



NEST-PROMISE
NEST SUPPORT

The project will evaluate the social impacts of NLPs, such as how being involved in very risky and not-always-successful research affects scientists' careers.

Because NEST focuses on far-seeing, multidisciplinary research where the outcome is often unpredictable, NEST-PROMISE is potentially a very important complementary exercise. It will gather and analyse information on an extremely wide range of existing research initiatives operating along NEST lines, drawing vital experience from their successes and difficulties. Lessons learnt will enable the refinement of future project objectives, and encourage a wider use of NEST principles within the European Research Area.

NEST-building for the future

Over the last ten years a large number of very diverse research programmes have arisen all over Europe with several things in common – their innovative concepts, high-risk elements and multidisciplinary nature. They are exemplified by EU NEST projects and also referred to as High Innovation/Gain/Expectation (HINGE) programmes: the idea of NEST is to support visionary, interdisciplinary research and to anticipate Europe's future needs in science and technology. NEST projects, along with much smaller or more localised NEST-like programmes (NLPs) working towards a new approach in specific fields, have faced and overcome similar difficulties. They have accumulated much valuable experience which could be used to promote future successes (for NEST itself and other NLPs) and to avoid problems and mistakes already encountered.

From strength to strength

To do this, the NEST-PROMISE project will identify NEST-like initiatives and go on to record, analyse and validate their findings. Further research will evaluate the social impacts of NLPs, such as how being involved

in very risky and not-always-successful research affects the careers of scientists, especially those from special groups – for example, women, young scientists or those from new Member States. The insights gained will be used to strengthen existing NEST activities alongside current and developing NLPs. They should also encourage the introduction of NEST elements in other national programmes. In a sense, NEST-PROMISE will use this body of NLPs as a laboratory, bringing their past results to bear on future NEST initiatives in a way which will save time, resources and duplication.

The main aim of NEST-PROMISE is to develop practical tools which NEST initiatives and NLPs can use to optimise their benefits and cost-effectiveness. Many of the wide range of programmes and projects providing relevant experience may not even realise that they contain elements of the NEST approach. NEST-PROMISE will survey existing NLPs and others looking to introduce similar elements into national-level programmes, in terms of their methodology (successes, failures, problems and solutions) and



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AT A GLANCE

Official title

NEST-Promoting Research on Optimal Methodology and Impacts Supported by Experience

Coordinator

Israel: The Israel Science Foundation

Partners

- *Germany: Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research*
- *Ireland: Trinity College, Trinity Centre for Bioengineering*
- *Italy: Consorzio Pisa Recherche, Information Technology and Telecommunications Division*
- *Poland: Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute for Fundamental and Technological Research*

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their social impact. It will attempt to define the barriers limiting the spread of the NEST approach – the traditional European discipline-oriented education systems may constitute such an obstacle. The ultimate objective is to offer this value-added information to contribute to further NEST-related research, to strengthen existing NLPs, to promote new ones, and to encourage the use of NEST concepts in national programmes.

One of the more immediate outcomes of NEST-PROMISE is that its work will establish a network of NLPs which, together with its new database, web page, and regional briefings and workshops, will greatly enhance communication and the sharing of contacts, information and resources between NLPs – possibly leading to joint problem-solving, co-operative research, and an end to isolation.

Spreading the word

The project partners are extremely well-placed to disseminate their findings, as among them are National Contact Point organisations for the Research Framework

Programme for NEST and Information Society Technologies – giving access to databases containing tens of thousands of public- and private-sector research organisations.

As well as studying, refining and disseminating the accumulated wisdom from this type of research project, NEST-PROMISE is unusual in that it will carry out a significant amount of evaluation

on its own impact. Project partners will monitor and report on the usefulness and acceptability of its survey and reports, and on the participation and level of interest in regional workshops, briefings and a major dissemination/brokerage event. It will also assess the interest in follow-up activities

among the participants in Europe's NLPs, the level of interest expressed by national programmes about using NEST elements, and the usefulness of PROMISE to NEST itself. This and other feedback will be used by the project partners and their high-level expert advisory committee (NEPRAC) to guide their recommendations and action on future research support actions.

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SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME