

April 2013

Finance and Loans: DIFASS guarantees transfer

The Mineral & Energy Economy Research Institute (MEERI) of the Polish Academy of Sciences invited the DIFASS projects partners, local and international guests from all over Europe to Krakow to discuss finance and loan guarantee schemes.

The DIFASS project facilitates access to finance for enterprises by exchanging innovative business support measures across Europe. The focus will be on the development and implementation of non-grant based financial support instruments, such as revolving funds, transregional funds and venture capital funds.

Highlights of the Krakow workshop included the ERDF Guarantee Fund, presented by Antonello Chessa of the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (IT), the Regional Seed Financing Forum, presented by Sture Ericsson of Teknikdalen Foundation (SE), BMV Express by Mario Kokowsky of the Center of Technology Western Pomerania (DE), the National Fund for Entrepreneurship & Development by Theodore Theodoropoulos of the Region of Western Macedonia (EL), the Loan Guarantee Scheme by Jackie Walker of WSX Enterprise (UK) and the National Credit Guarantee Fund for SMEs by Andreea Potinteu of the Regional Development Agency Centru (RO).

Participants discussed with the speakers about the pros and cons of their proposals. The objectives of the DIFASS project is to share information and the implementation of the best voted proposals in other regions. The meeting in Krakow proved worthwhile because several agreements were made to implement best practices in other regions. BDF is preparing a regional seed financing forum in Friesland based on the Swedish model.

All videos of the presentations of these so-called Good Practices on Guidance to Finance are available through the DIFASS Youtube channel: youtube.com/DIFASSWorkshops

On day 2 of the meeting the partners were invited to visit the Jagiellonian Center of Innovation in Krakow. This new centre bridges the gap between development of innovation and financing. The center houses numerous start-ups in life science. The market of new medicine is extremely competitive and only few innovations make it to the world market. Some well-known Polish and European pharmaceutical companies work in the Jagiellonian Center and offer opportunities for investment for start-up companies next to coaching and role modelling for young Krakow initiatives.

The next DIFASS meeting will be held in Cagliari and Oristano, Italy on June 19-20. Topic of the meeting is mixed grant & non grant instruments, issues include notification and de-minimis rule. The invitation to the meeting is available on the www.difass.eu website. It also features the latest news on financing support schemes for small enterprises and includes Twitter news feeds @DIFASS and Youtube videos.

The project is supported by the INTERREG IVC Programme. The overall objective of the programme is to improve the effectiveness of regional policies and instruments. INTERREG IVC provides funding for interregional cooperation across Europe. It is implemented under the European Community's territorial co-operation objective and financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Not for publication:

For more information on the DIFASS project you may contact:

- the DIFASS contact person for the Polish Academy of Sciences, Mr. Maciej Woźniak (PL) by e-mail Mwozniak@zarz.agh.edu.pl
- the DIFASS project manager Mr. Robert Nemeth of the Pannon Business Network (HU) through tel. 0036 94 505 003 or by e-mail nemeth@pbn.hu
- the DIFASS project communication component leader Mr. Frank Hiddink of Business Development Friesland (NL) through tel. 0031 58 845 8045 or by e-mail f.hiddink@bdfriesland.nl

or visit www.difass.eu .