

# Neutrons and muons: how to succeed in FP7?

**E**uropean neutron and muon facilities have been successfully involved in EU Framework Programmes since their earliest days. Construction of the ISIS muon facility started with the help of EU funding from FP1 in 1985. Kurt Clausen ran one of the very first EU Access programmes at Risø starting in FP3 in 1991.

By 1993 five other neutron and muon facilities were also offering EU funded access. Mike Johnson coordinated ENNI, the first neutron related research and technical development project in FP3, then XENNI in FP4 and TECHNI in FP5; there were six other RTD projects in FP4 and five in FP5.

The Neutron Round Table was one of the first to be established, coordinated by Charles de Novion in FP3 and then Kurt Clausen in FP4 and FP5. In FP6 all of the neutron and muon facility related activities were grouped into a single project - NMI3 - the Integrated Infrastructure Initiative for Neutron Scattering and Muon Spectroscopy.

NMI3 is the second largest I3 project, the synchrotron project IA-SFS being the largest, and includes EU access to all European neutron/muon facilities apart from ILL, eight Joint Research Activities, and networking activities which replace the previous Round Table. Building on the very solid foundations of all the projects in previous Framework Programmes, NMI3 has established a very high profile and has been considered a model for how European research infrastructures can work effectively together. So what does the future hold?

In FP7 the Research Infrastructures budget is not as large as had been hoped. With big new activities, such as Preparatory Phase projects for the 35 potential facilities on the ESFRI Road Map and 29 potential targeted I3 projects related to the FP7 Thematic Priorities, there will be significant pressure on the budgets for the "traditional" I3.

This is a great pity, since these I3 are seen to be one of the more generally successful areas of EU funding

when it comes to useful pan-European collaboration. EU funding to neutrons and muons has been of order 5M€ per year since 2000.

The total funding of European neutron and muon facilities exceeds 200M€ per year, so the EU contribution is only a small percentage. Of course all additional money is useful, particularly that coming from Access since it is a direct payment for a service delivered, with no strings attached.

But there are significant opportunities for savings within normal development budgets if we collaborate more, rather than compete. Despite the high level of bureaucracy, and the emphasis on project management over scientific and technical excellence, organisations actually appear to like the fact that the EU offers a defined collaboration framework, rather than having to set it up for themselves. But it is time that we overcome this reluctance – otherwise FP7 may start to see neutron and muon facilities moving apart for the first time in over 20 years.

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