

- possible greater restriction on participants' access to pre-existing knowhow (background IP) brought to the consortium by one partner
- removal of IP access rights for partners involved in projects in the same specific program

FP6 will have as few as 10 model contracts, compared with over 30 in FP5. There is an awareness within the EC of the need for a model contract addressing the situation of 3rd countries partners who do not secure funding from FP6. Nonetheless, the desire to keep the number of model contracts to a minimum may preclude having such a specific option.

FP6 Official Launch (November 2002)

The EC will launch FP6 with a conference (email: rtd-conference2002@cec.eu.int and website (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/conferences/2002>) in Brussels on November 11-13, 2002. "European Research 2002: at the cross roads- The European Research Area and the Framework Program" is expected to attract 5,000 participants. It will provide a forum for presentation of FP6 objectives, priorities and rules for participation, and will create opportunities for scientific debate and exchange of best practices. The features of this event include: Plenary sessions on FP6 thematic priorities and cross-cutting issues such as human resources and mobility, patenting and intellectual property, sessions on how to participate in the FP6; symposia, workshops and poster sessions on topical subjects; project presentations on research projects carried out under past FPs; an exhibition of EU-sponsored research projects with 150 stands; press briefings, interviews and facilitated background discussions.

5. European Union: International S&T Activities

As the European Union is a supranational entity, all of its activities are de facto international. International activities in the broader sense (e.g. beyond the Union) are an important European objective, and are addressed in the FPs. Understandably, the EU has different R&D relationships with different types of nations: "Associated" and "Candidate" countries, and all the other so-called "Third Countries", both developed and developing.

The EU monitors third country participation and its benefit to the EU, as well as its conformity with the EU's external policy. Often, such participation is subject to the signing of international agreements that provide equitable access for European researchers to R&D programs in the third countries concerned, and ensure adequate arrangements for intellectual property rights. The EU has signed formal Government-to-Government S&T Agreements with many non-member countries, such as Argentina, Australia, Canada, United States, South Africa, India, Israel, China and Russia.

The ERA, and FP6 as its instrument, seek to establish a new political context in which to develop European strategies for international cooperation. The four areas of focus will be:

- Making the ERA attractive to the world's best scientists, and useful as a world class reference centre
- Accessing knowledge and technology produced outside Europe
- Developing S&T activities useful in the implementation of EU foreign policy and development aid
- Enlisting the S&T resources of the EU and other nations to address significant world problems (e.g. food safety, environmental safety, health and diseases connected with poverty)