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Newsletter

Special Issue

May 2011

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Special Issue

Charter members



Edito

The first quarter of 2011 marks two important milestones for Agropolis Fondation.

After four years of existence, the Foundation is entering into a new phase with a €25 million grant from the French Government. For us, this is a recognition of the work the Foundation has carried out since its inception in 2007.

This new grant will allow us to continue the work we have started. It will certainly serve as an impetus in mobilizing French competencies and in contributing to make Montpellier a "place to go" in the field of agricultural science and sustainable development.

This new chapter in the life of the Foundation coincides with the flourishing of our partnership with the African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD). The Foundation will host, in June 2011, a seminar workshop where the results of the Feasibility Study for the expansion of the AWARD Programme in Francophone Africa will be presented and discussed by the AWARD leadership, representatives of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Agropolis Fondation and other potential partners.

These latest developments are indeed important milestones in the life of the Foundation. We are consolidating our experience gained in the previous years and we will use it in building partnerships aimed at contributing to generate and use knowledge in responding to today's major challenges linked to agriculture and food.

*Henri Carsalade, Agropolis Fondation Chairman of the Board
and Anne-Lucie Wack, Agropolis Fondation Director*

French Government grants additional €25 million to Agropolis Fondation



The French Government confirmed, on 13 May 2011, that it will provide an additional grant of €25 million to Agropolis Fondation.

This was following the announcement made by the Government on the selection of the proposal led by Agropolis Fondation as among those rated A+ and ranked 1st *ex aequo* by the international jury out of more than 240 submitted under the French national "Laboratories of excellence" programme.

Its proposal is in the continuation of the work the Foundation has carried out since its creation in 2007 with an initial endowment of €20 million from the State and its charter members.

Over the past four years, the Foundation's Fellowship Programme has been supporting more than 170 fellows coming from around 30 countries. Its Grant Programme is funding about 100 interdisciplinary projects involving more than 300 partners from more than 60 countries. The Foundation has on-going partnerships with AWARD, CAPES (Brazilian Federal Agency for Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education) and INRIA (Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control) where joint endeavors, including the launching of Joint Calls for Proposals, are being carried out.

Based on these and with the €25 million new funding from the French Government, the challenge is to achieve, over the next 10 years, a significant quantitative and qualitative leap on the following:

- *Favoring research impact and the development of innovative solutions* by supporting original scientific approaches privileging integration (from genes to systems), interdisciplinary approach (biological sciences, engineering and social sciences), and the exploration of scientific questions at the interface with biodiversity and ecology, mathematics and information science, chemistry, nutrition and health, and water sciences;
- *Reinforcing research involvement in major international programmes;*
- *Boosting human capital* by setting up highly attractive Fellowship Programmes (seniors, junior, post-doc, doctorates and pre-docs) that will facilitate international mobility, and by supporting innovative projects that combine research and training;
- *Strengthening linkages with the private sector* (small and medium enterprises, industrial groups, international foundations, producers' organizations...) as well as the valorization and dissemination of research results.

Meeting the above is expected to contribute significantly in making Montpellier a "place to go" in the field of research in plants of agronomic interest given the capacity of its scientific community to generate high-level scientific knowledge and use such knowledge to meet critical challenges related to plants, e.g., adaptation to climate change, increasing demand for plants and plant by-products for food and non-food uses, as well as the prevention and management of risks (e.g., bioinvasion, bio aggression, resource scarcity and erosion of biodiversity).

This ambition falls within the recent selection of Montpellier as the site of the headquarters of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research Consortium (CGIAR Consortium).

Fast-tracking the Careers of Francophone African Women Seminar on Francophone AWARD, 8-9 June, Montpellier



A seminar workshop where the results of the feasibility study for a Francophone African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) Programme is being organized in Montpellier on 8-9 June 2011 with the support of Agropolis Fondation.

AWARD is a professional development programme that provides fellowships and other types of support to strengthen the research and leadership skills of African women in agricultural science. It currently supports 180 African women in agricultural research and development from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia who have completed a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree in selected disciplines. It is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the USAID since 2008.

The seminar workshop in June will serve as an opportunity to (1) share the results of a detailed feasibility study financed by the USAID which was conducted in several Francophone countries (2) discuss recommendations regarding country coverage, partners, location, actors, and budget; and (3) inform potential investors and partners about this opportunity and contribute to its design.

In addition to the AWARD Steering Committee, BMGF and USAID representatives, the event will also be attended by various institutions such as the *Agence Française pour la Développement (AFD)*, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), Imperial College London, Volkswagen Stiftung, Fondazione Cariplo and Danone.

Representatives from the European Commission's Marie Curie Programme, Ford Foundation International Fellowship Programme and the International Foundation for Science will also be present to share experience and lessons learned in running fellowship and mobility programmes.

AWARD has elaborated a strategy to broaden its on-going programme which focuses on 10 Anglophone African countries to the French-speaking countries in the region. Given the historically strong relationship between France and Francophone Africa, Agropolis Fondation will serve as a link between AWARD the pool of expertise of the Foundation's charter members and their partners in agricultural sciences in Sub-Saharan Africa.

[Interested to attend the Seminar? Click here >](#)

About Agropolis Fondation



Quick facts

- Established in February 2007 as a French Foundation for Scientific Cooperation
- Located in Montpellier, at the heart of the Agropolis complex, home to one of the world's largest concentration of scientific expertise in the food, agriculture and environment sectors
 - Four charter members which are France's leading scientific institutions for development-oriented research and higher education in Agriculture, Food and Environment: Cirad, INRA, IRD and Montpellier SupAgro
- Promotes a scientific network composed of 27 research units with top-flight scientists specializing in plant research at various levels- from its genes to its environments to its final uses- and at the interface of temperate, tropical and Mediterranean regions
- Initial endowment of €20M and current additional funding and pledges of over €34M
- Launched series of Calls for Proposals in 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010
- Since inception, 92 projects selected for a total funding commitment of €14.4M
- €3M funding allocated to each of the Foundation's two Flagship Programmes (PI@ntNet and ARCAD)
- €1M funding allocated to each of the Foundation's three Grand Federative Projects (Biofis, FABATROPIMED and Rhizopolis)
- Altogether, supported projects involve more than 300 partners from around 60 countries, about 60% are from Southern (Africa, Asia and Latin America & the Caribbean) and Mediterranean countries
- Agropolis Fondation Fellows total more than 170 international scientists from more than 30 countries

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What's on your mind?

Agropolis Fondation Newsletter is meant to serve as a tool to disseminate information on our and our partners' goings-on. Since we would like this Newsletter to be of service to you, we would like to receive your feedback and know what you think.

So, send us your comments and suggestions at agropolis-fondation@agropolis.fr
We are just a click away!

Agropolis Fondation supports and promotes high level research and higher education in agricultural sciences that address the main challenges related to sustainable agricultural development in temperate, tropical and Mediterranean regions. The Foundation's office is located at the heart of Agropolis International complex in Montpellier, home to one of the world's largest concentration of skills and expertise in Agriculture, Food Biodiversity and Environment.

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