

New Association kicks off to boost European research and innovation investments

The most relevant European companies in innovation consultancy join efforts to boost the competitiveness in the research and innovation ecosystem.

On Thursday 5 November 2020, the European Association of Innovation Consultants (EAIC) was launched. Created at the initiative of the French Association of Innovation Consultants (ACI) as an informal gathering in a working group back in September 2019, the creation of the EAIC was formalised yesterday by its 42 members active across Europe. A board of 8 members as well as a president was elected.

The Association is now being established as a formal entity, its objective: **to become the voice of European consulting companies specialized in Research, Development & Innovation (RDI) financing and management.**

The Association aims in particular to:

1. Create **synergies between members** to promote the added value their professional services bring to RDI collaborations in Europe and carry out actions of common interests and benefits for its members.
2. **Enhance a positive image of European professional innovation consulting companies** by ensuring and maintaining high professionalism and ethical values among members.
3. **Represent the EAIC towards European institutions and stakeholders to defend the specific expertise and professionalism of EAIC members** and acknowledge the increased project impact they deliver to the European research community
4. **Identify common issues and goals of its members and pursue them in a coordinated manner on a national level** by contributing to national concertation and enhancing direct dialogues with the different representations of the EU Member States.
5. **Facilitate knowledge sharing on best practices and information between members** on the latest evolutions in the European RDI ecosystem.

6. Foster the participation of the private sector to European RD&I programmes for stronger impact and exploitation of results.

Since September 2019, when they first decided to work together as an informal working group, the members of EAIC initiated several actions such as

- The launch of a [Manifesto](#) to support Professional project management in Horizon Europe to better recognise the added value of innovation consultants. It has already been signed by over 168 organisations;
- The adoption of a [Code of Conduct](#), signed by all members to promote ethical behaviour in the sector;
- The development of two [EIC Accelerator position papers](#) to provide feedback on the planned evolutions of the programme under Horizon Europe

The EAIC recently elected 8 board members. Their role is to ensure progress towards the structuration of EAIC's activities.

The 8 Board members are:

- Luc Ragon – Benkei, France
- Virginie Robin – Euronovia, France
- Alejandro Alvarez Alvarez – FI Group, Spain
- Nilay Yalcinkaya Yoruk – Intract, Turkey
- Diego Soro – Soros Gabinete, Spain
- Pekka Koponen – Spinverse, Finland
- Marie Latour – Zabala Innovation Consulting, Belgium
- Xavier Aubry – Zaz Ventures, Belgium

On the occasion of its first meeting, the Board elected the EAIC's President, Pekka Koponen.

Welcoming the decision, Pekka said: *“Innovation consultants play an important role as the glue and catalyst between European innovators from largest enterprises to growth companies and academic organizations. We transfer the latest information on public funding to our clients, help them build and raise funding for their innovation and manage resulting projects and ecosystems professionally for new business, other impact and finally, competitiveness of European industry that keeps the whole innovation system running. EAIC also stands to make sure that our members do their work with strictest code of ethics and professionalism, always walking the extra mile needed for success.”*

About EAIC

The European Association of Innovation Consultants (EAIC) gathers active Innovation Consultants in the field of European research and innovation projects. The group aims to facilitate exchange and promotion of best practices and success stories, as well as to uphold professional skills and expertise in European RDI projects. Today the group gathers 42 members, active in more than 18 countries around Europe.

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