Frequently Asked Questions

• How is a technology platform set up and who are the stakeholders?

Due to their demand driven nature, key industrial concerns in the field in question play a leading role in initiating and advancing the platform. Nevertheless, to be effective, the platform approach is inclusive and mobilises the efforts of all key stakeholders. These typically include:

- *Industry* (large, medium and small, embracing the whole production and supply chain)
- *Public authorities* (given their role of policy-makers and funding agencies, as well as promoters and consumers of technologies)
- *Research institutes* and the *academic community*
- *Financial community* (e.g. Venture capital organisations and the European Investment Bank)
- *Civil society*, including users and consumers

It is up to the interested stakeholders themselves to decide whether or not to set up a technology platform. However, new emerging initiatives should meet some criteria (see below), designed to avoid a dilution of the ETP concept and overlaps between platforms. The relevant thematic services of the European Commission can provide guidance and emerging initiatives are invited to contact Commission services for more information (**RTD-ETP-Secretariat@ec.europa.eu**)

• What are the defining characteristics of ETPs?

A specific inter-service working group at the Commission evaluates whether emerging ETP initiatives adhere to the following criteria:

- Its key goals contribute to European growth, competitiveness and sustainability objectives, including:
  - Timely development and deployment of new technologies that offer the potential of radical change in one or more industrial sectors
  - Technology development to meet different policy objectives with a view to sustainable development
  - New technology-based public goods and services with high entry barriers and uncertain profitability, but which offer significant economic potential
  - Achieving the necessary technological breakthroughs to remain at the leading edge in high technology sectors that have significant strategic and economic importance
  - Renewal, revival or restructuring of traditional industrial sectors

- Interactions with and positive impact on a wide range of Community policies (e.g. industrial policy, sustainable development, economic and societal issues, regional policy)
- Clear commitment from industry and strong involvement from Member States
- Representation from a wide range of stakeholders (e.g. large industries, SMEs, NGOs, financial institutions, civil society, Member States)
- Addressing topics of recognised importance and of a vertical nature
- A technology platform is the most appropriate approach to achieve the desired outcome

Emerging initiatives that are considered to meet these criteria will appear on this website, and their industrial leaders will be invited to regular meetings to exchange views and information with Commission services. Emerging initiatives are invited to contact Commission services for more information (**RTD-ETP-Secretariat@ec.europa.eu**)

- **What is the typical lifecycle of a technology platform?**

While each technology platform has its own origins and approach and its own particular way of working, they normally follow a "three-stage" development process:

Stage 1: Stakeholders getting together in order to establish their "vision" for the future development of the field concerned and to set up the technology platform;

Stage 2: Stakeholders define a Strategic Research Agenda setting out their common views on the necessary medium to long term research, development and demonstration needs for this technology;

Stage 3: Implementation of the Strategic Research Agenda - for which, in many instances, it is anticipated that significant public and private investments will need to be mobilised.

- **How are technology platforms funded?**

In general, the stakeholders themselves fund their own costs in participating in technology platforms. Limited Community support for funding operational entities (for example a Secretariat) can however be mobilised in the case where a given platform's objectives and activities correspond closely with the thematic areas of the current 7th Research Framework Programme.

- **What is the role of the European Commission in technology platforms?**

The European Commission encourages this bottom-up, industry-led approach, for example through active participation as an observer in many platforms and by playing a guiding role, where necessary.

In order to avoid a dilution of the ETP concept and overlaps between platforms, the Commission services evaluate emerging initiatives, according to a set of pre-established criteria, and give recommendations for their development.

The Commission however does not "own" technology platforms (which do not have any legal basis) nor is bound by their views. The Commission services follow developments within technology platforms and, where appropriate, use their input in the course of developing European research policy. In this context, the Strategic Research Agendas have already provided a valuable and significant input to the nine themes of the "Co-operation" programme

in the Commission's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) and they will be further reflected in more detail in future Specific Programmes and Work Programmes.

- **Who can I contact for more information?**

The Commission services have compiled three Status Reports on the Development of Technology Platforms (February 2005, May 2006 and March 2007) which contain further information and contact details for the individual platforms.

Additional information on the context and rationale of platforms is available in the reports "Technology Platforms: from Definition to Implementation of a Common Research Agenda" (September 2004) and "European Technology Platforms and Joint Technology Initiatives: Fostering Public-Private R&D Partnerships to Boost Europe's Industrial Competitiveness".

All these reports are available on Cordis (http://cordis.europa.eu/technology-platforms/further_en.html).

For any other questions you can contact the ETP Secretariat at European Commission's Directorate General for Research at **RTD-ETP-Secretariat@ec.europa.eu**.

- **Is the information on technology platforms on this website exhaustive?**

Developments on technology platforms are evolving rapidly and the information provided on this site is by no means exhaustive. In general, information is provided on those platforms which have reached a certain maturity and of course when it is available to the Commission services.

In order to get up-to-date information on the activities of a specific ETP, please visit their web-sites, which are listed on http://cordis.europa.eu/technology-platforms/individual_en.html

- **Can I attend an event on technology platforms organised by the European Commission?**

The Commission holds seminars with the industrial leaders of technology platforms. The objective is to share experiences and best practice and promote synergy between the technology platforms whenever this adds value to their work.

All ETPs that meet the defining characteristics as detailed above are invited to these meetings. The proceedings and reports are publicly available on this site.

- **What is a Joint Technology Initiative?**

Joint Technology Initiatives are a specific new mechanism, envisaged to be introduced under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), which will enable coherent, large-scale structures to be set up in order to support the implementation of all or part of the Strategic Research Agendas defined by a limited number of technology platforms which are of such an ambitious scale that they will require the mobilisation of very high public and private investments, as well as huge material and human research resources.

Further information is available on ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/faqs-jtis_en.pdf.

At this stage, Joint Technology Initiatives are envisaged in the following fields:
- Innovative Medicines
- Aeronautics and Air Transport
- Hydrogen and Fuel Cells
- Nanoelectronics Technologies 2020
- Embedded Computing Systems
- Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES)