



Launch of the New ESINET Network

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The XVI Annual Congress of the European Business and Innovation Centre Network, held in Canterbury, England, was the setting for the re-launch of the European Space Incubators Network, ESINET.

Dedicated to the issues of globalisation and benchmarking across the frontiers in Europe and across different continents, the EBN Congress also looked at the role Europe can play today as a leader in innovation driven regional development. The Congress reassessed the primary mission of ESINET, which is to stimulate and support entrepreneurship in the area of new services or applications emerging from the creative use of space technologies and/or systems in non-space sectors.

As an integral part of the EBN Network of Business and Innovation Centres, the ESINET network will actively help its members to stimulate entrepreneurship and support SMEs. EBN welcomed 25 participants to the kick-off event, amongst which were the founding members of ESINET, the European Space Agency and representatives from regional incubators.

"An open and ongoing dialogue with the ESINET members is very important for us", said Robert Sanders, Head of European Projects at EBN. He encouraged the participants to share their views and expectations, allowing EBN and ESA to adequately reply to specific members' needs and requirements in the future.

In his presentation of the ESINET strategy, Frank Salzgeber, Head of the ESA Technology Transfer Programme Office, explained how the strategic partnership between EBN and ESA will increase performance and inspire dynamics within the ESINET network. The ESINET management will combine EBN's long term experience in professional networking, and, through ESA's business incubators, provide links to three ESA establishments and their

"We are convinced that regional incubators can play a crucial role in increasing the number of innovative companies all over Europe to support economic growth," added Bruno Naulais, ESA's ESINET Manager at the Technology Transfer Programme Office.

Florence Ghiron, Capital High Tech, explained how ESINET leverages on SMEs and regional innovation centres to stimulate economic development downstream the satellite capabilities:

"Today, the markets of navigation, datation, geo-localisation and environmental monitoring are booming. In line with the EC funded projects already in progress, the ESINET network can offer its members added-value services to increase the visibility of their SMEs in the European arena, support SMEs in accessing public or private funding and help them build European critical mass offers."

Two incubators' representatives, Thorsten Rudolph from Anwendungszentrum Oberpfaffenhofen (Germany) and Adam Tucker from Hertfordshire Business Incubation Centre (England), were given the floor to speak about the incubators' perspective, pointing out the benefits of the network and the label "ESINET".

The ESINET Network also offers its members a number of assets, such as the participation to investment fora, training sessions, conferences and events discounts etc. The first incubators training session, organised in cooperation with the INVESaT project, will take place on September 25th 2007. More information will soon become available on this website and at www.invesat.com.