press release **Ideal-ist**
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Ideal-ist has generated more than 19,300 responses of interest within five ICT Calls. More than 50 responses for each Partner Search launched

Brussels, 3.December 2009 - Ideal-ist the successful international partner search network for Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) is open for partner searches relating to the sixth call in the 7th Framework Programme. After five closed Calls of the 7th Framework Program the effectiveness of the Quality check can be highlighted.

A recently published evaluation report by Ideal-ist, the worldwide ICT support network, demonstrates that a high interest among European and Non-European participants is shown in the electronic partner search system implemented and supported by Ideal-ist and its Quality team.

The level of responses generated by Partner searches during the first five Calls in the 7th Framework Program has demonstrated a high activity: 19,300 responses generated (Expressions of Interests) by interested organisation, which gives an average of 50 responses per Partner Search launched. In the first two years a success rate of almost 100% could be observed. This means almost every proposer who launched a partner search via Ideal-ist, found a key partner for their project.

On average 80 % of the partner searches finally submitted a proposal and out of this 33% scored above all evaluation thresholds. Approximately 11 % of these were retained for funding with an average score of 11.5 points.

This success results from:

- the effectiveness of the Quality check against predefined criteria which support the proposer e.g. to have better focused submitted proposals and hence increase the chances of being retained for funding. Besides the Quality team, the National Contact Points are also a great support to proposers.
- the support for completing the proposal consortium by the unique and fast partner search tool, which is also beneficial for enhancing the chances for a positive evaluation.
- the support of the large international ICT network, which publishes each partner search in more than 60 countries worldwide, so more than 60.000 contact addresses are reached.

SMEs and Academia are the main initiators of partner searches; however there is a big increase of research centres, consultants, non profit organisations, larger companies and public administration. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in particular, but also newcomers and potential participants from non-EU countries, are faced with problems in participating in European Framework projects. Obstacles which obstruct participation are a lack of experience and a lack of contacts and awareness. Once these obstacles are overcome and a project proposer participates in a funded project, many barriers to future participation are reduced. With the unique quality labelled partner search tool and the support of the whole network of National Contact Points, newcomers and less experienced organisations are given guidance on how to get started in FP7.

Experienced organisations are launching partner searches via Ideal-ist for the following reasons:

- to increase awareness
- to present the potential
- to find a coordinator
- to find specific expertise
- to find partners abroad
- to create an added value with a new partner
- to expand into another challenge
- to get support by the Quality team to increase the chances to submit a proposal and get funded

A conclusion that can be drawn from this recent report is that Ideal-ist is THE tool to link inexperienced proposers with many ideas, to coordinators and organisations that have experience in FP7 and are looking for an opportunity to join new projects. The Ideal-ist partner search system is available for anyone who needs to find partners for their ICT FP7 project.

Ideal-ist recommends that **Partner searches are initiated as soon as possible**, once the content of the project idea is known. Last minute Partner Searches should highlight that they are mature proposals looking for a very specific profile. This electronic partner search system is already open for partner searches relating to the sixth call in the 7th Framework Programme.

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About Ideal-ist
Ideal-ist is the first and unique quality labelled international ICT partner search network with 13 years experience. The network of Ideal-ist consists of 63 national contact points (NCP) in the area of Information and Communications Technologies. The Consortium members are from EU and Non-EU Countries, including Associated States, Eastern European Partner Countries (EEPC) and Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC) and Emerging countries like China, Brazil, India and South Africa. Ideal-ist is part funded by the European Commission and supports research organisations and companies worldwide to find partners for their project ideas. It helps them to join projects and to find services leading them to success in the 7th Framework programme. Furthermore, the main goal is the enhancement of cooperation between the national NCPs within FP7 and an overall improvement of quality across Europe in the dynamically growing area of ICT. This is in line with the international cooperation strategy of the European Commission.

Find more information on the Ideal-ist web portal www.ideal-ist.net