



network enterprise europe

NRW.Europa Your partner in the Enterprise Europe Network



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NRW.Europa



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Editorial.

For many years, NRW.Europa has offered entrepreneurs and research institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia a central source of information on all EU-related topics. With its extensive service offer, the Enterprise Europe Network helps its clients to establish international business contacts, launch innovation and research projects and participate in EU funding programmes. NRW.Europa provides individual advice on foreign markets and funding opportunities, as well as a broad range of brokerage events, participation in trade exhibitions, delegation visits, seminars and other specialist events. Services are provided on behalf of the European Commission by ZENIT, NRW.BANK and NRW.International.

Where can I obtain the financial resources I need to transform my innovative ideas into reality and who really knows their way through the funding jungle? Above all small and medium-sized enterprises often find it difficult to maintain an overview of the wide spectrum of services on offer. That is why the European Commission, the German government and the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia have nominated partners who are experts in specific questions on the topic of funding: Whether with regard to ZIM, the national government's central innovation programme for SMEs, or to the modalities in Horizon 2020, for example, the EU's new framework programme for research and innovation.

For anyone seeking new business contacts or a cooperation partner with whom to apply for European funding or who wants to make innovative products and services more attractive with the aid of additional technologies or who requires information about European funding programmes, help with know-how and technology transfer or internationalization or innovation management advice, NRW.Europa is certainly the right port of call. NRW.Europa is part of the Enterprise Europe Network: With 600 local partners in over 50 countries the European Commission's largest network.

Broad service offer for business and science

The consortium responsible for North Rhine-Westphalia, comprising ZENIT, NRW.BANK and NRW.International, is the central contact point - on behalf of the European Commission and with the financial support of the federal state and NRW.BANK - both for technology-oriented SMEs in the region as well as research institutes and universities. Thanks to this funding, initial advice within the service offer is free of charge.

Tasks within the consortium are clearly allocated. ZENIT is responsible for information on European topics, feedback to the EU, internationalization support, cooperation partner search, assistance with technology and know-how transfer, innovation management consulting, information and advice on public funding

as well as advice on Horizon 2020, the EU's framework programme. NRW.BANK's main role is to provide information on EU Structural Fund and Action Programmes as well as public financial schemes in EU Member States which help to fund export-based activities in EU countries. NRW.International is above all in charge of assisting delegations of entrepreneurs from abroad who, for example, visit NRW in the framework of a trade exhibition or to establish business contacts, with the organization of individual programmes in their sectors. The focus here lies on the mediation of business contacts with local enterprises in NRW, for example by organizing company visits.

Just what shape this help can take is shown in this brochure in the form of five very typical case studies - yet each with a different focus: They describe examples of services provided across all sectors in the areas of technology transfer, distribution agreements, sales and marketing strategies, funding advice and how to finance activities abroad.



All EU topics from A to Z

NRW.EUROPA – Our services

Information, enquiries, feedback

- **Individual enquiries**
- **Data searches on public calls for tender and approval procedures**
- **Online information**
- **“Europe for SMEs” and “Europe Today” newsletters**
- **Theme-based events**
- **Help with problems in doing business in Europe**
- **Feedback to the European Commission**

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Internationalization support

- **Internationalization audits**
- **Market information procurement**
- **Strategy development**
- **Implementation support**

Cooperation partner search

- **Compilation of cooperation profiles**
- **Databases**
- **Matchmaking events**
- **Delegation visits**
- **Individual partner searches**

www.nrweuropa.de

Know-how and technology transfer support

- **Technology searches**
- **Databases**
- **Cooperation opportunities – Email service**

Innovation management consulting

- **Innovation audits**
- **Self-evaluation tool**
- **Workshop concepts**
- **Innovation management planning**
- **Strengths and weaknesses analyses**

Funding information and advice

- **Early-stage information and funding hotline under ++49 (0) 208 30004-39**
- **Funding consultation days and sourcing**
- **Practical help with applications**
- **Funding advice on Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research**
- **Networking with universities in NRW**
- **Monitoring of research, technology and innovation policy**

and of

- **SME policy in Brussels**

Advice on financial instruments

- **National funding programmes abroad, in particular**
 - **EU structural fund programmes in EU Member States (not NRW)**
 - **EU funding in EU candidate countries as well as third countries**
- **Europe-wide action programmes of the EU**
- **Public financial aid for export trade from the German national government and the federal state of NRW**

IWW Zentrum Wasser. **Guidance through the funding jungle.**

Partners in EU projects and above all their coordinators need to know what is required of them and what expectations the financing bodies have. That's why it is important to plan and implement the project well – both formally and in terms of content. “No witchcraft is involved”, says David Schwesig of IWW. He does, however, warn against submitting proposals or participating in projects without professional advice.

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What have topics such as demographic development and climate change got to do with our drinking water and what influence do they have on supply infrastructure? Questions with which IWW Zentrum Wasser in Mülheim an der Ruhr has been dealing for almost 30 years. With its 20 shareholders from the water sector, IWW sees itself as an innovation pool for the topic of drinking water. Its areas of activity cover all aspects of water supply and range from water resource management to water technologies, water quality and water networks to management consulting. Today, around 100 natural scientists, engineers, economists and technical staff work at the centre in Mülheim, which was established in 1986, as well as at sites in Hesse and Lower Saxony. The institute's clients include water suppliers, industrial enterprises, ministries and authorities as well as operators of swimming baths.

There was a clear local focus in the early years, but IWW's excellent work soon became known beyond regional boundaries and throughout the EU. Through its active involvement in European standardization committees, its transnational contacts also deepened. These led to first forays into European research projects in the new millennium.

Through the EU project “DESSIN”, IWW Zentrum Wasser is also involved in measures for the re-conversion of the Emscher River.

(Picture: EmscherGenossenschaft)

From project partner to project coordinator

The centre's greater presence at European level also paid off for the water experts with regard to service offer and turnover development. It also profited from increasing international visibility and a growing network. As a consequence, in 2009 the management decided in favour of a targeted expansion of the centre's research activities and set up a central “Research Coordination” unit.

This department is supervised by Dr. David Schwesig, who was previously the company's Head of Laboratory. Nothing more could stand in the centre's way in its role as coordinator of large-scale joint European research projects. Another decision which paid off: The very first EU proposal coordinated by IWW with a total of 31 partner institutions was successful. Over a period of four years, the “TRUST” project (www.trust-i.net) is developing new technologies and management tools with which to make urban water cycles more efficient, resource-friendly and sustainable.





**Dr. David Schwesig, Research Coordinator,
IWW Zentrum Wasser**

When we coordinated a proposal for the first time under FP7 with 30 partners, the NRW.Europa team at ZENIT gave us very practical and valuable support both through its critical review of our application as well as by mediating important contacts.

IWW has been assisted for many years by the funding experts at ZENIT, which has established an extensive service offer against the background of its in-depth knowledge in the field of EU funding programmes. This includes tools and checklists for potential applicants which help to optimize its consulting services in the area of EU proposals in a systematic and expedient way.

IWW coordinated a successful proposal for a major EU project in 2013 as well: The "Dessin" project with 20 partner organizations was launched at the beginning of 2014. Its objective is to foster technical innovations for improvements in the areas of water quality and water scarcity in urban regions of Europe. The aim is to implement new technologies at five European sites under real conditions and demonstrate their technical, ecological and economic benefits.

- **Information on relevant funding programmes**
- **Help with submitting proposals**
- **Project support**
(proposal coaching, proposal check and strategic consortium building)

In North Rhine-Westphalia, the Emschergenossenschaft, Duisburg-Essen University and two SMEs are working on innovative solutions for the real-time control and optimized treatment of rain overflow along the Emscher River: An important measure in the context of the river's re-conversion from a wastewater conduit to a waterway closer to nature.

(Picture: K. Baumers, Emschergenossenschaft)



Bio-Circle. Fast track to new partners.

As an export-intensive chemicals and biotechnology firm like Bio-Circle Surface Technology GmbH, what do you do when you suddenly lose an important distribution partner? No problem for the team from Gütersloh, who are amongst the regular users of NRW.Europa's various services.

8 The headquarters of Bio-Circle Surface Technology GmbH are located deep in the heart of East Westphalia-Lippe. Founded in 1985 under the name of CB-Chemie, the chemicals and biotechnology firm develops, manufactures and markets innovative chemical and technical products for the surface technology sector. bio-chem and BIO-CIRCLE are the product lines under which environmentally compatible cleaning, protection, lubrication and welding products as well as complete cleaning systems are sold.

Over the years, the company has developed into an international player with about 150 employees and numerous awards, such as the German Material Efficiency Prize and the Innovation Prize of the SME Initiative. About 45 percent of turnover is generated abroad. With branch offices and distribution partners in Austria, Switzerland, Brazil, Canada, Poland, Czech Republic, China and Thailand, BioCircle is represented across the globe.

In order to grow and develop the firm's business activities further, its management has called on the Enterprise Europe Network's assistance on several occasions. For example, Bio-Circle successfully took part in a number of international matchmaking events, which the Network regularly stages at important trade exhibitions.



Bio-Circle develops, manufactures and markets innovative chemical and technical products for the surface technology sector.



Jens Becker, Export Manager, Bio-Circle

We have never found such a reliable business partner in such a short space of time. The Enterprise Europe Network is excellent in the way it generates successful business contacts. We could never have managed it alone and without the Network's support.



Hey presto partnership thanks to international networking

When Bio-Circle suddenly lost its long-term representative in Denmark, it urgently needed a new local distribution partner. In order to find an adequate replacement as quickly as possible, Jens Becker, Export Manager, got in touch the same day with the NRW. Europa team at ZENIT, with whom Bio-Circle had already found partners in Sweden, France, Romania and Slovakia.

ZENIT's experts immediately contacted their Danish network colleagues and enquired whether they could assist in the search for a suitable partner for Bio-Circle. They received a positive reply within just a few hours: SauberHouse, a Danish manufacturer of cleaning and safety equipment, was very interested in working with the North Rhine-Westphalian firm. Less than a month later, all the necessary contracts were signed and since then SauberHouse has been selling Bio-Circle's products in Denmark. "Since we started working with our new partner, our exports to Denmark have tripled", Jens Becker, Export Manager, is pleased to report. Tommy Møller, Managing Director of SauberHouse, also views the future optimistically: "We are hoping to expand distribution beyond Denmark's borders and into the rest of Scandinavia."

- Organization of matchmaking events and delegation visits
- Access to extensive databases with cooperation profiles
- Advice on internationalization strategies
- Implementation support

How the new partnership evolved was such an extraordinary example that the European Commission even made a video about it (viewable by entering "Bio-Circle Euronews" as the search term).

This case study from the Enterprise Europe Network's work was nominated for the **Network Stars Award 2014**.

EMG. Support through innovation management.

Developing new ideas, transforming them into reality and making them marketable does not happen automatically, even for successful and innovative enterprises like EMG Automation GmbH in Wenden, Sauerland. That's why innovation management is an important element of their sales and growth strategy.

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The company has a long and successful history. Since way back in 1946, it has been setting the global standard for strip-guiding systems in the manufacture of flat strip products and since 1999 it has played an integral role in quality assurance in the steel industry with its new and innovative products. Innovation – so the firm's conviction – is the basis for technology and market leadership. This is understood not just as the result of innovative products, but also as the consequence of a strategic focus on areas of global demand. Over 6000 customers in more than



90 countries are the outcome of this strategy. Some international subsidiaries and partnerships have existed for over 30 years and make a vital contribution to the firm's profitable growth. About 60 percent of turnover is generated abroad.

EMG makes a significant contribution to its clients' competitiveness through continuous and consistent new and advanced developments on the basis of





Anno Jordan, Head of Knowledge Management / Marketing & Sales Strategy, EMG Automation GmbH, Wenden

Apart from technical innovation, the development of new products and future-oriented strategies is very important. Only with a permanent focus on target-oriented innovation management can we fulfil long-term the market's continuously growing requirements. That's why we are happy to profit from the know-how and consulting services offered by the NRW.Europa experts at ZENIT.

innovative manufacturing technologies with a high demand on quality. With about 940 employees worldwide and 350 staff at the plant in Wenden, the EMG Group develops and manufactures serial products, individual components and complex system solutions for continuous production processes in the metal, paper and plastics sectors as well as in the films and tyre industries. Solutions in the area of strip-guiding equipment and quality assurance systems offer EMG's customers both the reliability of this long-established global market leader as well as the dynamism of an innovation driver when they are making purchasing decisions. The development of in-house expertise and the pursuit of innovative product strategies which reflect customer demand play an important role in this success. That's why technological improvements as well as innovations not only in products but also in organizational procedures are regarded by the company as an ongoing task. Since innovations are understood as part of the company's strategy and culture, the topic is being further developed on an ongoing basis and under the sign of technological excellence and continuity.

EMG is the specialist for continuous production processes in the metal, paper and plastics sectors as well as in the films and tyre industry.



Workshop with external support

Since an outsider's perspective is often good for a company, the NRW.Europa experts at ZENIT were commissioned by EMG's management with the organization of an innovation management workshop on the topic of "New products for new fields of application", which took place after extensive preparation and was customized to the firm's specific requirements.

In the framework of the workshop, in-house and external experts together examined and assessed important topics such as EMG's current competitive position. Apart from identifying new fields of application for EMG's know-how, the identification of new customer-product combinations was also tackled.

The workshop was the perfect starting point for further steps and measures to put into practice the ideas developed together, which will be accompanied in future too by the NRW.Europa team. EMG has in the meantime been successful in achieving a remarkable level of turnover with two fresh products in new market segments.

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- **Innovation strengths and weaknesses analysis and self-evaluation tool**
- **Innovation audits**
- **Assistance in the integration of technology and innovation measures into business strategy**
- **Monitoring of the implementation process**

enviplan[®]. **New markets through networking.**

enviplan is located in Lichtenau-Henglar, Eastern Westphalia, and an innovative engineering office in the fields of industrial water and wastewater. It has been a regular user of various Network services for many years now.

Microscopically small air bubbles have kept Roland Damann, the firm's CEO, busy since the 1980s. When he founded the company in 1988, he laid the foundation for a flourishing business. He developed and manufactured the AQUATECTOR[®], a device which feeds oxygen into basins for salmon farming. This innovative process led to gigantic growth rates in fish production, but unfortunately also to falling prices for the producers and ultimately to the collapse of the market. Damann developed a new idea out of this dilemma. Since air bubbles can be used not just to mix oxygen with water

but also for the deposition of very fine particles of dirt or solid matter, the AQUATECTOR[®] was developed further and introduced into the marketplace as a process engineering system solution.

Today, technologies which have developed out of the AQUATECTOR[®] are applied in almost all areas of wastewater treatment. The suffix Microfloat[®], for example, describes microflotation as an efficient further development of conventional dissolved air flotation, with which even ultrafine particles of dirt are separated out of wastewater with microscopically small air bubbles. Plants fitted with this equipment not only produce clear wastewater, but also remove highly concentrated solid matter. Thanks to its mostly very high organic carbon content, this sludge is an excellent nutrient for biogas plants. Via a combined heat and power plant, energy can be recovered which can be used, for example, to run the wastewater plant and thus make it self-sufficient with regard to energy.

The microflotation plants manufactured by enviplan itself are today in use in some 20 countries. There are over 270 industrial and municipal reference plants and projects in Germany and around the world and some 70 percent of turnover is generated abroad.

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**Roland Damann, Managing Director,
enviplan Ingenieurgesellschaft**

We have been profiting from the services offered by the NRW. Europa team at ZENIT for many years now. We have, for example, participated in a large number of Network matchmaking events and always found suitable business partners and new strategies for enviplan's long-term development.

*The secret of enviplan technology:
Microscopic air bubbles remove
100 percent of solid matter from wastewater.*

- **Cooperation partner search**
(e.g. matchmaking events, business delegations, use of the Network's database)
- **Technology and know-how transfer support**
- **Market information**
- **Internationalization support**
- **Strategy development**



International success

For example with the help of the Network in Great Britain. Via its database, the NRW.Europa team at ZENIT received an enquiry in September 2013 from Isle Utilities, a British consulting firm specialized in the identification of innovative technologies. Isle Utilities was seeking a partner which offered technically sophisticated solutions for clients in the field of water supply. enviplan's profile was dispatched to England immediately and the two parties put in touch with each other. From then on everything happened very fast. In October already, Roland Damann went to London and presented enviplan's extensive engineering portfolio. A second meeting took place in the framework of the Aqua Match trade exhibition in Amsterdam in November, where the Network was staging a match-making event.

A third meeting in London at the beginning of 2014 brought enviplan together with some of Isle Utilities' very interested clients. The outcome was negotiations with a British wastewater plant operator, whose goal, amongst others, was to save transport and de-watering costs for sewage sludge. This development is of particular importance to enviplan's corporate objective of giving its own technology to licensees in various fields and for different applications, in order to be able to concentrate on key competencies and target markets. The strategy required for this is being jointly developed by the firm in cooperation with the NRW.Europa team. What is, however, already quite clear is that – thanks to Network activities – a number of valuable contacts to a new market have been established.

Krückemeyer.

Valuable help with company acquisition.

Taking over a firm located abroad takes time as well as needing proper planning and a sound financial base. If there is the possibility to take advantage of funding from external sources, then this is a pleasing solution for the firm investing, as was the case with Reinhard Krückemeyer GmbH & Co. KG in Wilnsdorf.

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What does a firm do if – as an SME – it does not have the resources to build up its own research department? There are two possibilities. “A small company can contract its development and innovation work out to an institute. But if the unexpected opportunity arises to buy up an entire firm in one go which already has the necessary resources, then personally we were in favour of choosing the second option”, explains Jan Krückemeyer, Managing Director, whose company was presented with this alternative in 2013.

Krückemeyer, a specialized single-source supplier for abrasives and adhesive technology, had already been working for many years with a Dutch partner. TAPIR B.V. operates in the same sector, but has focused on other target groups. With its close contacts to local research institutions, the Dutch firm was an interesting candidate for acquisition by the enthusiastic innovators in Wilnsdorf.

In order to sound out possible ways to finance the project, Jan Krückemeyer contacted the NRW.Europa team at NRW.BANK. In its capacity as the development bank for North Rhine-Westphalia, NRW.BANK supports above all small and medium-sized enterprises in the financing of new investment, consolidation and expansion projects in the home market and abroad. It also offers information and contacts to other public financial and funding institutions.



Krückemeyer supplies all kinds of abrasives and manufactures sanding belts at its own facilities.

Adhesive tapes are laminated, coated, stamped, wound and cut in the factory.





**Jan Krückemeyer,
Managing Director, Reinhard Krückemeyer GmbH & Co. KG**

“We profited considerably both in terms of time and know-how from NRW.BANK’s consulting services. In addition, through their help and comments during the course of our project, we were given valuable feedback, so that from the very outset we had a concrete roadmap, which could ultimately be implemented 1:1.”

Various public funding schemes were potential sources of finance for Krückemeyer’s Dutch project. Basically, it was a matter of reduced-interest loans from two credit institutes - NRW.BANK and KfW – which can also be used to finance corporate investment abroad. Although firms must apply for such loans via their house bank, many enterprises first obtain their own personal overview of what public finance and funding is available before approaching their bank. This is what Jan Krückemeyer did. First of all, NRW.BANK provided him with extensive information about possible instruments. At that time, his business plan for his Dutch acquisition project was still at an initial stage and it was his intention to take into consideration all possible options. He ultimately decided in favour of an “NRW.BANK International Investment” reduced-interest loan, with the help of which he acquired the Dutch firm at the beginning of 2014.

In addition to assisting in the fundamental question of how to finance his investment, the NRW.Europa consultants also supplied him with detailed information about funding instruments in the Netherlands. In particular they pointed out the possibility of applying for funding for research activities in the Netherlands at a later date. “But at present that’s a vision for the future for us. What’s important now is to make our acquisition project successful”, says Jan Krückemeyer.



- **Advice on national funding programmes abroad, in particular**
 - EU structural fund programmes in EU Member States
 - EU funding in EU candidate countries as well as third countries
- **Europe-wide action programmes of the EU**
- **Public financial aid for foreign trade from the German national government and the federal state of NRW**

*Specialists for over 60 years in adhesive tapes:
Whether as standard products or customized
to clients’ requirements (top picture).*

*Self-adhesive stamped parts for a
wide variety of applications are manufactured
to individual specifications.*



Service NRW.EUROPA

- Information on EU topics and enquiry service
- Internationalization support
- Cooperation partner search
- Know-how and technology transfer support
- Innovation management consulting
- Funding information and advice
- International funding advice

NRW.Europa

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