RUSERA EXE Handbook for Russian and European researchers and RTD managers
International scientific and research seminar: FP7 and international cooperation

Vienna, 19th June 2009

Petra Reiter
FFG - Austrian Research Promotion Agency
Division European and International Programmes (EIP)
Overview of the presentation

- Background and rationale of the survey
- Findings and conclusions of the survey
- Recommendations
Background and rationale: a survey in RU and EU

Aims of the survey
• To get insight into experiences and practical hurdles of EU-Russian RTD cooperation
• To identify social and cultural differences

Purpose of the survey:
• To provide information for a report/ handbook

Aim of the report:
• To support FP7 multipliers in Europe and Russia
  – Raising of understanding and competence
  – Raising of capacity to consult and support researchers in Russia and Europe wishing to establish EU-Russian RTD contacts and cooperation
A surprisingly good participation in the online survey

An online survey and semi-structured interviews to collect views and experiences of researchers

104 respondents to the online survey
  – 38 European respondents
  – 66 Russian respondents

46 semistructured interviews
  – 17 European researchers interviewed
  – 29 Russian researchers
Successful researchers sharing experiences

EU: 89,2% of projects accepted for funding
- 54,2% - FP6 projects
- 22,9% - INTAS projects
- 22,9% - TEMPUS, TACIS, bilateral programmes

RF: 71,2% of projects accepted for funding
- 40,6% - FP6 projects
- 19,8% - INTAS
- 39,6% - TEMPUS, TACIS, bilateral programmes

…up-to-date experiences collected
Which funding programmes? Russia

2. We submitted (at least) one proposal/participated in the preparation of a proposal in 96 Answers

- FP6: 40.6%
- INTAS: 19.8%
- TEMPUS: 14.6%
- TACIS: 11.5%
- (bilateral RTD programmes, etc): 13.5%
...with 71.2% of Russian respondents being successful
Which funding programmes? Europe

2. We submitted (at least) one proposal/participated in the preparation of a proposal in
48 Answers

- FP6: 54.2%
- INTAS: 22.9%
- TEMPUS: 8.3%
- TACIS: 8.3%
- (bilateral RTD programmes, etc): 6.3%
…with 89.2% of European respondents being successful
Findings: High esteem for Russian colleagues

European respondents value

• High esteem for the scientific contribution of Russian colleagues
  – „Russian groups are outstanding because of the big number of excellent researchers participating.“

• Excellent quality of human relationships
  – „Personal relationships work very well. They are easy going and warmhearted people.“

• Existing contacts well exploited
• Reliability of Russian colleagues
• Native Russian researchers located in Europe provide highly appreciated support to EU-coordinators
Findings: A need for information, support and communication

European respondents regret

- A lack of transparency and information on Russian RTD
- Partners search without previous contacts a challenge
- A considerable language barrier
- Signature of documents in English sometimes a challenge
- Significant barriers to mobility/a lack of pre-/interim financing of mobility in Russia
- Transfer and use of EC-funding sometimes a challenge
- Insufficient reliability of the Russian post services
- Costly and time-consuming visa requirements
- Sometimes at universities restricted access of researchers to the Internet
Findings: Awareness of benefits of international cooperation

Russian respondents value

• New opportunities for the exchange of S&T information and methods
• International recognition in established professional circles
• Incentives to change a way of thinking
• A better self-assessment
• Additional funding, possibilities to purchase equipment

The impact of participation in EC-funded projects experienced stronger by Russian respondents than by their European colleagues!
Findings: A need for best practise models

Russian respondents regret

- Insufficient knowledge of English
- Insufficient networking into the European research community
- Lack of information about consortia under formation
- Limited experience with proposal writing and project management
- Insufficient support with EC-funding programmes
- Difficult relationships of researchers with their own institution
- Deficiencies of the money transfer system
- Remote geographical locations challenging the maintenance of close contacts to Europe
Cultural differences?

European respondents experience

• Russian partners contained at the beginning, but quickly casual and easy going

• No particular differences on an individual level, but rather on an institutional level, if at all

• Russian researchers keen on delivering good results, but exact information on what they are expected to do is required
  – a stronger need to provide guidance

• Russian researchers sometimes not asking for additional clarifications

• A different style of writing and presenting proposals and reports

• Limited freedom of decision-making of researchers
... not too much reference towards Europe, but also no arrogance!

European respondents recommend to Russian colleagues

- Be proactive and responsive
- Be well prepared before contacting European partners, care for ‘real S&T complementarity’
- Look for a professional coordinator
- Create WIN-WIN situations with your partners
- Don’t be afraid to ask questions
- Make detailed workplans for yourself
- Make sure your own institution is supportive
- Try to mediate between EC-rules and your own administration
- Make sure EC-funding is used as stated in the contract
Summary of main findings:

- EU-Russia S&T cooperation successful and of mutual benefit
- Good exploitation of existing contacts
- Guidance, clear structures and technical specifications ensure good S&T results

- Insufficient networking of Russian researchers into the EU-research community
- Partner search without previous contacts a challenge for both sides
- A considerable language barrier
- Money transfer and controlling sometimes a challenge
- A need for training and support on project management and proposal writing

More information, support and mobility required to take advantage of the full potential
A report to encourage EU-Russian RTD cooperation in FP7

Content of the final version of the report:
• More details about the findings of the survey
• Background information for Russian and European researchers
• Key messages and conclusions

Target groups:
• FP7-multipliers and NCP‘s in Europe and Russia
• any researcher interested in EU-Russia RTD cooperation

How to receive the report?
http://www.rusera-exe.ru
Contact:

Petra Reiter
FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency
European and International Programmes (EIP)
Unit of International Cooperation and Mobility
Phone: +43-(0)5-7755-4605
Email: petra.reiter@ffg.at
http://rp7.ffg.at