The Challenge

Many SMEs need both digital innovation support and access to international business opportunities. However, technology services and internationalisation support are often offered separately, making it difficult for companies to identify the right pathway for growth and collaboration.
EDIHs and EEN nodes can help SMEs bridge this gap by connecting digital transformation needs with cross-border cooperation opportunities.



SustainX Best Practice One-Pager | October 2026

Mini Collaboration Guide – North-East Romania

Connecting EDIH digital innovation services with EEN internationalisation support

The Best Practice

The North-East Romania innovation ecosystem provides a practical example of complementary SME support through Digital Innovation Zone (EDIH) and ADR Nord-Est's Enterprise Europe Network services.

While the EDIH supports SMEs with digital maturity, technology assessment, testing before investment and digital skills, the EEN facilitates international partner identification, business cooperation and market connections.
This combined approach helps SMEs link innovation needs with international collaboration opportunities.

How can EDIHs & EENs apply this approach?

1. ASSESS

Identify SME technology and business needs
Assess digital maturity, innovation needs and business objectives.
Ask: What kind of support does the SME need most?

2. ALIGN

Match technology needs with market ambitions
Connect digital transformation priorities with internationalisation goals.
Ask: How can innovation support and market opportunities reinforce each other?

3. CONNECT

Mobilise complementary support services
Involve EDIHs, EEN nodes, research organisations and innovation intermediaries.
Ask: Which actors are needed to support the SME effectively?

4. EXPLORE

Identify cooperation opportunities
Explore partner search, technology validation, pilot actions and European cooperation.
Ask: Which collaboration pathway is the most relevant?

5. FOLLOW-UP

Support the next steps
Facilitate continued communication, introductions and practical next actions.
Ask: How can this first contact lead to real cooperation?

Why this is useful for EDIHs & EEN Networks



- ✓ Shows how digital innovation services and internationalisation support can work together.
- ✓ Helps SMEs access both technology-related and business cooperation services.
- ✓ Encourages stronger collaboration between EDIHs, EENs and innovation intermediaries.
- ✓ Supports cross-border cooperation in areas such as digital health, agri-food and sustainable manufacturing.
- ✓ Provides a transferable ecosystem-based approach for SME support.

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Funded by the European Union

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