



For a simple framework programme for researchers, with a strong impact on European society

Science, due to its ability to move beyond cultural and political differences, contributes to meeting the major challenges facing the European Union. The EU effort in research and innovation gives European and world scientists the opportunity to work together. The framework programme Horizon 2020 enables optimising the use of shared resources and to create a competitive spirit amongst researchers and innovators of the highest level. Through these EU collaborations, within a successful ecosystem, European research and innovation (R&I) stakeholders progress, innovate, share and transmit knowledge. Together, they create the foundation of a common space for progress, growth and sustainable prosperity.

CLORA welcomes the achievements of the framework programmes and the ongoing efforts to be furthered. Excellence is the primary objective of EU research. During FP7 (the EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development) and Horizon 2020, the European Research Council (ERC) has established itself as a global benchmark for excellence in science. In order for this programme to remain as successful as it is now, its budget must at least be maintained. Collaborative research, given its originality, is also a fundamental asset in building the European Research Area (ERA). It is necessary to undertake efforts to simplify administrative and financial procedures and to improve submission, monitoring and contracting procedures. CLORA calls on the European Commission to make it a top priority.

To ensure its sustainability and strengthen its impact, the Europe of research must be made more accessible, both to European citizens and to those involved in research and innovation. It must also encourage and strengthen the structuring partnerships between European stakeholders and support the continuum from research to innovation in order to enhance the impact of EU funding.

For a Europe of research and innovation more accessible to scientists and European citizens

The Europe of research and innovation must be on a human level, accessible and understandable. It must be both more accessible to the scientists involved and better valued by the citizens. The dynamic for developing work programmes must be improved among all



players. Administrative and financial simplification must continue in order to enable much wider participation in the framework programmes, beyond the usual stakeholders. Efforts must also be made to ensure that the success rates are high enough for the programme to remain attractive.

In addition, it is necessary to show European citizens that European research, the third item in the EU budget, is one of the great achievements of the European project. There is a need to better communicate the results of the research produced by EU scientific excellence and their economic and social impacts.

Proposals

1) Reduce the oversubscription to calls for proposals, as the success rates should imperatively exceed 10%. For instance:

- Better define the expected impact, whose description must always be adapted to the purpose of a project and its level of maturity in the research and innovation value chain.

- Provide adequate funding for intentionally open calls for proposals.

2) Encourage small-scale collaborative projects (less than €5 million), insofar as they make it possible to answer very targeted questions and to facilitate the access of new teams to the framework programme, without prejudice to larger projects when they are needed.

3) Encourage European project leaders to disseminate the results and new knowledge derived from their project as part of the training of young researchers and students, or through any adequate action, in order to accelerate the cycle of innovation.

4) Continue the administrative and financial simplification efforts.

- Strive to limit the number of instruments and different financing tools in order to work towards more simplicity and homogeneity.

- Avoid modifying the grant agreement models too frequently, so that these changes do not affect the contracts already signed.

5) Rethink Europe's policy of communicating research to its citizens by placing emphasis on the media, including scientific journalism and social networks, and taking into account the linguistic diversity.



For coherent and coordinated European governance of research

For a more effective research policy, a clearly identified common strategic vision and more consistency and interactions between EU programmes are required, “breaking down silos and moving away from static structures”, as expressed by Jean-Claude Juncker in his speech of 10 September 2014¹.

Proposals

- 1) CLORA strongly encourages the European Commission's efforts to establish a coordinated governance of its various Directorates-General (DGs) related to the Europe 2020 strategy. Institutional coordination would improve the interactions between European programmes and would increase synergies between research, innovation, training and territorial development.
- 2) In order for this coordinated governance to be effective, it must be combined with a standardisation of the rules for participation and financing of the various programmes, in particular between Horizon 2020 and the Structural Funds.

For a method of financing adapted to the specific nature of the scientific activity and technological development

As research funded by the European Union is a matter of public interest, by definition it uses public funding in the form of grants. These are the most suitable means of financing due to the sometimes long timespan between the research phase and that of the economic exploitation of the results. Moreover, public research performers often do not have the legal capacity to borrow, which automatically excludes them from financial instruments (loans, venture capital, risk financing, the "Juncker Plan").

Proposal

Reaffirm the principle of the grant as the main instrument for financing European research.

¹http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-984_en.htm



For strengthening the collaborative aspect of European research

Collaborative projects are a key source of European added value. They enable networking and interdisciplinary work that is beneficial to the development of scientific knowledge and to the discovery of innovative solutions. In the framework programme, the collaborative approach to which Europe is particularly attached must be widely promoted and give rise to sustained relations between European research and innovation stakeholders, at the individual and institutional level.

Proposal

- 1) Support, through tailored programmes, the establishment of an ecosystem and structuring partnerships between research organisations and companies in order to connect these different players in the long term, both at the individual and the institutional level.
- 2) Collaborative projects mobilise excellent European researchers. CLORA encourages the European Commission in its efforts to integrate players from the less represented European countries.

For a revival of the international strategy of the European Union

The European Union's international collaboration in R&I must always strive for excellence, to improve European competitiveness and with a view to co-development. The European Union must make use of its know-how and its diversity in international cooperation.

Proposals

- 1) The European Commission must establish a clear framework with clearly identified challenges and strategic objectives for international cooperation, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030.
- 2) It should also set up a simplified regulatory framework for the non-member countries it subsidizes.
- 3) Finally, the intellectual property of all parties must be guaranteed in the framework of international collaborations. The European Commission must develop a real strategy of attractiveness in order to favour the exploitation of patents on the EU territory.



For a high-impact European science that creates economic and social value

The benefits of science permeate all areas of society. It is necessary to contribute to realising this potential by facilitating the transition from research to application. The entire value chain of research to innovation must be funded in order to ensure a continuum. The societal challenges of Horizon 2020 enable a real cross-sectoral multidisciplinary, source of scientific progress and innovation. The structuring of pillar 3 by challenges, responding to the priority issues for European society, must be maintained.

Proposals

1) Rebalance the funding for the different stages of maturation of discoveries, technologies and solutions in the innovation process ranging from basic research to application. This implies:

- including more upstream research in pillars two and three,
- streamlining technology transfer instruments.

2) Better co-ordinate the programming of Societal Challenges to take account of their transversality.

3) Strengthen the capabilities of Challenge 6 (Innovative, Inclusive and Reflective Societies) to anticipate and deliver sustainable responses to the current European crises. This challenge must also contribute to building a vision for the European project.



Conclusion

In order to support the potential and scientific quality of those involved in research and innovation, which guarantees Europe's economic and social progress, CLORA recommends that:

- scientific excellence remain an indispensable prerequisite for obtaining funding through the European framework programmes
- the framework programme be accessible and simplified, freeing up time for actual research and innovation;
- EU policies on training, research and innovation be more coherent and integrated;
- grants be maintained as the main funding tool for research and innovation;
- the collaborative uniqueness of European research be reaffirmed, favouring the setting up and strengthening of structuring partnerships between research and innovation stakeholders.
- Europe has a real international strategy for research;

Scientific expertise is necessary for political decision-making. The "three-way dialogue" between science, politics and citizens is of fundamental importance, and CLORA wishes to participate in this effort of mutual understanding for the benefit of growth, development and employment in Europe.

CLORA : French Club of associated research organizations

Set up in 1991 in Brussels to strengthen the relationship between its members and the European Union, CLORA aims to enhance the participation of its members to EU programs involving research, technology, innovation, training and education.

With its 33 members, CLORA gathers most of the French public research centers and universities encompassing a plethora of scientific fields. In numbers, the CLORA represents:

- **163 400 staff, including more than 100 000 researchers**
- **Close to 2000 Horizon 2020 projects, as participants and coordinators.**

The goal of the CLORA is to contribute to the ERA's scientific excellence and to foster impactful innovation, for European competitiveness and the European society at large. Ten CLORA members are represented in Brussels :



Club des Organismes de Recherche Associés

Avenue des Arts 8 – 1210 Bruxelles - Tel : 0032 2 506 88 64 - secretariat@clora.eu
www.clora.eu