

Profile

International

ZIM Innovation Network

HealthGoGreen

Industry meets health:

Sustainable innovations in the medical sector

Objective of the international ZIM innovation network HealthGoGreen

Traditionally, the medical technology industry has produced groundbreaking innovations, saving, prolonging and improving lives. However, the success of these advances has been and continues to be accompanied by high environmental demands and costs. From the manufacture of disposable products and their packaging, to energy consumption and the disposal of medical waste - every phase of the life cycle of medical devices has a tangible impact on the environment.

In a world that is increasingly characterized by environmental awareness and social responsibility, the medical technology industry is also facing the challenge of implementing more sustainable products and practices.

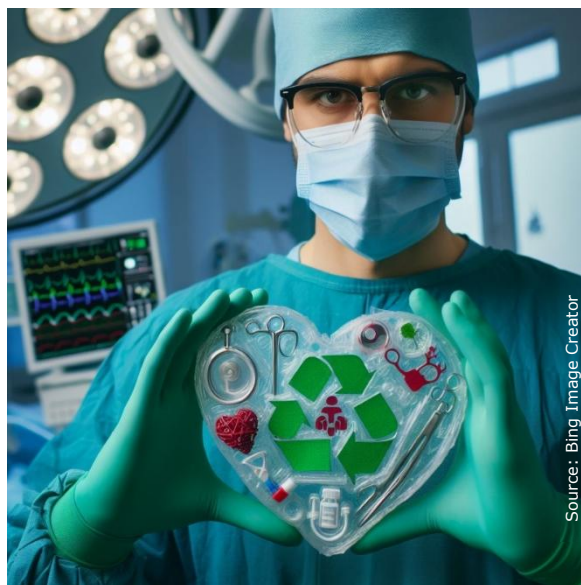
Many companies have already taken the first steps by switching to biocompatible materials, optimizing energy consumption and introducing recycling programs. However, these efforts should be seen as individual actions and only the beginning of a comprehensive change that will transform the entire industry.

The overarching goal of the international **HealthGoGreen** network is to develop and produce new sustainable medical products: Away from traditional materials, products and processes, towards future-oriented innovations, without compromising on safety and quality.

As is always the case with ZIM innovation networks, this is to be realized within a consortium of companies and research institutions on the basis of specific product developments and improvements.

Companies and research institutions participating in this network have the unique opportunity to be identified as pioneers in the field of sustainable medical technology and to establish themselves as innovators and trailblazers.

The innovation network goes beyond the mere demonstration of environmental awareness and enables network partners to strengthen their competitiveness, open up new markets for new products and consolidate their long-term corporate responsibility. The strategic integration of sustainability approaches not only offers environmental benefits, but also ensures that partners respond to the increasing demand for environmentally friendly products and ethical business practices. This reputation strengthens their position in an increasingly demanding market and helps to ensure long-term financially stable business success.



Source: Bing Image Creator

Possible lines of development for the network

The first approaches in terms of sustainability are new innovative or improved medical products made of plastics or composites, which are used in hospitals, doctors' surgeries, rehabilitation centers, but also for personal use by patients.

The portfolio ranges from the use of bioplastics and medical products made from recycled materials to waste avoidance in doctors' surgeries and clinics and efficient plastics recycling.

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Technical topics such as material selection, design and construction processes, medical validation procedures, manufacturing techniques and processes, as well as quality assurance are dealt with within the network.

The aim of the network activities is to develop new or improved medical products, the realization of which is achieved by the network partners through the use of federal, state or European funding.

What is an international ZIM innovation network?

An innovation network is an association of at least six SMEs and research and development institutions with the aim of jointly developing innovative products, processes or services and working out utilization concepts. The aim is synergetic cooperation in one or more fields of technology, from research and development to the marketing of R&D results. Within an innovation network, both the management of the network and the activities for the development of R&D projects (ZIM-SOLO, ZIM-KOOP) are supported. The network is coordinated by experienced network managers. The network is divided into two phases, with phase 1 (18 months) serving to establish the network and phase 2 (36 months) being dedicated to the development and implementation of the network concept and the technical development lines. An agreement on the activities and services of the network management is concluded between the network partners and the management institution. Before submitting an application for phase 1, the network management organization must provide a binding mandate from at least six independent SMEs, which entitles the network management organization to apply for funding for the innovation network. Furthermore, in the event of approval, the network partners commission the network management organization with the network management of the innovation network.

The funding of the innovative network is aimed at sustainable cooperation between the partners beyond the funding period. The aim of the network work is to develop a viable concept for the continuation of the network in appropriate structures and organizational forms.

What is supported?

The ZIM Innovation Networks funding pillar combines funding for network management services with the network's development projects. The networks consist of at least six small and medium-sized enterprises. Other partners can also participate (e.g. research institutions, university institutes, large companies and other institutions such as associations).

Your advantages

- ▶ Securing your ability to innovate
- ▶ Easy access to funding and supra-regional and international projects
- ▶ Development synergies
- ▶ Reduction of R&D costs
- ▶ Takeover of formalities by the network management
- ▶ Support in opening up new markets

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The Network Management - Plastics Institute Lüdenscheid

The network management is carried out by the Kunststoff-Institut Lüdenscheid, KIMW-Management GmbH. KIMW Management GmbH (KIMW-M) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the parent company. The object of the company is the provision of services in connection with management and strategy issues, general administration and organization, marketing and sales, project management, and the management of clusters and networks. The institute supports companies in identifying ideas, helps them to find suitable funding programs and accompanies them during implementation. The many years of experience in network management are also reflected in the establishment of various networks. In the KIMW network, for example, companies and research institutes from different sectors work together on joint research and development projects. Training courses are also organized for the members. The "Kunststoff-Institut Lüdenscheid" cluster is a well-functioning, constantly growing network geared towards sustainability and supported exclusively by industry funding. Back in 2005, the network Trägergesellschaft Kunststoff-Institut e.V. and its partners were accepted into "Kompetenznetze Deutschland", now "gocluster". The institute has held the Gold Label for Cluster Management Excellence since March 2013. Furthermore, the Trägergesellschaft Kunststoff-Institut Lüdenscheid is an active member of Kunststoffland NRW and a stakeholder of NRW.Europa. KIMW has built up extensive experience in the field of project management over more than three decades.

Network structure - actors involved

HealthGoGreen is to consist of mostly small and medium-sized companies (<1,000 employees) and research institutions as well as larger companies (>1,000 employees) as associated partners. In addition to technical precision, the manufacture, assembly and marketing of medical devices are subject to strict national and European laws and standards, compliance with which is mandatory.

These requirements are being worked on intensively within the framework of this network, which is why participation is particularly interesting for companies that have not yet had access to the medical technology market.

Material manufacturers, toolmakers, machine and peripheral equipment manufacturers, as well as production companies in plastics processing with their supplier and customer structures ideally represent the value chain and can present this in the network. Innovations in the form of new products, product and production improvements are developed and tested through joint and applied R&D activities with proven research partners.

Benefits and advantages for network partners

The benefits and advantages for you as a network partner, as a company or R&D institution, are very specific. We have therefore compiled a selection of benefits and advantages here, which will be tailored to your situation and role:

- ▶ Securing your ability to innovate
- ▶ Increased competitiveness, expansion to leading market positions and support in the development of lead markets
- ▶ Cross-industry and cross-disciplinary contacts to increase complementary skills with other partners
- ▶ Development synergies through reduction of R&D costs
- ▶ Cooperation with outstanding innovation drivers to expand the innovation competence of the target group, integration into national structures

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- ▶ Development of innovative solutions for new products and services through to support in opening up new markets
- ▶ Expansion and further development of existing innovation strategies beyond our own horizons
- ▶ Networking of companies and science in Germany and their integration into global knowledge flows through international cooperation
- ▶ Development of and embedding in value chains in the fields of technology and innovation
- ▶ Creating added value for all cooperation partners
- ▶ Easy access to funding and supra-regional and international projects
- ▶ Takeover of formalities by the network management

Funding conditions

The innovation network is to be applied for as part of the ZIM central innovation program for SMEs. If approved by the project sponsor:

- ▶ In a four and a half year network term
 - Phase 1: 18 months
 - Phase 2: 36 monthsthe network management costs of the companies with funding ratios of
 - 95% in the first and second
 - 80% in the second and third
 - 60% in the third and fourth
 - 40% in the fourth and fifth year.

Timing

- ▶ Phase 1: 01.11.2024 - 30.04.2026
- ▶ Phase 2: 01.05.2026 - 30.04.2029

Supported by:



Federal Ministry
for Economic Affairs
and Climate Action



on the basis of a decision
by the German Bundestag

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