

# EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK

## Call for proposals

### The European Investment Bank proposes two new EIBURS sponsorships within its EIB-Universities Research Action

(2009/C 155/05)

The European Investment Bank channels most of its institutional relations with Universities through an EIB-Universities Research Action consisting of three different programmes:

- **EIBURS**, the **EIB** University **R**esearch **S**ponsorship Programme,
- **STAREBEI** (**ST**Ages de **RE**cherche **BEI**), a programme for financing young researchers working on joint EIB-University projects, and
- **EIB University Networks**, a co-operation mechanism for university networks showing characteristics that are of particular relevance to support the objectives of the EIB Group.

**EIBURS** provides grants to University Research Centres working on research topics and themes of major interest to the Bank. EIB sponsorships, of up to EUR 100 000 per year for a period of three years, are awarded through a competitive process to interested University Departments or Research Centres, associated with Universities of EU, Accession or Acceding Countries, with recognised expertise in EIB-selected areas, so they can expand their activities in these areas. The successful proposal will entail the delivery of a variety of outputs (research, organisation of courses and seminars, networking, dissemination of results, etc.) that will be the subject of a contractual agreement with the Bank.

For the academic year 2009/2010, the **EIBURS** programme has selected two new lines of research:

#### — **Development of public e-services in Europe**

Both the Renewed Lisbon Strategy and the European Economic Recovery Plan identify the universal deployment across Europe of high-speed broadband access infrastructure as a key requirement for accelerating the use of productivity-enhancing e-services applications. As market incentives may initially not be sufficient for the roll-out of these applications, the public sector is expected to play a leading role in stimulating the demand for applications so as to economically justify the deployment of such infrastructure. At the same time the public sector could benefit from significant productivity increases by providing existing services more efficiently or developing new services. It could therefore invest in the required infrastructure network (given its public good nature and the need for open access) and specify the types of service the infrastructure will be expected to cater for (output-based approach).

The research programme should evaluate the deployment potential for different types of e-services (e.g. e-Government, e-Health, e-Learning), identifying the respective roles of the private and public sectors and the most efficient delivery modes (especially in the context of a public-private partnership arrangement). It should take account of new EU actions, such as the lead market initiative and pre-commercial procurement, which are intended to enable the public sector to take the lead in encouraging the emergence of new markets. And it should also reflect the public interest in developing demand-side initiatives based on ICT applications in other sectors such as transport and in particular energy, where ICT can play an important role in increasing energy efficiency.

The project may involve any additional research activity that the University Centre wishes to undertake with the sponsorship, such as (i) the organisation of courses and seminars; (ii) the creation of databases and surveys; and (iii) in-depth case studies.

— **Financial and Economic Valuation of Environmental Impacts**

The financial and economic valuation of the environment and its implications for human well-being is particularly pertinent to the inter-related topics of climate change and biodiversity, which are expected to be major global issues in the 21st century.

Climate change is already happening: the world is getting warmer with all the associated changes, and this is exacerbating existing threats to ecosystems and biodiversity.

In particular, ecosystems such as forests, wetlands and coastal zones are under threat from ongoing habitat destruction and fragmentation. Consequently, various ecosystem services — such as flood control, pollination, preservation of healthy soils and carbon sequestration — are also threatened. The long-term functionality of these ecosystems needs to be ensured in order to maintain the services that they provide. Healthy ecosystems are more resilient to the impacts of climate change and associated weather variability.

Against this background, building on existing research findings and empirical evidence, the EIB is inviting research proposals in *one or both* of the following related fields:

- The costs and benefits of ecosystem protection in the context of climate change, acknowledging the need to address existing threats in order to strengthen resilience to climate change impacts, and the role played by (and value of) healthy ecosystems in terms of both climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation;
- The use of market-based approaches to protecting and enhancing ecosystem services, based on experience in the carbon market.

The deadline for presentation of proposals is 30th September 2009. Proposals submitted after this deadline will not be considered. Proposals should be sent to:

EIB-Universities Research Action  
100, boulevard Konrad Adenauer  
2950 Luxembourg  
LUXEMBOURG  
To the attention of Ms. Luisa Ferreira, Co-ordinator.

*For more exhaustive information on the **EIBURS** selection process and on the other programmes and mechanisms, please visit [www.eib.org/universities](http://www.eib.org/universities)*

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