



SIXTH FRAMEWORK
PROGRAMME

European Commission

Community Research



European Excellence Fellowships

Recognising that the young scientists of today are the research leaders of tomorrow, OPTICON has set up a working group to consider how to train and retain the brightest of Europe's young scientists. The objective is to establish a cadre of potential research leaders rooted in the culture of the European Research Area. At present attractive fellowship schemes, such as the American 'Hubble Fellows' draw talented young people away from Europe and frequently they never return. A prestigious, EU wide, fellowship scheme would be a powerful tool to reverse this flow of talent out of the community.

The future of the European Research Area demands that we forge research leaders who can see issues at a European level. One way of doing this is to establish a fellowship scheme which is attractive to the best of Europe's researchers and will encourage them to remain in Europe to develop their careers. Such a scheme should be a role model for young people and provide a bridge between Marie Curie fellowships and more senior positions such as professors and project leaders.

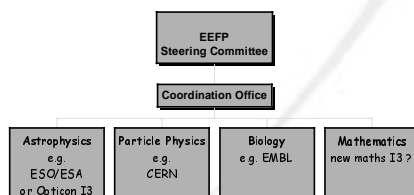
These fellowships should be in subject areas where EU facilities are at the leading edge, where there is decline in involvement by young scientists and where there are attractive options abroad which draw people away from Europe.



An OPTICON sponsored proposal to study a European Excellence Fellowship programme was approved by the EU in 2001. Information on similar schemes around the world was gathered in order to establish the parameters required to make a new programme competitive on the international stage.

Key Features of a European Excellence Scheme

- Research independence.
- Adequate support for necessary research facilities at host institution.
- A group identity to encourage networking.
- Prestigious Name (e.g. Oort Fellow).
- Special symposia to allow fellows to interact with their peers.
- Managerial training of fellows to suit them for leadership roles later in their careers.
- Communication training for fellows to assist their interactions with public and politicians.
- Relocation assistance for immediate family members to widen pool of applicants.



An expert panel has been appointed to consider how best to implement this concept both in the FP6 context of the existing Marie Curie scheme and to set out guidelines for future development in FP7.

Our Mission

The OPTICON Infrastructure Coordination network brings together all of Western Europe's owners and operators of large observatories and data centres. Our goal is to identify opportunities where greater progress can be made by collaboration than by competition, and to take unified actions to achieve those agreed goals.

Contacts

Prof Peiro Benvenuti
Chair Fellowship Working Group
Space Telescope- European Co-ordinating Facility
Karl-Schwarzschild-Str 2
Garching Bei München
Germany
Telephone: 49-89-3200 6291
E-mail: pbenvenu@eso.org
web: www.stecf.org

Dr. John K. Davies
OPTICON Project Scientist
UK Astronomy Technology Centre,
Blackford Hill
Edinburgh, EH9 3HJ
United Kingdom
Telephone: +44 (0)131 668 8348
E-mail: jkd@roe.ac.uk

Web: www.astro-opticon.org

OPTICON - The Optical
Infrared Coordination Network
for Astronomy

