

# EU|BIC PEER REVIEW SCHEME

EBN (European Business and Innovation Centre Network) is a not-for-profit that serves a pan-European, global community of people that use innovative business as a driver for regional (economic) development. EBN's initiatives include EU|BIC certification, development and distribution of quality business support programmes, facilitation and initiation of project collaborations, global networking and advocacy for excellent business support actors like the EU|BICs. We are on a mission to drive economic development and wellbeing in our regions. There are now more than 130 certified EU|BICs and 46 Associate Members shaping our global community.

Becoming an EU|BIC means responding to our mission to use business and innovation as a force for regional development with the best possible actions to create vibrant, thriving startups and SMEs. In other words, EU|BICs take real steps to ensure that their services are best advantageous to their clients and best advantageous to their regions.

The EU|BIC Certification process underpins the value of the EU|BIC Quality Mark and of the organisations that have received the licence (professionalism, performance, consistency and positioning).

## WHY ORGANISATIONS CERTIFY

### Build relationships

Connect online and meet in person at events, when your organisation certifies as an EU|BIC, you join a powerful community of business leaders, practitioners and innovation partners who can fast-track connectivity within your local and the international ecosystem.

### Improve impact

Getting certified and taking the yearly assessment is a powerful mechanism to help your company set goals for improvement, deliver more value to your clients and your region's development, and track performance over time. As a member, you get access to the necessary training, technical assistance and funding opportunities.

### Amplify voice

The third-party validation that comes with the EU|BIC Certification helps your organisation stand out and stand by your mission. The EU|BIC label communicates that an organisation is a verified business innovation leader when it comes to delivering quality business support and empowering entrepreneurial innovators.

### Engage partners

More than ever, people want to do engage with people and organisations they trust. Earning your EU|BIC Certification is the best way to attract best-of-class clients, investment partners and to participate in revenue-generating projects that help you deliver on your mission.

## OBJECTIVE OF THE PEER REVIEW SCHEME

The EU|BIC Peer Review Scheme is an initiative launched by EBN and overseen by the EU|BIC Quality Mark Committee (BQMC) to enable members with an expiring EU|BIC licence to renew their EU|BIC Certification.

Every 5 years, we make sure that organisations continue to comply with the EU|BIC Quality Mark Criteria and we recertify them with pride. We do that by supporting EU|BICs to plan broker peer reviews and fostering the exchange of best practices. The EU|BIC Peer Review Scheme has therefore multiple objectives:

- To promote greater collaboration and foster cross-fertilisation of initiatives among certified EU|BICs.
- To identify best practices, share know-how, and methodologies.
- To enhance the quality and the validity of the EU|BIC Assessment Framework.
- To put emphasis on the targeted continuous improvements of EU|BIC organisations and recertify with pride.

# THE EU|BIC LIFE CYCLE

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|---|---|
| <b>1</b> <b>Becoming Certified</b>          | <b>4</b> <b>Improving Your Impact</b>   |
| <b>2</b> <b>Telling Your Story</b>          | <b>5</b> <b>Surpassing Expectations</b> |
| <b>3</b> <b>Connecting to the Community</b> | <b>6</b> <b>Recertifying with Pride</b> |

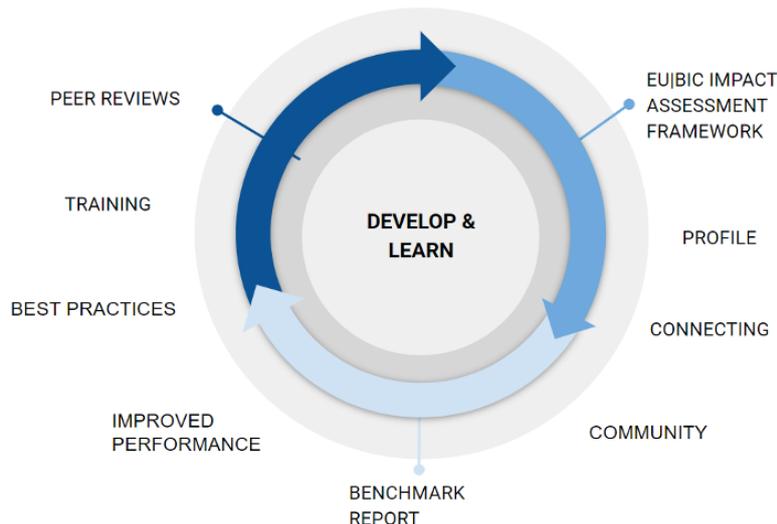


## RECERTIFY WITH PRIDE

Every year, EBN notifies full members with an expiring EU|BIC license and help them plan a peer review in the coming months. All EU|BIC organisations should apply for a peer review when their licence is expiring. The cost for renewing the licence to use the EU|BIC Certification label for a period of 5 years amounts to EUR 500 (excluding VAT).

EBN selects an expert from another EU|BIC (EU|BIC directors, senior EU|BIC staff members...) which should be similar in terms of type of organisation, stage of development, sector, and activity.

**In 2020, EU|BIC Peer Reviews will be organised virtually.**



# PROCEDURE: EU|BIC PEER REVIEW

The EU|BIC Peer review consist of three stages: before, during and after.

## BEFORE THE REVIEW

EBN informs the organisation about the upcoming review, the proposed timeframe, the cost of the review, its structure and rationale and suggests a peer review expert. The organisation confirms to EBN that it accepts the procedure as guidelines for the full day and sign a commitment contract that confirms its engagement in renewing the EU|BIC license.

EBN provides the expert with the latest survey completed by the organisation and with other reports relevant for the review, if available. EBN also shares the Peer Review Report Template (available at page 1) with the organisation and the expert.

### EU|BIC Organisation

### EU|BIC Expert

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set out potential available dates for the review (suggested length of exercise is 3 to 4 hours).</li> <li>• Send the latest version of the completed EU BIC Annual Survey.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set out potential available dates for the review (suggested length of exercise is 3 to 4 hours).</li> <li>• Review the results of the EU BIC Annual Survey and improvement plan at least one week in advance to the review.</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answer to any preliminary questions coming from the peer review expert if possible.</li> <li>• Send any relevant documentation (at least two weeks in advance to the review): business plan for the current year (strategy, objectives, business model; activity report(s).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact the organisation in case of any preliminary or introductory questions.</li> <li>• Review the documentation provided.</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get acquainted with the Peer Review Report Template</li> <li>• Structure agenda for the review.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get acquainted with the Peer Review Report Template</li> <li>• Approve agenda for the review.</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up the virtual platform to use to carry out the peer review. Test it, make sure it is reliable, and share the link with the peer review expert.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge good reception of the link and make sure to have everything set up to attend the virtual meeting.</li> </ul>   |

## DURING THE REVIEW

The schedule proposed below has worked well for several occasions, but of course can be adapted to local/regional conditions and/or priorities, as appropriate.

## Suggested agenda

1. Introduction of staff and participants to the review
2. Presentation of organisations' activities and fields of interest
3. Interview around the EU|BIC Annual Survey results and following the structure Peer Review Report Template
4. Discussion regarding its main challenges and opportunities
5. Testimonials from stakeholders (i.e. two or three short interventions with: current and alumni startups/partners/share holders...)
6. Wrap up

The CEO and key staff members must be available during the review. EBN invites the organisation to be open and available to discuss, answer questions and exchange experiences. Likewise, the peer review expert should guarantee that all aspects listed in the agenda will be examined.

The expert should be curious: this is as much of a peer-review technical review as it is a networking exercise, where his/her expertise will be useful for the host organisation to get information on how other practices, tools and methodologies work.

Recording the conversation is recommended.

## AFTER THE REVIEW

The expert submits the completed Peer Review Recommendation Report to EBN within one week after the visit (and preferably on the first working day following the visit). EBN comments the Report and forwards it to the BQMC, which must then take one of the following decisions:

- **Renew five-year licence** (any recommendations must be clearly stated in the relevant section of the report);
- **Grant conditional one-year licence** (a list of conditions must be provided along with the timescale for compliance with these);
- **Revoke the licence** (a list of reasons must be given to the organisation);
- **Postpone the decision** to the next or a subsequent BQMC meeting (reasons should be presented).

No licence can be withdrawn without deliberation by the BQMC based on this mission report.

It is important to note that any organisation can evolve in such a direction that its mission no longer conforms with the EU|BIC Quality Mark Criteria. Without questioning the professionalism of the organisation as such, the BQMC then has to consider the withdrawal of the licence. The organisation can still stay in the network as EBN is allowed to transfer the organisation from the Full Member category to the Associate Member category. This revision of status enables the organisation to continue to benefit from EBN's activities and services. The organisation is allowed to use the EBN logo, but it cannot be labelled as an EU|BIC anymore or use the corresponding logo.

## CONTACT US

For all your questions related to your EU|BIC Certification and the peer review scheme, contact Luca Maini (Certification and Impact Manager) via email on [luca.maini@ebn.eu](mailto:luca.maini@ebn.eu) or via phone on +32 (0)2 772 89 00.