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# The Future of European LUGs

*Points for discussion*

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*Jerzy B. Ludwichowski, GUST*

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*TUG 2003 Conference, July 20 – 24, Hawaii*

In Nottingham, 2002, Erik Frambach advocated international **co-operation**.

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But '*money makes the world go round*' and therefore funding—preferably from outside—is needed.

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### **An opportunity:**

*The Sixth Framework Programme (FP6)* of the EU  
a funding programme targeted to spur European research  
in areas where Europe is perceived to lag behind the  
USA and Japan.

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## Goal:

close the gap between Europe and the USA and between Europe and Japan, where R&D spending is perceived as the driving force of technological progress.

- ▷ Japan – 3.1% GDP
- ▷ USA – 2.7% GDP
- ▷ Europe – 1.8% GDP
- ▷ aspiring countries – even less

Over several years, 16.3 billion EUR will be spent.

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Seven priority thematic areas are identified, namely:

- life sciences, genomics and biotechnology for health;
- **information society technologies (IST)**;
- nanotechnologies and nanosciences, knowledge-based multifunctional materials, and new production processes and devices;
- aeronautics and space;
- food quality and safety;
- sustainable development, global change and ecosystems;
- citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society.

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**‘Information society technology’ is targeted with a 3.6 billion EUR funding and this vision:**

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**‘Our surroundings  
is an interface to the world of integrated  
Information Technology Services’**

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## IST targets:

- Enabling anywhere any time natural and enjoyable access to IST services for ALL
- Natural way of interaction and co-operation
- Life and work quality improvement, new ways of activity
- New standards: products, services, applications, business processes, organization practices.

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## Four Key Actions:

I. Systems and services for the citizen

II. New methods of work and electronic commerce

III. Multimedia: content and tools

IV. Essential technologies and infrastructures

In general, **research** addressing societal challenges (“e-inclusion”, environment, cultural heritage, entertainment, transport and tourism)

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## Types of projects:

1. Targeted Projects
2. Integrated Projects
3. Co-ordination Actions “Networks of Excellence” or **NofE**
4. Support Actions (conferences, seminars etc.)

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## Expressions of Interest

The 6th FP started this year (2003) but the relevant EU bodies before the first **call for proposals**, issued in December 2002, issued in February 2002 a call for **expressions of interest** (EoI).

GUST, with the help of NTG, Dante, GUTenberg and UK TUG members prepared an **NofE EoI**, available at [http://eoi.cordis.lu/search\\_form.cfm](http://eoi.cordis.lu/search_form.cfm)

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# The NofE proposal

## The summary

## The EuroT<sub>E</sub>X proposal

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DECISION No 1513/2002/EC  
OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT  
AND OF THE COUNCIL  
of 27 June 2002

concerning the sixth framework programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities, contributing to the creation of the European Research Area and to innovation (2002 to 2006).

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## Working documents of the Research DG of the EC

- ▷ **Provisions** for implementing Networks of Excellence
- ▷ **Outline** of the core contract between the Consortium and the Commission
- ▷ **Draft core contract** between the Consortium and the Commission
- ▷ **Checklist** for Consortium agreements in FP6.

Available at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/>, along with many more documents.

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## Discussion time

- ▷ It should be stressed that except for possibly being noted, our EoI has no significance whatsoever.
- ▷ The second Call for Proposals is going to be issued soon, with 3 months time to prepare it.
- ▷ I seriously doubt if we, the T<sub>E</sub>X user groups, are able to fulfil the requirements for NofE, as understood by the EC.
- ▷ Perhaps we should join forces with FSF Europe – an IP (**LAFIS**) and an NofE (**FOCAL**), available at <http://fsfeurope.org/documents/fp6/>

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▷ Erik Frambach asked: **What's cooking?**

▷ I think the answer is—CTAN. CTAN is a 'nail soup' aka 'stone soup', of an enormous potential, which also seems to be a goulash or hogde-podge unuseable by the 'general public' (out of which miraculously T<sub>E</sub>X Live emerged);

**BUT:**

▷ we do not have a **PRODUCT** with which we could go out and seek broadly understood support, hence we need to come up with one!

**Will it be:**

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- *TEX Live (or is it?) – The Team?*
- *LaTEX 3 – The (other) Team?*
- *LyX – (yet another) Team?*
- *XEmTEX – Fabrice Popineau?*
- *ConTEXt – Hans Hagen?*
- *NTS – Karel Skoupy?*
- *Omega – Yannis Haralambous, John Plaice,...?*
- *fonts, fonts, fonts... (also a complete book or set of books explaining fonts, fonts, fonts... as needed for the TEX world)?*
- *a repository of TEX related publications, descriptions and manuals; translated into different languages?*

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- *a pan-European T<sub>E</sub>X journal, with a repository of articles to be freely used by local user groups?*
- *a central T<sub>E</sub>X server (automatic installation update, intelligence for CTAN)?*
- *T<sub>E</sub>X as a vehicle for preserving cultural heritage?*
- *a database for preserving cultural heritage (e.g., old hyphenation patterns for Dutch and German)?*
- *or last but not least, a set of publishing tools for the FP6, targeting researches, administrators or school children (citizen in general)?*

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- ▷ None of this will happen without excellent cooperation between T<sub>E</sub>X user groups, T<sub>E</sub>X developers and the reinventing of the ways things are being organised (e.g., like the Apache or MySQL organisations)

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- ▷ Again – perhaps we should join forces with FSF Europe?

Last minute note: 3 recent proposals (GNUCAN, Libre-Net, OTCCMS) under FSF Europe aegis failed...

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# The Future of European LUGs? What is it?

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