

16 December 2016

12.5 million euros to be invested by EU into Southern England and Northern France

The Interreg France (Channel) England programme, based in Norwich, has announced that it will invest 12.5 million euros in three projects that aim to address a range of key challenges faced in both the South of England and the North of France¹. The projects will involve a combined total of 33 partners from both countries.

Following a project selection sub-committee, where representatives from both France and England were present, the Programme announced that it will co-fund the following projects:

- **ADAPT** – The project will tackle mobility problems faced by elderly and disabled people by developing a smart Electronic Powered Wheelchair. The smart wheelchair will include driving assistance technologies such as obstacle avoidance, route selection and autonomous driving. The provision of smart wheelchairs will provide autonomy for users and improve social inclusion. *European Region Development Fund budget - 5.9 million euros.*
- **CoRoT** – The project will develop innovative and affordable robot software and hardware that is focused on the needs and budgets of SMEs. The robotic systems, developed by CoRot, will allow smaller manufacturing businesses to become more flexible and responsive to demand, improving their productivity and competitiveness. *European Region Development Fund budget – 2.6 million euros.*
- **LABFACT** – Led by the University of Southampton, the LABFACT project will unite world-class research centres in the Channel area to support and train SMEs on clean and environmentally friendly ways to manufacture fine chemicals. The project will focus on the emerging technologies of reagentless and flow chemistry which will unlock new, low cost and low waste manufacturing opportunities for SMEs in the chemical industry. *European Region Development Fund budget - 4 million euros.*

Commenting on the announcement Vince Muspratt from the Programme's Managing Authority, Norfolk County Council said: *"It's great that we've had a further three projects approved and underlines how cross-border co-operation is continuing to find innovative ways to tackle key issues.*

"We want to remind potential applicants that the UK government has guaranteed funding for the lifetime of all projects contracted prior to the UK leaving the EU². The France Channel England Programme is still very much open for business and we encourage applicants to continue to apply for funding."

The Interreg FCE Programme is a European Territorial Cooperation programme that aims to fund high quality cooperation projects in the Channel border region between France and England. It focuses on a range of specific objectives including supporting innovation, improving the attractiveness of the FCE area and developing low carbon technologies. The programme is managed by Managing Authority Norfolk County Council.

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Notes to Editors

1. The projects' approval is dependent on projects meeting a number of conditions outlined by the Selection Sub-Committee.
2. In October 2016 HM Treasury released a statement clarifying the Government's position on EU funding for UK partners. A link to the full statement can be found [here](#).
3. The Programme operates within a clearly defined eligible area, covering the South and East Coasts of England from Cornwall to Norfolk, and the North Coast of France from Finistère to Pas-de-Calais. The programme area can be found [here](#).
4. More information about the Programme can be found at <https://interreg5a-fce.eu/>. You can also send an email to titus.carey@norfolk.gov.uk