

Information on the programme « Interuniversity Attraction Poles » (IAP)

The Interuniversity Attraction Poles (IAP) programme aims at providing a temporary impulse for the formation of excellent **Belgian interuniversity networks in basic research**.

The principal objectives of the IAP-programme's are to:

- provide excellent research teams with additional human and material resources in order to get a sufficient critical mass;
- encourage collaborations between teams from different institutions belonging to the different Belgium's linguistic Communities;
- promote complementarity and interdisciplinarity between these teams;
- enable young teams to benefit from the environment of excellence provided by a network and its international influence;
- facilitate the insertion of Belgian research teams in European and international networks.

The IAP programme has been implemented since 1987 in phases of five years each. The ongoing sixth phase (2007-2011) consists of 44 networks with a total budget of 143 million EURO. The IAP networks span a wide range of research fields with three major orientations: life sciences, exact and applied sciences, and human sciences.

At the end of 2010 a scientific *ex-post* evaluation of the ongoing networks of phase VI was organised by means of written evaluations and panel meetings. The conclusions and recommendations of these scientific evaluations were communicated to the different partners of the networks and to the universities'boards.

Within the perspectives of the seventh phase (2012-2017), a new Call for proposals was launched with the deadline for submission of the proposals on 17 October 2011. This call is open for existing IAP networks and for new applications. Networks having taken part in the sixth phase must take into account the recommendations of the *ex-post* evaluation.

The Belgian science policy (BELSPO) is now organising an ***ex-ante* evaluation of the proposals**, by means of a **written procedure** by four independent and international evaluators.

The results of the *ex-ante* evaluation will be used to draft a ranking list which will be used for the final selection of the networks for the seventh IAP-phase.

More information on the IAP-programme can be found on our website www.belspo.be/iap