



ERA-LINK USA NEWS – JUNE 2008

EDITORIAL MESSAGE

We report this month on the visit of the EU Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, Jan Figel' to Washington DC. Commissioner Figel' participated in the annual NAFSA conference, the largest gathering of international educators in the world, and his visit provided an opportunity to elaborate on the EU policy toward the role of education and student mobility in bringing about social change: "It is now common for bright and talented students from Boston, Bologna or Bangkok to look for the best match for their skills and interests half-way across the globe. Promoting international education is among the best ways to fight prejudice and advance mutual understanding and dialogue among nations and peoples," commented Commissioner Figel'. We invite you to read his inspiring speech delivered at the NAFSA conference and listen to a podcast from the Commissioner's visit to the German Marshall Fund. We also bring you highlights from our recent events around the country, and keep you posted on the currently available funding opportunities.

Wishing you a great summer!!

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

Better careers and more mobility: A European Partnership for Researchers. Commission Communication, May 23, 2008

On May 23, 2008, the European Commission issued a Communication to the Council and the European Parliament, which proposes to develop a partnership with Member States to ensure the availability of the necessary researchers. The Communication states: "As the core producers of new knowledge and the main agents in its transfer and exploitation, researchers are indispensable for a competitive, knowledge-based EU economy. In order to retain and attract the best research talents, a balanced approach is required to ensure that researchers across the EU benefit from the right training, attractive careers and the removal of barriers to their mobility." The Communication calls for a coordinated action among the member states in the following areas:

- Opening recruitment systematically and portability of grants
- Meeting social security and supplementary pensions needs of mobile researchers
- Providing attractive employment and working conditions
- Enhancing the training, skills, and experience of researchers

The Commission calls upon the Member States to adopt a national action plan by early 2009, and to set out specific actions to achieve the above aims of the partnership.

To read this important Communication, please go to:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/press/2008/pdf/com_2008_31_1_en.pdf

EU and Russia discuss cooperation in field of research

The first meeting of the EU-Russia Permanent Partnership Council on Research was held in Ljubljana on May 26, 2008. At the meeting, the Russian Federation was represented by Minister of Education and Science Andrey Fursenko. The cooperation between the EU and Russia in the field of research is one of the most promising areas of cooperation between these two partners.

It spans many key technological and strategic sectors, for example a good progress has been achieved in the implementation of the roadmap of the EU-Russia Common Space of Research and Education, including cultural aspects. Russia has consistently been the most successful third-country partner in the 6th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development.

Most recently, the European Community and Russia have launched coordinated calls for co-funded research project proposals (in the areas of Food, Agriculture & Biotechnology and in the area of Energy). More such coordinated calls for co-funded projects, namely in the areas of Health, Nanotechnologies & New Materials, will be launched soon, and analogous discussions are ongoing on similar co-funded initiatives in the areas of aeronautics, nuclear fission energy research, and in space research.

The Russian Federation has requested to start the negotiation of an association agreement to the 7th Framework Programme on Research and Technological Development. A meeting is planned between the Commission and the Russian authorities to address all issues that relate to the possible association of Russia to FP7, including administrative, legal, organizational and procedural requirements.

EU-US joint selection of 2008 Atlantis projects

The month of May was important for advancing the EU-US Atlantis program. Officials from the European Commission, the Agency for Education Audiovisual and Culture, and the US Department of Education (FIPSE) selected 16 new projects out of 53 applications for funding in 2008. Eight are transatlantic joint-dual degree projects, four are mobility projects, and two are policy oriented projects. They will all receive financial support for a total of 4,5m€ from the EC (up from 3,7m€ in 2007), and an equivalent amount in US dollar terms from FIPSE. Projects will be launched in September 2008 and will typically run for four years, except for the two policy-oriented ones, which will last for two years. Some 700 European and American students and 140 scholars will be exchanged through this round of projects.

Transatlantic degree applications were of the highest quality, confirming the validity of the format of joint/dual degrees created with the Atlantis program. The most represented field of study was Engineering and Technology with 5 projects (laser technology, paper science, software, micro and nano systems, information systems), followed by Economics and Business Administration (3 projects), Environment and Biotechnology (2 projects), and International Relations, Education, Law and Urban design with 1 project each.

The pool of 16 selected projects represented 41 EU institutions from 17 EU countries: Germany 6 institutions, Finland 5, France 4, Belgium, Italy and UK 3, Spain, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal, Poland, Slovakia and Sweden 2, Austria and Czech Republic 1. Slovakia and Czech Republic featured as first timers in the Atlantis program.

To read more about the Atlantis program, please go to:
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/fipseec/index.html>

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International Careers Expo at NIH, May 15, 2008

On May 15th, ERA-Link sponsored an exhibit booth at the International Careers Expo at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. Among 30 Expo exhibitors were the following science and technology representatives from government and private sectors: Office of Science & Technology, Embassies of Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Ireland, China, Hungary, and Switzerland; Institute for Health Research, Canada, Japan Science & Technology Agency; Jupiter Bioscience, India; Netherlands Office for Science and Technology, and others. The ERA-Link's booth was very well attended. We distributed numerous handouts, including the Marie Curie



ERA-Link USA exhibit stand at the NIH International Expo. From left to right: Izabella Zandberg, ERA-Link and Julia Garcia-Pascual, EC Delegation in Washington (Photo: Patrick Bernier)

actions marketing materials, ERC grants information, ERA-Link brochures, and others. As the result of this outreach, a considerable number of new members joined our network and signed up the forthcoming ERA-Link event at NIH on May 29th.

European researchers' get-together at the National Institutes of Health, May 29, 2008

ERA-Link USA joined forces with the NIH Office of Intramural Training & Education, and the NIH Visiting Fellows Committee, to organize a meeting on May 29 for scientists interested in research collaborations with Europe. The event introduced funding opportunities, the ERA-Link organization, and a discussion on the importance of international collaborations in science. Among the speakers were Laurent Bocheau, Head, Science, Technology & Education, EC Delegation in Washington, DC; Thomas Lehner, Chief, Genomics Research Branch and Associate Director, Div. of Neuroscience and Basic Behavioral Science, NIMH; and



Event registration (Photo: ERA-Link)

Izabella Zandberg, ERA-Link Project Manager.



Event participants (Photo: ERA-Link)

Approximately 60 participants attended the event, mostly European post-docs currently holding research fellowships in various NIH institutes, but also employees of the NIH interested in international collaborations as well as participants from other academic institutions in the area (University of Maryland, Johns Hopkins University).

A networking reception and a Happy Hour followed the event, providing an opportunity for more informal interactions among participants. It was suggested that such an event should be organized annually, and the NIH Office of Intramural Training & Education

expressed interest in future collaboration with ERA-Link USA in conducting outreach to European scientists at NIH.

NAFSA Conference of International Educators, May 25-30, 2008

NAFSA, the Association of International Educators¹, held its 60th Annual Conference & Expo in Washington D.C. from May 25 to 30, 2008. NAFSA is the leading U.S. professional organization promoting the exchange of students and scholars to and from the United States. With more than 9000 delegates, from over 100 countries the NAFSA conference is the largest gathering of international educators in the world. Over the years, it has become a must for international educators interested in global higher education trends, joint and dual degrees, networking and mobility programs.

Ján Figel', EU Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, following an invitation from NAFSA, participated in the session "International Student and Scholar Mobility: Programs, Trends, Challenges and Impact," and stressed the role of Europe in advancing international education, and in particular the Bologna process leading to creation of a European Higher Education Area, the EU's Erasmus Mundus program, and the EU-US cooperation program Atlantis. This is the first time that a European Commissioner was invited at NAFSA, the 60-year old system of networking and cooperation in higher education in the US.



Commissioner Ján Figel' (center) at the NAFSA conference
(Photo: ERA-Link)



Commissioner Ján Figel'
(Photo: File)

Commissioner Figel' referring to the EU motto "unity in diversity," stressed that "international education unites people and makes them understand and value diversity". Promotion of education cooperation within Europe with European Commission programs like Erasmus, or through the more recent Bologna process have been success stories for European integration. Thanks to these initiatives a number of unprecedented reforms have seen the light in Europe paving the way for a European Higher Education Area by 2010. Promotion of international education cooperation and exchanges with other parts of the world is widely recognized as crucial for competitiveness, cultural understanding and global peace and stability; the EU is a world leader in this respect.

The NAFSA session on International Student and Scholar mobility was the occasion for highlighting the opportunities for American students to study in Europe through the Erasmus Mundus and Atlantis programs. Noting that since 2005 over 4,000 European and American students have used the Atlantis program to typically spend one semester of study on the other side of the Atlantic, Commissioner Figel' said it has given EU and US universities a

¹ In May 1990 the membership formally renamed the organization NAFSA: Association of International Educators. The NAFSA (National Association of Foreign Student Advisers) acronym was retained to reflect NAFSA's proud past and broad name recognition.

unique opportunity to integrate their structures and study programs. "Moreover, Atlantis blazed a trail," he said. "It is the only program of its kind jointly funded by two public authorities - the European Commission and the US Department of Education -with balanced flows of students and it is used as a model for cooperation with other countries such as Canada, Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea."

The text of the speech can be read:

http://www.eurunion.org/eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1764

EU presence at NAFSA

A major highlight of the NAFSA Conference was its International Education Expo at the Washington Convention Center showcasing 462 exhibitors from all over the world with booths in an area of over 4,600 m². The US accounted for about 50% of all exhibitors. The European Union had the second largest group with 117 exhibitors mostly grouped around national pavilions.

Exhibitors included well-known universities and other higher education institutions, as well as organizations promoting international education and student mobility. The main purpose of the exhibition was to meet with potential partners in international academic cooperation and exchange programs, and to present opportunities for foreign students to study in Europe. Some countries like Spain, France, Germany, UK and Italy displayed large exhibition spaces and were very visible at the Expo. The European Commission, Directorate General of Education and Culture, together with the EU Delegation in Washington, D.C. also hosted a stand at NAFSA Expo.

Bologna process and perceptions outside Europe

A series of workshops and sessions at NAFSA dealt with European higher education in general and the Bologna reforms in particular. As we reported in our May newsletter, there is a large and growing interest from North America and other world regions for the changes taking place in Europe. The Bologna reforms have made European higher education more visible and more attractive. Thousands of master programs are offered in English and their number is rapidly increasing. Quality reviews are put on the web and a register of trustworthy quality assurance agencies has been created. Most American universities now consider the European three-year Bachelor as an acceptable basis for admission to a Master program (only few European countries have opted for a four year bachelors as in the United States). It is to be noted, however, that the transparency tools (ECTS, Diploma Supplement) are not used consistently throughout the European Higher Education Area, and that countries are progressing with various speed towards the 2010 objective.

Meeting with Commissioner Ján Figel' at the German Marshall Fund



The event at the German Marshall Fund attracted about 50 participants, including representatives from the US Government, think-tanks, European Embassies, and American Marshall Memorial Fellows.

Commissioner Ján Figel' at the German Marshall Fund (Photo: ERA-Link)

Commissioner Figel' gave a speech entitled "Educating Our Youth to Compete in Tomorrow's Economy." In it he described the recent European policy developments, including the so-called Bologna (for higher education), and Copenhagen (for vocational education and training) processes, the European Institute of Technology, and international programs such as the Atlantis and Erasmus Mundus. He insisted on societal responsibility to strike a balance between equity and efficiency, and to reconcile egalitarian and elitist approaches.

Dr. Allan Goodman, President and CEO of the Institute of International Education, stressed the rapidly increasing global competition between education institutions (while the US concentrates two thirds of the world faculty positions in 4000 institutions), the strong influence on the world scene of the Bologna process (particularly the three-year bachelor degree), the current limitations in the mobility of scholars coming to the US, and the insufficient international exposure of US students.

The debate moderated by Ellen Pope, allowed for a broad exchange of views. The main questions and comments were related to the role of volunteering programmes such as the Peace Corps on global development, the main comparative advantages of the US system, the expected impacts related to the European Institute of Technology, the dilemma between cooperation and competition facing universities worldwide, and the prospects for an increase of double and joint transatlantic degrees.

The panel was followed by press interviews and the recording of a podcast with Dr. Allen Goodman, which has been placed on the GMF web site. To listen to the podcast interview with Commissioner Figel and Dr. Goodman, please click on the link below:

Preparing American and European youth for tomorrow's economy:

Audio file: <<http://web.gmfus.org/mp3s/20080528Figel.mp3>>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Third International Seville Conference on Future-Oriented Technology Analysis (FTA): Impacts and Implications for Policy and Decision-Making, Spain, 16-17 October 2008

We are pleased to announce the Third International Seville Conference on Future-Oriented Technology Analysis (FTA) organised by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre - Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (JRC-IPTS).

The conference will be held on Thursday 16th and Friday 17th October 2008 at JRC-IPTS, Seville, Spain. The focus of the conference is on the "impacts and implications of FTA for policy and decision making."

The 2008 FTA Conference will gather academics, practitioners as well as public and private sector decision makers from Europe, North America, Asia, Latin America, Africa and Australasia. http://forera.jrc.ec.europa.eu/fta_2008/instructions.html

Please use the following e-mail address for any inquiry you might have:

jrc-ipts-forera@ec.europa.eu

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND FELLOWSHIPS

Open Call: Science & Technology Fellowships in China

The Science & Technology Fellowship Program (STF-China) of the European Commission offers funding for 30 researchers from EU member states who want to conduct or join a research project in a Chinese host institution. It is a pilot phase of an EC action in China aiming at building bridges between the EU and China in the Science & Technology domain.

The purpose of the Science & Technology Fellowship (STF-China) is to:

- facilitate participation of outgoing European researchers in Chinese research and development programs
- establish sustainable links and research partnerships between EU and Chinese research institutions and between individual researchers

STF-China offers financial support ca. 50.500 Euro per fellow. The program is planned for 24 months, including:

- a two-day pre-departure briefing in Brussels
- a six-month tailor-made Chinese language and research culture training in Beijing
- a 18-month practical research period in a Chinese host organization.

STF-China is open for research proposals from all disciplines as well as interdisciplinary projects. The applicants must hold an EU passport and have a minimum of 2 years of practical research work experience.

A European Sending Organization may be any public or private scientific or research & development institution from EU that has either already established or can convincingly demonstrate an interest in establishing scientific co-operation with China.

Chinese Host Organization shall be any Chinese National Research Laboratory or University laboratory. At the moment of applying for the STF China Program, the applicant shall propose a host institution in China.

Deadline to apply is 5th September 2008. The program will start in March 2009.

For more details about STF-China, please check:

www.euchinastf.eu and <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/cgi/frame12.pl>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security announces call for proposals for International Research Projects

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate is soliciting applications for international research projects aligned with the mission and requirements of DHS S&T. Specifically, the S&T Directorate seeks proposals that will contribute to homeland security science and technology, including, but not limited to:

- Evaluation of novel tools or approaches to confronting homeland security challenges
- Basic research to provide data, understandings, or models that support S&T efforts or policy decisions
- S&T and operations research evaluations to support revolutionary improvements in DHS's mission and its component agencies operations

This funding opportunity is available to accredited institutions of higher education, and all proposals must include both US and foreign institutions, and an academic lead institution.

The call for proposals it will remain open until **30 September 2008**.

For more details about the International Research in Homeland Security Science & Technology Mission Areas, including eligibility criteria and instructions on how to apply, please go to: <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=HhrZ4nwdvvyLjJGvdYpn6Cqh5LKHsKD1P43Jtg24tfh5nyRHq0yJ!2042773451?oppld=40993&flag2006=false&mode=VIEW>

Grants.gov will also inform about any updates if and when modifications are posted to the announcement.

Grants from the Foundation for Polish Science

Established in 1991, the Foundation for Polish Science is the biggest independent and non-profit institution supporting scientific community in Poland, and scientists from abroad who wish to cooperate with their Polish partners.

The Foundation has developed many programs that foster scientific international cooperation. It offers Polish scholars the opportunity to gain experience in scientific work abroad and supports development of international cooperation of Polish research institutions with their foreign counterparts. The Foundation also encourages foreign scientists to work in Poland. In particular, the Foundation offers support to young researchers – especially those who are completing or have just completed their PhD.

FNP`s programs - offer for Polish and foreign scientists

- Welcome - Support in establishing research teams in Poland by foreign researchers who intend to work in Poland or Polish scientists returning from the scientific stay abroad
- [Research Fellowships for Foreign Scholars](#) (main focus: Central and Eastern Europe)
- [Alexander von Humboldt Polish Honorary Fellowship](#) (for German scholars)
- [FOCUS PROGRAMME](#) – Support in establishing new research groups (for Polish and foreign scientists)

- [INNOVATOR PROGRAMME](#) - Training and assistance at the implementation level (for Polish and foreign scientists)
- HOMING – Polish scientists currently working abroad and wishing to return to Poland
- TEAM - Funding research projects by the best teams engaging young Polish and foreign researchers

FNP`s offer for foreign research institutions

- KOLUMB - Postdoctoral out-going fellowships for Polish scholars: Possibility for research institution to accommodate a post-doc with a fully-funded fellowship for a period up to 15 months
- MPD - International PhD Studies Program: involves international consortia (partner institution)

For more information, please visit: www.fnp.eu or contact: Adam Zieliński, Head of International Programs, adam.zielinski@fnp.org.pl, phone: 0048 22 845 95 15

Current calls for proposals

PEOPLE PROGRAM:

- [FP7-PEOPLE-ERG-2008](#)
- [FP7-PEOPLE-IRG-2008](#)
- [FP7-PEOPLE-ITN-2008](#)
- [FP7-PEOPLE-IEF-2008](#)
- [FP7-PEOPLE-IIF-2008](#)
- [FP7-PEOPLE-IOF-2008](#)

COOPERATION PROGRAM:

[Health](#) / 1 Open call

[Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and Biotechnology](#) / 1 Open call

[Information and Communication Technologies](#) / 4 Open calls

[Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials and new Production Technologies](#) / 1 Open call

[Energy](#) / 1 Open call

[Transport \(including Aeronautics\)](#) / 1 Open call

[Socio-economic sciences and Humanities](#) / 1 Open call

[Coordination of Research Activities](#) / 1 Open call

To access a full list of currently open calls for proposals launched by the European Commission, go to: <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm> or http://www.interfaceurope.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=97&Itemid=130

RESEARCH CAREERS

EURAXESS Jobs (formerly known as 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/euraxess/index_en.cfm?l1=0&l2=1&CFID=625253&CFTOKEN=23197369

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

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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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