



The European Social Simulation Association

March 19, 2010

To Whom It May Concern

**RE: Candidate Flagship on “FuturICT: Unleashing the Power of Information for a Sustainable Future” EU Projects, FET Programme, Complexity Initiative**

On behalf of the Management Committee and as President of the European Social Simulation Association (ESSA), I would like to express the strong interest of our community in this scientific initiative.

On one hand, this initiative is a clear evidence of the growing reputation of social simulation and its fertile interconnections with other scientific environments. When the computational social sciences link ICT with the social scientific disciplines, social simulation can bridge the gap with complexity science.

On the other hand, the candidate Flagship shows the strong applicability of social simulation. Nowadays, it would be short sighted to ignore the tools that ICT in general, and computer simulation in particular, can provide to anyone who is interested in understanding the evolution and change of societies. There is no way to investigate the future without the powerful technology provided by ICT, because these technologies are a significant factor for change, and a major component of the future. ICT-enabled social simulation enables us to understand future developments of ICT and its contribution to society..

Taking advantage of a large network of prestigious institutions and highly reputed scientific partners, the Flagship has several merits.

Firstly, it tackles the most crucial issues that strongly affect the future growth and the quality of life of Western(ized) societies.

Secondly, it creates a far-reaching interdisciplinary vision, requiring strong synergies among physics as well as social, cognitive and computational sciences.

Thirdly, if one may use an oxymoron, it represents a solid vision. Highly ambitious in its objectives, it stands on solid grounds. Implementing complex and evolving virtual societies is a daring task, which, on the other hand, can count upon a resource of models, theories, techniques and tools. Still in progress, some basic ingredients (new theories and models, large-scale simulation platforms, databases and data-mining techniques, etc.) are already available, waiting to be incorporated into a consistent theoretical framework.

Fourthly, it would contribute to European competitiveness by providing novel means to maintain and develop its welfare tradition. Moreover, it will add to the merits of the Complexity Programme of the European Union to provide the ways and means of such a competitive endeavour.

Finally, it is innovative, building on the frontiers of ICT and providing stimulating reasons to go even further: using Bertrand Russell’s words, it builds on the objective to “see in imagination the society that is to be created”.

Best wishes

*Rosaria Conte*

(President of ESSA

<http://www.essa.eu.org/> )