

ERA-NET PLUS



INFRAVATION INITIATIVE PLANS CALL FOR PROPOSALS ON ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE INNOVATION IN EARLY 2014

Europe needs to redefine its transport system for the 21st century. Transport ministries across Europe are facing ever tougher challenges to cope with the need to accommodate increased traffic growth, minimise congestion, maintain services in face of increasing climate change effects, as well as deliver on environmental and societal objectives. Now is the time when innovation for road infrastructure is an absolute imperative, to reduce costs without compromising on quality.

To deliver this objective on a transnational basis, the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark, supported by FEHRL and TUV, have been working hard to set up an exciting new initiative for developing innovative infrastructure concepts called Infravation 2014 (as reported in previous issues of this magazine in November 2012 and June 2013). This new ERA-NET Plus action is expected to be supported through the European Commission's (EC) Framework Programme 7 (FP7) 2013 Work Programme. This call will address the needs of Member States for joint research on road infrastructure and will enable national and regional bodies to take on tasks collectively that otherwise could not be taken forward, bringing together the efforts of Member States, the EC and industry. In a first ever, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)/Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will participate too, through its Cooperative Agreement with FEHRL.

Infravation comprises a blend of 11 European countries and the EC, as well as the participation of the USA through FEHRL. Infravation will pave the way to a new quality of transnational research funding cooperation by applying a real common pot that merges national and EC top-up funding into one funding pot.

THE CALL

The topic of the Infravation 2014 call will be 'Advanced Systems, Materials and Techniques' for road infrastructure. For design, inspection and monitoring, advanced systems could include breakthrough sensing and analysis technologies, including 'manu-services'. The call

will include the development of advanced and novel materials based on nano-technology, biomimicry, etc. In the case of techniques for construction and maintenance, aspects such as advanced robotics could be developed.

The Infravation call will be issued in early 2014. For this call, the available budget for co-financing is €9 million. The exact funding scheme for specific stakeholders will be published in the Guide for Applicants which will be available at the launch of the call.

The call is for the development of innovative technologies for road operations, either on the European, national, regional or urban network. The topics being covered will be drawn from:

- Advanced predictive infrastructure performance processes
- Enhanced durability and life-time extension
- Rapid and non-destructive methods for routine quality and performance checks of materials and construction.
- Keeping freight routes open through zero-intrusive maintenance
- Ensuring infrastructure performance under all weather conditions
- Resource and energy efficiency in road construction and maintenance (Eco-design)
- Virgin material reduction by substitution or recycling.

Infravation is a challenge driven programme. All projects will be expected to deliver tangible, demonstrable benefits.

INFRAVATION SCOPING STUDY

To raise the profile of the ERA-NET Plus, help identify the key topics and further inform the development of the call for tenders and subsequent evaluation and negotiations, an Infravation scoping study is being undertaken to be completed before the end of 2013. This study, coordinated by FEHRL, involves international experts to determine the priority areas and delivered a portal on the topic (portal.infravation.net).

INFRAVATION PARTNERS



Rijksverkeer



Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development



Vejdirektoratet



Norwegian Public Roads Administration



TRAFIKVERKET



Viasat



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► For more information on the call, contact Miriam Stephan at miriam.stephan@de.tuv.com or David Doerr at david.doerr@de.tuv.com, or see www.infravation.net.