

## Recommendations for the development of FP8 Archimedes Foundation, Estonia

Archimedes Foundation is an independent body established by the Estonian government in 1997 with the objective of coordinating and implementing EU programs and projects in the field of training, education, research, technological development and innovation. Archimedes Foundation, among other responsibilities, also organizes higher education accreditation and research evaluation in Estonia. In addition to that, Archimedes Foundation is the implementing body for the Estonian research information system ETIS.

Archimedes Foundation, as a part of R&D and innovation system support structure in Estonia and one of the institutions responsible for the implementation of research related *acquis*, was and is closely involved in the implementation of various new measures supporting the European Research Area.

Archimedes Foundation has been the Estonian national contact point organization for EU framework programmes since the Fifth Framework Programme.

### General principles

EU framework programmes have been a major instrument for building the European Research Area. The new FP needs to clearly define its role in the complex system of European RTD&I policies and instruments as well as with national and regional policies on the one hand, and with other EU funds and policies on the other hand.

#### **1. To achieve the set objectives of the ERA Vision 2020, the budget of FP8 should be significantly increased by means of:**

##### **a) Revision of the existing reserves within the RTD&I**

- i. For example, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) should be a part of FP8 in order to create a better synergy and to face the future priorities of European research and research-based innovation in the post-2010 Lisbon strategy;
- ii. Before the new programming period, there is a need for cooperation and open discussion among officials and stakeholders, to ensure that during the next period the principles of added value and interoperability between Structural Funds and the FP will come into effect.

##### **b) As knowledge-based society is the basis of the future well-being, EU should follow the model of behaviour of several Member States during the recent economic crisis where budget cuts were made in all other areas except education and research.**

- i. We recommend to significantly increase the budget of FP8, covering it in proportion from the other EU budget lines, such as CAP.

## **2. To pursue continuously the simplification of the FP financial regulations by:**

- i. Harmonisation of the rules, procedures and terminology between different DG-s;
- ii. The interests of end-users should guide/underlie the simplification steps;
- iii. Reducing significantly the administrative bureaucracy (e.g. budget limits to projects which will be the subject of ex-post audit);
- iv. Continuing the efforts to shorten the time to contract.

## **Structure and contents of FP8**

### **1. Balance between top-down and bottom-up research in FP8**

To address the grand challenges of our time which call for action at the European level, it is essential to mobilise industry and knowledge-building institutions of different scales, as well as civil society at large, through both top-down and bottom-up approaches, as emphasized in the conclusions of the Competitiveness Council from 3 December 2009. The prime criterion for research funding in FP8 should be excellence.

#### **a) Bottom-up activities will ensure the flexibility of FP8:**

- i. European Research Council (ERC) activities support top talents and performance of excellent basic research;
- ii. Marie Curie actions support the realisation of ERA through researchers' mobility. We strongly support the continuation of efforts to professionalise the careers of early stage researchers, as well as retaining the focus on research-based training and increasing access to Marie Curie initiatives for junior post-doc researchers;
- iii. Research Potential programme supports knowledge transfer, and strengthening excellence across ERA;
- iv. To be sure that new research directions and ideas will be noticed in time, we suggest to allocate 20% of budget from Grand Challenges budget to the bottom-up activities;
- v. To maintain the flexibility of initiating new emerging (multidisciplinary) research, COST Actions should be considered as a well-functioning and proven form.

#### **b) Top-down activities will support strategic choices and targeted investments**

- i. Meeting the Grand Challenges must take into account on the one hand the diversity of Europe, and on the other hand the relatively small size of different EU countries in the global scale. In case of Joint Technology Initiatives (JTI), Technology Platforms (TP), Research Infrastructures, public-public partnerships, small countries are not able to allocate very high public and private investments and resources needed for such an ambitious scale and scope. At the same time they have excellent research groups and high tech industry but in a small scale. Not to be excluded, special measures/instruments should be put in place/adopted which would enable them to participate. Here, the EC has an important role to ensure appropriate cooperation/alliances models for collaboration among EU Member States between universities, research centres and industry.

- ii. To ensure the continuing excellence in research and support from society, FP8 should be accompanied by measures addressing Europe's talent base and general public, for example: consistently upgrade the quality of science education in Europe; strengthen the links between all levels of education, research and innovation (the knowledge triangle) to introduce R&D as exciting and promising career opportunity; establish a targeted strategy through specific models for communicating research results.
- iii. In the pursuit for economic prosperity, we must not leave aside the role of social sciences and humanities as investigator of dangers and problems in society at large.
- iv. Taking into account the fragmentation of Europe's research base, it will be advisable to consider Joint Programming as a gradual process within the ERA, not as an instrument.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ülle Must', written in a cursive style.

Ülle Must  
National Coordinator