



MOTEURS DE CROISSANCE ET D'EMPLOI

March 2011

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CLUSTER POLICY

▪ CALLS FOR R&D PROJECTS (FUI)

The FUI's 12th call for R&D projects is now in progress until 29 April 2011

On 15 March 2011, the ministers in charge of the policy of the clusters launched the 12th call for R&D collaborative projects from the competitiveness clusters, within the framework of the single interministerial fund (French acronym: FUI). Its specifications include a certain number of new provisions.

Project promoters must submit their applications online, using the dedicated and secure FUI-OSEO extranet, before **noon on 29 April 2011**.

In comparison with previous specifications, the specifications of the 12th call for projects contain new provisions, notably:

Projects:

- requiring less than 750,000 euros of aid should ideally be submitted to the OSEO innovation assistance programme, subject to their eligibility for that programme,
- for which the share of funding for public research laboratories or institutions or for institutions of higher learning is greater than 40% of all of the requested funding must be able to justify this in view of the expected results.

In particular, the project partners must:

- offer a financial situation that is consistent with the scope of the work that they propose to carry out within the framework of the project, and with the requested funding,
- submit a consortium preliminary agreement that outlines the major principles and initial elements of the outline of each partner's commitments and the distribution of the ownership rights or exploitation rights and of the expected returns.

At the end of the appraisal of the submitted applications, the ministers in charge of the policy of the competitiveness clusters will select the projects and publish a list of them in late July 2011.

Applications for structuring R&D projects from the clusters in an amount from 8 to 50 million euros will have to be submitted within the framework of the "structuring R&D of the competitiveness clusters" call for projects as part of the investments for the future launched in October 2010, rather than as part of the FUI. With regard to 2011, two new waves for the selection of structuring R&D projects within the framework of the investments for the future have been scheduled. Their deadlines for submitting applications are 29 April 2011 and 30 September 2011.



- CALLS FOR R&D PROJECTS (FUI)

Results of the 11th call to R&D projects as part of the FUI: 83 new collaborative projects

At the end of the 11th call for R&D projects from the competitiveness clusters, the State decided to finance 83 new collaborative research and development (R&D) projects from 52 competitiveness clusters, for total funding of €76 million.

These projects were selected from the 185 applications submitted by the clusters.

Selected for their innovative nature and for the economic activity that they should generate, they will receive financial aid from the State. The mobilisation of the regional authorities and of Community funds (ERDF) for most of these projects serves to complete the funding in the amount of €56 million.

Cumulatively, all of these calls for projects from the clusters have made it possible to support 972 projects since 2005. These projects represent an amount of R&D expenditures of nearly €4.7 billion, with 15,000 researchers, and public funding of €1.9 billion, including €1.2 billion through the State.

- STANDARDISATION

Possibilities for aid relative to the participation in European or international standardisation works

The Minister for the Economy, Finance and Industry has set up a financial assistance system in order to encourage participation in standardisation efforts by SMEs, industrial companies and cottage industries. It's a means for these companies to remain competitive on the international level.

Intended to allow the participation of recognised experts, this aid notably involves the competitiveness clusters.

What type of aid for the clusters?

The general department for competitiveness, industry and services (DGCIS) can cover up to 50% of the expenditures devoted to standardisation works over an estimated period of three years (travel, time worked and assignment expenses).

This financial support is primarily intended for the members of a competitiveness cluster that wish to assign an expert in standardisation works, who would act in the name of the cluster's companies.



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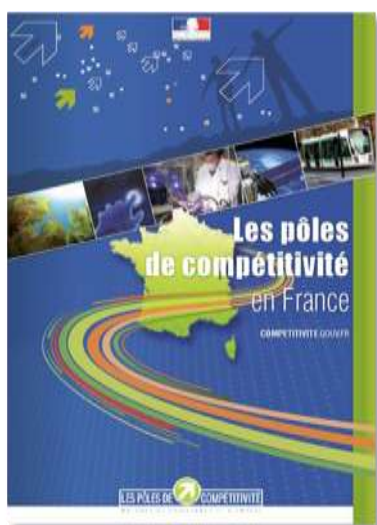


MOTEURS DE CROISSANCE ET D'EMPLOI

▪ PUBLICATION

A new brochure presenting the competitiveness clusters in France

Intended to present the French policy on competitiveness clusters, this brochure has been completely updated. It describes this policy's fundamental elements, and highlights concrete actions undertaken by the clusters.



As such, **four examples of actions in favour of growth and employment ecosystems** are presented, in the sectors of financing, international activities, training and skills management. They are completed by **six examples** of successful collaborative **R&D projects** assisted within the framework of the FUI, as well as by **two examples of innovation platforms**.

A new graphic charter, identical with that of the www.competitivite.gouv.fr Internet site and of the newsletter from the clusters, has been adopted.

The brochure is available in PDF format, in French, English and Spanish.

A German version in HTML format will also be available shortly.

 Télécharger




 [The brochure "Les pôles de compétitivité en France"](#)

▪ CLOSE-UP ON INVESTMENTS FOR THE FUTURE

Results of the 1st call for "Biotechnologies and bio-resources" projects: 5 winning projects in the amount of €33.7 million

As part of the "Health and Biotechnologies" action and its €1.55 billion budget, this call for projects is intended to encourage the emergence of a bio-economy based on a knowledge of life sciences and on new ways of assessing renewable biological resources.

Amongst the 15 submitted projects, the following were selected:

-  **Amazing and Breedwheat**, promoted by the National institute for agronomic research, that will make it possible to select new varieties of corn and wheat that need less water and fertilizer, for sturdier agriculture that is more respectful of the environment,
-  **Idealg**, promoted by the European university of Brittany, that targets the development of tools intended to promote marine resources (algae, etc.) over the long term.
-  **Synthiacs and Biorare**, respectively promoted by the National institute for agronomic research and the Cemagref, that are intended to develop innovative solutions in order to produce fuels and chemical products from organic waste or biomass.



▪ CLOSE-UP ON INVESTMENTS FOR THE FUTURE

Results of the 1st “Cohort” call for projects: 10 winners amongst the 44 submitted projects

As part of the “Health and Biotechnologies” actions, the “Cohorts” call for projects has a budget of 200 million euros in order to provide funding over the long term. The interest on this allocation of 200 million euros will provide for the establishment and follow-up of these 10 cohorts over a period of 9 to 10 years.

These 10 projects will lead to the establishment of databases that are essential for ambitious research programmes. The selected projects include:

- **Radico** on rare illnesses;
- **Cryostem** on graft rejection;
- **I-share** intended to study the risky behaviour of young adults;
- **Ofsep** relating to multiple sclerosis;
- **Canto** on breast cancer, that will eventually include public and private research laboratories in order to develop indicators for a clinical approach to anti-cancer treatments;
- **E4N** will, for the first time, provide for the large-scale monitoring of the health of a population group through three generations (women, daughters and granddaughters);
- **Psy-CoH** will monitor, over 10 years, 2000 young patients suffering from 3 major psychiatric illnesses (schizophrenia, manic-depressive psychosis (“bipolar disorder”), Asperger’s syndrome);
- **Hope-Epi** will serve to identify environmental risks and genetic risks related to cancer in children;
- **CKD-reinqui** is part of an international research programme on the organisation of healthcare;
- **CoBlance** on bladder cancer.

The cohorts constitute one of the reference instruments for public health research. They make it possible to study biological, social, behavioural, economic and environmental deciding factors for health, but also to understand the development of illnesses and to study the interaction between genetic and environmental factors.

In time, these large-scale studies will help to optimise public health policies and medical practices.



MOTEURS DE CROISSANCE ET D'EMPLOI

▪ CLOSE-UP ON INVESTMENTS FOR THE FUTURE

Launch of the “Digital city” and “Intelligent transportation systems” calls for projects

These two calls for projects align with the efforts of the “support for new digital services and usages” action, with a total budget of €2.25 billion, that is part of the “Digital economy” programme of the investments for the future. These measures are being operated by the Caisse des dépôts et consignations.

The deadline for submitting applications is 31 May 2011.

- **The “Digital city” call for projects** is intended to support R&D projects involving innovative technologies, products and services for an intelligent and interactive city. This call covers three major topics: data collection (collection and dissemination tools, development of sensors), real-time data processing and simulation and intelligent usage interfaces (notably contactless services).
- For its part, **the “Intelligent transportation systems” call for projects** is intended to support R&D projects involving innovative technologies, products and services in the area of digital transportation technologies. It covers the three following major topics: information systems for users and ticketing, travel management assistance systems and vehicle communication systems.

▪ CLOSE-UP ON INVESTMENTS FOR THE FUTURE

Digital economy: the current calls for projects

The “digital economy” part of the investments for the future programme includes an investment of 4.25 billion euros within the framework of 9 calls for projects.

4 calls for projects are still in progress, and could be of direct interest to cluster members. Namely:

- Onboard software generic bricks: ongoing until 31/03/2011
- e-Education: ongoing until 15/04/2011
- e-Health: ongoing until 15/04/2011
- Cloud computing - informatique en nuage : ongoing until 15/04/2011

▪ CLOSE-UP ON INVESTMENTS FOR THE FUTURE

Ongoing calls for expressions of interest

- Solar: ending on 02/05/2011
- Photovoltaic: ending on 02/05/2011
- Mobility: ending on 20/05/2011
- Experiments related to charging infrastructures for rechargeable electric and hybrid vehicles



MOTEURS DE CROISSANCE ET D'EMPLOI

EU NEWS

▪ PUBLICATION

New: the monitoring newsletter for State aid, intended for the competitiveness clusters

Each month, the DGCIS' coordination office for European policies monitors the main State aid in favour of innovation, within the European Union.

This monitoring provides for a comparison of the measures implemented by the Member States, as well as an understanding of the subsidized activities of companies established in Europe.

INTERNATIONAL

▪ INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

A new Franco-Brazilian partnership thanks to the OSEO and FINEP call for projects

The 2nd call for R&D project proposals developed by French and Brazilian companies is underway from 21 September 2010 until 20 September 2011.

As part of their agreement to develop technological cooperation between French and Brazilian companies, OSEO for France and the FINEP for Brazil have launched a call for proposals for the selection of common innovation projects that are likely to qualify for appropriate funding.

▪ INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

New Franco-Russian cooperation for French competitiveness clusters and science parks

The first edition of the Interpôle programme is open to all French competitiveness clusters and science parks, until 29 April 2011.

This programme involves get-togethers organised by the scientific department of the Embassy of France in Russia. Its aim is to offer innovative SMEs, in association with one of their academic research partners, a mission to assess and identify cooperation partners between French and Russian participants in R&D projects. The programme provides for missions to be carried out throughout Russia.

LANDMARKS

4.7 billion euros

This is the total budget available since 2005 for R&D projects receiving FUI assistance, through to the 11th call for projects.

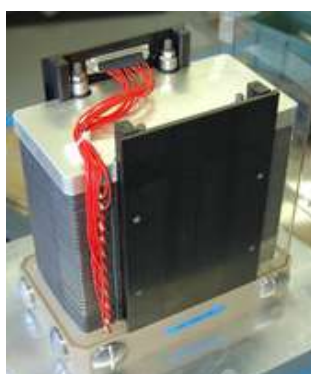
CLUSTERS IN ACTION

FOCUS ON COMPLETED PROJECTS

ENERGY

Bahia: a test bench for fuel cells, for training purposes

Labelled in 2006 by the Capenergies competitiveness cluster that specialises in the sector of energies that do not produce carbon dioxide and in energy control, the Bahia project received support from the single interministerial fund (FUI) during the 1st call for projects.



Bahia fuel cell. Hélon

The growth of energy consumption, the depletion of certain fossil energy resources and the associated environmental risks have taken on particular importance.




In this context, hydrogen is emerging as a strong potential vector for energy. Associated with a fuel cell, it offers new prospects for producing energy but also for storing electricity produced by intermittent renewable energies, such as wind turbines or photovoltaic systems.

This last function makes it very attractive for industry, higher education and universities.

The project's challenge was to develop a high level training tool that would help students to understand the theoretical principle of a fuel cell, and to familiarize them with its practical operation. The only system on the market was German, and it included a Canadian fuel cell. Requests from universities and market studies brought to light the interest value of an innovative product that would include pedagogical content, a simulator and an industrial quality test bench with extensive instrumentation.

A project promoted by the Helion company, a specialist in hydrogen and energy storage

The project was coordinated by the Helion company, that specialises in hydrogen systems and energy storage, a subsidiary of the Areva group. It brought together various partners:

-  the École Polytechnique, the Marseille IUT and the École des Mines (Armines), that contributed to the definition of the system's specifications, to the preparation of the pedagogical materials and to the performance of the bench tests under real conditions;
-  the CAPSIM company, involved in simulation engineering;
-  Alpeha Hydrogène, for the dissemination of information about hydrogen and its applications



A project involving the production of a complete system

The project's initial objective was to develop two prototypes of educational test benches that would operate with a fuel cell. The efforts led to the definition of educational and safety requirements; the production of an initial prototype with a 1 kW electrical and thermal fuel cell, and then of a second prototype representing an initial series unit; the delivery of two prototype test benches to customers / partners, and the retrieval of data from their feedback.

Close collaboration with universities in order to determine the pedagogical needs

The developments have been undertaken in close collaboration with the teaching faculty at the Ecole Polytechnique and of the Marseille IUT, such as to respond to the most representative pedagogical needs of the future users. One of the major difficulties has been to adapt a complex industrial system such as to make it accessible to an uninformed audience, at an attractive cost. Moreover, the safety strategy has been developed in order to account for operating imperatives within a university setting.

The two test benches fitted with a fuel cell notably make it possible to run a broad range of experiments, via a simulator. After three years of experiments at the Ecole Polytechnique and the Marseille IUT, Helion is continuing to monitor this equipment in order to integrate its feedback into new test benches.

Very promising concrete results

The production of these two prototypes allowed Helion to continue with its industrialization and marketing objectives by launching, back in 2009, its first industrial product from the Helion Didactic System, Bahia line: an innovative concept that aligns with the Areva strategy to make future generations aware of high technology energy production solutions that do not release CO₂.

A Bahia team has been put together in order to look after the sales and manufacturing of the educational test benches, which required the hiring of 3 additional people. The system itself has been improved and now has a simulator of the fuel cell's option, by means of application modules for the naval sector, electrical backup and the coupling with renewable energies. Moreover, to expand the sales to secondary schools, a distribution contract was signed with the SDMS company at the start of 2009.

So far, some 20 systems have been sold to national partners and customers (the ENSEM in Nancy, the ENIM in Metz, the INSA Lyon, the Marseille IUT, the École des Mines in Nice, the CEA in Tours, GDF Paris, the Poitiers IUT, the Reunion Island University, the Corte IUT, the ENSAM Aix-en-Provence, the UFR in Belfort, the Paris Ecole Polytechnique, the Bourg-en-Bresse IUT, the Martin Nadaud de Saint Pierre des Corps secondary school, the ESIP Poitiers, the Cherbourg IUT, and the McPHY company). A users' club is being set up, and it will make it possible for institutes and university laboratories to exchange their experiences, their practical work modules and to prioritize the product's improvements.

Based on these promising sales and the satisfaction of its French customers, Helion is now planning to sell the test benches internationally, and it is currently setting up a distribution network in Europe.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

The Vegepolys cluster has signed a partnership agreement with the French Foreign Trade Advisors (CCE's)

In an effort to intensify the presence of the cluster's SME members within export markets, Vegepolys has just signed a partnership agreement with the French Foreign Trade Advisors (CCE's) (Comité national des conseillers du commerce extérieur de la France - CNCCEF).



Signing of the agreement between the Vegepolys cluster and the CNCCEF. Copyright : VEGEPOLYS

Closer ties with the University of California in Davis, exploratory mission in Mexico and California, commercial mission in China, signing of an agreement with EuroChile, etc. In 2010, Vegepolys, the worldwide plant competitiveness cluster, considerably strengthened its international network.

This cluster does not limit itself to facilitating R&D (networking of companies and research centres for the purpose of promoting innovative collaborative projects). Indeed, after having labelled nearly 100 projects in order to improve the competitiveness of companies in the specialised plant sectors (seeds, fruits and vegetables, ornamental horticulture, vine and cider production, mushrooms, perfumed and aromatic medicinal plants...), Vegepolys encourages and accelerates their access to international markets.

The partnership agreement signed by the chairman of the Vegepolys cluster and the CNCCEF national chairman on 10 December 2010 in Angers represents, for the competitiveness cluster's member companies, an additional tool for succeeding in the export markets.

This agreement will make it possible to accelerate the international growth of the cluster's SME members, thanks to:

- enhanced access to contacts and networks of foreign trade advisors;
- encouragement to find their place within the international market, via the "competitiveness clusters" working group.

This body has been created in order to coordinate the support of advisors and to prepare true international development strategies intended for the SMEs that are members of these clusters, notably through international "sponsorship".

The cluster's members will once again be able to meet up with this network on 10 June 2011, in Angers at the Parc Terra Botanica.

▪ INTER-CLUSTER PARTNERSHIPS

When Vitagora works with the Qualiméditerranée and PASS clusters for the development of innovative projects

The Vitagora competitiveness cluster from Burgundy and Franche-Comté has committed to two partnership actions with clusters in complementary business fields, in order to initiate innovative projects.

Contributing to the competitiveness of agriculture, wine growing and agro-food processes by developing innovation

Vitagora and the Languedoc agro-food cluster Qualiméditerranée are demonstrating their willingness to work together, particularly in the field of agro-technologies, agro-equipment and ICTs. The aim is to put information and communication techniques (ICT) into the service of precision agriculture in order to allow the development of cultural practices that are more efficient and that align with a view of sustainable agriculture. The two clusters have launched a call for expressions of interest in order to encourage companies, laboratories, technical centres and training institutions to propose ideas, and even to present projects that are currently underway, so that the two clusters can support the best of them. *“Our objective is to contribute to the competitiveness and continuation of agriculture, wine growing and agro-food processes through the development of innovative products or services”*, the managers of the clusters indicate.

Better characterization of taste perception for the development of food products.



Signing of the agreement by the Vitagora and PASS clusters.
Copyright Vitagora

Working in parallel, Vitagora and the Parfums Arômes Senteurs Saveurs (PASS) competitiveness cluster have created a strategic action domain agreement.

The objectives of this agreement are to encourage the launch of projects that will help to better characterize taste perception, for the development of food products. This will involve a sharing of the skills developed by each cluster.

As such, for Vitagora, the aim will be to study the complexity of the mechanisms for the liberation and perception of flavours in relation with the food matrix. For the PASS cluster, the aim is to develop flavours of natural origin and to include them in food products in an optimised manner. At the heart of this agreement's action programme is the re-launch of a *“Arômes et formulations alimentaires”* club involving industrialists in the flavours sector and professionals from the agro-food industries. This club will organise an annual plenary event, open to all. It will serve as the basis for the launch of various working groups made up of members of the partner clusters, with the objective being to generate innovation projects.



[_ Consult the archives \[http://www.competitivite.gouv.fr/spip.php?article116&lang=fr\]](http://www.competitivite.gouv.fr/spip.php?article116&lang=fr)

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This newsletter is published by the DGCIS and DATAR

Address: 8, rue de Penthièvre, 75 008 PARIS

- Director of publication: M. Patrick Crézé
- Editor in chief and copy: Martine Maillard
- Editorial committee (in alphabetical order): Delphine Abramowitz, Rémi Arquevaux, Véronique Barry, Nicolas Daubresse, Nicole Dechervois, Emma Delfau, Ana Dujmovic Blua, Aurélie Faitot, Arnaud Lafont, Fabienne Ragache, Laetitia Tailliez, Thierry Vautrin and all of the associated competitiveness clusters
- Design and production: **Stratis**
- Photos: **Stratis**, Helion, Competitiveness clusters Capenergies, Images et Réseaux, Vegepolys, Vitagora, Parfums Arômes Senteurs Saveurs (PASS), X

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