

# **EUROCORES Workshop 2**



## **The new EUROCORES Scheme**

**Brussels 1<sup>st</sup> March 2005**

**By Svenje Mehlert**

**European Science Foundation**

# EUROCORES Scheme Analysis

## Success stories



- **12 Programmes are fully running (Call for proposals published)**
- **8 Programmes have finished the Review process**
  - ⇒ 4 fully operational
  - ⇒ 4 awaiting funding decisions
- **6-7 Programmes will publish their Call for proposals this year**

# EUROCORES Scheme Analysis

## Success stories



### Involvement of funding organisations

- 54 different funding organisations from 27 different European countries are involved in the 12 EUROCORES programmes

### Response from the Science community

- More than 1000 outline proposals were received in response to 12 Calls for proposals published

# EUROCORES Scheme Analysis

## Success stories



### Review process:

- More than 1000 referees have been involved in the EUROCORES Review processes so far
- Response rate of referees
  - ⇒ 36.5 – 58.1%
  - ⇒ Average ~46.6 %
- Referees from outside Europe
  - ⇒ 14 – 44 % (ECT exception)
  - ⇒ Their response rate: 24.4 – 50.6 %

# EUROCORES Scheme Analysis

## Success stories



### Networking

- **more than 20 networking activities have been funded in the last 18 months**
  - ⇒ 4 conferences
  - ⇒ 9 workshops
- **4 scientific meetings co-sponsored with other organisations**
  - ⇒ National funding organisations (CNR, CNRS)
  - ⇒ International organisations and US-American organisation (NSF, InterMARGINS)
- **8 Scientific Committee meetings**

# EUROCORES Scheme Analysis

## Lessons Learned



### Timing of EUROCORES Programmes

- Time from the idea of a EUROCORES programme to the funding of projects should not be much longer than 24 months
  - ⇒ With new EUROCORES procedures this should be achievable
  - ⇒ ~two years is also needed to alert the scientific community
- Funding decisions should be made within 3-4 months after ranking of proposals

# EUROCORES Scheme Analysis

## Lessons Learned



### Calls for proposals

- Define scope of Calls for proposals
  - ⇒ To attract 80 – 120 outline proposals
- Keep a success rate at outline stage of 20 - 30 %
- Keep a success rate at full proposal stage of more than 30%

# EUROCORES Scheme Analysis

## Lessons Learned



### Review process

- For a high quality review process it is essential to have at least 3 external referee per CRP proposal (at full proposal stage)
- Keep referee response rate at 40 – 50 %
  - ⇒ Improve ESF-Referee interactions
  - ⇒ Increase attractiveness to referee a EUROCORES programme
- Keep 30 – 35 % of referees from outside Europe



# EUROCORES Scheme Analysis

## Lessons Learned



### Funding

- **Secure reliable funding commitment**
  - ⇒ Target should be 10 Mio Euros per EUROCORES programme
- **Fund between 10 – 15 CRPs, involving 50 - 70 IPs**
- **Keep funding at a level so that not organisation has to fund more than 30% of a EUROCORES programme**
- **Introduce minimum level of funding to participate in a EUROCORES programme**

# New EUROCORES procedures

## Phase 1 – Theme selection Phase



- **Invitation of ideas for new EUROCORES themes (EUROCORES suggestions)**
  - ⇒ Call with deadline once a year (deadline 15<sup>th</sup> June)
  - ⇒ Detailed guidelines
- **Scientific assessment**
  - ⇒ Through ESF Standing Committee members
- **Strategic decision**
  - ⇒ EUROCORES Committee + ESF Executive Board (September 2005)
- **If both positive**
  - ⇒ Preliminary workshop

# New EUROCORES procedures



## Phase 1 – Theme selection Phase

- **Preliminary workshop**
  - ⇒ **Between 4<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> December in Brussels**
  - ⇒ **Potentially interested MO's and other funding agencies (MO-Plus)**
  - ⇒ **Target: Draft Call for proposals and Define Programme**
- **ESF CEO seeks formal Commitment**
  - ⇒ **Formal and financial reliable commitment of the interested funding Agencies**

# New EUROCORES Procedures

## Suggestions for improvements



- **More emphasis on the opening of the Call for suggestions**
  - ⇒ 6 weeks might be too short to initiate proper European collaboration
  - ⇒ Good EUROCORES suggestions are important
- **Shorten negotiation phase**
  - ⇒ Are the workshops necessary ?
  - ⇒ Decisions of funding agencies by 28<sup>th</sup> February ?

# New EUROCORES Procedures

## Remaining problems



- **Not all funding organisations seem to be able to make a decision within the given timeframe**
  - ⇒ **E.g. Swedish Research Council, CNR Italy**

# New EUROCORES Procedures

## Phase 2 - Project Selection Phase



- **Deadline for Outline proposals**
  - ⇒ End April
- **EFAs checking Outline proposals**
  - ⇒ May
- **Meeting to sift Outline proposals**
  - ⇒ By end May
- **Invitation of Full proposals**
  - ⇒ Beginning June
- **Deadline for Full proposals**
  - ⇒ Beginning September
- **Review Panel meeting to prioritise proposals after completion of International Peer Review**
  - ⇒ By Mid December
- **Start of Funding**
  - ⇒ April/May

# New EUROCORES procedures

## Phase 2 - Project Selection Phase



- **Outline proposals sifting**
  - ⇒ **Criteria: Eligibility, Relevance to Call, European added value, Novelty, Feasibility etc. , NOT: Scientific quality**
- **International Peer Review for Full proposals**
  - ⇒ **Criteria: Scientific Quality**
  - ⇒ **Replies of applicant to referee assessments**

# **EUROCORES Scheme**

## **Principles of financial commitment**



## **Need of reliable financial commitment is essential**

- **To assure scientific community that it is worth submitting a proposal**
- **To contribute in a meaningful way to a European Programme**
- **Potentially secure funding from the European Commission under Framework 7, ERA-Net PLUS**



# **EUROCORES Scheme**

## **Principles of financial commitment**



## **Normal level of funding for a EUROCORES Programme**

- **At least 10 Mio Euros over 3 – 4 years**

## **Minimum Commitment**

- **Equivalent of the funding for one Post-doc position for 3-4 years plus travel funds**
- **Will vary considerable in the different countries**
- **E.g. Table with minimum commitments for each country**

# EUROCORES Scheme

## Principles of financial commitment



## Normal level of commitment

Depending on:

- Number of “teams” in the country
- Normal success rate of similar national programmes in the country
- Funding level of similar national programme

## Condition

- Funding will always depend on the existence of sufficient quality
- Funding should be “new” money not a re-labelling of already existing funds