



INCUBATE

Information and Communication Technologies
Innovation stimulated by incubators



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Update with INCUBATE

Edition 4, February 2008

Editorial

Welcome to the fourth edition of the INCUBATE Newsletter!

During our consortium meeting in Grenoble / France on the 24th and 25th of January 2008 we have again achieved a good level of knowledge exchange, matching project ideas of young and innovative SMEs throughout Europe while covering the range of ICT topics set by the current open calls for proposals within FP7. Like that, we...

- got to know about chances/barriers for SMEs in terms of EU project participation while deducting first recommendations on how to improve the situation,
- gathered a growing number of project sketches,
- while further striving to submit a high number of good quality ICT proposals to the EC.

We have received good feedback from Newsletter Edition 3 and therefore decided to keep more news from the INCUBATE project partners as well as their respective SMEs.

Find today:

- The “who we are and what we do” section.
- Experience reports and case studies from Italy and France – How and why to participate in FP7?
- FP7 and ICT – opportunities for SMEs (latest and upcoming calls, events and networks)
- Third INCUBATE Matching Event, Grenoble, France
- New INCUBATE project ideas

Do not hesitate to get in touch with one of us if you have any questions or are interested in a matching project. *In the meantime, enjoy your reading!*

INCUBATE – who we are and what we do

INCUBATE brings together 11 partners from 8 European countries in a project aimed at enabling young small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to get better access to current and future European Research and Technology Development activities and programmes, primarily within the European Commission's Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7).

To reach this objective the INCUBATE project partners

- Screen young ICT enterprises in their respective environments
- Identify enterprises with an interest to participate in European Research projects
- Identify potential projects and match enterprises with suitable partners
- Provide support in the establishment of consortia and preparation of proposals
- Identify opportunities to enter already existing projects

The consortium built up for INCUBATE is coordinated by inno AG, the manager of the former Gate2Growth Incubator Forum, a pan-European network of technology-based incubators. The other project partners are all incubators being members of the Incubator Forum network. These incubators contribute to INCUBATE with a large client base of ICT enterprises and their experience in dealing with innovation projects.

Experience reports and case studies – How and why to participate in EU projects?

University of Padova

Soluta.Net (<http://www.soluta.net>) is an SME working in the ICT sector, specifically dealing with software engineering and development; its main goals are consulting services for software development related activities. It offers component-based software solutions, consulting services, technical leadership for distributed enterprise class applications and training with courses on software engineering in order to help companies to better manage software requirements, analysis, design, development, testing, maintenance and software legacy re-engineering. The **experiences gained in 15 years of projects with international customers**, in most different sectors like telecom, eGovernment, health care, banking and pharmaceutical, allows them to be the key partner for many companies. One recent proposal was based on the application of architectural software principles that are closed to civil engineering techniques, with the added value to support the automatic generation of code from models (Model Driven Architecture, MDA); in this context - also thanks to EU projects - Soluta.Net reached strong competences.

Since its establishment in 2003 Soluta.Net has participated to proposals in FP6 and FP7. By today Soluta.Net has obtained a great score: four financed projects (plus a Thematic Network) among six proposals. These projects are two IPs (Integrated Project) and two STREPs (Strategic Targeted Research Project) with a total financing of approximately 1.0 M€ (DBE, ONE, COIN, PERSIST). **FP7 out of their view is “a powerful instrument which allows companies, not only the big ones, to work closely in a collaborative environment with other players in studying, planning and developing innovative solutions at an international level”.**

As a partner, and not as a project coordinator, they were partly involved in the writing of the proposal document in view of their competences, nearly always related to software architectures, coordination of the development and the realization of generation and modeling of codes. In any case, these experiences have been important “to **widen out business network both in Europe and Italy**; we gained **new competences and skills** through reciprocal cooperation and comparison”. They mention that with a good planning and scheduling of tasks in the project it is then possible to reach results which can be translated into high quality solutions in industrial applications; these are benefits which came out after years of working.

Soluta.Net finally mentions that the complex management of a European project and the need for a timely and accurate reporting “may seem to be an obstacle, but should be seen as **an opportunity to improve the internal capabilities of the company for a more organic and formal way of working**”.

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GRAIN

ImmunID (<http://www.immunid.com>) offers services and kits to medical diagnostic market and pharmaceutical industry. It consists of immune forecast evaluation from blood test, which leads to having a very precise immune cartography. Early detection of secondary effects, follow-up of treatment efficiency against infections diseases, autoimmune disorders and cancers; such are the main advantages of ImmunID tests. ImmunID was a project led by Nicolas Pasqual with three other researchers. It entered GRAIN Incubator in late 2003 and started as a business. But even before that date, its leader had scented the interest for the future start-up to contribute to European R&D projects. An interview of the now CEO of a very dynamic and European convinced SME.

What is ImmunID’s historical record in terms of FP proposals?

- We started before we were created as we were in contact in our lab with people who were involved in such projects. We were then asked to take part into three FP6 projects – one of which was Myasthald (having been) successful in the submission and is now about to end for us.

What was the reason why you were “asked” to collaborate, do you think?

- Why, in fact, the main reason why it worked straight away for us: we already had been identified in our area as “specialists” and had a rather “local” (,,,) recognition!

What is now your position as a young R&D SME?

- We are currently under evaluation in the FP7 Health theme as partner of a consortium dealing with pre-analysis for molecular biology. The result of the evaluation should be issued shortly by the Commission and of course we all hope for the better.

So do we! Indeed, what opportunity did you see in such collaborations?

- *The very first one as far as ImmunID is concerned is **creating a tight network** around us. As a matter of fact, we have clearly identified that the consequences of being partner in a proposal - and moreover a project - implied very interesting consequences. For instance, experts in the field came to know us as things went into realisation. Moreover, on our FP6 project, we wrote a patent and acquired more know-how in our field even at an international level.*

Would it mean to say that even a project that is not accepted is worse the effort?

- *Of course it is more rewarding when the project passes the Commission examination!!! But, yes, in terms of networking the ones that trusted you for the proposal are likely to come back to you for the next possible run!*

- *Saying that one must be aware that preparing a proposition is time consuming for the SME and that the effort put into the preparation must be well evaluated – as is the case for the overall energy and resources to be spent.*

Could you develop on the observations you have made for yourself throughout these experiences that you would like to share with other candidate SMEs?

- *Well, of course each situation is specific. **Being very strategic is essential.** As for us, we always made a point to work in a project whose subject was close to our field of knowledge. That is to say our know-how was exactly suited both with the project and our speciality: our Work Packages were well defined and were also strategic for our own business R&D development. The question we always had in the back of our mind was: “what are deliverables we are asked to produce” going to bring to our business”?*

- *In fact, **a very opportunistic attitude is necessary.** At the same time, one has to be able to manage the project within daily business needs, [...however...] the financing aspect in FP7 is very advantageous for SMEs. It means that we did not have a loss and we even managed to finance the development of results which are useful to our daily business.*

In terms of structure, you just happily mentioned the EC financing yet justified benevolence towards SMEs, do you think more improvements should be made?

- *Indeed, it is great to get the money: it helps your daily life (!) and at the same time, it makes you feel you contribute to something that is beyond your daily routine preoccupations...*

- *The (key) improvement that is necessary to me is the one concerning all the administrative reports that have to be written. The criteria have to be simplified for SMEs. The honest SMEs are unfavoured by these procedures especially the very small ones.*

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FP7 – opportunities for SMEs



Current and upcoming calls for proposals

Within the European Commission's Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7) **the third ICT call of the Specific Programme "Cooperation" has been launched on the 4th of December 2007 (FP7-ICT-2007-3)**. European Commission strives to simplify rules, procedures and administration for applicants to enable and encourage more SMEs to take part in the activities of an FP than ever before. From the indicative budget of 265 M€ for the 3rd call there will be two thematic challenges covered: Challenge 2 - Cognitive systems, interaction, robotics as well as Challenge 4 - Digital libraries and content.

Apart from the above, project proposals in the so called "*Future and Emerging Technologies*" within proactive schemes 4-6 are being awaited: "Science of complex systems for socially intelligent ICT", "Embodied Intelligence" and "ICT forever yours".

The deadline of FP7-ICT-2007-3 call has been set on **the 8th of April 2008 at 17:00** (Brussels local time).

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=usersite.cooperationdetailscallpage&call_id=109

Within FP7 "Capacities" Work Programme another call for proposals within the funding scheme „**Research for the benefit of specific groups (in particular SMEs)**" (FP7-SME-2008-1) has been launched on the 30th of November 2007 with an indicative budget of 92,72 M€.

The financial scheme is focused on supporting objective-driven research where the bulk of research is carried out by RTD performers (i.e. institutions having the capacity to carry out research at the request of and for the benefit of specific groups, in particular Small and Medium sized Enterprises SMEs) - in small groups or in associations - or for Civil Society Organisations and their networks (CSOs) and open to all kinds of research fields and topics. Minimum requirements: at least three participants must be independent established SMEs from at least three Member States or Associated Countries and at least two participants must be RTD performers.

The deadline of the call FP7-SME-2008-1 is scheduled for the **11th of April 2008 at 17:00** (Brussels local time).

For further information concerning the above mentioned call for proposal check: http://www.frp.nrw.de/frp/de/rp/fp7/dld/calls/p_ct_200801_en.pdf

FET-Open being open to a broad spectrum of needs, opportunities and solutions avoids the risk of a 'tunnel vision' in ICT research and acts as an early indicator of new directions and opportunities for research in ICT. With an indicative budget of 65 M€ (of which 61 M€ are for short and full STREPs and 4 M€ for CAs) the call is **open from 19 March 2007** onwards and ideas are continuous receivable **until 31 December 2008**.

Further information: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/fet-proactive/home_en.html

Networking possibilities - events

March 4, 2008, Hannover, Germany

The EU-funded initiative **HAGRID**, helping to **increase the participation of newcomers in EU ICT** research by acting as a **gateway** to similar EU-funded projects (especially for young SMEs, including organisations from New Member States, Associated Candidate Countries and INCO countries) will be running its meanwhile 3rd Networking Event @ IRC Future Match. It will take place during world's leading fair for Information and Communication Technologies, CeBIT on March 4th 2008 in Hannover, Germany.

For further information please refer to: <http://www.hagridproject.net/event.php?id=36>

March 29 - April 6, 2008, Budapest, Hungary / March 22 – 29, 2009, York, United Kingdom



The European Joint Conferences on Theory and Practice of Software (ETAPS) is the primary European forum for academic and industrial researchers working on topics relating to Software Science. These events – five main annual conferences, accompanied by satellite workshops and other events – this year are holding their meanwhile eleventh event in the series. For further information please refer to the 2008 and 2009 ETAPS

event web pages: <http://etaps08.mit.bme.hu>

<http://www.cs.york.ac.uk/etaps09>

April 9 - 10 2008, Barcelona, Spain

Both conference and exhibition will focus on integration issues of miniaturized systems - Microelectromechanical systems (MEMS), Micro-opto-electromechanical systems (MOEMS), Integrated Circuits (ICs) and electronic components. An international committee has selected a large number of papers for presentation at the conference. Keynotes, tutorial and invited speech, special sessions and poster presentations will also be offered.

Further information and registration: <http://www.mesago.de/en/SSI/main.htm>

June 23 – 25, 2008, Porto, Portugal

BASYS'2008 Conference – 8th IFIP International Conference on Information Technology for Balanced Automation Systems will be held in Portugal this year organised by INESC Porto and University of Porto – Faculty of Engineering. The focus of conference is to discuss the rapidly evolving field of integration of human actors and emergent technologies and multi-disciplinary approaches towards business ecosystems.

Further information and registration: <http://www.basysconference.org>

June 12 – 13, 2008, Cardiff, Wales

Over two days, the eris@ conference "Opportunities and Challenges for Regional Development through ICT - New Paradigms - New Problems" will debate issues of vital concern for Europe and its regions - offering a range of perspectives from regional, national

European and global levels. Plenary sessions will view the opportunities and risks for regions in their continuing adoption of ICT and their attempts to adjust to globalisation, cope with technology changes, and contribute to goals of the Lisbon Agenda.

Topics are e.g.: e-Business, e-Government, e-Health, e-Infrastructure, e-Learning, Indicators & Benchmarking, e-Content, e-Inclusion, e-Transport, Open Source, Regional Strategies, Rural Areas, Mobile Technologies, e-Work, GIS Application

<http://www.erisa.be> for online registration and further information.

November 25 – 27, 2008, Lyon, France

Formerly known as "IST Event" this event is the most important forum for discussing research and public policy in information and communication technologies at European level. The event brings together researchers and innovators, policy and business decision-makers working in the field of digital technologies.

See: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/events/ict/2008/index_en.htm

Networking possibilities - networks

The European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA)



by Panagiotis Trimintzios; Expert at ENISA in the section on Relations with Industry, Academia, and International Organisations.

In the 21st century, we take for granted innovations such as mobile phones, computers, the Internet, on-line banking, e-Health and e-Commerce. The Internet has become indispensable for individuals at work, at home and in doing business. Network and Information Security (NIS) is therefore crucial for businesses and home-users alike.

Communication networks and information systems are critical for the European digital economy and business – both today and increasingly for tomorrow. There are millions of mails and transactions every day. As networks grow more complex, they also become more vulnerable. Security breaches can generate substantial economic damage. ENISA <http://www.enisa.europa.eu> is the European Union (EU)'s response to NIS challenges, especially as they affect the EU's economy.

Expertise and Excellence in NIS

ENISA's role is to be an expert body and a Centre of Excellence in NIS. Its mission is to enhance the level of NIS in Europe. As such, the Agency's role includes:

- Giving **independent, expert advice** to the EU, as the first step towards the drafting of legislation
- **Responding to requests** from Member States and the EU
- Collecting and analysing data on security incidents and emerging risks
- Promoting **best practices in e.g. risk assessment & risk management, awareness-raising and computer security incident response**

As part of its work, ENISA has published a number of reports and studies on, for example, spam, social networking, Botnets, standards, risk assessment/risk management, Computer Emergency Response Teams and awareness-raising, in addition to co-organising conferences such as the ISSE conference, running workshops, producing the ENISA Quarterly magazine to encourage NIS debate and publishing Position Papers. In this tangible way, ENISA is fulfilling its tasks, to the benefit of Europe and its people.

Situated in Crete, Greece, the Agency currently employs around 50 professionals, who benefit from EU employment conditions. Vacancies are regularly posted on the Agency's website.

ENISA as a focal point for NIS industry

ENISA is closely in touch with the NIS industry, for example the Director General of EICTA is represented on the Agency's Management Board. In addition, the **Permanent Stakeholders' Group (PSG)**, which consists of 30 leading NIS experts, represents NIS stakeholders from the ICT industry, consumer groups and academia. The PSG members, who are selected on their personal merits, advise the Executive Director of ENISA on NIS trends and the Agency's Work Programme.

Bridging the gap: ENISA as a broker in NIS

- Communication networks are mainly owned by private stakeholders. So ENISA is **bridging the gap** between industry and governments, acting as a **'broker'** of information and best practices for the EU Member States.
- In an international context, ENISA is the European spokesman on NIS to the outside world.

Looking ahead: 2008 & beyond

ENISA will continue to develop its position as the EU's Centre of Excellence in NIS. The Agency's Work Programme for 2008 details its operational activities and budget (8,16 M€), divided into three Multi-annual Thematic Programmes (MTPs) – taking it through 2008 and into the years beyond:

Improving resilience in European e-Communication networks (MTP 1)

- Stocktaking and analysis of:
 - The relevant legal and regulatory measures
 - The measures deployed by operators, e.g. in outsourced IT infrastructures, business continuity plans, IT continuity measures.
 - Existing technologies which enhance NIS security

Developing and maintaining co-operation (models MTP 2)

- Providing a platform for co-operation within the awareness-raising community
- Providing security competence circles and mechanisms for the sharing of examples of good practice within CERT communities
- Encouraging a faster take-up of interoperable eIDs in Europe
- Operating a European NIS good practice brokerage

Identifying emerging risks for creating trust and confidence (MTP 3)

The Agency will examine the feasibility of a Europe-wide system for the evaluation of emerging risks. This will primarily contribute to stakeholders' trust and confidence but should also provide decision-makers in Europe and beyond with valuable pointers to future developments and NIS requirements.

- Establishing a framework for assessing and discussing emerging risks
- Publishing ENISA Position Papers, which identify some of the problems in NIS and suggest some solutions

Third INCUBATE Matching Event, Grenoble, France

Following “Matching Event” #1 held in Brussels/BE in February 2007 and #2 in Coimbra/PT in June 2007 INCUBATE partners got together on the 24th and 25th of January 2008 in GRAIN's – Grenoble Alpes Incubation – brand new premises to present current project progress, exchange experiences, discuss project ideas with potential to participate in the 3rd FP7 ICT call or other relevant funding schemes while finally bringing together experiences and know-how on how increase the number of SMEs participating in EU projects.



So far, contacts from more than 400 target SMEs have been brought together in the INCUBATE database. Out of these contacts, a large number of proposals within the field of ICT have been submitted within FP7 ICT calls 1 and 2 as well as related funding schemes such as “Research for the benefit of specific groups”. Many of the companies from the partner networks have developed innovative project ideas feasible within FP7 calls ready to be submitted as proposals. INCUBATE partners agreed to identify, trace and support the most promising cases (as presented below) up to their submission as project proposals.

Participants decided to further collect information from their partner companies in order to create discussed dissemination and networking activities (e.g. involvement of “big brothers” in the process of project proposal preparation) as well as further strategic measures to be taken and deliverables to be provided.

Join INCUBATE Project Ideas – get together in FP7 / ICT with SMEs from all over Europe!

The INCUBATE partners have brought together SMEs' project ideas as the following examples of prospective projects show: Feel free to contact us for further details:¹

<p>Project A <i>IPN Incubadora, Portugal</i></p>	Development of nanosondas to use in agriculture
<p><i>Type of partners sought / tasks of the partners</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - partners with electro chemistry knowledge - agriculture partners to do demonstration - R&D Agricultural Institute - R&D wireless sensors networks
<p>Project B <i>Incubatore di Politecnico S.c.p.a. (I3P), Italy</i></p>	FAITH-RFID: FAcilitating a wider Implementation in healTHcare sector by RFID
<p><i>Type of partners sought / tasks of the partners</i></p>	<p>The strategic aim of FAITH-RFID Thematic Network is to create a European coordination network to facilitate wider implementation of RFID applications to the health sector with the participation of partners the hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, research, academia and RFID technology providers.</p> <p>Stakeholders already implemented RFID solutions in healthcare, able to offer the baseline and expertise.</p>
<p>Project C <i>Politecnico di Milano, Italy</i></p>	E-Content: To build an authoring environment for the creation of multimedia biografies and allow extraction of information (e.g competencies from CV's)
<p><i>Type of partners sought / tasks of the partners</i></p>	<p>share experiences spanning from modelling (Ontologies), prototyping, language definition (HR-XML), field validation; SME, large enterprises, universities</p> <p>Challenge: Digital Libraries and Content</p>
<p>Project D <i>Politecnico di Milano, Italy</i></p>	Semantic Web: To build new generation search engines based on non-deductive rules (as happens in present products)
<p><i>Type of partners sought / tasks of the partners</i></p>	<p>validate theories and hypotheses (Benford Law), formalise algorithms, develop prototypes, to test them on "vertical segments"; SME, universities, Research Institutions</p> <p>Challenge: Robotics and Cognitive Systems</p>

¹ further details such as contact data, budget etc. are kept confidential as agreed

Project partners



Project name: Incubate
Activity field: ICT
Number of partners: 11
Countries represented: 8
Coordinator: inno AG, Germany
Project running time: Jan 2006 to July 2008

industry. Paulo Santos - paulosantos@ipn.pt

Oxford Innovation Ltd., United Kingdom – the UK's leading operator of Innovation Centres currently managing 13 innovation centres currently incubating more than 300 companies in total.
Andrew Colleran - andrew.colleran@oxin.co.uk

Start Cube, Italy – technology business incubator of the University of Padova helping researchers bring innovative concepts and technologies to market and to promote innovative entrepreneurship based on research.
Elena Pavan - elena.pavan@unipd.it

RTD TALOS Ltd. (TALOS), Cyprus – development organisation based in Cyprus offering start-ups information, networking and support services in the areas of research, technology and development.
Charis Dikomitou - cd@talos-rtd.com

Gründungsinitiative der Region Ostbayern zur Wachstumsförderung (GROW), Germany – regional network providing start-up and entrepreneurial support for six Higher Education Institutes in Eastern Bavaria.
Christian Lendner - christian.lendner@fh-deggendorf.de / Markus von Gemmingen-Hornberg – m.vongemmingen@inno-group.com

Science Park Jönköping, Sweden – meeting point for knowledge-intensive companies and dynamic business innovators seeking to explore new business opportunities in the Jönköping area. The facilities are located close to Jönköping University and offers qualified business development services, seed capital and infrastructure to secure future growth and development.”
Magnus Gramming - magnus.gramming@sciencepark.se

inno AG, Germany – strategic management consultancy with profound experience from managing European projects, the setting up and implementation of innovation strategies and the commercial exploitation of research.
Luc Schmerber – l.schmerber@inno-group.com

Acceleratore d'Impresa del Politecnico di Milano, Italy – University incubator supporting the technological transfer from the University to industry through the creation of new enterprises.”
Giacomo Zanotti - zanotti@fondazionepolitecnico.it

Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas (FORTH), Greece – national research centre with the mission to engage in high-quality basic and applied research.
Panagiotis Ignatiadis - ignatiadis@stepc.gr

Grenoble-Alpes Incubation (GR-A-IN), France – incubator with the purpose to encourage the creation of innovative high-technology start-ups.
Christine Vacca - christine.vacca@gr-a-in.com

Incubatore di Politecnico S.c.p.a. (I3P S.c.p.a.), Italy – incubator of Turin Technical University with the mission to promote the creation of new enterprises by taking advantage of the potential in the research centres in the area. Federico Sarti - sarti@i3p.it

IPN Incubadora, Portugal – technology business incubator of the Instituto Pedro Nunes constituting the main link between the University of Coimbra and the