



## Forum for European-Australian Science and Technology cooperation

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## LATEST NEWS

### Australian and European Research Priorities

In November 2002, the European Commission launched the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Program (FP6). This well established Research and Technological Development (RTD) Program enters its 6<sup>th</sup> round with a €17 billion budget for 4 years (2002-2006). FP6 is the core instrument driving the creation of the European Research Area (ERA) through focusing and integrating Community research. There are seven thematic priorities with emphasis on SME participation:

1. Life Sciences, Genomics & Biotechnology for Health
2. Food Quality & Safety
3. Nanotechnologies & nanosciences, knowledge based multifunctional materials & new production processes & devices
4. Information Society Technologies (IST)
5. Aeronautics & Space
6. Sustainable development, global change & ecosystems
7. Citizens & governance in a knowledge based society

For the first time, the Australian Government released four national research priorities (see below table) in December 2002. The implementation of the priorities is ongoing as relevant Commonwealth Government agencies prepare *Implementation Plans* for lodgment to the Minister for Science by 16 May 2003. The priorities are:

1. Promoting and Maintaining Good Health
2. Frontier Technologies for Building and Transforming Australian Industries
3. An Environmentally Sustainable Australia
4. Safeguarding Australia

Improved international competitiveness and quality of life are the shared goals of the Australian and European Governments in their selection of these priority areas. There are a number of commonalities between the priorities which present opportunities for increased collaboration in research, development and training between Europe and Australia. Some of these include:

- Health, in particular, disease and the ageing population
- Sustainable development, including climate change, biodiversity, land and water management
- Emerging technologies such as biotechnology and nanotechnology
- ICT solutions for business.

Researchers should note that a multidisciplinary approach to FP6 research projects is anticipated and that individual expertise could be applied to a number of priority areas. In the case of FP6, researchers should consult the Calls for Proposals (<http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/calls.cfm>) and the relevant Work Programmes (<http://www.feast.org/eurFundServ.php?i=17>) under each theme for more detailed information.

A list of sub-themes for each Australian and EU priority is provided on the FEAST website at <http://www.feast.org/library.php#australia>. Further information can be found at the following websites:

Europe - [http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/index_en.html).

Australia – <http://www.dest.gov.au/priorities>

## The 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Program (FP6) in Full Swing

On December 17 2002, the European Commission published the first calls for proposals for FP6. The first batch of 49 calls, cover a total of €5 billion. Most of this first allocation (€3.4 billion) will be dedicated to the seven main FP6 priorities, ranging from life sciences to aeronautics, from information society technologies to energy and transport. 70% of this funding will focus on new funding instruments such as Networks of Excellence and Integrated Projects, and at least 15% overall will go to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

"The new programme is now taking off," said European Research Commissioner Philippe Busquin. "It is time to start working on the new priorities and with the new instruments. European research players have already sent in 12,000 expressions of interest promising ideas that helped us shape the work programmes. But now it is for real. I expect the Framework Programme to be a major catalyst in mobilising the European scientific and industrial communities, as well as Member and Associated States, including the candidate countries. I invite researchers and entrepreneurs to join in this endeavour and to help us make the Framework Programme a success."

Within these first calls:

- €460 million will also be devoted to policy-oriented research, special activities involving SMEs, special international co-operation activities, and support for the co-ordination of national activities
- €990 million will be devoted to human resources and mobility, infrastructures and the science/society dialogue
- €69 million will go to nuclear research

Deadlines for the calls, most of which will be in March and April 2003, are specified in the calls for proposals at <http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/calls.cfm>.

### The funding instruments

FP6 will give priority to two new funding instruments. The long-term objective for *Networks of Excellence* is to forge lasting co-operation between those universities and research centres that excel in a particular field. *Integrated Projects* have a more mid-term and market focus. Other revamped funding schemes include:

- *Specific targeted research projects* - in contrast to the Integrated Projects, Specific targeted research projects will support smaller-scope research projects
- *Co-ordination actions* - Co-ordination actions will encourage networking and the co-ordination of research and innovation activities
- *Specific support actions* - accompanying measures to support the implementation of FP6

Further information about FP6 including the Work Programmes for the 7 priority themes can be found at <http://www.feast.org/eurFundServ.php?i=17>.

## Marie Curie Actions

The Sixth Framework Programme's Human Resources and Mobility (HRM) activity has a budget of AU\$2.849 billion and is largely based on the financing of training and mobility activities for researchers. These activities, known as the Marie Curie Actions, are aimed at the development and transfer of research competencies, the consolidation and widening of researchers' career prospects, and the promotion of excellence in European research.

The actions are open to researchers in all fields of scientific and technological research from the EU Member States, from countries associated with FP6 and from third countries like Australia and New Zealand. A special priority is placed on SME participation and women researchers. There are no quotas. Eligibility for the various schemes is based on research experience and expertise, not age or nationality. All levels are covered from researchers at the start of their career to world-class researchers with well-established scientific expertise. The Actions are also open to business, universities and institutions active in research.

There are four types of Actions – *Host Driven Actions*, essentially for early stage researchers (with less than 4 years of research experience, or no doctorate), *Individual Driven Actions*, for researchers with more than 4 years research experience or a doctorate, *Excellence Promotion and Recognition* and *Return and Reintegration Mechanisms*. They include:

### Host Driven Actions:

- Marie Curie Research Training Networks
- Marie Curie Early Stage Host Fellowships (Multihost)
- Marie Curie Transfer of Knowledge Schemes
- Marie Curie Conferences and Training Courses

### Individual Driven Actions:

- Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowships  
(Includes Europeans residing outside EU)
- Marie Curie Incoming International Fellowships  
(100% funded Fellowships for third country researchers)
- Marie Curie Outgoing International Fellowships  
(Third country host institutions are joint applicants)

### Excellence Promotion and Recognition:

- Marie Curie Excellence –Grants, Awards and Chairs

### Return and Reintegration Mechanisms:

- European Reintegration Grants
- International Reintegration Grants  
(For EU researchers who have been conducting research outside the EU for at least 5 years.)

The above actions are open to third country researchers, third country host institutions or EU expatriates who wish to return to Europe. It is expected that for Host Driven actions up to 30% of researchers may come from countries that are neither EU member states nor associated with FP6.

Twelve Marie Curie Actions were announced in December 2002 covering activities for 2003 and 2004. The call list including deadlines is available at

[http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/calls\\_activity.cfm?ID\\_ACTIVITY=594](http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/calls_activity.cfm?ID_ACTIVITY=594)

Researchers should consult the Marie Curie Work Programme available on the FEAST website at <http://www.feast.org/eurFundServ.php?i=17> for further information about the specific actions.

## - PROJECT PROFILES -

### PROMISE

The PROMISE project concerns the information flow of a product system and focuses on the last two phases of the product's life cycle: the Use, Service & Maintenance or MOL (Middle-of-Life) and the Retirement or EOL (End-of-Life). The objective of the PROMISE proposal is to adapt and develop the appropriate technology and associated information models as well as business models (standardization) in order to enable the seamless flow, tracing and updating of information about a product, after its delivery to the customer and up to its final destiny (EOL scenario) and back to the designer and producer.

The Industrial Research Institute Swinburne (IRIS) is Australia's leading organisation for applied research and technology diffusion to industry. IRIS and its industry partners and industry associations will be working on the recycling of plastics from consumer durable products eg office equipment, white goods and automotive products etc. The benefits to Australia from being in a research partnership with some of the worlds leading manufacturing companies eg Fiat, Electrolux etc. are great. Projects like PROMISE allow participants entry into very valuable and wide ranging business networks.

FEAST interviewed Mr John Bishop, Business Manager of IRIS, to find out more about his involvement in the PROMISE Project and European collaboration read the full interview at [www.feast.org](http://www.feast.org).

## RECENT EVENTS

### FEAST in New Zealand

Recently, Lynne Hunter from the Delegation of the European Commission visited New Zealand to outline the opportunities for New Zealand Researchers under the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Program and to promote the information services of FEAST. With Rick Petersen from the NZ Ministry of Research Science and Technology (MoRST), Lynne visited ten sites across New Zealand as well as holding separate meetings with the Health Research Council of New Zealand; Director of Research & Innovation; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Executive Director of Crown Research Institutes. The presentations stressed the importance of using existing bilateral links to gain access to the projects funded under FP6 and expanded on the new opportunities under the Marie Curie Actions and participation in the Experts Evaluation Panel.

During their tour the issue of a NZ equivalent of FEAST was raised and some interesting acronyms arose, perhaps the most interesting being FRENZI – Forum for Research between Europe and New Zealand Inc.

MoRST are very keen to promote the EC's 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme as part of their new international strategy which is shortly to be implemented and have identified the EU as one of their key target countries. As part of their increased international outlook they are bidding for an extra NZ\$1.5M in funding. If they are successful, they plan to use some of these funds to install an S & T official at the NZ Mission to the EC in Brussels. Their aim is not just to increase the opportunities for New Zealand researchers to take part in the FP6 but also to strengthen their already considerable linkages with many of the EU Member States.

A recent survey undertaken by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs & Trade (MFAT) highlighted over 500 active bilateral arrangements between NZ tertiary education providers and the EU Member States. NZ's Bilateral Research Activities Programme (BRAP) has a budget of

approx. NZ\$300,000 to support travel of researchers to and from NZ to develop research collaborations.

MoRST has also committed to funding a Delegation of senior researchers/research managers drawn from six of the seven thematic priorities (not aeronautics and space) to go to Brussels this year to establish contact with the relevant Unit Heads in DG RTD and also to establish and build on their bilateral relationships. The New Zealand Prime Minister and Minister for Science will be visiting the EU in the early part of 2003.

## COMING EVENTS

### FEAST State Seminars on FP6

To follow on from the success of FEAST 3 in Melbourne last year, FEAST is organising a number of seminars across Australia on opportunities for Australia under the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Program. The European Commission Delegation in Canberra and Federal Government research funding agencies are participating and will provide information on:

- the structure and scope of the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework program;
- identified opportunities for Australian involvement in research projects and other aspects of the Framework program;
- factors individual researchers should take into account when considering involvement in research projects funded under the Framework program; and
- funding opportunities available from Government.

FEAST has partnered with a number of State-based organisations to host the seminars and each event will feature a local European-Australian research partnership to provide examples of practical experience.

Seminars will be held at the following locations:

|          |               |                                |
|----------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Canberra | 13 February   | (afternoon session)            |
| Brisbane | 17 February   | (morning session)              |
| Sydney   | 18 February   | (morning & afternoon sessions) |
| Adelaide | 11 March      | (morning session)              |
| Perth    | 12 March      | (afternoon session)            |
| Hobart   | to be advised |                                |

Further information about each seminar can be found on the FEAST website at [www.feast.org](http://www.feast.org) or by contacting [sally@feast.org](mailto:sally@feast.org).

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### FEAST 4 – Networking for Excellence

FEAST 4 - *Networking for Excellence* will be an international research and technology development forum hosted jointly by FEAST and the National Europe Centre (NEC). The event will be held on 17 & 18 June 2003 at the Academy of Science Shine Dome in Canberra.

The goal of FEAST 4 is to encourage increased interaction and collaboration between Australia and Europe particularly in areas of excellence and where there is a commonality of research priorities. We expect to involve decision-makers in government and leading researchers from Australia and Europe. More details of FEAST 4 will be publicised as the event takes shape and we would appreciate your input. If there is anything that you wish to see discussed about European collaboration and the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Program in particular please contact [info@feast.org](mailto:info@feast.org).

## GRANT HIGHLIGHTS

### **EU Fund - Innovation Access Program – International Science & Technology**

Support for Australian participation in the EU Framework Program is available under the **EU Fund** offered by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science & Training.

Competitive grants are available to support travel to Europe to negotiate participation in Framework Research projects as well as activities with a European Programme partner that will have mutual benefit to the research community and industry of both countries.

Preference in selection will be given to those proposals where:

- the applicant is seeking or has been invited to participate in a consortium as a full partner rather than as a sub-contractor; and
- the proposal relates to research from the Innovation Access Programme's current sector or technology priorities.

There are 3 selection rounds per year and the next closing date is **7 March 2003**. Further information is available at: <https://sciencegrants.dest.gov.au/IAP/ASP/EUFund.asp>.

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### **Australian-European Union Health Research Collaboration**

The National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has a limited fund to assist Australian participation in projects selected for funding under the European Commission's Sixth Framework Programme (FP6). The NHMRC will support projects which fall within the **Genomics and biotechnology for health** priority area.

Where projects involving Australian researchers based in Australia are chosen for funding, the Australian researchers may be eligible for NHMRC support. The following issues will be taken into account when assessing eligible projects:

- the quality of the project;
- the relevance and value added to Australian research objectives; and
- the need for funding.

The NHMRC's Research Committee will make funding decisions after considering the recommendations of the European Union.

The responsibility for submitting proposals to the European Union under FP6 falls principally to the European partners. Australian researchers who are members of projects being submitted to the EU, in any round under the Framework, must notify the NHMRC and forward a copy of the final application submitted to the European Union, to the NHMRC by the due date.

The closing date for submission to the European Union in the 1<sup>st</sup> call under the Sixth Framework is 25 March 2003 at 17:00 Brussels time. **Australian participants must forward this application to the NHMRC by COB 8 April 2003.**

More information on the European Union's Sixth Framework programme is available from the following sites: [www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/index\\_en.html](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/index_en.html) and [www.cordis.lu/fp6/eoi-instruments/genomics.htm](http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/eoi-instruments/genomics.htm).

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*This is not a comprehensive list of funding opportunities available.  
Please look at the [feast website](#) for further information under  
Australian and European funding and services.*

## OTHER NEWS

### Outcomes from Science meets Parliament Day

Australia experienced its fourth “Science meets Parliament” (SmP) Day in October 2002. This event brought scientists and technologists to Canberra for one-on-one meetings with 142 federal politicians. The issues of particular interest to Parliamentarians were: water and salinity; education and training at school, university and in industry; and science as it affects the local electorate.

Toss Gascoigne, Executive Director of the Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies (FASTS) and originator of SmP in Australia, highlighted a number of achievements from the day.

“The first is that we have opened a conduit for communication between the two worlds of science and politics. Few Australian politicians have formal qualifications in science, and they are not completely comfortable in dealing with scientists, seeing the area as difficult and not part of the ‘real world’. What they find in the meetings is that scientists have ideas, they have possible solutions, and they have lots of potentially-useful information.

“The second is that we are steadily creating a group of scientists who have been to Parliament and talked to politicians. This helps break down preconceived notions about politicians, and enables them appreciate the pressures and constraints under which politicians operate.”

Further information about Science Meets Parliament Day including the feedback received from the scientists involved, can be found at the FASTS website: [www.fast.org](http://www.fast.org).

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### Share your experiences

The FEAST office would like to hear from researchers (including industry researchers) already or previously involved in European-Australian collaboration. Don't waste your valuable experience; consider sharing it with others through our newsletter.

Publication in our newsletter is free. Your contributions may be edited for clarity. For further information please contact [info@feast.org](mailto:info@feast.org).