

Rooted in tradition, Russian and Eastern European science can be visionary.

Bringing together EU and NIS visionary research

The New and Emerging Science and Technology areas of the Framework Programme support unconventional and visionary research which could open up new areas of European science and technology. The Russian Federation, Ukraine, Belarus and Republic of Moldova have a long record of scientific excellence, yet their visions of future research are largely unknown to the rest of Europe. The NIS-NEST Specific Support Action aims to open up the opportunities within the EU Research Framework Programmes, especially in frontier and high-risk research fields between the EU and the aforementioned countries.

The Russian Federation, Ukraine, Belarus and Republic of Moldova have a long record of excellence in scientific achievements, particularly in leading-edge research areas including ICT, molecular biology and health, nanomaterials, nano- and opto-electronics and energy. The Soyuz spacecraft is an example of their far-reaching achievements. However, there is now a realisation that the EU and the above-mentioned countries know little about each other's research and technology development. So, the time is right to bring the two groups together.

The NIS-NEST project will heighten the knowledge of each about the opportunities to be gained from working with one another. It will avoid duplication, open access to different approaches and skills, and achieve the benefits of a multidisciplinary approach.

Pool of partners

NIS-NEST first needs to identify the researchers and organisations in the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Belarus and Republic of Moldova who are actively involved in new and emerging science and technologies areas. The expectation is that 600 researchers and 80 research organisations can be included in an on-line database. This will be a pool for potential partners of the above-mentioned countries – for the Seventh Framework Programme for research (FP7) and for other EU programmes. The project will analyse the information to develop an understanding of activities in the different countries, including their cultural and financial support conditions, research performance and career structure. This analysis will also provide information to help the EU to prepare future initiatives relating to science and technology in Eastern Europe.

The NIS-NEST project partners, who are in close contact with the relevant research bodies in Belarus, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, and the Ukraine, will all contribute to the database. The emphasis will be on potential partners and organisations which are active in FP7 visionary research fields.

It is better to join in

One of the major objectives of NIS-NEST is to encourage more participation from organisations in the above-mentioned

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NIS-NEST
NEST SUPPORT



Soyuz TMA-3 undocks from the docking port on the Russian Piers module (artist's impression) © ESA

AT A GLANCE

Official title
Opening up the New and Emerging Science and Technology in NIS countries

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countries in EU research programmes, including the novel exploratory areas examined in New and Emerging Science and Technology areas. NIS-NEST aims to raise awareness among these countries that substantial financial resources available through current EU programmes – for example, International Cooperation (INCO) – remain untapped.

The quality of participation and the integration of their expertise, however, is the key aim, rather than simply to increase the level of applications. Bringing research organisations from the aforementioned countries into FP7 will allow different approaches and schools of thought to stimulate new multidisciplinary achievements.
Researchers will be helped to find potential partners. In addition, attracting researchers from the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Belarus and Republic of Moldova to become involved in EU collaborations could also help to reduce the 'brain drain' from Europe to other parts of the world.

The EU and the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Belarus and Republic of Moldova know little about each other's research and technology – the time is right to bring the two together.

In practical terms, information days will be held in these countries by each of the NIS-NEST partners near the date of the first call for proposals for novel exploratory research under FP7. They will inform researchers from the above-mentioned countries and policy-makers about the opportunities and procedures. These will be followed by workshops, tailored to meet the needs of the applicants and to provide advice and support to consortia from both the EU and the participating countries. Throughout the project, awareness of New and Emerging Science and Technology areas of the FP7 initiatives will be maintained among organisations via a quarterly e-newsletter, invitations to participate in Information days and workshops, and electronic contact through the database and website.

The project initiatives will be supported throughout by the International Science and Technology Centre (Moscow, Russia Federation) and the Ukraine Science and Technology Centre (Kiev, Ukraine), both of which support numerous staff in emerging research areas. These activities will be linked with similar projects – in particular NEST-IDEA – which is identifying ideas of great potential for future research.

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SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME