



Office of the Vice-Minister-President
of the Flemish Government and
Flemish Minister for Innovation,
Public Investment, Media and Poverty
Reduction

Mr. Steven Bishop
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FuturICT Initiative

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your correspondence dated

your reference

our reference

attach.

JA/067/05201

ask for

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date

30 APR. 2012

subject:Letter of Intent: FuturICT FET Flagship Initiative

Dear Sir,

Being Minister responsible for innovation in the Flemish Region (Belgium) I was informed about the FET Flagship initiatives.

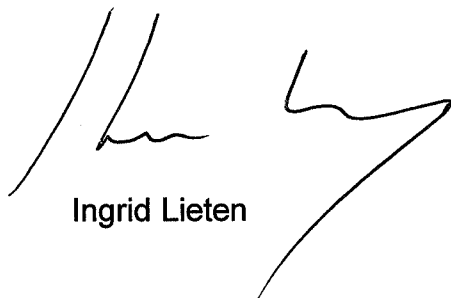
In particular the FuturICT initiative that you are proposing for the FET-Flagship programme has drawn my full attention. Indeed, the FuturICT project seems to be a very challenging initiative requiring cooperation at the European level. I'm convinced that the universities and research institutes of Flanders are able to contribute to the major objectives of FuturICT.

Therefore, it is my pleasure to inform you that I am willing to look favourably on supporting our participation in FuturICT should the initiative be selected by the European Commission. This support would then be provided according to standard procedures implemented by the Flemish funding agencies.

For your information in annex, a short overview of the Flemish instruments, major funding agencies and research efforts related to the research domains of FuturICT.

I am confident that our researchers' participation in an ambitious initiative such as FuturICT would be of mutual interest.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ingrid Lieten', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Ingrid Lieten

Annex

FuturICT FET Flagship Initiative

This one page document gives a short overview of Flanders' research activities and interest in the FuturICT FET Flagship initiative.

1. Instruments

The Flemish research institutes acquire most of their public funding through open competition via bottom-up research project calls. Participation in European projects such as ERANET+ is subject to approval by the Flemish Government. The implementation is handled by the funding agencies such as: Research Foundation Flanders (FWO), Hercules research infrastructure fund, and the Agency for innovation by Science and Technology (IWT). The level of funding is in general proportional to the Flemish contribution to the initiative.

2. Actual research activities in the domain

At present, the total public funding contribution to FuturICT-related research projects in the Flemish research institutions is about 115.3 million euro (on-going projects March 2012), of which 50.2 million euro is provided by the regional funding agencies FWO (frontier research), IWT (applied research and innovation activities), and Hercules (research infrastructures). In addition, the IWT invested 15.9 million euro in ICT research in the private sector (2010 figures). Next to these public investments, the Flemish private ICT sector invested up to 772 million euro in intramural R&D in 2009, which amounts to 29% of the total private sector R&D investments in Flanders (Source: AGORIA, Union of Technology Industries).

3. Current interest

The Flemish research institutes that already expressed their interest in FuturICT are 4 universities (KU Leuven, UGent, UAntwerp, VUB) and the strategic research centre Interdisciplinary Institute for Broadband Technology (IBBT). They have currently invested 33.8 million euro in the research domains of FuturICT. At present, these organisations employ 781 researchers in the specific domains, including 147 senior researchers. Moreover, Flemish researchers at these institutes collaborate in European projects (especially FP7) in FuturICT relevant domains for an estimated total budget return of 31.2 million euro. This includes also 4 grants of the European Research Council (Philip Lemey, Jan Ramon, Tinne Tuytelaars and Luc Van Gool).

4. Strong participation of Flanders in the FP7 ICT theme

In general Flanders research organizations are participating very well in the FP7 ICT theme. Indeed, the Flemish budget return for ICT research in FP7 amounts in total to 121 million euro up to 2010, which is 50% more than what would have been expected based on Flanders' GDP (source: EWI, Department of Economy, Science and Innovation of the Flemish Government).