**Introduction**

IKOSZ is a independent non-profit organization that brings together Hungarian cluster initiatives based on the concentration of knowledge, experience and expertise in order to strengthen competitiveness in Hungary. The organization, which was established as a result of the cooperation of 9 Hungarian clusters in 2012, and which will be expanded by another 12 clusters in 2020, aims at the coordinated and sustainable development of clusters, the coordination of cluster policy, and the bringing together of entities and individuals. Clusters most of all are needed by small and medium-sized business enterprises therefore to have better conditions to compete in the field they are specialised in.

Clustering is an important and useful cooperation for the Hungarian small- and mediumsized enterprises already for 20 years. These flexible business alliances, which bring together players from a specific or pulling sector in a smaller or larger region, can provide their members with a number of significant competitive advantages. Exchanges of professional experience, joint procurement and investment, shared use tools, risk mitigation of innovation and international representation - the possibilities are limited only by creativity.

Clusters are created in collaboration with universities, businesses and government. Universities are involved in research and development, education, training, enterprises represent the business and economic side, and the government supports these initiatives both financially (for economic recovery purposes, for example through tenders and by creating and providing the appropriate legal framework. The aim of IKOSZ is to create this synergy and increase its efficiency by supporting cluster organizations.

**Benefits of the IKOSZ**

• strengthening the role of clusters in innovation processes and development strategies within the Hungary

• boosting dynamic development in key sectors and emerging technology-based clusters

• providing institutional support for cluster organizations and initiatives to improve their performance and increase their – as well as their members’ – competitiveness

• helping to raise efficiency and quality in cluster management

• promoting effective, proven solutions on an international scale and thus helping businesses, members of the clusters to expand their business into the international market.

• increasing the efficiency and quality of clusters in Hungary

• giving support for hungarian cluster organizations in their national and international projects development