

Marie Curie Fellows Association

Letter to Members

May 2007



Welcome to another issue of the “Letter to Members”!

Dear MCFE Members,

Is the MCFE capable of tackling all the themes we would like to get involved? Can our association really be a player in science policy discussions, representing scientists in debates and at the same time handle everyday problems of current MC fellows? This is only possible with strong national groups and a large and active administrative board. Read more about all the very interesting activities of our national groups.

Our association has a new logo as of today. The logo that received the most votes was proposed by Natalia Balcazar and will from now on be used on our website and communication.

More progress with the French and UK welcome packs and good news: more and more people are getting involved! Please take a look and give us feedback. Let's hope there will be more follow-ups on the welcome packs from other countries as well.

You can also check the link for news concerning the EIT and the Green Paper and send your ideas, feedback, and opinions to the MCFE mailing lists or contact the board to be redirected to the responsible persons.

Another chance for the MCFE to be heard!

The MCFE plans to have an active role in the ESOF 2008 where we will hopefully meet with many Marie Curie Fellows and fellow researchers from other associations. By the way, the call for proposals is open.

Also, read about discussions that take place in meetings of MC fellows in France and their problems. Why are they unhappy with regard to the E.C. and the MCFE? How can we tackle the everyday problems of fellows and also keep track of science policy etc.? This can obviously be done only with active participation from MC fellows who have no problem to get their hands dirty.

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Life of the Association

Membership Renewal 2007

Your membership makes a real difference to keep the Association live and running. Please renew your membership at your earliest convenience.

New MCFA logo: The 3 best

Our association has a new logo as of today. The logo that received the most votes was proposed by Natalia Balcazar and will from now on be used on our website and communication.



Congratulations Natalia!

Carsten Thun saw his two very nice ideas on 2nd and 3rd place. Well done!



and



This is the first of our association logos that has “fellows” instead of the “fellowship”. Don’t forget that the official name, “Association des boursiers Marie Curie”, means “Marie Curie Fellows Association”!

News from the Advisory Board

Ivana Casaburi, advisory board member and lecturer in the Department of Marketing Management at ESADE, Barcelona, Spain is working with Vanessa Diaz on the preparation of a **business plan** for the association. Momentarily, all the necessary data are being gathered, while the next step will probably be a questionnaire sent to MCFA members. MCFA members with experience and interest in such topics are invited to participate. Our advisory board has already started an interesting discussion about the best way for this project.

Philippe Zinck and Christos Christoglou have started a discussion with the editorial board that published the last issue of the **MCFA Annals**, trying to find the best way to revive them. One big obstacle seems to be that the annals cannot be published in paper form, but solely online due to financial reasons, thus discouraging submissions. Ideas, combined with active participation are more than welcome.

If you are interested in **joining the MCFA advisory board**, you are still and always welcome to submit your candidacy to office@mariecurie.org, with a CV and a suggestion for your preferred area of contribution.

Publications and Communications

First MCFA Newsletter 2007

The MCFA Newsletter Spring 2007 will finally not be available before this summer and will thus be called “Summer 2007”. We are sorry for not being able to deliver it in due time. You can still download the Newsletter Summer 2006 from the MCFA webpage.

If you want to publish an article in the next MCFA Newsletter, you should send your contributions to office@mariecurie.org, subject line “Newsletters 2007”, the sooner the better in order to avoid similar delays in the future.

The MCFA Newsletter, Spring 2007 will soon be available! You can still download the Summer 2006 newsletter from the MCFA webpage.

If you want to publish an article in the next MCFA Newsletter (which will be released in approximately 3 months), you should send your contributions to office@mariecurie.org with the subject line “Newsletter Summer 2007”.

Invitation for internship applications

Related to the MCFA Newsletter, we invite applications for internship (up to 3 months) in the

MCFA. Journalism students, graphic designers, journal and media managers are encouraged to submit their application. Please send enquiries and applications to office@mariecurie.org with subject line "Internship".

Career Development

Survey on researchers' mobility

The MCFA organised a survey on Researcher's mobility. The aim of this survey was to better understand the contribution of Marie Curie Fellows to developing a skilled labour force in both outgoing and host countries. While it is undis-

puted that a research period overseas forges new skills and knowledge, the role of mobility in forming and in reallocating knowledge across countries is at times debated, particularly with regards to skilled labour movements (e.g "brain drain"). We hope to bring you the results of this survey in the next Letter to Members.

National Groups and Mailing Lists

News from MCFA National Groups and Call for National Coordinators of MCFA national groups

The board is currently in the process of providing the active National Groups with new IT services, e.g. one blog for each active Group, hosted on the main server. We are confident that this will represent a useful tool in order to facilitate networking amongst members of each Group and beyond. The blogs will be available on the new website as soon as single blog contents are completed.

We are also committed in taking close contacts with the European Commission to trace new Marie Curie Fellows and inform them about the MCFA.

Moreover, we are elaborating new strategies to support the National Coordinators in managing their tasks. Of course, feedback is necessary, as well as a lot of pushing to keep things moving.

For more information please get in contact with us by email: office@mariecurie.org.

An activity report for each National Group has been requested, in order to assess the level of activity and necessities of different National Groups. We would like to urge those of the national group coordinators who have not yet submitted their reports to do so. This is the only way we can stay informed of the needs and problems of the National Group Coordinators.

Unfortunately, Stefan Ratschan decided to

step down from the position as National Group Coordinator in the Czech Republic. Any persons interested in taking over are encouraged to contact the office.

MCFA German National Group meeting in May

Unfortunately the meeting had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. Natalia Balcazar and Lyudmila Zinchenko are currently trying to organise a future meeting. MCFA members and MC fellows in Germany are kindly requested to contact either our office or Natalia and Lyudmila (natalia.balcazar@mariecurie.org and lyudmila.zinchenko@iais.fraunhofer.de).

MCFA French National Group meeting in May

Marianne Schaedel in France is trying to revive the French National Group. Anyone interested and especially anyone interested in working on the welcome pack for France is welcome to contact her or the office.

Marianne organised a meeting/social gathering with Marie Curie fellows in Lyon on the 22nd of May, which was a mixture of a get-together and contract discussions. Regarding the contract problems the fellows have, it was discussed how administrations do not seem to be very clear about management of the incom-

ing money, since often sums end up disappearing. In general, fellows are not informed about what kind of resources they can use and when they ask for details, there seems to be communication problems.

For example, one institution apparently does not hand out the mobility allowance to the fellows (PhD candidates), a random decision as there is a post-doctoral researcher at the same host institution who receives his mobility allowance with his salary. The same decision is also not applied throughout the whole network of these three researchers, as another PhD candidate in the same town at another host institution gets the allowance directly with her salary.

These are not unusual situations for MC fellows in France, but at least by having some personal contacts there is a starting point to find out which information is most urgently needed. The most important help would be to have a reliable and freely accessible database with all the financial details of MC contracts. To have information about guidelines for taxation and social deduction handling from the French government is essential to address the problem. More important would even be that there would be external help to overcome the often observed helplessness of the administration regarding complex contracts resulting in administrative decisions which do not benefit the fellow.

Marianne found the fellows by asking amongst the foreign students. The MCFA is apparently unknown to the fellows!

MCFA Welcome Packs: Update

The Welcome Packs are documents designed to help Marie Curie Fellows solve practical problems before or when arriving in a country, e.g. with respect to administration, social security and taxation. They are available on the MCFA website under: Publications → Welcome Packs but most of them are unfortunately outdated.

It is extremely important to update all our welcome packs as often as possible, as this will minimize the workload in the future, and maximize their usefulness. Only few sources offer the information one can find in the MCFA welcome packs since these are written by MC fellows for MC fellows and often point out the traps nobody else mentions.

UK Welcome Pack

The update of the UK welcome pack is still underway and awaits your input. This month the highlighted topic is on National Insurance: what it is, how to get an appointment for a NI number at your arrival in the UK and in what cases you need to pay contributions. Please participate and update this section if you have any recent experience on these matters. You will need to go to <http://eric.buchlin.org/local/mcfawiki/> and register. The page on National Insurance is http://eric.buchlin.org/local/mcfawiki/doku.php?id=uk:national_insurance

French Welcome Pack

The French Welcome Pack is currently in the process of being updated. Luckily, French fellows abroad, as well as fellows in France are joining in. It seems that this is going to be a fully loaded welcome pack (close to 50 pages!) with lots of details. Anyone willing to contribute, even if only for proofreading, can contact us.

Italian Welcome Pack

The Italian Welcome Pack needs to be updated, as some of the information is actually outdated. We are looking for people willing to contribute. Anyone willing to share his experience in practical matters is welcome. Present Fellows living in Italy or past Fellows are invited to participate in order to collect as much information as possible, so as to create a useful tool for future researchers moving to Italy. Please, contact Maria Antonietta Buccheri (mabuccheri@yahoo.it).

MCFA Australia and New Zealand National Group news

Sophie Pinchinat, MC OIF in Canberra, has prepared an extensive report on the past and planned activities of this far away but not forgotten MCFA national group that shows us how it can be done.

The MCFA Australia and New-Zealand National Group gathers together current and former Marie Curie fellows who live in Australia and New Zealand. MCFA-AU-NZ works as an informal support group, with the aim of helping colleagues to tackle everyday issues faced

by MCF scientists and researchers in this part of the world.

MCFA-AU-NZ was formally launched in Brisbane by former MCFA Secretary General Prof. Magda Lola on February 22, 2004. As the 6th Framework Program opened the Marie Curie fellowships to researchers from 'down under' to come to Europe and vice-versa, MCFA-AU-NZ was expected to grow fast. Under the first call for proposals, 6 Australia-based researchers went to Europe to take up a three-year fellowship and 7 Europe-based researchers came to Australia. Today, at the end of the FP6, the numbers have risen to 33 fellows holding an Incoming International Fellowship, and 29 Outgoing International Fellows. A significant number of Intra-European Marie Curie fellows have now moved to Australia.

MCFA AU-NZ is in close contact with European Union institutions and other organizations, which promote and facilitate European-Australian relations and exchanges. In particular, the National Group benefits from a fused interaction with the Forum for European-Australian Science and Technology Cooperation (commonly known as "FEAST", see <http://www.feast.org>), and the Delegation of the European Union.

FEAST is an organization established by the Australian Government and the European Union to highlight, promote, and facilitate research collaboration between their respective communities. The aims of FEAST are:

- to highlight existing multilateral and bilateral S&T cooperation between Europe and Australia, and
- to improve this cooperation, particularly multilateral cooperation, through identifying priorities and enhancing the quality, quantity and visibility of future action.

FEAST supports MCFA by offering access to its databases and especially by integrating the experience of researchers into regular seminars, conferences, newsletters aimed at promoting scientific cooperation between Australia and New Zealand, and the EU. Mark Matthews has been appointed as the new executive director of FEAST in April 2007 following Neil Hamilton's move to head-up the WWF's Arctic research program. He is seconded by Jean-

François Desvignes-Hicks, the project manager of FEAST, and Rado, who is FEAST's webmaster.

What is the MCFA-AU-NZ National Group and what are its aims?

The Australia-based MCFA is a group and hence it is not organized as an association, but a network of active researchers who are current and past MCF who act as a "knowledge bridge" between (mostly) incoming fellows and the research/general environment of the institutions where they are hosted. The group, with the support of Delegation of the European Commission to Australia (Lynne Hunter) and FEAST (Michael Parker), has a webpage providing contact details of the researchers involved (<http://www.mariecurie.org/au/>). The group participates in meetings and seminars organized by FEAST and keeps members in touch with meetings in various Australian cities.

On November 27, 2006, FEAST hosted a "Marie Curie Day" for all past and present Marie Curie Incoming and Outgoing International Fellows with links to Australia. The day was chaired by Dr. Neil Hamilton (the executive director of FEAST until January 2007), and Prof. Norbert Kroo from the European Research Council. There were 20 attending fellows. This event was an opportunity to showcase the fellows work on posters during the conference, and to share the expertise of each individual MCFA member.

A formal report on the Marie Curie Day is expected to be available soon.

The MCFA-AU-NZ National Group and the future

Given FEAST resources primarily devoted to promoting scientific interactions, and the MCFA-AU-NZ group of researchers, there is scope to coordinate activities to promote and facilitate Marie Curie fellowships in Australia and New-Zealand. Examples of joint projects include:

1. Explanation and promotion of the Marie Curie Actions in Australia
2. Support to fellows:
 - (a) Application phase
 - (b) Starting phase

(c) Arrival phase

(d) Implementation phase

3. Feedback to stakeholders (improvement loop)

Whereas FEAST's mission focuses on Tasks 1 and 3, the Marie Curie Fellows Association will likely focus on Task 2. The tools and activities to achieve the tasks for 2007 include:

- An MCFA-AU-NZ mailing list, which will be launched in June 2007 (either hosted by FEAST or by the MCFA board).
- A revised MCFA-AU-NZ website hosted on <http://www.mcfa.eu>, highlighting as it currently does local contact points.
- The preparation of a Welcome pack with reports from fellows, providing feedback on major issues encountered during the fellowship, including contractual issues, host agreements, return, start. Some of the points will be raised at the level of the MCFA board while Australia and New Zealand local issues will be raised with FEAST.
- The participation of MC fellows to specific Marie Curie Actions seminars events

organized by FEAST in Australia and New Zealand.

FEAST would support the network by pooling some resources:

- Access to the FEAST website and Database facility (i.e. Australia specific pages, mailing list, member database).
- Provide information about and promotion of the current Marie Curie schemes in FP7. This includes seminars in Australia for research administrators and researchers, including early careers and I liaison with the Marie Curie fellows.
- Provide access to venues for meetings or seminars in Canberra.
- Promote experience of European fellows in Australia and Australian fellows in Europe in the FEAST Newsletter.
- General support and consulting role, integrating the association within the broader scope of the Australian-European cooperation. An important coordination role will be set for interaction with the other European or bilateral networks in Australia.

News from the Board

European Institute of Technology

News from the E.C. concerning the EIT can be found at: http://www.merit.unu.edu/publications/docs/200704_EIT.pdf and http://www.europarl.europa.eu/comparl/itre/20070327_eit_presentation_en.pdf

Deadline for EIF

The closing date for the Intra-European Fellowships for Career development (call identifier FP7-PEOPLE-2007-2-1-IEF) is 14 August 2007 at 17h00 (Brussels local time). An extensive guide for applicants can be found on the FP7 webpage. To check all the existing calls and deadlines go to: <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.FP7CallsPage>

You can also find a nice table with all the calls at the following link (downloadable Word document): http://www.sussex.ac.uk/rrdd/documents/calls_and_deadlines.doc

Green paper on ERA

In April, the E.C. published a very interesting Green Paper, titled: "The European Research Area: A new perspective", http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/consultation-era_en.html#greenpaper.

CEWS seminars

Four-day-long seminars from the Centre of Excellence Women Science take place in Brussels until January 2008. Check out <http://www.cews.org> for more information.

MCFA website FAQ

On our new website, the FAQ section has been updated by Guggi Kofod, but of course you are always welcome to submit any questions. In case you have any remarks, comments, changes to propose, we are happy to receive your mail at our office address.

Science at school

The E.C. is working to get science out of the lab. What better way than to start with school children? Read more at http://ec.europa.eu/research/rtdinfo/special_eiroforum/intro2_en.html on how a quarterly journal is making science popular with students in schools all around the world.

MCFA mailing lists and forums

We would like to draw your attention to the MAILING LISTS of the MCFA. The mailing list is a way for you to get information from many sources. Everyone is allowed to submit a notice for dissemination, also people and organizations outside the MCFA. There is a mailing list for each of the National Groups, and for the Science Policy and Women in Science Groups. There is also a list for general discussions on the Marie Curie Initiatives, while a special list may be used for publication of available research (and not only) positions (mcfa-career). Please see <http://mcfa.eu/site/public/maillingLists.php> (the link might change as the new website consolidates).

The mailing lists are a quite slow, more formal way, to disseminate views and opinions. A

more direct way to engage in discussions is via the Discussion Forum (DF), which is available to members only. The DF is also an archive of past activities in the MCFA. There are discussions on Marie Curie initiatives and the framework programs, as well as on industry and science policy. A very active group is the National Groups section. Both the mailing lists and the DF can be accessed through the “Communication” button at <http://www.mcfa.eu>. We strongly encourage you to take part or even initiate the debate using these means, since your experience-based opinions must be the basis of MCFA policy.

MCFA in Wikipedia

Dario Taraborelli, Research Fellow at the Department of Psychology, University College London and MCFA member, initiated the Wikipedia page for the MCFA: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie_Curie_Fellows_Association. Any MCFA member who knows how to handle the wikipedia editing tools is welcome to contribute (especially the “older” active hands in the Board) or contact the office or Dario with ideas and propositions. The future planning includes our own wiki. Why not take part?

End of MC Excellence Programme

Young researchers out to get a starting grant should be aware that the Marie Curie Excellence Programme will cease to exist. Anyone interested in a similar fellowship has to keep his eyes open toward the ERC (European Research Council).

The Speaker's corner

Science and Industry: Is the transition from one to another that the E.C. and industries advertise feasible?

Being a Chemical Engineer who was born and raised in one European country, studied (Diploma and PhD) and worked as a production engineer in a metallurgical industry in another and quit his job for a Marie Curie Fellowship in a third one, I always thought that doors would be open for me, the transition from in-

dustry to research (let me add here “research in public organisations”) would not be difficult and that I would be “wanted”. What I have experienced since then is that private/industrial research and public research have few things in common, independent from the European country under view. Researcher in public organisation still loose too much time with things they are not paid to do, things someone else could do faster and better (ever heard of secretaries etc.?). The case where they loose time

for research that does not interest anyone in the broader public seems to have passed. The many discussions about research that should lead to higher productivity inside Europe have probably led towards this. But, if the difference in research in industry and public is that vast, what about working in industry and doing research in a public research centre? Well, it can only be said that the majority of industrial engineers (I am going to speak about engineering sciences but believe that it is the same with other disciplines as well) considers research, especially in public organisations as... playing around! Since there is this attitude towards engineers in research, it is just normal that, when such an engineer wants to apply for positions in industry and hence production, the companies consider him unqualified, not able to handle the stress such a position carries with it, not able to solve things as fast and as practical as a younger but sometimes more experienced in industry engineer. Unfortunately this is the case also for major industries, some of which have participated in meetings with the E.C., where the MCFA was present. One thing discussed and agreed there? That it should be made easier for researchers to make the transition between research and industry and not only once in their life! Well, it is not so, unfortunately. I believe that the E.C.

is aware of the problem and is aware that steps into this direction need to be made. It is common in the discussions I follow inside the MCFA that many researcher want to find a work in the private sector as soon as possible because they are afraid that it will soon be too late, in terms of age and qualifications. This robs European research centres of researchers/scientists/brains with all the negative results mentioned in so many discussions.

What else remains to be said? If you are over 30 with major research experience and start looking for a position in industry, then you have chances only in a major research department, no chance at all in production/quality management and other “stressful” positions. It is a bit easier if you had prior industrial experience, since at least your former employer knows you, although he may not appreciate you leaving in the past to go back to research.

Well, all the above may sound strange, stupid and crazy to us researchers, but if you try it out, you will see that this is reality.

Christos Christoglou

Please send your email to office@mariecurie.org (Subject line: “Speaker’s corner”) to be published (in excerpts) in this section in the next “Letters to Members”.

Diary of Events

Past meetings with MCFA participation

- **“Women in Science: the way forward”.** The meeting took place in Heidelberg in May and Gianna Avellis and Raffaella di Sante attended it on behalf of the MCFA and a report should be available next month.
- **“European Researchers of Tomorrow - Crossing the Borders of Academia and Industry”** in Stuttgart from 13th to 15th May 2007. Frank Heemskerk and Natalia Balcazar represented the MCFA. You will be able to read all about it in the June issue of our letter.
- The **European Materials Research Society** (E-MRS) holds its annual conference on May 28th - June 1st, 2007 in Stras-

bourg. Antonella Di Trapani, MCFA chair, is representing the Association during the meeting and in our June issue you will be able to read all about it.

- The **Irish National launch of Marie Curie People Programme** took place on the 21st May in Dublin and its Vice-Chair Vanessa Diaz represented the MCFA. The event was very successful, with an approximate audience of about 180 people. Many of the attendees were young researchers, proving once again the popularity of the Marie Curie Fellowship scheme, in particular the individual Fellowships. A number of established researchers were interested in the Marie Curie Networks.

One of the recurrent themes of the day was how Marie Curie Fellowships could boost scientific careers, especially for young and non-established researchers. It was also pointed out that one of the most appealing attributes of MC actions is that one can apply in any area of science. It is the inherent flexibility of the Programme, one of its most appreciated characteristics. Several speakers highlighted also how Marie Curie Networks have created wonderful atmospheres in their groups, making them cosmopolitan, dynamic, and an excellent experience for the Irish young researchers. Quoting Prof. Kenneth Dawson "Perhaps the greatest pleasure of this whole thing is that we are seeing the vision of students having a truly European education, building excellence from a variety of experiences". According to the speakers' experience, the role of the network coordinator proves to be a key factor in the success of the whole project.

Problems were pointed out though: although very beneficial for the Networks, it was widely recognized that the terms of employment and in particular salaries received by MC Fellows are badly perceived by administrators and academics. Mrs. Begona Arano from the E.C. highlighted that MC Fellowships are an instrument of the E.C. to try to establish a new standard in terms of better salaries and career development for researchers. The long term career perspectives for young researchers in Europe were also discussed as it was widely recognized that in terms of stability and working conditions, although the situation has improved in recent years, scientific careers are not seen as an attractive option when compared to other career prospects by young Europeans.

The stand of the MCFA proved to be very popular with many questions coming from young researchers who wanted to apply for Marie Curie Fellowships.

Additionally, two speakers, MC Fellows (individual Fellowships), talked about their "success stories". The IUA has updated the web page of

the event and has included the PowerPoint presentation of the speakers: http://www.iua.ie/news_events/MarieCurieLaunchMay07.htm

- Ivan Montanari attended the "**Initiative for Science in Europe**" (ISE) meeting in Lisbon (15 January 2007). During this meeting, Federico Mayor was elected new President of ISE. He is former Director General of UNESCO and former Chair of the ERC Expert Group. His term in office will last two years. ISE is moving towards a more formal structure so that some changes to the Rules of Procedures and Engagement were discussed. Among them, ISE will be registered as a trademark. The practical consequence for the MCFA is that our association should become full or associate member. A lot of the discussion concerned the membership fees. Julio Celis, the chair at the time and Luc Van Dyck met with commissioner Potocnick and some of his staff on Friday 12 January 2007. The Commissioner's core message was that concerning the EU budget for R&D and the revision of the EU financial perspectives nothing will change before 2013.

Concerning research infrastructures, the European Strategic Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) did an excellent job. The ESFRI Roadmap (ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/esfri/docs/esfri-roadmap-report-26092006_en.pdf) is not a political decision, but a decision that politicians cannot ignore. As the Commission has not been allowed to use FP money for RI construction, its main objective is to carry out the preparative work leading to a political decision by EU Member States. Commissioner Potocnick agreed to the organization of a meeting with the heads of ISE member organizations. A date should be proposed in the coming months. An expected date is in July 2007 and hopefully the MCFA will be there.

Peter Tindemans from Euroscience reported on the debate on the creation of a European Institute of Technology (EIT)

to whom the European Parliament has commissioned a feasibility study to be presented at parliamentary hearings. The Commission proposal will (was) be discussed by the European Council in April. On scientific careers, Carol Featherstone (ELSO) indicated the interest of her organization in the career structure of scientists and, particularly, the status of independent group leaders. She summarized the process she had been through so far with ISE (notably a survey, decided at the ISE meeting in Mulhouse in January 2007, of what is happening in ISE members with respect to careers), to outline the case for a debate on reform of the academic career structure to incorporate a tenure-track type model, to collate information on what other organizations might be doing concerning academic careers, and to gain the consent of the ISE to create a working group on "Tenure Track Models for European Research Careers". A large part of the discussions in Lisbon were dedicated to the development of an "ISE vision for science for Europe", which should help to move science in a central stage in Europe. They were based on two documents, one submitted by Tony Mayer (ESF and Euroscience) prior to the meeting and one submitted by Frank Gannon during the meeting, which are rather complementary. It was decided that a working group representing all ISE sensitivities would be established to start preparing a draft of the vision. The WG held its first meeting on the 26th of February 2007 in Berlin.

Upcoming meetings with MCFA participation

- **EARMA (European Association of Research Managers and Administrators)** has announced that registration is now open for the 2007 Annual Conference, which will take place at Warsaw University, Poland, between 29 June and 1 July 2007. Please register your place through the official Conference website <http://www.earma2007.pl>. Please note that you must be a member of EARMA (either in-

dividual or institutional) to attend the Conference (membership of EARMA can be applied for through the EARMA website). The main theme of the Conference is "Building the European Research Area: The Responsibilities of Research Managers".

- **ESOF 2008:** The MCFA plans to have an active role in the ESOF 2008 where we will hopefully meet many Marie Curie Fellows and fellow researchers and scientists from other associations. By the way, the call for proposals is open! Check the ESOF2008 website at <http://www.esof2008.org> and register. Institutions, associations, researchers, businesses and individuals may also submit proposals for outreach activities. MCFA would like to have an active role in the ESOF meeting, best in cooperation with another association. The deadline is near and people willing to work on the project are welcome.

Turin is going to host the ESOF 2010 event.

- On the 23rd of May the FP7 Coordination Action WIDEMAP (**Women in DEcision-Making Processes**) was submitted. One of our partners, GWIIN - Global Women Innovators and Investors Network) has invited the MCFA to participate to EWIIN (European Women Innovators and Investors Network) conference in Berlin, 14-16 June 2007. Gianna Avellis, on behalf of the MCFA Women in Science working group, will be happy to represent our association. Of course, any MCFA members in Berlin are happy to contact the board and find out more.
- **European Science & Research Commissioner in Athens to present the 7th Framework Programme.** Mr Janez Potocnik, European Commissioner for Science and Research, is visiting Athens on Friday, June 1st, for the official presentation of the 7th Framework Programme to the Greek public. The open event will be held at the Hotel Grande Bretagne, from 10am to 1pm and will also include a speech by Professor Dr Helga Nowotny,

Vice-President of the European Research Council. The MCFA-EL national group will represent the MCFA and you will be able to read more about it in the June issue of our letter to the members.

- Commissioner Janez Potocnik will also be available for questions and discussions on June 12th in Brussels. The event is called “**The Fifth freedom – research in Europe**”. For more information and the preliminary programme, see http://www.sciencebusiness.net/pdf/5th_Freedom_Preliminary_Programme.pdf and http://www.sciencebusiness.net/round_table/5thfreedom.php.

It will take place in Brussels at a gathering of academic and industrial researchers, and link via Internet to satellite meetings on university campuses across Europe. The discussion will be based largely on the Green Paper (see page 6). On behalf of the MCFA, Eric Buchlin will attend one such satellite meeting at the Imperial College in London. Any other MCFA members who will attend the event are kindly requested to contribute to the next letter to members by sending us their impression.

Please feel free to forward this Letter to the Members to your colleagues and friends, even if they are not Marie Curie Fellows!

The MCFA Board