perspectives from different European Projects powered by Innovate-EU.</i></p> <p><b>Moderator: Flaviu Iorgulescu, Project Manager of CLUSTERO (RO)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Anna Rozenfelde</b>, Lead Project Coordinator at Latvian Federation of Food Companies (LV)</li> <li>● <b>Antonio Novo</b>, Managing Director at IDiA Cluster (ES)</li> <li>● <b>Cătălina Luca</b>, Management Consultant at Imago-Mol Cluster (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Daina Klepone</b>, Project Manager at Agrifood Lithuania Cluster (LT)</li> <li>● <b>Johannes Mielitz</b>, Project Manager at Grünhof (DE)</li> <li>● <b>Georgiana Mihailovici</b>, Project Manager Open Hub Cluster (RO)</li> <li>● <b>Denisa Lazurca</b>, STARRISE Technical Expert, North-West RDA (RO)</li> </ul> <p><b>Food Identity – The Future of Geographical Indication</b></p> <p><b>Venue: Furniture Excellence Centre – CEM</b></p> <p><i>This panel will explore the role of European collaboration in advancing education, training, and knowledge transfer in the field of food identity, with a special focus on safeguarding the meaning of place through Geographical Indications. The discussion will highlight successful initiatives and best practices that unite academic institutions, regional stakeholders, and industry partners across Europe.</i></p> <p><b>Moderator: Felix Arion, AgroTransilvania Cluster Manager (RO)</b></p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Gabriele CANALI</b>, Associate Professor, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Food and Environment, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (IT)</li> <li>● <b>Rim BACCAR</b>, Head of the Master's Program ESA Angers – L'Ecole Supérieure des Agricultures d'Angers (FR)</li> <li>● <b>Notis ARGIRIOU</b>, Professor at University of the Aegean, Researcher at Institute of Applied Biosciences - INAB (GR)</li> <li>● <b>Tshering LHAMO</b>, Lecturer in Food Science, Head of MSc Food Identity - Erasmus Mundus, ESA Angers (FR)</li> <li>● <b>Stefano GONANO</b>, Researcher, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Food, and Environment, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (IT)</li> </ul>
<b>11.00-11.30</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>
<b>11.30-13.00</b>	<b>Empowering Success: Cluster Innovation Stories and Field Experience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Site visit 1: Research Infrastructure for Alternative Energies by Transylvania Energy Cluster</b></li> <li>● <b>Site visit 2: Furniture Excellence Centre by Transylvanian Furniture Cluster</b></li> </ul>
<b>13.00-14:00</b>	<b>Lunch &amp; Networking</b> <b>Venue: Furniture Excellence Centre – CEM</b>