Newsletter

NIS-NEST
New & Emerging Science and Technology in NIS countries

Issue 1 / October 2006

www.nisnest.gr

1 Editorial by Maria Koutrokoi, coordinator of NIS-NEST

The NIS-NEST project, funded by the EU 6th Framework Programme for Research (FP6), focuses on the support for the collaboration and networking between the scientists from EU and Eastern European countries (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova) under the 7th Framework Programme for R&D of the EU (http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/).

This scientific collaboration will achieve benefits for the scientists of both sides and in broader terms for the whole of Europe as it will bring together researchers and scientists with different skills, and encourage them to collaborate to identify themes and emerging topics and solve problems in fields of high risk research areas under the FP7. Moreover through the above collaboration both EU and Eastern European scientists will have the opportunity to find partners across Europe to work together in order to avoid duplication of efforts (especially for similar topics of the scientific research), to achieve added value results. Moreover the collaboration of the scientists of both sides will increase their opportunities for the successful participation under FP7 through innovative ideas based on new partnerships and consortia and researchers - scientists of both sides will have the chance to increase their "networking capacities" across whole Europe.
Within the framework of the project several Information events in Eastern European countries as well as an Information campaign across EU scientific networks will take place about the opportunities and benefits for the collaboration between the scientists of both sides.

Please express your suggestions and ideas and inform us about your relevant experience in case that you participated in a previous or on-going project in fields of novel exploratory research under the Framework Programmes of R&D of EU (*eg.* FP5 or FP6, etc.)

2 The NIS-NEST project

The NIS-NEST project, operating under the fields of New and Emerging Science and Technology (NEST) of the 6th Framework Programme for Research (FP6), aims to open up the opportunities within the EU Framework Programmes between EU and Eastern European countries and contribute towards closer and mutually beneficial collaboration between them in the field of novel exploratory research. The trans-national consortium of the project consists of seven (7) partners originating from: Greece (1), France (1), Russian Federation (2), Ukraine (1), Belarus (1) and Republic of Moldova (1).

The project aims to bring together different schools of thought and approaches from among researchers and scientists with different skills from the EU and the Eastern European countries and encourage them to collaborate and identify themes and emerging topics and solve problems in fields of high risk research. One of the major objectives is to encourage more active participation from the Eastern European organisations in EU research programmes. The quality of participation and the integration of Eastern European expertise, is the key aim rather than simply to increase the level of applications. Bringing Eastern European research organisations into FP7 will allow different approaches and schools of thought to stimulate new multidisciplinary achievements.

The long-term objective of the proposed project is to open up the "borders" for further collaboration in high risk research fields between EU and Eastern European countries. Researchers will be helped to find potential partners. Attracting Eastern European researchers to become involved in EU collaborations could also help to reduce the 'brain drain' from Europe to other parts of the world.

2 The NIS-NEST project (cont.)

In practical terms, a mapping of researchers and research organisations active in high risk Scientific Research areas, will take place within each participating Eastern European country, to support networking in FP7. The mapping results will be used for the creation of an on-line Database which will be accessible through the website during and beyond the project's lifecycle.

Moreover, information days will be held by each of the five partners near the date of the first call for proposals for novel exploratory research under FP7 and will inform researchers from both EU and East European countries and policy-makers about the opportunities and procedures. These will be followed by workshops, during the second year project's lifecycle. Researchers and research organisations working within frontier research as well as representatives from the European Commission, the International Science and Technology Centre (Moscow, Russia Federation), the Ukraine Science and Technology Centre (Kiev, Ukraine) and the National Academy of Sciences (Belarus, Moldova) will be invited to participate in them. These activities will be linked with similar projects – in particular NEST-IDEA – which is identifying ideas of great potential for future research.

3 The kick off meeting (Athens, 15-16 June 2006)

On 15 and 16 June 2006 , the Kick-off Meeting of the NIS-NEST project was held in the premises of the National Documentation Centre, in Athens . In the Meeting participated and delivered relevant speeches the Scientific Project Officer from the DG Research of the European Commission as well as representatives from the consortium.

There was unanimous agreement that: "*scientists are the bottom-up drive within the EU and that we should therefore protect human capital, the greatest resource in a world with limited resources*", and all partners' commitment to:

- identify and attract scientists and
- promote and support collaboration between scientists from different sectors and countries.

Photos from the meeting …





1 - The meeting room (EKT, Athens);
2 - Carlos Saraiva-Martins (DG Research, Project Officer) and Maria Koutrokoi (EKT, Coordinator) during the discussions;
3 - The participants, from left to right: Mihail and Maria Iovu, Vadim Korablev, Maria Samara, Tatyana Lyadnova, Sergey Kozyrev, Maria Koutrokoi, Carlos Saraiva-Martins, Alexander Belyaev and Paul Jamet;





4 Presentation of the NIS-NEST website

The NIS-NEST web site (www.nisnest.gr), provides extensive information on the project, its achievements and relevant links. The site is divided in two parts: the public area and the partners' area.

The public area is addressed to all Internet users and contains information on the project and partners contact details, FP7 relevant information, project and related R&D news and events, related initiatives, useful links etc. The NIS-NEST Newsletter will be available through the project's website on a quarterly basis. However, the objective of this web site is not only informative. The main reason for its existence is to serve as a useful tool to find potential partners, via its Database, which will contain the contact details and the scientific interests of the researchers from Eastern European countries.

The partners' area is only accessible by password and addressed to the project partners.

5 How to prepare a winning proposal for FP7 by Paul Jamet

There are plenty of resources available on different websites, mainly of research funding agencies, explaining what evaluators will consider for each of these key points. This paper is an attempt to present suggestions and advices for ***Preparing and managing a European R&D project step by step***.

Part 1: Getting ready for FP7

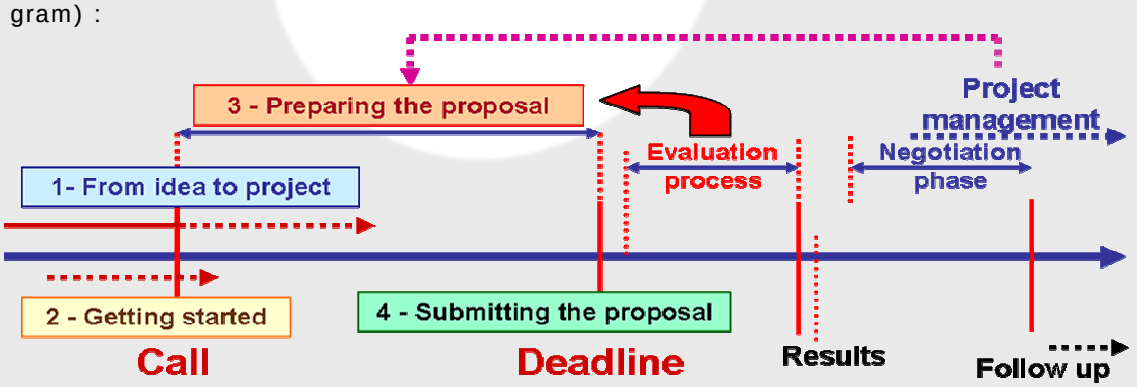
I have been a NCP under FP5 (for Quality of Life programme) and FP6 (as NCP coordinator and NCP for NEST). During eight years, I helped project holders, read many draft proposals and participated myself to two projects (TRAIN-NET under FP5 and NEST-IDEA under FP6). Through this experience, I learned a lot on the differences between loosing and winning proposals.

1 – What makes a good proposal?

Obviously, the answer to this key question is not so easy. Common weaknesses of proposals are well known. Generally, insufficient information has been provided about key aspects as:

- objectives of the proposal,
- research strategy,
- resources and management,
- outputs and impact of the proposal.

In the different issues of this Newsletter that will be published during the course of this project, we will go through the proposal preparation process (See **Fig. 1** – Process diagram) :



5 How to prepare a winning proposal for FP7 by Paul Jamet (cont.)

2 – From idea to project - Getting ready for FP7

The seventh Framework Programme is still under negotiation. Nevertheless, the first calls will most likely be issued in early 2007. Now, it's time to anticipate, to activate your scientific networks, to contact potential partners and to invite them to participate in brainstorming meetings for designing projects (See on next page **Fig 2** – From idea to project).

21 - What scientists can do waiting for the calls?

The preparation of a project starts before the call is published.

Gathering information:

- reading documents on EU policies in your field of activities (Green and White Papers published by EU, vision papers published by Technology platforms, etc.);
- reading news, for instance on CORDIS (CORDIS News and also CORDIS Wire: http://cordis.europa.eu);
- attending info days organised in your Country, Universities or Institutes by NCPs;

Reflecting on yourself and on your partners:

- Answer the following question: what do you want to do? Why? With who?
- A participant, especially the project holder must know his area of expertise, his strengths and weaknesses. The same for his partners;
- Read the presentation of already funded projects (See CORDIS Projects)

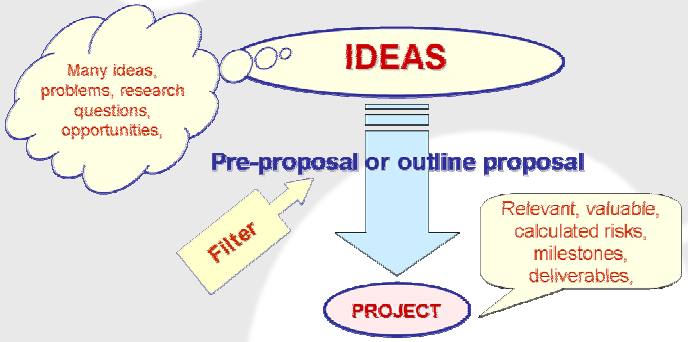


Fig. 2:
From idea to project

22 – Understanding how the Framework Programme works

As a first approach, beginners could read two recent news published this summer by CORDIS.

In the first news (N° **26064** published on July 25th, 2006), Graham Stroud, explains how the content of the Framework Programme is generated. What's the role of the Programme Committee members? Then, what's the role of the European Parliament and the Council to adopt the Framework Programme.

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5 How to prepare a winning proposal for FP7 by Paul Jamet (cont.)

The second news, (N° **26145** published on August 4th, 2006), explains how the Framework Programme is implemented, how proposals are submitted then evaluated and selected for funding. *« Proposals are marked for:*

- ***relevance** to work programme;*
- ***quality of science** - the most important single criteria;*
- *likely **impact** of project;*
- ***management of project** - especially important due to the EU component - projects have on average 10 partners in seven states; this requires active management;*
- ***resources** - are they adequate/reasonable? This may also influence funding ».*

Coming up in the next issue, **Part 2:** « ***Knowing the evaluation procedure and criteria to prepare a winning proposal*** ».

NB: readers, especially those who have a valuable experience as experts-evaluators under FP6, are invited to send contributions, testimonies or for instance answers to the following question: « ***While reading an EU research proposal, what an expert-evaluator looks first?*** » Answers will be analysed and the synthesis published in this Newsletter. Please, write to paul.jamet@jouy.inra.fr

6 Documents and links

- **Do you know IST Results?** The IST Results service gives you online news and analysis on the emerging results from Information Society Technologies research:

  http://istresults.cordis.lu/index.cfm?section=home&tpl=whatis.service



- **Communicating science**: in 2004 and 2005, DG Research organized two conferences in Brussels untitled "***Communicating European Research***" (CER2004 & CER2005). Most of the presentations are available on-line on EUROPA.

- **2004** : CER2004 attracted more than 500 participants, including an extraordinary 120 journalists from 28 countries, to debate on how to communicate successfully on European Research. See: http://ec.europa.eu/research/conferences/2004/cer2004/index_en.html
- **2005** : CER2005 was also a great success. Around 2100 participants - including project co-ordinators, journalists and other communication professionals, press officers and representatives from research organisations - met to promote mutual understanding of their respective roles, to share best practice and to define strategies to improve communication, outreach and dissemination of research results to the public and the press at a European level. See: http://ec.europa.eu/research/conferences/2005/cer2005/index_en.html

6 Documents and links (cont.)



« **A guide to successful communications** » (**2004**)

As written in the introduction, « *This publication aims to assist project coordinators and team leaders to generate an effective flow of information and publicity about the objectives and results of their work, the contributions made to European knowledge and scientific excellence, the value of collaboration on a Europe-wide scale, and the benefits to EU citizens in general* ».



«**Communicating Science – a scientist's survival kit** » (**2006**)

Written by the journalist Giovanni Carrada this survival kit aims « *to help scientists and researchers to improve their skills and practice in interfacing with the media, elaborating and presenting information in a way that non initiated persons can easily and rapidly understand*».



« *RTD Info* » is celebrating its 50th issue

Launched 1993, just before the FP4 (1994 - 1998) this newsletter, published on a quarterly basis by DG Research, has now reached 86 000 copies (36 000 in English, 30 000 in French and 20 000 in German) sent free of charge to individual and institutional subscribers.

The on-line version, available on EUROPA, attracted more than 300 000 readers in 2005. All issues can be consulted on-line. A new version will be unveiled in 2007 to coincide with the launch of FP7.

To read RTD Info and to subscribe:
http://ec.europa.eu/research/rtdinfo/index_en.html

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