

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF
RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY
ORGANISATIONS

EARTO 2009-2010

**A Report on EARTO Activities in 2009
and a Presentation of First Priorities
for 2010**

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

2009 saw the launch of the annual **EARTO Innovation Prize**. A Task Force of EARTO Board nominees, chaired by former EARTO Vice-President Dirk-Meints Polter, set the rules and procedures for the Prize. Fifteen submissions were received, out of which seven were pre-selected for final scrutiny by an independent jury. The winner of the 2009 Prize was TNO for its "Legionella Chip" innovation, with commendations going to CEA (MOTIONPOD) and ECN (Back-Contact Solar Panel Assembly).¹



The 2009 **EARTO Annual Conference**² and associated meetings in Paris on 4th – 6th May were a considerable success. Organised around the theme of "Engaging Effectively" and hosted by EARTO members ASRC, Association des Instituts Carnot, CEA and Réseau CTI, the events attracted 230 participants.

EU policy debates relating to research and innovation in 2009 began to focus more and more on large-scale initiatives, such as "joint programming", "public-private partnerships", and research infrastructures. EARTO has welcomed the targeting of societal "grand challenges", but has also argued strongly for the need to maintain a diversified approach to R&D funding, including support to smaller-scale trans-frontier projects. EARTO's analysis and proposals - **ESTARC paper**³ – were released on the occasion of the 2009 EARTO Annual Conference.

The Commission's campaign of **ex-post audits of FP6 projects** as well as **implementation problems relating to FP7** (e.g. "certification methodologies") were major issues for the Association in 2009. A special Task Force of RTO senior financial and legal officers has monitored developments and discussed defensive and offensive strategies. The Secretariat has supported individual members in their dealings with the Commission regarding ex-post audits. It has also taken a leading role in mobilising other affected stakeholder groups, especially in industry. In November, EARTO was invited to testify before the ITRE Committee of the European Parliament, and its robust critical presentation⁴ attracted much attention.

During 2009 EARTO joined the Knowledge for Innovation (K4I) platform⁵, which in October organised the first **European Innovation Summit**. This high-profile event, held in the European Parliament, attracted a large audience of Members of the European Parliament, Commission officials, and R&D stakeholders, and was addressed by Commission President Barroso as well as Parliament President Buzek.

¹ Video materials and press releases are available here: <http://www.earto.eu/earto-innovation-prize/earto-innovation-prize-2009/>

² <http://www.earto.eu/annual-conferences/pages-annual-conference/annual-conference-2009/>

³ A copy of the ESTARC Paper can be found here:

http://www.earto.eu/fileadmin/content/01_Seminars_Conferences/AC_2009/ChrisHUII_PROPOSAL_FOR_A_EUR_OPEAN_STRATEGIC_TECHNOLOGICAL_AND_APPLIED_RESEARCH_COUNCIL_ESTARC.pdf

⁴ A copy of the presentation can be found here: http://www.earto.eu/fileadmin/content/03_Publications/EP-ITRE10Nov09_TextOfPresentation.pdf

⁵ K4I is an independent platform which enables the multiple stakeholders of the knowledge and innovation economy to meet and exchange viewpoints and insights - <http://www.knowledge4innovation.eu/k4i/default.aspx>

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 and again in autumn 2009.

The 2009 review confirmed the broad thrust of the previously agreed strategy. It emphasised that the primary focus should be to safeguard current and future public funding sources of importance to RTOs. The target should be both EU initiatives, notably the RTD Framework Programme and other European research- and innovation-related programmes, as well as national and regional programmes. With regard to the latter, EARTO should develop new materials (e.g. RTO innovation success stories) and arguments which would assist members in strengthening their position with their national and regional governments. In this and other ways, EARTO should further strengthen the RTO "brand".

Implementation of the recommendations of the 2009 strategy review will begin in January 2010, when first operational decisions and recommendations will be made by the EARTO Steering Committee.

The activities undertaken by EARTO in 2009 were designed to achieve the mission and strategy agreed in 2007 and summarised below.

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

EARTO ACTIVITIES IN 2009

The following pages briefly review the principal activities of EARTO during 2009. 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

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. RTOs key-player category | European Institute of Innovation and Technology
JTIs, PPPs
FP6 ex-post Audits
FP7 certification methodologies
Indirect costs in FP7
VAT in FP7 projects
ERAB
Responsible Partnering
Participation in Commission Expert Groups
<i>ÆRTOs</i>
EARTO Innovation Prize
DESCA, Meeûs
RTOs Yearbook
Knowledge4Innovation |
| 2. European programmes attuned to interests of RTOs | ERAB
European Institute of Innovation and Technology
JTIs, PPPs
Joint Programming Initiatives
EARTO Task Forces
Participation in Commission Expert Groups
Monitoring the Implementation of FP7
Preparation in view of the FP7 Mid-term Review
Innovation Policy |

2. PROVIDE ADDED-VALUE SERVICES TO EARTO MEMBERS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Networking and exchange among members | EARTO Annual Conference
EARTO Innovation Prize
EARTO Information Days
EARTO Working Groups, Special Interest Groups
EARTO News
EARTO FP7 Benchmarking Service
RTOs Yearbook |
| 2. Exploiting European funding opportunities | FP Training Courses (with Hyperion Ltd)
EARTO FP7 Proposal Preparation Service
DESCA, Meeûs
EARTO News
EARTO Information Days |
| 3. Promote contacts with industry | Responsible Partnering
DESCA
Cooperation with EIRMA |



4. Facilities in Brussels

EARTO meeting facilities in Brussels
Assistance to members in their relations with the
Commission, Parliament, other European
organisations

EX-POST FP6 AUDITS

EARTO continued to monitor with the greatest attention the issue of ex-post FP6 audits, which threaten serious financial harm to many RTOs, throughout 2009.

EARTO and the EUROTECH Special Interest Group established a high-level Task Force of senior legal and financial officers from affected RTOs in 2008, which met several times in 2009 to consider joint action towards the Commission.

The Budget Control Committee of the European Parliament supported EARTO's position by voting unanimously for an amendment requesting the Commission to stop recalculating the financial statements for FP6 projects that have already been closed and paid, in its vote on the discharge of the Commission's management of the EU budget in 2007.

EARTO took a leading role throughout the year in establishing contacts with industry and other affected parties in order to share information, encourage reaction, and to coordinate responses towards the Commission.

Additionally, information was provided to EU Member State governments in order to gain their support. This resulted in several research ministers writing to Commissioner Potočník to complain about the Commission's FP6 audit campaign.

In November, EARTO was invited to represent the research community at a hearing in the European Parliament, where we gave a robust presentation on the RTOs' perspective regarding problems linked to the implementation of the Research Framework Programme, especially the issue of ex-post FP6 project audits. We argued for a new constructive initiative by Parliament, the Commission and the European Court of Auditors to agree a clear, realistic definition of eligible costs for the Framework Programme. This proposal was welcomed by representatives of both the Parliament and the Swedish EU Presidency.

EARTO also used the triennial review of the Financial Regulation as an opportunity to raise the issue of ex-post FP6 audits⁶.

MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FP7

EARTO was active throughout the year in defending RTOs interests with regard to the implementation of FP7. The Association used the opportunities of the hearing in the European Parliament and the triennial review of the Financial Regulation (see previous item) to signal needed improvements to the implementation of FP7, including, for example, "certificates of methodology" and the use of lump sums and flat rates.

In June, the Commission published criteria for the use of **average personnel costs in FP7**. EARTO collected feedback from some 30 larger RTOs which indicates that the great majority are unable to meet the Commission's criteria, which are unrealistically restrictive. Most business enterprises, too, appear unable to meet the Commission's

⁶ A copy of EARTO's response to the consultation on the review of the Financial Regulation is available here: http://www.earto.eu/fileadmin/content/03_Publications/FinReg_2_.pdf

criteria. These results were provided to the Commission on the occasion of the European Parliament hearing (see above), with a request for modification.

Feedback from members audited during 2009 indicated that the Commission and its auditors are now examining more and more closely how **indirect costs are calculated and attributed to FP7 projects**. This is potentially a very serious issue for those many RTOs which have high overheads relating to specialised plant and equipment as well as to essential non-research activities. Monitoring of this issue and representations to the Commission will continue to be a priority in 2010.

During the summer of 2009 there were reports of a change to the European regulations concerning **Value Added Tax (VAT)** which would have potentially serious consequences for many RTOs and SMEs which participate in the Framework Programme. The reported change had resulted from a discussion between national VAT authorities and the European Commission which had concluded that the financial contribution of the Commission to a Framework Programme project must be considered to be a subsidy. Some national VAT authorities appear then to have considered that because it is a subsidy, the related work could not be considered to be a commercial transaction and therefore would not fall within the scope of VAT. In its turn, this would mean that purchases of goods and services for the purpose of performing an FP project would not be considered VAT-deductible. During the following months, this interpretation of the VAT regulations was successfully challenged by EARTO members in several countries, including the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, and they appear to have won the argument. We will continue to monitor this issue in 2010.

PREPARATION IN VIEW OF THE FP7 MID-TERM REVIEW

EARTO liaised closely with the European Commission, the Swedish Presidency and the European Parliament in the second half of 2009 in order to prepare the ground for the mid-term review of FP7 and the preparation of FP8.

The Association made its own analysis of recent ERA developments and presented a set of proposals designed to ensure a coherent and diversified approach in the future. The analysis and proposals were the result of earlier work in an EARTO Task Force. This work is intended to feed into the mid-term review of FP7, which is foreseen for 2010: mid-term reviews of Framework Programmes have often presaged major innovations in the following Framework Programme.

The EARTO proposals envisage the creation of a **European Strategic Technological and Applied Research Council (ESTARC)**. ESTARC would be a high-level independent body which would monitor the development of the European Research Area with particular reference to strategic and applied research and technological development. It would identify currently uncovered and emerging strategic technological and applied research priorities and opportunities, and would propose and implement corresponding programmes. The implementation of these programmes would be assured by a dedicated agency under the authority of ESTARC. The initial ESTARC proposals include programmes for promoting strategic alliances between RTOs (but not excluding other partners such as universities and enterprises where appropriate), programmes for supporting projects promising disruptive and next-generation technologies, and a European programme for new technology-based start-ups and high-growth technology-



based companies modeled on the US Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) programme.

EARTO was invited to represent RTOs at a **workshop of the incoming Swedish Presidency** in June and took this opportunity to present the ESTARC paper, which was later distributed to Member States representatives attending the Competitiveness Council. EARTO also used its response to the consultation on Community Innovation Policy (see next item) to promote the proposals contained in the ESTARC paper.

INNOVATION POLICY

On 18 September 2009 the Commission launched a **public consultation on Community Innovation Policy**. This consultation, which closed on 16 November, focused on the Commission's Communication "Reviewing Community innovation policy in a changing world" and various staff papers released in September as part of the "Innovation Package".

EARTO responded to this consultation on the basis of established EARTO positions, including the ESTARC paper⁷. Responses to the consultation will serve as an input to the preparation of a new **European Innovation Plan**, due to be released in the first quarter of 2010.

EARTO will monitor the adoption of the European Innovation Plan carefully in 2010.

EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

EARTO continues to monitor very closely the development of the EIT. An **information day** for members was organised in January 2009. In the same month, EARTO took an active part in the **stakeholder consultation on the IP policy of the EIT**. In early 2010 we shall monitor the signature of the contractual agreements between the EIT and the first Knowledge and Innovation Communities, in which several EARTO members will play a prominent role. We shall also start preparing EARTO's position in view of the consultation on the **EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda**, due to take place in 2010.

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. Our concern was also to prevent a precedent being set which other JTIs might follow. The Member States Representative Group which monitors the IMI JTI finally accepted to address these issues.

⁷ A copy of EARTO's response to the consultation on Community Innovation Policy is available here: http://www.earto.eu/fileadmin/content/03_Publications/EARTO_Response_to_the_Public_Consultation_on_Community_Innovation_Policy.pdf



The IMI IP Working Group, set up in 2009, will take stock of the experience gained with the first IMI call for proposals and propose short term adjustments in relation to the IMI IPR policy. The working group will also discuss outstanding issues which require changes in the rules. These issues are likely to include the questions of "affiliated entities", time limits for access rights (there is no time limit under the current rules), access rights for "research use" (currently very widely

defined) and access rights to third parties for research use. In addition, the IMI Member States Representatives Group will review the issue of a 20% cap on overheads for IMI projects in the first few months of 2010.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS (PPPs)

EARTO has monitored the implementation of the three PPPs of the "European Recovery Plan" and organised an **information day** in Brussels on 23 September 2009, focusing on the Multi-Annual Roadmaps which define the priorities of the PPPs for the coming years. Participants had the opportunity to exchange views on the first calls for proposals, focusing on their practical aspects, and to hear directly from the coordinators of the Ad-hoc Industrial Advisory Groups for **Factories of the Future** and **Energy-efficient Buildings**. A member of the group for **Green Cars** also updated participants on the latest developments with regards to the Green Cars PPP.

JOINT PROGRAMMING INITIATIVES (JPIs)

EARTO carefully monitored the selection of the first wave of joint programming initiatives and provided regular updates on the selection process throughout the year via EARTO News. We will continue to monitor the implementation of the first wave of JPIs and the pilot initiative on neurodegenerative diseases, especially with regard to the framework conditions for implementation of the JPIs. We will also monitor the selection of a second wave of JPIs.

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 successfully nominated **Unni Steinsmo**, President and CEO of SINTEF, as a member of ERAB.

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.



The Responsible Partnering organisations released a **new edition of the Responsible Partnering Handbook** in 2009. This revision brings the Handbook up-to-date without fundamentally changing the principal recommendations. Information on **State Aid** has been added and the section on human aspects of effective collaborative research extended. There is a new checklist for all types of organisation interested in implementing the guidelines.

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 raises the profile of RTOs and is intended as a strategic exercise in exploring and implementing long-term transnational cooperation between them. The original ÆRTOs partners are FhG (Coordinator), CEA, SINTEF, TNO and VTT. They were joined in 2009 by SP Group of Sweden and Tecnalia of Spain. 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 opportunities for such participation are expected in 2010.

EARTO INNOVATION PRIZE

2009 saw the launch of the annual EARTO Innovation Prize. A Task Force of EARTO Board nominees, chaired by former EARTO Vice-President Dirk-Meints Polter, set the rules and procedures for the Prize. Fifteen submissions were received, out of which seven were pre-selected for final scrutiny by an independent jury. The winner of the 2009 Prize was TNO for its "Legionella Chip" innovation, with commendations going to CEA (MOTIONPOD) and ECN (Back-Contact Solar Panel Assembly).

The award ceremony for the prize at the prestigious Musical Instrument Museum in Brussels on December 9th attracted almost 100 participants and featured presentations by Martin Schuurmans, President of the EIT, Luke Georghiou, Professor of Science and Technology Policy and Management at Manchester University, on innovation priorities for Europe, and a Fraunhofer presentation illustrating RTOs' strategic research function.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION EXPERT GROUPS

Commissioner Potočník's Sounding Board for Smaller FP Actors met for a final time in 2009. EARTO was a very active member of the Sounding Board, which provided a valuable lobbying opportunity in the run-up to FP7. Its main focus in 2009 was to monitor the implementation of FP7 and propose modifications, in particular with regard to overly long time to contract, the use of flat rates and lump sums for cost reimbursement, and implementation difficulties in the SME-specific programmes.

EARTO representatives and members are regularly invited to sit on **Commission expert groups**. For example, TNO Board member Tini Colijn was a member of the Expert Group on the Knowledge-Based Economy, which reported in late 2009.



FP7 BENCHMARKING SERVICE

EARTO launched its FP7 benchmarking database in 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.).

The survey was expanded in 2009 to include the CIP programmes (ICT PSP – Information Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme and IEE – Intelligent Energy Europe) and other European research programmes.

EARTO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 2009 EARTO Annual Conference and associated meetings in Paris on 4th – 6th May were a considerable success. Organised around the theme “Engaging effectively” and hosted by the ASRC, the Association des Instituts Carnot, the CEA and Réseau CTI, the several events attracted 230 participants.

EARTO WORKING GROUPS AND TASKS FORCES

EARTO Working Groups active in 2009 included those on:

- Shadow Group on the SET-Plan
- Human Resources Management in RTOs (now continuing within AERTOs)
- Spin-offs (now continuing within AERTOs)
- Security of Energy Supply
- EARTO-EUROTECH EU Coordinators Working Group

EARTO Task Forces active during the year included:

- EARTO Innovation Prize Preparatory Task Force
- ex-post FP6 Audits (the remit of the Task Force has been expanded to cover the issues of certification of costs in FP7, VAT in FP7 projects, and indirect costs in FP7)
- Mid-term review of FP7 (ESTARC proposals)
- DG RTD Report on Research-Performing Organisations

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. 14 issues were published in 2009. News of general interest to RTOs is updated on the EARTO website daily.

EARTO FACILITIES IN BRUSSELS

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 can help to obtain larger meeting rooms for up to 40 persons.

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 – 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.

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. A review of the Meeûs initiative is currently underway.

RTOs YEARBOOK

The proposed RTO Yearbook is intended to raise the profile of RTOs in Europe by providing a regular statistical snapshot of the RTO sector. A pilot phase to test data-collection methodologies was undertaken during 2009 and is currently being evaluated.



KNOWLEDGE 4 INNOVATION (K4I)

EARTO joined the "Knowledge4Innovation" (K4I) platform during 2009, a Belgian non-profit association for organizations wishing to promote innovation and innovation policy dialogue in Europe. This will help EARTO build a stronger relationship with the European

Parliament, which is becoming increasingly influential, through active participation in the 'Lisbon Forum', K4I's main activity.

The first **European Innovation Summit**, organized by Knowledge for Innovation, took place in the European Parliament on 13 and 14 October 2009. The event, which was attended by a large number of key players in the innovation field and many new and returning MEPs, was a considerable success. The President of the European Commission and the President of the European Parliament, who both gave keynote speeches at the event, welcomed it as an important opportunity to promote innovation in Europe at a time when it becomes crucial to find appropriate solutions to build a more sustainable economy and society after the crisis. EARTO Secretary General Christopher John Hull chaired one of the sessions of this summit.

EARTO MEETINGS IN 2009

MANAGEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting	May 6 th	Paris
Executive Board	May 5 th September 18 th	Paris Luxembourg

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

EARTO EIT Information Day	January 13 th	Brussels
EARTO-EUROTECH Energy Working Group	October 19 th -20 th	Brussels
EARTO Task Force on FP6 ex-post Project Audits	March 3 rd October 15 th	Brussels
EARTO-EUROTECH Special Interest Group	March 29 th - 30 th September 27 th -28 th	Vienna Ottobrunn/Munich
EARTO-EUROTECH EU Coordinators	March 9 th April 24 th September 24 th	Munich Brussels Brussels
EARTO Working Group	May 4 th	Paris
EARTO Spin-off Special Interest Group	May 4 th	Paris
EARTO Annual Conference "Engaging Effectively"	May 5 th - 6 th	Paris
EARTO Task Force on DG Research Study on Research-Performing Organisations	June 22 nd	Brussels
EARTO Information Day on Public-Private Partnerships	September 23 rd	Brussels
EUROTECH Special Interest Group	March 29 th -30 th October 4 th -5 th	Vienna Seville
EARTO-EUROTECH SET-Plan Shadow Working Group	January 22 nd September 2 nd	Brussels Brussels
EUROTECH Working Group	October 19 th - 20 th	Brussels
EARTO Innovation Prize: • Task Force • Task Force • Jury • Award Ceremony	January 9 th May 4 th October 7 th December 9 th	Brussels Paris Brussels Brussels

OTHER MEETINGS WITH EARTO IN 2009

EIT IP Stakeholder Consultation		January 14 th	Brussels
Commissioner Potočník's Sounding Board for Smaller FP Actors		January 14 th	Brussels
AERTOs Human Resources Workshop		January 15 th June 4 th -5 th	Munich Helsinki
Conference "Role of Spin-offs in Science and Innovation Policy"		January 21 st	Brussels
DG Research Knowledge Transfer Expert Group		January 27 th	Brussels
EDUPROF Conference		February 4 th – 5 th	The Hague
EDUPROF Project Meeting		February 6 th	The Hague
DG Research University/Business Forum		February 5 th -6 th	Brussels
AERTOs Project	Board Meeting & W/shop	February 9 th -10 th	Oslo
	Board & Council Meetings	March 4 th -5 th	Delft
	Board Meeting	July 30 th -31 st	Brussels
	Board Meeting	October 16 th	Brussels
	Board Meeting	December 10 th	Brussels
DESCA Model Consortium Agreement	Core Group	January 26 th	Brussels
	Core Group	March 23 rd	Brussels
	Core Group	June 16 th	Brussels
	Consultation Group	June 17 th	Brussels
ERAB meetings		February 18 th October 6 th	Brussels Brussels
EU Presidency Conference "FP Impact Assessment (EUFORDIA)"		February 24 th – 25 th	Prague
ERA 2009 Conference		April 16 th – 18 th	Prague
DG Research Workshop "Assessment of University Research Performance"		April 20 th	Brussels
EU Presidency Conference "Researchers without Frontiers"		April 28 th -29 th	Prague
Helmholtz Society Financial Managers Workshop		May 7 th	Brussels
Swedish EU Presidency Preparatory Workshop on Industrial Research		May 12 th	Brussels
DG Research Stakeholder Review Meetings "Study on Research Performing Organisations"		May 27 th June 22 nd September 11 th	Brussels
DG INFSO Workshop on Public Procurement		June 16 th	Brussels
TEKES/VINNOVA Seminar on Future Policies for an Innovative Europe		June 17 th	Brussels
Swedish EU Presidency Preparatory		June 24 th	Brussels

Workshop on ERA instruments		
EU Presidency Workshop on Research and Innovation Policies	July 14 th	Brussels
JIIP Workshop on Market for Applied Research	July 15 th	Brussels
K4I Meetings to Prepare European Innovation Summit	July 22 nd September 9 th	Brussels Brussels
IP Management Workshop	September 7 th – 8 th	Berlin
DG Research Workshop “Joint Research Initiatives”	September 8 th	Brussels
DG Research Workshop “Rationale and Future of the SME-Specific Measures”	September 11 th	Brussels
European Innovation Summit	October 13 th – 14 th	Brussels
DG Enterprise Conference “Innovation and Public Procurement”	October 20 th -21 st	Brussels
European Commission ERA Conference: “Working Together to Strengthen Research in Europe”	October 21 th - 23 th	Brussels
Fuel Cells and Hydrogen JU – Stakeholders General Assembly	October 26 th	Brussels
AIRTO Special Interest Group on EU R&D	November 5 th	London
Science/Business Conference “Future of EU R&D and Innovation”	November 6 th	Brussels
European Parliament ITRE Hearing on the Implementation of FP7	November 10 th	Brussels
WIPO Symposium on Alternative Dispute Resolution	November 13 th	Leuven
DG ECFIN Conference “Systematic Approach to Innovation”	November 20 th	Brussels
CEN/STAIR Meeting “Standardisation and Innovation”	December 7 th	Brussels
K4I General Assembly	December 8 th	Brussels
AERTOs Spin-Off Workshop	December 9 th – 11 th	Brussels

EARTO IN 2010: FIRST PRIORITIES AND ACTIVITIES

The following events and priorities are currently foreseen for the first months of 2010. Other events and activities will be undertaken according to need and demand. **The Secretariat welcomes proposals** from members for new activities, including subjects for Working Groups to exchange experience and good practice.

EVENTS

EARTO Steering Committee Meeting	January 11 th
AERTOs Board Meeting & Foresight Workshop	January 19 th -20 th
DESCA Core Group Meeting	January 21 st
FEDIT Conference on the 7th Framework Programme	January 28 th
EUROTECH Special Interest Group	April 8 th – 12 th
EARTO Annual Conference 2010	May 19 th -21 st

PRIORITIES

2010 will be an exceptional and important year for EARTO and RTOs. We begin the year with the appointment of a **new Commissioner**, who will be **responsible not just for research but also for innovation**. This extension of the Commissioner's mandate may affect the structure of the Commission services (e.g. innovation-related parts of DG ENTR being merged with DG RTD).

Above all, 2010 will be the year of **mid-term reviews** of all of the major EU programmes relating to research and innovation: the **RTD Framework Programme**, the **Competitiveness and Innovation Programme** as well as the **Structural Funds**. These mid-term reviews tend to be important in recommending structural changes which influence the design of successor programmes.

In addition, several expert groups have reported in the past few months and have made fundamental recommendations for future EU research and innovation policy. There is an emerging consensus that future programmes should focus more on societal "grand challenges".

During the coming months, several major EU policy announcements are programmed, including proposals for a European Innovation Plan, proposals for a "post-Lisbon agenda" ("EU 2020"), and a review of Joint Technology Initiatives (legal structure, funding modalities, etc.). We shall also experience the implementation of the first Joint Programming initiatives and operational launch of the first EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities.

The large number of reports, recommendations, proposals, expert groups, reviews etc. which are in process, or which are programmed for the coming months, will create much confusion. It will therefore be essential to remain focussed on the essential.



EARTO's initial focus and concern will be three-fold:

- to ensure that a growing trend towards large-scale initiatives, which in itself is welcome, does not lead to a future Framework Programme, and other programmes, that neglect **smaller-scale R&D initiatives** such as are currently supported under the Cooperation Programme, SME programmes etc.;
- to resist **simplification** initiatives by the Commission that, while they may bring simplification for the Commission, bring **complication** for FP participants, and
- to see an end to the current campaign of **ex-post FP6 audits**, which are doing far more damage to EU research and development than they may be benefiting the Community budget.

Above all in 2010 we shall focus still more strongly on **building the "RTO brand"**, which ultimately is the best way to secure the collective future of RTOs throughout Europe.