

WORK PROGRAMME 2008¹

CAPACITIES

(European Commission C(2007)5759 of 29 November 2007)

¹ In accordance with Articles 163 to 173 of the EC Treaty, and in particular Article 166(1) as contextualised in the following decisions: Decision 1982/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18/12/2006 concerning the 7th Framework Programme of the European Community for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration (2007 – 2013) and the Council Decision 2006/974/EC of 19/12/2006 adopting a Specific Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration 'Capacities' (2007 – 2013).

Capacities Work Programme

The work programme presented here provides for a series of new calls for proposals which will be issued in late 2007 or in 2008. Further details on new or additional information included in the individual chapters are given on the second page of each chapter.

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i. General Introduction

This is the work programme for 2008 for the Capacities Specific Programme of the 7th Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities.

The work programme was adopted by the Commission, with the assistance of the Programme Committee, following the adoption of the Specific Programme 'Capacities' and the Rules for Participation and Dissemination.

This work programme provides additional detail of the implementation of the Specific Programme, setting out information on the priorities, objectives and policy relevance of the research topics which will be implemented through calls for proposals in late 2007 and in 2008.

The Capacities work programme is structured around 7 chapters, setting out the implementation of the parts. In general, each chapter is self-standing; however, applicants are advised to read this general introduction in addition to the chapter(s) containing the part(s) of interest. A range of issues of relevance to the Capacities work programme as a whole are also set out in Annexes 1-3.

In preparing this work programme, the Commission has relied on advice from a wide range of consultations, including from specific advice of a series of advisory groups². The advisory groups are groups of independent, high-level, experts which have been set up by the Commission to advise on the implementation of Community research policy in all parts contained in this work programme, except for the Coherent development of policies. The experts were chosen based on their knowledge, skills and significant experience in the field of research and aligned issues covered by the Parts. More information on the members, and the work, of the advisory groups can be found on the Europa website.

In the implementation of the Capacities Specific Programme, attention is also paid to the working conditions, transparency of recruitment processes, and career development as regards the researchers recruited on projects and programmes funded, for which the Commission Recommendation of 11 March 2005 on the European Charter for Researchers and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers offers a reference framework, while respecting its voluntary nature.

This work programme will support the further building of the European Research Area³. There are a range of activities for optimising research programmes and priorities. Through the ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus activities, Article 169 Actions, and initiatives for working with national and regional programmes and actors, the Capacities Programme includes measures for increasing the coordination of national and regional research programmes. The Capacities programme includes a range of activities for developing world-class research infrastructures and to ensure the optimal use of existing research infrastructures. The Capacities Programme also provides support to ensure that the European Research Area is open to the world, through increased structured dialogue with Third Countries to establish joint S&T priorities, reinforcing bilateral cooperation and coordinating national programmes of EU Member States with third

² http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/advisory_en.html

³ For further information on ERA, see the Green Paper, 'The European Research Area: New Perspectives', COM(2007)161, 4 April 2007.

countries. Additional information on each of these aspects is given in the following sections and in further detail in the separate chapters of the work programme.

Scope of Work Programme

The scope of this work programme corresponds to that defined in the Capacities Specific Programme. The calls for proposals planned within this work programme are those which are scheduled to be launched in late 2007 and in 2008. In addition each of the Parts includes information on potential future activities.

Ethical Aspects

All research carried out under this work programme must respect fundamental ethical principles, and the requirements set out in the text of the Capacities Specific Programme. More information on the procedures for the peer review of submitted proposals is given in the 'Rules for Submission of Proposals and the Related, Evaluation, Selection and Award Procedures'.

The Commission is fully committed to the principles set out in the declaration on the use of human embryonic stem cells, as set out in the annex to the Commission Communication COM(2006)548 of 26 September 2006. This states that the Commission will maintain the practice of the Sixth Framework Programme. Accordingly the Commission will not fund projects which destroy human embryos, including for the procurement of stem cells. The exclusion of funding of this step of research will not prevent Community funding of subsequent steps involving human embryonic stem cells.

Support under the Capacities programme

This specific programme will support a range of actions involving the active collaboration of research teams from all sectors, including industry, SMEs, universities and other higher education institutions, research institutes and centres, international European interest organisations, civil society organisations, and any other legal entities. These actions will be implemented through the funding schemes: collaborative projects; networks of excellence; coordination support actions and Research for the benefit of specific groups (in particular SMEs). Researchers based in Associated States may take part in the Capacities programme on the same basis and with the same rights and obligations as those based in Member States unless otherwise stated. International cooperation represents an important dimension of all research activities carried out in the Capacities Programme, in particular through the opening up of research activities to researchers and research organisations from all International Cooperation Partner Countries (ICPC) and from industrialised countries. A list of the International Cooperation Partner Countries is given in Annex 1. There is provision for the financing of the participation of research partners from the ICPC countries from the FP7 budget. Some topics of the work programme, in areas of mutual interest and benefit, may target the participation of specific third countries. The participation of third countries may also be implemented in the form of coordinated or joint calls. Chapter 7 of this work programme focuses specifically on a range of activities designed to support and stimulate the participation of third countries in the Framework Programme.

Coordination of non-Community Research Programmes

The coordination of non-Community research programmes is an important and integral part of the development of the European Research Area. This programme builds on the success of activities carried out in the Sixth Framework Programme. Actions foreseen in the Capacities work programme will make use of two specific approaches – the ERA-NET scheme and the participation of the Community in jointly implemented national research programmes (through Article 169 of the Treaty which is only foreseen in the Research for the benefit of SMEs part).

A legislative proposal for the Article 169 initiative foreseen in the Research for the benefit of SMEs part has been presented in 2007. This initiative, called 'Eurostars', is aimed at supporting research & development performing SMEs.⁴

In this work programme only ERA NETs which are within the scope of one of the parts will be supported and any call in 2008 is clearly indicated in that part. However, the Cooperation work programme also envisages support for actions of a horizontal nature or not directly linked to Cooperation Themes. Further information on these ERA-NET activities is given in Annex 4 to the Cooperation work programme.

Risk-Sharing Finance Facility

Improving access to loans for RTD actions requires public support to overcome market deficiencies for the financing of riskier European RTD actions. In accordance with Annex III of the Capacities Specific Programme, the Community has provided a contribution to the European Investment Bank (EIB). This support will contribute to the Community's objective to foster private sector investment in research, technological development and demonstration (RTD) as well as innovation through a Community contribution to a Risk Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF), a new financing instrument established by the European Investment Bank with the support of the EC.

In compliance with the Capacities Specific Programme, the development of research infrastructures funded by the Community under this Specific programme shall be automatically eligible for the RSFF. Other research infrastructures responding to European research principles and criteria could also be considered. Legal entities established in third countries other than Associated Countries are also eligible if they participate in FP7 indirect actions and their costs are eligible for Community funding, or, in the case of Research Infrastructures, if the beneficiary is able to demonstrate that either the infrastructure(s) ownership or operation(s) involve, or will involve, independent legal entities in at least three Member States or Associated States, or the infrastructure(s) services are, or will be, used or requested for use by research communities from at least three Member States or Associated Countries..

Further information on the Risk-Sharing Finance Facility is given in part 1 of this work programme.

⁴ Another legislative proposal for an Article 169 initiative foreseen under the Cooperation Specific programme has also been presented in 2007. This initiative is aimed at enhancing the quality of life of older people through the use of new ICT technologies ("Ambient Assisted Living").

Submitting a Proposal

Proposals should be submitted in accordance with the terms set out in a call for proposals. In order to submit a proposal, applicants should consult the following documents:

- The text of the call for proposals, as announced in the Official Journal of the European Union and published on the webpage of the Part concerned;
- This work programme; and
- The relevant Guide for Applicants

There are also a number of other useful texts, which applicants could refer to, including the Specific Programme 'Cooperation', the Rules for Participation for FP7, the 'Rules for Submission of Proposals and the Related, Evaluation, Selection and Award Procedures', and the Commission Recommendation on the European Charter for Researchers and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. These documents, and other relevant background documents, are available on the CORDIS website⁵. The forms of the grant which will be used and the maximum reimbursement rates for projects funded through the Capacities work programme are set out in Annex 3.

In addition, every Member State and Associated State has appointed a set of National Contact Points (NCPs) to assist potential and successful applicants. There is a NCP for each of the parts of the Capacities Programme, except for the Coherent Development of Policies. Applicants are encouraged to make contact with the relevant NCP from their country.

Evaluation Criteria and Related Issues

The 'Rules for Submission of Proposals and the Related, Evaluation, Selection and Award Procedures' set out the basic procedures to be followed by all programmes under the 7th Framework Programme.

The set of eligibility and evaluation criteria for this work programme is given in Annex 2. Any deviations or complementary criteria, which may apply, are clearly set out in the relevant chapter of this work programme and in the text of the calls for proposals.

All proposals which deal with ethical issues and all proposals for which ethical concerns have been identified during the evaluation process may be reviewed by a separate ethical evaluation panel, before they can be selected for funding. Further information on this ethical review and all aspects of the evaluation procedure are given in the 'Rules for Submission of Proposals and the Related, Evaluation, Selection and Award Procedures'.

The work programmes, and consequently the calls for proposals, may specify and restrict the participation of legal entities, according to their activity and type, or according to the funding scheme used.

Calls for proposals may involve a two-stage submission and/or a two-step evaluation procedure. When such a procedure is employed, this is clearly stated in the call for proposals and the Guides for Applicants. More information on two-stage submission and two-step evaluation is

⁵ <http://cordis.europa.eu>

given in the 'Rules for Submission of Proposals and the Related, Evaluation, Selection and Award Procedures'.

In carrying out the evaluations of proposals received, the Commission may chose to send the proposals to external experts, or to make the proposals available electronically, so that the experts may carry out their examination and review of the proposals at their home and/or their place of work.