
Editorial

The European Union's Fifth Framework for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration (FP5) (1998-2002).

1. What is the FP5 ?

The FP5 is the fifth in the series of 5-year E.U. Framework Programmes, launched in February 1999. It provides a coherent European framework for supporting research and technological development, as part of the E.U.'s research policy for the period 1998-2002. The FP5 confirms the E.U.'s increased commitment to research as the key to promoting an environment favourable to innovation, by encouraging technology transfer, ensuring the availability of venture capital, helping to protect intellectual property rights and developing human resources. The FP5 is aimed at promoting a number of the E.U.'s major policy thrusts into the year 2000, including strengthening the E.U.'s competitiveness in the global learning economy, creating new jobs, improving the quality of life, and meeting the challenge of enlargement.

The programme is concerned with societal and economic needs and how scientific research can contribute to these. The FP5 therefore reflects a problem-solving approach; instead of featuring a list of areas by scientific discipline, it has identified a limited number of problem-solving areas, targeting common priorities. The orientation of the FP5 is not on science *per se* but science at the service of the people, to improve their living conditions.

2. How does the FP5 work ?

The FP5 is made up of 4 thematic programmes and 3 horizontal programmes of research activity (Table 1). The European Commission published the first FP5 calls for proposals by programme in the Official Journal of the European Communities in March 1999. The calls for proposals were also published on the E.U.'s website for S&T information, CORDIS, which also provides all the background information and documents relating to the calls, including the Work Programme, Guide for Proposers and proposal forms for each of the seven programmes and the Evaluation Manual. An innovation of the FP5 is that the Commission is encouraging the submission of proposal forms electronically, using the Protocol which may be downloaded from the CORDIS website. Each of the work programmes provides an indicative road map of the calls to be issued over the next four years. It is important to note that a number of the calls are open calls and proposals may therefore be submitted at any time of the year. When a call does not appear on the stipulated date, an advance notice appears, indicating when the call in question will eventually appear.

3. Which organizations are eligible to participate in the FP5 ?

Legally established organisations and individuals in EU Member States and Associated States may participate with Community funding in all areas of the FP5.

Thematic programmes :

1. Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources (16%)
 - 1.1 Food, nutrition and health
 - 1.2 Control of infectious diseases
 - 1.3 The "cell" factory
 - 1.4 Environment and health
 - 1.5 Sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry, and integrated development of rural areas
 - 1.6 The ageing population and disabilities
 - Generic RTD activities
 - Support for research infrastructures
2. User-friendly information society (24%)
 - 2.1 Systems and services for the citizen
 - 2.2 New methods of work and electronic commerce
 - 2.3 Multimedia content and tools
 - 2.4 Essential technologies and infrastructures
 - Generic RTD activities
 - Support for research infrastructures
3. Competitive and sustainable growth (18%)
 - 3.1 Innovative products, processes and organisation
 - 3.2 Sustainable mobility and intermodality
 - 3.3 Land transport and marine technologies
 - 3.4 New perspectives for aeronautics
 - Generic RTD activities
 - Support for research infrastructures
4. Energy, Environment and sustainable development (14%) and Euratom (7%)
 - 4.1 Sustainable management and quality of water
 - 4.2 Global change, climate and biodiversity
 - 4.3 Sustainable marine ecosystems
 - 4.4 The city of tomorrow and cultural heritage
 - 4.5 Clearer energy systems including renewables
 - 4.6 Economic and efficient energy for a competitive Europe
 - Generic RTD activities
 - Support for research infrastructures

Horizontal programmes:

5. International role of Community research (INCO) (3%)
 - 5.1 States in the phase of pre-accession
 - 5.2 NIS and those CEECs not included in 5.1
 - 5.3 Mediterranean partner countries (INCO-MED)
 - 5.4 Developing countries (INCO-DC)
 - 5.5 Emerging economies and industrialised countries
 - 5.6 Training : INCO Bursaries
 - 5.7 Coordination
6. Promoting innovation and the participation of SMEs (2%)
 - 6.1 Promoting innovation.
 - 6.2 Encouraging SME participation
 - 6.3 Joint Innovation/SME activities
7. Improving human research potential & the socio-economic knowledge base(9%)
 - 7.1 Training and mobility of researchers
 - 7.2 Access to research infrastructures
 - 7.3 Promoting scientific and technological excellence
 - 7.4 Improving the socio-economic knowledge base
 - 7.5 Development of science and technology policies in Europe

Table 1. FP5's main programmes (Key Actions and budget breakdown).

Legally established organisations and individuals in other countries with or without cooperation agreements and international organisations may participate in all areas of the FP5 without Community funding on a self-funded project-by-project basis.

The second category of organisations and individuals may only benefit from Community funding:

- exceptionally, if it is essential for achieving the objectives of the project,
- under the relevant component of the INCO Programme (where applicable), and
- through subcontracting of work from one of the main project partners (Category a).

The following legally established entities may participate in the FP5:

- individuals
- industrial and commercial firms, with special incentives for small and medium-sized enterprises
- universities
- research organisations (private and government)
- international organisations

4. How may these organisations participate ?

Participation in FP5 is on a partnership basis. Proposals submitted to the Commission should demonstrate a European dimension and as a general rule, should involve at least:

- two legal entities established in two different EU Member States, or
- a legal entity established in a EU Member State and an Associated State

5. Malta's Status

Malta is currently negotiating the necessary Financing Agreement for its participation in FP5 as an Associated State. Individuals and legal entities established in Malta can participate with Associated Member status in calls for proposals with a closing deadline of September 2000 onwards.

Certain actions may vary from this rule - either by requiring more partners or by permitting a single one. It is therefore important to consult the relevant information package. The consortium jointly develops a research proposal and one of the EU partners in the consortium must agree to become the Project Coordinator. The latter, in consultation with the other partners, completes the necessary forms, including a detailed programme of work and the responsibilities and budgets for each of the partners. The Coordinator submits the duly completed forms directly to the Commission by the stipulated deadline. Projects are evaluated by the EU Commission in accordance with a set of specific selection criteria: eligibility, scientific excellence, economic development, Community added value and contribution to EU social objectives.

A. Shared-cost actions

- Research and technological development (R&D) projects - projects producing new knowledge intended to develop or improve products, processes or services and/or to meet the needs of Community policies. EU Funding: 50% of total eligible costs.
- Demonstration projects - projects designed to prove the viability of new technologies offering potential economic advantage but which cannot be commercialised directly. EU funding: 35% of total eligible costs.
- Combined R&D and demonstration projects - projects combining the above elements. EU funding: 35-50% of total eligible costs.
- Support for access to research infrastructures - (only implemented under the IHP Programme) actions enhancing access to research infrastructures for Community researchers. EU funding: 100% of the eligible costs.
- SME "Exploratory" awards - support for exploratory phase of a project of up to 12 months (e.g. feasibility studies, validation and partner search). EU funding: 75% of total eligible costs.
- SME "Cooperative" research projects - projects enabling at least 3 mutually independent SMEs from at least 2 Member States or one Member State and an Associated State to jointly commission research carried out by a third party. EU funding: 50% of total eligible costs.

B. Training Fellowships

- Marie Curie fellowships where individual researchers apply directly to the European Commission.
- Host fellowships where institutions apply to host a number of researchers.

In both cases, EU funding: up to 100% of additional eligible costs.

C. Research training networks and thematic networks

- Training networks for promoting training-through-research especially of researchers at pre-doctoral and at post-doctoral level (these are only implemented under the IHP Programme).
- Thematic networks for bringing together for example manufacturers, users, universities, research centres around a given S&T objective. These include coordination networks between Community funded projects.

For setting up and maintaining both types of networks, EU funding: up to 100% of eligible costs.

D. Concerted actions

- Actions coordinating RTD projects already in receipt of national funding, for example to exchange experiences, to reach critical mass, to disseminate results etc. EU funding: up to 100% of eligible costs.

E. Accompanying Measures

- Actions contributing to the implementation of a Specific Programme or the preparation of future activities of the programme. They may also prepare for or support other indirect RTD actions.

EU funding: up to 100% of total eligible costs.

Table 2. Types of proposals eligible for E.U. funding

More detailed information, including roadmaps of current and future calls can be obtained from

<http://www.cordis.lu>

A local web page is being set up at

<http://www.mcst.org.mt>

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