

PRESS RELEASE

BIC and Vanguard Initiative sign Bioeconomy MoU

Brussels, 21 June 2016 – Two leading European bioeconomy players, the Bio-based Industries Consortium (BIC) and the Vanguard Initiative have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for better interregional cooperation on the bioeconomy.

The collaboration will support improved access to funding and awareness-raising activities, marrying BIC's bioeconomy expertise with the Vanguard Initiative's regional network to help steer Europe away from its fossil-based past and develop novel products for new markets, creating more jobs.

Europe needs integrated bio-based value chains if it is to become the world's leading bioeconomy. Achieving this goal depends on bringing regional stakeholders together to pool resources, combine complementary assets and share best practice. Established in 2014, the Vanguard Initiative facilitates the creation of cross-regional demonstration projects, making it an ideal catalyst for the EU's bioeconomy ambitions, boosting new growth through entrepreneurial innovation and industrial renewal.

BIC already has a number of partnerships to harness the power of interregional cooperation. ERRIN, the European Regions Research and Innovation Network, contributed to BIC's study 'Combining BBI (H2020) and European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) to deploy the European bioeconomy.'

At the MoU signing on 21 June, Dirk Carrez, Executive Director of BIC said, "BIC will work together with the regions in the Vanguard Initiative to exchange information and explore synergies between BBI work programs and Vanguard pilot projects on the bioeconomy. Our collaboration will identify opportunities for joint demonstration, accelerating the development and uptake of bio-based products, strengthening regional development and creating jobs. At the same time, I encourage European regions to explore different financing options, such as regional development funds, to help them bring to market innovative renewable products."

Marcel Wubbolts, Chair of the BIC Board and of the Governing Board of the Bio-based Industries Joint Undertaking (BBI JU) said, "I look forward to the results of our cooperation with Vanguard, such as increased visibility for the bio-based industries and new value chain partnerships. It would be great to see co-funding opportunities which will allow BIC at an EU scale and Vanguard on a regional scale, to demonstrate their mutual added value."

Read the agreed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU):

http://biconsortium.eu/sites/biconsortium.eu/files/documents/20160621_Vanguard-BIC_MofU.pdf

About the Bio-based Industries Consortium

The Bio-based Industries Consortium (BIC) is a non-profit organisation based in Brussels. It represents the private sector in a public-private partnership (PPP) with the EU on Bio-based Industries (BBI). Worth €3.7 billion, the partnership mobilises investment in innovative facilities and processes that manufacture high-quality bio-based products as well as in biorefining research and demonstration projects.

BIC is host to a unique mix of sectors that currently covers agriculture, agro-food, forestry, pulp and paper, chemicals, energy and other manufacturing sectors. With over 200 members including large companies, SMEs, SME Clusters, RTOs, universities, technology platforms and associations spread across Europe, BIC brings together an authoritative pool of cross sector and multi-disciplinary expertise in the field of bio-based industries.

<http://biconsortium.eu>

About the Vanguard Initiative

The Vanguard Initiative is a European network of industrial regions that seeks to speed up the market uptake of new technologies through the establishment of industry-led, cross-regional joint-demonstration platforms. The network has initiated five thematic pilot projects to explore opportunities for developing interregional joint-demonstration. The Bioeconomy pilot project concerns the implementation of synergies in new bio-based value chains across regions based on their smart specialisations.

<http://www.s3vanguardinitiative.eu>

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