

FRT

The FRT is the preferred instrument of the Ministry of Research for promoting partnerships between public and private research. FRT primarily targets businesses, with a mission to develop products and services based on new technologies in partnership with public research laboratories. Along with the increase in FRT funding since 1997, there has been a re-orientation of its focus toward the networks for technology research and innovation (RRIT: Réseaux de Recherche et d'Innovation Technologique).

The 16 RRITs created since then have been built around a common theme of technological research. Their objective is to foster and develop partnerships between public research and private laboratories. The RRIT model normally requires that the Ministry of Research and another ministry involved in the specific network field, jointly contribute to financing 50% of an approved project, to which the private sector will contribute the other 50%.

As in 2001, the FRT will have FF1M (€152M) in 2002, which represents 2.5 times its funding of 5 years ago. It will firstly allow RRIT funding (FF675M; €103M) for projects partnering public laboratories and businesses. It will also provide for measures supporting the creation of innovative technological firms through incubation and the national competition for the creation of innovative technological firms. In 2001, half of FRT funds, €76M, were allocated to the life sciences and information and communication technologies. The same distribution is proposed for 2002.

In 1999, the ministries of Research and of Economy, Finance and Industry launched a call for "technological business incubation and seed-money" projects, to encourage the establishment of incubators for innovative science-based companies associated with scientific sites, whose work pays dividends by supporting young creators and by providing capital for innovative SMEs who want it. Consequently, 31 incubators have been created – one per region in France – and more than 10 seed-capital funds have been created. The funds dedicated to this incubation initiative are €24.6M.

ACTIONS TO SUPPORT INNOVATION AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH

Funds granted to ANVAR to support innovation will reach €142M

ANVAR will therefore extend its field of activity to include innovation in the services sector and will promote partnerships between public research and companies, particularly SMEs, for which it represents a preferred resource.

The aeronautics construction budget is experiencing strong growth

The budget devoted to aircraft construction has seen strong growth in 2002 (+10.1%) and will reach FF1,750M (€ 267M), thus highlighting the support that the French government intends to provide for the development of the large-capacity A380 aircraft by Airbus.

The space sector remains a priority Space remains one of the priorities for action by the Ministry of Research. The budget of CNES, France's national space agency, is stable at FF8,810M (€1,343M). This is the most important European effort, and allows CNES and the French aeronautics industry to play a premier international role. Specifically, in 2002, these funds will be devoted to the following activities:

- maintaining the competitiveness of the European component of the Ariane launch vehicle;
- earth observation and environmental monitoring;
- telecommunications and satellite navigation, with the Galileo program;
- scientific programs to increase our knowledge of the universe, particularly with the Mars program, which should culminate by the end of the decade in the launch, with NASA, of a sample-gathering mission to Mars;
- the International Space Station, whose construction is ongoing and whose