

The 2007
**INNOVATION AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP DAY**

**Growth and Opportunity in an Enlarged EU
What's in it for Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises?**

Entrepreneurs are the lifeblood of the European economy. It is their ingenuity, their risk-taking, their hard work that drives economic dynamism and pushes the boundaries of innovation. In an era of increasing economic integration, the European Union in general and its single market in particular are among the key growth opportunities for small- and medium-sized enterprises, or SMEs. With more than 480 million consumers, "Europe" is a valuable asset which pays demonstrable dividends to entrepreneurs and companies that venture outside their home country. In addition, the EU Institutions are working hard to meet the needs of the SME community, be it through special financing facilities or mapping conducive framework conditions for the single market.

Despite the obvious benefits provided by the enlarged EU, many entrepreneurs shy away from pursuing ventures outside their home country or are slow to seize the opportunities on offer. Against this backdrop, the **Innovation and Entrepreneurship Day** is designed as a one-stop-shop for gaining valuable information about the potential of the European market, as well as other key issues, such as the latest thinking on innovation. In addition, it is a powerful networking platform, bringing together entrepreneurs from across Europe in an informal, casual atmosphere. The aim is to provide in a short period of time tangible benefits and take-home value to the participants. What are the latest trends in innovation, and what are the lessons for European SMEs? How can entrepreneurs tap into the significant funds that EU institutions make available for SMEs? How can companies benefit from the EU's single market, and what are the prospects for providing cross-border services?

Tuesday, 06 November 2007

Residence Palace, International Press Centre
155 rue de la Loi, Brussels, Belgium

PROGRAMME:

09:30-10:30

Entrepreneurs Café

A special welcome from the partners of the *Innovation and Entrepreneurship Day*, KBC Group and Oracle. Meet senior company executives, European Commission officials and fellow entrepreneurs.

10:30-12:30

Meeting the Innovation Challenge

Few issues are more important to a thriving business than operating at the leading-edge of economic, social or environmental developments. Indeed, the constant quest for catch-up and renewal is a matter of survival. But what are the latest trends in innovation? How is the world of business changing and what opportunities do new collaborative models present to companies?

- **Don Tapscott**, chief executive officer, New Paradigm, Canada; author of *Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything. Lessons for your Business from Web 2.0*

Discussant

- **Vasumathi Briquez**, Vice-President, Innovation and Pervasive Computing Solutions, Oracle EMEA, Switzerland
- Participating SME company representatives will share their experiences

12:30-13:30

Networking Lunch

13:30-15:00

Financing for Innovation and Growth

This session examines the financing and innovation challenges European SMEs face, and the policies and practices that are needed to overcome them. How can major lending institutions, such as the European Investment Bank, ensure that money earmarked for innovation really gets to SMEs? What can SMEs in turn learn from successful peers, which manage to access EU funds to help with their financing needs? What are the major stumbling blocks towards greater innovation that European SMEs face?

- **Francis Carpenter**, chief executive officer, European Investment Fund, Luxembourg

Discussant

- **André Bergen**, Chief Executive Officer, KBC Group, Belgium
- Participating SME company representatives will share their experiences

15:00-15:30

Coffee Break

15:30-16:30

The Single Market: How to Make it Work for You

The EU's single market is a beacon to entrepreneurs. The access to more than 480 million consumers is a powerful tool to grow one's company and allows businesses to take advantage of a diverse, multifaceted market place comprised of 27 countries. The reality "on the ground", however, is very different. Companies wishing to operate and expand to other countries continue to face discriminatory treatment, and are often faced with a plethora of hurdles not imposed on domestic companies. What is the current state of the single market? What is in the EU legislative pipeline

With the kind support of KBC Group and Oracle

that will ease the provision of cross-border services? How can entrepreneurs find redress where they encounter discrimination and unequal access?

- **Charlie McCreevy**, European Commissioner for the Internal Market and Services

16:30-17:00

Farewell Reception