

Insights into South Africa's Participation in FP7 for Research and Technological Development of the European Commission

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Strengthening Technology, Research and Innovation
Cooperation between Europe and South Africa

Introduction

- With a budget > € 50 billion over 7 years (2007-2013), FP7 one of the largest sources of funding for scientific research in the world (additional €2.7 billion for Euratom)
- Budget for the FP7 represented a 41% increase from FP6
- FP7 was designed to support research activities of importance to EU
- FP7 was initially established to address employment needs and competitiveness

Table 2: South Africa's FP7 applications per research priority area together with success rates (based on data up to 2012)

FP7 priority areas	Number of applicants	Success rate (applicants)	Requested EC contribution (€m)	Success rate (requested EC contribution)
Health	157	25.5%	49.71	25.1%
Environment (incl. climate change)	156	20.5%	29.51	14.1%
Marie Curie actions	150	40.0%	n/a	n/a
Food, agriculture & fisheries, and biotechnology	144	22.9%	24.38	17.7%
ICT	98	17.4%	19.53	8.4%
Socio-economic sciences and humanities	83	14.5%	16.06	11.6%

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Table 3: South Africa's FP7 applications per organisation type together with success rates (based on data for 2012)

Organisation type	Number of applicants	Success rate (applicants)	Success rate (requested EC contribution)
Higher education sector	530	25.1%	19.3%
Research organisations	226	26.5%	17.6%
Private for profit (excl. education)	112	32.1%	21.0%
Other	66	25.8%	15.6%
Public body (excl. research and education)	61	41.0%	36.2%

- More than 50% applications from Universities
- Universities received bulk of funds - € 14.82 m in 2013

Table 3: South Africa (based on data for 2013)


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Public institutions had the highest rate of success



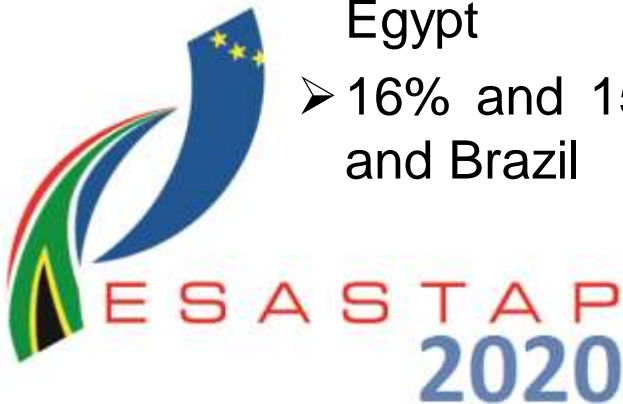
Breakdown of Projects by Programme

- 122 FP7 projects classified according to programme and sub-programme
 - 95 SP1 Co-operation projects – 22 in Environment & 19 in KBBE
 - 3 SP3 People projects
 - 24 SP4 Capacities projects
 - 3 SP5 Euratom projects
- 153 SA institutional participations
 - CSIR 30
 - DST 14
 - UCT 12
 - UKZN 10
 - SU 8



Benefit and Potential Impact of Participation in FP7

- Project administrators (DST) acquired skills that enhanced their knowledge on policy, administration and funding mechanisms
- SA integration in international networks
- Strengthening collaboration with other African countries and BRICS countries
 - 15% and 11% of SA FP7 projects collaborated with Kenya & Egypt
 - 16% and 15% of SA FP7 projects collaborated with China and Brazil



Single Most Important Challenges

Challenges experienced by SA researchers:

- Availability of students with competence/interest
- Administrative, project and financial management overheads
- Collaboration with and participation of SA stakeholders
- Cumbersome reporting system and paperwork
- Understanding and following the EU FP7 rules and practices



Challenges of SA Participation in EU Projects

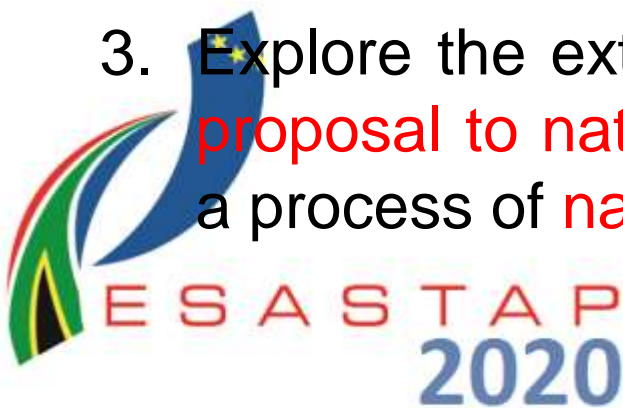
Challenges as reported by international coordinator of FP7 projects:

- At times, slow administration; SA PI left academia before completing project tasks; position not replaced quickly enough to be of value to project
- Cooperate as a small team within extensive European network
- Complications of EU financing system and loss of funding because of currency movements
- Access to synthetic genes – these had to be provided via the EU rather than directly to SA team



Recommendations

1. Strategic Partnership Division of the DST should receive **capacity enhancement** wrt grant management to improve efficiency and effectiveness
2. Attention should be devoted to **project management** challenges:
 - Support project website beyond project time frame
 - Further dissemination of the project outputs
 - Support SA participants in addressing EC financial & admin requirements
3. Explore the extent of assistance from NCPs in **aligning proposal to national priorities** & investigate feasibility of a process of **national endorsement** of projects



Improve **data management** of projects for the purpose of impact-oriented monitoring (IOM)

- Develop a database of SA projects in Horizon2020 that is updated on regular basis until 3 years after completion
- The DST should compile a clear and unambiguous list of the national priorities for STI that that is easily accessible to assist in alignment and can be incorporated into the IOM approach
- The DST should adapt the IOM approach, or elements thereof, for Horizon2020 to monitor impacts

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