

ECFA meets at DESY

In their [meeting](#) a couple of days ago at DESY, [ECFA](#), the European Committee for Future Accelerators, got a complete update on all present and future particle physics activities in Europe. They also discussed the ILC and its potential: "We think it is important to remember that particle physics in Europe is more than the LHC," says the current ECFA chair Karlheinz Meier from Heidelberg university in Germany. "The community has to plan now, gather facts and lay foundations for future projects, and the ILC is a very good example for this."

ECFA is divided into two groups: one open, where several representatives from all CERN member states, elected for six years, and people from major labs and universities are present, and one restricted, RECFA, where only one representative per member state plus one person each from CERN, DESY and the INFN have a say. One of its main roles is to plan and oversee the continent's particle physics future; this includes monitoring the progress of the [strategy to-do list](#) created by the CERN Council Strategy Group in 2006.

ECFA hears reports from EU-funded projects, member states and commission studies for planned particle physics initiatives and also looks at lab plans, such as the programme-oriented funding proposal for the next five years that the DESY directorate is currently drafting.

"Even though it is still at the negotiation stage, we were happy to hear the good news about EUCARD, a project to be funded under the Commission's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). It is supposed to receive ten million Euros for new acceleration technologies, for example high-field magnets for an LHC upgrade or super-conduction RF accelerating structures," recounts Meier. They were less happy to learn that a proposal they had triggered, the follow-up to the EU-funded EUDET project called 'DevDet', was not accepted for funding. "It had a very strong ILC component," says Meier. "ECFA therefore strongly encourages the European detector R&D community to continue their efforts." They consider central services like test beams, micro electronics development or generic radiation studies to be especially important.

New on the agenda was a report from an ECFA study group on possible SuperB-factories, led by Tatsuya Nakada of the EPFL Lausanne and former spokesman of LHCb. ECFA is also looking for a new chair for its outreach activities who will be announced at their November meeting.

A project the ECFA members were especially impressed with is the Helmholtz Alliance "[Physics at the Terascale](#)." "It should serve as a model for many European activities," thinks Meier. In his opinion the news of funding in Europe are generally good, despite the UK's withdrawal (see this week's Director's Corner) from the ILC: "We don't think that this was a general statement against fundamental research." ECFA also predict a sound future for the field: the numbers of students taking up particle physics are constant, despite a lack of qualified physics teachers throughout Europe.

-- Barbara Warmbein



ECFA hopes that initiatives like EUDET will continue the detector development effort in Europe.
Photo: DESY



Karlheinz Meier, chair of the European Committee for Future Accelerators