

The European research policies

A comprehensive Bavarian challenge...

In order to be able to survive in the complex arena of the world markets, we have to stay at the cutting edge of technological advancement and offer innovative products that are attractive to the consumer. This is the only way that we can secure our prosperity for the long term. For this reason, it is considerably significant that commerce and science work closely together in the area of research.

In light of its 11 universities, 19 universities of applied sciences and almost 30 non-university institutions, Bavaria has become well established as a hub for research and sets standards within the European stage. The expenditures incurred for research and development (R&D) in Bavaria amount to approximately 3% of the gross domestic product; this affords Bavaria a ranking among the three top German Federal States as regards their share of R&D funding.

It has therefore become a high priority for the Bavarian government to positively influence this research orientation with various factors. In this sense, both fundamental research, as well as applied research, are generously funded. It is their goal to create an optimal network between science and economy.

The Bavarian research landscape in comparison

However, when we examine the third-party funds allocated to Bavarian universities, then we realise that more than 80% of the funding is derived from the German Research Foundation (DFG), the Federal Government (BMBF) and industrial sources. EU projects are hardly apparent within this context, although the budget for the 7th Framework Programme, figuring at €50.5bn, has been

increased threefold since the last Programme. Bavarian universities in particular have not fared so well on average. Third-party funds from the EU for Bavaria amounted to €34m in 2006. This quota even diminished by approximately 5% in 2007, while the trend continues to be downward.

There were 83 projects granted for Germany in 2008 within the 7th Framework Programme; 31 of them for Bavaria. Bavarian universities played a coordinating role in only four projects, while the other projects were coordinated by non-university institutions such as the Max-Planck Institute and the Helmholtz Association.

Within the same timeframe, Greek universities were able to raise funds for 22 projects, which they also coordinate themselves; even Turkey, as a non-EU member state, was able to acquire 12 projects with a coordinating function.

It is also the case among the small and medium-sized enterprises, which are viewed by the EU Commission as a catalyst for research policies, that the Bavarian efforts for 2008 were not able to produce a single coordinator for an EU-funded project.

It is a fact that there are hardly any projects in Bavaria that are coordinated by Bavarian universities or universities of applied science. Why is this?

- Scientists tend to choose the path of least resistance; this means that they often fill out research applications alone or with only one partner. These applications are then forwarded directly to regional or national subsidy providers or other topic-specific endowments. Since sufficient financial means are available at these sites and the expectations and contacts are

previously known, the probability of receiving funding is quite high. EU projects are disadvantaged in this context. Moreover, the scientific quality of a project with EU origin does not have a good reputation among the universities;

- The universities often do not have the advantage of the necessary infrastructure to develop and formulate EU projects. Particularly impacted by this fact are the universities for applied sciences, which have no central structure at their command;
- Furthermore, deficits exist within the management structure: even if an EU research project is successfully installed and authorised, the time-consuming project-development and completion phases cannot be adequately supported by the university, because of the fact that resources are missing;
- Industry is determined to come to terms with research projects with universities. The application process collapses, but usually right away at the beginning stages, since there is an unawareness of regulations concerning intellectual property rights among European consortia.

Perspectives

The European research arena has become indispensable for international cooperation. And during critical times, it is important to know how one can procure admission to alternative sources for subsidies. The European Union offers funding on a vast scope, which must increasingly be acquired by Bavaria. For this reason, the research interests of Bavaria must be consolidated and proactively incorporated into the topic formation phase for the research framework programmes.

The Bavarian Research Alliance – an opportunity to take advantage of Bavaria's strengths

As a result of this necessity to consolidate the research resources within Bavaria, the Bavarian Research Alliance GmbH was founded in 2006 through an initiative from the aggregate Bavarian universities (University of Bavaria) and by financial support from the Ministry for Science, Research and Art and the Ministry for Business, Infrastructure, Transport and Technology as well as the Bavarian State Chancellery. The consortium of all Bavarian universities for applied sciences (University of Applied Sciences Bavaria) as well, is involved with the non-profit organisation BayFOR as a second partner.

Our main competencies lie in the following four fields of business:

- Support in the acquisition of regional, national and European subsidies – strategic consultation for Bavarian scientists regarding proposals and, if required, support for project execution, particularly with regard to the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development of the EU. Our services comprise a broad spectrum for informing, consulting and supporting the scientists with the specific project idea;
- Representation in Brussels regarding strategic-political representation of interests for Bavarian university research vis-à-vis the European Union (lobbying). Our Brussels office represents the Bavarian universities and universities of applied sciences on the European stage, strengthens their visibility and functions as the 'door-opener' and contact to European institutions;
- International Cooperation – particularly as a site for scientific coordination between Bavaria – Québec and Bavaria – Alberta (Canada). Bavaria and the North-American Region of Québec have been working closely together for many years in the areas of

science, research and technology. We support the exchange between the individual scientists and their facilities and cooperate closely with commerce. It is our objective to jointly achieve a fortified international presence and, furthermore, to procure mutual advantages in international research and innovation competition;

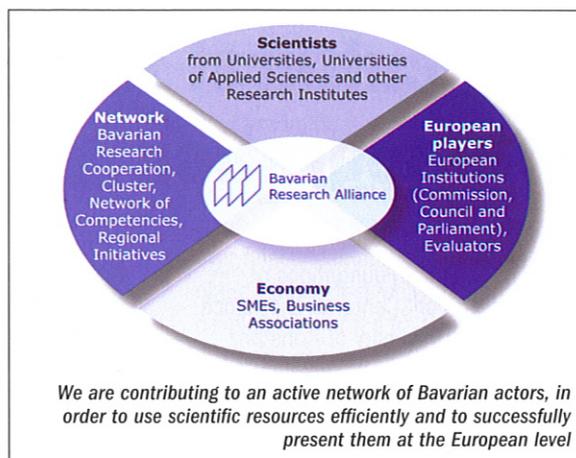
- Management of the Bavarian Research Cooperation – as well as their networking at an EU level. A research cooperation is a unique network of scientists, specialising in widely differing disciplines. The researchers operate from different locations, and work together on complex topics. Since 1985, the concept of research cooperation has worked for interdisciplinary research projects and close to application research projects in Bavaria.

Fit for Europe

BayFOR is a partner within the EU consultancy network for small and medium-sized enterprises, the 'Enterprise Europe Network'.

The hallmark for the 'Enterprise Europe Network' (EEN) project is the so-called 'One-Door-Principle', which is meant to enable, for the enterprises, fast and direct access to relevant information and to the correct contact person.

Target groups from this project, which started officially on 7th February 2008, are mainly scientists and enterprises from sectors with high demand for knowledge, innovation and technology. Close collaboration with the business partners in the network and the Bavarian clusters guarantees access in the process to local enterprise clientele.



The Bavarian Research Alliance is primarily responsible, in the EU consultation network, for the information, consultation and 'sensitisation' of SMEs regarding the opportunities and possibilities for participation within the 7th Framework Programme. Furthermore, it is also a contact partner for universities and companies regarding questions and problems revolving around the topics of the transfer of innovation and technology between academic research and the industrial-commercial-private sector.



Further information: EU-Commission:
http://www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm



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