

7. Framework Programme: aid for organizations and companies

The last round of file ideas for projects within the 7th Research framework program has been started. The European Commission will support innovative projects over eight billion euros to Europe for global competition to strengthen and protect jobs. In addition to innovation, the focus is on health, environment, urbanization and waste disposal. The promotion is organizations and companies in all EU-member-states and partner countries open.

The European Commission has announced the final and biggest ever set of calls for proposals for research under its Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). In total, €8.1 billion will support projects and ideas that will boost Europe's competitiveness and tackle issues such as human health, protecting the environment and finding new solutions to growing challenges linked to urbanisation and managing waste. The funding – which is open to organisations and businesses in all EU Member States and partner countries - makes up the lion's share of the EU's proposed €10.8 billion research budget for 2013. This announcement comes just days after EU leaders emphasised the importance of research and innovation in the Compact for Growth and Jobs.

European Research, Innovation and Science Commissioner Máire Geoghegan-Quinn said: "Knowledge is the currency of the global economy. If Europe wants to continue to compete in the 21st century, we must support the research and innovation that will generate growth and jobs, now and in the future. The high level of competition for EU funding makes sure that taxpayers' money goes to the best projects that tackle issues that concern all of us."

Especially for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)

The calls target both innovation and a range of societal challenges, building a bridge to Horizon 2020, the next funding programme for EU research from 2014-2020. In total €4.8 billion is dedicated to thematic research priorities. Industrial innovation will be supported through close-to-market activities such as piloting, demonstration, standardisation and technology transfer. Special attention will be given to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in a package worth up to €1.2 billion. Around €2.7 billion will help cement Europe's place as a world class destination for researchers, mainly through individual grants from the European Research Council (€1.75 billion), and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (€963 million) for research training and mobility.

To help spread excellent research more widely, a new "European Research Area Chairs" initiative is being prepared. A €12 million pilot call will select a total of five ERA Chairs, to be hosted by universities or other eligible research institutions in less developed regions in five different EU countries. To host an ERA Chair, institutions must demonstrate their ability to support excellence through providing the necessary facilities and complying with European Research Area principles such as open recruitment.

Most of the calls for proposals (invitations to bid for funds) will be published on 10 July, with some further specific calls to follow in the autumn.

Background

Innovative thematic research priorities in this FP7 call include: around €155 million for "Oceans of the future", to support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors; around €365 million for technologies that will transform urban areas into sustainable "Smart Cities and Communities"; some €147 million to combat the rise of drug-resistant bacteria; and nearly €100 million dedicated to innovative solutions for managing fresh water resources. The calls also support the Digital Agenda's ICT research funding targets, with almost €1.5 billion going to the thematic area of information and communication technologies.

There will be around €970 million of financing for SMEs under the thematic research priorities. Other measures include an extra €150 million for guarantees to leverage €1 billion in loans for SMEs and mid-caps (slightly larger firms up to 500 employees). The €8.1 billion announced today is expected to leverage an additional €6 billion of public and private investment in research, and estimated to increase employment by 210,000 in the short-term and generate, over a 15 year period, an additional €75 billion in growth.

The FP7 framework programme, launched in 2007, has a total budget of €55 billion for research and innovation. It has so far

supported some 19,000 projects involving over 79,000 participants (universities, research organisations and businesses) across all EU Member States, with a total EU investment so far of €25.3 billion. By 2013 it is estimated that FP7 will also have directly supported some 55,000 individual researchers' careers.

The EU's total research budget includes funds that are not included in the calls announced today. These include funding under the Euratom treaty covering nuclear energy research (€993 million), or to help support "joint technology initiatives" with industry (€751 million) or "joint programmes" set up between Member States. The total budget also includes funding for the Commission's Joint Research Centre and the Commission's contribution to the Risk Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF), managed by the European Investment Bank Group.

Press release

12-Jul-2012

Source: Europäische Kommission (09.07.2012)