



## Welcome to the first FEAST Newsletter

It is with great pleasure that we launch the first FEAST newsletter, which we hope will be an important tool to communicate with those interested in research collaboration between Europe and Australia. The intention is for the newsletter to be produced at least quarterly and grow in parallel with the overall FEAST initiative.

FEAST has stimulated considerable interest and expectations with enthusiastic support from many researchers and research policy-makers alike. At the same time, FEAST is still in an early formative stage and we struggle to balance our ambitions against the current resources available. However, a tremendous amount has been achieved in a remarkably short time - the whole initiative was just an abstract idea a mere eight months ago, was initially launched last November, and has been further developed since then.

Thanks to the support from the Embassy of France, the on-line database has now been launched, together with an improved website (see article below).

At the same time the arrangements for the first FEAST event (FEAST1) to be held in Canberra on 30–31 May 2001 are progressing apace. The organisers are very grateful for all the support offered and impressed with the calibre of the individuals prepared to make presentations (see overleaf for detail).

FEAST1 will mark the conclusion of a number of inclusive processes currently in train, which will define the future role and structure of FEAST and the practical services it will deliver. So take the opportunity to have your say by making an input into the working party and working groups, and make FEAST work for you!

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## Launch of on-line database and new website

[www.france.net.au/feast](http://www.france.net.au/feast)

A searchable on-line database has been developed and is now up and running. The database gives the details of those registered on FEAST, and can be used to find potential collaborators. Searches at this stage are possible by last name, country and, importantly, discipline. The more individuals registering on the FEAST database, the more powerful this tool will become – so if you haven't already done so, register today! If you have registered, check your record and update and/or correct it as appropriate. The database has a number of other applications, such as a tool to use for targeted email messages from the FEAST stakeholders on collaborative opportunities.

The website has been redesigned and includes a single portal of information services. This gives funding sources, formal cooperative mechanisms, links about research in Australia and Europe as well as links for those travelling to Europe and Australia.

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## Statistics on Registrations

As at 19 February 2001, some 623 individuals had registered on FEAST. Australian researchers accounted for 372, European Researchers for 142 and the remainder described themselves as either research administrators or other. A number of individuals have multiple nationalities and on this basis the number of Europeans registered increase to 299, with France accounting for 31% of this total, the UK 28% and Italy and Spain around 10% each. Registrations by Australian State are led by NSW and Queensland (24% each), followed by Victoria (20%) and the ACT (17%).

Further details are available at <http://www.france.net.au/feast/results/>

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## Aims and Objectives of FEAST

The Forum for European-Australian Science and Technology cooperation (FEAST) has the overall aims of:

- ✓ highlighting existing multilateral and bilateral Science and Technology cooperation between Europe and Australia; and
  - ✓ improving this cooperation, particularly multilateral cooperation, through identifying priorities and enhancing the quality, quantity and visibility of future action.
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## FEAST 1

The first physical event under the FEAST banner is to be held in Canberra on 30 – 31 May with the theme *Enhancing Research through Collaboration and Linkages*. 220 Delegates will meet over two days to discuss some of the critical issues impacting on European-Australian research cooperation.

This 'feast' of minds will have the benefit of keynote addresses from Senator Nick Minchin (Minister of Industry, Science and Resources); Dr David Kemp (Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs); Mr Achilleas Mitsos (Director-General, Research DG, European Commission); Dr Robin Batterham (Australian Chief Scientist); and Professor Vicki Sara (Chair, Australian Research Council) along with many other prominent international and national speakers.

A vital component of the proceedings will be four parallel workshops charged with making recommendations for action. The workshops will address the following topics:

WS1: *Developing international exchanges of researchers*

Chair: Prof Sue Serjeantson (President, Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies)

WS2: *Applied research and innovation – establishing effective international linkages*

Chair: Prof Peter Robinson (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of Wollongong)

WS3: *The Australian experience of FP4 and FP5 - the lessons for FP6*

Chair: Prof Ron Johnston (Executive Director, ACIIC, University of Sydney)

WS4: *Emerging research trends and opportunities*

Chair: Prof Frank Larkins (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, University of Melbourne)

The workshops will consider discussion papers prepared by the workshop teams, with the broader research community encouraged to provide input to the issues being considered through on-line discussion forums to be developed over the coming weeks.

Similarly, a virtual working group, under the chairmanship of Prof Michael Wagner (Head of School of Computing, University of Canberra), will consider *The user needs and future directions for FEAST*. Participation from the wider research community is not only encouraged, but critical if FEAST is to become a relevant instrument to facilitate European-Australian cooperation

For further detail on these forums, see: <http://www.france.net.au/feast/activity/>

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## Expressions of Interest to attend

Due to the level of interest, attendance at FEAST1 will be by *invitation only*. If you would like to be considered as a Delegate you are encouraged to submit an Expression of Interest as soon as possible.

For further details see: <http://www.france.net.au/feast/interest/>.

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## Webcast

To allow those unable to physically attend FEAST1 to participate, we hope to web cast the two morning plenary sessions. Further information on this element will be posted on the FEAST website when available.

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## Contacts

For further details visit <http://www.france.net.au/feast> . Subsequent questions can be sent to:

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## FEAST Stakeholders

*European:* Embassy of Austria; Royal Belgian Embassy; Royal Danish Embassy; Embassy of Finland; Embassy of France; Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany; Embassy of Greece; Embassy of Ireland; Embassy of Italy; Royal Netherlands Embassy; Embassy of Portugal; Embassy of Spain; Embassy of Sweden; British High Commission; and the Delegation of the European Commission to Australia and New Zealand.

*Australian:* Australian Academy of Science; Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering; Australian National University; Australian Research Council; Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation; Cooperative Research Centres' Association; Department of Industry, Science and Resources; National Health and Medical Research Council; and Rural R&D Corporations Chairs Committee.

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The second FEAST Newsletter will be issued in May 2001 just prior to FEAST1.

This will feature summaries of the workshop discussion papers.

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