The European Science Foundation: Excerpts from the Annual Report for 1987

The European Science Foundation (ESF) is an association of 49 research councils and scientific academies in 18 countries. The ESF brings European scientists together to work on topics of common concern, to coordinate the use of expensive facilities, and to discover and define new endeavors that will benefit from a cooperative approach. The scientific work sponsored by the ESF includes basic research in the natural sciences, the medical and biosciences, the humanities and the social sciences. The ESF links scholarship and research supported by its members and encourages cooperation across national frontiers. Through its function as coordinator, and also by holding workshops and conferences and by enabling researchers to visit and study in laboratories throughout Europe, the ESF works for the advancement of European science.

The General Budget for 1988 amounted to French Francs (FF) 12,476,000, itemized as follows: salaries and charges, FF 8.110 million; running expenses, FF 1.187 million; travel and meetings, FF 2.448 million; publications, FF 576,000; other, FF 155,000. The Scale of Contributions for the member countries (based on net national income) was, for 1988:

Austria	2.24%	The Netherlands	4.58%
Belgium	2.87%	Norway	1.76%
Denmark	1.88%	Portugal	0.59%
Finland	1.63%	Spain	5.74%
France	17.65%	Sweden	3.20%
FRG	21.94%	Switzerland	3.51%
Greece	1.28%	Turkey	1.51%
Ireland	0.59%	United Kingdom	15.64%
Italy	12.15%	Yugoslavia	1.24%

Executive targets of the ESF

ESF resources are constrained – this in turn compels choice and careful scrutiny before funds can be allocated. The Council's 'Executive Targets' form a useful filtering device, or reference point, in helping to define the 'working objectives' of standing committees, ad hoc groups and staff members, and in helping to decide how its budget is to be apportioned. The targets, as submitted to the Executive Council in September 1987 are, briefly:

1. To identify and promote new scientific activities on a European scale, where the whole project will be greater than merely the sum of the parts, where coordination by the ESF proves necessary because other agencies are not taking the required action and the ESF is well suited to the task.
2. To identify projects, in type like that of the 'Ocean Drilling Project' consortium, where cooperation leads to outcomes which could not be achieved by individual countries alone.
3. To press forward in the process of creating new, and reinforcing old, networks which will facilitate the furthering of mobility and the professional development of young scientists.
4. To encourage the widening of international horizons on all academic fronts and to expose in particular the humanities and social sciences to new interdisciplinary approaches and new techniques.
5. To nurture European communities of young scientists and scholars by generating support for joint endeavors that make use of ESF and Member Organization contacts.
6. To pinpoint means of helping Member Organizations in their endeavor to improve the training opportunities for younger scientists – in particular by developing multilateral exchange programs.
7. To provide a forum for discussion and independent scientific opinion on a wide range of issues where the interests of technology, industry, basic science and the public converge.
8. To identify, through the resources of Member Organizations, areas where scientific enthusiasm is greatest in Europe and to ensure that cooperation flourishes.
9. To support individual Member Organizations in special studies or activities.
10. To disseminate the aims of the ESF to a wide scientific audience.

Scientific Networks of the ESF

Networks are intended to bring together people working in the same field in Europe so as to strengthen a particular area of science or to consolidate advances in an area of science that is already strong. The initiative should come from the scientists, but the ESF helps in organization and finance. Nine networks have so far been approved by the Executive Council for a two-year period (Phase 1). Four of the networks have subsequently been endorsed for a Phase 2; two of these networks (numbers 1 and 2 in the table) had been launched in January 1988 for a 3-year Phase 2.

	Phase 1	Financial support
1 Network on Longitudinal Studies on Individual Development	July 1985–July 1987	650,000 FF
2 Network of Earth Science Study Centres	July 1985–July 1987	600,000
3 Network on Transport, Communications and Mobility	January 1986–January 1988	575,000
4 Network on Polar Science	April 1986–April 1988	780,000
5 Network on the History of European Expansion	June 1986–June 1988	500,000
6 Network on the Crystallography of Biological Macromolecules	March 1987–March 1989	625,000
7 Network on Molecular Neurobiology of Mental Illness	March 1987–March 1989	565,000
8 Network on Surface Crystallography	July 1987–July 1989	500,000
9 Network on Volcanology	November 1987–November 1989	500,000

Phase 1 Network operations have so far been financed from a special fund, the Network Seed Fund, created in 1985, and a call for funds was made to member countries for FF 6.5 million (1 million ECU). The money collected was sufficient to finance Network operations until the end of 1988. From 1989 on, money for these Network operations will be collected by an annual call.

The full Annual Report can be obtained from:
The European Science Foundation,
1, quai Lezay-Marnésia,
F-67000 Strasbourg, France.

The European Brain Research Program 1989–1990 of the European Science Foundation (ESF)

Training program activities

Short-term fellowships are intended for qualified young scientists who already have some research experience but need further training and expertise to broaden their research activities. These fellowships cover periods of up to 3 months and are meant to facilitate the transfer of knowledge or techniques relevant to research in neuroscience of behavioral science. Applicants are expected to return to their institutions upon termination of the grant. Deadlines for applications are 1 March and 15 September. Applicants should preferably be under 35 years of age. They are expected to work in a country other than their own, in Europe or Israel.

Travel grants are available to young scientists allowing them to participate in the Annual Meetings of the European Neuroscience Association (ENA) and the European Brain and Behaviour Society (EBBS).

Advanced research activities

Twinning grants. Requests can be submitted by laboratories located in 2 or 3 different countries and working in the neurosciences or the behavioral sciences. Twinning grants support research projects which any one of the groups could not undertake singly because it lacks the methodology offered by the other institutes. In particular, multidisciplinary collaboration is supported. The grants allocated do not exceed French Francs (FF) 20,000 per project and are meant to cover the costs of short reciprocal visits of research workers from the participating institutes. Application deadlines are 1 March and 15 September.

Travel fellowships for advanced technology in neuroscience. Due to the rapid development of new techniques in neuroscience research in recent years it has become increasingly difficult for scientists and laboratories to keep up to date, to set up and make use of such techniques. To ameliorate this situation a new type of grant has been created for experienced scientists, allowing them to visit institutes with well-recognized advanced technology in neuroscience. The maximum grant per project is FF 15,000. Deadlines for applications are 1 March and 15 September.

General information

Applications may be submitted only by scientists working in a European or Israeli laboratory. Further information and application forms can be obtained from: Ms Linda Gardner, European Science Foundation, European Training Programme in Brain and Behaviour Research, 1 quai Lezay-Marnésia, F-67000 Strasbourg, France.