



**NETWORKED
& ELECTRONIC
MEDIA**

Strengthening Small and Medium Enterprises within NEM - NEM SME Activity -

1. NEM SME Activity: Background and origin

SMEs have become increasingly important in our society as providers of employment opportunities and as key players for the well-being of local and regional communities. Hence, European SMEs represent more than 90% of the overall European industrial entities. However, the visibility of SMEs in the specific field of R&D is really low, being in the order of 15% in the best cases.

Therefore, there is a need to specifically target the role of SMEs, motivate them, facilitate their involvement and ensure that their interests and capabilities are duly taken into account by NEM as an European Technology Platform. SMEs participation in NEM would mean an opportunity to establish tight contacts with main industry players in several research areas where NEM is active, being up-to-date with actual R&D targets defined by the industry, being able to find appropriate partners for creation of successful R&D projects and increasing chances to get funding for realisation of the projects where SMEs can launch specifically dedicated projects or become part of wider and more ambitious R&D projects in cooperation with large NEM participants.

Being European technology platforms, one of the main vehicles fostering R&D in Europe, it seems appropriate that NEM should also promote a specific Activity (as defined by NEM) where SME interests can be openly discussed, and views of SMEs can be channelled to the relevant bodies of NEM (GA, EB, EG, position papers groups, etc.).

2. NEM SME Activity: Objectives

In order to enhance and promote SMEs competitiveness by means of R&D results, a new specific Activity within NEM is launched. The Activity targeting SMEs will cover several actions:

- Dissemination among SMEs and SMEs Associations of the benefits to participate in NEM activities.
- Specific action to promote a more active involvement of SMEs from the several technology fields within the scope of NEM (content producers, broadcasters, middleware developers, etc...).
- Orchestration of small scale workshops (e.g. besides General Assembly, NEM Community/Projects workshops, etc.), with emphasis on the participation of SMEs.
- Promotion of active participation of NEM representatives and NEM participants (SMEs among them) at international events.

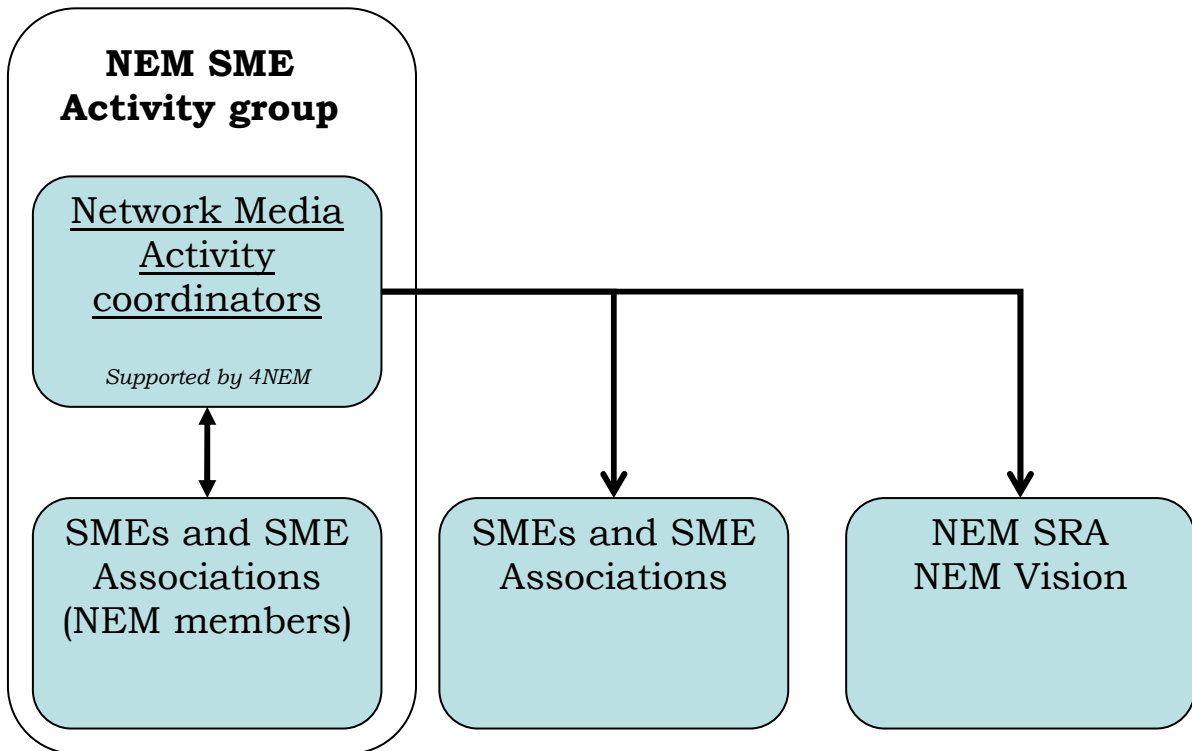
Various reports will be produced from events and workshops organised as a result of this Activity, which will depend on the interests to be expressed by the interested SMEs. In many cases, contacts with SMEs Associations will constitute the main vehicle for channelling the relations with SMEs in the most effective and efficient manner.

3. How the NEM SME Activity will be organized

The NEM SME Activity will be based on a group of NEM participants interested to discuss how to enhance the SME participation in NEM actions, how to channel SMEs views and interest with more emphasis towards the NEM bodies and how to promote more involvement of SMEs in the Networked media projects. Consequently, several actions will be conducted: meetings, promotion of SMEs participation, dissemination, discussions of the SMEs research interests, etc..., organized and promoted by 4NEM that will assume the early stages of the activity, depending on the general NEM participants' interests and views. The NEM SME Activity group, made up of SMEs members, supported by 4NEM, will set up its own priorities as result of its own deliberations.

The NEM SME Activity group will discuss the main priorities for SMEs within the current NEM Vision and NEM SRA, taking into consideration the interests and research proposals of the NEM SMEs.

One possible outcome of this effort will be a sort of subset of thematic priorities of high strategic interest for SMEs: a sort of NEM focussed vision for SMEs and NEM focussed Strategic Research Agenda for SMEs.



This Activity will be also the liaison body within NEM to cooperate with other specialized projects in the SME field, like the PRESTO project, which focuses on SMEs in the construction sector, or like the FASTER project, related to transport and logistics SMEs, or other similar actions launched by other ETPs, like eMobility.

4. NEM SME Activity: Members

More than 600 NEM participants joined the NEM Initiative, amongst others, a significant number of SMEs. Therefore, it is expected that this NEM SME Activity would find large interest among many current NEM participants and would also attract other SMEs to become NEM participants as a consequence of this effort by NEM to focus on SMEs interests.

The coordinator of this NEM SME Activity is Dr. Julián Seseña (Rose Vision) with the support from the 4NEM project. jsesena@rose.es, telf: +34 630047191.

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5. NEM SME Activity: working practices

As a working method, a reflector will be created with all those interested to get involved. Initial membership will be from those NEM participants aiming to reach critical mass of memberships and fostering them to be more active within NEM bodies.

Although the NEM SME Activity group will set up its own priorities as result of its own deliberations, the initial SRA items for this NEM SME Activity will include several specific tasks:

- List NEM SMEs current membership.
- Identify NEM SMEs Associations which can be further multipliers of the NEM SME Activity work.
- Discuss the main priorities for SMEs within the current NEM Vision and NEM SRA. Ensure that the interests of NEM SME researchers are duly taken into consideration. Surveys can be carried out to provide the identification of priority research topics for the SMEs.
- Propose specific research items to be included in the ongoing revision of the NEM SRA.
- Organize small scale workshops, roundtables or specific meetings with SMEs of several technology fields (content, devices, middleware developers, etc) to foster and promote specific research areas of interest to SMEs, raise interest on possible project areas (FP7, Celtic, National R&d Programmes, Eurostars, etc.).... In those meetings not only the benefits to participate in NEM activities will be disseminated among SMEs, but also their needs, problems, successful engagements or the situation of their research programmes and initiatives will be discussed.

- Circulate an estimated events calendar through all those SME members. It will contain information about the meetings: the specific area of interest, type and number of participants, objectives, premises, etc.
- Liaise with other similar SME groups from other technology platforms and other projects (Presto, ERA Study, FASTER, SECURE FORCE, eMobility SME, ...).
- Develop a reference back-up repository (available on-line) where the reports, produced from events and workshops organised as a result of this Activity.

6. NEM SME Activity: outcome and impact

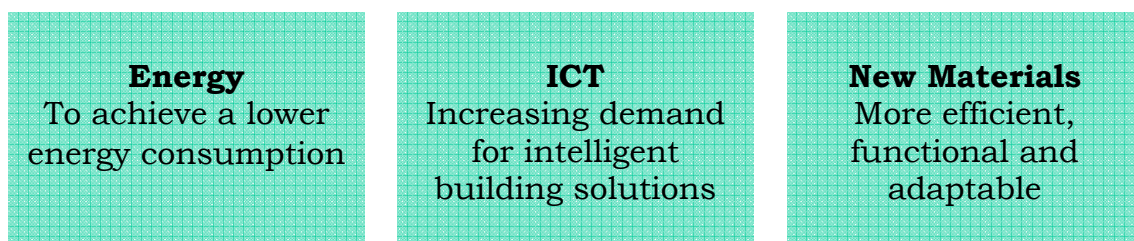
As a consequence of the work and operational actions described above, a number of outcomes are expected:

- List of NEM SME participants interested to conduct research in the network media field
- Recommendations about measures to enhance the SMEs involvement in the NEM ETP
- Identification of research priorities for NEM SMEs
- Improvement or confirmation of the NEM Vision and NEM SRAs at the light of specific interests by NEM SMEs
- New SMEs attracted to become active members of NEM community.
- Wide dissemination of NEM activities among the SME Community

7. Connecting NEM SMEs with the construction sector

The “cities of the future” are becoming part of our present and “intelligent homes” are becoming our own homes! This reality represents a new approach that should be included in the NEM SRA and future plans.

Analysing the main interactions between NEM activities and the construction sector, we can highlight some important relations in the domains of:



Within this context, effective efforts have been developed between NEM and PRESTO project (www.presto-project.eu) to jointly launch cooperation measures that can be mutually useful for both sides.

The High Level Group Consultation Meeting, held in Labein Tecnalia's Premises in Bilbao (Spain) on 19th October 2009 brought together NEM, European Technology Platform representatives and SMEs Associations ones, member of PRESTO Core Group.

It served to define and discuss the cooperation modalities between ETPs and SMEs Associations so that the latter can be deeper involved in the activities carried out by the Platforms and can also have a say in the RTD policy making process.

As part of the results of the meeting, we can highlight the following:

- The most adequate implementation strategy to appropriately channel the dialogue among SME associations and NEM involves, on the one hand, SME associations as the “ears” of the EU SMEs needs, and on the other hand, NEM as the interface between EU policies and the SME associations.
- The main inputs of the SME Associations from the Construction Sector for the NEM SME activity are:
 - Exchange of information and mutual promotion of activities
 - Promotion of new technologies and innovative SMEs
 - Reciprocal participation in specific activities and commonly agreed events
 - Transfer of best practices
- In parallel, as part of a comprehensive SWOT Analysis a number of common research topics were identified:
 - Research Topic → Development of new technologies for more efficient energy consumption and better energy management in buildings' life-cycle.
 - Simulation tools for better design and management of energy requirements and consumption
 - Research Topic → New technologies for remote control of home environment and security installations.
 - Wireless technologies for remote control of home devices and appliances
 - Controlling and monitoring devices to oversee home environment and improve comfort
 - Improve usability of monitoring technologies
 - Better interoperability of software applications managing different communication protocols
 - Research Topic → Development of mobile devices and microelectronics to surveil and monitor elderly or disabled people at home.
 - High sensitive sensors

- High definition cameras
 - Tracking and (face) recognition devices
 - High-performance actuators
- Research Topic → Software tools and methods for virtual prototyping of design, manufacture and operation and management of buildings.
 - Implementation of sensors and pervading computing systems towards the development of *intelligent buildings*
 - Development of software tools for virtual prototyping design (from 3D to 4D)
 - Software tools for construction support, control and life-time maintenance
 - RFID technologies for monitoring and tagging activities, materials and equipment
- The complete version of the PRESTO SWOT analysis is available for download on the following link: <http://www.presto-project.eu/index.php5?file=79>