



ERA-LINK USA NEWS – FEBRUARY/MARCH 2008

EDITORIAL MESSAGE

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all new ERA-Link members who joined our network at the European Career Fair at MIT and International Career Fair in San Francisco. It was great to meet so many of you in Boston and California! It was also a great pleasure to meet so many members at the ERA-Link meeting with Commissioner Potočnik in Washington, DC, and at the ERA-Link Members get-together at swissnex San Francisco. We are working on having a video recording from the event with Commissioner Potočnik posted on our website. In the meantime, we invite you to read our report from this and other ERA-Link events, and take a look at the pictures on our website. More events are coming up. ERA-Link members will have an opportunity to meet with the President of the European Research Council, Prof. Kafatos, in New York, on March 18. In April, we will co-host with the University of Southern California a symposium on international cooperative research. We hope to see many of you in Los Angeles and New York.

The ERA-Link USA team.

http://cordis.europa.eu/eralink/about_en.html

<http://www.eurunion.org/policyareas/science.htm>

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FEATURES

Free flow of knowledge on top of agenda for Slovenian Presidency



Slovenia is the first of the new EU Member States to hold the reins of the EU Presidency (each term lasts 6 months). Slovenian priorities include the implementation of commitments to tackle climate change, and an EU-wide recognition of a **“fifth freedom”** - the free flow of knowledge. “Merely investing in knowledge is not enough,” explains Mr. Jansa, the Prime Minister of Slovenia and current President of the European Council. “We must ensure that there will be no obstacles to the flow of ideas and knowledge.” The Slovenian Presidency plans to make the free flow of knowledge a fifth freedom at the spring European Council.

During its time at the helm of the EU, Slovenia also intends to make headway on Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs) - a new initiative based on public-private partnerships. Other concerns for Slovenia include developing research infrastructures at the regional level, integrating the Western Balkan countries into the European Research Area (ERA), and strengthening the role of women working in science. The Presidency would like to bring new impetus to the issue of scientific careers for women and young researchers by introducing examples of best practices of what it refers to as “family-friendly scientific careers.” (Source: CORDIS)

For further information on Slovenia’s EU Presidency, please visit:

<http://www.eu2008.si/en/index.html>

<http://cordis.europa.eu/slovenia/presidency>

Science and technology key to development and prosperity in Western Balkans

One of the top agenda items for the Slovenian Presidency is the integration of Western Balkans. Science and technology are considered a key to prosperity and peace in this strife-torn region. The state of technology development in the region is poor, where spending on R&D ranges from .05 percent (Bosnia) to 1.24 percent (Croatia). Leading the effort to re-define the priorities for the Western Balkans and put R&D at the center of interest is the neighboring Romania. Romanian officials, drawing to a large degree on their own experience, see modernization of the region’s scientific research and technology sector as the key to building modern high-tech industries and creating long-term employment. Current lack of mobility of researchers is perceived as a great barrier. Facilitating researchers mobility, improving their access to the EU resources and programs, organizational innovation, and creation of research development and innovation networks for young scientists are put forward by the Romanians as the way to achieve success in the region. (Source: Science Business Bulletin)

Women in the world of science

In most European countries, there are now proportionately more female than male graduates under 30, but women remain under-represented in science and in the decision-making bodies concerned with scientific issues. In order to deal with this lack of balance and promote gender mainstreaming in science, the Commission set in 1999 a 40% target for the participation of women in scientific committees, groups and panels. Although some progress has been made over the last decade, the target for women's participation has not yet been met. For example, in FP5 (5th Framework Program for Research), the percentage of women on evaluation panels varied from 22% to 27%. This percentage increased to 32% in FP6 (6th Framework Program for Research). There are no data available yet on women's participation in programs under FP7 (7th Framework Program for Research). However, among the first projects selected for funding under the "Science and Society" program of FP7 is the €1 million PRAGES ("Practicing Gender Equality in Science"). This project will compare strategies implemented in Europe and elsewhere for promoting the participation of women in decision-making bodies relating to scientific research.

The Slovenian Presidency plans to bring a new impetus to the issue of women in the world of science and research by introducing examples of best practice of "**family-friendly scientific careers.**" It is recognized that an integrated model, based on a policy mix addressing the whole life cycle of the scientific career from beginning, through all stages up to the highest decision-making positions, is needed. Complementary actions targeting these questions on a national and EU level should help to improve the situation of researchers - in particular of young researchers and women.

For more information about women in European research, go to:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.topic&id=37>

For more information about the PRAGES project, go to:

http://www.cfa.au.dk/Projects/Abstracts/PRAGES_FP7.pdf

To read about the Helsinki Group on Women and Science, go to:

<http://cordis.europa.eu/improving/women/helsinki.htm>

ERAWATCH Survey



Just over a year ago the European Commission launched the ERAWATCH service, an online information platform on research systems and policies within the European Union and EU's main competitor countries. ERAWATCH will evolve according to the needs and expectations of the users. We therefore invite you to send your comments and suggestions, in order to improve its content and presentation. This survey will take approximately ten minutes to complete. All received questionnaires will be gathered by CORDIS. Survey results will be provided to the European Commission, in aggregate and anonymous form. The findings will be used only for the purpose of improving the service.

The survey is available at:

http://user-survey.cordis.europa.eu/2007/ew_survey/ew1.php?language=en

We thank you for your time and contribution.

REPORTS

European Career Fair and Round Table at MIT, Boston, 1-2 February 2008



From left to right: Izabella Zandberg, ERA-Link, Karin Peeters, Astrid-Christina Koch and Laurent Bochereau, Delegation of the European Commission

The ERA-Link USA team attended the 12th European Career Fair at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), in Cambridge on February 2, 2008. The European Commission partnered with the MIT European Club to organize a dedicated Science & Technology (S&T) space at the Career Fair. The goal was to promote Europe as a place to pursue a career in science and technology, whether it is in industry, research organizations, academia or science policy. ERA-Link, European Research Council and Joint Research Centers shared this dedicated space at the fair, and sponsored three neighboring exhibit

booths. We are glad to report that our booths were quite popular among the attendees of the fair. It was great to meet so many of you! We welcome all new ERA-Link members who joined our network at the fair.

ERA-Link meeting with Janez Potočnik, the EU Commissioner for Science & Research, February 14, 2008

Approximately 170 ERA-Link members, friends of ERA-Link, ComSci fellows, and scientists from the East Coast, gathered on February 14 to meet with Commissioner Janez Potočnik on his visit to Washington, DC. The meeting was held in the light-filled atrium of the Embassy of Austria. The Austrian Ambassador, Eva Nowotny, provided welcoming remarks, followed by the introduction by the Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Commission in Washington, DC, Angelos Pangratis. Also present were Mary Minch, Director of International Affairs of the European Commission, and European Research Council Starting Grant recipient, Jan Eeckhout.



From left to right: Angelos Pangratis, Delegation of the European Commission, Commissioner Janez Potočnik and Mary Minch, European Commission

In his presentation, Commissioner Potočnik introduced the European Research Area (ERA), a new initiative to promote research and technology development in the EU. The ERA defines a EU without geographical, institutional, disciplinary or sector research borders. It focuses on creating

incentives and removing structural barriers to researchers, technology and knowledge across the continent. To accomplish these initiatives, there needs to be coordination between national programs to make them compatible and open, as well as access to world-class research infrastructure and facilities for all European scientists.

Addressing ERA-Link members, the Commissioner underscored the importance of researchers mobility in the increasingly inter-connected world: "You represent the first examples of the new kind of researcher that we want to see more of within Europe: not only highly educated, but also highly mobile and experienced in a country not of your origin. In the face of globalization, mobility of European researchers both within and outside the EU is not only beneficial but indispensable."



Jan Eeckhout, recipient of the ERC Starting Grant

Acknowledging the value of transatlantic mobility, Commissioner Potočník also emphasized the importance of cultivating links between Europe and its expatriate scientists: "Whether you intend to stay abroad or return to Europe, we want to stay in touch with you. It can also be helpful for you to stay in touch with each other to find research and social partners. And we want you to be kept up to date with what is happening in the research world back in Europe."

The Commissioner also introduced FP7, funded by 54 billion Euros for 2007-2013. FP7 consists of four major programs:

Cooperation, Ideas, Capacities, and People. 670 million Euros a year will be spent within the People program on outgoing, incoming and return fellowships; the International Research Staff Exchange Scheme; the International Reintegration Grant; ERA-MORE mobility centers, and Researcher's Mobility Portal. Commissioner Potočník assured that the People program is designed so "that Europe has the highly skilled and mobile researchers it needs, and that the working environment for these researchers is the best that it can be."

Among other initiatives mentioned by the Commissioner to facilitate "brain circulation" was the adoption of a European researchers "passport." This passport is designed to encourage mobility and career opportunities for researchers, and will cover social security, transnational recruitment and portability of funding - as well as fair employment and working conditions. Also planned are fast-track visa and permits for researchers from outside Europe.



From left to right, Ingrid Ytreland, Karin Peeters and Julia Pascual distribute ERA-Link t-shirts

"You are a part of the European scientific diaspora and we are proud of you," said the Commissioner. "And I want you to be as proud of the European Union; but not only for the history, food, climate or culture. I want you to be proud because we are building a strong Europe that can compete with the best in the world; a fair Europe that can provide for its citizens and also give to the world; a responsible Europe that protects the environment and manages its natural resources."

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ERA-Link meeting with the President of the European Research Council, Fotis C. Kafatos, New York, 18 March 2008



The President of European Research Council, Prof. Fotis C. Kafatos will meet with ERA-Link members in New York on 18 March 2008. The meeting and the following reception will be held at the American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West and 79th Street, New York City 10024, between 5:00 and 7:30PM.

Professor Kafatos will introduce the European Research Council (ERC is the first European funding body set up to support investigator-driven frontier research). Among the presenters will also be Katerina Aifantis, the youngest among the 300 researchers who were awarded the European Research Council starting grant this year. Her research proposal was selected from among over 9,000 applications submitted to ERC in response to the first call.

Both presenters will be available to answer your questions. All ERA-Link members who won't be able to attend the event may submit questions for Prof. Kafatos and Dr. Aifantis in advance of the meeting, by forwarding them to: eralink.usa@cordis.europa.eu. All ERA-Link members are invited to attend.

RSVP: Acceptances only delegation-usa-era@ec.europa.eu by Thursday, March 13th.

For more information about the European Research Council, please go to: <http://erc.europa.eu/index.cfm>

Workshop on Transatlantic Research Cooperation, New Orleans, 8 April 2008

A Workshop on Transatlantic Research Cooperation will be held at the Annual American Chemical Society Meeting in New Orleans on 8 April 2008, between 10:00am – 12:00pm, in Morial Convention Center, room 215. The workshop will be linked to the Career Fair at ACS; The Delegation of the European Commission will have a stand at the Fair.

The objectives of the workshop are:

- To discuss current and future transatlantic research co-operation with four case studies of past and ongoing projects of the European Commission Framework Program;
- To explain the rationale for and practicalities of transatlantic research teams;
- To identify key obstacles in strengthening transatlantic research and to explore future opportunities for collaboration.

For more information on the European Commission's 7th Framework Program, please go to http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html

For more information about the American Chemical Society, please go to: <http://portal.acs.org/portal/acs/corg/content>

Mark your calendars: European Commission/University of Southern California Symposium on International Cooperative Research and Education Opportunities (ICREO), April 11, 2008



USC and the European Commission, in cooperation with NSF, NIH and ERA-Link USA, will co-host a half-day symposium on International Cooperative Research and Education Opportunities (ICREO) at the University Park Campus on April 11, 2008, 3:00-8:00 PM. The meeting will focus on issues of transatlantic R&D cooperation. The 2000 Lisbon Strategy for increasing R&D investment to levels comparable to those of US and Japan is being actualized through the establishment of the European Research Area (ERA). This new approach has moved the EU to focus attention toward cooperative opportunities outside of the EU. As of now, the EU expenditures in R&D (in relation to GDP) count among the largest in the world.

Among the speakers will be Laurent Bochereau, Counselor, Head of Science, Technology and Education, from the Delegation of the European Commission in Washington DC, as well as representatives of the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health. Success stories from transatlantic cooperation will be presented. The meeting will be followed by a networking reception.

More details about the meeting will be available on our website, and in the upcoming newsletter.

Call for Abstracts: Third International Seville Conference on Future-Oriented Technology Analysis, Seville, Spain, 16-17 October 2008

The third International Seville Conference on Future-Oriented Technology Analysis (FTA) organized by the European Commission's Joint Research Center - Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (JRC-IPTS) will be held on Thursday 16th and Friday 17th October 2008 at JRC-IPTS, Seville, Spain. The focus of the conference will be on the "impacts and implications of FTA for policy and decision making".

The 2008 FTA Conference will place emphasis on diversity of views by attracting academics, practitioners as well as public and private sector decision makers from Europe, North America, Asia, Latin America, Africa and Australasia.

The full call for abstracts can be consulted and downloaded at:

http://forera.jrc.ec.europa.eu/fta_2008/intro.html

The deadline for submitting abstracts is Thursday, 15 May 2008. Please use the following e-mail address for any inquiry you might have regarding the conference:

jrc-ipts-forera@ec.europa.eu

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND FELLOWSHIPS

Marie Curie Actions

Deadlines are approaching for several "calls for proposals" under the Marie Curie "Actions of the People" program. Proposals for the International Staff Exchanges (IRSES) are due on March 28 2008, and proposals for the first round of European Reintegration Grants and International Reintegration Grants are due on April 3, 2008.



The following table lists all cut-off dates for the upcoming Marie Curie calls.

| EUROPEAN COMMISSION | Call ID | Call Opens | Call Closes /Cut-off | Budget (€ million) |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| IAPP Industry Academia Partnerships & Pathways | FP7-PEOPLE-IAPP-2008 | 30 November 2007 | 25 March 2008 | 45 |
| IRSES International Staff Exchanges | FP7-PEOPLE-IRSES-2008 | 30 November 2007 | 28 March 2008 | 25 |
| ERG European Reintegration Grants 1st cut of | FP7-PEOPLE-ERG-2008 | 30 November 2007 | 03 April 2008 | 7 |
| IRG International Reintegration Grants 1st cut off | FP7-PEOPLE-IRG-2008 | 30 November 2007 | 03 April 2008 | 17 |
| IEF Intra-European Fellowships | FP7-PEOPLE-IEF-2008 | 19 March 2008 | 19 August 2008 | 75 |
| IIF International Incoming Fellowships | FP7-PEOPLE-IIF-2008 | 19 March 2008 | 19 August 2008 | 25 |
| IOF International Outgoing Fellowship | FP7-PEOPLE-IOF-2008 | 19 March 2008 | 19 August 2008 | 25 |
| ITN Initial Training Networks | FP7-PEOPLE-ITN-2008 | 04 April 2008 | 02 September 2008 | 185 |
| ERG European Reintegration Grants 2nd cut off | FP7-PEOPLE-ERG-2008 | 30 November 2008 | 03 April 2008 08 October 2008 | |
| IRG International Reintegration Grant 2nd cut off | FP7-PEOPLE-IRG-2008 | 30 November 2008 | 03 April 2008 08 October 2008 | |
| CO-Funding of Regional, National & International Programs | FP7-PEOPLE-COFUND-2008 | 19 November 2008 | 19 February 2009 | |

For more information on the open calls, please go to:

<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.FP7OpenCallsPage>

Continuing Professional Development program for the human sciences (e.g. social sciences, life sciences and humanities)

The Research Network 1989 invites applications from post-docs in the human sciences for a multi-year program of professional development, mentorship, networking and training - to begin in 2008. It will prepare postdocs to assume roles as principal investigators and to manage research teams.

The Network is looking for applicants with the following qualifications who have the capability to become principal investigators:

- Awarded at least one post-doctoral research grant or a post-doctoral mobility grant.
- International experience as exemplified by holding educational qualifications from at least two different countries, or else having held mobility fellowships cumulatively for more than 15 months.
- Awareness of the importance of principal investigators in the knowledge economy and information society - with experience in knowledge-based industries and services a plus.

Eligibility for principal investigator awards in Europe is not restricted to European Union citizens and accordingly applications are welcomed from all over the world.

For further information, go to: <http://www.cee-socialscience.net/1989/independence/index.html>

Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA) Matchmaking Event in Paris (April 19, 2008)



HERA

Humanities in the European Research Area

Research Area and in the 6/7th Framework Programs.

HERA – Humanities in the European Research Area - is a partnership between fifteen Humanities Research Councils across Europe, and the European Science Foundation. The objective of HERA is to establish the humanities in the European Research Area and in the 6/7th Framework Programs.

Two large-scale transnational research programs in the humanities will be launched in 2009. These HERA Joint Research Programs (JRPs) will focus on two themes:

- Cultural Dynamics
- Humanities as a Source of Creativity and Innovation.

Successful grant proposals for funding will require consortia of at least three partners based in three different countries: Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Iceland, Ireland, Luxemburg, Norway, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom.

To assist researchers with the 2009 HERA JRP transnational research proposals, a Matchmaking Event will be held in Paris on Saturday, April 19, 2008. At that meeting, the two HERA themes will be discussed, and there will be opportunities for researchers to present their research interests, post ideas and make new contacts. All eligible senior and early career researchers interested in learning more about the HERA Joint Research Programs and to find potential research partners are invited to participate. 200 travel grants of € 500 will be made available.

For more information about the Matchmaking Event, please consult the brochure: http://www.heranet.info/Admin/Public/DWSDownload.aspx?File=Files%2fFiler%2fHERA+JRP%2fHERA_JRP_PDF_white.pdf

To access the application form for the HERA JRP grants, go to: <http://www.heranet.info/Default.aspx?ID=277>

COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES

EU-U.S. ATLANTIS Program: New call for proposals



Together with the US Department of Education, the European Commission has launched a new joint call for proposals covering a series of actions grouped under the common title of "ATLANTIS". The 2008 ATLANTIS Call for Proposals covers the following actions:

- **Transatlantic Degree Consortia Projects**
This Action provides support for consortia of EU and U.S. higher education institutions to implement dual/double or joint degree programs.
- **Excellence Mobility Projects**
This Action provides funding for international curriculum development projects that involve short term transatlantic mobility not directly related to the award of a joint or dual/double degree.
- **Policy Oriented Measures**
This Action provides support to multilateral EU-US projects and activities designed to enhance collaboration in the higher education and vocational training fields.

For EU institutions, the available budget amounts to approximately EUR 4.5 million. The largest portion of this will be devoted to Transatlantic Degree Projects. For U.S. institutions comparable funding will be provided. (U.S. new and continuing awards are made pending annual congressional appropriations.) The European Commission will provide funding for the direct use of the EU partners, and the U.S. Department of Education (FIPSE) will provide funding for the direct use of the United States partner(s). It is anticipated that eight Transatlantic Degree projects, four Excellence in Mobility, and seven Policy-Oriented Measures projects will be funded in 2008.

Deadline for applications: 2 April 2008.

For more information on the EU-US program, go to:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/extcoop/usa/index_en.htm

For information on the EU-Canada program, go to:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/extcoop/canada/index_en.htm

European Space Agency: Call for small external payloads on Columbus

The ESA's Directorate of Human Spaceflight, Microgravity and Exploration has released a Call for Interest for flying small external payloads on Columbus, by means of a new external platform. Please access the relevant announcement and supporting documentation under the following link: <http://spaceflight.esa.int/sep>

Letters of Interest are due on **21 April 2008**.

RESEARCH CAREERS

Job opportunities in ITER International Organization

ITER is a fusion energy project undertaken in cooperation between the European Union (represented by EURATOM), Japan, the People's Republic of China, India, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the USA. The aim of ITER is to show that fusion could be used to generate electrical power, and to gain the necessary data to design and operate the first electricity-producing plant.

The ITER International Organization publishes vacant positions on the ITER Organization website. You are therefore advised to check the website regularly. The place of work is Cadarache (France). Only nationals from the ITER Parties can apply to the positions published. Persons interested in applying for one of the positions should do so through the contact persons in the ITER Parties. Job applications sent directly to ITER will not be taken into consideration.

For the list of currently available positions, please go to:

http://www.iter.org/a/index_jobs.htm

ERACAREERS



If you are a researcher planning your next career move, the Pan-European Researcher's Mobility portal provides links to information on career and grant opportunities in science and technology in European countries.

For further details, please go to: http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/index_en.cfm

RESOURCES

Web resources on research activities in Europe

The Internet-based resources on various aspects of research activities in Europe are plentiful, and we would like to mention a couple of sites that might be of particular interest.

- **European Commission Research site:**

This site is part of the European Commission's **Europa** portal, and is designed to help visitors find out about European Research in general. It provides information on latest political decisions, and on the latest advances in research. Although the site has over 25,000 pages, visitors can find the parts that interest them most by using "Who are you." The site offers regular updates on research developments in Europe on their "What's New?" section.

To access the site, please go to: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm?lg=en&pg=about>

- **CORDIS**



CORDIS is run separately and is intended primarily for current and potential participants in the Research Framework Programs. The CORDIS portal is designed to benefit those visitors who want to find out more about actually getting involved in European-level research.

To access the CORDIS portal, please go to: <http://cordis.europa.eu/en/>

ABOUT ERA-LINK USA

ERA-Link USA is a network of thousands of European researchers, scientists and scholars throughout North America. This multidisciplinary network includes members at all stages of their careers. It allows them to connect with each other and with Europe - ensuring that they are recognized as an important resource for European research, whether they remain in the U.S. or return to Europe.

For further information about ERA-Link USA, please visit:

http://cordis.europa.eu/eralink/about_en.html

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

ERA-Link USA News is a monthly electronic newsletter that provides information of specific interest to the European researchers in the U.S.

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