

***„Best practice in
multinational programme
collaboration“***

***Alain Brenac
ANRT, France***

PROACT

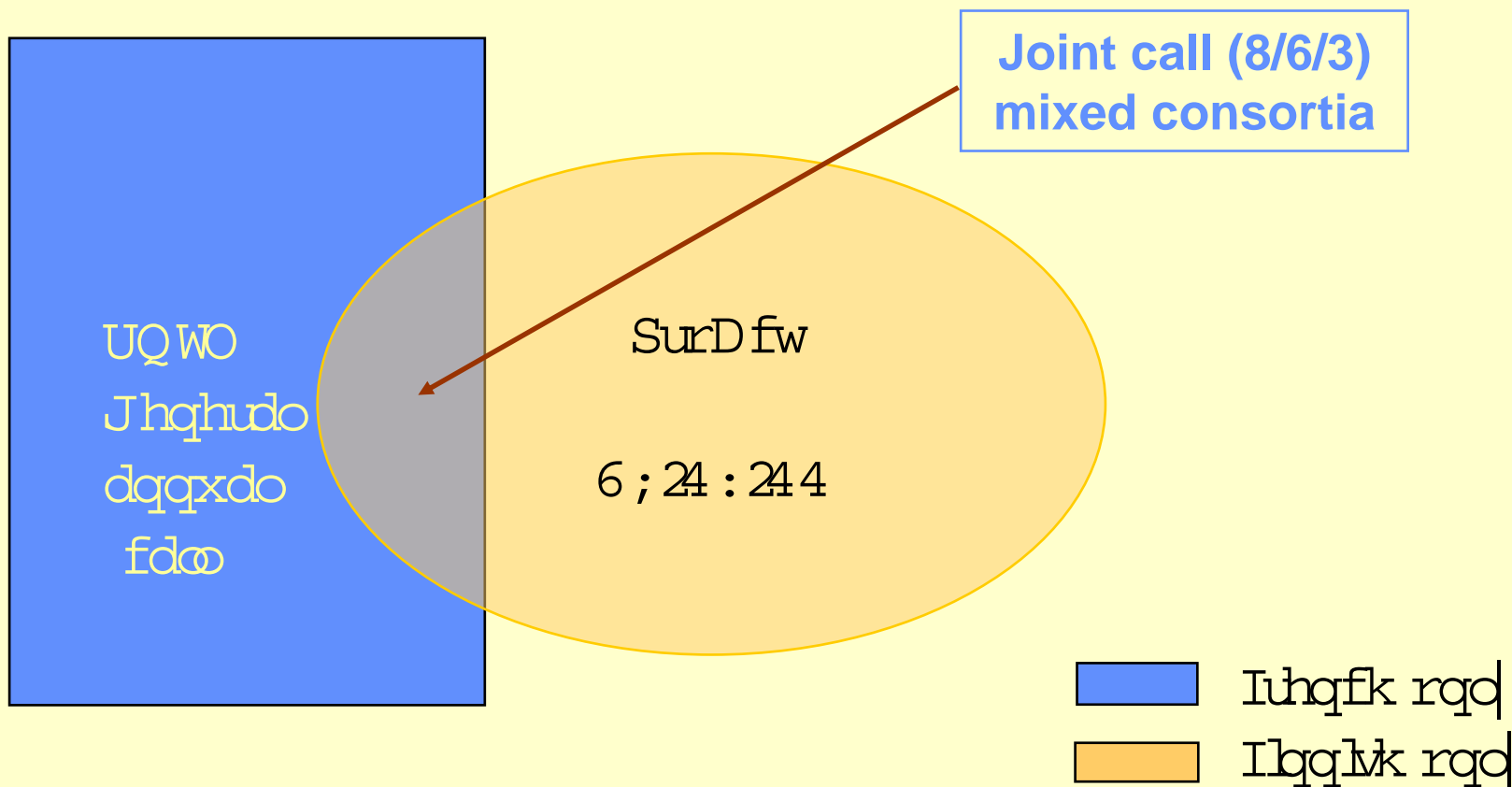


The franco-finnish
« Proact » programme

The **PROACT-RNTL** programme

- A joint **Research Programme on Proactive Computing** between France and Finland
- Funding of mixed consortiums of Finnish and French research teams active in the field
- Funded by the
 - **Academy of Finland**, in co-operation with **Tekes**, the National Agency of Technology of Finland as for finnish partners
 - **RNTL**, the French National Initiative for Software Technologies (funded by the French Ministry of Research and new Technologies ...) as for french partners
 - Each country is funding its own partners !

Organisation of the national/bilateral calls



Characteristics of the joint programme PROACT-RNTL

Joint programme means:

joint planning

joint programme committee

joint call for and evaluation of proposals

joint decisions on projects to be funded (2 steps)

joint evaluation of programme results

Total planned funding: about **2 M€** from each country (inside “intersection” ProAct-RNTL)

Extension: 8 projects submitted (16 partners)

Duration: 2002-2005 (3 years)

PROACT-RNTL

3 projects approved

- **ADAMOS: Adaptive Mobile Services**
Design parameters and user experience factors
 - Experimental platforms for rapid prototyping of proactive systems and services (3 Fi + 3 Fr)
- **AMPROS: Adaptive Middleware Platform for Proactive and Reconfigurable Systems**
 - A middleware platform for interoperation between mobile and stationary computer and communication systems (2 Fi + 2 Fr)
- **CONTACT: Context Management for Proactive Computing**
 - Detection, manipulation and computation of context information networks & energy control (2 Fi + 2Fr)

PROACT Strengths

- **Phase 1: Planning**
 - **Political willingness** to succeed rapidly: agreement on a joint call reached in one month !
 - Immediate **good fit** on the technical content
 - Rapid agreement on the **project evaluation** procedures
- **Phase 2: Implementation**
 - Rapid choice of **coordinators** of both sides and efficient cooperation between them
 - **Good response** from both national constituencies (adhesion to the bi-national approach)
 - Reinforcement of **pre-existing links**

PROACT Strengths (cont.)

- **Phase 2: Implementation (cont.)**
 - Common projects are working on a **real bi-national cooperation** basis (and not as a juxtaposition of national sub-consortia)
 - In some cases, opportunities found to prepare **new IST proposals** in common
 - Easy **IPR** agreements
- **Phase 3: Programme Assessment**
 - General **assessment process** agreed in common
 - Evaluation planned in June 2006 by an international panel in Helsinki
 - The evaluation report will be public

PROACT Weaknesses & Remedies (1)

- **Phase 1: Planning**
 - Some delay in the finalisation of the MoU
MOU official signature did not hinder the progression of the whole business
 - Eligibility problems: private-public partnerships mandatory in FR networks; in Fi, mainly academic partners concerned, hence unbalanced participation. Try to balance the Finnish participation by opening to industrial partners (via TEKES contribution) but little success !

PROACT Weaknesses & Remedies (2)

- **Phase 1: Planning** (cont.)
 - Delays in funding some projects on FR side
No possibility to shorten FR delay due to national financial constraints
 - Differences in IPR regime for public researchers
Inform the participants on the regimes in force in the 2 countries (Infodays on both sides)

PROACT Weaknesses & Remedies (3)

- **Phase 2: Implementation**

- Submission **procedures** rather different
Difficulties to adjust respective national timings (e.g. 2 step proposals in Finland, 1 step in France)
Found out some compromises (e.g. 2-step procedures adopted, date of call harmonised etc.)
- Submission **language** issue
English adopted as the common language, additional national summaries or short versions needed in both countries (archiving)

PROACT Weaknesses & Remedies (4)

- **Phase 2: Implementation (fwd)**
 - Lack of money for supporting the coordination costs (FR side)
Finns supported most of the extra-cost (e.g. evaluation meeting)
- **Phase 3: Assessment**
 - n.a. (weaknesses not yet identified)

Recommendations

- Ensure a high degree of **political will /backing** in concerned country staffs (at the highest level)
 - **BE OPEN** to compromises and changes in implementation to ease the convergence towards a common process
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- Careful selection of the **technical content**: pre-evaluation of national potentials
 - Careful selection of **coordinators** (key persons) in each country. Tight working team indispensable.
 - **Motivate, Inform, Explain**: pre-meetings, specific infodays for constituencies. Their adhesion to the scheme is essential. What is changing for actors ?
 - Ensure a **good balance** between involved countries, in terms of:
 - funding
 - number of partners
 - competencies

- ANNEXES:
 - About Proactive computing
 - Objectives
 - Timescale
 - Applications to PROACT

Proactive computing

Directly derived from the “Ambient Intelligence” concept, a proactive system is intended to **anticipate** one’s needs and to **act in advance**”

Two everyday examples

- **antilock brakes** and **airbags** have to act much faster than a human can
- **thermostats** and **air conditioning systems** act (almost) autonomously keeping room temperatures at more suitable levels than a human can

Related topics: ubiquitous and pervasive computing, adaptive systems, communicating objects,...

PROACT- RNTL Objectives

1. To support high quality research on proactive computing by funding several interrelated projects within the target area
2. To develop IT solutions that will help people, especially the elderly and disabled, in everyday life
3. To strengthen bilateral research cooperation between Finland and France
4. To intensify researcher training
5. To strengthen funding cooperation between European funding organisations

Added value: the research programme worth more than the sum of its parts

PROACT -RNTL timescale

- In Finland: identification of PROACT theme for research programme (June 2000)
- Decision by the Academy Board on 6 November 2001
- Negotiations with French funding organisations (Dec 2001)
RNTL formally accepts co-operation
- In Finland: Coordinator is selected on 21 Jan 2002
- Preparation of programme memorandum (description and application procedures): February to June 2002
- Information seminars in March about the programme (before launching call for proposals on 29 Mar 2002)
- 1st deadline (short proposal): 29 April 2002
- Final deadline (full proposal): 9 August 2002
- Evaluation meeting (Paris) and funding decisions: September 2002
- Starting date: January 2003

Applications to PROACT

Applicants

- French-Finnish consortia in the joint call (common part)
- Finnish consortia, and Finnish individual research teams (in the Finnish part of ProACT)

Applications in the common part

- Common research plan (**10 pages**)
- Each Finnish research team submitted its own funding application either to Academy or Tekes ; each **private-public cooperative** French sub-consortium to RNTL (French teams)
- All parties used their normal administrative procedures (Academy, RNTL, Tekes)

Evaluation

- **International evaluation panel**: 8 experts, panel meeting

Results: 23 applications → 14 accepted

PROACT selection results

	1st proposal	Final proposal	Approved
French-Finnish consortia	8	6	3 (6+10 partners)
Finnish consortia	12	10	8 (22 partners)
Individual projects	26	7	3 (3 partners)
Total	46	23	14 (41 partners)



RNTL
logiciel

PROACT- RNTL

A French-Finnish joint research programme on Proactive computing

« Best Practice .. » Workshop -
Cologne – 17-18 January, 2006



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Recommendations

- Not To do
 - Launch a common action **without sufficient preparation** both at the **Managers** and **Stakeholders** levels !
 - **Unbalanced** cooperation !
 - The **MoU must not be too detailed** : one or two pages is enough for edicting the general principles. Set up, the rest in annexes (call, guidelines, submission forms, evaluation procedures, etc).
 - **Forget to plan resources for coordination**: staff or evaluator meetings, videoconferences, coordinators expenses, etc. Make clear to partners that travel expenses induced by TN cooperation are included in the fees !
 - Forget to treat (or unsufficiently) the **IPR issue** !