

FLAG-ERA

Press release, Brussels, 27 October 2014

Research funding organisations in Europe launch their funding instruments in support of the Flagship initiatives on Graphene and Human Brain

The research funding organisations gathered in FLAG-ERA kick-start their support instruments to the FET Flagships. The FLAG-ERA Consortium launches a dedicated joint call for proposals worth 18.5 M EUR in support of transnational research in synergy with the FET Flagships 'Graphene Flagship' and 'Human Brain Project' on 27 October 2014. In parallel, FLAG-ERA announces the launch of Association Mechanisms for integration of nationally and regionally funded research into the Flagships work plans. FLAG-ERA gathers 37 research and innovation funding agencies, research councils and ministries (NRFOS) from 26 countries within the EU and beyond, all working together to create an environment that enables the coordination of national and regional funding to support the Flagships. As such, FLAG-ERA coordinates the national investments in the Flagships; encourages their actual development and take up of their results and aims to widen their impact.

The FET Flagships are large-scale science-driven research initiatives designed to form a strong base for future technological innovation and exploitation in a variety of areas. The FET Flagship initiatives 'Graphene' and 'Human Brain Project' are the first ones to receive funding from the European Commission (EC). FLAG-ERA aims to contribute to the construction of these two ambitious projects and will also offer support to four FET Flagship pilot projects entitled RoboCom, ITFoM, FuturICT and Guardian Angels. FLAG-ERA stands for 'Flagship ERA-NET'. It is funded by the EC under the 7th Framework Programme for an initial three year period

The FLAG-ERA Joint Transnational Call (JTC) for proposals launched on 27 October 2014 is designed to expand the current Flagships to new researchers while also supporting researchers already in the Flagships. Investigators based at universities, research institutions, SMEs and larger enterprises are invited to team up with their peers abroad to submit proposals in the area of the Flagships. Call topics in the area of graphene research range from coatings to new layered materials and energy, while neuroinformatics, brain simulation and high performance computing are part of the research areas covered by the Human Brain Project.

An independent international evaluation panel composed of eminent scientists will assess the proposals with the help of external experts to make up a ranking. It is expected that the partners of successful projects will become associate members of the Flagships. The inclusion of associate members into the Flagships allows for a larger geographical coverage, opens access to additional expertise and can lead to the discovery of new research areas for the Flagships. As such, associate members will help the Flagships to achieve their science and technology targets by creating a greater synergy. On the other hand, associate members will benefit from their participation in the large-scale Flagship Initiatives in a variety of ways.

The total call budget of 18.5 M EUR provided by the FLAG-ERA call partners matches the funding provided by the European Commission (EC) so that the Flagships could organize an 'open competitive call' earlier this year. This call resulted in over 100 additional research groups joining the Flagships.

While the EC has committed itself to providing funding to the Flagships of about 500 M EUR spread over a period of 10 years, an important part of the support to the FET Flagship initiatives is expected to come from national and regional funding through the use of existing calls for research proposals overlapping with the domains of the two Flagships and from FLAG-ERA JTCs,



in combination with specific Flagship Association Mechanisms. The goal of these Mechanisms is to allow researchers funded from various sources to work together toward the objectives of the Flagship initiatives in a seamless fashion. They provide a way for researchers funded outside the Flagship Core Projects (at the national and regional as well as European and international levels) and inside these Core Projects to set up Partnering Project Agreements. Early results of a mapping exercise carried out by FLAG-ERA indicate that the total funding available through existing national and regional calls in the domain of the Flagships is estimated to be of about the same size as the funding from the EC.

To learn more about the exact topics of the call, the expected participating funding organisations, the eligibility and evaluation criteria, please consult the official announcement of the call at <http://www.flag-era.eu/FLAG-ERA-call-2015>.

To learn more about the Flagship Association Mechanisms, please refer to the page: <http://www.flagera.eu/flagship-association-mechanisms>

Contacts:

FLAG-ERA coordinator: edouard.geoffrois@agencerecherche.fr
FLAG-ERA communication: freia.vanhee@frs-fnrs.be

Web links:

FLAG-ERA official website: <http://www.flagera.eu>

Information on the FET Flagship programme:

<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/programme/fet/flagship>

Information on the Graphene Flagship: <http://www.graphene-flagship.eu> and Human Brain Project: <https://www.humanbrainproject.eu>

Information on the 4 FET Flagship pilots:

- FuturICT : <http://www.futurict.eu>,
- IT Future of Medicine: <http://www.itfom.eu>,
- Guardian Angels for a Smarter Life: <http://www.ga-project.eu>,
- Robot Companions for Citizens: <http://www.robotcompanions.eu>