

**WORK PROGRAMME 2012**

***COOPERATION***

**ANNEX 4**

***GENERAL ACTIVITIES***

*Revised*

*(European Commission C(2011)9493 of 20 December 2011)*

This update introduces a call for Coordination and Support Actions aimed at facilitating a set of Joint Programming Initiatives which have been the object of dedicated Commission Recommendations

## **Annex 4      General Activities**

In this annex, the activities which are funded across the Programme are presented. These activities concern in particular the following:

### **Dissemination, knowledge transfer and broader engagement**

1. The CORDIS services

### **Co-ordination of non-European Union research programmes**

2. Programme coordination and cooperation in the European Research Area: ERA-NET scheme and Joint Programming
3. Research organisations in the EU
4. Strengthened coordination with EUREKA
5. Scientific and technological cooperation activities carried out in COST

### **Risk-Sharing Finance Facility**

6. Contribution to the European Investment Bank (EIB) – Risk-Sharing Finance Facility

#### A4.1 THE CORDIS SERVICES

CORDIS, the Community Research and Development Information Service, supports the European Commission's dissemination of information on EU-funded research projects and their outcomes, as well as their exploitation, since 1990. The web portal is available at: <http://cordis.europa.eu>.

As expressed in the FP7 Cooperation Specific Programme, CORDIS continues "to foster the dissemination of knowledge in a user-friendly way and the exploitation of research results".

As referenced in the 2011 Work Programme and based on the agreement between the Directorates-General and Agencies of the research and innovation family, the clear focus for each of the key Commission research web portals (CORDIS, Participant Portal and Europa research websites) will continue to be implemented in 2012.

The specific objectives for CORDIS activities in 2012 will be:

- **SO 1: Continued availability and improved usability** for users of CORDIS services including content management, maintenance, operational and supporting activities;
- **SO 2: Consolidation of services** to reflect decisions on the web-based communication strategy;
- **SO 3: Improvement and development of services to disseminate and exploit research results** according to the needs as defined by the research and innovation Directorates-General/Agencies;
- **SO 4: Editorial harmonisation, technical interoperability and ensuring seamless navigation** with the other research-related websites and systems, in particular the Participant Portal and Europa websites.

The budget foreseen for these activities in 2012 is EUR 7.9 million.

The CORDIS services are managed by the Publications Office of the European Union under the governance of the CORDIS Service Management Board (where all research and innovation Directorates-General/Agencies and other stakeholders are represented). Administrative arrangements are set out in the applicable Service Level Agreement between the Research and Innovation Directorate General and the Publications Office. A detailed Work Programme for the CORDIS 2012 activities, including a detailed budget forecast, will be drawn up.

## A4.2 PROGRAMME COORDINATION AND COOPERATION IN THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA

### A4.2.1 The ERA-NET scheme

The objective of the ERA-NET scheme is to develop and strengthen the coordination of national and regional research programmes through two specific actions:

- 'ERA-NET actions' - which provide a framework for actors implementing public research programmes to coordinate their activities.
- 'ERA-NET Plus actions'- which, *in a limited number of cases, can provide* additional EU financial support to facilitate joint calls for proposals between national and/or regional programmes.

Under the ERA-NET scheme, national and regional authorities identify research programmes they wish to coordinate or open up mutually. The participants in these actions are therefore programme 'owners' (typically ministries or regional authorities defining research programmes) or programme 'managers' (such as research councils or other *research funding* agencies managing research programmes).

Since the introduction of the scheme, a large number of ERA-NETs have been funded, involving hundreds of national research programmes<sup>1</sup>.

ERA-NETs span a wide range of research fields such as transport, energy, environment, industrial technologies, plant and human health, astrophysics and social sciences. ERA-NET actions have been also set up to address more horizontal topics such as international cooperation, SMEs, metrology or the promotion of gender balance in research.

The networking and mutual opening of research programmes require a progressive approach. The ERA-NET scheme therefore has a long-term perspective and it is flexible in order to accommodate the different ways in which public research funding is organised in Member States and Associated Countries.

In contrast to FP6, the ERA-NET scheme is no longer conceived as a 'stand-alone' action in FP7, but as an implementation tool available to the Themes of the Cooperation specific programme and to the Parts of the Capacities Programme.

Several ERA-NETs have been already able to contribute and interact with proposed Joint Programming Initiatives, aimed at addressing major societal challenges. The involvement of programme managers and programme owners in ERA-NETs renders them a useful instrument also in this context.

Thanks to the ERA-NET scheme, tangible progress has been made in reducing fragmentation across the European Research Area (ERA).

For the full list of projects, please refer to:

<http://cordis.europa.eu/coordination/projects.htm>

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/coordination/home\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/coordination/home_en.html)

<http://netwatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu/nw>

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<sup>1</sup> ERA-NET actions cover both national and regional research programmes. To avoid repetition, the term 'national research programme' will be used in this section to refer to both national and regional research programmes.

#### **A4.2.2 Content of the FP7-ERANET-2012-RTD Call**

In 2012, the ERA-NET scheme foresees a cross-thematic call for proposals, open to challenge-oriented strategic priorities explicitly specified in the thematic sections of this work programme. The concerned Themes will be responsible for providing the required funding (*please refer to the Call Fiche for details*).

Proposals submitted to the 2012 ERA-NET call should be able to clearly demonstrate the innovation potential of the planned activities. Participants are encouraged to adopt a global approach in their proposals and the inclusion of partners from relevant non-EU countries is encouraged.

The cross-thematic call will include also centrally-managed Horizontal Support Actions, aimed at optimising implementation modalities and support mechanisms applicable to trans-national R&D programme collaborations and, particularly, Joint Programming in Research.

ERA-NET topics might be present also in other calls which, for logistical and organisational reasons, are kept distinct from the present one. In order to provide a complete reference on the way in which the scheme will be implemented in 2012, a list of further subjects open for ERA-NETs is provided in appendix to the call fiche.

##### **A4.2.2.1 Activity: ERA-NET actions**

Funding Scheme: Coordination and Support Actions (Coordinating Action)

The aim of ERA-NET actions is to network research programmes carried out at national or regional level, with a view to their mutual opening and the development and implementation of joint activities.

"*Research programmes carried out at national or regional level*" refers to entire research programmes, parts of such programmes or similar initiatives. Such programmes shall have all the following characteristics:

- a) Be strategically planned (i.e. be composed of a number of research projects focused on a defined subject area or set of problems, that are scheduled to run for a set period of time and that have a co-ordinated management).
- b) Be carried out at national or regional level.
- c) Be either financed or managed directly by national or regional public bodies, or by structures (e.g. agencies) closely related to, or mandated by, public authorities.

##### Eligibility

The minimum number of participants in an ERA-NET consortium is **3 independent legal entities** which finance or manage publicly funded national or regional programmes. **Each of these must be established in a different Member State or Associated Country.**

Partners for ERA-NET actions eligible to satisfy the above condition are:

- Programme owners: typically national ministries/regional authorities responsible for defining, financing or managing research programmes carried out at national or regional level.
- Programme 'managers' (such as research councils or funding agencies) or other national or regional organisations that *implement* research programmes under the supervision of the programme owners.

- Programme owners (typically national ministries/regional authorities) which do not have a running or fully fledged research programme at the moment of submitting an ERA-NET proposal, but which are planning, and have committed, to set up such a programme, are also eligible if their participation is well justified and adds value to the overall programme coordination. As such, countries or regions which have less diverse research programmes (in particular new Member States and candidate Associated Countries) will find their involvement in the ERA-NET scheme greatly facilitated.

Please note that research organisations or universities which are not programme owners or managers are not eligible partners for ERA-NET actions.

In addition to the minimum number of independent legal entities mentioned above, private legal entities (e.g. charities) which manage research programmes may enter the consortium if their participation is well justified and adds value to the overall programme coordination.

Non-European programme owners and programme managers are eligible partners at full title, assuming the ERA-NET consortium is already validly constituted (with 3 independent legal entities each of them established in a different Member State or Associated Country).

Sole participants (as referred to in Article 10 of the Rules for Participation) may be eligible if the above-mentioned specific criteria for eligible ERA-NET partners are respected. A sole participant shall explicitly indicate which of its 'members', forming a sole legal entity, is either a programme owner or programme manager in the proposed action, and indicate for these members the respective national/regional programmes which are at the disposal of the proposed ERA-NET action.

#### Technical content/scope

ERA-NET actions cover the networking of national research programmes on selected topics of science and technology which are identified in the annual work programmes of the Cooperation Themes and the relevant Parts of the Capacities Programme.

The networking of programmes may involve several levels of cooperation and coordination, depending on the degree of maturity of the network. The use of the ERA-NET scheme should make this evolution possible and should adopt a step-by-step approach.

In this respect, a four-step approach covering the following activities could be envisaged:

- 1) Information exchange
- 2) Definition and preparation of joint activities
- 3) Implementation of joint activities
- 4) Funding of joint trans-national research.

ERA-NET actions should be ambitious and should aim to reach step 4. They should result in concrete progress towards the opening up of, or cooperation between, the participating research programmes. The cooperation should be sustainable beyond the duration of the ERA-NET action itself.

#### Activities funded

The EU contribution shall take the form of a grant consisting of a reimbursement of the eligible costs related to the action.

Activities eligible for funding correspond to the four steps identified in the *'technical content/scope'* section above. More specifically, these include:

##### (i) Information exchange

This step aims to gather information on the structure and programmes covered by each national research system. It could also improve communication, develop better reciprocal knowledge and promote trust-building among programme owners or managers in similar scientific and technological areas through a mutual learning process, and the systematic exchange of information and good practices.

(ii) Definition and preparation of joint activities

This key part of the action should analyse the information gathered in step 1 and identify the type of cooperation and the areas which will be addressed.

It should result in an **Action plan**, which sets out common strategic issues and prepares for a concrete implementation of joint activities.

(iii) Implementation of joint activities

Experience has shown that much of the added value in co-ordinating national programmes is gained by trying to implement joint activities, even if in a pilot form.

ERA-NET actions are therefore encouraged to develop and implement, from an early stage in the project, common, joint, strategic activities such as:

- Clustering of nationally-funded research projects, to develop complementarities or mutual reinforcement of ongoing nationally-funded research programmes.
- Multinational project evaluation procedures (common evaluation criteria and methods of implementation). This could contribute in the long-term to the integration of evaluation practices across national research systems (covering proposal, project and programme evaluation).
- Schemes for joint training activities, such as co-supervised theses and international PhD schemes, to help support a wider cooperation in research.
- Schemes for the mutual opening of facilities or laboratories in one country for scientists from another.
- Converging schemes for programme monitoring and evaluation, including joint monitoring or evaluation.
- Schemes for personnel exchange, in the context of the above activities.
- Specific cooperation agreements or arrangements between participating programmes. These would prepare the ground for further trans-national research programmes and ensure that legal barriers are removed.

(iv) Funding of joint trans-national research

The strongest form of programme networking implies the funding and implementation of a joint programme of trans-national research projects or actions. This is likely to involve the setting-up of a common strategy, a joint work programme, common (mutually open) or joint calls for proposals or tenders, a common trans-national evaluation system and a common plan for dissemination of results or experiences. In such schemes, projects funded out of a common or joint call for proposals should involve *at least two teams from two different countries*.

In this step, other ways of implementing joint research actions could also be developed or explored. For example, a complex or very ambitious research agenda could be divided in various parts, which are each addressed through differentiated national calls. Results would then be shared.

Expected Impact

The ERA-NET scheme aims to reduce the fragmentation of the European Research Area by increasing coordination between participating national research programmes, avoiding unnecessary duplications of effort and developing expertise from mutual learning.

In general, ERA-NET actions should not cover very restricted research domains and should not overlap with other ongoing ERA-NET actions, as this could create further fragmentation. Complementarities to, or coordination with, FP7 activities should be ensured where possible.

ERA-NET actions should deliver concrete results: establishment of solid networks, mutual opening of activities, development and implementation of joint programmes.

The level of ERA-NET actions will depend on their previous experience:

- Existing ERA-NETs wishing to submit a new proposal must include a strong coordination action, directly focusing on steps 3 and 4. As such, these proposals shall aim to broaden the partnership and/or deepen the coordination between the relevant national programmes in the concerned field. In particular, a global approach including non-European research programmes is encouraged.
- New ERA-NETs, addressing topics not covered by previous ones, should target steps 1 to 3 as a minimum, but are encouraged to aim at the 'four step approach' described above.

The scheme will also enable national or regional systems to collectively take on tasks that they would not have been able to tackle independently.

ERA-NET actions are expected to have a lasting impact. The cooperation developed should provide reliable indications that it could continue beyond the EU funding. Lessons learned and knowledge gathered should be disseminated in the European Research Area.

In addition to the general impact described above, more specific expected benefits of ERA-NET actions include:

- Achieving critical mass, to ensure the better use of scarce resources.
- Joining forces to provide common answers to common research problems.
- Addressing global issues, common to many countries.
- Addressing specific geographical issues.
- Developing common governance principles (e.g. with respect to ethics, good practices).
- Bring together national programmes which deal with cooperation with third countries, and enable them to speak with a 'single voice'.
- Adopt a global approach, involving third-country research programmes in the ERA-NET activities.

**Indicative budget for A4.2.2.1:** Please refer to *Call Fiche FP7-ERANET-2012-RTD*



**A4.2.2.2 Activity: ERA-NET PLUS actions****Funding Scheme:** Coordination and Support Actions (Coordinating Action)

Under ERA-NET Plus actions, the Commission provides an incentive to the organisation of joint calls between national or regional research programmes by 'topping-up' joint trans-national funding with EU funding. These joint calls will entail the award of grants to third parties participating in calls for proposals launched under the ERA-NET Plus actions.

These actions require programme owners or programme managers **from at least 5 different Member States or Associated Countries** to plan a single joint call with a clear financial commitment from the participating national or regional research programmes.

**Activities funded**

The EU will top up the total of the national contributions to the joint call with additional funding for RTD activities. The EU contribution will be limited to a maximum of 33% of the total contributions to the joint call budget. The combined national/regional and EU contributions to the joint calls have to reach **at least EUR 5 million**.

The EU contribution shall take the form of a grant. This grant will combine the reimbursement of eligible costs covering the activities linked to the preparation and coordination of the joint call<sup>2</sup>, and the reimbursement of eligible costs as an agreed proportional contribution to the national pooling of funds (for activities relating to the funding of selected trans-national projects, maximum 33%).

In accordance with the Decisions concerning the Seventh Framework Programme<sup>3</sup> and the 'Cooperation' Specific Programme<sup>4</sup>, the provisions of Article 120(2) of the Council Regulation on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities<sup>5</sup> and Article 184a of the Commission Regulation laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities,<sup>6</sup> shall not be applicable with regard to the financial support provided by the participants in the ERA-NET Plus actions to third parties participating in projects selected following calls for proposals launched under these actions.

The total duration of a given ERA-NET Plus action and of the resulting projects shall **not exceed 5 years**.

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<sup>2</sup> No further supporting costs will be eligible once a 'selection decision' has been taken by the consortium as a result of the joint call.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 412, 30.12.2006, p. 1 Decision No 1982/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 400, 30.12.2006, p. 86

<sup>5</sup> Council Regulation No. 1605/2002 of 25.6.2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (OJ L248, 16.09.2002, p1).

<sup>6</sup> Commission Regulation No. 2342/2002 of 23.12.2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation No. 1605/2002 (OJ L357, 31.12.2002, p1).

Specific Eligibility criteria for ERA-NET Plus actions

ERA-NET Plus proposals must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- A single joint call should be planned with a clear financial commitment from the participating national or regional programmes<sup>7</sup>.
- Eligible participants are the same as for ERA-NET actions with the exception that programme owners, which do not have yet a running or fully fledged research programme at the moment of submitting a proposal, are not eligible for ERA-NET Plus actions. Furthermore, *a consortium must include programme owners or programme managers from at least 5 different Member States or Associated Countries.*
- Beyond the minimum of 5 programme owners or managers, the same types of additional participants foreseen for ERA-NET actions are eligible.
- The total planned budget of *the joint call shall have a minimum financial volume of EUR 5 million.*
- A common peer review mechanism for evaluating the proposals submitted to the joint call shall be foreseen.
- Each project financed out of the joint call shall be trans-national (i.e. minimum of two partners from different Member States or Associated Countries).
- A fixed common set of general evaluation/selection criteria (excellence, European added value, etc.) should be part of the common evaluation criteria of the joint call organised by the national programmes.

Detailed rules for participation in the funded trans-national projects shall be defined by the call organisers themselves (e.g. participating national or regional programmes).

Expected Impact

ERA-NET Plus actions aim to facilitate the launching of joint calls for proposals between EU Member States or Associated Countries, based on their European added value. In special cases, they may also facilitate the transition of an ERA-NET towards an Article 185 TFEU initiative, where the criteria for the latter are met.

The EU added value will be a critical criterion to evaluate the impact of ERA-NET Plus actions and will depend on the area/topic covered by the research programmes participating in the joint call. Therefore, the following criteria should help to identify the impact of ERA-NET Plus actions offering best prospects for sufficient European added value:

- **Relevance to EU objectives:** The field of the potential topic should be of major interest for the EU as a whole.
- **Framework Programme relevance.** As regards '**objective**': Demonstration that an ERA-NET Plus action in that topic shall allow the EU to reach the objective of effectively enhancing the coordination of national research programmes. As regards '**content**': The

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<sup>7</sup> Proposals must demonstrate that national research programmes are committed to support the call. Selected proposals will have to provide evidence that a commitment has been made by the relevant research programmes.

field of the potential topic shall be covered by the Framework Programme both in terms of scientific content and of budget allocation.

- **Pre-existing basis:** The ERA-NET Plus action should build on a pre-existing basis or coordination experience between national programmes in the topic identified.
- **Critical mass:** ERA-NET Plus actions will enable national programmes to address together with the EU programmes research areas, that due to the nature of the field are better addressed jointly or fields which would/could not have been addressed independently.
- **Instrument relevance:** Demonstration that ERA-NET Plus is the most appropriate instrument for achieving the Framework Programme goals with regard to coordination of national research programmes (i.e.: avoiding fragmentation, etc.). Demonstration that implementing an ERA-NET Plus action in a given field is more appropriate to coordination goals than other possible FP7 actions.

ERA-NET Plus actions are expected, where appropriate, to facilitate the development of a more global approach to the topics addressed, involving also non European research programme.

ERA-NET Plus actions are expected to have a lasting impact. The cooperation developed should provide reliable indications that it could continue beyond the joint call supported by the EU funding.

**Indicative budget for A4.2.2.2:** Please refer to *Call Fiche FP7-ERANET-2012-RTD*

#### ***A4.2.2.3 Activity: Support for Programme coordination and cooperation in the European Research Area (Horizontal Support Actions)***

Funding Scheme: Coordination and Support Actions (Supporting Action)

It is increasingly evident that Europe needs to elaborate stronger, better coordinated, more coherent and global responses to the challenges it is facing. Europe needs also to boost its innovation potential, e.g. the capacity to transform the results of research into tangible benefits for society and for the overall competitiveness of its economy

Recent policy developments (the Europe 2020 growth strategy, the Innovation Union flagship initiative, the Joint Programming process, the Green Paper for a Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation funding) are building on this basis and promoting a more effective coordination of national research programmes.

Achieving this objective will require updating and expanding the systems already in place, as well as the set of support tools so far developed for the research funding community in the context of ERA-NET, ERA-NET Plus and Article 185. This goal should be accomplished with the full participation of the stakeholders and users concerned and deriving the maximum possible benefit from the experiences already matured.

In this context, it is envisaged to call for support actions in the following domains:

- Organisation of events aimed at debating Joint Programming in Research, fostering the active participation of all relevant stakeholders (policy makers, funding agencies, research performing organisations, scientists and general public).*

- b) **Monitoring progress in the domain of the "Framework Conditions"**, i.e. areas where common approaches are considered essential for an effective development and implementation of trans-national research collaborations and Joint Programming in particular (Peer Review Procedures, Foresight Activities, Evaluation of Joint Programmes, Funding of Cross-border Research by National or Regional Authorities, Optimum Dissemination and Use of Research Findings, Protection, Management and Sharing of Intellectual Property Rights).
- c) **Expansion of existing initiatives, tools and mechanisms for the research funding community.** Since the ERA-NET scheme started in 2002, a wide community of programme owners and managers has been accumulating a valuable experience for the benefit of both current participants and newcomers to the scheme. In 2008, the Commission launched a first set of initiatives, the ERA-NET Learning Platform and the NETWATCH information system, which provide opportunities for mutual learning and exchange of good practice, as well as the creation of a central information platform on European trans-national programme cooperation in Research and Technological Development. Proposals should focus on pilot actions for the expansion of services and content, based on existing initiatives; tools and mechanisms to further support the coordination of national programmes and its implementation in direct response to users' needs and recent policy developments.

#### Expected Impact

The selected support actions should provide useful input and devise pilot actions that, in the context of Joint Programming and, more in general, the Innovation Union Initiative and the future Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation funding, could be instrumental in driving the evolution of the methods for coordinating national research programmes.

**Indicative budget for A4.2.2.3: EUR 1 000 000**

## \*\*\* Call Fiche FP7-ERANET-2012-RTD \*\*\*

**Call title: ERA-NET Call 2012**

- Call identifier: **FP7-ERANET-2012-RTD**
- Date of publication: 20 July 2011<sup>8</sup>.
- Deadline: 28 February 2012, at 17.00.00, Brussels local time<sup>9</sup>.

**Indicative budgets and Topics:**

A total of EUR 38.5 million is foreseen for this call and divided as follows:

- Up to EUR 37.5 million<sup>10</sup> will be allocated by individual Themes in the Cooperation Work Programme to the ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus topics detailed in *Table 1* (Thematic part of the Call).
- A further EUR 1 million<sup>11</sup> for horizontal support actions, funded pro-rata by all the Themes in the Cooperation Work Programme, as detailed in *Table 2* (Horizontal part of the Call).

**Table 1 – Overview of Thematic Coordination Actions in FP7-ERANET-2012 -RTD**  
Funding Scheme: Coordination and Support Actions (Coordinating Actions)

Challenge/Activity/ Area	Topic identifier	TITLE	Indicative budget (EUR million)
<b>INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT</b>			
KBBE 2.1 Sustainable production and management of biological resources	KBBE.2012.1.2-08	ERA-NET Plus on Innovation in the forest-based sector for increasing resource efficiency and tackling climate change with competitive customer solutions <sup>12</sup>	8.0
NMP 4.4 Integration of technologies for industrial applications	NMP.2012.4.0-3		
KBBE 2.1 Sustainable production and management of biological resources	KBBE.2012.1.2-13	Strengthening cooperation in European research on sustainable exploitation of marine resources in the seafood chains - ERANET	2.0

<sup>8</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may publish it up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date of publication.

<sup>9</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may delay this deadline by up to two months.

<sup>10</sup> Total indicative budget provided by the concerned Themes for ERA-NET actions. Following the evaluation of proposals, the final total budget of the call, as well the individual sub-budgets independently allocated by each Theme, may vary by up to 10% of the values initially foreseen.

<sup>11</sup> Total indicative budget for horizontal support actions. Following the evaluation of proposals, the final budget of the call may vary by up to 10% of the total value of the indicated budget.

<sup>12</sup> Topic jointly implemented by KBBE & NMP, each Theme contributing with EUR 4M

KBBE 2.3 Life sciences, biotechnology and biochemistry for sustainable non-food products and processes	KBBE.2012.3.6-01	ERA-NET: Systems Biology	2.0
ENERGY 5.10 Horizontal Programme Actions	ENERGY.2012.10.1.1	ERA-NET Plus on Bioenergy: Demonstrations of the European Industrial Bioenergy Initiative	15.0
ENERGY 5.10 Horizontal Programme Actions	ENERGY.2012.10.1.2	ERA-NET on Solar Electricity: Implementation of the Solar Energy Industry Initiative	2.0
SST 7.2 Sustainable Surface Transport	SST.2012.6-1	ERA-NET Transport III	3.0
<b>CONFRONTING MAJOR THREATS TO PUBLIC HEALTH</b>			
HEALTH 2.3 Translational Research in Major Infectious Diseases	HEALTH.2012.2.3.0-2	ERA-NET on infectious diseases	2.0
NMP 4.1 Nanosciences and Nanotechnologies	NMP.2012.1.2-3	ERA-NET on nano-medicine	1.5
SSH 8.3.2 Societal Trends and Lifestyles	SSH.2012.3.2-4	Drug demand and supply reduction (ERA-NET)	2.0

*. Table 2 – Horizontal Support Actions in FP7-ERANET-2012 -RTD*

*Funding Scheme: Coordination and Support Actions (Supporting Actions)*

<b>THEME/Activity</b>	<b>Topic identifier</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Indicative budget (EUR million)</b>
<b>HORIZONTAL</b>			
A4.2.2.3 Support for Programme coordination and cooperation in the context of the ERA	ERA-JP.2012.1	Joint programming and its instruments: optimising implementation modalities and support mechanisms	1.0

### **General Eligibility Conditions**

The general eligibility criteria are set out in Annex 2 to this work programme, and in the guide for applicants. Please note that the completeness criterion also includes that part B of the proposal shall be readable, accessible and printable. Only information provided in part A of the proposal will be used to determine whether the proposal is eligible with respect to budget thresholds and/or minimum number of eligible participants

### **Additional eligibility Criteria for ERA-NET proposals**

The aim of ERA-NET actions is to network research programmes carried out at national or regional level, with a view to their mutual opening and the development and implementation of joint activities. Such programmes shall have all of the following characteristics:

- Be strategically planned (i.e. be composed of a number of research projects focused on a defined subject area or set of problems, that are scheduled to run for a set period of time and that have a co-ordinated management).
- Be carried out at national or regional level.
- Be either financed or managed directly by national or regional public bodies, or by structures (e.g. agencies) closely related to, or mandated by, public authorities.

The minimum number of participants in an ERA-NET consortium is **3 independent legal entities** which finance or manage publicly funded national or regional programmes. **Each of these must be established in a different Member State or Associated Country.**

Partners for ERA-NET actions eligible to satisfy the above condition are:

- Programme owners: typically national ministries/regional authorities responsible for defining, financing or managing research programmes carried out at national or regional level.
- Programme 'managers' (such as research councils or funding agencies) or other national or regional organisations that *implement* research programmes under the supervision of the programme owners.
- Programme owners (typically national ministries/regional authorities) which do not have a running or fully fledged research programme at the moment of submitting an ERA-NET proposal, but which are planning, and have committed, to set up such a programme, are also eligible if their participation is well justified and adds value to the overall programme coordination. As such, countries or regions which have less diverse research programmes (in particular new Member States and candidate Associated Countries) will find their involvement in the ERA-NET scheme greatly facilitated.

Please note that research organisations or universities which are not programme owners or managers are not eligible partners for ERA-NET actions.

In addition to the minimum number of independent legal entities mentioned above, private legal entities (e.g. charities) which manage research programmes may enter the consortium if their participation is well justified and adds value to the overall programme coordination.

Non-European Programme owners and programme managers are eligible partners at full title, assuming the ERA-NET consortium is already validly constituted (with 3 independent legal entities each of them established in a different Member State or Associated Country).

Sole participants (as referred to in Article 10 of the Rules for Participation) may be eligible if the above-mentioned specific criteria for eligible ERA-NET partners are respected. A sole participant shall explicitly indicate which of its 'members' forming a sole legal entity is either a programme owner or programme manager in the proposed action and indicate for these members, the respective national/regional programmes which are at the disposal of the proposed ERA-NET action.

### ***Additional eligibility Criteria for ERA-NET Plus proposals***

ERA-NET Plus proposals must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- A single joint call should be planned with a clear financial commitment from the participating national or regional programmes<sup>13</sup>.
- Eligible participants are the same as for ERA-NET actions with the exception that programme owners, which do not have yet a running or fully fledged research programme at the moment of submitting a proposal, are not eligible for ERA-NET Plus actions. Furthermore, a consortium must include programme owners or programme managers from at least 5 different Member or Associated countries.
- The same additional participants as for ERA-NET actions are eligible, beyond the number of 5 minimum programme owners or managers.
- The total planned budget of the joint call shall have a minimum financial volume of EUR 5 million.
- A common peer review mechanism for evaluating the proposals submitted to the joint call shall be foreseen.
- Each project financed out of the joint call shall be trans-national (i.e. minimum of two partners from different countries).
- A fixed common set of general evaluation/selection criteria (excellence, European added value, etc.) should be part of the common evaluation criteria of the joint call organised by the national programmes.

### ***Evaluation Criteria for ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus proposals***

For the evaluation of ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus proposals, the general criteria and thresholds applicable to Coordination and Support Actions given in Annex 2, are complemented as follows:

#### *1. Scientific and/or technological excellence - Quality of coordination (Threshold 3/5)*

Level of ambition in the collaboration and commitment of the participants in the proposed ERA-NET / ERA-NET Plus action to coordinate their national/regional research programmes.

#### *2. Quality and efficiency of the implementation (Threshold 3/5) – no additional criteria*

#### *3. Potential impact (Threshold 3/5)*

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<sup>13</sup> Proposals must demonstrate that national research programmes are committed to support the call. Selected proposals will have to provide evidence that a commitment has been made by the relevant research programmes.



Contribution to establishing and strengthening a durable cooperation between the partners and their national/regional research programmes.

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A reserve list may be produced of proposals that pass the evaluation, but fall below the available budget.

- Proposal format:
  - Applicants must ensure that proposals conform to the page limits and layout given in the Guide for Applicants, and in the proposal part B template available through the EPSS. The Commission will instruct the experts to disregard any pages exceeding these limits. The minimum font size allowed is 11 points. The page size is A4, and all margins (top, bottom, left, right) should be at least 15 mm (not including any footers or headers).
- Evaluation procedure:
  - The evaluation will follow a single stage procedure.
  - Proposals will not be evaluated anonymously.
  - Proposals may be evaluated remotely.
- Indicative timetable:
  - Evaluation in April 2012.
  - Opening of negotiations in June 2012.
  - Selections from October 2012.
  - Grant agreements from December 2012.
- Consortia agreements:
  - Consortia Agreements are recommended.
- The forms of grant and maximum reimbursement rates which will be offered are specified in Annex 3 to the Cooperation work programme. This call provides the possibility to use flat rates to cover subsistence costs incurred by beneficiaries during travel carried out within grants for indirect actions. For further information, please refer to the relevant Guide for Applicants. The applicable flat rates are available at: [ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/flat-rates-subsistence\\_en.pdf](ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/flat-rates-subsistence_en.pdf).

\*\*\* End of Call Fiche FP7-ERANET-2012-RTD \*\*\*

## \*\*\* Appendix to Call Fiche FP7-ERANET-2012-RTD \*\*\*

*For information purposes:* overview of **ERA-NET topics**, open for other Themes in Cooperation and Parts in Capacities, ***which are not included*** in the **cross-thematic ERA-NET Call 2012** described in the previous section.

Challenge/Activity /Area	Topic identifier <sup>14</sup>	TITLE	Indicative budget (EUR million)
<b>INNOVATION FOR INFORMATION TECNOLOGIES</b>			
ICT 3.3 Components, systems, engineering	ICT-2011.3.5 <sup>15</sup>	Core and Disruptive Photonic Technologies - ERA-NET Plus	10.0
ICT 3.9 Future and Emerging Technologies	ICT-2011 9.9 <sup>16</sup>	FET Proactive: Quantum ICT (QICT) ERA-NET Plus	7.0

\*\*\* End of Appendix to Call Fiche FP7-ERANET-2012-RTD \*\*\*

<sup>14</sup> The listed topics belonging to the ICT work programme are open also to other funding schemes: the indicated budgets represent the maximum available for ERA-NET/ERA-NET Plus actions, not the total for the topic.

<sup>15</sup> Topic ICT-2011.3.5 is included in the call FP7-ICT-2011-8, with publication date 26/7/2011.

<sup>16</sup> Topic ICT-2012.9.12 is included in the call FP7-ICT-2012-9, with publication date 18/1/2012.

#### ***A4.2.2.4 Activity: Support for Programme coordination and cooperation in the European Research Area (Thematic Coordination Actions)***

***Funding Scheme:*** Coordination and Support Actions (Coordinating Action)

Following the Communication "Towards Joint Programming in Research: working together to tackle common challenges more effectively"<sup>17</sup>, the Commission has been encouraging Member States to pursue common visions and strategic research agendas in the domains identified by the High Level Group for Joint Programming (GPC) as suitable for new Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs).

In its conclusions of 26 May 2010, the Competitiveness Council welcomed the identification and substantiation of six "second wave" themes for JPIs. Further, the Competitiveness Council invited the Commission to sustain the implementation of the proposed JPIs and "Act as a facilitator by suggesting complementary measures to support the Joint Programming initiatives"<sup>18</sup>.

Therefore, the Commission has decided to facilitate, by funding dedicated coordination actions, the JPIs which have reached a satisfactory level of maturity testified by:

- a) Adoption of a challenge-oriented problem-solving approach, backed by a solid and firm commitment by participating Member States or Associated Countries, which should include also provision of adequate human and financial resources.
- b) Development of a Strategic Research Agenda that, on the basis of an up-to-date mapping of research activities in the concerned areas, should have identified at least a limited number of measurable scientific-technological or socio-economic objectives, translating the challenge into operational terms, supported by an appropriate analysis of their relevance in relation to the addressed challenge and innovation potential.
- c) The presence of a governance system commensurate to the tasks, involving the participating organisations at an appropriate level.
- d) The European added value of the proposal be justified in terms of its scale, scope, increased effectiveness and/or cost savings potentially achieved.

#### ***Scope of the Actions***

The Commission foresees to sustain the overall coordination and capacity-building process of the concerned JPIs<sup>19</sup>, with the initial aim of shortening the time required to reach the implementation phase and then allow the adoption of effective and efficient methods of collaboration, such as those proposed within the "Voluntary Guidelines on Framework Conditions for Joint Programming in Research", adopted by the GPC on 11 November 2010<sup>20</sup>.

**Indicative budget for A4.2.2.4:** Please refer to *Call Fiche FP7-JPROG-2012-RTD*

<sup>17</sup> Commission Communication C(2008)468 final. Brussels, 15 July 2008.

<sup>18</sup> Council Conclusions on Joint Programming of 12 October 2010

<sup>19</sup> Please refer to the following Commission Recommendations: C(2011)7403 of 27/10/2011 on 'Water Challenges for a Changing World'; C(2011)7406 of 21/10/2011 on 'Urban Europe'; C(2011)7410 of 21/10/2011 on 'Connecting Climate Knowledge for Europe'; C(2011)7660 of 27/10/2011 on 'The Microbial Challenge'.

<sup>20</sup> Annex to "Joint Programming in research 2008-2010 and beyond - Report of the High Level Group on Joint Programming to the Council" <http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/docs/en/joint-programming-in-research-2008-2010-and-beyond---report-of-the-high-level-group-on-joint-programming-to-the-council.pdf>

## \*\*\* FP7-JPROG-2012-RTD Call Fiche \*\*\*

**Call title: Joint Programming Coordination 2012**

- Call identifier: **FP7-JPROG-2012-RTD**<sup>21</sup>
- Date of publication: 12 January 2012<sup>22</sup>.
- Deadline: 20 March 2012, at 17.00.00, Brussels local time<sup>23</sup>.

**Indicative budgets and Topics:**

A total of EUR 8.0 million<sup>24</sup> is foreseen for this call and will be allocated by individual Themes in the Cooperation and Part in the Capacities work programmes to the topics detailed in *Table 3*. Only up to one proposal per topic can be selected.

**Table 3 – Overview of the Topics in FP7-JPROG-2012-RTD**<sup>25</sup>

THEME/Activity	Topic identifier	TITLE	Indicative budget (EUR million)
<b>COOPERATION SPECIFIC PROGRAMME</b>			
<b>1. HEALTH</b>			
2.3 Translational research in major infectious diseases: to confront major threats to public health	HEALTH-2012.2.3.1-1	Coordination action in support to the Joint Programming Initiative on <i>'The microbial challenge – An emerging threat to human health'</i>	2.0
<b>6. ENVIRONMENT</b>			
6.1 Coping with climate change	ENV.2012.6.1-6	Coordination action in support to the Joint Programming Initiative on <i>'Connecting Climate Knowledge for Europe'</i>	2.0
6.3 Improving resource efficiency	ENV.2012.6.3-5	Coordination action in support to the Joint Programming Initiative on <i>'Water Challenges for a Changing world'</i>	2.0

<sup>21</sup> The present call, which assembles topics from both the Cooperation and Capacities FP7 programmes is published in Cooperation Annex 4 and the Regions of Knowledge Capacities work programme. Description of the topics is under the relevant Themes/Part.

<sup>22</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may publish it up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date of publication.

<sup>23</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may delay this deadline by up to two months.

<sup>24</sup> Following the evaluation of proposals, the final total budget of the call, as well the individual sub-budgets independently allocated by each Theme in Cooperation and Part in Capacities, may vary by up to 10% of the values initially foreseen.

<sup>25</sup> Coordination and Support Actions (Coordinating Action)

<b>CAPACITIES SPECIFIC PROGRAMME</b>			
<b>3. REGIONS OF KNOWLEDGE</b>			
3.2 Support to Joint Programming	REGIONS-2012.2 <sup>26</sup>	Coordination action in support to the Joint Programming Initiative on 'Urban Europe - Global Urban Challenges, Joint European Solutions'	2.0

### ***General eligibility criteria***

The general eligibility criteria are set out in Annex 2 to this work programme, and in the guide for applicants. Please note that the completeness criterion also includes that part B of the proposal shall be readable, accessible and printable. Only information provided in part A of the proposal will be used to determine whether the proposal is eligible with respect to budget thresholds and/or minimum number of eligible participants.

<b>Funding scheme</b>	<b>Minimum conditions</b>
Coordination and Support Actions (coordinating action)	At least 3 independent legal entities, each of which is established in a MS or AC, and no 2 of which are established in the same MS or AC

### ***Additional eligibility criteria***

*(Complementing the general eligibility criteria applicable to CSA-CA)*

All participants in the proposal must be independent legal entities which:

- Finance or manage publicly funded national or regional programmes related to the addressed domains or
- Institutions which have been expressly mandated to represent the country/region in JPI activities.

Sole participants (as referred to in Article 10 of the Rules for Participation) shall be eligible if each individual member in the sole legal entity satisfies the above-mentioned eligibility criteria.

<sup>26</sup> The topic REGIONS-2012.2 appears in the updated Regions of Knowledge 2012 work programme.

***Evaluation Criteria***

The general criteria and thresholds applicable to Coordination and Support Actions (coordinating action) given in Annex 2 will be applicable for the evaluation of the proposals.

***Proposal format:***

- Applicants must ensure that proposals conform to the drafting instructions and layout given in the Guide for Applicants, and in the proposal part B template available through the EPSS. The Commission will instruct the experts to disregard any pages exceeding these limits. The minimum font size allowed is 11 points. The page size is A4, and all margins (top, bottom, left, right) should be at least 15 mm (not including any footers or headers).

***Evaluation procedure:***

- The evaluation will follow a single stage procedure.
- Proposals will not be evaluated anonymously.
- Proposals may be evaluated remotely.

***Indicative timetable:***

- Evaluation in April 2012.
- Opening of negotiations in June 2012.
- Selections from October 2012.
- Grant agreements from December 2012.

***Consortia agreements:***

- Consortia Agreements are recommended.

***Forms of the grant:***

The forms of grant and maximum reimbursement rates which will be offered are specified in Annex 3 to the Cooperation work programme. This call provides the possibility to use flat rates to cover subsistence costs incurred by beneficiaries during travel carried out within grants for indirect actions. For further information, please refer to the relevant Guide for Applicants. The applicable flat rates are available at: [ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/flat-rates-subsistence\\_en.pdf](ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/flat-rates-subsistence_en.pdf).

**\*\*\* End of Call Fiche FP7-JPROG-2012-RTD \*\*\***

## \*\*\* Appendix to Call Fiche FP7-JPROG-2012-RTD \*\*\*

*For information purposes:* overview of topics in support of **Joint Programming Initiatives which are not included** in the call *Joint Programming Coordination 2012*, described in the previous section.

THEME/Activity	Topic identifier	TITLE	Indicative budget (EUR million)
<b>COOPERATION SPECIFIC PROGRAMME</b>			
<b>3. ICT</b>			
ICT for Health, Ageing Well, Inclusion and Governance	ICT-2011.5.7 <sup>27</sup>	Support to the early implementation of the Joint Programming Initiative ' <i>More Years – Better Lives – the Challenges and Opportunities of Demographic Change</i> '	1.5
<b>7. TRANSPORT (including Aeronautics)</b>			
Sustainable Surface Transport	SST.2012.1.1-2 <sup>28</sup>	Support to the development of Joint Programming in marine and maritime research to address cross-cutting sea-related challenges	2.0

\*\*\* End of Appendix to Call Fiche FP7-JPROG-2012-RTD \*\*\*

<sup>27</sup> Topic ICT-2011.5.7 is included in call FP7-ICT-2011-8, published on 20 July 2011.

<sup>28</sup> Topic SST.2012.1.1-2 is included in call FP7-SST-2012-RTD-1, published on 20 July 2011.

### **A4.2.3 External expertise**

*Funding Scheme:* Coordination and Support Actions (Independent Experts<sup>29</sup>)

It is foreseen to appoint independent experts to carry out the following tasks:

- The evaluation of the proposals submitted to the cross-thematic calls *FP7-ERANET-2012-RTD* and *FP7-JPROG-2012-RTD*.
- Where appropriate, the review of running projects.

**Indicative budget for A4.2.3:** EUR 60 000

### **A4.3 SUPPORT FOR COORDINATION AND COOPERATION WITH AND BETWEEN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND OTHER HIGH-LEVEL SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS IN THE EU, IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ERA.**

The cooperation with European Research Organisations and their umbrella associations is object of continuous attention.

It is envisaged to pursue the effort of improving co-ordination with EIROforum and its members by creating new partnerships aimed at valorising the contributions these institutions could make towards reaching EU 2020 objectives.

On the same line, the dialogue with National Research Councils and other (non-University) Research Organisations should also be sustained, with particular attention paid to the important role that Research Councils could play, when acting as National Funding Agencies, in improving the efficiency of trans-national research collaborations.

**Indicative budget for A4.3:** No operational appropriations

### **A4.4 STRENGTHENED COORDINATION WITH EUREKA (PRO MEMORIA)**

*Funding Scheme:* Other Actions (Subscription<sup>30</sup>)

The Specific Cooperation Programme will support coordination activities aimed at increasing complementarities and synergy between EUREKA and the Framework Programme in areas of common interest. The EU is a member of EUREKA and, as such, contributes to the budget of the EUREKA Secretariat: membership fees are expected to total about EUR 2 million for the duration of the Seventh Framework Programme.

**Indicative budget for A4.4:** EUR 350 000

<sup>29</sup> In accordance with Articles 14(c), 17 and 27 of Regulation (EC) No 1906/2006 of 18 December 2006 laying down the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in actions under the 7th Framework Programme and for the dissemination of research results (2007-2013).

<sup>30</sup> In accordance with Article 14(d) of Regulation (EC) No 1906/2006 of 18 December 2006 laying down the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in actions under the 7th Framework Programme and for the dissemination of research results (2007-2013), and in accordance with Article 108(2)(d) of the Financial Regulation and Article 160a of the detailed rules of the implementation of the Financial Regulation.



**A4.5 SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN COST**

*Funding Scheme: Coordination and Support Actions – Named Beneficiary*<sup>31</sup>

COST is a long-standing, intergovernmental framework that facilitates coordination and exchanges between nationally funded scientists and research teams operating in a variety of fields. During the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programmes, COST underwent significant reforms: this has been most recently confirmed by the COST FP7 mid-term evaluation, which took place in 2010.

The Innovation Union Flagship sets out a *strategic approach to innovation and is key to achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy for a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy.*

COST, as an integral part of the Innovation Union and the European Research Area, will also be expected, for its part, to contribute to the delivery of the Europe 2020 agenda and the Innovation Union goals through efficient implementation of the COST networking activities.

Specifically, the Innovation Union calls for an inclusive research and innovation policy and, to this effect, COST could further contribute by bringing together "pockets of excellence", which are not yet well integrated in European and global research and visible in European cooperation, thereby also enhancing capacity building.

Under FP7, support to COST is provided through a grant agreement between the Commission and the legal entity designated by COST as its implementing agent, whose identity was communicated to the Commission by the General Secretariat of the Council and identified in the annual Cooperation work programme. The legal entity designated by COST as its implementing agent is the European Science Foundation<sup>32</sup>.

The first four instalments of the FP7 COST grant, of EUR 30 million each, covered consecutive 12 month periods spanning until 1 June 2011. Following the FP7 COST mid-term evaluation, the grant agreement was extended in 2011 for a further 12 months, until 1 June 2012, with a contribution of EUR 43.3 million. A new extension of the grant agreement for a further 12 months is foreseen also in 2012, until 1 June 2013, with a corresponding financial contribution of EUR 43.3 million.

**Indicative budget for A4.5: EUR 43 300 000**

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<sup>31</sup> In accordance with Article 14(a) of Regulation (EC) No 1906/2006 of 18 December 2006 laying down the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in actions under the Seventh Framework Programme and for the dissemination of research results (2007-2013).

<sup>32</sup> The European Science Foundation is established in 1 Quai Lezay Marnesia, Strasbourg, CEDEX 67080, France.

## **A4.6 RISK-SHARING FINANCE FACILITY**

In accordance with Annex III to the Cooperation Specific Programme, the European Union provides a contribution (taking the form of a 'coordination and support action' (CSA-SA)) to the European Investment Bank (EIB), which is a risk-sharing partner for the Risk-Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF). RSFF which is co-funded by the European Union and the EIB, is aimed at fostering primarily private sector investment across Europe in research, technological development, demonstration and innovation<sup>33</sup> (RDI). This new financing instrument has been designed by the European Commission and the EIB, and launched in June 2007.

### **A4.6.1 Context**

#### *Innovation Union aspects*

The Innovation Union initiative underlines that research and innovation are key drivers of competitiveness, jobs, sustainable growth and social progress. The RSFF work programme 2012 has been designed to support the implementation of the Innovation Union Initiative, in particular to bring together research and innovation to address major challenges and to enhance access to finance for enterprises.

Access to finance to support investments in Research and Innovation (RDI) is indeed an integral part of the Innovation Union Flagship Initiative, which contains a commitment that by 2014, on the basis of Commission proposals, the EU should put in place financial instruments to attract a major increase in private finance and close market gaps in investing in R&I.

The work programme can contribute to the innovation objective in two ways, and constitutes a significant change to the approach in earlier work programmes:

1/ By supporting more topics aimed at generating knowledge to deliver new and more innovative products, processes and services. This will include pilot, demonstration and validation activities.

2/ By identifying and addressing exploitation issues, like capabilities for innovation and dissemination.

The European Council, in its conclusions of 4 February 2011 on Innovation<sup>34</sup>, invited the Commission to present proposals by the end of 2011 for scaling-up the RSFF and for assessing how best to meet the needs of fast-growing innovative companies through a market-based approach. This will be done in particular in the context of the Commission proposal for a Common Strategic Framework for EU research and innovation funding instruments. However, the RSFF 2012 work programme will already contribute to the innovation objective by enhancing access to finance for activities of RDI, and in particular for SMEs.

Information on the RSFF is available online<sup>35</sup>. The Commission will respond to further needs of potential beneficiaries for information on the RSFF (by, e.g., awareness-raising activities in conjunction with the EIB, participation to thematic events).

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<sup>33</sup> See below under 'Innovation dimension of the activity'.

<sup>34</sup> Doc EUCO 2/11.

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.eib.org/products/loans/special/rsff/?lang=en> and [http://ec.europa.eu/invest-in-research/funding/funding02\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/invest-in-research/funding/funding02_en.htm)

### *Approach for 2012*

Private investment in research and innovation in Europe remains below the level necessary to achieve the ambitions of the *'Europe 2020 strategy'*. In addition to grants, other mechanisms – in the form of financial instruments including the RSFF – have proven effective in leveraging private investment by firms, thus mobilising the financial markets and diversifying funding sources for European RDI actions.

The financial crisis has made access to finance for innovative companies even more difficult as banks have become more than ever risk-averse. As a result, risk capital for private investments in RDI is very scarce. In addition, public financial support for RDI at national level is scarce, very fragmented and cyclical depending on the availability of budget resources in the EU Member States.

Improving access to loans for research and innovation actions requires public support to overcome market deficiencies for the financing of European RTD actions, which often involve a high level of risk.

One of the key challenges to be addressed through the RSFF work programme for 2012 is to improve access to the appropriate forms of finance to increase investment, especially private, in RDI in Europe.

The RSFF contributes to addressing the financing needs of innovative projects and companies, with a particular emphasis on SMEs, which vary considerably depending on sectors, types of innovation and stages of business development. It contributes to improving access to finance across the entire spectrum, from research, development to innovation. The RSFF also addresses cross-sector policy goals – as defined in the Cooperation Specific Programme<sup>36</sup> – and related investments/ funding needs.

The 2012 Work Programme will also respond to the recommendations of the independent experts group (IEG) in charge of the interim evaluation of the RSFF<sup>37</sup> relating to the period 2012-2013 and contribute to preparing the next programming period. The IEG was *'highly positive about the first rolling out phase of the RSFF'* and considered the RSFF as *'a uniquely innovative, demand driven instrument, successfully introduced in the European Union's research funding within FP7 and having dramatically expanded the financing for RDI'*. Experts therefore recommended the release of the EU contribution of up to EUR 500 million to the RSFF for the period 2011-2013 under the conditions foreseen in the FP7 legal basis. They also recommended improvements to be implemented for some already supported target groups (in particular SMEs).

Responding to the recommendation of the independent expert group in charge of the interim evaluation of the RSFF for a better support to SMEs and to the conclusions of the European Council on 4 February 2011 asking for a scaling up of the RSFF and for meeting the needs of fast-growing innovative companies, the RSFF 2012 Work Programme will open up a better access to RSFF finance for SMEs. For that purpose, a pilot scheme 'RSFF for SMEs' will be

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<sup>36</sup> With the exception of Socio-Economic Sciences and the Humanities Themes.

<sup>37</sup> See Report of the Independent Expert Group in charge of the RSFF evaluation:

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/index\\_en.cfm?pg=rsff](http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/index_en.cfm?pg=rsff)

and the response: European Commission Communication COM(2011) 52 *'On the Response to the Report of the Expert Group on the Interim Evaluation of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities and to the Report of the Expert Group on the Interim Evaluation of the Risk- Sharing Finance Facility'*:

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/pdf/archive/other\\_reports\\_studies\\_and\\_documents/commission\\_response\\_fp7\\_ie\\_report\\_2011.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none](http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/pdf/archive/other_reports_studies_and_documents/commission_response_fp7_ie_report_2011.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none)

launched in 2012 within the current RSFF. The 'RSFF for SMEs' objective is to encourage banks and other financial intermediaries to extend loans and similar debt financing to SMEs but also to small mid-caps investing in RDI through a specific risk-sharing arrangement between the EU and the EIB Group. EIB has to preserve its excellent rating on the financial market despite the current context of extensive demand for risk-taking coverage. As a consequence, the EIB has currently to bind its risk-taking capacity. As compensation, the EU financial contribution within the present RSFF Agreement could be used as a first-loss piece<sup>38</sup>. Part of the 2012 EU contribution to RSFF from the Cooperation Programme should be dedicated to this pilot scheme, for an expected amount of EUR 120 million.

### *Innovation dimension of the activities*

RSFF activities contribute to achieving the objective of the Innovation Union, as they attract a major increase in private finance and close the market gaps in investing in RDI. The risk-sharing arrangement concluded between the EC and the EIB ensures that activities covered by an RSFF Operation can be from any part of the whole value-chain (e.g. from "blue-sky" research to commercialisation activities, encompassing innovation). The RSFF interim evaluation showed that for the period 2007-2009 the majority of approved loans were dedicated to technological development and innovation activities.

As far as the use of the EU financial contribution is concerned, costs related to Innovation activities are eligible for EC RSFF Operations provided they comply with the provisions of the RSFF Co-operation Agreement between the European Union and the European Investment Bank (as stated in Article A4.6.2: '*Selection of Projects for Financing and the Eligibility Criteria*').

### *Modalities of RSFF implementation*

Within the framework of a maximum contribution of EUR 1 billion for the period 2007-2013, the European Union has provided its first contributions (Coordination and Support Action) to the EIB for RSFF for an amount of EUR 501.5 million for the period 2007-2010<sup>39</sup>, EUR 400 million of which coming from the Cooperation Specific Programme. For 2012 it is expected that the EU will transfer EUR 197.28 million from the Cooperation Specific Programme<sup>40</sup>. The EIB Group is the sole beneficiary of this European Union action. Pursuant to a decision by the EIB Board of Directors, endorsed by the Bank's Governors on 9 June 2006, the European Union contribution will be matched by an equivalent amount from the EIB (up to EUR 1 billion for the period 2007-2013).

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<sup>38</sup> The EU contribution would be used **first** to cover potential losses for a portfolio of loans provided to a specific target group, up to a defined percentage of losses ("first-loss" cushion). Only if potential losses were to exceed the EU contribution, the EIB contribution to the RSFF would be used to cover such further losses on an agreed basis.

<sup>39</sup> For the record, an amount of EUR 70 million was front-loaded from 2010 budget to the 2009 budget in response to the financial and economic crisis for the Cooperation Specific Programme. An additional contribution of EUR 1.5 million in 2009 was requested by the budgetary authority for the Capacities Specific Programme, consequently increasing the total EU contribution for 2007-2010 to EUR 501.5 million.

<sup>40</sup> This amount corresponds to primary-credit appropriations only. It will be complemented by an additional amount of EUR 5.13 million (corresponding to the allocation to RSFF of the EFTA credits of 2,60 %) and by third-country appropriations for an amount of EUR 27 million (the latter being used to partially finance the pilot scheme 'RSFF for SMEs').

The cooperation agreement between the European Union and the European Investment Bank (EIB) with respect to the Risk-Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF) – the RSFF Cooperation agreement – was signed on 5 June 2007 between the EIB and the European Commission (EC) and amended by the EC (on the basis of the Commission Decision C(2008)8058 – 12/12/2008 authorising the Director-General of the Directorate-General for Research to conclude further amendments of the Agreement on behalf of the EC on a number of points specified in the decision). A first amendment entered into force on 26 February 2009, a second one on 8 September 2009 and a third one on 22 December 2010.

This Agreement defines terms and conditions related to RSFF and, in particular, to the use of the European Union contribution in RSFF, the risk-sharing methodology, the indicative annual budget, the reporting conditions, the governance, the rules for establishment of network of financial intermediaries in all Member States and Associated Countries and their related conditions. The first amendment seeks to simplify and harmonise the financial reporting requirements and rules for asset management with other Commission funds managed by the EIB. The entry into force of this amendment allows, *inter alia*, for the allocation to RSFF of the Third Country Appropriations. The second technical amendment specifies the EU contribution for 2009 and simplifies reporting dates. The third technical amendment specifies the EU contribution for 2010, in compliance with the 2009 budgetary authority request.

In compliance with the recommendations of the Independent Experts Group (IEG) in charge of the RSFF interim evaluation, endorsed by the Commission in its Communication of 9 February 2011<sup>41</sup>, the level of the European Union risk coverage, as well as the risk-sharing methodology established in the Agreement between the EC and the EIB for the RSFF implementation will be reviewed. In particular, but not exclusively, the RSFF could move from the current project-by-project approach to the use of more pooling of risk through a portfolio approach in duly justified cases, to better address financing needs of specific groups, like SMEs and small midcaps.

### ***International Co-operation***

In accordance with the provisions of the Cooperation Specific Programme, the EIB may only use the European Union contribution to RSFF to cover risk of operations limited to those borrowers or beneficiaries of guarantees from legal entities from Third Countries other than Associated Countries who participate in FP7 projects and whose costs are eligible for European Union funding.

### ***Dissemination actions***

Since 2006 the EIB, assisted by the Commission services, has carried out an intensive awareness raising campaign to reach stakeholders in as many Member States and Associated Countries as possible. Such awareness-raising actions will continue in 2012, with special focus on the most RDI-intensive sectors in Europe, target groups (including SMEs) and countries which have not yet benefited from the RSFF enough.

RSFF will involve development of financial engineering solutions adapted to the needs of European RDI actions. Such solutions will be implemented and tested by the EIB and its financing partners.

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<sup>41</sup> COM(2011) 52

As soon as such a solution can be considered replicable, case studies of risk-sharing arrangements with financing partners and new products developed specifically for RSFF will be published on the EIB dedicated RSFF web-site.

A number of workshops for representatives of Member States and Associated Countries have been held since the launch to disseminate such financial engineering solutions and seek future co-operation opportunities. Initiatives of this kind will be continued in 2012, both at European and national level.

### ***Cross-thematic approach***

By nature, the RSFF mechanism – through the partnership between the EIB and the EC – responds to a cross-thematic approach to finance RDI activities in a wide spectrum of sectors. Moreover, the EU contribution – coming from the FP7 Cooperation Specific Programme – can be used to support RSFF operations eligible under different contributing Themes<sup>42</sup>.

### ***Contacts with potential clients***

The launch of a RSFF dedicated website and other awareness raising activities started in 2006 have resulted in applications for financing from promoters of European actions of RDI. In parallel, the EIB loan officers have numerous contacts with highly research-intensive companies explaining the existence of new financing options made possible by RSFF.

The objective is to increase the participation in RSFF in as many Member States and Associated Countries as possible in order that all types of legal entities, irrespective of size (including SMEs in particular and research organisations, including universities)(already said) may benefit from this facility for the funding of their activities in eligible actions. The EIB shall use all reasonable efforts to ensure that RSFF is also offered by means of EIB financial-intermediary partners active in as many Member States and Associated Countries as possible and willing to offer RSFF products, in order to support eligible small and medium sized RTD projects in accordance with the EIB's usual rules and procedures. The attention of the Member States and Associated Countries is drawn to the fact that, in case of difficulties in identifying financial-intermediary partners interested in joining the EIB network for RSFF purposes, there will be a dependence on the best efforts of the Member States and Associated Countries themselves to ensure that there is no consequential damage to the interests of participants in their countries.

### ***Addressing the financing needs of the Technology Platforms and Joint Technology Initiatives***

Having identified in 2006 the most dynamic and active Technology Platforms, the EC and the EIB will continue to follow their individual development and monitor the implementation of their strategic research agendas to search for financing needs which the Bank could address. In some cases customised products, individual or wholesale, may be developed, if necessary in co-operation with other financial institutions.

The Commission and the EIB will follow the development of Joint Technology Initiatives and the initiatives undertaken by their stakeholders and advise the stakeholders on options

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<sup>42</sup> See below under A4.6.2 'Selection of Projects for Financing and the Eligibility Criteria'. Contributing Themes do not include Socio-Economic Sciences and Humanities.

available to optimise their financing packages. This may involve bridge financing as well as individual customised financing solutions, specifically adapted to the financing needs.

### ***Implementation arrangements for SMEs***

The EIB can only be directly involved in operations with financing requirements in excess of EUR 7.5 million. Smaller requests will be directed to financing partners established in Member States or Associated Countries with whom the EIB has or will develop risk-sharing arrangements, including Framework Facilities designed to provide intermediated financing to smaller projects, notably those promoted by SMEs.

A Framework Facility is a line of credit advanced by the EIB to banks or other intermediary institutions which on-lend the proceeds to finance small and medium-size investments.

The deployment of Risk-Sharing Framework Facilities across the EU will reflect demand. During an initial phase, this has involved a limited number of leading EIB partner banks, based in Member States or Associated Countries.

Risk-Sharing Framework Facilities will be set up either through the introduction of risk sharing arrangements in existing credit lines or through new facilities or intermediaries.

In 2012 a higher emphasis will be given to supporting and enlisting financial intermediaries contributing to financing RDI-intensive SMEs, notably through relevant incentives to use the pilot action 'RSFF for SMEs', allowing those intermediaries to build sub-portfolios of loans for RDI investments carried out by SMEs and small Midcaps.

The independent expert group recommended an increased RSFF support to SMEs during the second part of the RSFF (2011-2013), including (1) the possible increase of risk-taking on the EU side (beyond the current limits of the EC window) and (2) the move from a project-to-project approach to a portfolio approach (with first-loss taking by the EU instead of risk-sharing between the EU and the EIB for each operation under the RSFF).

These recommendations will take wing with the launch in 2012 of the pilot action 'RSFF for SMEs'. The 'RSFF for SMEs' objective is to encourage banks and other financial intermediaries to extend loans and similar debt financing mainly to innovative SMEs, but also to small mid-caps investing in RDI through a specific risk-sharing arrangement between the EU and the EIB Group (for instance through a possible increase of risk-taking and the adoption of a portfolio and first-loss taking approach on the EU side). Part of the 2012 EU contribution to RSFF from the Cooperation Programme should be dedicated to this pilot scheme, for an expected amount of EUR 120 million. An appropriate level of coordination will be ensured with complementary EU instruments, such as the High Growth and Innovative SME Facility (GIF), a venture-capital instrument funded under the *Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme 2007-13 (CIP)*.

The RSFF Co-operation Agreement between the EC and the EIB will be amended accordingly in the course of 2011.

### ***Governance***

RSFF implementation is managed by the EIB in accordance with its own rules and procedures, with due regard to the terms and conditions of the RSFF Cooperation Agreement (and its subsequent amendments) between the Commission and the Bank. RSFF

implementation and in particular the use of the European Union Contribution is supervised by a Steering Committee, consisting of at least four representatives, at Director level, from the Commission and the Bank respectively.

The Commission will continue to monitor closely the effective use of the European Union Contribution, including ex-post assessments of the successful features of the action, and to regularly report to the Programme Committee. In addition, the Commission will include main findings in this respect to the annual report on research and technological development activities which it will send to the European Parliament and the Council pursuant to Article 190 TFEU. In this context, it is interesting to note that the RSFF interim evaluation carried out with the assistance a group of independent experts in 2010 concluded very positively on the implementation phase of the RSFF.

#### **A4.6.2 Selection of Projects for Financing and the Eligibility Criteria**

The EIB was recognised as a beneficiary of the European Union action in the Council and Parliament decision adopting the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme.

In accordance with the principles established in the Cooperation Specific Programme the EIB will use the European Union contribution on a "first come, first served basis", as provisions and capital allocation within the Bank to cover part of the risks associated with its operations supporting eligible European RTD actions.

The European Union contribution to RSFF may only be used to support activities which can be classified as "fundamental research", "industrial research" or "experimental development" as defined in the Framework for State Aid for Research and Development and Innovation. Prototypes and pilot projects, which are part of "experimental development", may be eligible if they fulfill the conditions specified therein. Innovation activities intended to prepare the commercial use of research results within the time period of the project (such as training, technology management and transfer) are eligible if they are linked to and complementary to research, technological development activities and/or demonstration activities, the later constituting the bulk of any eligible European RTD action.

The RSFF Cooperation Agreement with the Bank comprises a list of exclusions from financing with support of the European Union contribution, reflecting political agreement between the Commission, the Member States and Associated Countries as well as the European Parliament as documented in the 7th Framework Programme and the Cooperation Specific Programme.

#### **A4.6.3 The Commission Right to Object to the Use of the European Union Contribution**

The Commission has a right to express its opinion on each and every financial operation proposed by the EIB to its Board for decision under Article 21 of the EIB Statutes. Where the Commission delivers an unfavourable opinion, the EIB Board may not grant the loan or guarantee concerned, unless it votes unanimously in its favour, the Commission nominee abstaining. Should the Bank proceed with financing despite the Commission's negative opinion the European Union contribution to RSFF may not be used.

In accordance with the Rules of Participation, the Commission may object, in duly justified cases, for the use of the European Union contribution for provisioning and capital allocation for a loan or a guarantee proposed by the EIB. If such a case arises the Commission may conduct an independent, internal or external, review of such a case.



#### **A4.6.4 European Union Financial Contribution to RSFF in 2012**

All Themes of this Work Programme will contribute on a proportional basis, except the Socio-Economic Sciences and the Humanities theme, which does not contribute to RSFF.

Following the interim evaluation of the RSFF, as stated in Annex II to FP7, the Commission endorsed the recommendation of the group of independent experts to release up to EUR 500 million for the period 2011-2013. By voting the EU budget 2011 (EUR 250 million for the RSFF), the Council and the European Parliament have provided their agreement of principle for the release of the second tranche. Moreover, in the conclusions of the Competitiveness Council of 9 March 2011, the Council agreed with the recommendation of the Independent Expert Group, also supported by the Commission, to release an additional EU contribution of up to EUR 500 million for the period 2011-2013.<sup>43</sup>

As from 2009 the Commission proceeds annually with an equal amount of commitment and payment of the European Union contributions to RSFF, based on an the EIB's activity and forecast report and its request for the amount of the contribution estimated necessary for the following year. In compliance with Annex II to FP7, the Commission will commit, in 2012, an amount of EUR 197.28 million<sup>44</sup> coming from the contributing Themes of the Cooperation Specific Programme. Out of the total amount of the EU financial contribution in, 2012, EUR 120 million will be ring fenced for the pilot scheme 'RSFF for SMEs'.

#### **A4.6.5 Process for Recovering and Reallocating Unused European Union Funds**

In order to mitigate the risk of accumulation of unused funds the multi-annual planning will be adjusted on the basis of reports including pipeline report (summary of information on projects considered for financing) and demand forecasts. Amounts committed but not earmarked, blocked or paid to the EIB – i.e. not used for the operations of RSFF – will be reallocated to other activities of the contributing themes.

Notwithstanding the above and unless the Council and the European Parliament adopting the Common Strategic Framework for the period post 2014 decide otherwise, the Commission will recover from the EIB any unused funds of the European Union contribution (including interest and income) which on 31 December 2013 have not been used or committed to be used or are required to cover eligible costs, as defined in the RSFF Cooperation Agreement.

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<sup>43</sup> See final Council conclusions on the interim evaluation of the RSFF on 04/03/2011: "*Regarding the role of the Risk-Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF) in FP7, the Council WELCOMES the finding of the Independent Experts Group (IEG) that RSFF has been a success, both in quantitative and qualitative terms and that very considerable results on an EU-wide scale have been achieved since its launch. The Council therefore AGREES with the recommendation of the IEG, also supported by the Commission, to release an additional EU contribution of up to EUR 500 million for the period 2011-2013 under the conditions foreseen in the FP7 Decision in accordance with the applicable procedures. The Council CALLS ON the Commission, in liaison with the European Investment Bank, to urgently examine ways and means to improve the take-up by currently underrepresented target groups, in particular SMEs, universities and research infrastructures with a view to achieving significant progress in 2012. A specific SME lending mechanism within the current facility is being designed by the Commission, the European Investment Fund and the EIB in this respect. The Council is looking forward to the Commission proposals called for by the European Council for scaling up the RSFF*".

<sup>44</sup> This amount corresponds to primary-credit appropriations only. It will be complemented by an additional amount of EUR 5.13 million (corresponding to the allocation to RSFF of the EFTA credits of 2,60 %) and by third-country appropriations for an amount of EUR 27 million (the latter being used to partially finance the pilot scheme 'RSFF for SMEs' ).

**A4.7 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW FOR GENERAL ACTIVITIES FOR 2012**

The following provides a financial overview for 2012 of the activities which are funded across the Cooperation Programme:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Funding for 2012</b>
A4.1 CORDIS	EUR 7.90 million
A4.2 ERA-NET scheme (cross-thematic)	EUR 1.06 million <i>broken down as follows:</i>
A4.2.2.1 ERA-NET Actions *	EUR 0.00 million
A4.2.2.2 ERA-NET Plus Actions *	EUR 0.00 million
A4.2.2.3 Horizontal Support Actions	EUR 1.00 million
A4.2.3 External expertise	EUR 0.06 million
A4.3 Research Organizations	EUR 0.00 million
A4.4 EUREKA	EUR 0.35 million
A4.5 COST	EUR 43.30 million <i>broken down as follows:</i>
A4.5a COST: Baseline Contribution	EUR 30.00 million
A4.5b COST: Additional Contribution	EUR 13.30 million
A4.6 RSFF**	EUR 229.41 million
<b>Total:</b>	<b>EUR 282.02 million</b>

\* ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus actions are funded directly by the Themes.

\*\* This amount is foreseen to be released according to the conclusions of the interim evaluation of the RSFF. This amount of EUR 229.41 million corresponds to primary-credit appropriations of EUR 197.28 million, complemented by an additional amount of EUR 5.13 million (corresponding to the allocation to RSFF of the EFTA credits of 2,60 %) and by third-country appropriations for an amount of EUR 27 million (the latter being used to partially finance the pilot scheme 'RSFF for SMEs').

**Budget Figures in This Work Programme**

All budgetary figures given in this work programme are indicative. The final budgets may vary following the evaluation of proposals.

The final budget awarded to actions implemented through calls for proposals may vary:

- The total budget of the call may vary by up to 10% of the total value of the indicated budget for each call; and
- Any repartition of the call budget may also vary by up to 10% of the total value of the indicated budget for the call.

For actions not implemented through calls for proposals:

- The final budgets for evaluation, monitoring and review may vary by up to 20% of the indicated budgets for these actions;
- The final budget awarded for all other actions not implemented through calls for proposals may vary by up to 10% of the indicated budget for these actions.