

"The Research Promotion Foundation's Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development 2003-2005" (RPF's FP 2003-2005)

INTRODUCTION

The launching of the Research Promotion Foundation's Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development 2003-2005 (RPF's FP 2003-2005) constitutes a medium-term strategic mechanism aiming at creating favourable conditions for the balanced development of research infrastructure and knowledge, thus making Cyprus more competitive in the international research area and the development of new technologies.

The integration of Cyprus in the European Union creates new requirements for the Cyprus' economy, and presupposes the improvement of the competitiveness of Cypriot enterprises, as well as the creation of new products and services that would utilise research results.

The total budget of RPF's FP 2003-2005 is expected to reach 20 million CYP. The Government will contribute 11.65 million CYP to the above budget whereas, it is estimated that during the Programme, 250 research projects and 150 supporting activities will be financed.

This document provides an overview of the 3 Activity Areas, the 11 Research Programmes and the 34 Specific Actions of RPF's FP 2003-2005.

OBJECTIVES

RPF's FP 2003-2005 constitutes a medium-term mechanism that covers all the research activities to be supported and financed by RPF, during the three-year period 2003 - 2005.

The main objective of FP 2003-2005 is to achieve RPF's targets for this time period, as these have been set by the Foundation's Board of Directors.

More specifically, these targets are:

- The improvement of the population's quality of life
- The enhancement of the competitiveness of the Cyprus economy
- The increase of the potential for conducting high level research
- The promotion of Cypriot participation in international research.

THE STRUCTURE OF RPF's FP 2003-2005

RPF's FP 2003-2005 consists of three (3) "Activity Areas". Each "Area" represents the materialization mechanism of one of RPF's strategic objectives, as this is recorded in the Foundation's Constitution.

The three Activity Areas are:

- A: "Multi-thematic Research Development", which aims at the implementation of multi-thematic research projects.
- B: "Applied Research Development", which aims at the development of new products and services for the benefit Cypriot enterprises in all economic sectors.
- C: "Infrastructure Development and Research Support", which aims at helping the upgrading of the research infrastructure, the promotion of research collaborations and the exploitation of human research potential of Cyprus.

Each Activity Area consists of a number of "Research Programmes". In total, RPF's FP 2003-2005 includes eleven (11) Research Programmes.

Each Programme has specialised objectives that are achieved through Specific Actions. There is a total of thirty-four (34) specific Actions in RPF's FP 2003-2005. The terms "Activity Area", "Research Programme" and "Specific Action" will be referred to as "Area", "Programme" and "Action", respectively.

The structure of RPF's FP 2003-2005 is presented in the following table:

ACTIVITY AREA	RESEARCH PROGRAMME	SPECIFIC ACTION
<u>A</u>	1. Thematic Actions	Technology
		Information Society
		Sustainable Development
		Society
		Economy
		Health
		Specific Project
	2. Programme for the Support of	Integration

Multi-thematic Research Development	Young Researchers	Support
		Mobility
	3. Bilateral Agreements	Cyprus – Greece
		Cyprus – France
		Cyprus – Slovenia
		Cyprus – Austria
<u>B</u> Applied Research Development	4. Research for Enterprises	Development of New Products and Processes
		Information Technologies and Telecommunication Applications in the Development of New Products and Processes
		Information Technologies and Telecommunication Applications in the Service Sector
	5. EUREKA Cyprus	New Projects
		Ongoing Projects
		Support Projects
	6. Follow-up Scheme	RPF Projects
		General Projects
<u>C</u> Infrastructure Development and Research Support	7. Research Infrastructure	Infrastructure Networks
		Upgrading of Existing Infrastructure
		New Infrastructure
	8. Participation in the ESF	European Science Foundation Collaborative Research Programmes (EUROCORES)
		'À la carte' Scientific Programmes
	9. Expatriate Researchers	Hosting an Experienced Expatriate Researcher
		Hosting a Young Expatriate Researcher
	10. Research Development and Support Measures	Participation in FP6
		Conference Participation
		RPF Research Publications
	11. Research Activities Development in the Cypriot Educational System	Pupils in Research
		Research Competition for Undergraduate Students

Table 1. Structure of the RPF's FP 2003-2005

ACTIVITY AREA A

MULTI-THEMATIC RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

The first Activity Area A concerns the implementation of multi-thematic research projects with high scientific value and innovative character aiming at the promotion of a developmental process in the socio-economic area of Cyprus.

The specific Activity Area allows the implementation of research projects in a wide range of thematic areas with emphasis on the interdisciplinary character of the research work.

Activity Area A is addressed to all research and academic institutions, enterprises and organisations of public welfare, and encourages the development of collaborative research networks with overseas institutions and the support of young researchers.

Activity Area A consists of three Programmes:

- Thematic Actions Programme
- Programme for Young Researchers
- Bilateral Agreements

1. THEMATIC ACTIONS

The Programme supports the research activities of local research institutes, and promotes scientific collaboration between local and foreign research institutes as well as between academia and industry. It also encourages the active participation of Cypriot enterprises and the efficient exploitation of research results. The Programme entails the creation of a coherent network of research organisations and enterprises, whereas participation to the network is limited to seven partners. One partner will act as the Host Organisation (either a research institution or a public welfare organisation) and up to three partners can act as an End User (either an enterprise or a public welfare organisation). The Host Organisation and the End User must be based in Cyprus. The other three Cooperating Partners can be based overseas and can be a research organisation, an enterprise or organisation.

The Programme consists of six Actions, each of which focuses on specific scientific areas. Each Action supports specific research projects, their subject relating to up-to-date issues as

these arise. The Actions, through their thematic priorities, encourage the realization innovative of research projects and the establishment of expertise in novel research areas. The programme has the following structure:

1.1 Technology

This Action promotes research in the areas of Competitiveness, Materials, Energy and Sciences. The scope of the specific Action relates to the development of technological advancements that will enhance research activities in traditional sectors and also establish new technological areas. For example, research topics on Materials could refer to the development of new, intelligent materials, whereas the enhancement of the properties of traditional and local materials could also be investigated. Where Energy is concerned, special interest is given to projects concerning at renewable energy sources. The Action aims at the improvement of industry competitiveness as a factor in the development of new technologies in the sector of production and manufacturing.

1.2 Information Society

The thematic priorities of this Action are Telecommunications, Software Development and Applications of Information Technologies. The objective is to promote research activities that seek to develop next generation technologies of a knowledge-based society. Great emphasis is placed upon the application of new technologies in telecommunications, e.g. optical technologies, wireless communication systems and on the implementation of interdisciplinary scientific projects that apply information technologies and telecommunications to areas such as education, health service, commerce, etc.

1.3 Sustainable Development

The Action promotes the sustainable development of Agriculture, Fishery and Forestry, the Natural Environment and the Urban Environment. The dissemination of research results is expected to increase awareness within the general public, the industry and the public sector regarding the environment protection, as well as the conservation and rational use of natural resources. Great importance is also given to the modernization of traditional agricultural methods and the development of new ones.

1.4 Society

Education, Culture and Societal Issues are the main targeted areas of research within this thematic Action. Research in these areas is expected to deal with problems associated with the education system and the society. Project proposals regarding the protection of the national cultural heritage are also expected.

1.5 Economy

Research under this action focuses on Economy and Regional Development, having as an objective the sustainable urban and tourist development, as well as the development the mountain regions in Cyprus. Trade policies and their effect on the Economy, as well as socioeconomic issues and technology oriented SME's are of great interest.

1.6 Health

The scope of the action is the improvement of the quality of life through research projects carried out in the thematic areas of Public Health, Biosciences and Food Science. In the Public Health sector the objective is the prevention and management of diseases, whereas in the Food Science the objective is the development of healthier and varied food and the control of food related risks. Project proposals are also expected in the area of medical genomics with regard to the treatment of diseases.

1.7 Specific Project

This action aims at tackling specific and imminent problems as these arise. The End User of the project results is expected to come from the public service sector.

2. PROGRAMME FOR THE SUPPORT OF YOUNG RESEARCHERS - PENEK

This Programme aims to support the participation of Young Researchers in Research Programmes. It consists of the following three Specific Actions, each one having a different strategic target:

2.1 Integration

This Action is addressed to experienced scientists of recognised research centres that are interested in employing young researchers for a period of 9 to 12 months. Successful applicants

will participate in either ongoing research projects or new research projects that are specifically designed for the purposes of this Action.

Young researchers must be under the age of thirty-five and belong to one of the following categories: university graduates, master's degree holders or postgraduate students. The young researcher will be working in the premises of the Research Institution and will be supervised by an experienced researcher, who could be the scientific coordinator of the project.

The grant will cover the salary of the young researcher (monthly rate is based on qualifications and status), as well as any travel costs. A detailed list of eligible costs can be found in the specific call for proposals for this Action.

2.2 Support

This Action aims at providing Research Centres with an incentive to recruit young researchers and to encourage their involvement in specific high-level research projects.

The proposed research projects should be of a high level, have a duration of 18 to 24 months and should be implemented in the premises of the Research Centre, under the supervision of an experienced researcher. The subject of the proposed research projects may be the same as research conducted by the proposed young researchers.

Potential candidates for young researcher positions under this scheme should be young Cypriot scientists, under the age of 35, who are either PhD holders or candidates. Foreign young researchers registered as PhD students in a Cyprus Academic Organisation are also eligible. The proposed research network requires the participation of an End User organisation, which will be able to exploit the research results.

2.3 Mobility

The prime target of this Action is to motivate young PhD holders, under the age of 35, to participate in research projects that would result in the benefit of Cypriot enterprises. Another primary objective is the promotion of cooperation between enterprises and research institutes. Therefore, a project proposal in this Action requires the establishment of a research network that would consist of a research centre and an enterprise, from any sector of the Cyprus economy.

Proposed research projects should be of a high level, they should have a duration of 18 to 24 months and should be carried out in the premises of the proposed enterprise under the supervision of the project's scientific coordinator. Part of the research project may be carried out in the premises of the research centre.

The subject of the proposed research projects may be the same as research previously conducted by the proposed young researchers but it also has to be associated with the core business activities of the participating enterprise. The expected research results will be exploited by the participating enterprise.

3. BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Bilateral Agreements or Protocols for Research and Technological Development are signed by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and the Government of a second country. The implementation of the actions foreseen in each Protocol of Cooperation is assigned to the Research Promotion Foundation.

The main aim of the Programme “Bilateral Cooperation” is the promotion of cooperation and networking between Cypriot research organisations and enterprises and respective organisations from the other cooperating country, on selected thematic priorities that reflect the mutual interests of the two countries.

The Programme “Bilateral Cooperation” consists of a number of Actions, one Action for each Bilateral Agreement signed by the Government during the period 2003 – 2005. So far, such an Agreement has been signed by the Planning Bureau and the General Secretariat for Research and Technology of the Ministry of Development of Greece, whereas preliminary discussions are under way for the conclusion of Agreements with a number of other countries, such as France, Austria, Slovenia and Germany.

Based on the provisions of each Protocol, a Joint Scientific and Technological Cooperation Programme will be launched by RPF and the respective organisation of the other country, inviting all interested researchers / organisations to submit joint proposals for the implementation of specific research projects.

Usually, each side covers the expenses for the implementation of the project and the networking activities of their own researchers. However, it is possible that for each Action different procedures for the approval / funding / monitoring of research projects apply, since the Calls for Proposals have to be mutually agreed by the two sides.

ACTIVITY AREA B

APPLIED RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

The second Activity Area B covers the general objective of RPF for "conducting mainly applied research, taking into consideration the developmental needs of the economy". The main objective of this Activity Area is the improvement of the competitiveness of Cypriot enterprises through their involvement in research activities, the development of new products and services, the development of new or improved methods of production and the resolution of production problems.

Area B applies to Cypriot enterprises of all sectors of economic activity and the academic/research institutions in Cyprus or abroad and aims at creating powerful and productive links between enterprises and the research/academic community.

The main difference between Activity Areas A and B is that the subject of work involved in the projects to be funded under Area B will not be identified with the scientific interests of participating scientists/researchers, but with the needs and particular problems of the enterprises involved, instead.

Activity Area B contains the following three Programmes:

- Research Programme for Cypriot Enterprises
- EUREKA Cyprus
- Follow-up Scheme

4. RESEARCH FOR ENTERPRISES

RPF has launched the specific research programme for the benefit of Cypriot enterprises. The main objective of this programme is to stimulate research interest in the Cyprus business world and to provide incentives for cooperation between enterprises and research centres.

More analytically, the primary objectives of this programme are the following:

- Involvement of Cypriot enterprises in research activities
- Enhancement of the cooperation between Cypriot enterprises and research centres

- Increase of the Cypriot enterprises competitiveness of through the development at new products and services.
- Development of new, innovative methods of production
- Effective exploitation of research results

The programme is open for participation to enterprises from all sectors of the economy. Proposals for research projects can be submitted by individual companies or by business associations, whereas an important criterion of the evaluation of project proposals will be the ability of the initiating company to effectively exploit the research results. Another important criterion is the project cost in association with the expected technological results.

Research projects that will be selected for funding will be carried out mainly in the premises of the beneficiary enterprise through part of the project may be implemented in the premises of the research centre. The project duration can be up to 24 months.

The programme has three actions. The first action is of interest to enterprises from all sectors of the economy. The second concerns enterprises from the Primary and Secondary Sectors, and the third is of interest to enterprises exclusively from the Tertiary Sector of the economy.

4.1 Development of new Products and Processes

Under this Action, project proposals can be submitted by Cypriot enterprises or business associations from all sectors of the economy.

This action covers research topics that relate to the development of a new product or service development as well as to the re-engineering of business processes. Proposals can fall into any scientific or technological area, apart from Information Technologies and Telecommunications, to which the other two specific actions of the programme refer.

4.2 Information Technologies and Telecommunication Applications in the Development of New Products and Processes

This Action is addressed to Cypriot enterprises in the Primary and the Secondary Sectors of the economy and aims at the support of research projects in the fields of Information Technologies and Telecommunication. Some of the most important topics for which funding will be available relate to the implementation of new methodologies and advanced technologies for

production and business processes, communication systems as well as new product development systems.

4.3 Information Technologies and Telecommunication Applications in the Service Sector

This Action is open to enterprises in the Tertiary Sector of the economy (i.e. - the Services Industry). Similarly to the previous action, the strategic target of this action is the implementation of information technologies applications for the development of new products and services in the field of e-business.

Project proposals can address issues like Supply Chain Management, Customer Relationship Management, New Business e-Models, Business Value Networks, Value Chain Services and Value chain integrators, Value Chain Providers, Virtual Communities etc.

Furthermore, projects may address intelligent, user-friendly systems for the implementation of electronic commerce applications with safe transactions, SMEs and the digital economies and business environment interaction for the development of new digital services.

In the last two Actions, the following technologies may be used: Web Decision Support Systems, Data mining, Web Information and Work flow systems, Intelligent Agents, Digital Interactive TV & Interactive Content Development, M-Commerce with WML & WAP Technologies, Digital Libraries and Interactive Publishing, Mobile Multimedia Platforms, Intelligent Access Devices & GUI for Mobile Devices, Component Based Architectures for Mobile Computing, 3D Modeling, Simulation and Animation, VRML, Avatars, 3D CAD Applications, GIS etc.

5. EUREKA CYPRUS

The EUREKA Organisation is a pan-European network established in 1985 for the promotion of market oriented research and development. Today, 31 countries collaborate with the European Commission for the promotion of industrial research and development. Through the EUREKA network industries, research institutes and universities develop and exploit technologies, which are crucial for the global competitiveness and the improvement of the quality of life. Cyprus participates in the EUREKA Organisation as a full member since June 2002.

EUREKA projects are based on a "bottom-up" approach, meaning that the participants are free to design a specific project form, its objectives and network of implementation, and specify the contribution of each partner and the way in which each partner will exploit the research results.

Each member-state is responsible for providing financial aid to partners participating in a EUREKA project coming from the specific country. The procedures followed by each member-state differ in each country. The total budget for «EUREKA Cyprus» Programme for the 2003-2005 period is 600,000 CYP.

EUREKA Programme includes the following Actions:

5.1 New Projects

Under this Action researchers may submit proposals for the participation of Cypriot organisations / enterprises in new projects that have not yet received the approval of the EUREKA Organisation.

The proposals submitted in «EUREKA – New Projects» should include a full description of the project. Proposals will be evaluated according to the evaluation procedures as these are described in RPF's FP 2003-2005. The Cypriot representatives to the EUREKA Organisation will then support projects approved by RPF, during the High Level Group meeting. Funding will be provided by RPF when projects receive the approval of the EUREKA Organisation.

5.2 Ongoing Projects

Under the Action «EUREKA – Ongoing Projects» researchers can submit proposals for the participation of Cypriot organisations / enterprises in already approved EUREKA projects. For the purpose of this Action, an Ongoing EUREKA project is one that has obtained the approval of the EUREKA Organisation prior to submission to RPF. The proposals submitted under this Action will follow the evaluation procedures of RPF.

5.3 Support Projects

The main difference of projects submitted under this Action is that approved projects do not receive funding from RPF. Under this specific Action, researchers submit proposals in order to receive the «EUREKA Label» by the EUREKA Organisation. It must be noted that the EUREKA Label is considered as a quality assurance label within the research community in Europe and is used as a means of securing financial support organisations.

6. FOLLOW-UP SCHEME

The Follow-up Scheme aims at the enhancement of the competitiveness of Cypriot enterprises through technological development and exploitation of basic and industrial research project results.

A project within this Scheme should lead to specific results, namely the technological development of a new or the improvement of an existing product or service, and the effective exploitation of the above by the Cypriot enterprise participating in the project.

The Scheme's budget for the 2003 - 2005 period is 760,000 CYP.

The Scheme involves the following two Actions:

6.1 RPF Projects

This Action is addressed to organisations and individuals who have successfully completed a research project funded under one of RPF's previous funding Programmes (e.g. 1st-5th Annual Programmes for the Financing of Research Projects and Programmes for Young Researchers 2000-2002).

It is noted that proposals should be submitted by enterprises or research organisations (not individuals), even in cases where prior RPF funding was awarded to individuals (project coordinators). In cases where the originally funded project did not involve a Cypriot enterprise, or the participating enterprise does not wish or is not in a position to participate in the follow-up project, a new enterprise should be introduced.

Cypriot research organisations and enterprises, are eligible participants in proposals under this Action.

The budget for this Action is 430,000 CYP.

6.2 General Projects

This Action concerns Cypriot research organisations that have participated in and successfully completed research projects funded by an organisation other than the RPF and have obtained the rights to use the research results or part of them.

In cases where the originally funded project did not involve a Cypriot enterprise, or the participating enterprise does not wish or is not in a position to participate in the follow-up project, a new enterprise should be introduced.

Cypriot research organisations and enterprises, are eligible participants in proposals under this Action.

The budget for this Action is 320,000 CYP.

ACTIVITY AREA C

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

The Third Activity Area is not directly connected with the financing of research work, but is mainly concerned with the support of research infrastructure, the enlargement of the domestic and international network of Cypriot institutions, the effective utilisation of the Cypriot human research potential and the creation of a research culture, especially for the younger generations.

Activity Area C contains the following five Programmes:

- Research Infrastructure
- Participation in the ESF
- Expatriate Researchers
- Research Development and support measures
- Development of Research Activities in the Educational System of Cyprus.

7. RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

This Programme concerns the development of new research infrastructure, the development and enhancement of existing research units / laboratories and the development of research infrastructure networks.

RPF will provide funding mainly for the acquisition of equipment necessary to implement specific research projects, whereas all project proposals submitted under this Programme should describe the research project, whose successful implementation will depend heavily on the acquisition of the new suggested infrastructure.

The total budget for the Research Infrastructure Programme is 1,700,000 CYP.

The Programme includes the following three Actions:

7.1 Infrastructure Networks

This Action aims at the development of infrastructure networks of Cypriot research laboratories and organisations, with similar or complementary research and technological activities. It concerns the implementation of common research projects by the research units/ laboratories involved in the network. RPF will co-finance the purchase of important and advanced instruments and specialised Information Technology equipment (hardware and

software). The purchase of small equipment, personal computers and non-specialised software will not be covered by RPF funding.

The Action is addressed to Cypriot research organisations and enterprises that have an organised laboratory available, and are willing to initiate collaborations with other research organisations and enterprises, through the development of common research infrastructure. A proposal under this Action should be submitted by at least two organisations / enterprises with at least one of them belonging to the private sector. It should also describe any previous common activities of the network participants and the potential for implementation of future common research projects.

The budget for this Action is 600,000 CYP. Projects concerning the acquisition of durable technological and research equipment will receive up to 150,000 CYP whereas projects concerning the purchase of highly specialised information technology software and hardware will receive up to 30,000 CYP.

7.2 Upgrading of Existing Infrastructure

This Action refers to the implementation of research projects that involve the substantial enhancement of infrastructure in an existing research unit / laboratory, through the acquisition of new, advanced and high quality equipment.

RPF will fund the purchase of significant, advanced instruments and specialised Information Technology equipment (hardware and software). The purchase of small equipment, personal computers and non-specialised software will not be covered by RPF funding.

Project proposals submitted under this Action should describe, apart from the importance of the research project, the significance of the investment in the research area for Cyprus, the possibilities generated through the specific enhancement, the technological advantages created, the potential new areas of activity for the research unit / laboratory, the efficiency of existing personnel for the exploitation of the new equipment etc.

The budget for this Action is 600,000 CYP. Projects concerning the acquisition of durable technological and research equipment may receive up to 100,000 CYP whereas projects concerning the purchase of highly specialised information technology software and hardware may receive up to 35,000 CYP.

7.3 New Infrastructure

The New Infrastructure Action aims at supporting the efforts of research organisations for the development of new research units and laboratories.

This Action is addressed exclusively to research organisations and concerns the implementation of research projects by the new research unit or laboratory that will be created in the organisation. RPF will co-finance the purchase of important and advanced instruments and specialised Information Technology equipment (hardware and software). The purchase of small equipment, personal computers and non-specialised software will not be covered by RPF funding.

The proposals submitted under this Action should justify the importance of the investment in infrastructure for that specific research area for Cyprus, the possibilities that emerge by the creation of the new research unit or laboratory, the technological advantages created, the potential new areas for activity, the expansion for the Cypriot organisation, the efficiency of existing personnel to exploit the new infrastructure, etc.

There will be only one call for this Action, with a budget reaching 500,000 CYP. Projects concerning the acquisition of durable technological and research equipment may receive up to 250,000 CYP whereas projects concerning the purchase of highly specialised information technology software and hardware may receive up to 50,000 CYP.

8. PARTICIPATION IN ESF ACTIONS

The Participation in ESF Actions Programme aims at encouraging the participation of Cypriot researchers in two of the actions of the European Science Foundation (ESF). The ESF promotes high quality science at a European level and acts as a catalyst for the development of science by bringing together leading scientists and funding agencies to debate, plan and implement pan-European initiatives.

The total budget for this Programme is 250,000 CYP.

The Programme includes the following two Actions:

8.1 European Science Foundation Collaborative Research Programmes (EUROCORES)

The EUROCORES scheme aims at the coordination of national research funding for basic research, the development of multilateral funding collaboration and the provision of a European critical mass in specific priority topics. It uses a common call for proposals and single peer review system under the responsibility of ESF. A programme's budget depends on the project and the number of research teams involved. Research teams participating in a successful proposal for a EUROCORES programme will receive the required funds from their respective funding agencies - ESF Member Organisations (in Cyprus' case, RPF). The

applications for participation in programmes under this action will be evaluated on their eligibility and scientific significance to Cyprus and will not be competitive. The scientific reviewing and competitive assessment of proposals is carried out by ESF.

8.2 'À la carte' Scientific Programmes

Scientific Programmes are medium- to long-term activities focused on specific subjects. They bring together substantive research projects carried out by multinational teams of researchers, and may include limited fellowship schemes. They concentrate on how expertise can be effectively co-coordinated and developed at a European level.

Programmes last an average of three to five years and are funded on an à la carte basis by the ESF's Member Organisations (in Cyprus' case, RPF). Financing is in the range of €90k - €250k per annum. The applications for participation in programmes under this action but will not be evaluated on a competitive basis will be assessed on their eligibility and scientific significance to Cyprus.

9. EXPATRIATE RESEARCHERS

The Expatriate Researchers Programme seeks to attract distinguished Cypriot researchers living abroad and to recruit them, for specific periods of time, in a research organisation in Cyprus.

The main goal of the Programme is the transfer of research and technological knowledge from the international to the Cypriot research community. At the same time, the creation of strong cooperation links between the two research communities will benefit the Cypriot researchers and will result in the creation of networks with the participation of Cypriot researchers for the exchange of ideas on the development of research strategies and policy, and the channelling of Cypriot research activities in new directions of research and technology.

Furthermore, the Programme could also enhance the future involvement of expatriate researchers in the evaluation of research proposals submitted under RPF's FP 2003-2005, the contribution or the participation of expatriate researchers in conferences and symposia, and the promotion of partnerships between Cypriot and Expatriate Cypriot researchers for the submission of joint proposals to EU Programmes.

For the purpose of the Programme, an Expatriate Researcher is one who devotes a great percentage of his / her time on research-related activities and who is employed at a research centre (academic or industrial) outside Cyprus.

Despite the fact that the Programme does not focus on any specific research thematic areas, it is expected that the proposals that are to be submitted will involve proposals that are of interest to Cyprus (New Materials and Products, Information Technology, Environment and Quality of Life, Health, Biosciences, Culture, Society and Technology). At the same time, proposals of high scientific quality in other thematic areas will not be excluded.

The Programme participants will be, on one hand, academic and research institutions in Cyprus that will act as Host Organisations, and on the other hand, expatriate researchers who will be the Guest Researchers.

The Programme includes the following two Actions:

9.1 Hosting an Experienced Expatriate Researcher

This Action encompasses the hosting of an experienced and accomplished researcher who has had extensive and significant research activity abroad.

The experienced expatriate researcher participating in this action must definitely be involved in the research activities of the host organisation in either an ongoing or a new research project. The research activity that the expatriate researcher will implement must be explicitly described in the proposal.

The duration of a research project under this Action, may range from 3 to 12 months.

9.2 Hosting a Young Expatriate Researcher

The research proposals submitted under this Action should be characterised by the fact that the bulk of the research activity will be carried out by the young expatriate researcher (under 35 years of age) involved in the project.

A young expatriate researcher is defined as one who has recently completed his doctoral thesis and who has developed research activity abroad.

Through this Action, young expatriate researchers are given the opportunity to implement their newly acquired knowledge and skills by undertaking postdoctoral research in Cyprus. In addition, this action will aim to provide the conditions for their permanent reintegration in Cyprus. The duration of a research project, under this Action may range from 12 to 24 months.

10. RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT MEASURES

This Programme aims at encouraging and increasing the participation of Cypriot researchers in project proposals and other activities of the Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development of the European Commission (FP6 2002-2006).

The Programme consists of the following three actions:

10.1 Participation in FP6

The first Action refers to the reimbursement, by RPF, of part of the expenses incurred by Cypriot researchers during the preparation stage of a proposal that has been submitted in one of the thematic priorities or horizontal actions of FP6. Under this programme, any Cypriot who can provide proof of the expenses incurred during the preparation of any kind of proposal to the FP6 is eligible for application. The proposal must have been submitted to FP6 and assessed by independent evaluators assigned by the European Commission (EC) as eligible for funding. RPF's reimbursement of eligible applications will be in the form of a lump-sum amount.

The applications to this action will be reviewed based on their eligibility (as assessed by the EC) and will not be judged on a competitive basis.

10.2 Conference Participation

The Second Action refers to the participation of Cypriot researchers in important Conferences organised under FP6. Initially, the action will cover the IST and SME Technology Days Conferences. At a later stage, it will apply to other important FP6 conferences. The IST conference refers to activities undertaken by the DG Information Society and has a different theme each year. The SME Technology Days conference deals with the participation of the Small-Medium size Enterprises (SMEs) in the FP6.

Any researcher who is active in the Information Technology/SMEs area and wishes to participate in a conference in order to promote/present a specific proposal or to prepare the submission of a proposal to the FP6 can apply to this action. RPF will reimburse the cost of air travel and participation fee for one person of each interested research institution wishing to participate in the conference.

The applications to this action will be reviewed based on their eligibility (as assessed by RPF) and will not be judged on a competitive basis.

10.3 RPF Research Publications

This Action aims at the dissemination of research results of projects that have previously received funding by RPF.

Project Coordinators or Host Organisations involved in projects that have received funding under one of RPF's previous Programmes and have been successfully completed are eligible for participation in this Action.

RPF will undertake part of the publication expenses, whereas the interested parties will undertake the cost for the preparation of the text to be published.

11. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES DEVELOPMENT IN THE CYPRIOT EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The Programme consists of the following two actions:

11.1 Pupils in Research - MERA

This Action aims to involve pupils and their teachers, from elementary and secondary schools, in research activities. MERA has been the result of a substantial dialogue between RPF and the Ministry of Education and Culture, regarding the promotion of research activities within the educational system of Cyprus. The Programme is co-organised by the aforementioned bodies and the University of Cyprus and is launched on an annual basis. Within the framework of MERA, working groups consisting of pupils, teachers and experienced researchers implement research projects in a wide range of topics. RPF offers monetary awards and commemorative plaques to successful applicants, as well as certificates to all participants.

11.2 Research Competition for Undergraduate Students - PROFIT

This Action is another step towards the development of research activities within the educational system of Cyprus. The competition's main objectives are to involve undergraduate students in research activities and stimulate public interest in the achievements of young scientists. PROFIT is launched on an annual basis and invites undergraduate students to submit projects related to their scientific and technological achievements. The students that excel in their research projects are given monetary awards and commemorative plaques. RPF also covers the expenses for their participation in study visits in Greek research centres or in the London International Youth Science Forum.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

The implementation timetable for RPF's FP 2003-2005 reflects the time frame, which will be followed by RPF for the opening of the Calls for Proposals and the deadlines for submission. This information is presented in the following Table.

RPF maintains the right to modify the dates or the number of Calls depending on the progress in the implementation of the FP 2003-2005, always taking into consideration the needs and interests of the research community.

			2003											
ACTIVITY AREA	PROGRAMME	ACTION	June 03	July 03	Aug 03	Sept 03	10-Oct	24-Oct	30-Nov	Dec 03	Jan			
A Multi-thematic Research Development	1. Thematic Actions	1.1 Technology												
		1.2 Information Society												
		1.3 Sustainable Development												
		1.4 Society												
		1.5 Economy												
		1.6 Health												
		1.7 Specific Project												
	2. Programme for Young Researchers	2.1 Integration												
		2.2 Support												
		2.3 Mobility												
B Applied Research Development	4. Research Programme for Cypriot Enterprises	3.1 Cyprus - Greece												
		3.2 Cyprus - France												
		3.3 Cyprus - Slovenia												
		3.4 Cyprus - Austria												
	5. EUREKA Cyprus	4.1 Development of New Products and Processes												
		4.2 Applications of Information Technologies and Telecommunications in the Development of New Products and Processes												
		4.3 Applications of Information Technologies and Telecommunications in the Services Sector												
	6. Follow-up Scheme	5.1 New Projects												
		5.2 Ongoing Projects												
		5.3 Support Projects												
C Infrastructure Development and Research Support	7. Research Infrastructure	6.1 RPF Projects												
		6.2 General Projects												
		7.1 Infrastructure Networks												
	8. Participation in ESF Actions	7.2 Upgrading of Existing Infrastructure												
		7.3 New Infrastructure												
	9. Expatriate Researchers	8.1 EUROCORES												
		8.2 'à la carte' Scientific Programmes												
	10. Research Development and Support Measures	9.1 Hosting an Experienced Expatriate Researcher												
		9.2 Hosting a Young Expatriate Researcher												
		10.1 Participation in FP6												
C Infrastructure Development and Research Support	11. Research Activities Development in the Cypriot Educational System	10.2 a IST Conference Participation												
		10.2 b SME Conference Participation												
		10.3 RPF Research Publications												
	11. Research Activities Development in the Cypriot Educational System	11.1 Pupils in Research												
		11.2 Research Competition for Undergraduate Students												

Table 2. RPF's FP 2003-2005 Workplan

The shaded areas of the Workplan indicate the time period between the date of announcement of the Call for Proposals and the deadline for the resp

BUDGET AND PROJECT FINANCING

RPF's FP 2003-2005 is regulated by the Republic of Cyprus' 2001/2003 Law relating to the "Control of Public Aids". Funding is granted in the form of co-financing with the highest contribution provided by RPF being 75% of total eligible expenses. Consequently, for the successful implementation of research projects, the participating organisations / institutions are requested to seek complementary funding sources.

RPF has the right to act in a way that ensures the smooth implementation of the proposed research work that it co-finances, by closely monitoring and imposing sanctions where irregularities or deviations are identified.

The preliminary budget concerning RPF's financial contribution to scientific research amounts to 11,650 million CYP, however, the total budget regarding RPF's FP 2003-2005 is expected to exceed 20 million CYP.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION - EVALUATION - SELECTION

The proposal Submission, Evaluation and Selection procedure under RPF's FP 2003-2005 will include the following stages:

1. Submission of Project Proposal
2. Evaluation
 - Preliminary Check
 - Scientific Evaluation
 - Presentation of Proposal
3. Negotiation
4. Final Selection

SUBMISSION

Specific application forms are now available for proposals to be submitted for Actions under RPF's FP 2003-2005. There are three types of application forms available depending on the Action in question. An electronic version of these documents can be obtained from RPF's website, at www.research.org.cy. The forms should be completed according to RPF's FP 2003-2005 Guidelines for Proposal Submission.

The deadlines for proposal submission have been specified for the whole 2003-2005 period and can be found in the respective Calls for Proposals. It should be noted that opening dates and deadlines among different Programmes and Actions.

Project proposals should be submitted at RPF offices either in person or by post.

EVALUATION

Preliminary Check:

At this stage, RPF examines the eligibility of each proposal according to RPF's FP 2003-2005 preset eligibility criteria, depending on the Action in question.

Scientific Evaluation:

Each research proposal undergoes evaluation by a Scientific Evaluation Committee (SEC), which meets at a specific time and place.

The composition and the number of SEC members is determined by RPF depending on the nature, the objectives, the budget and the number of proposals in each Action of each Programme.

Presentation:

RPF maintains the right, it considered necessary, to ask a Project Coordinator for a presentation of the proposal to the SEC. The presentation will take place either in the premises of one of the participating Institutions or at another place specified by the RPF.

NEGOTIATION

Following the completion of scientific evaluation, RPF will invite the Scientific Coordinators of eligible proposals, based on the evaluation results, for negotiation.

FINAL SELECTION

The final selection of the proposals that will receive funding by RPF is made based on the negotiation results. The decision on the final selection of research projects that will receive funding will be taken by RPF's Board of Directors.

FURTHER INFORMATION

All relevant documents concerning RPF's FP 2003-2005, can be found on RPF's website at www.research.org.cy.

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