

W6.1

Maximising funding opportunities from the European Union

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Synopsis

Within the European Union initiatives and programmes there are many opportunities available that provide part funding for information technology projects. The programmes support the political initiatives approved by the EU Council of Ministers. Only projects that are pertinent to these political initiatives are considered. The funding opportunities are available to all private and public sector organisations within EU member states.

The workshop addresses the key issues related to these opportunities such as:

- keeping abreast of the information about these opportunities
- understanding the processes involved
- how to find partners to form project consortiums across Europe
- finding expertise to help you
- producing and submitting proposals that will be successful
- finding and managing venture capital; the different roles within a multi-national consortium.

This paper provides an aide memoir for the workshop together with reference material that may assist organisations locate and take advantage of the many opportunities that exist.

1 Introduction

GI and the associated technologies are naturally pervasive. As such the opportunities for GI are wide ranging. GI plays an important role within many EU programmes such as:

- Programmes that are GI specific such as the IST Cross Action Programme line *CPA 3 Ubiquitous and Intelligent Info-mobility and Geo-Information*;
- Programmes where GI has a contributory role but may not be specifically mentioned such as the eContent programme *Government online: electronic access to public services*.

Some of the relevant programmes are detailed at appendix C.

The opportunities exist for both public and private sector organisations within all member states of the EU. Some EC initiated projects specifically seek project proposals where the consortium is made up of both public and private sector organisations. One such programme is the eContent programme Action Line 1 - *Improving access to and expanding use of public sector information*.

2 EU Funding

The normal level of funding for EC approved projects is 50% leaving the consortium partners to fund the remainder. Each partner within a project is expected to fund an equivalent amount to that which they receive from the EC. This may be through self-funding or by seeking funds elsewhere such as a finance institution. The EC infrastructure available to potential project consortium members provides support in locating such funds.

Applying for EU funding differs in three important respects from applying for funding from a bank or other finance institution (reference UK/SHELP).

- The award of EU funding is made for a specific business case and not as in the case of bank funding upon the presentation of a business plan for the organisation
- Funds are awarded only for projects, which fall into areas in which the EU wants to encourage technological and economic activity
- Except in specific funding schemes, funding is provided following a call for submissions 'or applications'.

3 Exploiting the opportunities

3.1 Awareness

Awareness of the opportunities available is a key factor. The EC has established a comprehensive set of information centres on the internet backed up by information on conventional media, which relate to each of the EC programmes. An example is the EC IST programmes *Community Research & Development Information Service* CORDIS (refer to appendix A) which provides a one-stop shop to the latest information on the IST programme and contains details on:

- calls for proposals;
- events for gaining further information, meeting EC officials responsible for each programme as well as potential consortium partners;
- locating partners across Europe;
- guidance on how to produce and submit proposals;
- the procedures involved;
- etc.

Within each member state the responsible government department or ministry also provides comprehensive information centres on the Internet. Within the UK the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) maintains via its contractors a comprehensive web site UK/SHELP (refer to appendix A) which contains information on all EC programmes such as the:

- IST 5thFP
- IST 6thFP
- eContent
- TEN Telecom.

By subscribing to the UK/SHELP site personnel within an organisation can be kept informed via email of the opportunities as they arise that match the profile provided by the individual. This service is free to all subscribers, as the DTI objective is to maximise the UK uptake of the funding opportunities that are available.

Within the UK the AGI actively engages in the processes of lobbying and tracking GI related EC programmes and informs its members through its web site (refer to appendix A), profiled emails, newsletter and specific events on potential opportunities for its members to exploit. The AGI also has a European Special Interest Group that brings together all members' that have an interest within Europe and which holds regular events on the progress of European funded projects and programmes that involve its members.

The AGI is a member of EUROGI the European Organisation for GI, which brings together all European countries national GI associations together with pan European bodies that have an interest in GI. EUROGI has a good working relationship with the EC and its family of organisations such as the JRC, EUROSTAT, etc. EUROGI has a comprehensive web site on GI at the European level (refer to appendix A).

The JRC on behalf of the EC maintains the EC GIS web site (refer to appendix A) which contains information on all current and past EC funded GI related projects as well as a wide range of information about GI not only within Europe but across the world.

Organisations that provide professional information services derived from the EC Official Journal OJEC also exist. These organisations provide a tailor made information service pertinent to the subscribers profile. Such services not only provide information on EC programme calls for proposals but also other business opportunities such as tenders that exist within the UK and across Europe. Such professional information service providers can be found within the AGI membership.

3.2 Locating help and partners

Since 1995 the EC has established Innovation Relay Centres (refer to appendix D) within all parts of the EU. The IRC's provide professional services that will help organisations with all aspects of participating in EC funded projects. These services include preparing the proposal, considering aspects such as IPR, funding, finding partners, etc.

Both the EC and the DTI run events that have the specific purpose of bringing interested parties together. Help is also provided in finding and introducing potential partners that may be interested in forming a project consortium. The latest programme of events can be found on the CORDIS, eContent and UK/SHELP web sites.

The CORDIS, eContent and UK/SHELP web sites also have within them services that assist locate partners through databases, email services, interactive forums, etc. One such email partner finding service is SINGLEIMAGE singleimage@compuserve.com

Within the UK and the GI sector the AGI through its broad membership base provides excellent networking opportunities at the many events that it regular organises across the whole of the UK.

Private companies also provide professional services that assist organisations with the process of preparing and submitting EC proposals. Such companies with an interest in GI are also members of the AGI.

4 Current EU opportunities

The following calls for proposals are currently open or will open in the near future:

5thFP IST 7th call. This call is now open.

5thFP IST 8th call. The call is expected to be issued in November 2001. It will be the final call within the 5thFP.

TEN Telecomm. The current call opened in June will close in September 2001.

eContent programme 1st call Part 2. The call is continuously open for definition phase projects and accompanying measures until 16 December 2002.

IST Initiative on 2.5-3 G mobile applications and Services. The call is currently open.

CPA V1.3 call. The call opened in June and will close in September 2001.

Further details on these programmes can be found at appendix C.

5 Workshop structure

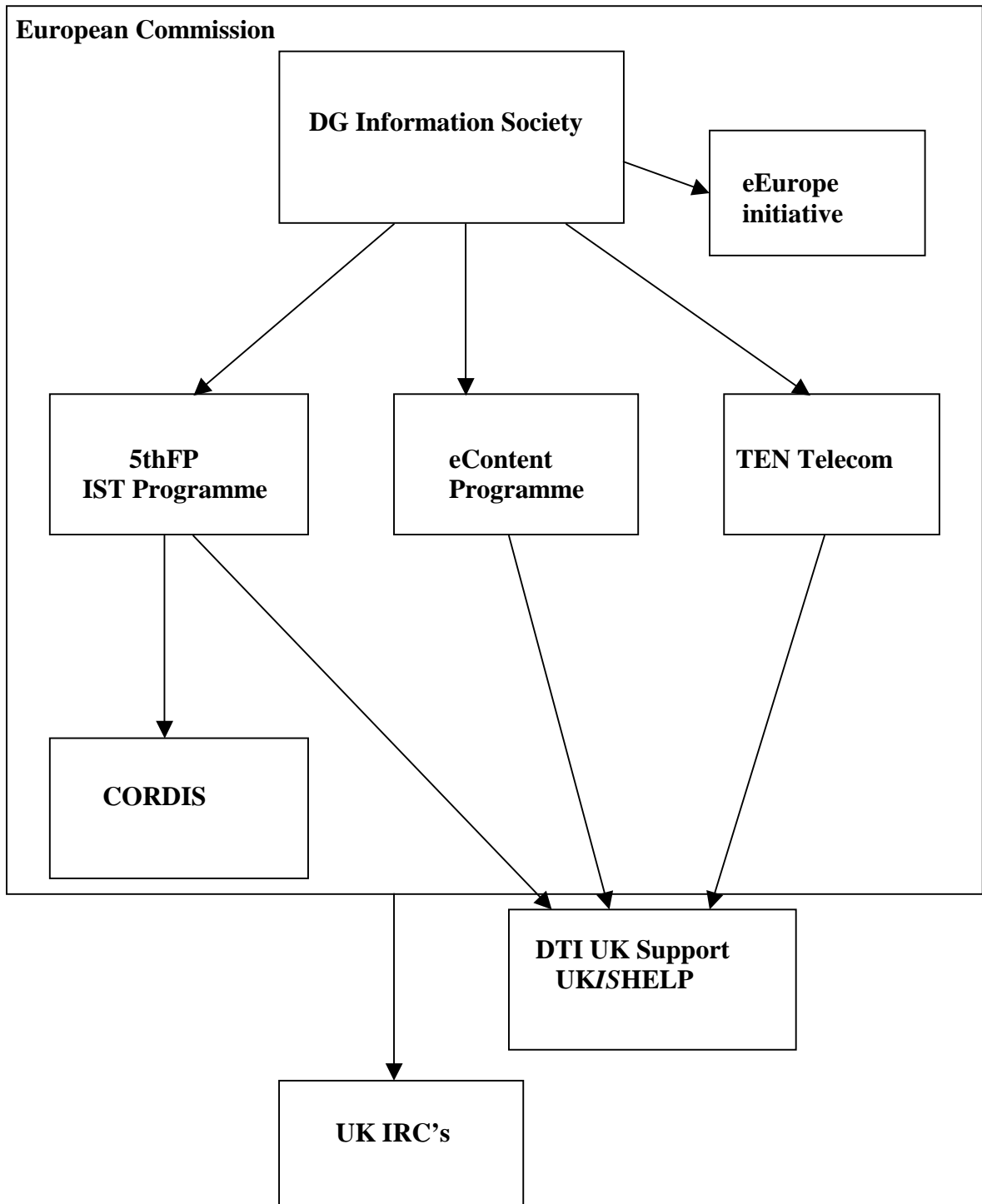
Three presentations will set the scene for the workshop, which will consider the following issues:

- Addressing the awareness issues of how to keep abreast of opportunities that become available for consideration. A senior representative will present this from the UK National Contact Point for the IST programme.
- How to find support and help once the decision has been made to participate in an EC call. A senior representative will present this from the London and South East IRC.
- How to locate and manage venture capital. A senior representative will present this from a venture capital management company.

6 Conclusion

A wide range of opportunities do exist within EU programmes to obtain funds for projects whether they be research, taking an idea to the market, opening up public sector information, developing new markets for innovative solutions. The workshop will help to support you maximise such opportunities.

Diagrammatic representation of the EC programmes and support structure



Appendix A

Information Sources available on the World Wide Web

URL	Owning Organisation	Content
www.agi.org.uk	AGI	The UK's Association for Geographic Information's one stop source to information on geographic information (GI). Contains a wealth of information about GI within the UK including the latest developments. The activities of the AGI's European Special Interest Group (SIG), its involvement at EUROGI and the European Commission can be found within this web site, as well as links to many other relevant GI sources of information. AGI members gain access to a comprehensive source of information within the GI members part of the web site including links through to the members only part of EUROGI's web site
www.cordis.lu	EC	The community research & development information service. This site provides a one-stop shop to all information on IST programmes and the latest information on calls for proposals.
www.cordis.lu/econtent	EC	Contains information about the eContent programme.
www.cordis.lu/irc	EC	Contains information about the EC Innovation Relay Centres.
www.cordis.lu/ist	EC	This site contains information about the IST programme
http://europa.eu.int	EC	The European Commissions web site.
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/eeurope	EC	Contains information about the eEurope initiative.
www.ec-gis.org	EC - JRC	The Joint Research Centre maintains on the behalf of the European Commission an informative web site about all active projects as well as past projects that involve geographic information. The site also contains topical information related to events across Europe as well as highlighting current calls for proposals.
www.eurogi.org	EUROGI	Europe's Umbrella Organisation for Geographic Information (EUROGI) one stop source to information. The web site contains information about its activities and its involvement with its members across the European continent. This includes details about its members in each country as well as pan European organisation's but also its involvement with the European Commission. Details of European funded projects that EUROGI is involved in are also to be found on this web site as well as its work at the global level within GSDI.
www.ten-telecom.net	EC	Contains information on the TEN-Telecom work programmes.
www.ukishelp.co.uk	DTI	A comprehensive one stop shop to information about the opportunities available for EU funding. The site contains the latest information as well extensive information on how to process and submit proposals to the EC.

Appendix B

Glossary

AGI	Association for Geographic Information.
Cluster	A group of RTD projects and/or other cost-shared actions and/or accompanying measures that address a common theme or area of interest
CORDIS	COmmunity Research & Development Information Service
CPA	Cross Programme Action
CPC	Cross Programme Cluster
CPT	Cross Programme Theme
EC	European Commission (Commission of the European Communities)
EEurope	A political initiative of the EC to allow Europe to benefit fully from the Information Society.
EU	European Union
EUROGI	EUROpean umbrella Organisation for Geographic Information
FP	Framework Programme
FP5	The Fifth Framework Programme (1998 to 2002)
FP6	The sixth Framework Programme (2002 to 2006)
GI	Geographic Information
GIS	Geographic Information System
ICT	Information and Communications Technologies
IRC	Innovation Relay Centres
IST	Information Society Technologies
ISTAG	IST Advisory Group
ISTC	IST Committee
JRC	The EC Joint Research Centre
KA	Key Action
KA I	Key Action 1: Systems and services for the citizen
KA II	Key Action 2: New methods of work and electronic commerce
KA III	Key Action 3: Multimedia content and tools
KA IV	Key Action 4: Essential technologies and infrastructure
OJEC	Official Journal of the European Communities
RTD	Research and Technological Development
SME	Small and Medium sized Enterprises
UKISHelp	UK Helpline for the EU Information Society Programmes

Appendix C

European Programmes and Initiatives

C1 The Fifth Framework Programme

The Fifth Framework Programme (FP5) sets out the priorities for the European Union's research, technological development and demonstration (RTD) activities for the period 1998-2002. These priorities have been identified on the basis of a set of common criteria reflecting the major concerns of increasing industrial competitiveness and the quality of life for European citizens.

C2 The Sixth framework Programme

The EC in the spring of 2001 presented the Council of Ministers the draft programme that will form the sixth Framework Programme (FP6) which will run from 2002 through to 2006 once approved. The draft content for FP6 is currently open for consultation. The proposals for FP6 include Information Society Technologies and will include specific programmes on:

- Applied IST, which will address the major societal and economic challenges.
- Communications and computing infrastructures;
- Knowledge and interface technologies.

C3 The eEurope initiative

eEurope is a political initiative to ensure the European Union fully benefits for generations to come from the changes the Information Society is bringing. These changes, the most significant since the Industrial Revolution, are far-reaching and global. They are not just about technology. They will affect everyone, everywhere. Bringing communities, both rural and urban, closer together, creating wealth, sharing knowledge, they have huge potential to enrich everyone's lives.

Managing this transformation represents the central economic and social challenge for the Union. It will impact profoundly on European employment, growth and productivity for the next five years and for decades afterwards.

eEurope is intended to accelerate positive change in the Union. It aims at ensuring this change towards the Information Society is cohesive, not divisive. Integrating, not fragmenting. An opportunity not a threat. In essence, *eEurope* aims at bringing the benefits of the Information Society to the reach of all Europeans.

The key objectives of *eEurope* are:

- Bringing every citizen, home and school, every business and administration, into the digital age and online.
- Creating a digitally literate Europe, supported by an entrepreneurial culture ready to finance and develop new ideas.
- Ensuring the whole process is socially inclusive, builds consumer trust and strengthens social cohesion.

eEurope specifically tackles the following areas.

The objectives above have been translated into specific actions lines as follows:

Objective 1 – A cheaper, faster, secure Internet

- Cheaper and faster Internet access.
- Faster internet for researches and students
- Secure networks and smart cards

Objective 2 - Investing in people and skills

- European youth into the digital age
- Working in the knowledge-based economy
- Participation for all in the knowledge-base economy

Objective 3 – Stimulate the use of the Internet

- Accelerating e-commerce
- Government online: electronic access to public services
- Health online
- European digital content for global networks
- Intelligent transport systems

C4 eContent Programme

The eContent programme is aimed at supporting the production, dissemination and end use of European digital content and to promote linguistic diversity on the global network.

The eContent programme is based on three main strands of action where EU added value can be maximised:

- Improving access to and expanding use of public sector information.
- Enhancing content production in a multilingual and multicultural environment.
- Increasing dynamism of the digital content market.

C5 IST Cross Programme Themes

The objectives of the IST Cross programme action lines is to ensure that topics associated with more than one Key Action are addressed in a coherent manner with each Key Action concentrating on and contributing from its particular perspective. These activities themes add value by facilitating information exchange, consensus and co-ordination on themes that cut across the Programmes.

During 2001 there are 13 CPAs, which includes CPA 3: *Use of Geographic Information*. The objectives of IST2001 V1.1.3 CPA3 include:

To improve

- citizens' awareness and comfort;
- industrial competitiveness;
- the efficiency of public administrations;

by enhancing the use, access and management of geo-information.

To contribute to the eEurope initiative, in particular

- Government on-line.
- Citizen environmental awareness.
- Intelligent transport systems

The target domains include:

- transport, mobility;
- tourism, entertainment;

- e-Map;
- e-Work, e-Commerce;
- statistics;
- meteorology, the environment;
- intelligent publishing and delivery mechanisms.

Appendix D

EU Innovation Relay Centres

The IRC section of the CORDIS web site contains details of IRC's across Europe. The following table details the IRCs within the UK.

Region	Geographic coverage	URL details
Eastern England	Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire	www.stjohns.co.uk/eeirc
Midlands	Coventry and Warwickshire, Derbyshire, Herefordshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, Shropshire, Staffordshire, the West Midlands and Worcestershire	www.mids.demon.co.uk
Northern England	All counties and urban districts of Northern England from the Scottish border in the north to the southern boundaries of Cheshire, Yorkshire and Humber	www.rtcnorth.co.uk
Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland	www.ledu-ni.gov.uk/irc
Scotland	Scotland	www.targetingtechnology.co.uk
South East England	London, Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire	www.seirc.co.uk
South West	Cornwall, Devon, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire and the City and County of Bristol	www.southwest-irc.org.uk
Wales	Wales	www.wda.co.uk/business/relay/

The goal of the IRC network is to enhance European business competitiveness by strengthening the technology and innovation base of SMEs.

The scope of the IRCs is to:

- Promote the trans-national technology transfer of technologies, whatever their origin, in accordance with the needs of the local industrial, economic and social fabric;
- Promote the trans-national dissemination and exploitation of the results of Community research, including notably those identified by the innovation units of the thematic programmes as suitable for third party exploitation;
- Stimulate the capacity of firms to adopt new technologies by establishing their needs and ability for trans-national co-operation and partnerships between them;
- Promote common trans-national innovation initiatives of European regions as well as support schemes in priority areas of the Specific Programme;
- Provide information on the innovation actions of FP5.