

Networking Excellence

Why

To build a genuine European Research Area and to take advantage of all existing scientific excellence in the Union, measures are needed to ensure that Horizon 2020 is open to all potential participants , in particular in “new Member States”.

Objectives and approach

As a contribution to restructuring the science and technology sector of less developed parts of the Union, as well as to reinforcing the overall Union research and innovation capacity, the objective will be to support excellent research centers in these parts of Europe in order to better put their capabilities at the service of the economic and social needs of their country, in conformity with the interest of the Union as a whole.

This will be done in the first place by enabling them to establish or improve their links with other excellent European research centers elsewhere in the Union, through networking and twinning arrangements, and to upgrade their research and innovation capabilities to those of their partners.

This will lead to an improvement of the efficacy of scientific and technological research in all Member States and to contribute thereby to the reduction of scientific and technical disparities between the different Member States, while breaking the relative isolation of a number of excellent scientists and engineers.

Expected impact

-increased networking of European research centers and therefore, by means of cooperation, the better use of high- level researchers in the Union;

-increased mobility of researchers and engineers in the Union;

-development of intra-European scientific and technical cooperation on high quality projects;

-increased scope (regional coverage, subjects, activities) of the selected Centers;

-contribution to capacity building through attracting new young or established researchers and supporting of scientific and technical equipment:

-enhanced participation of the Centers in other areas of Horizon 2020.

Support measures

Community support will be allocated to networks regrouping at least 3 research and/or technological excellent centers bringing together theoretical and applied research in the natural, social and economic sciences.

One of the centers must be established in one less scientifically developed country of the Union or in an outermost region.

A less scientifically developed country is being defined by its level of participation in the former 7th framework programme ; a Member State with less than 20 retained projects for 100000 inhabitants in FP7 would be eligible for this programme.

Support will be provided for a package of measures comprising different types of activity:

-networking support : coordination, joint programming, joint experiments, exchange of results, workshops, conferences, visiting fellows (teachers and/or researchers) training for PhD students and/or post-doctoral researchers, study visits of the researchers to other institutions;

-capacity building support for the center in the less developed country to add to its equipment and to strengthen its team by taking on other scientists or technicians , preferably from a different country.

Selection

Projects to benefit from the Community support will be chosen on the basis of their quality, the extent to which they have innovative aspects and their value in terms of breaking down barriers between different scientific communities in all parts of the Union. Particular attention will be given to projects likely to reduce scientific and technological disparities between Member States and

thereby to contribute to economic and social progress within the Union.

Budget deemed necessary

Euro 1500 million

(100 networks /year - each one 2,1 million, on average, for a three year period)