

CSIR and its Activities in the European Union's (EU) Framework Programmes (FPs): Special Focus on FP6

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CONTEXT

The European Union's (EU) Framework Programmes (FPs) are Europe's major support instrument in the field of science, research and innovation and by FP6 (2002-6) represented about 4-5% of the total spending in this area by the EU member states.

South Africa's participation in the FPs dates from the signing of an agreement on scientific and technological (S&T) co-operation between the EU and South Africa in 1996.

MODALITIES

The details have varied as the FPs have grown from ECU11 879m in FP4 to a projected €64. 282m (excluding EURATOM) in FP7. However, many of the principles have remained:

- Proposals are submitted in response to calls;
- The FPs are structured around Themes (the bulk of the programme) and cross-cutting issues covering areas such as small and medium enterprises (SMEs), mobility and international co-operation (INCO);
- Projects are consortium driven;
- Delivery on the calls is through project structures called "instruments"; and
- Financial support is through a grant to the project costs i.e. requires co-investment.

Since FP6 South Africa has been able to be funded in the Themes.

FRAMEWORK PROGRAMMES 4 AND 5 (FP4 & FP5)

The EU/SA agreement from 1996 (see above) recognised South Africa as a developing country and this opened the way for participation in INCO with appropriate funding. INCO is focussed on relevant problems of the developing world and CSIR researchers were successful in seven food/biotechnology, two environmental and one information technology project.

SOUTH AFRICAN DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DST) AND THE EU

In 2002 the DST took a strategic decision to create a focus on greater co-operation with the FPs and put in place a number of support mechanisms:

- "Seed funding";
- Strategic co-investment;
- A network of National Contact Points (NCPs);
- The strengthening of EU/SA relationships through ESASTAP (see below); and
- Locating a Senior Science and Technology Representative in Brussels.

WHY BECOME A CONSORTIUM MEMBER IN FPS?

It enables you to:

- Develop your expertise base;
- Provide opportunities for human resource development;
- Enhance the S&T capacity of South Africa;
- Create S&T networks in the EU and beyond; and
- Leverage your investment.

FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME 6 (FP6)

The themes addressed in FP6 were:

Theme	1	2	3	4	5	6
Focus	Life sciences	Information society	Nanotechnologies	Aeronautics and space	Food quality and safety	Governance

In addition, there were three relevant cross-cutting issues: INCO, SMEs and Mobility.

CSIR PROJECTS IN FP6

To date the CSIR has been the most successful science and technology organisation in South Africa in FP6 and is involved in the following projects:

Project acronym	Title	Theme	Co-ordinator	Web site
Pharma-Planta**	Recombinant pharmaceuticals from plants for human health	1	Fraunhofer Institute, Germany	www.pharma-planta.org
FLOSSWorld	Free/Libre/Open Source Software: Worldwide impact study	2	University of Maastricht - UNU-MERIT, The Netherlands	http://www.flossworld.org/index.php
IST-Africa	Regional Impact of Information Society Technologies in Africa	2	International Information Management Corporation Limited, Ireland	http://www.ist-africa.org/2005/
EUDEVLAS	A framework for innovation comprising EU and Developing Country researchers in the field of laser manufacturing	3	Laser Zentrum, Hanover, Germany	Under development
Safe Foods**	Promoting food safety through a new integrated risk analysis approach for foods	5	RIKILT Institute of Food Safety, Wageningen University, The Netherlands	www.safefoods.nl
Repro**	Reducing food processing waste	5	Institute of Food Research (IFR), UK	www.repro-food.net
Food-N-Co	Co-operation network of NCPs with a special focus on Third World Countries	5	Senter-Novem, The Netherlands	Under development

Project acronym	Title	Theme	Co-ordinator	Web site
BESTUFS	Best urban freight solutions	6	NEA Transport Research and Training, The Netherlands	www.bestufs.net CSIR acts as a subcontractor
SIMBA	Strengthening road transport research co-operation between Europe and emerging international markets	6	ERTICO: (European Road Transport Telematics Implementation Co-ordination Organisation, Belgium	Under development
SPEAR**	Sustainable options for people, catchment and aquatic resources	INCO	IMAR - Institute of Marine Research, Portugal	www.biaoqi.org
ESASTAP**	European-South Africa Science and Technology Advancement Programme	INCO	SA DST CSIR-Biosciences and The Meraka Institute	www.esastap.org.za
SODISWATER	Solar Disinfection of Drinking Water for use in Developing Countries or in Emergency Situations	INCO	Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland	

** All the indicated projects receive co-funding from DST

FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME 7 (FP7)

FP7 will be fully operational by 1 January 2007 and will run until 2013. Nine high level themes have been proposed:

Theme	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Focus	Health	Food, agriculture, biotechnology	ICT	Nanosciences, materials, new processes	Energy	Environment, climate change	Transport, aeronautics	Humanities	Space, security

Key cross-cutting issues such as SMEs and mobility are also included. All the themes include a reference to international co-operation.

FP7 CURRENT STATUS

- Information is available on the Cordis web site (<http://www.cordis.lu/fp7/>), which includes some of the long term thinking as shown in the technology platforms (<http://www.cordis.lu/technology-platforms/home.html>). Information is also on the ESASTAP web site (http://www.esastap.org.za/EU_Framework/fp7.html); and
- Timing: The first detailed calls will be available towards the end of 2006.

THE CSIR'S RESPONSE TO FP7

The CSIR has considerable expertise across its units at a technical level and also areas of considerable understanding regarding budgeting, proposal development, consortium issues etc. In view of this and the tremendous potential to develop expertise, create networks with some of the best research groups in the world and offer human resource development opportunities, the CSIR will, for the first time, create a co-ordinated response to a Framework Programme, namely FP7, building on the currently existing experience. This response will be supported at the senior level of the organisation.

