

Innovation Network for Regional Business Development

- **Thematic Areas/Technology/Topic of focus + key elements of the idea/problem:**
The project cuts across thematic areas, but mainly focuses on exploration, mining and processing themes. The idea is to build a network to facilitate business creation under unknown or difficult circumstances. Key elements are: tools and guides, knowledge sharing, local start-up support and entrepreneurial education.
- **Expected synergies and complementarities:**
The project can benefit and work closely together with existing initiatives, such as projects like ArcHub and activities under regional innovation schemes.
- **Outcomes:**
Facilitate business creation in promising markets, e.g the Arctic and Eastern Europe – contribute to the local/regional business development and ability to cooperate with foreign, new-coming companies. Create better understanding of the local culture in order to improve social license to operate. Contribute to entrepreneurial education of young generations at student level.
- **Market & Business opportunities:**
The project is focusing on “new” markets and one of the aims of the project is to achieve clarity of the market-opportunities for European companies – as well as overcome the issue of the willingness to invest.
- **Partners already identified:**
Still open
- **Wanted additional partners:**
Open to partners with experience in / or need of knowledge of new markets with local population involvement and to partners with entrepreneurial education programmes.

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Background: Large potential for European Raw Materials Sector in (isolated) areas with unexploited metals/minerals, but businesses often face **harsh climate**, **insufficient infrastructure**, **limited (qualified) local workforce**, **obscure laws/regulations**, decreasing the likelihood of investment.

EIT Raw Materials is a great **forum** for collecting **experience** and enhance the **competencies** of companies interested in opening up new markets (exploration, mining, sub-supply).

Initial focus: The Arctic, North Africa & Eastern Europe – three promising, **metal/mineral rich** regions either part of Europe or closely affiliated.

Suggestion: An Innovation & Competence-Enhancing Network, facilitating business with the following **tools**:

- **How-to guides** based on local knowledge of regulations, laws, local cultures etc. improving success rate in social license to operate.
- **On-line forum** for knowledge sharing.
- Supporting **local start-ups** and **student entrepreneurship** to ensure **regional benefits** from the new business opportunities.
- Regular **meetings**, **workshops** and **conferences** to **facilitate contact between companies, authorities and investors**.

Existing activities and knowledge platforms, for the network to draw upon: **ArchHub network** (funded by the EIT Raw Materials), **Arctic Cluster of Raw Materials** and other organisational initiatives

End goal: New business!