

COOPERATION WORK PROGRAMME 2012

(European Commission C(2011)5068 of 19 July 2011)

¹ In accordance with Articles 179 to 190 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 182(1) as contextualised in the following decisions: Decision 1982/2006/CE of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18/12/2006 concerning the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration (2007 – 2013) and the Council Decision 971/2006/CE of 19/12/2006 adopting a Specific Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration: 'Cooperation' (2007 – 2013).

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General Introduction

CONTEXT

In its communication on **the Innovation Union Flagship Initiative**², adopted in the context of the EU's new growth and jobs strategy '**Europe 2020**'³ and fully endorsed by the Competitiveness Council⁴ and by the European Council⁵, the Commission calls for a strategic and integrated approach to boosting innovation, whereby all relevant policies and instruments are designed to contribute to innovation. The aim is to promote a broad concept of innovation, aiming at increasing competitiveness and addressing societal challenges. Research and innovation represent the engine of economic growth and innovative ideas that can be turned into new marketable products and services help create growth and quality jobs. The objective of enhancing Europe's research excellence and its capacity to innovate reinforce each other.

To fully accomplish the Innovation Union, and in particular taking account of the **European Council conclusions** of 4th February on Innovation, the framework conditions need to be improved (public procurements, standard settings, strengthen dissemination, protection of intellectual property, knowledge market and innovation financing) and the European Research Area (ERA) needs to be completed soon. The involvement and full support of all actors and stakeholders is required, at all levels (EU, National, Regional) and from all sectors (private, public, industry, research, academic, services): their commitment is key to the achievement of a true Innovation Union.

The implementation of the Innovation Union and its commitments have also a long-term dimension, and will be considered in the definition of the new Common Strategic Framework⁶ but already now the first steps can be made.

This is the work programme for 2012 for the Cooperation Specific Programme of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities. The work programme was adopted by the Commission, with the assistance of the Programme Committee.

Where appropriate and within the existing legal framework, the 2012 work programme has been designed to support the implementation of the Innovation Union and in particular by integrating research and innovation as much as possible, addressing key technologies, facilitating collaborative and industry-driven research, increasing demonstration activities, stimulating social innovation, strengthening excellence further and guaranteeing as much as possible the selection of projects with EU added value and socio-economic potential impact.

This work-programme is shaped around this new integrated and strategic approach, whereby special attention is placed on the selection of innovation relevant topics, the use of innovation relevant activities (e.g. demonstration actions, bottom up schemes, SME specific targeted

² 'Europe 2020 Flagship initiative Innovation Union' COM(2010) 546 of 6.10.2010

³ 'Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth' COM(2010) 2020 of 3.3.2010.

⁴ Council conclusion of 26 November 2010

⁵ European Council conclusions of 4 February 2011-03-17

⁶ Green paper 'From Challenges to opportunities: towards a Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation Funding' COM(2011) 48

calls,...) and the inclusion of innovation related activities (e.g. standards preparation, IP protection, exploitation of results,...).

The **participation of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises** (SMEs) is of particular importance in this work programme. A special emphasis has been placed on the participation of SMEs, this include the introduction of a pilot action on a Small Business Innovation Research-like initiative with the focus on removing barriers to innovation under the Health Theme as well as a pilot scheme 'RSFF for SMEs' within the current Risk-Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF) to encourage banks and other financial intermediaries to extend loans and similar debt financing to mainly innovative SMEs. Other specific topics of particular interest for SMEs, or specifically targeted to SMEs are highlighted in each Theme, where relevant. The aim of this work programme will be to enable at least 15% of the funding of the Cooperation programme to go to SME participants.

This work programme also emphasises the **innovation potential of research**, including, where relevant, a focus on helping to solve major societal challenges as highlighted in the Europe 2020 strategy and its Innovation Union. One important aspect concerns the European Innovation Partnerships where support to the pilot Innovation Partnership on active and healthy ageing is sought in each Theme, where relevant, and in particular under the 'Health' Theme. The ever increasing importance of harnessing the innovation-driven growth and jobs potential of research in building a knowledge-intensive economy takes on a special significance in the economic crisis as a means of mitigating its effects and ensuring a rapid recovery in the next economic upswing.

This work programme contributes to meeting the overarching objective of EU research policy to develop an **open and competitive ERA**, an essential element of the Innovation Union, characterised by research excellence and the free circulation of researchers, knowledge and technology at the heart of a single EU market for research and innovation. The main premise of ERA is to realise critical research mass and economies of scale unattainable at national level and to overcome deficiencies and inefficiencies arising from fragmentation, sub-criticality and duplication in R&D activities, and from a lack of policy coherence and coordination at and between regional, national and European levels. Tackling these depend upon the extent to which high-level political commitment⁷ is matched by concerted action and sustainable partnerships between the Member States and the European Commission and corresponding concrete research activities involving stakeholders.

Furthermore, the Budget Review⁸ calls for smart fiscal consolidation based on improved efficiency of EU funding which should focus on delivering key policy priorities as well as EU added value and be based on result-driven instruments. The capacity of the framework programme to deliver concrete results supporting innovative projects with a clear socio-economic impact is key.

In the implementation of the Cooperation Specific Programme, attention is also paid to the working conditions, transparency of recruitment processes, and career development as regards the researchers recruited on projects and programmes funded, for which the Commission Recommendation of 11 March 2005 on the European Charter for Researchers and on a **Code of**

⁷ As in the Ljubljana Process, Council Conclusions on the Launch of the "Ljubljana Process"- towards full realisation of ERA, 30 May 2008.

⁸ 'The Budget review' COM(2010) 700

Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers⁹ offers a reference framework, while respecting its voluntary nature.

The Cooperation work programme is structured around 10 chapters, which set out the implementation of the research Themes. A range of issues of relevance to the Cooperation work programme as a whole are set out in Annexes 1-5. In general, each chapter is self-standing; however, applicants are advised to read this general introduction and the Annexes, in addition to the chapter(s) containing the research Theme(s) of interest. The 2012 work programme contains a fifth annex, which sets out a series of research topics in three key cross-thematic research initiatives: the Green Cars Initiative; the Energy Efficient Buildings Initiative; and the Factories of the Future Initiative. These three research initiatives will be implemented as public private partnerships in collaboration with key European industrial partners¹⁰.

In preparing this work programme, the Commission has relied on advice from a wide range of consultations, including from the European Technology Platforms¹¹ and from specific advice of a series of advisory groups¹². The European Technology Platforms provide a framework for stakeholders, led by industry, to define research and development priorities, timeframes and action plans on a number of strategically important issues where achieving Europe's future growth, competitiveness and sustainability objectives is dependent upon major research and technological advances in the medium to long term. The advisory groups are groups of independent, high-level, experts which have been set up by the Commission to advise on the implementation of Community research policy in each of the ten research Themes contained in this work programme. The experts were chosen based on their knowledge, skills and significant experience in the field of research and aligned issues covered by the Themes. More information on the members, and the work, of the advisory groups as well as the European Technology Platforms can be found on the Internet pages of the Seventh Framework Programme.

⁹ <http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/europeancharter>

¹⁰ As set out in the Communication 'A European Economic Recovery Plan'; COM(2008)800 of 26 November 2008.

¹¹ http://cordis.europa.eu/technology-platforms/home_en.html

¹² http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/advisory_en.html

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ACTIVITIES

By funding excellent state-of-the-art research and innovative ideas in key priority areas and pooling research resources, this work programme helps to boost R&D and innovation investments in Europe, fosters better integration of European R&D, and raises research excellence.

More specifically, the essence of the Cooperation programme is that it supports all types of **research and innovation activities** carried out by different research bodies in transnational cooperation. It aims at gaining or consolidating leadership in key scientific and technology areas through collaborative research, the coordination of national research programmes and the establishment of Joint Technology Initiatives building where relevant on coordinated and common strategies such as those of the European Technology Platforms. Through joint actions among academia, industry, research centres and public authorities and the establishment of excellent research and innovation projects and networks, it is instrumental in fostering better integration of European research and national and regional research programmes, thus helping to complete the ERA. Also by tackling major and urgent societal challenges which transcend national borders such as energy efficiency, climate change, resources depletion and health or population ageing needs, it underpins innovation and brings about decisive progress in the transition towards a knowledge intensive economy.

Collaborative Research

This specific programme will support a range of research and innovation actions involving the active collaboration of research teams from all sectors, including industry, SMEs, universities and other higher education institutions, research institutes and centres, international European interest organisations, civil society organisations, and any other legal entities. These actions will be implemented through the funding schemes: Collaborative Projects, Networks of Excellence, Research for the Benefit of Specific Groups (in particular SMEs), Coordination and Support Actions, Integrating Activities/Preparatory Phase (**Combination of collaborative projects and coordination and Support Actions**) and **International Research Staff Exchange Scheme (IRSES)**.

Collaborative Projects can range from small or medium-scale focused research and innovation actions, to large-scale integrating projects. When a distinction is made between these two types of projects, it will be based – unless specifically otherwise stated – on the size of the European Union contribution requested. The related thresholds may vary for each Theme, and will be specified in the relevant parts of this work programme. It is important to note that these thresholds will constitute eligibility criteria. Additional qualitative aspects may also be given in the relevant parts of this work programme.

Researchers based in Associated Countries may take part in the Cooperation programme on the same basis and with the same rights and obligations as those based in Member States.

Pluri-disciplinary and Cross-Thematic Research, Including Calls jointly implemented

Cross-Thematic and pluri-disciplinary research areas are included in this work programme, paying particular attention to key scientific areas such as energy efficiency and marine sciences

and technologies. Such cross-Thematic research areas are considered at the topic level, either by a centre of gravity approach with close cooperation of the Themes involved and with the topic presented in the most relevant Theme, or by consideration of the specific topic by both Themes. In certain fields of research, where it is clear that proposals will always contain a high proportion of interest for one of more Themes, there is the potential for calls for proposals jointly implemented or coordinated by one or more Themes to allow for a more focussed approach to such cross-Thematic or pluri-disciplinary research areas.

The 2012 work programme includes as part of the initiatives linked to the Recovery Package a call on Innovative advanced lightweight materials for the next generation of environmentally-friendly electric vehicles for an overall amount of EUR 25 million where the following themes are involved: Nanosciences, nanotechnologies, materials and new production technologies (NMP), Environment (including Climate Change) and Transport (including Aeronautics).

Innovation in the forest-based sector for increasing resource efficiency and tackling climate change with competitive customer solutions will be dealt with by Theme 2 (KBBE) and 4 (NMP) through an ERA-NET Plus topic jointly implemented for a maximum EU contribution of EUR 8 million. Following the two previous "The Ocean of Tomorrow" cross-thematic calls, several topics will be launched to support the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC)¹³. These topics will be highlighted in each of the relevant part, i.e. Theme 2 Food, Agriculture, Fisheries and biotechnology, Theme 5 Energy, Theme 6 Environment, (including climate change), and Theme 7 Transport (including Aeronautics)

Adaptation to Evolving Needs and Opportunities

The Cooperation Programme has been designed to be responsive to the changing and evolving research needs of European industry and policy makers. Each Theme includes a range of different research topics, including those relevant to industrial needs, such as those identified in the strategic research agenda for the Technology Platforms, and topics relevant to the formulation, implementation and assessment of EU policies and regulations. In addition, 'emerging' research needs are incorporated through more 'bottom-up' research topics. There is also provision for the inclusion of research topics related to 'unforeseen policy needs' which may require a quick reaction, as relevant.

Coordination of non-Union Research Programmes

The coordination of non-Union research programmes is an important and integral part of the development of the European Research Area. Actions foreseen include the continuation of the ERA-NET scheme; support to the developing Joint Programming Initiatives, support to inter-governmental organisms, such as EUREKA and COST, and measures to sustain an active dialog with European High Level Scientific & non-University Research Organisations. Detailed information on these activities is provided in Annex 4 to the Cooperation work programme.

The objective of the ERA-NET scheme is to develop and strengthen the coordination of national and regional research programmes through two specific actions:

- 'ERA-NET actions' - which provide a framework for actors implementing public research programmes to coordinate their activities.

¹³ OJ L164 of 25.6.2008, p.19.

- 'ERA-NET Plus actions'- which, *in a limited number of cases, can provide* additional EU financial support to facilitate joint calls for proposals between national and/or regional programmes.

In 2012, the ERA-NET scheme foresees a cross-thematic call for proposals, open to challenge-oriented strategic priorities. Proposals submitted to the 2012 ERA-NET call should be able to clearly demonstrate the innovation potential of the planned activities. Participants are encouraged to adopt a global approach in their proposals and the presence of partners from relevant non-EU countries is encouraged.

The cross-thematic call will include also centrally-managed Horizontal Support Actions, aimed at optimising implementation modalities and support mechanisms applicable to trans-national R&D programme collaborations and, particularly, Joint Programming in Research (*The FP7-ERANET-2012-RTD Call Fiche is published in Annex 4*).

The Cooperation programme provides also support for inter-governmental organisms, including funding for the COST secretariat activities and payment of the annual EC membership fee to EUREKA. The dialogue with EIROforum and its members, National Research Councils and other Research Organisations will be sustained in view of improving coordination and improving the efficiency of trans-national research collaborations.

Risk-Sharing Finance Facility

Enhancing access to finance for Research and Innovation activities is key to achieve the objective of the Innovation Union and bring 'ideas to market'. The European added-value of public support consists in overcoming market deficiencies for the financing of riskier European actions of R&I, which often involve a high level of risk¹⁴.

In accordance with Annex III of the Cooperation Specific Programme, the European Union has provided a contribution to the European Investment Bank (EIB) for a Risk-Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF), with a view to fostering primarily private sector investment in research, technological development and demonstration as well as innovation¹⁵. This new financing instrument has been designed by the EIB with the support of the European Commission (EC).

In compliance with the Cooperation Specific Programme "Joint Technology Initiatives, Collaborative Projects, Networks of Excellence and Research for the benefit of SMEs funded by the EU shall be automatically eligible for the RSFF provided their objectives fall within the scope of the contributing themes of this Specific Programme. Legal entities established in third

¹⁴ In terms of current added value, the Independent Experts Group in charge of the RSFF interim evaluation in 2010 (IEG) notably underlined that "*the RSFF has been one of the most successful instruments for addressing market imperfections in the debt financing of RDI investments in Europe. As the financial crisis unfolded, the market imperfections with respect to loan finance for RDI investments did not just increase substantially, they became to some extent ubiquitous. RSFF remained one of the few financial instruments available to innovative firms and organisations. RSFF helped many European research intensive forms to maintain RDI activities in period of major financial stress (...). It has provided loan finance to those innovative SMEs not interested in private equity funding*".

¹⁵ Costs related to Innovations activities may be considered as eligible EC RSFF Operations provided their compliance with the provisions set in the RSFF Co-operation Agreement between the European Community and the European Investment Bank (as stated in the article A4.6.2: Selection of Projects for Financing and the Eligibility Criteria below).

countries other than Associated Countries are also eligible if they participate in the above mentioned FP7 indirect actions and their costs are eligible for Community funding".

The EU contribution to the RSFF from the Cooperation programme is funded by proportional contributions of all Themes, with the exception of Socio-Economic Sciences and the Humanities. Following the positive outcomes of the RSFF interim evaluation and the release of the second tranche of the EU contribution of EUR 500 million to RSFF for the period 2011-2013, the Commitment Appropriations to RSFF from the Cooperation Programme for 2012 is expected to be of EUR 200 million¹⁶.

Responding to the recommendation of the independent expert group in charge of the interim evaluation of the RSFF for a better support to SMEs¹⁷ and to the conclusions of the European Council on 4 February 2011 asking for a scaling up of the RSFF, the Work Programme 2012 should open a better access to RSFF finance for SMEs, also contributing to the objectives of the Innovation Union. For that purpose, a pilot scheme 'RSFF for SMEs' within the current RSFF shall be made available in 2012. The 'RSFF for SMEs' objective is to encourage banks and other financial intermediaries to extend loans and similar debt financing to mainly innovative SMEs, but also to small mid-caps, investing in Research, Development and Innovation through a specific risk-sharing arrangement between the EU and the EIB Group. Part of the 2012 EU contribution to RSFF from the Cooperation Programme should be dedicated to this pilot scheme, for an expected amount of EUR 120 million.

Further information on the Risk-Sharing Finance Facility is given in Annex 4 to this work programme.

Joint Technology Initiatives

Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs) address fields of major European public interest, focussed on well-defined areas of strategic importance for the competitiveness of European industry. These have been identified in the areas of Innovative Medicines (IMI), 'Clean Sky', Embedded Computing Systems (ARTEMIS), Nanoelectronics (ENIAC) and Fuel Cells and Hydrogen (FCH). JTIs will strengthen links between the research community and industry, thus facilitating the commercialisation of research results and reducing time-to-market and complementing this work programme. After the Council adopted the Regulations for the JTIs they started their operations. Further information on the JTIs can be found on the Internet pages of the Seventh Framework Programme.

¹⁶ On condition that the preliminary draft budget for 2012 is adopted without modifications by the budgetary authority and following the conclusions of the interim evaluation of the RSFF endorsed by the Commission in its Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the *'Response to the Report of the Expert Group on the Interim Evaluation of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities and to the Report of the Expert Group on the Interim Evaluation of the Risk-Sharing Finance Facility'* (COM(2011) 52 final – 9 February 2011).

¹⁷ See Report of the Independent Expert Group in charge of the RSFF evaluation: http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/index_en.cfm?pg=rsff and the related response: European Commission Communication (COM(2011)52 final, 9 February 2011) *'On the Response to the Report of the Expert Group on the Interim Evaluation of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities and to the Report of the Expert Group on the Interim Evaluation of the Risk-Sharing Finance Facility'*: http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/pdf/archive/other_reports_studies_and_documents/commission_response_fp7_ie_report_2011.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DIMENSION

Research cooperation with international partners is an important objective of the Seventh Research Framework Programme. Under the Cooperation Specific Programme, research cooperation with international partners is implemented in the following ways:

- Legal entities from countries associated to the framework programme can participate under the same terms and conditions as those established in the EU Member States. The countries currently associated are: Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Faroe Islands, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Israel, Lichtenstein, Norway, Montenegro, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey. In addition, and subject to the satisfactory outcome of the decision-making procedure, Moldova will be associated from 1 January 2012¹⁸.
- The general opening up of all research activities which allows for the participation of legal entities from all third countries, i.e. from high income countries as well as from middle and low income countries identified as International Cooperation Partner Country (ICPC). See list of countries considered as ICPC in Annex 1. Legal entities from the associated countries and the ICPC list are eligible for funding. Legal entities from the other third countries and international organisations are eligible for funding under the conditions laid down in Art 29 (2) of the Rules for Participation.
- Some topics in the work programme, in areas of mutual interest and benefit, may target the participation of legal entities from a specific third country, from a group of countries, or from a region. In this case, the active participation of the relevant third country partner or partners should add to the scientific and/or technological excellence of the project and/or lead to an increased impact of the research to be undertaken. These aspects will be considered specifically during the evaluation.

The participation of third countries may also be implemented in the form of specific measures such as coordinated calls, twinning of projects, use of matching funds or mutual opening.

- Through the Specific International Cooperation Actions (SICAs), research cooperation can be dedicated to given countries/regions listed of the ICPC list. The SICA topics are of mutual interest and identified in the work programmes per theme. It should be noted that in the case of SICAs the participation of the targeted countries/regions is an eligibility condition in the Collaborative Projects. Unless specifically stated, there are no such specific participation criteria for Coordination and Support Actions targeted at ICPCs. Depending on the nature and the expected impact of these actions, the participation of third countries in such projects could, however, be considered essential. Further information on these criteria is given in each theme and also in the relevant Guide for Applicants.

The inclusion of international partners is particularly relevant where such participation contributes to the innovative potential of the proposal concerned. This should take account of the potential exploitation of IPR and should be reflected within the description of the criterion 'Impact' in the proposal.

¹⁸ Therefore, legal entities established in Moldova can be considered as from an associated country for all the calls in this work programmes. Further information in this regard will be made available on CORDIS and the Participant Portal.

DISSEMINATION, KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND GENDER ISSUES¹⁹

FP7 is working to develop a better relationship between scientists and European citizens. With this aim in mind, the work programme will encourage activities to promote greater public engagement and dialogue in order to involve citizens and civil society organisations in research and science policy.

The pursuit of scientific knowledge and its technical application towards society requires the talent, perspectives and insight that can only be assured by increasing diversity in the research workforce. Therefore, all projects are encouraged to have a balanced participation of women and men in their research activities and to raise awareness on combating gender prejudices and stereotypes. When human beings are involved as users, gender differences may exist. These will be addressed as an integral part of the research to ensure the highest level of scientific quality. In addition, specific actions to promote gender equality in research can be financed as part of the proposal, as specified in Appendix 7 of the Negotiation Guidance Notes.²⁰

With the aim of encouraging young people's interest in science and science studies, account will be taken of the possible relevance of research results for the purposes of science education. Where appropriate, communication and dissemination strategies will address the wider audience of policy-makers, the media and the general public (including young people), in order to promote increased understanding between the scientific world and society at large.

In order to strengthen the diffusion and use of the output of EU research, the dissemination of knowledge and transfer of results, including to policy makers and to the managing authorities of the Cohesion Policy funds²¹, will be supported in the Themes (see also Annex 4 for further information on CORDIS). In addition, specific Internet pages of the Seventh Framework Programme also provide applicants with full details of the calls for proposals open under this work programme, together with all of the documentation necessary to make an application

As from 20 August 2008²², the Cooperation Themes Health, Energy, Environment, Information and Communication Technologies (*Challenge 2*), as well as Socio-Economic Sciences and the Humanities have been involved in the FP7 Open Access. Participants to their projects will be required to deposit peer-reviewed articles resulting from projects to an institutional or subject-based repository, and to make their best efforts to ensure open access to these articles within a specified period, usually six months.

PRACTICAL MODALITIES

This work programme provides additional detail of the implementation of the Specific Programme, setting out information on the priorities, objectives and policy relevance of the

¹⁹ Objectives related communication and dissemination, knowledge transfer and gender issues will be addressed during the contract negotiation.

²⁰ Available from : ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/negotiation_en.pdf

²¹ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/atlas2007/fiche_index_en.htm

²² C(2008) 4408 final of 20.08.08

research topics which will be implemented through calls for proposals in the latter half of 2011 and in 2012.

Submitting a Proposal

Proposals should be submitted in accordance with the terms set out in a call for proposals. In order to submit a proposal, applicants should consult the following documents:

- The text of the call for proposals, as announced in the Official Journal of the European Union, and published on the specific Internet pages of the Seventh Framework Programme
- This work programme, including the General introduction and the Annexes; and
- The relevant Guide for Applicants

There are also a number of other useful texts, which applicants could refer to, including the Specific Programme 'Cooperation', the Rules for Participation for FP7, the Guidelines on Proposal Evaluation and Project Selection Procedures, and the Commission Recommendation on the European Charter for Researchers and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. These documents, and other relevant background documents, are available on the Internet pages of the Seventh Framework Programme. Proposals should also be consistent with national legislation implementing Directive 95/45/EC of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data²³.

The forms of the grant which will be used and the maximum reimbursement rates for projects funded through the Cooperation work programme are set out in Annex 3 and are applicable to actions as a result of calls for proposals and grants to identified beneficiaries²⁴, unless indicated otherwise in the Themes. Participants will also have the possibility to use flat rates to cover subsistence costs incurred by beneficiaries during travel carried out within grants for indirect actions²⁵.

Every Member State and Associated country has appointed a set of National Contact Points (NCPs) to assist potential and successful applicants. There is a NCP for each of the Themes of the Cooperation Programme. Applicants are encouraged to make contact with the relevant NCP from their country.

Evaluation Criteria and Related Issues

The 'Rules for Submission of Proposals and the Related Evaluation, Selection and Award Procedures' set out the basic procedures to be followed by all programmes under the Seventh Framework Programme.

²³ OJ L 281 of 23.11.1995, p. 31

²⁴ According to Article 13 and Article 14 (a) of Regulation No 1906/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 laying down the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in actions under the Seventh Framework Programme and for the dissemination of research results (2007-2013) OJ L391 of 30.12.2006.

²⁵ Not available in the case of the ICT Theme.

The set of eligibility and evaluation criteria for this work programme is given in Annex 2 and is applicable to actions as a result of calls for proposals and grants to identified beneficiaries²⁴, unless indicated otherwise in the Themes. Any complementary criteria, which may apply, are clearly set out in the relevant chapter of this work programme and in the text of the calls for proposals.

All proposals which deal with ethical issues and all proposals for which ethical concerns have been identified during the evaluation process may be reviewed by a separate ethical evaluation panel, before they can be selected for funding. Further information on this ethical review and all aspects of the evaluation procedure are given in the 'Rules on Submission of Proposals and the Related Evaluation, Selection and Award Procedures'.

The work programmes, and consequently the calls for proposals, may specify and restrict the participation of legal entities, according to their activity and type, or according to the funding scheme used.

Calls for proposals may involve a two-stage submission and/or a two-step evaluation procedure. When such a procedure is employed, this is clearly stated in the text of the call for proposals and the Guides for Applicants. More information on two-stage submission and two-step evaluation is given in the 'Rules on Submission of Proposals and the Related Evaluation, Selection and Award Procedures'.

In carrying out the evaluations of proposals received, the Commission may choose to send the proposals to external experts, or to make the proposals available electronically, so that the experts may carry out their examination and review of the proposals at their home and/or their place of work.

Ethical Aspects

All research carried out under this work programme must respect fundamental ethical principles, and the requirements set out in the text of the Cooperation Specific Programme. More information on the procedures for the peer review of submitted proposals is given in the 'Rules for Submission of Proposals, and the Related Evaluation, Selection and Award Procedures'.

The Commission is fully committed to the principles set out in:

- a) The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union as well as in the relevant EU legislation
- b) The declaration on the use of human embryonic stem cells, as set out in the annex to the Commission Communication COM(2006)548 of 26 September 2006²⁶. This states that the Commission will maintain the practice of the 6th Framework Programme. Accordingly, the Commission will not fund projects which include research activities which destroy human embryos, including for the procurement of stem cells. The exclusion of funding of this step of research will not prevent Community funding of subsequent steps involving human embryonic stem cells.

²⁶ OJ L 412 of 30.12.2006, p. 42

Prior Information of Candidates, Tenderers and Grant Applicants

(Article 8 of Decision on the EWS and Article 13 of Regulation on the Central Exclusion Database)

The Commission uses an internal information tool (EWS), as well as a database available to public authorities implementing EU funds (CED) to flag identified risks related to beneficiaries of centrally managed contracts and grants with a view to protecting the EU's financial interests.

Candidates, tenderers, grant applicants and, if they are legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over them, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (EWS) for the use of authorising officers of the Commission and the executive agencies (OJ, L 344, 20.12.2008, p. 125), or
- the Commission Regulation of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database – CED (OJ L 344, 20.12.2008, p. 12),

their personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the EWS only or both in the EWS and CED, and communicated to the persons and entities listed in the above-mentioned Decision and Regulation, in relation to the award or the execution of a procurement contract or a grant agreement or decision.

More information on the EWS and CED can be found at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/budget/sound_fin_mgt/ews_en.htm

Budget Figures in This Work Programme

This work programme draws on financing from the 2012 budgetary year. All budgetary figures given in this work programme are indicative. Unless otherwise stated, final budgets may vary following the evaluation of proposals.

The final budget awarded to actions implemented through calls for proposals may vary:

- The total budget of the call may vary by up to 10% of the total value of the indicated budget for each call; and
- Any repartition of the call budget may also vary by up to 10% of the total value of the indicated budget for the call.

For actions not implemented through calls for proposals:

- The final budgets for evaluation, monitoring and review may vary by up to 20% of the indicated budgets for these actions;
- The final budget awarded for all other actions not implemented through calls for proposals may vary by up to 10% of the indicated budget for these actions.