

To
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From
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Dear Paolo

I am writing to express a letter of intent for my university to participate in the M-CHANGE proposal for funding from the European Commission.

REGIONAL

GROUP OF INTEREST : according to the Ideal Model of Composition

Knowledge Construction System that can be subdivided in THREE STEPS

A) "G" partnership' grouping Assembly oriented to propose BEST PRACTICES (BP data) **University research partners Aston Business School plus Regional SME clusters within the West Midlands/Birmingham Region (UK).**

B) ERWL - that get a function of "virtual editorial management" for the elaboration of (BP data) this e.work will be split in two targets :

- B1 - Info.Soc.Citizen ; **University research partners Aston Business School plus E-Government partners Wolverhampton Council, Environment Agency (London), Shepway Council, Media Citizens (UK).**
- B2 - Knowledge management Innovation for SME's ; **University research partners Aston Business School plus Regional SME clusters within the West Midlands/Birmingham Region (UK).**

C) NET Learning Open System that can be subdivided in some Knowledge Economy European priorities , for the production of not formal education materials and for their dissemination.

- **University research partners Aston Business School**

Aims.

- The discovery of new knowledge about why and how innovation networks are successful. This will involve data collection and analysis of micro level interaction processes within organisations and networks
- The development of new theories and methodologies for using and developing knowledge resources (e.g. weak tie theory, structural hole theory, function theory, mutual benefit theory, social capital theory, resource based theory, transaction cost theory, social networks theory, organisational learning theory). This involves a methodology of using grounded theory with studies of best and worst cases in practice.
- The development of clearer definitions of social capital, knowledge transformation, collaboration, network, knowledge transfer, network governance, virtuous spiral of trust than exist currently.
- Identification of enablers and barriers to inter organisational work relationships and how enablers can be institutionalised within organisations
- Identification of the role of umbrella trans organisational bodies such as regional industry bodies promoting cooperation and trade
- The potentials and limitations of information and communication technologies (ICT) and the social embeddedness of successful ICT use

Outline of work to be done.

- *Sample selection.* [1] Innovation networks of SMEs. We have chosen as our sample comparative case studies in several regional clusters of SMEs within the West Midlands Region (UK) to which we have access. [2] E-Government involvement in innovation networks. Wolverhampton Council, Environment Agency (London), Shepway Council, Media Citizens (UK).
- *Data collection.* Data in these case studies will be drawn from three sources: transcripts of face to face and telephone interviews, transcripts and observations of meetings between network members. Over the two and a half years of the study we will longitudinally track the cases.
- *Data analysis.* We will use grounded theory to inductively develop and extend theories of network governance and social capital growth.

Budget.

- Full cost (university) 300,000 Euros over 3 years.

Regards

Professor John Sillince.