



ERA-LINK NEWS – DECEMBER 2007

EDITORIAL MESSAGE

Welcome to the December issue of ERA-Link News. Our spotlight this month is on the recently unveiled funding opportunities: The EU has just issued calls for proposals in 32 research areas, making available 1.75 billion euros of new research money. The new calls include the Marie Curie International Research Staff Exchange Scheme (IRSES), a new program designed to support staff exchanges between the EU and 29 different countries (e.g., US). Additionally, the European Research Council will be introducing a new Advanced Grant Scheme, while Erasmus Mundus is launching an expansion that includes introduction of joint doctoral programs. You will find herewith all the details about these exciting opportunities. We also bring you news about our sister organization, ERA-Link/Japan, introduce the new European Institute of Innovation and Technology, invite you to several upcoming events around the country, and much more.

We wish you a happy holiday season and all the best in the New Year!

The ERA-Link team.

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

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

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FEATURES

The EU Council Competitiveness Meeting: Calling for integrated approach to internal market, industry and research

On November 22-23, the Council of the European Union adopted conclusions on competitiveness under an integrated approach rooted in the Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs. The Council established the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), and agreed on a general approach to establishing joint technology initiatives (JTIs) in the fields of: innovative medicine, embedded computing systems, nanoelectronic technologies and aeronautics. Also, conclusions on the future of science and technology, on scientific information and on nanoscience were adopted. The Council also approved a resolution on modernizing universities for Europe's competitiveness. Finally, an agreement was reached on general approach to the participation of the Community in a research program aimed at enhancing the quality of life of older people through the use of new technologies.

With the European Union planning to launch the new Institute of Innovation and Technology next year, some EU capitals have already started their bids to house the institute. Austria, Hungary and Poland have said they would like to host the new European body, which is being planned as a flagship project to boost innovation, research and higher education. Under the agreed rules, three different organizations from at least two member states should participate in one of the EIT projects, selected by the institute governing board responsible for steering the its activities. The institute will operate with a total budget of €2.4 billion from 2008-2013, with €308.7 million coming from EU coffers. But the bulk of the investments are supposed to come from public and private partners as well as from the institute's own activities.

For more information, go to:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/97225.pdf

Belgium ranked top country for life sciences academic research

A survey conducted by The Scientist magazine this year put Belgium at the top of the list of best countries for life science academic research, followed by the United States, Canada, and Switzerland. India took the 6th place. For the first time Brazil and Mexico got on the best countries chart, at 11th and 14th place, respectively.

For more information, go to: <http://www.the-scientist.com/2007/11/1/65/1/>

Europe at the cutting edge of nanotechnology development

Policymakers, scientists and industrialists met on November 20-21 in Braga, Portugal to discuss the future of nanotechnology research in Europe. A wide range of issues relating to nanotechnologies was discussed, including the industry perspective, various applications (e.g. electronics, medicine, manufacturing), and latest scientific advances. This comes at a positive time for European nanotechnology, with the public-private research partnerships for nanoelectronics and embedded systems close to becoming a reality, the European Commission identified as being the single largest investor in nanotechnology research, and a recently-completed public consultation on the principles for responsible nanotechnology research. But it is important to maintain momentum if Europe is not to miss the opportunities to be offered by this exciting area of science and technology. The EU is looking to international partnerships in nanotechnology. For example, a joint EU-India nanotechnology research fund was announced in

November, with €10 million to allow the best institutions in India and the EU to work together in this field.

For the most recent developments in nanosciences and nanotechnology, go to:

[IP/07/1321](#) on the Nanotechnology Action Plan

[IP/07/1140](#) on the consultation on responsible research

[IP/07/864](#), [IP/07/668](#) and [IP/06/1589](#) on the Joint Technology initiatives

For the program of the Braga event:

<http://www.fct.mctes.pt/hlc/programme/programme.htm>

A new Intellectual Property/Innovation Management Handbook has been published and is now available online

MIHR (the Centre for Management of Intellectual Property in Health and Research Development) and PIPRA (the Public Intellectual Property Resource for Agriculture) have published a book titled "Intellectual Property Management in Health and Agricultural Innovation." This handbook aims to contribute to sound IP management by offering a best practice resource. It also contains useful material for managing innovation. Best practice chapters are included for each type of entity: government, universities and research centers, scientists and licensing executives.

All content can be downloaded for free.

To access the handbook, go to: <http://www.iphandbook.org/handbook/index.html>

ERA-Link/Japan: A network for European researchers in Japan

European researchers in Japan have given a resounding "yes" to the European Commission's proposed initiative to create a network of European researchers in Japan called ERA-Link/Japan. This network will include Europeans who may not be doing research *sensu stricto* but have connections with science, technology or innovation activities in both public or private sector in Japan (e.g. European engineers, students, investors, entrepreneurs, patent attorneys, etc.) and, European or Japanese organizations hosting European researchers in Japan. ERA-Link/Japan will provide them with information and services about career and research-funding opportunities in Europe, as well as openings for research collaboration.

In order to better understand the views and needs of European researchers in Japan, the European Commission, in collaboration with the Embassies of the EU Member States in Japan and the other European countries associated with the European Research Area, launched a broad survey among European researchers currently working there. 571 researchers responded to the survey, including researchers coming from all-over Europe who are working in various Japanese cities. 65% of respondents worked outside Tokyo and the majority (67%) had spent less than 5 years in Japan. Notably, only 10% of the respondents had no knowledge of the Japanese language with 63% having either basic or conversational level of Japanese.

Respondents were very keen to develop their contact network, and were interested in information on career development and research funding. Specifically, the most valuable types of information and services cited were Europe-Japan cooperation opportunities, research funding sources, information on careers in Europe and tools for developing contacts with other researchers and scientific organizations. While interest in the proposed benefits of ERA-Link was very high (74% judged it as useful or very useful), respondents knew little about European research programs and policies such as the EU's 7th Research Framework Program or the European Research Area

(ERA). This provided more evidence for the need to launch an ERA-Link/Japan in the near future. The network is expected to be operational by mid-2008.

For more information and the full report of the survey, go to:

<http://www.deljpn.ec.europa.eu/ERA-Link>

http://www.deljpn.ec.europa.eu/relation/showpage_en_relations.science.eralink.survey.php

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

New calls for proposals in 32 research areas

The European Commission issued on November 30 calls for proposals in 32 research areas, making available about €1.75 billion from the 7th Research Framework Program. There is a strong emphasis on international scientific collaboration, with all areas of research being open to partnerships, including countries from outside the European Research Area.

The new €1.75 billion call for proposals address specifically the following areas:

Cooperation:

- Food, agriculture and fisheries and biotechnology;
- Nanoscience, nanotechnologies, materials and new production technologies (seven calls);
- Energy (four calls);
- Environment (including climate change) (two calls);
- Transport (including aeronautics) (four calls);
- ERA-NET/ERA-NET Plus.

Ideas:

- ERC (European Research Council) advanced grant
- IDEAS coordination and support action

People:

- Marie Curie European reintegration grants;
- Marie Curie international reintegration grants;
- Researchers night
- Marie Curie international research staff exchange scheme;
- Marie Curie industry-academia partnerships and pathways.

Capacities:

- Research infrastructures;
- Research for the benefit of SMEs;
- Regions of knowledge;

- Research potential;
- Science in society

The **Euratom** call concerns nuclear fission and radiation protection.

Of particular interest to ERA-Link members will be Marie Curie Actions under the People area, including Marie Curie European reintegration grants; Marie Curie international reintegration grants; and Marie Curie international research staff exchange scheme.

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

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

More details about the calls are also available via the network of National Contact Points, at http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ncp_en.html. The Network can help researchers identify areas of interest and create the partnerships that are generally required for accessing European funding.

For information on the European Research Council, go to: <http://erc.europa.eu/>

Marie Curie International Staff Exchange Scheme (IRSES)

Among the calls for proposals launched by the European Commission on November 30 is a new scheme, which will create closer links between staff working in research organizations in Europe and their counterparts in other international partner countries. The scheme will support staff exchanges of up to 12 months per staff member. Staff from research organizations in 29 different countries can participate and the scheme is open to all fields of research. The International Research Staff Exchange Scheme, as it is known, will have a budget of €25 million for 2008.

This new scheme will open the benefits of the Marie Curie approach to staff working in research organizations in all of the 29 countries either with which the EU has a Science and Technology Agreement (e.g., US) or which are part of the European Neighborhood Policy. It is hoped that exchanges of this type will help to increase international participation in the 7th Research Framework Program.

For more information on this new open call, go to:

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

More details about the call are also available via the network of National Contact Points

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ncp_en.html

Four billion euros for Europe's most far-reaching research from ERC

The Scientific Council of the European Research Council (ERC) unveiled recently the detailed design of a new high-profile initiative, which is set to become one of the most prestigious and forward-looking schemes for supporting frontier research across Europe. Following the success of this year's Starting Grant competition for young researchers, the ERC Advanced Grant scheme will channel around €4 billion over the next 6 years to the very best research projects and the most talented researchers across Europe.

The Advanced Grant scheme is set to be a flagship funding program of the ERC for the years 2008-2013, dispensing about two-thirds of the ERC's total budget, which averages about €1 billion per annum. It will operate alongside the already established ERC Starting Grant scheme

which is targeted at younger investigators, and which received over 9000 grant applications in the first year.

Depending on the nature of the research, ERC Advanced Grants may be up to €3,500,000 for a period of 5 years. While the Starting Grant scheme aims to boost the career and performance of young investigators by supporting early scientific independence, Advanced Grants will target researchers who already have established themselves as exceptional leaders in their field. ERC grants are open to researchers of any nationality, working or planning to work in Europe, and working in any field of science, scholarship or engineering. The selection process for these prestigious grants is based on an open competition with scientific excellence as a sole award criterion.

For more information, go to:

Fact Sheet on the “ERC Advanced Grant”: http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/AdG_Factsheet_2007.pdf

ERC Work Program 2008: http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/wp2008_Final.pdf

COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES

Expansion of Erasmus Mundus

Ministers representing the European Union's 27 member states have recently backed expansion of the EU's global Erasmus Mundus exchange program. Assuming formal approval by the EU Council of Ministers and the European Parliament, the scheme will spend €494 million (US\$733) from 2009 to 2013 on exchange programs for students and academics from the EU and other countries.

Erasmus Mundus was launched in 2004 following the success of the EU's Erasmus scheme, which funds such exchanges between universities and colleges within EU member states. In the first three academic years (2004-2006), more than 2,300 students have participated in the program and additional 1,800 started their studies in Europe in September 2007.

The new Erasmus Mundus II program builds on this by aiming to become the EU reference program for cooperation with third countries in this area. Over a period of five years, the new budget will be available for European and third-country universities to join forces in joint programs or collaborative partnerships, and to grant scholarships to European and third-country students for an international study experience.

The new improved Erasmus Mundus now under discussion would fund joint doctoral programs. It would also allow additional funding to be sourced from EU budgets dedicated to general economic development in developing countries. And Erasmus Mundus administrative procedures would be simplified to encourage participation from outside the EU. Negotiations will now continue with the European Parliament, with the aim of securing approval by next June, so the revamped Erasmus Mundus can start on schedule.

For more information, go to: http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/mundus/index_en.html

New agreement between NIH and CNRS: Research Career Transition Award for young French scientists

National Institutes of Health and France's Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) signed recently a Letter of Intent for a new NIH-CNRS Research Career Transition Award

program for young scientists. This multi-disciplinary program will allow young French researchers who have recently obtained their doctorate to spend three years in an NIH lab, paid by NIH, and another two in a French lab, paid by CNRS. The bilateral experience is aimed to encourage the reintegration of young scientists into the French research system. Applications for the new Research Career Transition Award program will be solicited once a year for several positions. A panel of Franco-American experts will select candidates based upon their applications and in-person interviews. ERA-Link will provide more details on this opportunity as soon as they become available. [Source: Federal Technology Watch, Vol. 5, No. 44, October 29, 2007]

RESEARCH CAREERS

Call for external experts: The Competitiveness and Innovation Program (CIP)

The Commission invites applications for independent external experts providing assistance in evaluation of proposals, the review of projects and other tasks related to implementation of Information & Communication Technologies Policy Support Program (ICT PSP). The ICT PSP forms part of the EC Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Program (CIP). CIP is structured around three specific programs:

- The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Program in support of enterprise, particularly SMEs, entrepreneurship, innovation, including eco-innovation and industrial competitiveness;
- The ICT PSP in support of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Policy
- The Intelligent Energy-Europe Program in support of energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and energy diversification.

The foreseen budget for the ICT PSP is 20 % of the overall CIP budget. The program period is 2007-2013. Applications may only be submitted via the online electronic registration form available at the website: http://ec.europa.eu/ict_psp.

For more information, go to:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/ict_psp/calls/call_experts_07/index_en.htm

Association Bernard Gregory: Helping the entry of young PhD into business

Founded in 1980, the French Association Bernard Gregory promotes the value of training through research to the non-academic world and helps the entry of young PhDs from any discipline into business. ABG facilitates the placement of PhDs into companies through information dissemination, individual support for job seekers, and matching the skills of new and recent PhDs with available job offers. The foundation has a network of 300 correspondents around the world who provide individual support to new PhDs in designing their career plans, writing CVs aimed at the non-academic sector, and who follow them through to recruitment. The ABG website contains an online database of CVs and a database of job offers. They publish a quarterly newsletter "Docteurs & Co" and offer an on-line guide "[From PhD to Employment](#)."

To learn more, please go to: <http://www.abg.asso.fr/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Innovation and Technology program January to March 2008 in House of Sweden, Washington D.C.

Progress in innovation, science and technology creates growth and wealth for nations, and opportunities for industry and individuals. Investment in these areas is also imperative for organizations and countries to stay competitive. During a period of 10 weeks beginning on January 8, 2008, there will be a program in House of Sweden, covering different aspects and application areas, in order to exchange experiences, create contacts and foster discussions between Sweden, the European Community and the US. The program consists of some twenty seminars on varying subjects as space research, nanotechnology, how to measure competitiveness, mobile wireless broadband, innovation policies, health care and more, as well as five exhibitions and some cultural events. The overall perspective is to look forward, focusing on the ways in which new innovations and technologies can improve life. For more information and updates on the program, see www.swedenabroad.com/washington (program page at http://www.swedenabroad.com/News____7067.aspx?slaveid=69341), or send email to houseofsweden@foreign.ministry.se for inquiries.

European Career Fair at MIT, 1-4 February 2008

The 12th European Career Fair will be held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), in Cambridge on 1 to 4 February, 2008.

This year, the European Commission is partnering with the MIT European Club to organize a dedicated Science & Technology (S&T) space at the Career Fair. The space will promote Europe as a great place to pursue a career in science and technology, be it in industry, research organizations, academia or science policy. It will present the best that Europe has to offer, in all its diversity: public, private, national and international. EU Member States will promote participation by their national research organizations and companies engaged in research.

For more information, go to:
<https://www.euro-career.com/>

ERA-Link meeting with Janez Potočnik, the E.U. Commissioner for Science & Research, Washington, DC, 14 February 2008

The EU Commissioner for Science and Research, Janez Potočnik, will meet with ERA -Link members on 14 February 2008. The meeting and the following reception will be held in the Austrian Embassy at 3526 International Ct, NW, between 12:00 and 2:00PM. All ERA-Link members residing in the Washington, DC area are cordially invited to attend.

Commissioner Potočnik will introduce the Seventh Framework Program, a 2007-2013 funding initiative to advance research and technology development, create jobs, and increase competitiveness and quality of research in the EU. The Commissioner will also be available after his presentation to answer your questions on science and research in the EU, and on the EU-US cooperation in R&D. Please send your questions for Commissioner Potočnik to our email

address: eralink.usa@cordis.europa.eu. We will be providing further details in the upcoming newsletter and on the ERA-Link website. We look forward to seeing you there!

International Career Fair, San Francisco, CA, 29 February –1 March 2008

The International Career Fair will be held at the Nikko Hotel in San Francisco, CA on 29 February –1 March 2008. This recruitment event will bring together engineering, scientific and business graduate students with leading companies from Europe and the US looking for highly qualified candidates for positions throughout the world. With company presentations and exhibits, keynotes and workshops relative to international careers, and one-on-one interviews, the International Career Fair is an event that cannot be missed by anyone interested in working in an international environment. There is no participation fee for qualified candidates, but pre-registration is required. The European Commission is one of the sponsors of the International Career Fair.

For more information, go to: www.internationalcareerfair.com/jsp/core/PlageHome.jsp

ABOUT ERA-LINK

ERA-Link 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 and allows them to become well connected among themselves and in Europe, ensuring that they are recognized as an important resource for European research, whether they remain in the U.S. or choose to return.

For further information about ERA-Link, please visit:

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

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

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