



**TITLE OF THE PANEL:** The Triple Helix Model applied to Cluster Initiatives to Go Global

**PROPONENT:** ART-ER - Emilia-Romagna Region



**CHAIR:** Valeria Bandini, Head of Europe and International Unit, ART-ER

**MAIN TOPIC/SCOPE:**

The panel will look at **cluster initiatives as means for enhancing the university-industry-government relationship** and aims at discussing to what extent the Triple Helix Model (THM) can be a reference for regional governments to design and promote cluster initiatives contributing **to support the internationalisation and attractiveness of their local innovation ecosystems**.

Due to the multidimensionality feature of cluster initiatives, there is no single, widely-agreed definition of this phenomenon. In the Cluster Initiative Green book (2003), cluster initiatives are defined as *organized efforts to increase the growth and competitiveness of clusters within a region, involving cluster firms, government and/or the research community*. Clusters, cluster initiatives and cluster organisations are not synonymous. According to the European Commission "Smart Guide to Cluster Policy" (2016), **cluster initiatives** can help a cluster to reach higher levels of performance, for example by strengthening linkages or facilitating collective action; while **cluster organisations** are the legal entities that support the strengthening of collaboration, networking and learning in innovation clusters and act as innovation support providers.

Lindqvist et al (2013) identified several gaps that led to cluster initiative formation: research gaps between firms and academia, education gaps between firms and education organizations, capital gaps, governmental gaps between firms and authorities, firm-to-firm gaps, cross-cluster gaps (interactions with firms from other sectors), and global market gaps (interactions with global actors and value chains).

In fact, cluster initiatives can bridge these gaps by bringing together actors from government, higher education and research institutions (Laur et al, 2012; Tödtling et al, 2013) and mediating between them. Hence, cluster initiatives are often characterized as hybrid organizations due to the presence of both organizational, intermediating and networking features (Etzkowitz & Ranga, 2011).

In recent years, **many countries, especially in Europe, have implemented cluster policies and have funded cluster initiatives in various sectors that, very often, apply a Triple Helix approach** (Klosten et al, 2015; Laur et al, 2012; Tödtling et al, 2013).

Innovation, which is a fundamental factor for single companies and local economies, has increasingly become the result of collaborative and international processes where clusters and cluster initiatives play a key role.

The panel will discuss **the role of cluster initiatives as means for building transnational partnerships to strengthen existing relations and/or build new ones among the triple helix actors and, more in general, for internationalizing regional innovation ecosystems**.

## PANELISTS (NAME, SURNAME, AFFILIATION)

1. Alberto Pezzi - Director of Competitive Strategy at the Directorate General for Industry - Government of Catalonia
2. Christophe Guichard - Team leader on Cluster internationalization, Clusters, Social Economy and Entrepreneurship Unit, DG Growth, European Commission
3. Gerd Meier zu Köcker - Executive Director, ClusterAgentur Baden-Württemberg
4. Ruben Sacerdoti - Director of the Regional Department for Business Internationalisation and FDI Attraction, Emilia-Romagna Region
5. Sauro Vicini - Cluster manager, Health Cluster of the Emilia-Romagna

## SHORT BIO AND PASSPORT-PHOTO OF CHAIR AND PANELISTS:

### Valeria Bandini, Head of Unit Europe and International, ART-ER



Head of Europe and International Unit of ART-ER (former ASTER), Valeria works on the design and implementation of regional, national, international activities to improve the access to initiatives and funds for R&D and innovation collaborations, including the Clust-ERs internationalization program. She also manages the participation in EU and international projects and networks to promote the regional research and innovation system and the development of international relations.

Graduated with Honors in Economics and Business Administration, she holds post graduate degrees on local development and on international cooperation.

### Alberto Pezzi, Director of Competitive Strategy at the Directorate General for Industry - Government of Catalonia



Alberto Pezzi is the Director of competitive strategy at the Directorate General for Industry of the Government of Catalonia. He has over 20 years of experience in competitive strategy and cluster development working both in international consultancy firms (McKinsey & Co, Competitiveness Group, etc.) and in the public sector.

In the last decade, Mr. Pezzi has been actively involved in different advisory groups at European and international level and, since September 2019, he is member of the Commission Expert Group on Clusters.

Mr. Pezzi is the co-author of different books, articles and business cases on cluster policy and practice and he is regularly invited to talk in international forums. As part of his professional pro-bono activity, Mr. Pezzi has been among the promoters of TCI Network (the leading global network of cluster practitioners, tci-network.org) and after having served in the Board of Directors as secretary, treasurer and president during 16 years he is now member of the Board of Advisors.

Mr. Pezzi holds a BSc in Economics from the Università degli studi di Bologna, a master in European Law and Economics from the European College of Parma and a postgraduate diploma in Economic History and Institutions from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

### Christophe Guichard, Team Leader on Cluster internationalization, DG GROWTH, European Commission



Christophe Guichard is Team Leader on Cluster internationalisation at the European Commission in the Clusters, Social Economy and Entrepreneurship Unit of DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROWTH) and is in particular responsible for international aspects of cluster policy. Previously, he was a policy officer in the field of innovation policy and industrial innovation support, and has been responsible for various initiatives aimed at promoting policy learning and transnational cooperation on public innovation support. Before joining the European Commission, he worked at Ernst & Young International in Paris, as Business Analyst and as Economic Advisor at Samsung Electronics, Strategy and European Affairs Department, in Brussels.

He holds a Master's Degree in International Business Management (France), a Master of Business Administration (Texas, USA) and a Master in International Politics (Belgium).

### **Gerd Meier zu Köcker, Executive Director, ClusterAgentur Baden-Württemberg**



Gerd Meier zu Köcker, who is holding PhD in Material Science, with focus on Manufacturing Technologies, is working the field of cluster developing, value chain mapping and regional transformation.

Gerd served the European Cluster Policy Group from 2007 – 2008, was the key initiator of the European Cluster Excellence Initiative (ECEI) in 2009, established the European Cluster Excellence Foundation with Emiliano Duch, founded the European Secretariat for Cluster Analyses (ESCA) in 2011 und led the European Cluster Observatory from 2013 – 2015.

Since 2014 he is CEO of ClusterAgentur Baden-Württemberg. He has widely written about value chain mapping, cluster development, innovation and cluster policy, incl. joint publications with Prof. Foray in connection with the further development of the S3 approach. He a frequent speaker and gave many guest lectures at universities world-wide. Currently he is teaching management at the University for Applied Science in Kehl.

### **Ruben Sacerdoti, Director of the Regional Department for Business Internationalisation and FDI Attraction - Emilia-Romagna Region**



Ruben Sacerdoti graduated from the University of Bologna and obtained his master's degree in international economics at the University of Torino.

From 2003 he is the Director of the Department for the Business Internationalization and FDI attraction of the Emilia-Romagna Regional Government, managing a staff of 20 people and a budget of around 30 million euros per year. The focus countries of its activity were mainly USA, Canada, Brazil, China, Japan, India, Russia, Israel and South Africa.

An important part of its the activity is concentrated in defining and managing programs devoted to favour the international cooperation between the Emilia-Romagna Regional High Technology Network (HTN) and International partners, mainly in advanced countries in Europe, North America and Asia. He started his activity as a researcher in ASTER, the Regional Technology Agency, and ERVET, Emilia-Romagna Regional Development Agency.

Later he moved to the corporate consultancy in the field of innovation, internationalization, finance, start-up high-tech and venture capital.

From 2001 he spent two years at the European Commission, DG Enterprise as Project officer of Innovation Policy C-1 Unit, managing PAXIS, the Pilot Action of VFP finalised at high-tech start-ups promotion in EU and NACs.

### **Sauro Vicini - Cluster manager of the Health Cluster of the Emilia-Romagna**



Sauro Vicini is the Cluster Manager of the Health Cluster of the Emilia-Romagna Region in Italy.

He's a computer scientist with a Master in Technology & Innovation Management held at BBS: the Business School of the Bologna University

From 2006 to 2017 he worked in the top ranked research centre in healthcare in Italy: the San Raffaele Hospital of Milan, working on topics such as IoT, e-Health, cloud computing, robotics, privacy and data security, mobile technologies, wearable sensors and personal health systems for well-being and disease prevention.

In 2012 he founded the "City of the Future Living Lab": the living lab for experimenting user-driven Open Innovation inside the San Raffaele Hospital.

From 2014 to 2016 he has been member of the Executive Board of the Cluster Foundation "Technologies for Smart Cities and Communities", a private foundation based in Milan and promoted by the Lombardia Region for the development of its regional Smart Specialization Strategy.

He conducted research activities, collaborating on numerous European Projects (Horizon 2020, FP7, FP6), in several ICT/Health sectors: Smart Cities, Internet of Things, Cloud Computing and Big Data, Data Security, Co-Creation & User-driven Open Innovation, Living Lab Methodologies, privacy-by-design technologies, ontologies and semantic engines, energy management systems and body area networks.