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Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science

## **Seventh Framework programme calls for proposals**

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Es gilt das gesprochene Wort

Seventh Framework programme calls for proposals

**Brussels, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2010**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's nice to be here to announce some good news before the summer break.

Let me take this chance to wish you all excellent holidays when they come.

We are going to be investing no less than 6.4 billion euro in European research and innovation over the next year or so.

This is the biggest package ever from the Seventh Research Framework Programme, itself the biggest single such programme in the world, with well over 50 billion euro of funding for the period 2007 to 2013.

That is big money and it has never been needed more than now.

We need to keep investing in research and innovation not despite the crisis, not despite the fiscal problems we face, but because of those challenges.

There is no more efficient investment in the future than research and innovation.

Indeed, research and innovation are the only smart and lasting route out of crisis and towards sustainable and socially equitable growth.

There is no other way of creating good and well-paid jobs that will withstand the pressures of globalisation.

You don't have to take my word for it. Angel Gurría of the OECD has said: "Don't cut research and development, don't cut education. They are the seeds of future growth"

Bids for the 6.4 billion euro we are putting on the table will be invited in a series of "calls for proposals", many of them to be formally published tomorrow.

We are going to be putting that money where it can do most good for growth and jobs.

Where it can best contribute to tackling the big societal challenges we face: climate change, energy and food security, health and an ageing population.

The investment I am announcing today will create 165 000 jobs over the relatively short term and potentially many more over the longer term.

There will be about 16 000 opportunities for organisations to participate in specific projects – of course some organisations will take part in more than one.

Individual scientists will also be supported with significant amounts of European funding.

The areas covered include medicine, transport, biotechnology, nanotechnologies, information and communication technologies, energy, the environment, space and the economy

Of course, the Framework Programmes are at the core of the Europe 2020 Strategy and will be a cornerstone of the Innovation Union Action Plan that we will bring forward in the autumn.

Creating a true Innovation Union means more jobs, improved lives and a better and greener society. It means marrying world-class science with an innovation economy or "i-conomy". It means removing bottlenecks which hamper a single market in innovation and which prevent Europe competing as well as it should with the US and others.

The work programme we are setting out today will feed directly into that.

EU funded research is a small proportion – around 5% - of the total public funding for research in the EU.

But it has an ever-more important role to play. As I have said, this is the biggest ever set of calls for proposals.

I want to stress that they are calls for innovation as well as for research. Calls for SMEs as well as scientists. Up to 3 000 SMEs will take part.

Many of the projects we fund will make a day-to-day difference to the real lives of millions of real people – EU funded medical research, for example, has already saved or improved many lives and will save more.

It also provides enormous opportunity to show people a Europe that is working for them. It is easier to explain to citizens that an EU-funded project – Life-Valve - is developing a heart valve that grows inside children and saves them from a whole series of operations, than it is to explain competition law, even though the latter is crucial.

There are some other examples of existing projects in the memo we are issuing and many more on the DG Research website.

Just to give two examples.

The SME Robot project aims to develop a new generation of affordable, versatile and human-friendly robots, which will be suitable for deployment in smaller enterprises.

The Second generation locator for urban search and rescue operations or "Technology for Heroes" as we prefer to call it, is developing portable tools using sensors, images, sound and chemical analysis to help search and rescue teams locate people trapped in collapsed buildings.

As a result of the investment we are announcing today, there will be thousands more cutting-edge projects like the ones I have mentioned.

I am determined that the package we are announcing today will not only be the biggest ever, but also the most effective and the best administered.

As I said when I appeared in this press room in April, my commitment to simplification is unequivocal.

My colleagues Janusz Lewandowski and Algirdas Šemeta have brought forward proposals, on financial management and tolerable risk of error respectively, that give us a great opportunity, if Member States and the European Parliament endorse them.

But even before such changes take effect, we will do absolutely everything possible within the current rules to get researchers out of the office and into the lab.

We need to spend every one of the 6.4 billion euros I am announcing today as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Thank you.