



More information:

For more information about the new approach for the SSH programme and an indicative list of challenges that will be addressed between 2011-2013 please visit:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/>

You may also wish to contact your National Contact Point (NCP) for Socio-Economic Sciences and Humanities. The list of NCPs is available at:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ssh/ncp_en.html

Please note that this document is purely for information purposes. To apply for funding under the SSH research programme please refer to official documents.

For information on funding under the SSH programme please visit:

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

Research in Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities: Towards a New Approach

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Why it matters for Europe?



The Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities (SSH) Theme of the Cooperation Specific Programme (SSH, 7th Community Framework Programme for Research and Development, 2007-2013) addresses key societal, economic and cultural challenges facing Europe and the world now and in the future.

It makes a significant contribution to promoting shared understanding across Europe and to the resolution of wider international problems.

It helps improve the formulation, implementation, impact and assessment of policy including regulatory measures in many Community policy areas at the European, national, regional and local levels.

The SSH programme funded research, combined with the bottom-up activities of the European Research Council (Ideas Programme), and strategy-oriented Joint Programming actively contribute to the development of the Lisbon and Ljubljana processes.

The Directorate for "Science, Economy and Society" in the Research Directorate-General of the European Commission currently manages over 210 projects funded under the Socio-Economic Sciences and Humanities Programme.

The projects involve several thousands of researchers from more than 1500 organisations (Universities, Research Organisations, Stakeholders, Research Funders, etc.) in over 70 countries which makes the programme the largest SSH targeted programme in the world.

However, efforts need to be continued to exploit the full potential of these research cooperation activities.

In a world that is being put to the test on a daily basis by global societal challenges, social sciences and humanities have a unique role to play.

The SSH programme as of the 2010 Call for proposals recognises that improving their impact requires a new approach, focusing increasingly on a challenge-driven approach.



These Societal Challenges have to be addressed by pooling resources, achieving critical mass and developing coherent and complementary research activities. The enhancement of interdisciplinary research efforts, better linking disciplines and approaches and forging the development of partnerships beyond the scientific community are specifically encouraged.

Within the new approach it will also be essential to forge the creation of a widely accessible, solid knowledge base in SSH that paves the way to common development of SSH research infrastructures.

What does it involve?

As a first step the European Commission, in consultation with various stakeholders, identified a number of important current Societal Challenges for the European Union. These will be addressed by the 2010-2013 Work Programmes and, as examples, include "Changing the role of the financial system to better serve economic, social and environmental objectives", "Creating and adapting jobs in Europe in the context of a socio-ecological transition" and "Europe facing a rising multi-polar world".

The Societal Challenges will be complemented by a number of more targeted 'traditional' research topics.

Each Challenge will be addressed by a specific Set of Research Actions that will be combined in a single large scale integrating project.

Future project proposals thus should now pay attention to:

- A coordinated inter-disciplinary approach and plurality of perspectives to examine the different dimensions of the societal challenge considered;
- Building on previous research; stock-taking;
- Forward looking /foresight analysis regarding the evolution of the societal challenge, where relevant;
- Deployment of a significant international cooperation dimension in addition to the European dimension;
- Dissemination and exploitation of research results in a variety of contexts (scientific, policy, media, civil society);
- Development of an effective critical mass of actors, involving a wide range of key stakeholders.
- A rigorous professional approach to managing research and day-to-day administrative work.
- Ethical and gender dimensions will continue to be relevant in both the conduct of the research and its content.

For comprehensively addressing the Challenges, proposers are encouraged to define additional research aspects that go beyond the research areas identified in the Work Programme.

How it will be implemented?

The new approach will be implemented as of the 2010 Call for proposals as a pilot exercise. In subsequent calls the number of Societal Challenges per call will increase in proportion with the rise in the general budget for the SSH programme.