

1. Publishable Summary European Investor Gate

It has been largely observed that, regardless of the great potential, relevant ICT research results are not being transferred to the market and investors are often missing the opportunity to foresee the tangible productivity of innovation. Furthermore, innovative ICT founders and start-ups using disruptive technologies often have difficulties in bridging the gap between public funding and private equity investment.

The central goal of the European Investor Gate (EIG) project is therefore to bring results of European research projects to the market and to make ICT researchers, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) or first-time entrepreneurs investor ready through tailor-made “investor readiness” coaching and training. At the same time EIG will raise awareness among investors for innovative early stage research projects and their economic potential.

The results are an improved interaction between investors and innovative ICT entrepreneurs or researchers, higher investor readiness of innovative ICT entrepreneurs as well as higher awareness among investors for the commercialisation potential of research projects.

The specific objectives of the EIG project are to:

- Assess the projects’ entrepreneurial and market perspectives right from the start to ensure successful technology transfer
- Enhance investment readiness for participants in ICT projects in EU Framework Programmes through coaching and training
- Raise awareness on the investment potential of ICT projects, not only among researchers and SMEs, but also among investors to bridge the innovation gap
- Provide a platform for access to finance for the innovative SMEs or entrepreneurs after having developed investment readiness

During the first reporting period the EIG consortium has advanced in establishing the different EIG hands-on services for ICT entrepreneurs and researchers, the investor readiness trainings, the awareness raising mechanisms, the selection process as well as the online and offline matchmaking both at events and via the EIG community on EuroQuity.

Activities have started in all work packages during the first reporting period from September 2013 until August 2014. The concrete working process of European Investor Gate with all work packages except management is described in Figure 1 below:

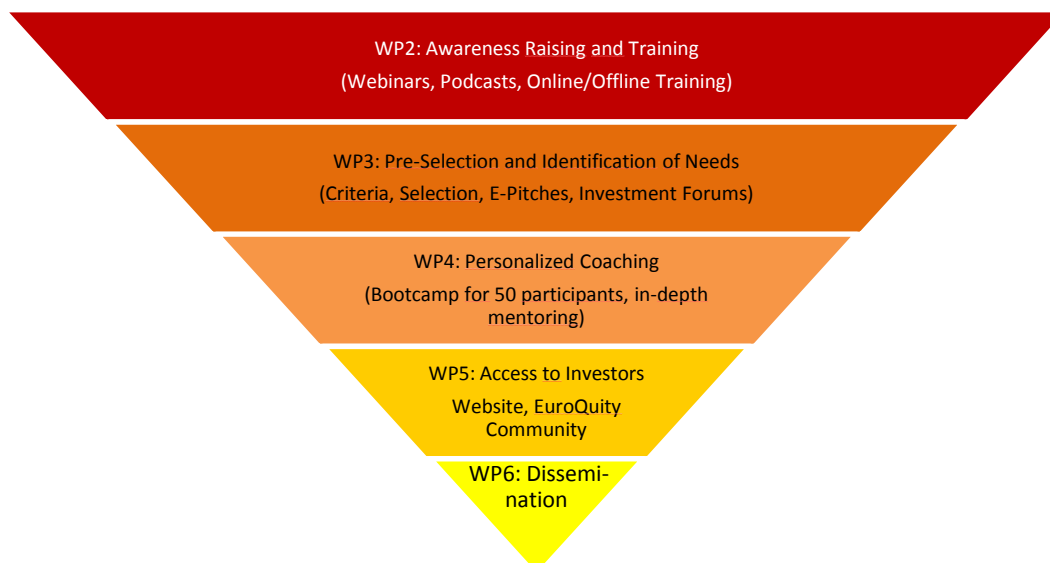


Figure 1: Workplan European Investor Gate - All Work Packages

European Investor Gate has raised awareness at local, regional and national level with more than 1300 contacts reached, more than 180 profiles of founders, researchers and start-ups completed and more than 100 investors from all across Europe getting involved in the EIG project activities in the first reporting period.

The project has succeeded in establishing an **investor readiness training concept** with different modules for all phases from very early innovation stages of research projects to start-ups in advanced stages. On the one hand, the project partner Go Beyond has provided publicly accessible [Guidelines for Financing and ICT Startups](#) and on the other hand, training sessions with different steps for implementing financing strategies for ICT entrepreneurs have been developed as part of the overall webinar and training sessions offer. Apart from these training modules which all address the need of ICT researchers and entrepreneurs to get ready for a financing round and preparing for an investment, the project has also held different onsite investor readiness sessions and one-to-one coaching sessions focussing on topics such as business modelling, pitching training, preparing for private investments and fostering cross-border investments and internationalisation. The specific **online and offline training modules** on ICT financing strategies developed cover the following topics:

Apart from the trainings, **podcasts** have been developed by European Investor Gate as an additional feature for all entrepreneurs and researchers interested in improving their financial strategy and preparing a financing round. All podcasts are available for free on the [EIG homepage](#).

The trainings, podcasts and investor readiness sessions which have been put in place at various **European summits** such as the [NEM Summit](#), [ICT 2013](#), [Futur en Seine](#) or the EIG Coaching Day at the [Heidelberg Innovation Forum](#), form only one part of the complete EIG ecosystem for founders, researchers and start-ups. The figure below provides an overview on the hands-on services of EIG which have a real added-value for project participants because of their convenient character concentrating on trainings, preparation and matchmaking with investors:



Figure 2: EIG Services for Start-ups, Founders and Researchers

Once the ICT entrepreneurs and researchers have profited from the various training opportunities offered at the investor readiness sessions, in the webinars and one-to-one sessions or in the podcasts, the participants can proceed to one of the next stages of the project.

The **e-pitches** have proved to be a good tool to connect the entrepreneurs and researchers directly with investors from across Europe. The e-pitches are connected to an online pitching training and a technical training and provide participants with the opportunity to practice their pitching skills and profit from direct matchmaking – all they need is a webcam and a headset. About 50 investors from various European countries have registered so far for each e-pitch to see the 5 or 6 selected companies present their innovative business ideas.

Other options for the trained and investor ready participants are the **9 investment forums** of the EIG project. The investment forums are always connected to a large Start-up or ICT summit such as the ICT 2013 or the NEM Summit. The participants join a final training session to get ready for their pitch and then join the pitching session of the investment forum to present their business concept in front of European investors. Both investors and the founders and start-ups profit from the networking and matchmaking opportunities: Investors find out more about innovative technologies and ideas which have been developed and are worth investing in and the entrepreneurs get in touch with potential financial providers or strategic partners from their sector.

The established training and matchmaking mechanisms have already been fruitful: For instance, the French start-up [Golaem](#) which provides crowd simulation solutions for films presented their idea at the EIG investment forum at NEM 2013 in Nantes and has now closed an **investment deal** with EIG's subcontractor France Angels and a VC fund. Another success story was that the jury of the Heidelberg Innovation Forum selected the **EU research project** [CloudSME](#) to present their business concept at the early stage panel of forum in front of international investors. From former projects such as SMARD a crucial learning was that research projects often find it difficult to establish a commercialisation strategy for their technologies and concepts. CloudSME applied for the project early on, participated in the coaching and training activities of EIG on business modelling and financial strategies and managed to refine its commercialisation strategy with the help of our mentors. CloudSME is now close to actually founding its own company and plans to present at the forum once again in 2015 – this time at the advanced stage panel.

Apart from the investment forums, there is also EIG's flagship event coming up: the **EIG Silicon Stroll Bootcamp in Dublin** in November 2014. Recently, the 50 most investable start-ups of the EIG community have been selected for the bootcamp and will profit from a two-day special event with various training opportunities, showcases as well as pitching opportunities, networking with investors and a cash prize for the winner of the pitching battles. The event takes place in the Guinness Enterprise Centre Dublin and provides an exciting **opportunity for investors** to spot the next big thing and meet the future generation of ICT entrepreneurs.

Concerning awareness raising among investors, EIG has gone one step further from just disseminating the activities to actually founding a core group of European investors interested in cross-border investment and willing to close financial deals together.

The **Connect Investor Club** is a core group of active, early-stage investors from different European countries. Kick off of the Club on May 22nd in Cannes hosted 8 investors from 8 different European countries. Participants in the Club are **business angels and early-stage funds** sharing an interest in the creative industries and ICT sector and looking at extending their investment scope and expertise. The Connect Investor Club aims at fostering a trusted relationship among European early-stage investors who will be meeting regularly in the next 18 months in order to work together and look at deal flow in the creative industries and digital media sector, and possibly develop some syndicated investments at the cross-border level.

The group now consists of 9 investors from 9 European countries and will be extended in the future:

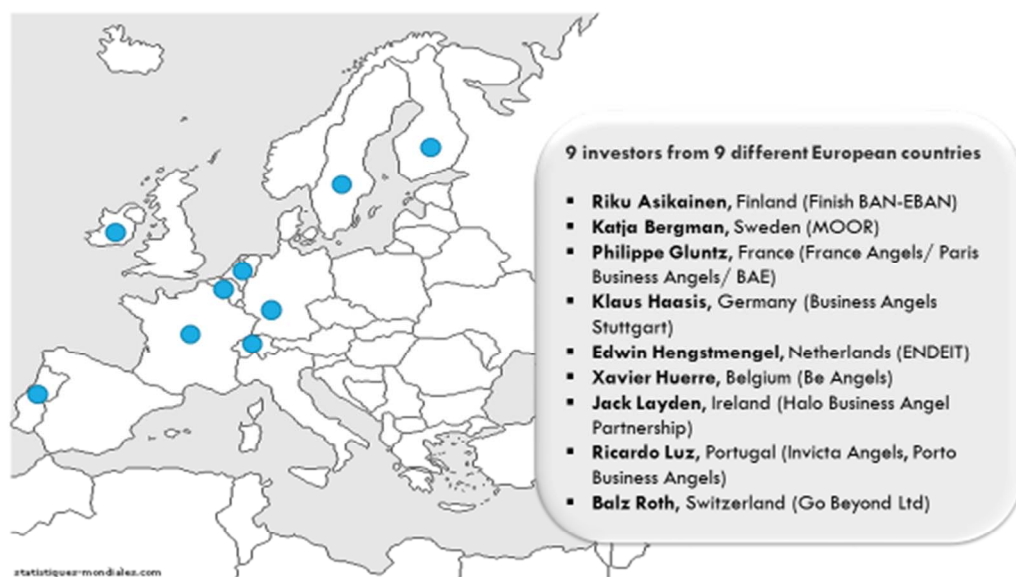


Figure 3: Members of the Connect Investor Club, European Investor Gate

In addition to the onsite events, the bootcamp and the sessions for investors, EIG has also succeeded in making online matchmaking one of its core activities.

In the framework of the project, the EuroQuity platform – hitherto a German and French cooperation bringing together investors and company founders – has been expanded to a European level. The EuroQuity platform connects entrepreneurs, founders and start-ups with investors. The platform is operated by the EIG project partner BPI France in close cooperation with KfW. To date, it has been available in Germany and France, and has become operational for ICT companies in all 28 EU in the course of EIG. There are now more than 6600 investors, more than 4000 companies and over 2200 founders registered on EuroQuity and the platform has helped SMEs raise more than 250 million euros.

Interested founders and investors registering on [EuroQuity.com/eu](https://www.euroquity.com/eu) may form groups connected to a specific subject or project. The platform enables not only for contacts to be forged, but also for deals to be concluded. Opening up EuroQuity to Europe and the launch of European Investor Gate will contribute to closing the gap between European research and commercialisation in the long run.

European Investor Gate

Bridging the gap between public research funding and private investment

EIG website: www.eig-project.eu

EIG Community on EuroQuity: <https://www.euroquity.com/eu/european-investor-gate>