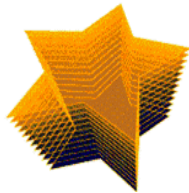


EARTO



News

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EARTO promotes the interests of over 300 Research and Technology Organisations in Europe

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATIONS

3 rue du Luxembourg, B-1000 Brussels

Phone +32 (0)2 502 86 98, Fax +32 (0)2 502 86 93, info@earto.eu

EARTO and the DESCA Partners Launch *Meeûs – a Self-help Resource for the FP7 User Community* www.meeusfp7.eu

Meeûs is an Internet platform for FP7 users through which they can ask each other questions and offer advice about FP7 – about preparing proposals or negotiating contracts with the Commission, about the model contract or the rules of participation, about reporting guidelines or eligible costs ... about anything.

In earlier Framework Programmes – in FP4 or FP5, for example – the Commission generally behaved as a neutral partner. When your project experienced a problem, for example over a defaulting partner or about the eligibility of certain costs, you could turn to the Commission for advice and could expect to get practical help.



Things have changed since FP6, and certainly in FP7. The Commission is now a contractor like you, but sitting on the opposite side of the table. True, the Commission still offers its own help-desk services, and finances some third-party services like the IPR-Helpdesk, but as soon as you bring up something that could comprise the Commission's interests you are likely to get an answer that does little more than paraphrase the official texts.

Meeûs offers an opportunity to get help and advice from other FP7 users. Meeûs is open to all FP7 users, actual and potential. You can ask questions about anything ... and get an answer or advice from other, experienced FP users.

Meeûs is launched by EARTO with the support of its partners who developed together the DESCA Model Consortium Agreement for FP7: ANRT, Eurochambres, the German CA-Team represented by Helmholtz and Kowi, and UNITE.

Meeûs is named after the address of the Commission's DG Research: Square de Meeûs.

Count Ferdinand de Meeûs, the "Belgian Rothschild", was the founder of the Société Générale de Belgique. He was a controversial figure throughout much of his life, and during the Belgian Revolution of 1830 a price was offered for his head!

If you look for his statue on Square de Meeûs today, all you will find is the empty pillar in the photograph on the right. Apparently, the original statue was stolen several years ago. At least twice it was replaced but each time the new one disappeared a few days later. Evidently, the ghosts of the Belgian Revolution are still with us ...!



**Meeûs has already almost 200 registered users.
A promising start!**

Important Message concerning the DESCA Model Consortium Agreement

The versions of DESCA Example 1 and Example 3 on the DESCA website contained an error that was not discovered and corrected until 19th November 2007: some text was missing from the end of Clause 9.4 and from the end of Clause 9.5.

If you downloaded either document before 19th November 2007, please click [here](#) to download the missing text.

**In Memoriam
Prof. Dr. Theo Gumpelmayer
1936 - 2007**

Theo Gumpelmayer, Vice-President of EARTO since its foundation, passed away unexpectedly on 17th October. As President of FEICRO, representing ACR – Austrian Cooperative Research, he was one of the founding fathers of EARTO, helping to bring about the merger between FEICRO and EACRO that gave birth to EARTO.

A memorial service in remembrance of Theo Gumpelmayer was held in his home town of Linz on October 25th, at which EARTO was represented by its Secretary General.

A wreath was placed by EARTO in the name of all of the members.



**The EARTO wreath carried the simple words
*In remembrance of a founding father, our vice-president, and friend***

EARTO Task Forces, Working Groups, and Surveys

Intellectual Property Task Force Munich, 8th November 2007

EARTO convenes from time to time a Task Force of Intellectual Property specialists from member RTOs to analyze new European policy developments and to help prepare EARTO policy positions.

The Task Force met on November 8th at Fraunhofer headquarters in Munich. The main item of discussion was the IP Charter currently being drafted by the Commission following a proposal by the German EU Presidency.



Several changes to the current Commission draft were discussed and agreed during the meeting, and will be presented to the

Commission by the two RTO representatives on the DG Research Expert Group which is assisting the Commission in the drafting of the document.

A further meeting of the IP Task Force is provisionally planned on January 24th in Brussels, with further discussion of a revised Commission draft on the IP Charter as the principal item on the agenda.

EARTO/YEAR Workshop on Career Development for Young Researchers Brussels, 20th November 2007

This event was co-organized by EARTO with the YEAR association - *Young European Associated Researchers*.

It was the first occasion that EARTO has targeted an event at human resource managers and those attending the meeting expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to meet and discuss together.

The presentations and discussions indicated a trend towards structured career development programmes in the smaller and mid-sized RTOs, and also a trend towards performance-related career paths and remuneration policies.

A welcome addition to the programme was a presentation by Andrew Dearing, Secretary General of EIRMA, which showed that industry faced many of the same challenges with regarding to hiring, developing and retaining capable research managers.

Three possible follow-up actions to this workshop were identified:

1. Possibility for EARTO members to send young research managers to participate in the residential

"R&D Management Study Group" organized by EIRMA in summer (possibly June) 2008.

2. A follow-up joint EARTO/EIRMA workshop on human resource issues.

For further information about this workshop and follow-up actions, please contact taffah@earto.org.

EARTO Task Force on FP6 Audits Brussels, 10th December 2007

This Task Force has been announced at short notice following reports from EARTO members about recent audits of their FP6 projects.

During these audits serious criticisms have been made. There are two main areas of criticism.

One concerns the use of average personnel costs, which auditors have often found to diverge significantly from real personnel costs in the case of individual projects.



The second and more fundamental criticism relates to the calculation of "invoiceable days" ("productive hours") and, specifically, to the question of whether certain elements of overhead (e.g. general marketing and administration costs) should be counted as invoiceable days.

The frequency and severity of FP6 project audits may be increasing. Furthermore, if the Commission is now adopting a more strict interpretation of invoiceable days, which can dramatically affect the effective rate of co-financing from the Framework Programme, it is important to clarify this issue as rapidly as possible and preferably before FP7 contracts are signed.

The objectives of this Task Force are:

- to clarify objections raised recently by auditors and by the Commission, to check the consistency of the objections raised (the Commission is using many external auditors: are they all applying the same principles?) and to consider the consequences of those objections for RTOs;
- probably, to formulate and to deliver to the Commission a consistent RTO position in response to the typical objections raised;
- possibly, to develop a reference model, consistent with RTO business models, regarding the calculation of invoiceable days, and
- to consider the need for, and if thought appropriate to obtain, a high-level meeting with the Commission in order to resolve critical issues.

For further information about this Task Force, please contact baumeister@earto.org.

**At the time of writing, over 30 registrations
have been received for this Task Force.**

EARTO Survey on RTO Overhead Costs

Early in FP6, the Commission made a move to limit the reimbursement of overhead costs to 80% of personnel costs. This would have penalized most RTOs, which tend to have high overhead costs because of the need to finance sophisticated equipment and large-scale facilities.

EARTO successfully opposed the Commission initiative by making a survey which showed that most RTOs have overhead costs well above 80%. The results of the survey were presented by practically the entire EARTO Board in person to the Commission, which consequently withdrew its proposal.

Although there is no immediate threat from the Commission to limit the reimbursement of overhead costs in FP7, it seems wise to update the earlier data in order to have good arguments available "just in case".

The short survey will be sent to EARTO members in the next two or three weeks. The results, which will be presented anonymously, will be available to all members

How is your RTO Performing in FP7?

Suppose you submitted five proposals in the first round of FP7 Calls for Proposals, three passed all evaluation thresholds and two were selected for funding. Is that a good or a bad performance?

Competition for FP7 funding is high, so you cannot expect to win every project. But you want to be at least as good as your competitors, and preferably better than most.

To help you get some idea of how well you are doing relative to other RTOs, EARTO is proposing to launch a survey to collect basic data on FP7 performance. The data will be presented anonymously to allow you to benchmark your evaluation and funding success rates against other RTOs.

We aim to launch the survey in early December and to update it from time to time as FP7 progresses and more data on proposal results become available.

OTHER NEWS

EIT - European Institute of Innovation and Technology

The slow birth of the EIT continues.

It appears that negotiations between Council, Parliament and Commission have resolved all of the outstanding issues, except finance.

The latest agreed compromise is that the EIT's Governing Board will have 18 members, i.e. three more than proposed by the Commission and three less than proposed by the Parliament.

The funding issue is not now expected to be settled until the mid-December European Summit, which in its turn means that the final green light from the Parliament cannot be expected before the following plenary session, in mid-January.

But then the Commission is expected to move fast to appoint the EIT's Governing Board. The Board is likely to have great influence over the EIT's future development. One of its principal tasks in the early months will be to map out the EIT's operational principles and practices and then to prepare its innovation strategy for the coming years.

We expect that an independent Identification Committee will be set up to find and propose the 18 members of the Board.

EARTO is preparing for this by drafting a paper to show that RTOs have long experience and success in

all of the critical areas the EIT is intended to address: strategic research, contract research, technology transfer through licensing and spin-offs, and post-graduate education and training.



For more information on the EIT, please contact baumeister@earto.org



Difficult Birth of the First JETIs



After months of discussion on the legal structure and statutes, the Competitiveness Council found a majority in support of the first four Joint Technology Initiatives, which could finally kick off in 2008.



The Commission has identified six areas in which JETIs could be established: innovative medicines; embedded computing systems; aeronautics and air transport; hydrogen and fuel cells; nanoelectronics technologies 2020, and; global monitoring for environment and security.

Four of these proposals have finally reached the Council table after long discussions on the legal structure of JETIs. The four are:

Innovative medicines (IMI)  

Embedded computing systems (ARTEMIS)  

Nano-electronic technologies (ENIAC)  

Aeronautics and air transport (CLEAN SKY)  

Nearly one year after FP7 entered into force, the first JETIs have still not been approved. The JETIs were originally envisaged as true industry-led initiatives, in which the choice of research to be funded would be based on excellence only. However, decision rights in the ARTEMIS and ENIAC joint undertakings will be divided between industry, the Commission and the group of individual member states giving additional funding to them (Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden for ARTEMIS, and Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal for ENIAC).

This arrangement could make ARTEMIS and ENIAC vulnerable to considerations of *juste retour* (a proportional return on investment).

CLEAN SKY and IMI are established by two parties only - industry and the European Community as represented by the Commission. Decisions on projects to be funded could be easier, as voting rights will be equal between the two parties, with the Commission having, however, a veto on the use of public money.

The present plan is that the JETIs would be set up as Community bodies (agencies), whereas at the same time they would take the form of real public-private partnerships, with responsibility for the management

EU Seeks World Leadership in Energy Technologies

On November 22nd the Commission published a Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET Plan) to help the EU reach targets for renewable energies uptake and CO² emissions reductions. Brussels hopes the plan will boost a 'clean' technology sector plagued by high costs, market barriers and under-investment.

Technologies are seen as a key part of the development of an Energy Policy for Europe, officially launched with the Commission's publication of a 10th January energy and climate 'package' that was endorsed by EU leaders in March.

[More...](#)

OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard 2007

Throughout the world, innovation and globalisation are the two major sources of economic performance. They directly affect productivity, job creation and citizens' well-being, and they help make it possible to address global challenges such as health and the environment. As their role has taken on greater prominence, their characteristics have evolved and policies have had to adapt.

This eighth edition of the Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard explores recent developments in matters relating to science, technology, globalisation and industrial performance. In this regard, it compares characteristics of OECD member and major non-member economies and provides information on national policies that have been implemented and their outcome. Major findings include:

- Investment in new knowledge, notably in R&D, is now growing in line with GDP. This contrasts with the late 1990s when investment in knowledge outpaced growth of GDP.
- Skilled workers constitute an increasing share of the labour force, notably in the services industries.
- Public policies that seek to foster innovation are being progressively reoriented, from subsidies and procurement to alternative instruments such as R&D tax relief and reinforcement of industry-science linkages.
- The pace of diffusion of information and communication technologies has become steadier than in the heady days of the late 1990s, notably in terms of broadband Internet access among households and adoption by businesses for e-commerce.
- The economies of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa are taking further steps in many areas of the knowledge economy, most notably in terms of investment in research (in China and India), patenting and trade in high-technology industries.
- Research and S&T activities have become more internationalised, in line with the increasing globalisation of value chains. In most OECD countries foreign affiliates of multinational firms now have a higher share in R&D than in manufacturing activities.

[More...](#)

European Research Advisory Board

The former high-level policy advisory committee to Research Commissioner Potočník, EURAB, is soon to be replaced by a new, smaller, high-level body, called ERAB – European Research Advisory Board.

EARTO was successful in nominating four members to the former EURAB, which proved an influential forum for raising awareness about RTOs and promoting RTO interests. The EARTO Board is currently working to ensure a strong list of RTO nominees to ERAB.

The Five Big Challenges for Innovation Policy in the Modern World

NESTA, the United Kingdom *National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts* has published a useful policy brief summarising the challenges currently facing innovation policy makers:

- Adopting the right understanding of innovation
- Measuring the kinds of innovation that matter
- Thinking and learning skills are as important as technical skills
- Encourage innovation in the public sector
- Develop a diversified university sector.

The article has a UK focus, but nevertheless offers a convenient summary of current innovation policy imperatives for European governments.

[More...](#)

Recent and Upcoming Events by and with EARTO

2008

May 28 th – 30 th	EARTO Annual Conference	Madrid
April 6 th – 7 th	EARTO-EUROTECH Special Interest Group	Dresden
February 4 th	EARTO Steering Committee	Brussels
January 24 th	IPR Task Force (to be confirmed)	Brussels

2007

December 17 th	DG Research SME Advisory Group	Brussels
December 10 th	EARTO Task Force on FP6 Audits: Average Personnel Costs, Definition of Productive Hours	Brussels
December 6 th	EARTO-EUROTECH Working Group on Energy Security	Brussels
December 3 rd – 4 th	Effective Collaborative in R&D and Technology Transfer a <i>Responsible Partnering</i> conference, under the auspices of the Portuguese EU Presidency	Lisbon
	EARTO – EIRMA – EUA - PROTON	
November 20 th	EARTO/YEAR Workshop on Career Development Programmes for Young Researchers	Brussels
November 15 th – 16 th	EARTO Board	Malvern
November 8 th	IPR Task Force	Munich

The EARTO Meeting Facilities

From December 1st the EARTO meeting facilities will be available in a reconfigured format.

Our own first-floor meeting room will be available for meetings of up to 20 participants.

Bigger meetings will be accommodated in a large, modern meeting room on the 5th floor of the Sweden House.

Members are also welcome to use a second, smaller room suitable for up to five people. It is available free of charge to EARTO members

For further information, please contact Birgitte Malz at the EARTO Secretariat: +32-2-5028698

