

The European - South African Science and Technology Advancement Programme (ESASTAP) congratulates the Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA) on the organisation of its Annual Conference for 2006. The theme of "Building Industry - Higher Education - Government Partnerships as the Engine for Research and Innovation for Regional Development" is fully aligned with the ESASTAP mandate. There are indeed many and rich opportunities for ESASTAP to assist SARIMA members in fostering such relations with European partners.

Coming soon in FP7 "2007-2013"

9 Thematic Priorities

1. Health
2. Food, agriculture and biotechnology
3. Information and communication technologies
4. Nanosciences, nanotechnologies, materials and new production technologies
5. Energy
6. Environment (including climate change)
7. Transport (including aeronautics)
8. Socio-economic sciences and the humanities
9. Security and space

ESASTAP is a dedicated platform to promote improved scientific and technological cooperation between South Africa and the European Union (EU). It is implemented as a Specific Support Action under the EU's Sixth Framework Programme by the Department of Science and Technology (DST). Full details of the ESASTAP services, which SARIMA members are strongly encouraged to use, are available at www.esastap.org.za.

ESASTAP looks forward to assist SARIMA members in fostering deepened research and innovation partnerships between their organisations and European counterparts. To this effect ESASTAP offers to SARIMA members:

- A preferred information portal on collaborative R&D opportunities for South African researchers to cooperate with partners in Europe, including:
 - The EU's Seventh Framework Programme
 - Other European research programmes such as COST, EDCTP and EUREKA
 - Bilateral cooperation agreements between South Africa and European countries.
- Focused advisory and support services, providing strategic and technical advice with regard to:
 - International R&D project proposal preparation, e.g. for FP7
 - International R&D contract negotiation including intellectual property management
 - International R&D project implementation, e.g. with regard to reporting compliance.
- Targeted interventions to match South African and European R&D partners through for example:
 - A specific "mobility portal" regarding fellowship opportunities to and from Europe
 - Electronic partner search databases
 - Support to market South Africa's science and technology strengths in Europe, through creating showcase opportunities for South African R&D organisations in Europe.

ESASTAP calls on all SARIMA members to engage with its services in order to achieve national and regional R&D objectives through improved mutually beneficial partnerships with Europe.

South Africa was one of the first countries outside the European Union to appoint **National Contact Points (NCPs)** to support its researchers' participation in the Framework Programmes. The South African NCP Network consists of a number of contact points - experts appointed because of their knowledge and experience of participation in European research programmes, as well as their understanding of South Africa's research strengths in the thematic areas they are responsible for.

In support of South Africa's involvement in the Framework Programmes, DST created several instruments to assist in increasing the opportunity for success of participation. One of the most important DST instruments, deployed as part of ESASTAP, is the **Framework Programme Seed Funding Instrument** that funds preparatory activities, such as overseas visits, undertaken by South African researchers to explore and prepare for Framework Programme participation. Details on how to apply for support from this and other instruments are available on www.esastap.org.za.

ESASTAP is an inclusive and participatory platform – comments and advice of SARIMA members are therefore greatly appreciated in order to enable the ESASTAP Team to render improved services to the South African R&D community.

ESASTAP's mission is to guide, support, facilitate and enable in response to the needs of the R&D community. It views SARIMA as a preferred and privileged partner and warmly invites all SARIMA members to become a member of the ESASTAP Community - Register at:

<http://www.esastap.org.za/General/register.html>

Please do not hesitate to contact the ESASTAP team should you require any further information:

contact@esastap.org.za

Fostering South African - European Union R&D Partnerships



European Commission

