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# LAUNCHING CONFERENCE SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

## Opportunities for participation in FP7

Vincent Canart - DG Research – Legal aspects



# Overview

- 1. Adoption**
- 2. How to participate & who can participate**
- 3. How proposals will be evaluated**
- 4. Who can receive funding**
- 5. Certification of costs & on the methodology**
- 6. The Guarantee Fund**
- 7. Grant agreement**



# Adoption

- **FP7 EC Rules** for participation and dissemination of research results (2007-2013) were adopted on 18.12.06 by the European Parliament and Council
- **FP7 Euratom Rules** (2007-2011) were adopted on 19.12.06 by the Council

FP7 Euratom Rules follow same principles as FP7 EC Rules, however adapted to specificities of the Euratom Treaty and content of FP7 Euratom (nuclear energy research – fission and fusion)



# Other rules

The Rules for Participation foresee that the Commission has to complete some aspects through three other decisions:

1. **Rules** to govern the **submission, evaluation, selection of proposals and award of grants, as well as redress procedures** for applicants
1. **Rules** to govern the **assessment of the legal and financial viability** of participants
2. **A model grant agreement**



# Main principles

Two main principles have been kept in mind for these rules:

- **continuity** of the principles and procedures established in FP6
- right balance between **simplification**, facilitating the participation of legal entities and protecting the Community's financial interest



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## 2. HOW to participate?



# Calls for proposals

- As a general rule **the Commission has to publish calls for proposals** for indirect actions in accordance with the specific requirements laid down in the relevant specific programme (SP) and work programmes (WP)
- The **first FP7 calls have been published** on the 22.12.06
- Calls for proposals will have **clear objectives** so as to ensure that the participants do not respond needlessly



# Evaluation & submission procedures

- Evaluations may follow a **single** or a **two-step *evaluation procedure*** or **two-stage *submission procedure***
- The applicable procedure will be set out in the call
- *Two-step evaluation procedure*, only proposals that pass the 1st step, based on the evaluation against a limited set of criteria, will go forward for further evaluation
- *Two-stage submission procedure*, only applicants whose proposals pass the evaluation for the 1st stage will be requested to submit a complete proposal in the 2nd stage



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# WHO can participate?



# Who can participate?

- Any undertaking, university or research centre or other legal entity, whether established in a:
  - Member State (MS)
  - Associated country (Ac) , or
  - third country
- Joint Research Centre (JRC) - is deemed to be established in another MS or Ac
- International organisations and participants from third countries can participate only if in addition to the minima



# Conditions for participation

- ***Minimum condition for participation***, as a general rule at least 3 independent participants from 3 different Member States (MS) or Associated countries (Ac)
- ***Additional conditions*** can be established by the work programme or specific programme (number or type of participant, place of establishment)
- ***Specific conditions*** may also apply for:
  - **Frontier research actions**, at least 1 legal entity established in a MS or Ac
  - **Collaborative projects addressing the participation of International Cooperation Partner Countries (ICPC)** – minimum is 4 participants, 2 of which from MS or Ac and another 2 from ICPC countries unless otherwise foreseen in work programme



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# 3. How proposals will be evaluated?



# Criteria for evaluation

- The Commission will evaluate the proposals submitted according to the following **main criteria**:
  - Scientific and/or technological **excellence**
  - **relevance** to the topic of the call
  - quality and efficiency of the **implementation and management**
  - **potential impact** of project results
- **Additional requirements** on the application of these criteria may be added in the work programmes
- For research actions under the **IDEAS Programme** the sole criterion of *excellence* will apply



# Exclusion of proposals

**A proposal which:**

- **contravenes fundamental *ethical principles*,**  
**or**
- **does *not fulfil the conditions* set out in the  
SP, the WP or the call for proposals**

**will not be selected**



# Assistance of independent experts

The Commission will appoint **independent experts** to assist with the evaluation of proposals

- Chosen on the basis of **skills and knowledge**
- Reasonable **gender balance** will be ensured
- The Commission will adopt a **model appointment letter** to be signed by each expert, which will include a declaration of no conflict of interest
- **Calls** addressed to individuals and organisations for establishment of a database of prospective independent FP7 experts (OJ C 305 of 14.12.2006, p. 52.)



# General principles

- **Proposals will be ranked according to the evaluation results and funding will be made on the basis of this ranking**
- **The Commission will provide information and set out redress procedures for applicants**



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## 4. WHO can receive funding?



# Eligibility for funding

- Legal entities from MS and Ac or created under Community law and the JRC
- International European interest organisations
- Legal entities established in international cooperation partner countries (ICPC), and
- International organisations and legal entities from third countries other than ICPC only if:
  - provided for in SP or WP; or
  - their contribution is essential for carrying out action; or
  - provision for funding is provided for in a bilateral agreement between Community and the third country



# Upper funding limits I

- **Research and technological development activities:** up to **50%** of eligible costs **or** up to **75%** for:
  - Research organisations (non-profit)
  - Public bodies: up to Secondary and higher education establishments
  - SMEs:
  - Security related research for highly reliable capabilities with impact on security of European citizens and targeted to a limited number of public users
- **Demonstration activities:** up to **50%**
- **Other activities** (including e.g. Management): up to **100%**



# Upper funding limits II

Actions that will be reimbursed up to **100%**:

- Frontier research actions
- Coordination and support actions
- Training and career development of researchers actions



# Reimbursement of eligible costs

- Most funding schemes, particularly at beginning of FP7 will use reimbursement of **eligible** costs

## Eligible

- actual (average personnel costs may be used consistent with accounting practices of the participant and if do not differ significantly from actual)
- incurred during duration of project
- in accordance with the beneficiary usual accounting and management principles
- recorded in the accounts of beneficiary
- used for the sole purpose of achieving the objectives of the project

**Non-eligible** (identifiable indirect taxes including VAT...)



# Indirect Cost

- Participants may charge eligible **direct** and **indirect** costs
- **Reimbursement of indirect costs :**
  - **For all:**
    - either actual overhead, or simplified method, or
    - flat rate of **20%** of direct costs
  - **For Non profit Public Bodies, Secondary and Higher Education establishments, Research Organisations, and SMEs** unable to identify real indirect costs, may apply for a flat rate of **60%** for funding schemes with Research, Technological Development & Demonstration
  - **For Coordination and Support Actions** limit of **7%** of direct costs



# Simplified method

- A participant may use a **simplified method** to calculate its indirect costs if this is in accordance with its usual management and accounting principles
- Why this new approach?
  - The Council wished to introduce a way to facilitate the transition from the Additional Cost model (abolished) towards the declaration of actual indirect costs
  - EP added the 60% flat rate for indirect costs for specific entities, being unable to identify their indirect costs



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# 5. Certification of costs and on the methodology



# Certification on financial statements

Under FP7 we do not talk anymore about audit certificates but about **certificate on financial statements (CFS)**

## Certificate on financial statements:

- Mandatory when requested funding reaches **375,000 Euro per beneficiary** (except for project of 2 years or less: CFS submitted at the end)
- If above the threshold, mandatory for every beneficiary, except if a *certification on the methodology* is provided



# Certification on the methodology

- It aims at certifying the methodology of calculating *(average) personnel costs and overhead rates*
- Waives the obligation of certificates for interim payments
- Simplified certificate for final payments
- Valid throughout FP7, on a voluntary basis, must be accepted by the EC
- Particularly aimed at legal entities with multiple participation



# Who can provide these certificates?

- Qualified auditors under the 8th Directive on statutory audits
- Independent
- Public bodies, secondary and higher education establishments and research organisations may opt for a competent public officer



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# 6. The Guarantee Fund



# Implementation

- Participants are **technically responsible** to carry out the project jointly and severally towards the Community and have to carry out the work of a defaulting participant
- But: no more collective financial responsibility as under FP6
- Instead: establishment of a **participant Guarantee Fund** to cover risks



# Risk avoidance mechanism (1)

## Participant **Guarantee Fund** ("the Fund"):

- **All beneficiaires contribute to the Fund** to insure against losses of a defaulting participant
- **The contribution shall not exceed 5%** of the EC financial contribution due to each participant
- Financial interests generated by the Fund will serve to cover financial risk
- In principle this amount will be reimbursed at the end of the action



## Risk avoidance mechanism (2)

- Only if interests are insufficient, Commission may deduct up to **1%** from the Community financial contribution to be returned
- This retention will not apply to public bodies, entities guaranteed by a MS or Ac, and higher and secondary education establishments
- Exoneration of verification of financial viability of participants (excluding Coordinators) requesting less than 500.000 EUR
- No bank/financial guarantee may be requested
- The Commission has to establish the Guarantee Fund and its modalities of implementation



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# 7. Grant agreement



# Grant agreement

The Commission is about to establish, in close cooperation with Member States, 3 model grant agreements:

- **General model** grant agreement (including specific provisions for SMEs, Infrastructures and ERA-NET+)
- **Specific model** grant agreement for **ERC** actions
- **Specific model** grant agreement for **Marie-Curie** actions



# Status and timing

- Inter-service Working Groups on FP7 Legal & Financial Issues, evaluation, reporting (started in spring 2006)
- Consultation with Members States & Associated countries and Sounding Board
- Inter-service consultations were launched on 21 December, Target: Adoption February 2007



# Terminology

## Sources: Financial Regulation/Implementing Rules, FP7 and Rules for Participation

- “Contract” becomes “Grant Agreement”
- “Contractor” becomes “Beneficiary”
- “Instruments” become “Funding Schemes”
- “Audit certificate” becomes “Certificate on Financial Statement”
- The results of the project (knowledge in FP6) becomes “Foreground”
- Pre-existing know-how becomes “Background”



# Similarities with FP6

- Signature by coordinator & Commission
- Accession of beneficiaries via “Form A”
- Later accession of beneficiaries via “Form B”
- Entry into force upon signature by coordinator & Commission



# Consortium agreement

- Unless exempted by the call for proposals, participants will have to draw up a “consortium agreement”, to govern the following:
  - (a) The internal organisation of the consortium
  - (b) The distribution of the Community financial contribution
  - (c) Additional rules on dissemination and use including intellectual property rights arrangements, as appropriate
  - (d) The settlement of internal disputes.



# Payment modalities

- One **pre-financing** (upon entry into force) for the whole duration of the action
- **Interim payments** based on financial statements (EC contribution = amounts justified & accepted \* funding rate)
- Retention (10%)
- **Final payment**



# Reporting (1)

- Periodic reports to be submitted by coordinator 60 days after end of period:
  - overview of progress of the work, including a publishable summary report,
  - use of the resources and
  - Financial Statement (Form C)



# Reporting (2)

- Final reports to be submitted by coordinator 60 days after end of project:
  - publishable summary report, conclusions and socioeconomic impact,
  - covering wider societal implications and a plan on use and dissemination of foreground.



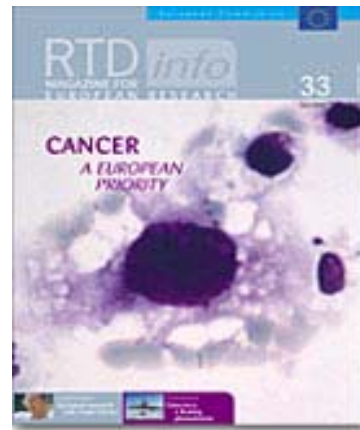
# Reporting (3)

- Commission has **105** days to evaluate and execute the corresponding payment
  - No tacit approval of reports
- After reception Commission may:
  - Approve
  - Suspend the time-limit requesting revision/completion
  - Reject them giving justification, possible termination
  - Suspend the payment



# Information

- EU research: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/>
- Seventh Framework Programme:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/research/future/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/future/index_en.cfm)
- Information on research programmes and projects:  
<http://cordis.europa.eu/>
- RTD info magazine:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/research/rtdinfo/>
- Information requests:  
[research@ec.europa.eu](mailto:research@ec.europa.eu)





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**Thank you very much for your  
attention**