



Dear Reader

After two years' work providing European entrepreneurs in the ICT field with support in the form of solutions to questions on investment issues, training and the provision of opportunities to secure funding, YMIR, VentureGate and ACCESS ICT, the three projects responsible for developing the ICT Finance MarketPlace, will end in early 2012 following the completion of their remaining activities and events.

This support has been effected through the creation of manuals and online tools, the provision of online and offline networking opportunities for entrepreneurs to "pitch" their ideas in front of international investors and the organisation of more than 15 workshops, seminars and events where entrepreneurs were able to meet with and receive feedback from international investors.

More than 200 entrepreneurs have benefited from ICT Finance MarketPlace activities and, as a result, are better prepared to find and secure private equity funding for their projects and, as a consequence, the European ICT sector has been strengthened and made potentially more competitive.

In this issue, we present you with the remaining upcoming events and activities in the programmes of each project as well as the main achievements we have accomplished over the last two years.

The remaining ACCESS ICT events and activities include the Investment Readiness & Investor Forum to be held in Barcelona, Spain on 19th January in cooperation with the Business Angel Network of Catalonia (BANC) and Barcelona Activa and which focuses on improving access to finance for Spanish ICT SMEs, and, the ACCESS ICT: Final Conference which will take place at European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels, Belgium on 31st January in order to will summarise the project and close its 2 years of activity.

Our final ICT Finance MarketPlace Venture Academy and Investment Forum event will take place in Lisbon Portugal on 25th and 26th March 2012. It is being held together with the annual **Tech Media Europe 2012** which is a brokerage event aimed at identifying promising tech start-ups from across Europe and attracting top European venture capital, corporate, private and other investors. In 2011, these included **Vodafone Ventures, Alcatel-Lucent, 360 Partners** and many others.

If you or someone you know could be interested in participating in any of these events, please check out our upcoming events section in this newsletter or go to our website www.ict-finance-marketplace.com and learn more about our activities and how ICT SMEs can more easily access finance.

On behalf of ICT Finance MarketPlace
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Highlights

19th January 2012, ACCESS ICT Investment Readiness & Investor Forum, Barcelona, Spain

ACCESS ICT, in cooperation with the Business Angel Network of Catalonia (BANC) and Barcelona Activa will organise an event dedicated to improving access to finance by Spanish ICT SMEs.

31st January 2012, ACCESS ICT: Final Conference, European Economic and Social Committee, Brussels, Belgium

ACCESS ICT will organise a final conference on 31 January 2012 which will summarise the project and close its 2 years of activity.

25th - 26th March 2012, ICT Finance MarketPlace @ Tech Media Europe 2012, Lisbon, Portugal (venue to be announced)

On 25th and 26th of March 2012 respectively, ICT Finance MarketPlace will organise its final Venture Academy and Investment Forum, in conjunction with Tech Media Europe 2012. This event requires registration which should be done at www.e-unlimited.com/TME

For further details see the Upcoming Events section in this issue and visit the ICT Finance MarketPlace Events page



What is ICT Finance MarketPlace?

The ICT Finance MarketPlace is an initiative delivered by three EU funded projects (YMIR, ICT VentureGate and ACCESS ICT) which aims to improve access to venture capital and other investment finance for innovative ICT SMEs and ICT research teams across Europe. The initiative facilitates the introduction of SMEs, which are active in EU funded ICT research and looking for financial partners to commercialise new technologies, to business angels, venture capital and to other investors seeking enterprises with innovative projects, which have the potential to become marketable products.

Achievements of Partner Projects over 2 Years

YMIR: Major Achievements

► ICT 2010 Digitally Driven, (27th – 29th September 2010, Brussels, Belgium)

ICT Finance MarketPlace was present at the "ICT 2010: Digitally Driven" event which was organised by DG Information Society and Media of the European Commission in Brussels in September 2010.

The event included special sessions presenting the European Union's funding priorities for the €2.8 billion of EU money which is available for ICT R&D during 2011 - 2012. Furthermore, the exhibition provided researchers from Europe and beyond with space to present their latest work in upstream ICT innovation as well as close-to-market projects. More than 200 projects were displayed over 10,000 square meters.



The ICT Finance MarketPlace sessions and active debate ended with the concluding remarks of Mrs Neelie Kroes, European Commissioner for the Digital Agenda who presented awards to each of the three entrepreneurs who made the best presentations at the Investment Forum.

Mrs Neelie Kroes, European Commissioner for the Digital Agenda, presenting an award for Best Presentation to Mrs. Karin Haager of Flimmit GmbH (Austria) 1st Digital Agenda Assembly (June 16th - 17th 2011, Brussels, Belgium)

► 1st Digital Agenda Assembly (June 16th - 17th 2011, Brussels, Belgium)

During the 16th and 17th of June, 2011, the ICT Finance MarketPlace ran a Venture Academy (VA) and an Investment Forum (IF), in conjunction with the 1st Digital Agenda Assembly in Brussels.

The event included a series of workshops, designed to identify solutions to specific challenges and plenary sessions with the objective of synthesising the discussions and identifying a way to bring the benefits of a digital society and economy to Europe's citizens.

Mrs Neelie Kroes, European Commissioner for the Digital Agenda again presented awards to the entrepreneurs who made the best three presentations at the Investment Forum, underlining her appreciation of the importance of SMEs to Europe's economy and her commitment to improving their access to finance.



► Future Internet Week (October 27th - 28th 2011, Poznan, Poland)

ICT Finance MarketPlace ran a Venture Academy and an Investment Forum in Poland on 27th and 28th October in conjunction with Future Internet Week.



During the Venture Academy, 11 SMEs received guidance about how to approach and deliver an effective presentation to investors, along with constructive comments highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of their presentations and business proposals.



Coaching Session during the Venture Academy in the FIW in Poznan

The Investment Forum took place on the 28th of October where the same 11 SMEs showcased their business ideas to investors from across Europe and from Silicon Valley.

The entrepreneurs who received awards for the Best Pitch were **Mr. Arek Skuza**, ITraff Technology, Poland and **Mr. Michal Lipiecki**, bs4, Poland.



Investors at the Poznan Investment Forum



Entrepreneur at the Poznan Investment Forum

Some feedback received from participants at the ICT Finance MarketPlace in Poznan included:

"The event in Poznan, namely the Investment Forum, provides a good opportunity to improve my pitching skill and to meet investors as well as fellow entrepreneurs. Meeting different people is interesting and learning from other projects is very exciting. The event is enjoyable and efficient. I feel like to join the event again if I get the chance in the future."

Mr. Leihe Wang, OrderValley B.V.

"ICT Poznan was a great opportunity to get great feedback regarding my pitching skills, meeting other entrepreneurs and getting good insights on how venture capital works. The event was correct regarding organization and participation, hope to attend the next one in Portugal."

Mr. Jose H. García Losada, PLASAE

"If I may summarize my thoughts, I found the experience very refreshing and exciting. It was really great to listen to enthusiastic entrepreneurs presenting their "babies" and eager to get advice to improve the communication and strengthen the message. Coaching and nurturing those promising start-ups and companies help to build a strong and competitive Europe in a more challenging worldwide marketplace."

Mr. Michel Cezon (Coach)

"By taking part of the ICT MarketPlace in Poznan, I have had the opportunity of meeting great entrepreneurs and investors from different European countries. The working atmosphere was distended, and the organization of the event was perfect."

Mr. Alfredo Bermúdez de Castro (Investor), Inberso



Mr Mauro Bianchi CEO of TESEO and co-coordinator of ICT Finance MarketPlace presented the award for Best Presentations to the winners Mr Arek Skuza (left) and Mr Michal Lipiechi (right) during Future Internet Week in Poznan

ICT VentureGate: Major Achievements

► ICT Proposers Day 2011 and Brokerage event (19th - 20th May 2011, Budapest)

This event brought together numerous ICT SMEs (many of them have participated in European Commission RTD Framework Programme projects) and ten innovation investors. A panel discussion covered the challenges that SMEs face, such as the securing external finance and commercialising their R&D results. Additionally, differences in attitudes and strategy between European and US SMEs and investors and the perceived asymmetry between the SMEs and the investing entities were debated.



The ICT FM Stand at ICT Proposer's Day Event

Twelve ICT SMEs seeking finance presented projects to an audience from several EU countries. A short discussion followed each presentation. Projects covered many ICT areas and provided a wide scope of innovation opportunities and business development. Subsequently, networking followed between potential investors and SMEs. One-to-one sessions of SMEs and investors were conducted over lunch and afterwards in a congenial and productive atmosphere.



The ICT FM Stand at ICT Proposer's Day Event

The Brokerage Event was considered a success because of the active involvement of the participants who provided insightful feedback and because of the numerous one-to-one SME-Investor sessions. This was reflected in the participants' written responses and primarily from the follow-up meetings and serious business discussions that were held during the event and afterwards. Eventually, funding was obtained by some of the participating SMEs.

► The ICT VentureGate Brussels Brokerage Event (4th - 5th October, 2011, Brussels)

The 2nd ICT VentureGate Brokerage event was co-organised with YMIR and with ACCESS ICT and focused on "Making EU SMEs Investment Ready".

Mr Richard Tuffs, Director of ERRIN, presented the role of regions in SME support, emphasizing that regions know the needs of the people and industry and can support "smart specialization".

This was followed by a thematic discussion on "The Issues and Challenges of ICT SMEs in Accessing Public/Private Funding", led by Dr Anton Theuma of ICT VentureGate and moderated by Mr Tuffs and a panel of experts. Various topics, such as policy development, venture capital passport, investment in Europe and how it differs from the US and more were discussed. This was followed by a presentation and coaching session, in which the participating ICT SMEs were trained by European experts on how to prepare and improve the SME's business pitch and project presentations. This was followed by a networking period.



The panel and the participants in the Brussels ICT VentureGate Brokerage event

The second day, opened with a panel discussion on “How we can create effective complementarity between public and private funding to help ICT SMEs grow rapidly”. It was moderated by Mr Philippe Vanrie of the European Business Network and European Commission representatives also took part.

This was followed by the presentations, by 13 SMEs, of projects seeking funding and then by one-to one meetings between investors and SMEs, allowing sharing of interests and promotion of follow-up and project uptake.

Since the event, several of the SMEs reported progress in their interaction with the Investors and suggested that investment is soon to be realised.

› The ICT VentureGate Rome Brokerage Event (1st - 2nd December, 2011, Rome)

ICT VentureGate held its last brokerage event, “Defining Innovation”, within the EFI2011 (European Forum for Innovation) organised by the European Alliance for Innovation.

The two-day event hosted SMEs, experts and investors from all over Europe for networking and training sessions. On Day 1, 13 SMEs pitched their ideas and received coaching and specific advice to polish their presentations in order to ensure top-class presentations to investors on Day 2.

Day 2 started with a panel discussion on how to create the right ecosystem for commercialisation of SMEs project results. Investors, experts and SMEs discussed how to raise funding successfully and approach investors in the correct manner. The main tips that came out of the discussion were:

1. Do homework first – know who you are presenting to and act accordingly;
2. Understand that the investor and SME are going to be a team with a mutual interest;
3. Understand that the goal of the first meeting is to grab the investor's attention - not to go into technical details.

Later, eleven projects were presented to investors and were further discussed during networking sessions, where business opportunities were investigated further.



The ICT VentureGate event in Rome

› The ICT VentureGate Web Platform

Based on ICT value chain model, the ICT VentureGate Matchmaking Platform represents a smart mapping of actors and market opportunities (www.ictventuregate.eu/makingplatform). About 250 entities have already registered to it. It improves networking between actors, and allows the SMEs to become more competitive. The platform also reduces risks for investors by target-sourcing the technologies they seek. The main benefit of the platform is that it enables direct networking between SMEs and private innovation investors or business angels. Other than that, it also facilitates the exchange of information, offers guidance and support, as well as helps with transfer of best practices. The long term objective is to create community/project memory.

› The e-Training facility of ICT VentureGate

The e-Training facilities developed by ICT VentureGate (www.geonardo.com/ictventuregate/) comprise e-Training courses that trainees can access online and choose from. The different modules within it include:

1. Raising Capital in Europe
2. Understanding Business Readiness
3. How to Prepare a Business Case
4. Presentation Skills
5. Cases and Best Practices.

Each training session includes the relevant learning modules, short tests and the opportunity to consult with the tutoring team. In the future, the facility could also include focused Webinars and other tools such as chat sessions organised by partner organizations to encourage networking between registered SMEs.

Access ICT: Major Achievements

› 9th EBAN Winter University (18th - 19th November 2010, Nice, France)

The 9th EBAN Winter University 2010 was held in collaboration with Sophia Business Angels with a theme of recognising early-stage industry as a new asset class. One session, attended by over 100 participants, presented ACCESS ICT and discussed the opportunities arising from ICT Research and Innovation, in particular, the challenges, risks and benefits of investing early.

The panel was moderated by Anthony Clarke, Chair BBAA and MD Angel Capital Group. Invitees included Dusan Stojanovic, Founder TGV, Mario Anid, President of Anidvest and Blaise Vignon, Microsoft.



› ICT Spring – From Tech Innovation to Market Leadership (28th – 29th June 2011 – Luxembourg)

ICT Spring is a global two-day event bringing together over 1,500 ICT executives from Europe, America, Africa and Asia. Business angel investors (left to right in the picture) Steve Glangé (BAN), Muriel Devillers and Joseph de Gheldere (BeAngels) accepted the challenge to be questioned by ICT entrepreneurs.

A training session was delivered by Steve Glangé covering key issues for ICT SMEs when fund raising. At the Q&A, participants were able to ask investors questions and get an insight on perspectives when investing in ICT SMEs.

ACCESS ICT invited five SMEs (from Germany, Portugal, Italy, Austria and Switzerland) seeking to commercialise the output of their EU-funded research to present to some 300 investors looking for new deals at the event.



› ACCESS ICT Finance Bootcamp (4th October, 2011, University College London)

The event, organised by ACI in conjunction with Capital Enterprise, was attended by key business angel and VC investors as well as Royal Bank of Scotland and TTO representatives.

45 Entrepreneurs / researchers participated from FP6&7 projects, STREPs, Networks of Excellence (Collaborative Projects) and FETs. All were early-stage seeking funding to implement business ideas (beta stage and pre-proof of concept), some of which were the direct result of their own R&D.

Jenny tooth introduced angel and early-stage investment and what makes a good, investment-ready deal. A panel of investors then discussed what attracts them to invest and how to approach investors. Dr Anthony Finkelstein, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Sciences, Software systems at UCL and a serial entrepreneur himself, presented a case study.



Each of the 35 entrepreneurs present gave short pitches receiving direct feedback from the investors, followed by networking and one to one discussions between entrepreneurs and investors.

› ACCESS ICT Investment Readiness & Investor Forums at Portugal Business Angels Week (7th November, Cascais and 11th November 2011, Santarém, Portugal)

ACCESS ICT, partnering with FNABA, the Portuguese business angels federation (www.fnaba.org), delivered an investment readiness workshop and invited ICT SMEs to pitch to a panel of early-stage investors in the context of the National Business Angels Week.

In Cascais on 7 November, a training and coaching session hosted presentations delivered by business angels on the most common issues that prevent entrepreneurs from accessing angel funding and provided individual and group support to improve each company's business plan and elevator pitch. 20 companies participated in this full-day, interactive session.

In Santarém on 11 November, the last day of the National Business Angels Week, over 50 investors from north and south Portugal gathered and provided an audience for the 6 companies which pitched following a coaching session.



▶ European Investment Event for ICT Projects and SMEs (1st December, 2011, Paris, France)

ACCESS ICT and Go Beyond invited 5 ICT SMEs, which had previously received EU FP6/7 R&D funding, to attend Go Beyond's European Investment Event for ICT Projects and ICT SMEs, organised in the context of the National Business Angels Week by France Angels.

This event brought together 45 international investors from Go Beyond's network based in Paris who were looking for promising ICT businesses.

Each selected company could pitch to a panel of investors and received feedback on its proposal. Two companies were able to present that evening to broad investor audience.



▶ ACCESS ICT Investor Readiness and Investment Forum with EUREKA Eurostars' companies (7th December 2011, Brussels, Belgium)

ACCESS ICT and EUREKA cooperated to organise a special event hosting 13 SMEs mostly from the EUREKA Eurostars programme. These SMEs pitched their business to experts who provided tailored advice and coaching on their investor presentation. The SMEs had time to modify and finalise their presentations, taking on board tips from the experts, to present again in the afternoon.

The full-day event included a networking lunch and moderated panel discussion on 'Bridging the gap – from R&D to commercialisation' which was led by EUREKA Chairman, Sándor Erdő, who is very familiar with private investment. Viorel Peca, Head of Unit at the European Commission's DG Information Society and Wim de Waele, CEO of IBBT, also participated. The event was moderated by Anthony Clarke, Chairman of the Commission's Expert Group on Cross-border Matching of Innovative Firms with Investors.

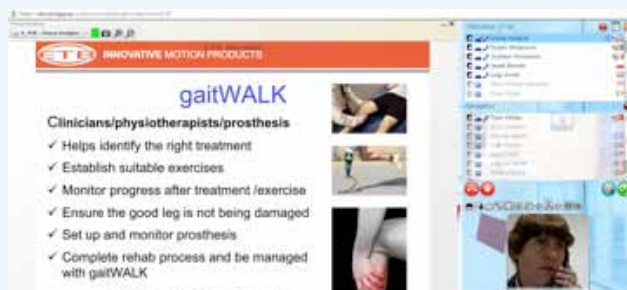
Stakeholders, members and associates of both EUREKA and EBAN were invited to observe and to get involved in the panel discussion.



▶ ACCESS ICT Online Pitching Session (13th December 2011)

ACCESS ICT challenged 8 ICT SMEs which have received EU R&D funding to join a virtual room to interface with 5 early stage investors and present their business in 15-minute slots, including Q&A. This was the first time EBAN and ACCESS ICT organised a virtual event running over the phone and with video and slide share support.

Feedback received from participants revealed this is a promising channel for business presentations. Despite the digital approach, investors not knowing each other and entrepreneurs joining the room only for their allotted 15 minutes, a cooperative group emerged with investors becoming interested in many of the businesses and spending longer on the Q&A than expected.



ICT Finance MarketPlace: Partners Cooperative Achievements over 2 Years

Access to Finance Toolkit

The ICT Finance MarketPlace toolkit is targeted at innovative SMEs in the ICT sector which have participated in the European Union RTD Framework Programmes (under relevant ICT strands) which are seeking sources of external funding to commercialise the results of their RTD activities.

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The aim of this toolkit is to provide information and advice on how to become investment ready and, notably, on how the SME can make its business proposition attractive to different types of early stage investors across Europe.

The toolkit guide users through the main steps that are needed in order to become investment ready. It reviews the specific challenges and opportunities as an ICT SME, including case studies and hot tips from investors and entrepreneurs. It also provides links to further sources of information and advice.

You can access the ICT FM Toolkit section by section on the website or download it at <http://tiny.cc/ict-fm-toolkit>.



European Investor Mapping

A survey of investors across the EU found that venture capital investors, in particular those making early-stage investments, place the majority of their funds in their own region or country. However part of their total portfolio is dedicated to European and international investments, albeit less than 25%.

Investors' first round of investment is mostly between €10,000 and €250,000 per individual investment. A significant number of respondents also invest between €250,000 and €2.5 million. For syndicated investments, the majority of respondents invest as groups in amounts mainly between €50,000 and €2.5 million.

There is a clear focus among respondents on investments in start-up companies (31%), other early-stage companies (28%) and seed-stage companies (20%).

The biggest challenges perceived by investors for ICT SMEs seeking investment finance in order of importance are:

- Lack of market and customer validation;
- Lack of an experienced management team or skills to take the business forward;
- Scalability of the business model - including in an international context;
- Exit potential;
- Investment returns.

Profiling of SMEs seeking Investment

Eighty percent of SMEs responding to the ICT VentureGate survey were interested in attracting external finance. The size of investments sought varied from €150,000 to €15 million, with the average being in the region of €1-3 million. For SMEs, the major problems in accessing finance are the lack of information about sources of finance and few opportunities for networking.

More than 90% of the companies were interested in services that would help them to be investor ready, get information about external finance and meet investors. All services offered by the ICT VentureGate platform are interesting for the SMEs and they are especially interested in receiving online information about access to finance in the ICT sector, belonging to a community of entrepreneurs and investors and participating in brokerage events bringing together SMEs and investors.

ICT Finance MarketPlace Partners

YMIR

Europe Unlimited S.A. (Belgium) www.e-unlimited.com

INA – Southern Europe Telecommunications & Informatics Research Institute (Greece) www.inatelecom.org

MentorTec – Serviços de Apoio a Projectos Tecnológicos S.A. (Portugal) www.mentortec.eu

UNINOVA – Iniciativas Empresariais Inovadoras (Spain) www.uninova.org

ACCESS ICT

EBAN: The European Trade Association for Business Angels, Seed Funds and other Early Stage Market Players (Belgium) www.eban.org

Angel Capital Group (United Kingdom) www.angelcapital.co.uk

ICT VENTUREGATE

Paragon Europe Ltd. (Malta) www.paragoneurope.eu

Geonardo Ltd. (Hungary) www.geonardo.com

Invent SAS. (France) www.invent.fr

Synbea (France) www.synbea.fr

APRE (Italy) www.apre.it

Euro Consultants Ltd. (Israel) www.eurocons.co.il

ICT Finance MarketPlace Events

UPCOMING EVENTS AT WHICH THE ICT FINANCE MARKETPLACE WILL BE ACTIVE

ACCESS ICT Investment Readiness & Investor Forum (19th January 2012, Barcelona, Spain)

ACCESS ICT, in cooperation with the Business Angel Network of Catalonia (BANC) and Barcelona Activa will organise a session dedicated to improving access to finance by Spanish ICT SMEs which have previously received EU funding for research. Eight companies will be selected from among the coaching-session participants, to present their business to real investors who will be invited by BANC and by other, local early-stage players.

Additional information about the event will be made available on www.ict-finance-marketplace.com.

ACCESS ICT: Final Conference (31st January 2012, European Economic and Social Committee, Brussels, Belgium)

EBAN and ACI, partners in ACCESS ICT, will organise a final conference on 31 January 2012 which will summarise the project and close its 2 years of activity. The session will provide an account of the project's activities, achievements, future sustainability and of policy recommendations proposed by ACCESS ICT's Steering Group.

A selected group of stakeholders who have cooperated with the project since February 2010, will be invited to participate in a round table to discuss the results achieved and how different organisations can take a role in the future to provide better access to finance for ICT SMEs involved in EU funded research programmes.

Organisations willing to participate in this final conference are invited to register for the event by sending an e-mail to the project manager, Luis Galveias (luis.galveias@eban.org). An agenda of the event will be made public soon on the ACCESS ICT website.

ICT Finance MarketPlace @ Tech Media Europe 2012 (25th - 26th March 2012, Lisbon, Portugal (venue to be announced))

On 25th – 26th March 2012, ICT Finance MarketPlace will organise the last Venture Academy and Investment Forum, in conjunction with Tech Media Europe 2012 in Lisbon, Portugal.

Tech Media Europe 2012 will be an occasion for early- and growth-stage start-ups, corporate and venture capital investors and industry players to network and discuss market opportunities and trends in media and ICT technology.

During Tech Media Europe 2012, 40 - 50 selected entrepreneurs/start-ups will showcase their business to a panel of international investors. Of these 20 -30 will do so at the ICT Finance MarketPlace Investment Forum. Many will have benefitted from a coaching session at the ICT Finance MarketPlace Venture Academy on the previous day and thereby improved their presentations and presentation skills as well as addressing any fundamental weaknesses or issues in their pitch.

The investor panel will be composed of venture capital, corporate and other investors as well as business angels and relevant key industry players.

This event requires registration at: www.e-unlimited.com/TME (Registration is free)

Visit the ICT Finance MarketPlace Events page.



ICT Finance MarketPlace News

NEWS IN BRIEF

Public Private Partnership calls 2012

Three PPP calls closed on Thursday 1st December 2011 covering Factories of the Future, Energy efficient Buildings and Green Cars. ICT related proposals were submitted as follows:

Factories of the Future 30 Integrated projects, 26 STREP, Total 56 proposals
Energy efficient Buildings 31 STREPs (only STREPs were called for)
Green Cars 23 STREPs, 2 CAs, 1 SA, Total 26 proposals

Evaluation discussions of all three calls will take place in Brussels in the week of 23rd January. Hearings for IP proposals in the Factories of the Future call will take place in the week beginning 6th February.

The Evaluation Summary Reports for Energy efficient Buildings and Green Cars will be out by the middle of February; those for Factories of the Future have to await the outcome of their hearings, but will be available before the end of that month.

ICT Finance MarketPlace News

NEWS IN BRIEF

First Innovation Union Convention

Forty-five of Europe's best ICT research projects were on exhibition the EU's first Innovation Union Convention held in Brussels on 5th – 6th December 2011. Among them:

- The V-City project integrates 3D modelling and virtual reality to reconstruct whole cities in 3D format using maps, photos and data in just a couple of hours;
- Project Perform offers remote monitoring of patients suffering from neuro-degenerative diseases and movement disorders, such as Parkinson's disease;
- The CASBLIP research project focuses on a cognitive aid for the blind as a wearable device to interpret information from the real world and transforming it into 3D sound maps;
- The Brain Computer Interface (BCI) created by the Brainable project helps people with severe disabilities to communicate;
- The Interstress project uses virtual reality to create a new way to measure all forms of stress;
- The Nanopower project seeks to power wireless sensors and nano-electronic devices without the need of batteries via transforming vibrations and movements into electrical power;
- Octopus is a soft-bodied robot that can operate under water and perform fluid movements.

FET Proactive information day

The Future and Emerging Technologies (FET) Proactive unit will stage a public information day for their objectives in the forthcoming ICT Call 9 in Brussels on 18th January 2012. The FET Proactive objectives in this call are:

- FP7-ICT-2011.9.9: Quantum ICT (QICT) including ERA-NET-Plus
- FP7-ICT-2011.9.10: Fundamentals of Collective Adaptive Systems (FOCAS)
- FP7-ICT-2011.9.11: Neuro-Bio-Inspired Systems (NBIS)
- FP7-ICT-2011.9.12: Coordinating Communities, Identifying new research topics for

Registration is free of charge but obligatory. Places will be allocated on a first-come, first served basis.

Horizon 2020

In November 2011, the European Commission presented a package of measures to boost research, innovation and competitiveness in Europe under Horizon 2020, an €88 billion research and innovation investment programme which succeeds the 7th Framework Programme and will run from 2014 to 2020.

Horizon 2020 will focus on three strategic goals - support the EU's position as a world leader in science (budget €27.8 billion), secure industrial leadership in innovation (budget €20.3 billion) and addressing major concerns shared by all Europeans, across six key themes (budget €35.9 billion), namely:

- i. Health, demographic change and well-being
- ii. Food security, sustainable agriculture, marine and maritime research and the bio-economy;
- iii. Secure, clean and efficient energy
- iv. Smart, green and integrated transport
- v. Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials
- vi. Inclusive, innovative and secure societies

Draft ICT PSP Work Programme and Call for Proposals 2012 now online

The draft ICT PSP Work Programme 2012 has been approved by the CIP ICT Committee. The work programme is still subject to the formal approval by the European Commission (expected in January 2012). The 6th Call for Proposals would be opened from 1 February to 15 May 2012 (pending to the formal approval of the Work programme 2012 by the Commission). An information day on the 6th Call for Proposals is planned for 3 February 2012 in Brussels. Confirmation of the date, the exact venue and the draft agenda will be published during the week of 9 January 2012. On line registration will be open from that page during the same week. Visit http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/ict_psp/index_en.htm for details.

New EU Open Data Strategy – €100 million for improved data-handling technologies

In December 2011, the European Commission has launched an Open Data Strategy for Europe, which is expected to deliver a €40 billion boost to the EU's economy each year. Europe's public administrations are thought to be sitting on a goldmine of unrealised economic potential contained in the large volumes of information collected by numerous public authorities and services.

Member States such as the United Kingdom and France are already demonstrating this value. The strategy to lift performance EU-wide is three-fold: firstly the Commission will lead by example, opening its vaults of information to the public for free through a new data portal; secondly, a level playing field will be established across the EU for open data; finally, these new measures are backed by the €100 million which will be granted in 2011-2013 to fund research into improved data-handling technologies.