



**ÉCONOMUSÉE© NORTHERN EUROPE
(ENE)**

BUSINESS SUPPORT MANUAL

For you, the Artisan

CONTENTS

What is an ÉCONOMUSÉE®?	3
About this Manual	7
1) Introduction	8
2) ÉCONOMUSÉE® Northern Europe, project overview	
3) Where are you now?	
4) Pre-Development - is it feasible?	
5) The Contract	
6) The Development Process	
7) Post-Development - In Business as an ÉCONOMUSÉE®	
To-do List	
Appendices	
Local Contacts	

What is an ÉCONOMUSÉE®?

- i. Features
- ii. Selection criteria
- iii. Definitions and characteristics

- i. Features

An **ÉCONOMUSÉE®** showcases traditional trades and know-how by promoting the establishment of **ÉCONOMUSÉE®**.

An **ÉCONOMUSÉE®** is a business which:

- uses a traditional craft technique (know-how or savoir-faire) in its production
- produces traditional and/or contemporary products with cultural connotation
- opens its doors to the public in order to promote its know-how and its craftspeople
- has a site designed for the animation and interpretation of its production
- aims to be completely economically independent through its business operations and the sale of its products

- ii. Selection criteria

You have been part of a highly selective and competitive process to ensure that the ÉCONOMUSÉE® network is able to maintain its high standards for the promotion of the member enterprises. Meeting the eligibility criteria was the first stage in the process, and is followed by a detailed evaluation of the business.

The initial selection process was based upon the following eligibility criteria:

- Be a private business in operation for more than three years
- Use a traditional technique or know-how to craft the products
- Make products of recognised quality
- Have the ability and the desire to innovate in production
- Operate throughout the year and be open to the public for at least four months each year, or accept opening to the public for at least four months each year
- Normally generate a turnover of more than fifty thousand Euros (50,000 euro) each year
- Show keen interest in welcoming visitors
- Be located on or near an identified tourist route, or a tourist route under development
- Operate in buildings that have the required space for setting up an ÉCONOMUSÉE® and welcome visitors (15 to 20 at a time), or intend to acquire the required space
- Operate on a site and in buildings of high quality

The above criteria formed the original specification. They have been adapted to local needs and circumstances within the project, without compromising the quality standards of the project and ÉCONOMUSÉE® principles.

Each ÉCONOMUSÉE® will enter into a contractual relationship with the network. (See contract section)

iii. Definitions and characteristics

While this section identifies the specific areas that form an ÉCONOMUSÉE®, it does not mean that these are necessarily distinctly separate physical areas within a building. There are

circumstances where that would not be feasible, through space constraints, or may not be desirable, through a design or logical presentation viewpoint. It would not be uncommon, for example, for areas 3 and 4 to form a single section, though containing the characteristics identified below. Similarly, the Reception and Welcome area may also be the Boutique/Gallery/Salesroom for visitors both entering and exiting the ÉCONOMUSÉE®.

1. Reception and welcome area:

- Presentation of membership in the ÉCONOMUSÉE® network.
- Space devoted to cultural heritage through the commemoration of a figure, craft, or know-how, events, historical period or site.
- Permanent plaque indicating the partners associated in the development of the business.
- Visitor gathering area.

2. Production and creation:

- Heart of the ÉCONOMUSÉE® where the craftsperson and/or his/her team produce contemporary objects, drawing inspiration from traditional methods.
- Visitors must see the craftspeople at work to understand the production process.
- This area is equipped with educational tools suited to explaining the production process, techniques, and materials, and to providing other relevant information.

3. Traditional production:

- Exhibition space showing visitors of all ages the creativity of the craftspeople from a historical perspective, using a collection of documented traditional objects and texts to explain the various facets of the craft and the environment within which it developed and functioned.

4. Contemporary production:

- Exhibition area for products, works or pilot-projects showing the adaptation of traditional products from the past to contemporary needs.

5. Information and documentation:

- Public area for visitors who want to read and consult documentation to learn more about the craft practised by the craftsperson.

6. Product display and sales:

- Space set aside for the sale of products made by the craftsperson as well as for associated merchandise.
- An opportunity for the visitors to provide comment and feedback on the ÉCONOMUSÉE®, their interaction with the craftspeople, the products and their overall experience, enabling further product and business development.

About this Manual

What it is

What it isn't (or shouldn't be)

This Business Development Manual should:

- provide an overview of ÉCONOMUSÉE® and their purpose
- outline the part that you can play within that enterprise structure
- indicate the benefits that can arise through being part of the ÉCONOMUSÉE® network
- stimulate your thoughts about
 - your enterprise,
 - its origins,
 - the traditional skills and products that have developed through your business
 - where your enterprise is going
 - what you need to consider to see your enterprise to where you want it to be
 - what actions you need to take to get there
 - what support you might need to help you along the way
- help you to develop your business and make it grow
- help you to keep alive the traditional skills and the history that has been the origin of your craft and its products
- reassure you that you are not alone
- facilitate your progress through this development of your enterprise
- providing you with contact details of those other enterprises involved in the network, as a support and sharing opportunity



- provide you with contact details of those other organisations that are involved in the network to support you through this process
- provide you with contact details of those organisations that can offer you their expertise to guide you through and beyond this development process

What it isn't (or shouldn't be)

- the answer to all of your questions
- the solution to all of your perceived problems
- a quick fix

1. Introduction

a. Objectives and functions	10
i. Objectives	
1. Financial	
2. Qualitative	
3. Technical	
ii. Functions	11
1. Reception	12
2. Production and creation	12
3. Traditional	13
4. Contemporary	13
5. Information and documentation	13
6. Product display and sales	13
b. Health & Safety	14
c. Social & cultural returns	15

Introduction

ÉCONOMUSÉE® NORTHERN EUROPE (ENE) is a support structure for selected enterprising, up-to-date craft businesses and artisans. You are part of that unique and developing network of enterprises that use traditional craft techniques in an up-to-date business environment. You produce contemporary products, whilst promoting the crafts, the techniques, the products and the network to the public.

a) Objectives and functions

i. Objectives

Within the ÉCONOMUSÉE® objectives, establishing an ÉCONOMUSÉE® needs to work within and achieve three objectives:

1. **Financial (Sustainable Development):** to self-finance all of the business operations, both commercial and cultural. This is achieved through the development of new products which are marketed at a profit. Consideration is taken of visitor interaction, comment and feedback to enable adaptation of the art/craft towards customer need.
2. **Qualitative (Total Quality):** to create a new range of products, with the main concern of conserving what is best in the tradition. The aim is of customer satisfaction with high

quality cultural products that contribute to everyday life. A key question should be: Is the technique inherently educational and relevant to the heritage of the local community?

3. **Technical and Administrative (Added Value):** to contribute to the development of cultural and scientific tourism in the region by selling the product in a suitable museological setting.

This enhances the built heritage and assists in the preservation of the character of the region. It serves as an interpretative centre that focuses on local products and explains to visitors the various techniques involved. It enables a comparison of traditional products with modern counterparts.

For the visitor, the emphasis is on the interpretation of the objects, including the activities involved in their creation and the direct contact with their makers. This assumes that this direct contact with the customer provides the best product market testing, with the underlying principle of ensuring that the product is promoting and enhancing the locality and perpetuating traditional fabrication and craft techniques.

ii. Functions

In designing and developing an, ÉCONOMUSÉE®, the guiding principles are based upon quality of life, environmental protection, human scale and regional/local appropriateness. Interdisciplinary skills are needed to ensure that these are complementary and balanced, both in the initial design and in the ongoing development of the ÉCONOMUSÉE®.

Whilst there are six functional areas identified as being essential as defining an ÉCONOMUSÉE®, this does not require them to be physically separate areas. It may be more appropriate to merge one or more of these functional areas together to present a more

coherent view of the particular craft(s) or skill(s) being promoted and demonstrated. There may also be physical constraints at the location of the Économusée which prevent there being separate areas for these functions.

1. **Reception:** This area is intended to be an active and stimulating introductory experience for the visitor. It should place the past and present into context, in preparation for viewing current production and meeting the craftspeople in their work activities.

Using appropriate interpretation and animation, the emphasis is upon bringing life to the production and objects of the present through the collection of displayed objects, skills and techniques of the cultural heritage of the locality in which they have originated and/or developed.

2. **Production and creation:** Relevant techniques, designs and traditions for the local heritage and identity are chosen to be preserved. The production techniques used are adapted from traditional ones, and the objects produced are inspired by traditional objects. The new products must meet contemporary needs whilst enabling the maintenance of traditions.

Training is essential to ensure updating of techniques and product quality maintenance. The training of new staff is provided by the expert craftspeople, ensuring survival of know-how, growing the craft occupations in the locality and helping to contribute to the sustainability of the business. The expert craftspeople must also undertake development of skills, techniques and design as part of continuous personal development so that they remain at the forefront of business development and enhancement. Much of this can be done with the support and collaboration of the other partners of the project; education and government.

Demonstration would indicate that the techniques/skills are difficult and/or take a long time to master and perfect, thus confirming the value of the skills. It is part of the story-telling about the craft.

3. **Traditional:** With a focus on the traditional products and crafts, the potential contribution of these to the local culture and heritage is emphasised through reference to specific displayed examples. This area will need updating to reflect developments over time: contemporary products become re-categorised as traditional, and their contribution to everyday life becomes recognised as part of the cultural development of the locality and the region.

4. **Contemporary:** In this area the visitor is challenged to compare contemporary products of the ÉCONOMUSÉE®, with those traditional ones from which they were inspired. The area can also include innovative objects, tools and techniques to illustrate their development from traditional approaches and show the relevance of the traditional to the present day. It is also likely that this area will include information about the business and its products, as well as its underlying philosophy, characteristics, *raison d'être*, growth and development. This will contextualise the products with the business and with the historical perspective, and also act as a bridge to the next area.

5. **Information and documentation:** This area serves the purpose of an information and research resource about the business, the research background to its creation, the business achievements over time. It may include a library of reference documents and books covering wider and deeper aspects associated with the specific craft of the ÉCONOMUSÉE®, as well as more general information about other ÉCONOMUSÉE® in the locality.

6. **Product display and sales:** The sales of the products from the ÉCONOMUSÉE®, are essential to the financial

independence of the business. The visitors' experience of earlier areas of the ÉCONOMUSÉE®, should have provided sufficient stimulation to encourage the purchase of objects that will be utilised in their everyday life. This will provide continual reminders of the perpetuation of traditional crafts, skills and techniques and their relevance and contribution to contemporary culture.

Additionally, conversations and word of mouth recommendations will contribute to dissemination and diffusion of craft heritage. Further enhancement of this area could be achieved through the availability of 'pocket-money' products. These would be relatively inexpensive quality products within the purchase range of children and less 'cash-rich' visitors. The emphasis would remain upon them being produced within the conceptual framework of the ÉCONOMUSÉE®.

General marketing and information materials would be available in this area, together with examples of products from other ÉCONOMUSÉE® on the same tourist route, to promote the ÉCONOMUSÉE® network, and encourage visitors to continue on their cultural heritage journey,

b. Health & Safety

The health and safety aspects of the operation of the business are of paramount importance and must be embedded throughout the business activities. All working practices and business operations must meet the minimum legal requirements of the country or region where the business is located. It is particularly important that all aspects of public access to an ÉCONOMUSÉE® are compliant with minimum legal requirements and that no-one is placed in a position of potential danger whilst visiting an ÉCONOMUSÉE®. There must be sufficient public liability insurance cover for the business, proportionate to the nature of the business and its craft activities, and the need to meet the criteria for being an ÉCONOMUSÉE®.

More detail on this is indicated in Section 2, with general examples and the need to include appropriate risk assessment within Section 2, Development.

c. Social & cultural returns

Substantial benefits can be derived from being part of the ÉCONOMUSÉE® network. The concept combines economic development with maintaining and developing traditional cultures, industries and crafts. One or more of the following benefits may arise:

- Saving a small traditional craft business from extinction
- Saving traditional craft jobs
- Preserving traditional crafts and techniques
- Preserving, maintaining and developing a physical site associated with a traditional craft
- Developing traditional designs, crafts and techniques within a contemporary business environment
- Adding modern design/know-how to traditional craft skills
- Growing the economic contribution of the business
- Facilitating and encouraging new and innovative products with improved quality
- Contributing to the enrichment of the cultural and industrial tourism, both locally and transnationally
- Enhancing the business image through association with the term "ÉCONOMUSÉE®", and use of appropriately relevant information, publicity, materials, brochures, logo, etc
- Potential preferential access to tourism-related investment opportunities, and information sources
- Sharing experience and expertise with other network members
- Having access to the ÉCONOMUSÉE® specialist expertise
- Accessing available and relevant programmes and projects

Over time, other benefits may emerge that may be specific to the craft or the business or the locality.



You are not on your own and the others involved are there to support you and one another. This is a development process and a learning journey for all partners, both during this project and afterwards.