

Trainers' Digest



**ETUI-REHS EDUCATION's
information bulletin about EU
training Programmes**

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME for Research and Technological Development (FP7) 2007-2013

The Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) is the last in a series of multi-annual framework programmes that have been the main instrument for funding EU research and development since 1984.

FP7 covers the period 2007-2013 and has a budget of € 50.5 billion.

As the EU Commission communication 'Building the ERA of knowledge for growth' points out, knowledge underpins all components of the Lisbon strategy. Research is a key component of the "knowledge triangle" along with education and innovation, and it is at the core of the EU's strategy to deliver growth, competitiveness and employment while maintaining social and environmental sustainability.

Objectives and structure

The new Seventh Framework Programme addresses 4 main objectives through specific programmes:

- The biggest in budgetary terms, with € 32.4 billion, called [Cooperation](#), has the ambition to help Europe gain leadership in key areas of science and technology by having our best brains from across Europe working together. It is sub-divided into nine distinct "themes": health; food, agriculture and biotechnology; information and communication technologies; nanosciences, materials and new production technologies; energy; environment; socio-economic sciences and humanities; transport; security; space.
- The second programme is called [Ideas](#), with a budget of € 7.5 billion to foster competition and excellence in frontier or fundamental research.
- The third programme, [People](#) (expansion of the "Marie Curie" exchange programme) with € 4.7 billion will enable tens of thousands of researchers to benefit from fellowships for research training. The programme will help with training and career development in various sectors, both public and private.

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- The fourth programme is [Capacities](#), with a budget of € 4.2 billion to ensure scientific and technological capacity-building, for example in the area of infrastructures or in helping European regions to gear up their scientific potential.

Calls for proposals and procedure

The European Commission will fund FP7 research by selecting project proposals submitted following the publication of a 'Call for proposals', that will be regularly published on this page:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html

The first Calls were launched on 22 December 2006.

The legal text of the Call defines the necessary specifications for preparing and submitting a proposal, i.e. research theme, funding instruments used, address and other technical means for submission, deadlines etc. Proposals that do not meet the specifications in the Call will be considered ineligible.

FP7 introduces two-stage "submission" and "evaluation" procedures:

- Where a call for proposals specifies a *two-stage submission* procedure, only those applications that meet the evaluation criteria for the first stage shall be requested to submit a complete proposal in the second stage.
- Where a call for proposals specifies a *two-stage evaluation* procedure, only those proposals that pass the first stage, based on the evaluation of a limited set of criteria, shall go forward for further evaluation.

Forms of grants and Community financial contribution

Three forms of grants are proposed for the Community financial contribution:

- reimbursement of eligible costs,
- lump sums, and
- flat-rate financing (the latter can be based on a scale of unit costs but also includes flat rates for indirect costs).

These may be used to cover the entire Community financial contribution for a funding scheme or more than one may be used in combination.

For most funding schemes, reimbursement of eligible costs will continue to be the preferred method, particularly at the beginning of FP7. Lump sum and flat rate financing will be introduced gradually and if successful will be used more extensively.

The definition of "eligible costs" has been simplified and the three cost reporting models used in previous framework programmes have been abandoned. This means that participants can charge all their direct and indirect costs and have the option of a flat rate for indirect costs. Costs will be determined according to the usual accounting and management principles of the participants based on the criteria of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

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The Community financial contribution will cover:

- a maximum of 50% of eligible costs minus receipts both for research and for demonstration activities, with a top up of a maximum of 25% for research activities for SMEs, public bodies, secondary and higher education establishments and non-profit research organisations;
- 100% of 'frontier research' actions for all entities.
- up to 100% for all other activities, including coordination and support actions, and training and career development of researchers, for all entities.

The maxima indicated above are applied to all eligible costs even where part of the reimbursement of costs, or even the full funding of the project, is based on lump sums or flat rates.

What kinds of organisations and countries are eligible to be promoters?

In most cases EU research funding through FP7 is to be sought by building a consortium for submitting a project proposal in response to a call. The eligibility of these consortia also varies according to different conditions related to the type of action or instrument.

The minimum conditions for eligibility are:

- ***INDIRECT ACTIONS (COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS)***

At least three legal entities (defined as organisations or individual researchers) must participate, each of which is established in a Member State or Associated country, and no two of which are established in the same Member State or Associated country. All three legal entities must be independent of each other, i.e. they should not be subsidiaries of the same organisation or of each other.

- ***INDIRECT ACTIONS CONCERNING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION PARTNER COUNTRIES***

Special conditions apply for collaborative projects involving the participation of international cooperation partner countries in parity with Member States or Associated countries. These minimum conditions, mainly applying to International Cooperation activities under the specific programme for "Capacities", as identified in the work programme, are the following: (a) at least four legal entities must participate; (b) at least two of the legal entities referred to in point (a) must be established in Member States or Associated countries, but no two may be established in the same Member State or Associated country; (c) at least two of the legal entities referred to in point (a) must be established in international cooperation partner countries, but no two may be established in the same international cooperation partner country; (d) all four legal entities referred to in point (a) must be independent of each other in accordance with Article 6 of the Regulation

- ***COORDINATION AND SUPPORT ACTIONS; TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCHERS***

For coordination and support actions, and actions supporting training and career development of researchers, the minimum condition shall be the participation of one legal entity.

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- **INVESTIGATOR-DRIVEN “FRONTIER” RESEARCH PROJECTS**

For indirect actions to support investigator-driven ‘frontier’ research projects funded in the framework of the European Research Council, the minimum condition shall be the participation of one legal entity established in a Member State or in an Associated country.

- **SOLE PARTICIPANTS**

Where the minimum conditions for an indirect action are satisfied by a number of legal entities, which together form one legal entity, the latter may be the sole participant in an indirect action, provided that it is established in a Member State or Associated country. The participation of natural persons will ensure that the creation and development of scientific excellence and ability are not limited to Community funding of projects involving only legal persons, whilst also ensuring the participation of SMEs that are not legal persons.

Eligible countries

While FP7 participants can in principle be based anywhere, there are different categories of country which may have varying eligibility for different specific and work programmes:

- MEMBER STATES: the EU-27;
- ASSOCIATED COUNTRIES with science and technology cooperation agreements that contribute to the framework programme budget;
- CANDIDATE COUNTRIES currently recognised as candidates for future accession;
- THIRD COUNTRIES: the participation of organisations or individuals based in countries that are not Member States, Candidate or Associated countries should also be justified in terms of the enhanced contribution made to the objectives of FP7.

The theme “Socio-economic sciences and humanities”

Whilst on the one hand management procedures are being simplified to assist projects with respect to the contractual relationship with the European Commission, larger projects (more partners, more activities) will take more time and effort to manage internally. A useful tip for trade unions and particularly their research institutes would be to try to become a partner in a project coordinated by a larger enterprise or organisation, thereby avoiding the difficult task of project management and contractual arrangements. This would also reduce the potentially significant management and coordination costs which would need to be carried.

The sub-programme (“Theme”) closest to trade unions’ activities is “Socio-economic sciences and humanities” (SSH), which is intended to contribute to an in-depth, shared understanding of the complex and interrelated socio-economic challenges that Europe faces.

Research into this theme should be related to:

- growth, employment and competitiveness in a knowledge society;
- social cohesion, cultural and educational challenges in an enlarged EU;

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- citizens in the EU (political participation, citizenship and rights, democracy, the media, cultural diversity and heritage, religions, attitudes and values);
- Europe in the world (trade, migration, poverty, crime, conflict and conflict resolution)
- sustainability, environmental challenges, demographic change, quality of life and global interdependence.

The socio-economic sciences and humanities programme will operate at the interface between these objectives, and should therefore help improve our knowledge in these fields as well as our policies.

Structure

The annual work programme is structured in terms of **Activities**, which are subdivided into **Areas and Topics**

Proposals should primarily focus on a single **topic** to which they would make the most important contribution.

The content of the first work programme draws to a significant extent on internet-based consultations in 2004 and 2006 and on a number of targeted expert meetings to identify better research priorities in socio-economic sciences, humanities and forward-looking approaches, including:

- growth, employment and competitiveness in a knowledge society: the European example
- changing the role of knowledge throughout the economy
- structural changes in the European knowledge economy and society
- globalisation and its interaction with the European economy
- combining economic, social and environmental objectives in a European perspective: paths towards sustainable development
- the Citizen in the European Union
- trends in society and lifestyles

The funding scheme "**Research for the benefit of specific groups**" will be dedicated to activities of civil society organisations (CSO): *a CSO is any legal entity that is non-governmental, not-for-profit, not representing commercial interests, and pursuing a common purpose in the public interest.*

The RTD activities outsourced to the RTD performers have to account for a minimum of 60% of the total eligible project costs.

Implementation of Calls for proposals

The Calls for proposals and the related documents (work programme, guidelines, the information package) will be regularly published on:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.CooperationDetailsCallPage&call_id=39

The first deadlines are:

10/05/2007
and
29/11/2007

We advise promoters to read very carefully all the above-mentioned documents related to the relevant Call for proposals under which they aim to submit their proposals.

Themes, eligibility conditions, deadlines and funding rules can, in fact, change depending on the related Call.