

EARTO 2008-2009

A Report on EARTO Activities in 2008 and a Presentation of First Priorities for 2009

EARTO'S MISSION AND STRATEGY

The current mission and strategy of EARTO, summarised below, were originally set by the EARTO Executive Board in 2004 and have been reviewed at intervals since, most recently in 2007.

The conclusion of the most recent review was that good progress continues to be made in promoting and defending the interests of RTOs and in developing services for members; by contrast, success in promoting contacts with industry has been limited.

The Mission

1. Promote and defend the interests of RTOs in Europe

2. Provide added-value services to EARTO members

The Strategy

- 1. RTOs key-player category**
- 2. European programmes attuned to interests of RTOs**

- 1. Networking and exchange among members**
- 2. European funding opportunities**
- 3. Promote contacts with industry**
- 4. Facilities in Brussels**

Further explanation of the mission and strategy may be found in the Annex.

EARTO ACTIVITIES IN 2008

The following pages briefly review the principal activities of EARTO during 2008. Some activities serve more than one objective. Therefore, by way of introduction, the following table summarily relates different activities to EARTO's mission and strategy.

1. PROMOTE AND DEFEND THE INTERESTS OF RTOS IN EUROPE

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| 1. RTOs key-player category | <p>"EARTO White Paper": <i>RTOs in the Evolving European Research Area</i>
 European Institute of Innovation and Technology
 JTIs
 FP6 ex-post Audits
 ERAB
 Responsible Partnering
 IP Charter
 Participation in Commission Expert Groups
 <i>ÆRTOs</i>
 EARTO Innovation Prize
 DESCA, Meeûs</p> |
| 2. European programmes attuned to interests of RTOs | <p>ERAB
 European Institute of Innovation and Technology
 JTIs
 EARTO Task Forces
 Participation in Commission Expert Groups
 EARTO Survey of RTO Overhead Costs
 Monitoring the Implementation of FP7
 FP7 SME Funding Model</p> |

2. PROVIDE ADDED-VALUE SERVICES TO EARTO MEMBERS

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|---|--|
| 1. Networking and exchange among members | <p>EARTO Annual Conference
 EARTO Working Groups, Special Interest Groups
 EARTO News
 EARTO FP7 Benchmarking Service</p> |
| 2. Exploiting European funding opportunities | <p>FP Training Courses (with Hyperion Ltd)
 EARTO FP7 Proposal Preparation Service
 DESCA
 Meeûs
 EARTO News</p> |
| 3. Promote contacts with industry | <p>Responsible Partnering
 DESCA
 Cooperation with EIRMA</p> |
| 4. Facilities in Brussels | <p>EARTO meeting facilities in Brussels
 Assistance to members in their relations with the Commission, Parliament, other European organisations</p> |

- **“EARTO WHITE PAPER”: RTOs IN THE EVOLVING EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA**

The purpose of this paper was to reinforce the message of the earlier EURAB (see also ERAB below) report on *Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs) and ERA*¹. It does this by:

- expanding arguments about the distinctive role of RTOs in modern innovation systems;
- giving examples of recent policy initiatives in European countries which illustrate the growing recognition which governments are giving to RTOs, and
- providing a statistical analysis of RTOs’ important role in the EU Sixth Framework Programme.

Preparation of this policy paper began in 2006, within the EARTO-EUROTECH Special Interest Group. The work was further supported in 2007 by the EARTO Executive Board and the EARTO Working Group on RTO Strategies (see below).

The paper was published in January 2008 and given wide circulation in the Commission, Parliament and other European organisations. The members of the EARTO Executive Board distributed the paper to key national organisations and people.

- **EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY**

EARTO prepared a paper in January 2008 “Making the EIT a Success: The Essential Contribution of Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs)” to illustrate that RTOs already perform many of the functions intended for the EIT and that they therefore have much to contribute to the EIT.

EARTO contributed in April 2008 to the discussion about the selection criteria to be employed for choosing the 18 appointed members of the EIT Governing Board.

In May 2008 EARTO nominated seven candidates for the EIT Governing Board, none of whom was selected. EARTO welcomed the strong presence on the EIT Governing Board of individuals with a record of industrial involvement and innovation.

EARTO was invited to the EIT launch conference for key stakeholders in Bratislava on 24th November 2008.

EARTO continues to monitor very closely the development of the EIT.

- **JOINT TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES (JTIs)**

EARTO took a leading role in constructively criticising the imbalanced IP-handling policy of the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) as well as its introduction of a 20% funding cap on overhead costs in IMI-supported projects. The early EARTO initiative helped to build widespread resistance, also in the university world, and resulted in many organisations boycotting the first IMI call for proposals. The interim outcome is that the Member States shadow group of IMI has recommended that IMI’s IP-handling policy should be reviewed, which IMI management has recently (November, 2008) accepted to do. Pressure to remove the 20% funding cap on overheads continues, also from the university sector.

IMI was the first JTI to go operational. It is important to prevent negative precedents being set. Since IMI’s launch, the Fuel Cells and Hydrogen has similarly introduced a 20% cap on overheads, which is now also a target of criticism.

- **ERAB**

ERAB is the follow-up body to EURAB, which was a high-level advisory body to Research Commissioner Potočník. ERAB’s 22 members are charged, in particular, with screening the practical implementation of European research policy. EARTO in 2008 successfully nominated Unni Steinsmo, President and CEO of SINTEF, as a member of ERAB.

¹ European Commission (ERAB), December 2005

- **RESPONSIBLE PARTNERING**

The Responsible Partnering initiative – launched by EIRMA and implemented jointly since 2005 by EARTO, EIRMA, EUA and Proton Europe – has achieved significant visibility and is recognised politically as an important contribution to improving research-enterprise cooperation and supporting the adoption of “open innovation” practices in Europe. After the stock-taking conference in December 2007 in Lisbon, a second conference was organised within the COPENMIND exhibition in September 2008 in Copenhagen.

Currently, the Responsible Partnering organisations are preparing guidelines to facilitate the implementation of the State Aid Framework for R&D&I. Many government decision makers at national and regional level across the EU have difficulty in practically interpreting the State Aid Framework, and this can obstruct innovative investments and innovation-support programmes. The Responsible Partnering guidelines now in preparation will offer public decision makers practical advice and examples.

- **IP CHARTER**

The German EU Presidency in the first half of 2007 launched an initiative for a set of guidelines (“IP Charter”) to facilitate and improve research-enterprise interaction, targeting especially universities and public research organisations.

EARTO members were active nationally and in European Commission Working Groups dealing with the IP Charter, and EARTO convened its IP Task Force.

Our principal concern was to argue against a Charter with constraining guidelines and in favour of a more strategic approach emphasising that active IP management in research organisations is critical to innovation, must take a long-term view, and needs to be conducted in a global context.

The inputs provided by the EARTO IP Task Force were largely adopted by the Commission in January and March 2008 and had a strong influence on the final document, which was published as a Commission Recommendation in April.

The Commission Recommendation, however, also contained a paragraph about the ownership of IP rights in contract research which was unacceptable for RTOs. Following strong intervention by EARTO, the offending text was satisfactorily qualified in a subsequent Council resolution.

- **ÆRTOS: AN RTO ERA-NET**

A group of EUROTECH RTOs, with the assistance of the EARTO Secretariat, in 2007 prepared a successful proposal for an RTO ERA-NET project. This project will raise the profile of RTOs and is intended as a strategic exercise in exploring and implementing long-term transnational cooperation between them.

The ÆRTOs partners are FhG (Coordinator), CEA, SINTEF, TNO and VTT. ÆRTOs held its kick-off meeting in April 2008. The early months of the project have been devoted to a detailed analysis of the participating RTOs’ strategic activities and operational service portfolios as the basis for identifying first areas for developing long-term joint activities.

EARTO is participating in the project as a sub-contractor, with the particular role of facilitating the participation of additional RTOs in joint activities identified by the ÆRTOs partners. The first joint activities are expected to commence in 2009.

- **EARTO INNOVATION PRIZE**

During 2008 the EARTO Executive Board of Management established a Task Force to prepare a detailed proposal for an EARTO Innovation Prize. The Task Force met once in 2008 and will continue its work in 2009, with the intention of delivering final proposals in time for the 2009 Annual General Meeting.

- **DESCA, MEEUS**

The DESCA and Meeus initiatives, described below, have both served to further confirm EARTO as a key player on the European R&D and innovation policy scene.

- **EUROPEAN COMMISSION EXPERT GROUPS**

- **Commissioner Potočnik's Sounding Board for Smaller FP Actors**

EARTO is a very active member of the Sounding Board, which provided a valuable lobbying opportunity in the run-up to FP7. Its main focus now is to monitor the implementation of FP7. Topics which are currently under discussion and for which practical solutions are required include overly long time to contract, Commission proposals to make greater use of flat rates and lump sums for cost reimbursement, and implementation difficulties relating to the SME-specific programmes.

- **DG Research SME Advisory Group**

The mandate of this Commission Expert Group covers both the SME-specific measures of FP7 ("Research for SMEs" and "Research for SME Associations") as well as SME participation in the Thematic Priorities of FP7 ("15% target"). There were two EARTO members in the Group during 2008, which was also chaired by the EARTO Secretary General. The Group will continue in 2009, but with partially changed membership.

- **Input to ERA Green Paper Expert Group on "ERA Rationales"**

EARTO collected data on RTOs' transnational contract research activities in Europe in order to provide an empirical basis for a possible recommendation by the Expert Group for a new Commission initiative to stimulate transnational contract research in Europe.

The contact with the "Rationales of ERA" expert group resulted in a proposal in the group's final report to the Commission for a Commission-funded scheme to provide a financial "bonus" on cross-order research contracts with industry.

EARTO representatives and members are regularly invited to sit on other *ad hoc* **Commission expert groups**, e.g. several of the expert groups which supported the ERA Green Paper debate.

- **RTO OVERHEAD COST SURVEY**

In March and April 2008 EARTO updated its earlier surveys (2000, 2005) of RTOs' overhead costs and working time. The results confirm the findings of the earlier surveys, indicating typical overhead costs well in excess of 100% of direct personnel costs. In addition, they show that a realistic figure for productive ("invoiceable") time is in the range 140-180 days.

- **FP7 BENCHMARKING SERVICE**

EARTO launched its FP7 benchmarking database in April, 2008. This enables individual RTOs to compare their FP7 success against other RTOs, e.g. what percentage of project proposals pass the evaluation threshold, what percentage get accepted for funding, etc. Comparisons can be made separately for each of the main programmes within FP7 (thematic priorities, ERC, SME measures, etc.).

- **EARTO ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

The 2008 EARTO Annual Conference and associated meetings in Madrid on 28th - 30th May were a considerable success. Organised around the theme "Impacting New Markets" and hosted by FEDIT, the Spanish Federation of Innovation and Technology Organisations, the events attracted over 300 participants.

• **EARTO WORKING GROUPS AND TASKS FORCES**

EARTO and EARTO-EUROTECH Working Groups active in 2008 included those on:

- Quality and Excellence in RTO Management
- Shadow group on the SET-Plan
- Human Resources Management in RTOs
- Security of Energy Supply
- Security Research
- Food Safety

EARTO Task Forces active during the year included:

- IPR Issues in FP Projects
- IP Task Force ("IPR Charter")
- IP handling and funding models in JTIs
- Ex-post FP6 Audits

• **EUROTECH**

EUROTECH is a Special Interest Group in which the Chief Executive Officers and other senior management of the larger "national" RTOs meet twice a year to discuss issues of common interest. Some thematic working groups have been established through EUROTECH (see above). EUROTECH has also given strong support to broader EARTO initiatives, e.g. ex-post FP6 project audits.

• **EARTO NEWS**

EARTO News is an electronic newsletter produced by the EARTO Secretariat every three to four weeks. It contains information about EARTO events, European policy developments of relevance for RTOs, and other information. 13 issues were published in 2008. News of general interest to RTOs is updated on the EARTO website daily.

• **EARTO FACILITIES IN BRUSSELS**

During 2008 the EARTO Secretariat moved to new premises in Brussels (rue Joseph II, 36-38), due to deficient heating and air-conditioning in the old premises. The move will also result in significant economies after initial investments. The new address is shared with the Brussels offices of EuroGeoSurveys, Sintef, TNO and VTT.

The EARTO Secretariat helps members in their contacts with the European Commission and with other European institutions and organisations. Typical requests for assistance concern obtaining documents, arranging appointments, advice about whom to contact, interpreting work programmes and calls for proposals, evaluation procedures, and complaint processes. We also help members establish their own presence in Brussels. The Secretariat maintains a meeting room which is available for members wishing to organise events in Brussels (capacity up to 12). In addition, we have access to larger meeting rooms for up to 40 persons.

• **MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FP7**

The Association has worked systematically since 2004 to obtain the best possible conditions for RTOs in the 7th Framework Programme (FP7).

EARTO was substantially involved in obtaining:

- 75% funding for R&D for non-profit research organizations (about 80% of EARTO members);
- the continuation of, and an increased budget for, the SME-specific measures ("Research for SMEs", "Research for SME Associations");
- the Mutual Guarantee Fund (MGF) for FP7 participants, which reduces the need for bank guarantees and hence also time-to-contract,
- no automatic access rights to foreground for affiliates of FP7 consortium partners, and
- no flat-rate funding of overhead costs.

Following the launch of FP7 in January 2007, the emphasis during the past year has been on monitoring the implementation of the Framework Programme and intervening where necessary with the Commission.

• **FP7 SME FUNDING MODEL**

In the latter part of 2006, the Commission made public that it was intending to change the funding model of the SME-specific measures. The principal changes were that the research performer(s) in a project would in future invoice their services to the SME partners and that IP ownership rights need not necessarily be wholly transferred to the participating SMEs or SME associations.

EARTO has intervened to try to ensure a "user-friendly" funding model. We argued successfully for a reinforced communication effort by the Commission and against confusing complexity (e.g. the proposed "double-ceiling" funding cap).

At the request of a large majority of members, EARTO has not supported proposals for 75% or 80% reimbursement of research performers in Research for SME projects, the remaining 20% or 25% being paid through royalties and/or success fees.

In 2008, some of the DESCA partners (see below) have produced a Model Consortium Agreement for Research for SMEs projects based on a 75%/25% model. EARTO did not support this work.

• **FP7 PROPOSAL REVIEW SERVICE**

With the start of FP7, EARTO launched its FP7 proposal preparation service, which offers members the services of four carefully selected, specialised consultancy organisations at a highly advantageous price. The service providers offer support from the initial planning of a proposal through to final preparation, including a critical review of the complete proposal before submission to the Commission.

• **DESCA, MEEÛS**

EARTO has taken an active role in the DESCA initiative, in which a group of European and national organisations – ANRT, EARTO, Eurochambres, German CA-Team, UNITE – has jointly developed a set of Model Consortium Agreements for FP7 which are well attuned to the needs and interests of RTOs. EARTO hosts the DESCA website. The DESCA Consortium Agreement documents were reviewed and updated during 2008.

Meeûs is an Internet Discussion Forum which provides a facility for FP7 users to obtain advice and information from other FP7 users. The rationale for Meeûs is that the self-interest of the Commission can sometimes prevent it – and by extension also Commission-funded helpdesk services – from providing neutral advice about FP7 issues.

Meeûs was initiated and is hosted by EARTO, with the endorsement of the other DESCA partners.

• **EX-POST FP6 AUDITS**

The Commission has launched a campaign of ex-post FP6 Audits in which it is targeting initially the 200 largest beneficiaries of FP6 funds. Several EARTO members signalled in 2007 already to the Secretariat that they had experienced challenging audits, and EARTO accordingly established a Task Force to collect experience from members and to examine the issues being raised by auditors. This resulted in a letter to the Commission focussed in particular on the use of average personal costs and the definition of productive hours.

In response to our letter, the Commission offered a meeting on February 13th between four Commission Heads of Unit and representatives of ten RTOs. While the meeting seemed to reach agreement on some, but by no means all, issues, in practice there has been no discernible change in the nature of the audits, which have continued throughout 2008.

In September 2008 the matter was discussed by senior RTO management in the EUROTECH Special Interest Group, and a new EARTO-EUROTECH Task Force of Chief Financial Officers and senior legal counsel was established to exchange information and to explore legal and political arguments to defend RTOs' interests. Contact was made with the private office of Commissioner Potočník.

EARTO MEETINGS IN 2008

MANAGEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting	May 30 th	Madrid
Executive Board	May 29 th October 23 rd -24 th	Madrid Ljubljana
Steering Committee	February 4 th June 25 th September 26 th	Brussels Brussels Brussels

EARTO WORKING GROUPS, TASK FORCES, CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, ETC.

EARTO IPR Task Force	January 24 th May 13 th	Brussels Brussels
EARTO-EUROTECH Energy Working Group	February 8 th April 29 th	Brussels Brussels
EARTO Task Force on FP6 ex-post Project Audits	February 13 th October 24 th	Brussels Brussels
AERTOs Project	Management Meeting Launch Meeting Project Meeting Board Meeting Board/Council Meeting Board Meeting Also various workshops	March 13 th April 7 th May 28 th June 19 th September 17 th October 14 th Brussels Dresden Madrid Trondheim Paris Brussels
EARTO-EUROTECH Special Interest Group	April 6 th -7 th September 27 th -28 th	Dresden Ottobrunn/Munich
EARTO Working Group	May 28 th	Madrid
EARTO-EUROTECH EU Coordinators	May 28 th	Madrid
The EARTO Annual Conference – “Impacting New Markets”	May 29 th – 30 th	Madrid
EARTO Working Group on Quality and Excellence in RTOs	June 16 th October 8 th December 17 th	Brussels Brussels Brussels
EARTO Working Group on Career Development and HR Issues	June 17 th September 25 th	Trondheim Brussels
EARTO Board Task Force: EARTO Innovation Prize	July 18 th	Brussels
EARTO-EUROTECH SET-Plan Shadow Working Group	December 5 th	Brussels

OTHER IMPORTANT MEETINGS BY AND WITH EARTO IN 2008

DIMES Association Meeting	February 12 th	Brussels
EU Research and Technology Development Programmes for SMEs	February 14 th	Istanbul
DG Research SME Advisory Group	March 4 th	Brussels
DESCA Model Consortium Agreement	March 12 th May 15 th	Brussels Brussels
Consultation Group Core Group		
EIRMA Annual Conference	May 28 th	Montreux
OECD Workshop on Impact Assessment of Public R&D	June 11 th	Paris
Responsible Partnering Planning Meeting	July 10 th	Brussels
EARTO Meeting with IMI Management	July 10 th	Brussels
Alpbach Technology Forum	August 22 nd	Alpbach
COPENMIND: Responsible Partnering	September 3 rd	Copenhagen
French EU Presidency Conference on SME R&D	September 15 th	Paris
Commissioner Potocnik's Sounding Board for Smaller FP Actors	September 24 th November 20 th (informal)	Brussels Brussels
DG RTD Review Meeting on Study of Public Research Organisations	October 28 th	Brussels
University-Business Forum on Knowledge Transfer	November 7 th	Brussels
Review Conference on State Aid Framework	November 21 st	Brussels
EIT Stakeholder Conference	November 24 th	Bratislava
YEAR Annual Conference	December 4 th	Brussels
MANUFUTURE Conference	December 8 th -9 th	St. Etienne

EARTO IN 2009: FIRST PRIORITIES AND ACTIVITIES

EARTO will continue in 2009 to follow the mission and strategy described earlier, carrying on established actions and launching new ones, as appropriate.

The following events and priorities are currently foreseen for the first months of 2008:

EVENTS

EARTO Innovation Prize Task Force	Brussels, January 9 th
EARTO Workshop on EIT	Brussels, January 13 th
EARTO Invited to Contribute to Discussion on IPR Policy for EIT	Brussels, January 14 th
EARTO Workshop on R&D and Innovation in the Structural Funds	Brussels, February 3 rd
EARTO-EUROTECH Special Interest Group	Vienna, March 29 th -30 th
EARTO Annual Conference	Paris, May 5 th -6 th

PRIORITIES

Monitor Commission campaign of ex-post audits of FP6 projects, which threatens serious financial harm to many RTOs	Major short-term priority Convene EARTO Task Force and intervene with the Commission, as required Liaise with other concerned stakeholder groups, e.g. universities
Monitor implementation of EIT	IPR policy, funding models, selection of themes for first KICs
Joint Technology Initiatives	Continue to press for change to IMI IP rules and end 20% cap on overheads Seek to avoid similar regulations in other JTIs, e.g. FCH, Clean Sky
EARTO Innovation Prize	Finalise concept in time for Annual General Meeting Aim to launch in autumn 2009
RTO Yearbook	Complete pilot project in time for Annual General Meeting Aim to launch in autumn 2009
Begin preparing EARTO positions for mid-term review of FP7	Launch Task Force First input in time for Annual Conference

ANNEX EARTO'S MISSION AND STRATEGY

The current mission and strategy of EARTO, summarised in the following diagramme, were originally set by the EARTO Executive Board in 2004 and have been reviewed at intervals since, most recently in 2007. The conclusion of the most recent review was that the mission and strategy remain essentially valid, although it was recognised that limited progress has been made so far with regard to the strategic objective of promoting contacts with industry.

The Mission

1. Promote and defend the interests of RTOs in Europe

2. Provide added-value services to EARTO members

The Strategy

1. RTOs key-player category
2. European programmes attuned to interests of RTOs

1. Networking and exchange among members
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1. PROMOTE AND DEFEND THE INTERESTS OF RTOs IN EUROPE

1. RTOs KEY-PLAYER CATEGORY

EARTO's key objective is to make policy decision-makers better aware of the important role which RTOs play in today's innovation systems and of how RTOs work with and complement the enterprise and higher education sectors.

Historically, RTOs have been poorly organised to promote their own cause, while business and the universities have been increasingly well represented and effective in voicing their interests. EARTO has been successful since 2000 in obtaining greater recognition for RTOs, but much remains to be done.

Indeed, raising awareness about RTOs is a never-ending task. One reason is the continual turnover of personnel in the Commission, Parliament and Council, with newcomers often having little or no knowledge of RTOs. Another is the existence of effective organisations lobbying for academic science, which can obscure or contradict RTO positions.

2. EUROPEAN PROGRAMMES ATTUNED TO INTERESTS OF RTOs

An important practical aspect of this work is seeking to ensure that European R&D and innovation programmes sufficiently address technology development, exploitation and practical application, and that funding mechanisms, eligibility rules and other conditions are attuned to the needs of RTOs.

Once programmes are launched, it is important to monitor their implementation in practice, for often "the devil is in the detail". Indeed, programmes are often adopted on the basis of compromise texts which provide general principles rather than precise definitions. These latter must then be determined during implementation.

2. PROVIDE ADDED-VALUE SERVICES TO EARTO MEMBERS

NETWORKING AND EXCHANGE AMONG MEMBERS

A core function of the Association is to provide the members with opportunities for networking and mutual exchange.

- The **EARTO Conference** is the main networking event in the annual agenda. It aims to provide members with analysis and insight on a topic of current interest to RTOs.
- **Working Groups** are where members meet to exchange professional experience on topics of mutual interest. Working Groups are generally of a limited duration; they may meet three or four times over a period of about twelve months, for example.
- **Task Forces** form to address critical policy issues affecting all or groups of members, in particular to formulate policy recommendations.
- **Special Interest Groups** are longer-term. They bring together members sharing a common interest and meet regularly with an agenda of their own choosing – experience exchange, joint business development, etc.
- **Workshops, Information Days** are also organised from time to time to provide information on, for example, new Commission programmes, funding models etc.

1. EXPLOITING EUROPEAN FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

EARTO aims not only to obtain European R&D and innovation programmes well attuned to the interests of its members but also to help the members to better exploit the funding opportunities thus obtained.

- EARTO has worked for many years with Hyperion Ltd. to provide **training courses** on obtaining FP funding and managing FP projects.
- At the start of FP7, EARTO launched its **FP7 proposal preparation** service, which offers members the services of four carefully selected, specialised consultancy organisations to provide support from the initial planning of a proposal through to final preparation, including a critical review of the complete proposal before submission to the Commission.
- The Association has worked with a select group of other European and national organisations – ANRT, Eurochambres, German CA-Team, UNITE – to jointly develop **DESCA**, a set of **Model Consortium Agreements** for FP7, which are well attuned to the needs and interests of RTOs. EARTO hosts the DESCAs website.
- Meeûs is an **Internet Discussion Forum** which provides a facility for FP7 users to obtain advice and information from other FP7 users. Meeûs was initiated and is hosted by EARTO, with the endorsement of the other DESCAs partners.

2. PROMOTE CONTACTS WITH INDUSTRY

EARTO seeks to promote contacts with industry – or, rather, with the enterprise sector more generally – in order to facilitate interactions which will promote effective innovation systems as well as business opportunities for members.

EARTO nurtures a cooperative relationship with **EIRMA (the European Industrial Management Research Association)** which serves to build generic relationships with industry.

3. FACILITIES IN BRUSSELS

The EARTO Permanent Secretariat in Brussels is the focal point of the Association, organises EARTO meetings and provides meeting facilities for members' own meetings (e.g. FP project meetings).

The Secretariat is available to help members individually in their dealings with the Commission, Parliament and with other European organisations.