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## 7th Research Framework Program

The EU revenue of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft has risen from 32 million to roughly 47 million euros over the past three years. The EU will invest even more in research activities in the course of its 7th Research Framework Program. A large amount will go to applied research.

“The 6th Research Framework Program was an unmitigated success for the institutes of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft,” says Cathérine Gröger at the Fraunhofer Brussels office. “The 7th Research Framework Program will have an even higher budget for applied research topics.” The European Commission in Brussels has been granted a total of 54.5 billion euros, which are to be invested in research and development over the next seven years. This constitutes an increase of 40 percent. The 7th Research Framework Program, FP7, is divided into four major categories: ‘ideas’, or cutting-edge research, ‘people’ – measures to promote training and mobility, ‘capacities’ – which includes fostering research in small and medium-sized companies, and ‘cooperation’, the general heading for collaborative research. 32 billion euros – roughly two thirds of the total budget – have been made available for the cooperation program. “This distribution of funds shows how important applied research is to the Commission,” says Gröger.

The program’s ‘cooperation’ category offers a wealth of new project opportunities for the Fraunhofer-Institutes. The topics covered in the 7th Research Framework Program range from life sciences to information and communications technology, nanotechnology, energy and the environment, and security research. All of these are areas in which Fraunhofer researchers possess both expertise and long experience.

Many of these research areas were already funded in the previous Research Framework Program. “Continuity is an important element. This is good news for the researchers who were actively involved in the 6th Research Framework Program, as they can now build on their experience and contacts. Continuity will play a particular role in the various promotion instruments: As before, there will be networks of excellence as well as research projects, and latter ones will be drawn together in collaborative projects.” Gröger also regards the extension of the program duration as a positive development. The FP7 covers a period of seven years instead of the

previous four. There will also be more money available this time, with non-profit research organizations such as Fraunhofer being granted 75 per cent of project costs in future, rather than the former 50 percent.

But, as the saying goes, no sweet without sweat! There is work to be done. Ideas have to be formulated and proposals must be written. However, the effort will be worthwhile, for – to quote another adage – nothing ventured, nothing gained!

## Countries

Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Spain, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia, Slovakia, United Kingdom

## Contributor

### Contributed by

Fraunhofer

Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft Presse Hansastrasse 27c

80686 Muenchen

Germany 

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