



Forum for European-Australian Science and Technology cooperation

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www.feast.org

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Latest News

Enlargement of the European Union

On the 1st May 2004, the European Union will enlarge with the accession of the following countries: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

This enlargement will increase Europe's:

- GDP from € 8,827 billion to € 9,576 billion;
- population from 379 million to 455 million; and
- land area from 3,191,000 sq km to 3,929,300 sq km.
(For comparison, Australia's land area is 7,690,000 sq km).

FEAST will provide information about S&T opportunities available in the accessing countries on its website.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/faq/faq2.htm#statistics>

Mapping Australian Science and Innovation

The Federal Government released the "Mapping Australian Science and Innovation" report earlier this year.

This report confirms Australia's performance in science is amongst the strongest globally, especially in medicine, health sciences, biosciences and astronomy. Particular strengths exist also in the emerging sciences of photonics and biotechnology. Australia's IP protection aims at world's best practice.

Commercial biotechnology companies are emerging quickly. In the period 1981 – 1982, there were almost none, now there are over 300. Collaboration between industry and universities is increasing - joint scientific and research publications are increasing in support of this.

But Australia shows a declining status in citations – from 8th position globally in 1981 to 13th (1999) and 15th (2000) and our development in commercialisation is lower than other countries. Crucially, the report finds that "Australia lacks a strategic approach in coordination of support for international collaboration in science and technology."

www.dest.gov.au/mapping

ARC/NHMRC to collaborate

The Australian Research Council and the National Health and Medical Research Council have announced an agreement to work together, for the first time, to encourage and fund research in new and emerging fields of health and medical research, and new technologies.

The collaboration will promote excellent multidisciplinary research that spans research sectors, disciplines and institutions, and will lead to more effective and well-informed policy and practice of critical relevance to the wellbeing of all Australians.

The first joint calls for research will be in the areas of *Thinking Systems/Biological Programming* and *Ageing Well, Ageing Productively*.

Courtesy of ARC's Discovery Newsletter Autumn 2004.

http://www.arc.gov.au/pdf/discovery_autumn_2004.pdf

Minister Nelson – release of research reports

Dr Brendan Nelson released three significant Australian Government reports relating to publicly funded research and research training. The reports relate to an evaluation of the 1999 Knowledge and Innovation reforms to higher education research and research training, the work of a national taskforce on the provision of funds for research infrastructure, and a review of the scope for closer collaboration between major publicly funded research agencies.

<http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Nelson/2004/03/n651240304.asp>

Academy of Science – researcher visit to Europe

Dr Georg Gottwald, School of Mathematics & Statistics, University of Sydney, has returned from a visit to Europe under the Scientific Visits to Europe Program, managed by the Australian Academy of Science and funded by the Department of Education, Science and Training's Science and Technology Networks (ISTN), a component of the Innovation Access Program.

Dr Gottwald worked with colleagues in Germany and the United Kingdom on aspects of cardiac physics including the breakdown of electrical pulse activity in cardiac tissue; very often the precursor to heart failure. Dr Gottwald's visit has resulted in stronger links between the University of Sydney and the University of Surrey including a program of visits and joint publications.

Dr Gottwald can be contacted on: gottwald@maths.usyd.edu.au

Commission proposes creation of fast track 'scientific visa'

The European Commission has adopted a proposal for a Directive and two recommendations aimed at introducing a 'scientific visa' to facilitate the movement of third country researchers to and within the EU, with the process of obtaining such a visa to be fast-tracked.

The accredited research organisations where the foreign researchers will work during their stay would be obliged to certify the individual in a 'hosting agreement', which confirms the existence of a valid research project, and that the researcher has the necessary scientific skills, financial means and health insurance.

'Once a researcher has gained their residence permit, they will be able to move freely within the Schengen Member States in order to attend meetings or conferences, and if they wish to extend their stay in the EU, it will no longer be necessary for them to return to their country of origin to submit the application.'

The single residence permit that will be created will cover all types of researcher contract, such as fellowships, traineeships and scholarships.

Adopting the Directive has already been agreed as a priority for both the Irish and Dutch EU Presidencies, and it is hoped that a political agreement would be reached as early as summer 2004.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/mariecurie-actions/indexhtm_en.html

Commission publishes IPR guide for FP6

The European Commission has published its guide to intellectual property rights for projects under the Sixth Framework Programme. The Commission states that it is intended to 'act as a guide to the various issues and pitfalls that participants [in FP6] may encounter.'

It also highlights aspects that should be considered before potential participants embark on a project or enter into consortium agreements. Topics covered by the guide include:

- ownership;
- protection of knowledge;
- access rights;
- consortium agreements;
- innovation-related activities;
- patent searches;
- the end of the contract;
- advanced IPR strategies; and
- useful resources.

<http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/find-doc.htm#ipr>

Future Events

Seminar series on the CORDIS website – postponed

With support from the Department of Education, Science and Training and assistance from the EC Delegation to Australia and NZ, FEAST planned a series of seminars on the opportunities presented by using the CORDIS website, for early April 2004 visiting Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Canberra. Unfortunately due to an injury sustained by the Keynote Speaker, this series had to be postponed.

We plan to reschedule this series, possibly in July 2004, and to look at the possibility of extending the series to visit Perth, Adelaide and Hobart.

A thorough justification is required to apply for extra funding for this extended undertaking and FEAST must gauge the interest from those in WA, SA and TAS. So if **you** are interested in hearing about the CORDIS website, and are in WA, SA or TAS, please notify Alison White alison@feast.org by 28th April 2004.

We are very grateful to the organisations that helped us disseminate the publicity for the seminar series.

CRCA Annual Conference 2004 - 10 June 2004 at Adelaide Convention Centre

The Conference will explore the last 12 years of CRC experiences by highlighting the views of CRC participants and customers. It will also showcase CRC excellence in innovation, PhD students, top achievers and research that delivers public, economic & environmental benefits. There will be many opportunities for Conference participants to share their experiences and knowledge about best practices for delivering successful outcomes from CRCs.

For more information: Please call Caroline Jones on 02 8850 6796 or go to: <http://www.crca.asn.au/conference>

FEAST-France events:

- Sydney, Thursday 22 April: launch of the FEAST-France group of the University of Sydney;
- Brisbane, Thursday 29 April, public talk: How to protect the beaches of the Gold Coast and the French Riviera;
- Canberra, Thursday 13 May, public seminar: Joint/Double-Badged Doctoral Degree - the French-Australian PhD in 'Cotutelle';
- Canberra, Monday 17 May, public seminar: Human Ecosystems Modelling with Agents.

For more information:

- Visit www.ambafrance-au.org/science/
- Become a member of FEAST-France by selecting this option in your FEAST online registration (you will then receive the FEAST-France newsletter and alert emails).

3 -16 May 2004 **Australian Innovation Festival**
<http://www.innovationfestival.com.au/>

4 – 6 May 2004 **CeBIT Australia 2004**
<http://www.cebit.com.au>

Public Lecture - “**Tackling Technology Transfer – Lessons from Ireland and Europe**” – Dr Pat Frain

Dr Pat Frain, is Director of NovaUCD, a new Innovation and Technology Transfer Centre at University College Dublin. NovaUCD was recently established to assist innovators and entrepreneurs to commercialise their ideas. In this lecture Dr Frain will provide some important lessons from Ireland & Europe on technology transfer and innovation.

6:00 pm, Thursday 6 May 2004,
Prince Philip Theatre, Architecture & Planning Building,
The University of Melbourne, Parkville.

Bookings are essential for this free lecture - please telephone 03 8344 3885.

Grant Highlights

DEST Research funding update

The results of Round 5 of the Innovation Access Program – International Science and Technology competitive grants (see below) continue the trend that a substantial proportion of the grant funds have been awarded to projects with European partners.

Project Title	Grantee Organisation	Grant amount	Collaborating countries
Ultra High Throughput Optical Probes	University of Melbourne	\$496,509	Ireland and Israel
Collaborative development of targeted alpha therapy for lymphoma	St George Hospital	\$35,500	Germany and Canada
Studies of high-temperature edge plasma confinement physics using new hyperspectral imaging systems	ANU	\$173,690	Italy, Germany, and USA
New electrical methods for measuring the distribution of plant roots	CSIRO Land and Water	\$13,500	England, Mexico, and France.
Transparent network architecture and access technologies for high-speed wireless communications	University of Sydney	\$241,354	England, Finland and France
Collaborative validation of new plasma thruster technology	CRC for Satellite Systems	\$300,750	Netherlands
Australian participation in the EU Framework 6 project 4S: Smart chips for smart surroundings	University of Queensland	\$332,636	Germany
Cord blood stem cell expansion technology transfer	Cordlife Pty Ltd	\$49,212	USA
Making film-stars – nano-composite films for solar energy capture	ANU	\$291,906	France and Sweden
New technology for the study of parasite genetics	University of Technology, Sydney	\$49,950	France
Integrating Australia into global e-science	University of Queensland	\$320,000	England
Photobioreactor systems for mass producing microalgae as feedstock for aquaculture	CSIRO Marine Research	\$86,000	Italy
Collaboration with the EU Integrated 6 th Framework Project “Grain Legumes; new strategies to improve grain legumes for food and feed”	Murdoch University	\$629,789	France
Mechanical stability and adhesion of multilayered coatings on polymeric substrates	Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation	\$9,400	France
Towards next generation extremely large telescopes	ANU	\$246,805	USA, Germany and Scotland
Neutralisation of respiratory toxins and pathogens	Anadis Limited	\$715,000	USA
29 th International symposium on macrocyclic chemistry and 20 th Royal Australian Chemical Institute Organic Chemistry Conference	ANU	\$50,000	USA
Fifth International CINet Conference	University of Western Sydney	\$15,000	Netherlands

https://sciencegrants.dest.gov.au/IAP/Pages/Outcomes_CG2003R5.aspx

ARC Discovery Projects Update

The ARC has received 3,443 applications from 48 administering organisations seeking \$398.4 million, in the call for Discovery Project proposals to be funded in 2005. The applications have been processed and sent to readers. The ARC College of Experts will consider them in August.

http://www.arc.gov.au/pdf/discovery_autumn_2004.pdf

NHMRC – collaborative grants

Australian and European scientists will join forces to develop new treatments for prostate cancer and for diseases such as type 1 diabetes, multiple sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis.

Two Victorian researchers will receive almost \$1.2 million over five years through the National Health and Medical Research Council *Australian-European Union Collaborative Grants Program*. This program provides funding to Australian researchers that are already part of a team that has won support from the European Union under its *Sixth Framework Programme*.

Dr Hamish Scott from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research will receive \$995,640 over five years for his team to develop a treatment for autoimmune diseases, such as type 1 diabetes, multiple sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis. The EU's contribution to the research program is up to 12 million Euro (approx. AUD\$20 million) for European researchers.

Dr Miles Prince from the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre will receive \$180,923 over two years to join French, Italian, Austrian and German researchers to develop and test a new treatment for prostate cancer. The EU's contribution to the research program is up to 1,999,940 Euro (approx AUD\$3.3 million).

<http://www.health.gov.au/nhmrc/media/index.htm>

\$1 million for student exchange programme with Europe

A new student exchange project will be developed to help increase opportunities for Australian students to study in Europe. Universities will be asked to submit proposals for a third pilot project, which will help promote student mobility and further encourage formal higher education cooperation between Australia and the European Union. The project will involve a group of Australian and European universities working together to develop a joint Masters programme involving an element of student exchange between Australia and EU Member States.

<http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Nelson/2004/03/n647190304.asp>

Endeavour Postgraduate and Postdoctoral Research Fellowships

High performing scholars from around the world will be able to undertake research in Australia under a \$3.5 million Australian Government funded fellowship programme. In their inaugural year, the Endeavour Postgraduate and Postdoctoral Research Fellowships will provide funding of up to A\$25,000 for 21 international scholars in any field of study, to conduct research at Australian universities for four to six months. Through attracting world-class researchers, these fellowships will build a greater knowledge of Australian excellence in higher education, build closer relationships between leading institutions, and continue to strengthen bilateral relationships between Australia and the participating countries.

<http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Nelson/2004/03/n650230304.asp>

Humanities and Social Sciences: call for proposals

The French Embassy and the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia have opened their joint 2005 call for proposals. Deadline for applications is 30th June 2004.

For more information:

- Visit www.ambafrance-au.org/science/

Academic Fellowship Scheme

A new Academic Fellowship Scheme was launched by the UK Office of Science and Technology (OST) and Research Councils UK (RCUK). This Fellowship will provide for 1,000 new academic fellowships over 5 years. Sums of £125,000 will be provided to universities to assist young researchers to undertake a permanent academic position.

www.rcuk.ac.uk/acfellow/

René Descartes Prizes – closing date for submissions

The closing date for submissions to the René Descartes Prizes under the Sixth Framework Programme is 11th May 2004. Prizes are being awarded for collaborative research and science communication.

www.cordis.lu/science-society/descartes/home.html

Other News

FEAST welcomes Alison White

Alison White is a welcome newcomer to FEAST, taking over the position formerly held by Sally Stewart.

Alison moved to Canberra recently from Melbourne during the past year has worked under contract for two Australian Government agencies. Before that, Alison worked at the Bionic Ear Institute for 2 ½ years.

Alison's tertiary qualifications are from the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow and she has broad experience in project and event management. Alison will be happy to assist you with information and advice on Australian and European collaboration.

Alison can be contacted on (02) 6273 4823, or by e-mail at alison@feast.org.

Review of FEAST by Dr Karsten Brenner, April 2004

Dr Karsten Brenner visited Australia in the period 18th – 28th March 2004 to review and assess the operations of FEAST and its potential as a model for similar operations around the world. Dr Brenner undertook 40 interviews and meetings in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne during this time and his report is due with the European Commission on the 30th April 2004.

European Commission Information Centre is now ONLINE

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/infocentre/index_en.cfm

The first phase of release has been activated and responses will be taken into account for the second phase.

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IPR helpdesk is a project of the European Commission EG Enterprise, co-financed within the 5th Framework Programme of the European Community.

Congratulations to Alessandra and Vittorio

Congratulations to Alessandra and Vittorio on the birth of their daughter Julianna last week.

Many of our members will remember Alessandra Iero who worked with Sally and Amanda in the support of the *Networking for Excellence* conference last November.

FEAST would like to thank everyone who participated in this current newsletter and encourages anyone who would like to contribute to the next newsletter to contact us at email: info@feast.org