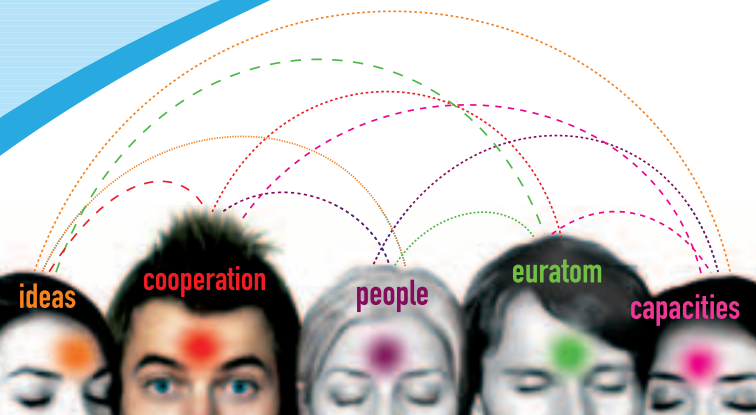




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FP7 in Brief

How to get involved in the
EU 7th Framework Programme for Research



a pocket guide for newcomers

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Who might find this booklet useful?

Do terms like “FP6”, “CORDIS”, “Specific Programme”, “Call for proposals” sound rather familiar to you? Have you participated in earlier EU Research Framework Programmes? If so, then you should probably stop reading here. If not, then the following pages might bring you a little closer to participation in “FP7”. This document is a simple guide on how to get involved in the 7th Framework Programme for EU Research (FP7), which is the European Union’s main instrument for funding research in Europe.

The booklet will tell you which areas and activities the EU plans to fund under the programme, and where to go if you want to apply for that funding.

More comprehensive information on each of the following sections can be found on the following dedicated websites:

www.ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/

www.cordis.europa.eu/fp7/



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Step 1

What is FP7? The basics

The complete name of FP7 is *7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development*. It will last for seven years from 2007 until 2013. The programme has a total budget of over € 50 billion. This represents a substantial increase compared with the previous Framework Programme FP6 (41% at 2004 prices, 63% at current prices), a reflection of the high priority of research in Europe. Indeed, FP7 is a key tool to respond to Europe's needs in terms of jobs and competitiveness, and to maintain leadership in the global knowledge economy.

This money will (for the most part) be spent on grants to research actors all over Europe and beyond, in order to co-finance research, technological development and demonstration projects. Grants are determined on the basis of calls for proposals and a peer review process, which are highly competitive.

In order to complement national research programmes, activities funded from FP7 must have a “European added value”. One key aspect of the European added value is the transnationality of many actions: research projects are carried out by consortia which include participants from different European (and other) countries; fellowships in FP7 require mobility over national borders. Indeed, many research challenges (e.g. fusion research, etc), are so complex that they can only be addressed at European level.

But in FP7 there is also a new action for “individual teams” with no obligation for transnational cooperation. In this case, the “European

added value” lies in raising the competition between scientists in fundamental “frontier” research from the national to the European level.

FP7 is the natural successor to the previous programme, FP6. It is the result of years of consultation with the research community from both the public and private sectors, with economic actors, and with political decision makers in Europe. FP7 is both larger and more comprehensive than its predecessors. It is also more flexible, with simplified procedures.

The Framework Programmes for Research have two main strategic objectives:

- to strengthen the scientific and technological base of European industry;
- to encourage its international competitiveness, while promoting research that supports EU policies.

How to find your way through

A 7 year programme with over € 50 billion to spend, reflecting all aspects of EU research policy, is – quite naturally - of a certain complexity. A newcomer might indeed get lost in the panoply of themes, activities, funding schemes, etc. But help is at hand!

In all EU Member States, in the countries associated with FP7 and in several other countries, National Contact Points (“NCPs”) have been set up to give personalized help and advice to researchers and

organisations intending to participate. Contact your NCP by phone, fax or e-mail in your national language, and explain your situation and your ideas.

The NCP's job is it to point you to the part of FP7 that might be of interest to you and to help you with your application. With their support, getting through the necessary paperwork will be much easier. You will find the address details of your National Contact Point at www.cordis.europa.eu/fp7/get-support_en.html

Why collaborate?

The EU policies of developing research for the global knowledge-based economy focus increasingly on collaborative research, both within the EU and with external research partners. Coordinating national or European teams, setting up research networks, and increasing the mobility of individual researchers are at the heart of such policies. Bringing together research teams from different countries is also a way of countering the fragmented nature of the European research landscape.

For the first time in the EU research programmes, FP7 can now also support research projects by single researchers/teams through the investigator-led programmes of the new European Research Council (see www.erc.europa.eu).

Step 2

Who can apply?

Which types of participants?

Participation in FP7 is open to a wide range of organisations and individuals:

- research groups at universities or research institutes
- companies intending to innovate
- small or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
- SME associations or groupings
- public or governmental administration (local, regional or national)
- early-stage researchers (postgraduate students)
- experienced researchers
- institutions running research infrastructures of transnational interest
- organisations and researchers from third countries
- international organisations
- civil society organisations

The above list is only indicative, not exhaustive.

Different participation rules apply, depending on the research initiative in question.

From which countries?

As a general principle, FP7 is open to participation from any country in the world. The procedures for participation and funding possibilities vary for different groups of countries.

Quite naturally, the EU Member States enjoy the broadest rights and access to funding. The same conditions apply to Member States and to countries associated to FP7 (countries paying a share to the overall budget of FP7). In FP 6 these countries included EEA countries (Iceland, Norway, Lichtenstein), candidate countries (e.g. Turkey, Croatia), as well as Israel and Swizerland.

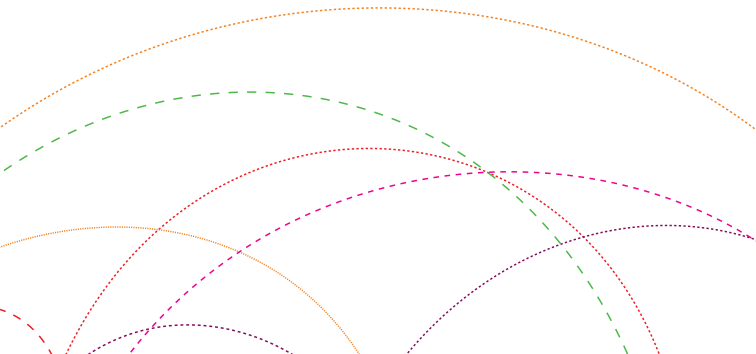
Another important group are the International Cooperation Partner Countries (e.g. Russia and other Eastern European and Central Asian states, developing countries, Mediterranean partner countries, Western Balkans countries). Participants from these countries are entitled to funding under the same conditions as EU Member States. The only restriction for them is that consortia must first have the required minimum number of participants from Member States or associated countries.

Participation from industrialised high-income countries is also possible on a self-financing basis, with EU funding granted only in exceptional cases.

Cooperation with “third countries” is explicitly encouraged in FP7. Two key objectives apply here:

- to support European competitiveness in selected fields through strategic partnerships with third countries, and initiatives that encourage the best third-country scientists to work in and with Europe;
- to address specific problems that either have a global character or are commonly faced by third countries, on the basis of mutual interest and mutual benefit.

Finally, with respect to third countries, FP7 also provides for international outgoing and incoming fellowships to foster collaboration with research groups outside Europe.



Step 3

How is FP 7 structured?
What are the “Specific
Programmes”?

The Specific Programmes constitute the five major building blocks of FP7:

Cooperation

The core of FP7, representing two thirds of the overall budget, is the *Cooperation* programme. It fosters collaborative research across Europe and other partner countries through projects by transnational consortia of industry and academia. Research will be carried out in ten key thematic areas:

- Health
- Food, agriculture and fisheries, and biotechnology
- Information and communication technologies
- Nanosciences, nanotechnologies, materials and new production technologies
- Energy
- Environment (including climate change)
- Transport (including aeronautics)
- Socio-economic sciences and the humanities
- Space
- Security

Ideas

The *Ideas* programme will support “frontier research” solely on the basis of scientific excellence. Research may be carried out in any area of science or technology, including engineering, socio-economic sciences and the humanities. In contrast with the *Cooperation* programme, there is no obligation for cross-border partnerships. Projects are implemented by “individual teams” around a “principal investigator”. The programme is implemented via the new *European Research Council* (ERC). For more information, see www.erc.europa.eu

People

The *People* programme provides support for researcher mobility and career development, both for researchers inside the European Union and internationally. It is implemented via a set of Marie Curie actions, providing fellowships and other measures to help researchers build their skills and competences throughout their careers:

- Initial training of researchers - Marie Curie Networks
- Industry-academia partnerships
- Co-funding of regional, national and international mobility programmes
- Intra-European fellowships
- International dimension - outgoing and incoming fellowships, international cooperation scheme, reintegration grants
- Marie Curie Awards

Capacities

The *Capacities* programme strengthens the research capacities that Europe needs if it is to become a thriving knowledge-based economy. It covers the following activities:

- Research infrastructures
- Research for the benefit of SMEs
- Regions of Knowledge
- Research Potential
- Science in Society
- Specific activities of international cooperation

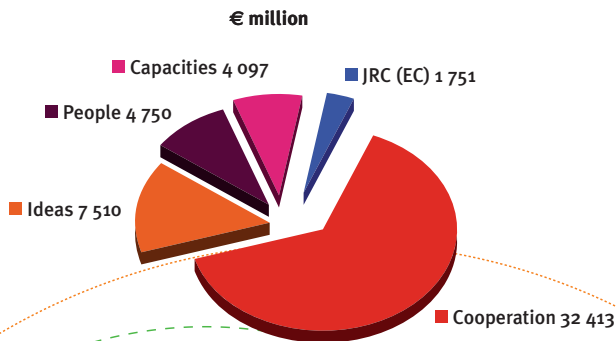
Nuclear Research

The programme for nuclear research and training activities will comprise research, technological development, international cooperation, dissemination of technical information, and exploitation activities, as well as training. Two specific programmes are planned:

- the first programme includes: fusion energy research (in particular ITER), and nuclear fission and radiation protection;

- the second programme covers the activities of the Joint Research Centre (JRC) in the field of nuclear energy, including nuclear waste management, and environmental impact, nuclear safety, and nuclear security. In addition to direct actions in the nuclear field, the JRC carries out research in a number of other areas to provide scientific and technological support to EU policy making (see www.jrc.ec.europa.eu/).

FP7 budget (€ 50 521 million, current prices)



Note: Euratom FP: € 2.7 billion over 5 years – not included above

Step 4

What are the “Funding schemes”?

“Funding schemes” are the types of projects, by which FP7 is implemented. They are the following:

Collaborative projects

Collaborative projects are focused research projects with clearly defined scientific and technological objectives and specific expected results (such as developing new knowledge or technology to improve European competitiveness). They are carried out by consortia made up of participants from different countries, and from industry and academia.

Networks of excellence

The *Networks of Excellence* are designed for research institutions willing to combine and functionally integrate a substantial part of their activities and capacities in a given field, in order to create a European “virtual research centre” in this field.

This is achieved through a “Joint Programme of Activities” based on the integrated and complementary use of resources from entire research units, departments, laboratories or large teams. The implementation of this Joint Programme of Activities will require a formal commitment from the organisations integrating part of their resources and their activities.

Coordination and support actions

These are actions that cover not the research itself, but the coordination and networking of projects, programmes and policies. This includes, for example:

- coordination and networking activities, dissemination and use of knowledge
- studies or expert groups assisting the implementation of the FP
- support for transnational access to major research infrastructures
- actions to stimulate the participation of SMEs, civil society and their networks
- support for cooperation with other European research schemes (e.g. “frontier research”).

Individual projects

Projects carried out by individual national or multinational research teams, lead by a “principal investigator”, funded by the European Research Council (ERC).

Support for training and career development of researchers

Training and career development for researchers from across the European Union and its research partners, through a range of support actions named after Marie Curie.

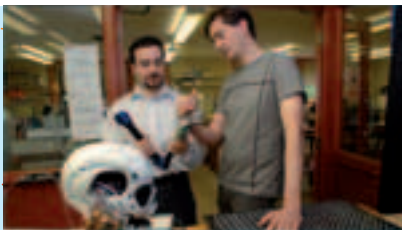
Research for the benefit of specific groups – in particular SMEs

Research and technological development projects where the bulk of the research is carried out by actors such as universities, research centres or other legal entities, for the benefit of specific groups, in particular SMEs, or for civil society organisations and their networks.

Talking about money

The basic principle of funding in FP7 is co-financing. This means that, in general, the Commission does not “purchase” research services by placing contracts and paying a price. Rather, it gives grants to projects, thus contributing a certain percentage to the overall costs.

The maximum reimbursement rates to the costs of a project depend on the funding scheme, the legal status of the participants and the type of activity. The standard reimbursement rate for research and technological development activities is 50%. Certain legal entities can receive up to 75% (non-profit public bodies, SMEs, research organisations, higher education establishments). For demonstration activities, the reimbursement rate may reach 50%. For other activities (consortium management, networking, training, coordination, dissemination etc.), the reimbursement can be up to 100% of the eligible costs. The 100% rate applies also to frontier research actions under the European Research Council.



Step 5

How to apply for funding

‘Work Programmes’ and ‘Calls for Proposals’

The concrete plans for implementing the Specific Programmes (see above) are announced by the European Commission in annual ‘Work Programmes’. These work programmes include the schedule of ‘Calls for Proposals’, commonly known just as ‘Calls’, to be published during the year. Each Call usually covers specific research areas, and you may have to wait until the publication of a Call which covers your exact area of interest.

How will I know when a Call for Proposals is issued?

All Calls are announced in the EU’s Official Journal (which is the official source of EU documents). The annual work programmes and the full texts of the Calls are published on the FP7 section of CORDIS, the web site dedicated to EU-supported research www.cordis.europa.eu/fp7/

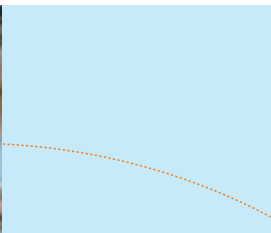
CORDIS is continuously updated with the latest information on Calls for proposals, as well as other information and services related to Community research. CORDIS will help you find information – and plan your proposal.

Step 6

How to respond to a Call

Submit your proposal

You respond to a Call by submitting your proposal. Proposals may be submitted at any time after a Call opens, until the deadline. The *Guide for Applicants* (also published on CORDIS) will guide you through the process, and point you towards other useful documents. A Web-based electronic online tool called EPSS ('Electronic Proposal Submission Service') is the obligatory channel for submission of proposals.



What happens after I submit a proposal?

After the deadline for the Call, all the proposals submitted are evaluated by a panel of independent evaluators, who are recognised specialists in the relevant fields. The panel will check the proposals against a published set of criteria to see if the quality of research proposed is worthy of funding.

The key criteria used for this evaluation are explained in the *Guide for Applicants*.

And if my proposal is accepted?

For successful proposals, the European Commission enters into financial and scientific/technical negotiations with your consortium on the details of the project. Finally, a grant agreement between each participant and the Commission is drawn up. This sets out the rights and obligations of the beneficiaries and the European Community, including the EU's financial contribution to your research costs.

For additional information on all issues related to Calls (including step-by-step advice on how to submit a proposal, eligibility criteria, evaluations, Intellectual Property issues, etc.), please refer to the *Guide for Applicants*, available from CORDIS at www.cordis.europa.eu/fp7/

Step 7

Where can I get more help or information?

- Go to the EU *National Contact Point* (NCP) in your country, whose job is to provide advice to potential applicants for EU research funding. NCPs, each knowledgeable about the various aspects of FP7, are established in every Member State and in countries associated with FP7. See the list of NCP addresses at

www.cordis.europa.eu/fp7/get-support_en.html

- For particular Calls, first check the detailed *Guide for Applicants*, which is included in the Call documentation.
- Consult the FP7 web site on CORDIS at

www.cordis.europa.eu/fp7/

This site contains a great deal of information about FP7, including the latest information updates, the calendar of Calls for proposals, the text of the Calls, frequently-asked questions (FAQs), and more.

- Visit the FP7 section of the European Commission's Research web site, at

www.ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/

This site contains simple, downloadable fact sheets explaining FP7 in 23 different languages.

- Contact the dedicated *Research Enquiry Service*, which will assist those new to participation in EU Framework Programmes, at www.ec.europa.eu/research/enquiries

For general questions about the European Union, you can contact *Europe Direct* either via the Single Freephone Number (00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11) from any Member State, or via the chargeable number (+32-2-299 96 96) from anywhere else in the world.

For additional information on EU Research, FP7 and the European Research Area:

www.ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/

www.ec.europa.eu/research/enquiries

www.cordis.europa.eu/fp7/

www.erc.europa.eu



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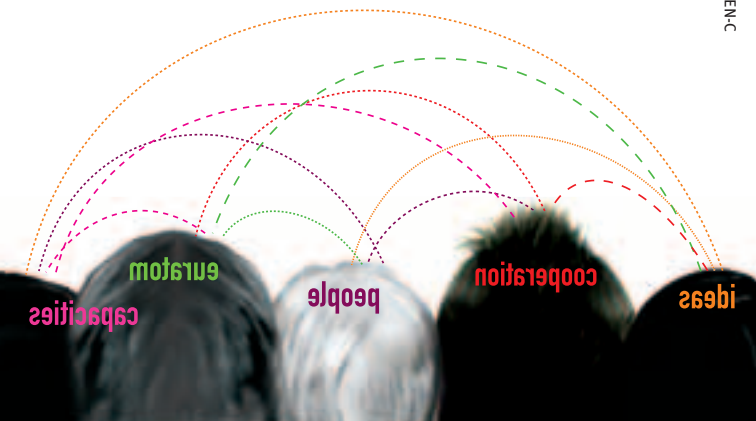
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