



## ERA-LINK USA NEWS – MAY 2008

### EDITORIAL MESSAGE

The overarching theme of this month's ERA-Link newsletter is the increasing recognition among European agencies, and all EU nations, for harmonization and coordination across the continent.

The most striking example of this is the Bologna Process: a voluntary agreement between all countries in Europe to make higher education more compatible and comparable between countries. A somewhat related push is in the area of technology with the recognition that standardization of technical specifications across nations is necessary to further innovation. Health research, with cancer research in particular, is yet another example of a strong commitment to coordinate at all levels.

In this newsletter, you will find information about those research policy issues. We also report from our two events in California, and list several funding opportunities. Please note that application deadline for the Marie Curie International Reintegration Grant is October 8, 2008.

*The ERA-Link USA team.*

[http://cordis.europa.eu/eralink/about\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/eralink/about_en.html)

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

### IN THIS ISSUE OF ERA-LINK NEWS:

#### FEATURES

- **The Bologna Process: Harmonization of higher education systems in Europe**
- **Publication of a communication on the contribution from standardization to innovation in Europe**
- **ERA Expert Group publishes a report on European research infrastructures**

#### ERA-Link REPORTS

- **Workshop on Transatlantic Research Cooperation at the University of Southern California, April 11, 2008**
- **ERA-Link participated in the American Association for Cancer Research annual conference, San Diego, April 12-16, 2008**
- **Workshop on Transatlantic Research Cooperation at the ACS Annual Meeting in New Orleans, 8 April 2008**

#### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- **ERA-Link USA event at the National Institutes of Health, May 29, 2008**
- **European researchers' get-together in Philadelphia, June 17, 2008**
- **Symposium on European Research and Transatlantic Cooperation - at the Plant Biology Congress, June 29, 2008**

#### FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- **International Reintegration Grant (IRG)**
- **Chateaubriand fellowships in the humanities and social sciences**
- **Current calls for proposals**

#### COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES

- **Marie Curie Action: Initial Training Networks (ITN)**

## **RESEARCH CAREERS AND OTHER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Careers at the Joint Research Center (JRC)**
- **Research jobs in the Netherlands**
- **ERACAREERS**

## **FEATURES**

### **The Bologna Process: Harmonization of higher education systems in Europe**

Few other developments in the long history of higher education have had such an extraordinary impact around the world as the decision by a group of European countries in 1999 to “harmonize” the way their universities operate. Many nations have followed the developments of the Bologna Process with increasing interest, and many have modified their own higher education systems to make them compatible with the Bologna principles.

Not only have the countries of Europe embraced the Bologna Process, but other nations across Africa, Asia, Australasia and North America have become involved – either as observers or as adopters of similar changes. One of the most amazing aspects of Bologna has been its voluntary nature: profound changes have occurred without international treaties or European legislation. (SOURCE: University World News)

To read more about the Bologna Process, please go to the following pages of the “University World News.”

[\*\*EU: Europe's groundbreaking Bologna Process\*\*](#)

[\*\*FRANCE: Sorbonne Declaration – Precursor to Bologna\*\*](#)

[\*\*UK: Bologna may not end one-year masters courses\*\*](#)

[\*\*US: Questions remain for American universities\*\*](#)

[\*\*RUSSIA: Bologna about to take root\*\*](#)

[\*\*GERMANY: University heads assess Bologna reform\*\*](#)

[\*\*GREECE: Diverging views, patchy execution of Bologna\*\*](#)

[\*\*AFRICA: Bologna responses follow ex-colonial lines\*\*](#)

[\*\*AUSTRALIA: Warnings of impending doom subside\*\*](#)

[\*\*EU: The future of Bologna\*\*](#)

[\*\*EU: Next stop after Bologna?\*\*](#)

### **Publication of a Communication on the contribution from standardization to innovation in Europe**

The European Commission recently sent the European Parliament and the Council a new communication, “Towards an Increased Contribution from Standardization to Innovation in Europe.”

Standardization is the voluntary cooperation by industry, consumers and public authorities to develop technical specifications based on consensus. At the European level, standards are developed by CEN, CENELEC and ETSI, and are used as references in EU legislation. The

Communication underlines that standardization can make an important contribution to the development of sustainable industrial policy, unlock the potential of innovative markets, and strengthen the position of the European economy through more efficient capitalization on its knowledge basis. The Communication also identifies key elements for EU standardization policy on innovation, as it adapts to a growing international competition in standards-setting.

The Commission expects to discuss the Communication with all relevant stakeholders and will adapt the rolling Action Plan for European Standardization accordingly. It will launch a fact-finding study to analyze the interplay of intellectual property rights (IPR), and standards. Indeed, while standards are open for access and implemented by everyone, IPR gives a “monopoly” to its holders on the protected subject matter. However, they both contribute to encouraging innovation and facilitating the dissemination of knowledge. (SOURCE: IPR Helpdesk)

To read more about issues of standardization in Europe, please go to: [Basic Aspects within EU-funded RTD Activities](#)

## **ERA Expert Group publishes a report on European research infrastructures**

One of the seven Expert Groups set up by the European Commission to give advice on the different dimensions of the European Research Area (ERA), recently published a report on European research infrastructures.

The report acknowledges positive actions implemented so far, but clearly states that the future development of research infrastructures in Europe requires more funding and more efficient management of the available funding. Moreover, it calls for better coordination between the different stakeholders, the Commission, the Member States, the European Strategic Forum on Research Infrastructures, and the e-Infrastructure Reflection Group, among others.

The ERA expert group’s other recommendations have to do with the next generation of Pan-European infrastructures and e-infrastructures. Since cutting edge research constantly requires new and upgraded infrastructures - often extending beyond local or national levels - the effective implementation of research infrastructure policies is crucial for the future of research in Europe.

To read the report, please go to: [Developing world-class research infrastructures for the European Research Area \(ERA\)](#)

## **ERA-Link REPORTS**

### **Workshop on Transatlantic Research Cooperation at the University of Southern California, April 11, 2008**

ERA-Link USA collaborated with the Delegation of the European Commission in Washington, D.C. and the University of Southern California (USC) to organize a half-day symposium on International Cooperative Research and Education Opportunities (ICREO), at USC’s University Park Campus in downtown Los Angeles, on April 11, 2008. The event brought together about 60 participants representing a mix of U.S. faculty members interested in international cooperation, and European researchers working in southern California.

The aim of the event was to describe the changing landscape of U.S. and European cooperative research and education funding, and to facilitate a growing network of researchers and educators who will define, exploit and sustain these international endeavors. Dr. Laurent Bocheau described the current EU research policy with special emphasis on international cooperation objectives and funding opportunities. Dr. Izabella Zandberg presented services and activities of

ERA-Link USA. Dr. Thomas Lehner, Head of Genomics Research at the NIH's Institute of Mental Health, described NIH international cooperation priorities and programs. He explained how the recent flattening of the NIH budget has led to a decrease of the funding success rate from approximately 30% in 1997 to only 15% in 2007. He described some of the funding modalities and specific programs dedicated to the support of collaborative research programs with non-U.S. research teams.



Dr. Thomas Lehner, National Institutes of Health, Institute of Mental Health  
(Photo: ERA-Link)

Dr. Mark Suskin introduced NSF's Office of International Science and Engineering (OISE). The objective of this office is to advance the frontiers of science and engineering in the U.S. The OISE offers funding for various activities, including planning visits, workshops, partnerships for international research opportunities, and international research experiences for students.

Dr. Suskin also presented the National Science Foundation's PIRE program (Partnerships for International Research and Education), which seeks to catalyze a cultural change in U.S. institutions by establishing innovative models for international collaborative research and education. A project funded under PIRE can get up to \$500,000 a year for up to 5 years. The funding is directed solely towards the U.S. participants, but it is necessary for PIRE applicants to secure the participation of international partners. About half of the 32 on-going PIRE projects have European partners. NSF will soon launch a new call for PIRE projects with an increased overall budget and streamlined objectives.

The presentations were followed by a Q&A session. Participants pointed out that there is a lot of interest among European and U.S. researchers to travel to the other side of the Atlantic, and they would like to see more coordinated funding mechanisms. Specific questions were related to the level of commitment required of a foreign partner under the PIRE program. One participant was particularly interested in finding support for "virtual fellowships," which would allow Europeans to access on-line infrastructure in the U.S. (and vice versa).

## **ERA-Link participates in the American Association for Cancer Research annual conference, San Diego, April 12-16, 2008**



From left to right: Jan van de Loo, Directorate for Health, Cancer Unit, Izabella Zandberg, ERA-Link USA, and Laurent Bocheureau, Delegation of the European Commission (Photo: ERA-Link)

ERA-Link USA hosted an exhibit booth at the AACR annual conference this year. The American Association for Cancer Research is the world's oldest and largest professional organization dedicated to advancing cancer research. The membership includes 27,000 basic, translational, and clinical researchers; health care professionals; and cancer survivors and advocates in the United States and more than 70 countries. The theme of this year's annual meeting was "Translating the Latest Discoveries into Cancer Prevention

and Cures.” More than 17,000 scientists from around the world attended the event.

The 2008 AACR Exhibit Show featured approximately 400 companies showcasing their latest products and services for laboratory and clinical cancer research. Also present were research agencies, such as the National Cancer Institute, membership organizations and publishing companies. There were also not-for-profit exhibits, including cancer advocacy groups, alumni associations, research institutes and other educational organizations.

The well-attended ERA-Link booth provided information on funding and collaboration opportunities available to scientists interested in conducting cancer research in Europe. Two reports were available from the Directorate for Health Research: a report on current cancer research programs conducted under the 6th Framework Program, and one on gender-related cancers.

Visitors to the ERA-Link booth asked many specific questions about cancer research currently being carried out in Europe. Dr. Jan van de Loo, Scientific Officer in the Directorate for Health, Cancer Unit, who attended the conference, was available at the booth to answer those questions.

Finding collaborators in Europe (a requirement under the Cooperation program of FP7), was of special interest to researchers who participated in the conference. Scientists already involved in collaboration with Europe pointed to an urgent need for technology-based networking tools to help facilitate the work of multinational teams across the Atlantic (since in-person meetings are often cost-prohibitive).

Several European organizations active in cancer research were also present at the not-for-profit section of this year’s AACR Exhibit Show:

- **European Association for Cancer Research (EACR):** [www.eacr.org](http://www.eacr.org) Europe’s largest member society for cancer research with over 6000 laboratory, translational and clinical cancer researchers. An upcoming EACR conference highlighting the latest discoveries and trends across cancer research will be held in Lyon, France, July 5-8, 2008.
- **European Cancer Organization (ECCO):** [www.ecco-org.eu](http://www.ecco-org.eu). ECCO is an organization founded to bring about a multidisciplinary approach to cancer research, treatment and care. The next ECCO Congress will be held in Berlin, September 20-24, 2009. ECCO is also a co-organizer, together with AACR and ASCO, of an upcoming workshop devoted to Methods in Clinical Cancer Research, to be held in Films, Switzerland, June 21-27, 2008. The workshop will gather European junior clinical oncologists in any clinical research specialty area, to learn the essentials of clinical trial design.
- **Cancer Research UK:** [www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org). The leading charity in the UK dedicated to cancer research, Cancer Research UK has five research institutes within the UK: in Glasgow, Cambridge, London, Manchester and Oxford. All institutes welcome applications from researchers at all stages of their careers, in both basic and clinical research, to establish independent research programs in the area of cancer biology. Cancer Research UK also offers postdoctoral fellowships.

Next year’s Annual Conference of the American Cancer association will be held in Denver, Colorado, April 18-22, 2009. AACR offers various funding opportunities for senior and junior investigators. For information about AACR grants, please go to:

<http://www.aacr.org/home/scientists/research-funding--training-grants.aspx>

For more information about European cancer research, please go to: <http://www.ecrmforum.org/>

For a commentary on cancer research in Europe, please see “Europe Combating Cancer: The European Union’s Commitment to Cancer Research in the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme,” by S. Jungbluth, O. Kelm, J-W. van de Loo, E. Manousaki, M. Vidal, M. Hallen, and O. Q. Trias, *Molecular Oncology*, 1 (2007), pp. 14-18

## **Workshop on Transatlantic Research Cooperation at the ACS Annual Meeting in New Orleans, 8 April 2008**

At the American Chemical Society (ACS) Annual Meeting 2008 the Delegation of the European Commission hosted a Workshop on Transatlantic Cooperation. The aim of the workshop was to present transatlantic research collaborations with four case studies, and discuss the lessons learned and obstacles for transatlantic research. Among the speakers were Professor Jean-Luc Bredas (Georgia Tech) and Dr. Rosenzweig, National Science Foundation (NSF). The workshop, attended by around 30 participants, resulted in open and informal discussion of the topics.

The four case studies that were presented focused on the following projects: NANOAM, MNIBS, EPOBIO, and transatlantic researcher exchanges.

The project NANOAM emerged from a Gordon Conference and combined leading edge work on simulation and analytical work on nanoparticles on surfaces. Short-term 1-2 week researcher exchanges between the U.S. and EU groups were most productive. As a result of the project new infrastructures were built and 35 graduate students were trained. It was also concluded that for future projects a more flexible approach should be implemented.

The MNIBS project is conducting research on liquid crystals and interfacial pattern formation. A paper with results of the project received an award from American Physics Society. It was stated that the US side of the project got less money but enjoyed more freedom when it comes to reporting and making changes in the work plan.

EPOBIO is a project bringing together world-class scientific and industrial expertise to identify areas for further investment in plant science research in order to realize the economic potential of plant-derived raw materials with long-term benefits to society. Several bio-based materials flagship (plant cell walls, oilseed crops and biopolymers) projects were created. Some IPR difficulties had to be solved at consortium formation. In the future, a single funding office in international affairs would be more efficient.

During his presentation, Professor Jean-Luc Bredas described his career path from Belgium to the U.S. (now at Georgia Tech). He is holding a double position in Belgium and in the U.S., which helps to establish continuous exchanges of senior researchers, to apply for joint research projects (e.g. MODECOM) and to provide PhD students with international experience.

Dr. Rosenzweig, National Science Foundation (NSF), explained that the NSF is building transatlantic experience on bilateral schemes. International experience provides students with extra maturity, creativity and confidence. Keywords for international cooperation are excellence, necessity (global challenges), confidence, science diplomacy and fun/excitement.

Information about project NANOAM: <http://pruffle.mit.edu/~ccarter/NANOAM/>

The EPOBIO website: <http://www.epobio.net/>

## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

### **ERA-Link USA event 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 for scientists interested in research collaborations with Europe. This event will introduce funding opportunities, the ERA-Link organization, and a discussion on the importance of international collaborations in science. Among the speakers will be Laurent Bochereau, 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 Izabella Zandberg, ERA-Link Project Manager. The event will be held on **Thursday, May 29, 2008**, from 5:30pm to 8:00pm, at the National Institutes of Health, Natcher Center (Building 45), Room Balcony A. All ERA-Link members are invited to attend. For further details and to register, please go to: <http://www.training.nih.gov/trainees/>

### **European researchers' get-together in Philadelphia, June 17, 2008**

An European researchers' get together will be held in Philadelphia on **Tuesday, June 17, 2008, from 2:30pm to 5:30pm**, on the University of Pennsylvania campus, BRBII/IIIU Lobby, 421 Curie Blvd. Astrid-Christina Koch from the Delegation of the European Commission will discuss recent European research policy developments, and Izabella Zandberg will present services provided by ERA-Link USA and introduce recent developments in our activities. A detailed discussion of currently available funding opportunities and a Q&A session will follow. The event will conclude with a networking reception. All ERA-Link members are cordially invited to attend. Further details about the event will be provided on our website ([http://cordis.europa.eu/eralink/wnew\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/eralink/wnew_en.html)). We look forward to seeing you there!

### **Symposium on European Research and Transatlantic Cooperation - at the Plant Biology Congress, Mexico, June 29, 2008**

The symposium will present current trends in European Plant Science, and discuss opportunities for Transatlantic Cooperation. **It will be held as a part of the Plant Biology Congress in Merida, Mexico, Sunday, June 29, 2008 from 7:30pm to 10:00pm in the Chichen Itza Room, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Mérida, Mexico.**

The program will include presentations by Laurent Bochereau, Head of Science, Technology and Education, Delegation of the European Commission to the USA, on the Transatlantic Cooperation and ERA-Link; Professor Wilhelm Grissem, Chairman of the European Plant Science Organization, EPSO, Zürich, Switzerland, on Plant Science in Europe; and Professor Dianna Bowles, Project Coordinator, University of York, U.K. on an Example of Transatlantic Cooperation in Bio-based products research: EPOBIO (<http://www.epobio.net>).

A discussion will follow with Professor Sarah Hake, Center Director of the Plant Gene Expression Center and Adjunct Professor at University of California, Berkeley, and Dr. Richard V. Greene, Program Manager for Energy Biosciences. Chemical Sciences, Geosciences and Biosciences Division, Office of Basic Energy Sciences, U.S. Department of Energy. A Questions/Answers session will conclude the workshop.

For more information about the congress, please go to: <http://www.aspb.org/meetings/>

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND FELLOWSHIPS

### International Reintegration Grant (IRG)

Marie Curie International Reintegration Grants (IRG) provide individual grants to researchers who have carried out research outside Europe for at least 3 years, and who wish to return to Europe. The duration of the grant is up to 2 years.

Eligible researchers are those from EU Member States or Associated Countries who have at least 4 years full-time post-graduate research experience or a doctoral degree. The researcher applies in liaison with a reintegration host organization located in an EU Member State or Associated Country. If the proposal is selected, the Commission signs a grant agreement with the reintegration host. The reintegration host will then sign an employment agreement with the researcher.



Proposals from all areas of scientific and technological research of interest to the European Community are eligible. **Application deadline: October 8, 2008.**

For more information about International Reintegration Grants, please go to:

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=usersite.FP7DetailsCallPage&CALL\\_ID=96](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=usersite.FP7DetailsCallPage&CALL_ID=96)

### Chateaubriand fellowships in the humanities and social sciences

Each year, France offers Chateaubriand Fellowships to doctorate students in various fields: anthropology, art history, economics, history, international relations, linguistics, literature, musicology, philosophy, political science, psychology, sociology, etc.

Chateaubriand Fellowships allow you to conduct research in France and/or work under the supervision of a professor in a French university or research institution, and/or attend the seminars of a specific professor at a French university.

Eligible candidates must be pursuing a Ph.D. in the Humanities or Social Sciences in an American university and must obtain a letter of invitation from a French university, a Grande Ecole, or a research institution before applying. U.S. citizenship is not required. French citizens are not eligible. No particular level of French is required, although most students need a certain level in order to conduct their research. **Application deadline: December 15, 2008.** A decision will be announced in March, 2009.

For more information, please go to: <http://www.frenchculture.org/spip.php?article405>

### Current calls for proposals

To access a list of open calls for proposals recently 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](http://www.interfaceurope.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=97&Itemid=130)

## COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES

### **Marie Curie Action: Initial Training Networks (ITN)**

Marie Curie Initial Training Networks (ITNs) are intended to improve career perspectives of early-stage researchers in both the public and private sectors by implementing a trans-national networking mechanism. ITN are networks of academic and private research organizations, which collaborate to train researchers in order to enhance their research and entrepreneurial skills, help them join established research teams, and provide better career prospects.

A network typically comprises at least three participants proposing a coherent research training program. Funding covers recruitment of researchers (in the first five years of their career) for initial training, and collaborative research to strengthen the transfer of knowledge. Networking activities include workshops and conferences. **Application deadline: September 2, 2008.**

For more information, please go to: [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/people/initial-training\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/people/initial-training_en.html)

To access a brochure on small to medium size enterprises (SMEs) in the Initial Training Networks, including several case studies, please go to: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/sme-techweb/pdf/smes\\_mcurie\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/sme-techweb/pdf/smes_mcurie_en.pdf)

## RESEARCH CAREERS



### **Careers at the Joint Research Centre (JRC)**

As a Directorate-General of the European Commission, the Joint Research Centre offers a stimulating multicultural, multilingual work environment, as well as the opportunity to be at the center of European policy-making. With their headquarters in Brussels (Belgium) and research Institutes at sites in Ispra (Italy), Karlsruhe (Germany), Petten (the Netherlands), Geel (Belgium) and Seville (Spain), the JRC also offers the possibility to work in any of these five Member States.

For more information about working at JRC, please go to:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/index.cfm?id=2030&lang=en>

Detailed information on the open calls, the projects and the specific posts available may be found on the web sites of the JRC's Institutes by using the following links:

- [The Institute for Environment and Sustainability \(IES\), Working Opportunities](#)
- [The Institute for the Protection and the Security of the Citizen \(IPSC\), Open Calls](#)
- [The Institute for Energy \(IE\), Jobs](#)
- [The Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements \(IRMM\), Job Opportunities](#)
- [The Institute for Health and Consumer Protection \(IHCP\), Job Opportunities](#)
- [The Institute for Transuranium Elements \(ITU\), Jobs](#)
- [The Institute for Prospective and Technological Studies \(IPTS\), Jobs](#)

### **Research jobs in the Netherlands**

Whether you are looking for a research position in the Netherlands or would like to find out more about living and working there, the following website will provide a lot of useful information: <http://www.academictransfer.org/>

For information about visa and working permits for your partner, children, fellowships, grants, and more specific questions, go to <http://www.eracareers.nl>

If you are interested in possibilities for study in the Netherlands, diploma recognition and immigration procedures, please go to <http://www.nuffic.nl>

## **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](http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/index_en.cfm)

## **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](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.**

**To unsubscribe, please send a message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line to [eralink\\_remove@cordis.europa.eu](mailto:eralink_remove@cordis.europa.eu)**

**Copyrights © ERA-Link USA**