

ToR

Call for candidatures - EBN annual Congress 2025

Terms of reference

Article 1 - Aim

The following terms of reference (ToR) have been elaborated to support candidates to submit their proposal for the hosting and the co-organisation (preparation & execution) of the **2025 EBN annual Congress**.

Article 2 - Definition

- a) **The EBN annual Congress** is the main corporate event for the EU|BIC community. It gives the opportunity to stimulate discussions on future incubation innovation trends, to facilitate networking and matchmaking, to showcase achievements and success stories, to share tools and concepts, to get exposed to relevant innovation stakeholders. The EBN annual congress should welcome investors, corporate, companies, policymakers and any other relevant actors within the global innovation ecosystem.

It is also possible to host congress jointly with another relevant event, gathering the same type of audience as mentioned above.

- b) **EBN is the primary organiser** of the EBN Annual Congress and is responsible for its general management and supervision, its promotion, and for its content coherence and consistency with past and future editions as well as to the interests of the EU|BIC community.

The selected applicant to this call for candidatures is defined as **the host and co-organiser** of the EBN annual Congress, and therefore the main EBN partner.

- c) By "**Congress**" we mean all the activities organised and deployed in the hosting city during the congress days. We mean by "**Preparation of the Congress**" all the activities connected to the preparation of this event, from the signing of the contract until the start of the Congress.

- d) The Congress is characterised by the organisation and physical hosting of plenary sessions, workshops, meetings of several hundreds of participants from different countries. It also consists of meals, transport of participants as well as the organisation of social activities for delegates.

Article 3 – General Guidelines

- a) The host city selected for staging the event should be European and attractive from an economic, cultural or symbolic point of view.
- b) **This city must also be easily accessible to participants** commuting from different countries. In other words, an international airport or easy, rapid access to an airport is essential to avoid long hours of travel.
- c) Since the expected number of delegates is approx. 300, **the city should have a significant number of 3 or 4-star hotels** with sufficient capacity to accommodate the delegates and ideally located in the same area. **The Congress Centre should be located in the vicinity of the hotels or within the main hotel area**, to reduce transfers as much as possible. If shuttles services are required, the costs will be borne by the **co-organiser**.
- d) **The conference centre should be equipped with a room for plenary meetings capable of seating up to 300 – 500 people. Several smaller meeting rooms should also be available** for staging separate workshops (approx. 2 rooms for 150 people). There should be **an open area** for exhibition networking, together with the possibility of having coffee breaks at intervals, and also a meeting and discussion zone for the delegates to conduct match-making & face-to-face meetings. Finally, the lunches should be made available in the conference centre in a safe and flexible manner, depending on the sanitary situation.
- e) The congress should be organised following principles of sustainability and should be structured around 1.5 days for the main public conference. It is suggested to foresee no early starts in the morning and to finish the overall conference around 16h30/17h in the afternoon, to facilitate travel in and out of the hosting city. The programme should focus on innovation incubation trends and be developed following the 4 EU|BICs community mission statements (regional economic development; quality business support; access to finance; scaling European innovation). A good balance between policy, debate and practices and between local and pan-European speakers should be envisaged. Speakers should also respect the principle of gender balance and their view should be in line with the morality and values the EU|BIC community upholds.
- f) The EBN Secretariat might request availability and some logistic guidance to organize internal EU|BIC Community meetings and workshops 1 day before the main conference. These will be closed events for EU|BIC community members, for around 60 guests. The capacity/availability of the co-organizer to host on its premises or make a space available for these meetings and workshops could be a plus.

Catering costs related to these meetings will be covered by the EBN secretariat.

- g) The host will be allowed the power of initiative in selecting themes, topics, and the overall content of panels and sessions of congress. The final selection of all the above-mentioned elements will only be finalized with the agreement of both parties.

If requested by the host, a consultative event committee, gathering 3 to 5 members of the network (that may include, but not be restricted to, past and future Congress hosts, the president and vice-president of the EBN, and a complementary geographically representative or thematically-expert selection of other members) can be put in place by the secretariat. The role of such a committee should be to advise both parties in the definition of the overall programme, taking into account the international and diversified nature of the network.

The EBN secretariat reserves the right to consult with a selection of EU|BIC community members throughout the process of selecting themes and overall content of congress.

- h) The EBN annual Congress visual identity can be adapted every edition to better fit the host's themes, region, or own brand. The characterization of a specific edition's visual brand will be a collaborative process, coordinated by the EBN secretariat, but where the host will be given the power of initiative, should it feel comfortable to do so on its own account.

Both parties agree however to keep in line with elements of the EBN Congress brand book, maintaining most of its general look and feel, respecting elements such as the EBN Congress corporate logo and Typeface.

- i) **The co-organiser** could also offer a **social programme** including visits to places of interest, monuments or scenery likely to appeal to an international audience and notably to the companions of some delegates.

Article 4 – Financing of the Congress: Breakdown of tasks & costs:

- a) **The co-organiser** undertakes to co-fund the Congress activities and to seek for local funding to **cover specific expenses** (see Breakdown of tasks & costs– annex 1 attached in this call).
- b) The **“Breakdown of tasks and costs”** clearly specifies the items to be financed by the two parties (EBN and the co-organiser). The mentioned costs could be co-financed through sponsorship fundraising at both local and international levels. In its proposal, the co-organiser undertakes to cover these items. If it appears that a task or responsibility has not been identified in the breakdown of tasks, it will be mentioned in the minutes of a work meeting, and co-signed by the two parties.

- c) The Breakdown of tasks & costs is complemented by a **detailed budget** provided by the co-organiser; this budget represents annex 2 of the contract, and shows an indicative total amount ranging between 100.000 and 200.000 €.
- d) In the “**letter of intent and the preliminary dossier**” (Article 7 – line B) the co-host will specify an amount that it is comfortable being making available to the organisation of Congress. This amount should be compounded by the co-organisers own resources and resources it believes it can raise through sponsorship. The breakdown should be transparent. In the submission of “**the final dossier**” (Article 7 – line D), the co-organiser will become legally bound to make the total amount available to the organising of congress. In between the letter of intent and the final dossier, the value can be slightly reviewed, but should not be lowered by more than 10% strong reasoning.
- e) The financial responsibility for speakers invited should be agreed upon at the beginning of the process (see annex 1: “Breakdown of tasks & costs” – item 1.1, 1.2, 1.3). By default, the split should be that each party is financially responsible for invitees of its own initiative and proposition. Both parties agree that European and international speakers should always be considered for any activity. **The co-host should therefore foresee** some budget for the **travel costs for European and international speakers** (see annex 1: “Breakdown of tasks & costs” – item 1.3.8). Equally, the co-organiser should also reserve a budget for the **accommodation costs for European and international speakers** (see annex 1: “Breakdown of tasks & costs” – item 1.3.7).

Article 5 – Financing the Congress: Breakdown of income

- a) In principle, the breakdown of costs, should be as identified in annex 1: “Breakdown of tasks & costs”. This document and its breakdown can only be negotiated until the date described in article 7, item C of this document.
- b) Registration fees for access to all activities related to Congress for Members of the EU|BIC Community should not exceed 300€ (indicative price, 250€). Registrations for access to all activities related to Congress for Members or non-Members of the EU|BIC Community should not exceed 450€. The ratio between the fees should be maintained – EU|BIC community members should always be afforded the lowest price available for full access to all congress activities.
- c) The income generated by **registration fees** for the congress are distributed as follows:
 - EBN will reimburse 75% of the income generated by registration fees to the co-organiser and keep for the secretariat the remaining 25%.
 - **EBN will reimburse** the co-organiser 100% of the income generated by registration fees for the life partners accompanying guests at the official Congress dinner.

- d) It is agreed that the co-organiser might decide to offer **free of charge access to a selection of national VIPs**; the same applies to the EBN secretariat as far as international/European VIPs are concerned. The parties agree to limit the number of free access tickets to a maximum of 25 per party. If additional tickets are requested, that will be decided case by case by the parties.
- e) The co-organiser – commits to raising resources for Congress generated **by sponsors/partners**. These resources should be applied to the costs for the organisation of Congress. The potential remaining profit will remain with the co-organiser.
- f) The EBN Secretariat will pursue additional resources for congress through **sponsorship & partnerships**. Both parties commit to coordinating their efforts in a transparent fashion.
- g) In case of loss of revenue, parties agree to bear the burden according to the breakdown of costs in the final version of Annex 1.

Article 6 – Congress Schedule

- a) Congress should take place in the second half of June. Another timeframe (as of the 20th of May until the first week of July) could be also exceptionally considered.
- b) Congress could take place:
 - o Either on a Tuesday PM – Wednesday all day, dinner happening on Tuesday evening and closing cocktail taking place on Wednesday afternoon.
 - o Or on a Wednesday PM – Thursday all day, dinner happening Wednesday evening and closing cocktail taking place Thursday afternoon.
- c) The day before congress, the organisation of internal meetings for members only should be facilitated by the co-organiser. Coffee breaks and lunches should be also made available.

Article 7 – Selection Process Schedule

- a) Launch of the call for candidates (letter + terms of reference): **15 February 2023**
- b) Deadline for sending the letter of intent and the preliminary dossier: **30 April 2023**
- c) Examination by the Board of Directors: **15 May 2023**
- d) Deadline for submitting the final dossier: **3 June 2023**
- e) Final formal approval (Board of Directors): **13 June 2023 (at the 2023 EBN Congress)**

The information to be contained in the dossier should include the global feasibility, both technical and financial, of the proposal. The proposal should include the following items:

- official invitation
- Indicative optional dates

- short description of the host region/city
- preliminary themes and desired content for congress
- venue options and dinner venue options
- logistics and technical equipment
- accommodation and catering
- financial viability (preliminary total costs, potential private sponsors & public support,...)

Article 8 – Eligible applicants

Only EBN (paid-up) Members (Full or Associate) are eligible for hosting and co-organising the EBN annual Congress.

Article 9 – Selection Criteria

The proposals will be evaluated according to the following selection criteria¹:

- a) Strategic geographical location for the EBN network
- b) Geographical accessibility for delegates and speakers
- c) Adequacy and quality of the Congress Centre facilities
- d) Robustness of the financial package
- e) Engagement and availability of the local partnering team
- f) Degree of innovation and differentiation of the proposed concept and programme
- g) Contribution to the exposure of the Congress to decision-makers both at the regional and national level

In the case no offer meets the criteria; **the EBN Board of Directors may decide not to accept any of the proposal(s) received** and may suggest alternative scenarios.

Article 10– General good practices between the parties

- a) The parties commit themselves **to providing all relevant information for the preparatory work of the other party**, including the planning of outside coordination meetings. The information will be communicated by e-mail. These will be archived to keep a record of the exchanges and to quickly identify specific data.
- b) The parties commit themselves **to making all the necessary arrangements to promote the event in all relevant publications**. Promotional documents will be prepared by EBN and will be the basis of the Congress marketing strategy (see annex 1: “Breakdown of tasks & costs” – item 3; 1.2.6; 1.3.10; 1.4.6; 2.1.11). The co-organiser commits itself to support EBN’s

¹ In no particular order

promotional strategy and to provide input through its contacts' network and by actively mobilizing national partners and networks. Partners and sponsors of both parties will be presented in the Congress promotional material, including brochure and website.

- c) The general **principles of both financial rigour and transparency** will be applicable between the two parties.
- d) **The official working language** of the EBN annual Congress is **English**, in compliance with article 31 of EBN Statutes.
- e) **The selected proposal and accompanying documents are considered legally binding** and, on that basis, the applicant and EBN will sign a **formal contract** dedicated to the annual Congress partnership, in which all rights and obligations of parties are defined.

For more information please contact:

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