

Helmholtz International

On this special page, we report several times a year news from the Helmholtz offices in Brussels, Moscow and Beijing. Specific focus is on cooperation and partnership ventures of the Helmholtz Association in Russia, China and the EU as well as on select international research policy news.

News from the Brussels Office:



The Helmholtz office in Brussels is once more fully staffed. Here are the colleagues at the Helmholtz Brussels Office (from left to right): Dr Susan Kentner (Head of Office), Catherine Löffgen (Office Management Assistant), Annika Thies (Deputy Director, Legal Counsellor), Dr Angela Richter (Delegate for the Research Field Earth and Environment), Dr Uwe Wellhausen (Energy), Dr Karin Lohmann (Health), Dr David Kolman (Key Technologies), Barbara Geilen (Team Assistant), Kristine August (Communication and Public Relations).

Horizon 2020 – Data and Facts Regarding the Eighth EU Research Framework Programme

Objective:	Promoting Research and Innovation
Superordinate Topics:	Excellent Science, Industrial Leadership, Societal Challenges
Budget:	approx. 80 billion Euro (scheduled)
Programm Period:	2014-2020
Launch:	Mid 2013 (scheduled)
First Calls:	December 2013 (scheduled)
Further information:	http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020

Horizon 2020 – An Up-to-date Appraisal

The timeline clearly illustrates: The next months will be decisive as regards the next EU Research Framework Programme „Horizon 2020“ (2014-2020). After the European Commission submitted its proposal on 30 November 2011, the legislative procedure now is in progress. The Helmholtz Association very much welcomes the Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020. With about 80 billion Euro, the proposed budget is significantly higher than the budget for the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7, approx. 50 billion Euro at the time).

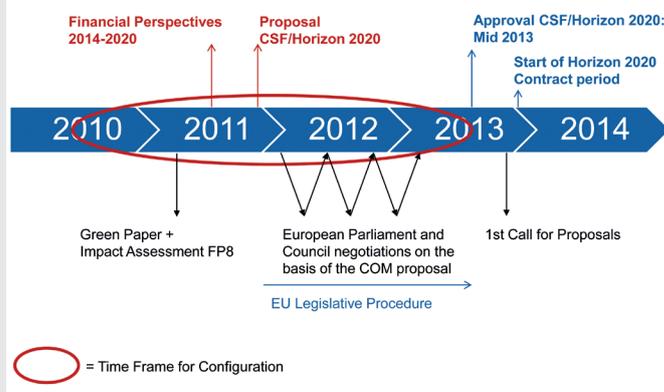
However, cuts are likely to occur. A positive aspect, without doubt, is the fact that the current proposal strives for simplified settlement rules for the funds. Another positive development from the point of view of the Helmholtz

Association is the general objective of solving major societal challenges. Even so, some aspects require improvement.

First and foremost: The allocation of the budget. The Commission's proposal allocates merely three per cent of the total budget for research infrastructures (RI), that is, precisely the same percentage as was the case in the FP7. Yet at the same time, the new programme now includes ambitious objectives: The access to national research infrastructures is to be guaranteed across borders within the European Research Area and 60 per cent of ESFRI projects are to be implemented by 2015. The proposed budget falls short of these objectives.

There is also the danger that the number of small-scale joint projects could decline and be substituted by the emergence of

Development of Horizon 2020



CSF: Common Strategic Framework (incorporating the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme CIP, the European Institute of Technology EIT and Horizon 2020)
 FP: Research Framework Programme
 COM: EU Commission

large Public Private Partnerships (such as Joint Technology Initiatives [JTIs], Knowledge and Innovation Communities [KIC], Future and Emerging Technologies [FET] flagships etc.) establishing their respective own administration structures. Here, the Helmholtz Association urges maintaining flexible joint projects as the main instrument. A point of particularly heated debate at present in Brussels pertains to the funding rates. The Commission advocates radical simplification and intends to grant research projects a maximum of 100 per cent of the total eligible costs and a flat rate of 20 per cent of the total direct eligible costs for indirect eligible costs (100+20; for demonstration/prototype projects 70+20). This would have an impact by way of decreased funding for coordinating activities (so far 100 per cent of total eligible costs) and, in the case of centres with higher

overhead costs, also as regards general funding. Likewise, the strict distinction between research projects and demonstration/prototype projects is in itself very disputable. A major point of concern is the fact that the respective maximum funding rate is to be fixed only as late as in the work programme or work plan stage. Back to the timeline and the time frame circled in red: There is scope for changes to the proposal up until the middle of 2013. Then the proposal is to be approved and passed in time to match the end of the Irish Council Presidency. The Brussels office will follow the debate over the course of the coming months and campaign for the inclusion of the requirements of Helmholtz scientists to the best possible degree.

Dr Susan Kentner

News from the Moscow Office:

5. Fifth Call for Tender in the „Helmholtz-Russia Joint Research Groups“ Programme

On 29 February 2012, a new call for tender is launched in the „Helmholtz-Russia Joint Research Groups“ Programme (HR-JRG), which the Helmholtz Association maintains together with the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR) since 2007. In contrast to the four previous calls for tender, this year's programme will concentrate on the central topic of research with photons, neutrons and ions.

The call is addressed at all Helmholtz researchers wanting to advance research and development in the wider topical field of photons, neutrons and ions in cooperation with established Russian partners. The fields of application include, for instance, new materials, that is, nanomaterials, biomaterials and multi-functional materials, that are researched and developed also in the context of such different Helmholtz research fields as

Energy, Health, Earth and Environment, Aeronautics, Space and Transport. One of the programme's main objectives is the promotion of particularly qualified young scientists from both countries. The Helmholtz Association and RFBR joint grant provides funds for six German-Russian research groups totalling up to 160,000 Euro per year and group over the course of three years.

Applications can be accepted until the cut-off date 31 May 2012. The Helmholtz Association's Moscow office supports the scientists in the event of questions.

All relevant documents can be found under
www.helmholtz.de/hrjrg-call

News from the Beijing Office:

New Funding Programme with China

The long-standing and successful cooperation between the Helmholtz Association and Chinese research institutions is further strengthened by a new funding programme for joint research groups.

The agreement with the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) was signed in the summer of 2011 and constitutes joint funding for an initial number of five groups of outstanding scientists over a period of three years. The Helmholtz Association will fund each group with an annual sum of up to 120,000 Euro from

out of the Initiative and Networking Fund for a period of three years, while the CAS contributes about 35,000 Euro per year for the same period.

The call for tender was published on the Helmholtz Association's website in February 2012. Applications can be submitted up until the cut-off date 15 May 2012.

To the Call for Tender:
www.helmholtz.de/hcjrg