

FP6

Is it for You?

dti

FP6UK

An Introduction to the EU's
Framework Programme Six

OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



The DTI drives our ambition of 'prosperity for all' by working to create the best environment for business success in the UK. We help people and companies become more productive by promoting enterprise, innovation and creativity.

We champion UK business at home and abroad. We invest heavily in world-class science and technology. We protect the rights of working people and consumers. And we stand up for fair and open markets in the UK, Europe and the world.

What is the Sixth Framework Programme?

As the name suggests, this is the sixth of a series of Framework Programmes through which the European Union (EU) offers grants to businesses or organisations (both public and private), of all sizes, for collaborative research and development. These programmes are the EU's main funding mechanism for supporting and encouraging collaborative research and development in the European Community.

The Sixth Framework Programme (FP6) is a four year programme that will end in 2006. FP6 has a total budget of **€19 billion** and aims to strengthen science and technology within industry, and encourage international competitiveness by promoting research activities.

The bulk of the funding aims to support activity in seven key scientific or **thematic areas**. In addition, across the whole programme, a range of activities are supported that are independent of an actual scientific theme (such as researcher mobility and infrastructure development). These are called **cross-cutting areas**.

Further details about each of these areas can be found on the **FP6UK** website <http://fp6uk.ost.gov.uk> or by ringing the FP6 Helpline **0870 600 6080**.

Who is eligible for funding?

Applications are welcome from any organisation that carries out research and development. This includes businesses (from large industrials to small and medium sized enterprises), higher education and research institutions and policy makers, as well as consumer facing organisations and individuals in EU Member States.

Collaboration with others is an essential part of the application. In general, proposals would involve consortia of *at least three* independent applicants from different countries.

What is eligible for funding?

The EU is keen to support and promote international collaboration on innovative research and development projects. Funding is delivered in a number of different ways, and applicants need to select the funding method that suits their consortia's project aims. Details of these can be found on the **FP6UK** website <http://fp6uk.ost.gov.uk>.

The three main funding mechanisms are:

- **Integrated Projects** - which will encourage ambitious initiatives to be undertaken by large, highly autonomous consortia;
 - **Specific Targeted Research Projects** - which will address the more limited aims of traditional shared-cost research projects; and
 - **Networks of Excellence** - which will encourage long-term collaboration and restructuring of research activities primarily between universities and research centres.
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FP6 - is it for me?

Participating in FP6 has many potential benefits: there are large sums of money available; there are opportunities to be part of a pan-European consortia sharing knowledge, skills and expertise. It will open up new contacts, networks and markets within Europe and beyond, and it could enable you to become involved in ambitious, leading-edge projects.

However, application is not for the faint-hearted. There are fundamental questions that you need to ask yourself before proceeding. Take a look at the table below and place a tick alongside those questions to which the answer is yes.

Tick ✓

Your project	
Is the project European focused, aimed at making an impact and providing a major step forward?	
Is your research project actually important to the work and priorities of your organisation?	
Are you undertaking research to develop a usable end product or to deliver knowledge and best practice?	
Will your project benefit from the involvement of a number of development partners?	
Working in Europe	
Do you see benefits in collaborating with other European organisations (access to larger markets, shared risk, new contacts, facilities and expertise)?	
Could you work in a consortium with a high level of responsibility, including collective liability?	
Are you prepared to negotiate around the project outputs, including ownership of intellectual property?	

Commitment	
Are you prepared to commit considerable management time and resource to meeting consortium partners across Europe and preparing an application?	
Are you prepared to resource and manage the administrative responsibilities that the grant will place on you?	
Are you prepared to enter a competition where the rules can be complex, the procedures drawn out and the success rate may be less than one in five or even one in ten?	
Can you commit to a 2 to 5 year project?	
In addition to the time and effort required, the grant will in most cases only fund up to 50% of your portion of the cost of the project. Are you prepared to invest in the project yourself, or seek alternative funding (called match funding) to ensure you can afford to undertake the work?	

The more of these boxes that you have ticked, the more **FP6 may be for you.**

How do I apply?

The European Commission will invite bids through ***calls for proposals*** in each area - typically there will be one or two each year. Usually you will have at least three months' notice of the deadline for submission of a proposal.

It is essential that any project proposals meet the objectives and timescales of the relevant ***work programme*** (details can be found via the **FP6UK** website at <http://fp6uk.ost.gov.uk>).

To be successful you need to devote considerable time and care to selecting your consortium, establishing what you intend to do, estimating your costs and defining the management structure of your consortium - *so make sure that you allow plenty of time for preparation and review.*

FP6UK can put you in touch with the ***UK National Contact Points*** (NCPs) for specific areas of FP6. They can offer advice and support. NCPs are nominated individuals, funded by government, within organisations who have deep experience and knowledge of the practicalities of applying for Framework funding.

Once submitted, your proposal will be evaluated by the Commission using independent experts. Competition will be fierce, but the rewards are many. If you are successful, you will be invited to enter into negotiations before you are awarded a contract.

From the time you start working on your application, to the time you sign a contract, could take up to a year. It could be much faster but be prepared for the process to be lengthy. Successful applicants will generally receive Commission support of up to 50% of the total budget for their project, which will be paid out over the lifetime of the project.

How can FP6UK help?

FP6UK can send you further information, signpost you to a large number of web-based information sources, advise you of events and provide support over the telephone. We can also put you in touch with the UK National Contact Points who offer dedicated expert advice and support in specific areas of FP6 and throughout the life of an FP6 project, from proposal writing to contract management.

Call us on the **FP6UK** helpline:

0870 600 6080

(calls will be charged at the National Rate)

or email us at:

help@fp6uk.co.uk

or visit the **FP6UK** website:

<http://fp6uk.ost.gov.uk>

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