



European Plant Science Organisation
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ISE position on Horizon Europe identifies three areas of intervention: Interdisciplinarity, Widening participation, Balancing Research and Innovation Actions

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The ISE Horizon Europe Task Force has been conducting a long reflection on the European Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, with a focus on the areas it deems of highly strategic importance to the development of the European R&I system.

The three main areas that need more consideration to further enhance the effectiveness and pan-European societal impact of the programme are:

- foster interdisciplinary approaches within the programme
- increase the efforts towards supporting EU-13 countries improve their R&I system
- strengthen the R&I cycle in pillar 2.

These three aspects are strongly interconnected and tackling them together will improve European R&I capabilities well beyond the time span of this framework programme.

Considering the relatively low funding budgeted for Horizon Europe (i.e., no substantial increase with respect to H2020), it is important to address from the beginning structural features to make it effective and balanced among the three pillars. The analysis of the framework programme presented in the position paper takes into account its impact on many sectors, disciplines, and geographies.

Interdisciplinary perspective

We argue for developing a work programme where **disciplinary, multidisciplinary, and interdisciplinary approaches coexist**. An interdisciplinary perspective is particularly important in Horizon Europe's Global Challenges, including the missions. To facilitate the uptake of interdisciplinary approaches, we recommend:

1. enabling flexible budgets across intervention areas and across clusters with no additional administrative burden, and create calls across different clusters,
2. adapting reward systems that recognise interdisciplinary research,
3. supporting research programmes for interdisciplinary education,
4. combining more disciplines in one project.

Widening participation

To **diminish the R&I gap between member states**, we recommend the following actions that will synergistically benefit both EU-13 and EU-15 countries:

1. provide incentives for both EU-15 and EU-13 to collaborate more closely and foster international links between institutions.
2. advance from the exchange networks for research results and ideas (COST actions) to actual research collaborations (RIA, IA).

3. extend the MSCA widening fellowships concept to other programmes.
4. enable a central role for National Contact Points (NCPs).
5. link national funding in EU-13 to peer review process in EU-15.
6. exploit synergies with other EU programmes.

The R&I cycle in pillar 2 of Horizon Europe

We consider that the Research and Innovation cycle in pillar 2 of the HE programme should be designed to achieve a balanced representation of basic and applied research in addition to demonstration and innovation actions. This will strengthen the effectiveness of the European innovation ecosystem by allowing a continuous flow between advancement of knowledge and technologies at different technology readiness levels (TRLs), thus as well addressing the needs of the industrial sector and private companies. To this end, we strongly **recommend including collaborative basic research as an intrinsic component and occasional focus of R&I actions**, particularly for funding that addresses Global Challenges.

EPSO is collaborating with European learned societies and research organisations in the Initiative for Science in Europe (ISE) as a strong voice of the scientific community discussing with the European Commission and Member States recommendations for science policy at EU level.

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Useful links

ISE position on Horizon Europe:

<https://initiative-se.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/ISE-position-Horizon-Europe.pdf>

ISE <https://initiative-se.eu>

Twitter: [@ISE_news](https://twitter.com/ISE_news)

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About ISE

The Initiative for Science in Europe (ISE) is an independent platform of 16 European Learned Societies and Research Organizations operating within different disciplines and across sectors. ISE supports all fields of research at a European level, involves researchers in the design and implementation of European science policies, and advocates strong independent scientific advice in European policy making.

About EPSO

EPSO, the European Plant Science Organisation, is an independent academic organisation that represents more than 200 research institutes, departments and universities from 32 countries, mainly from Europe, and 2.700 individuals Personal Members, representing over 26 000 people working in plant science. EPSO's mission is to improve the impact and visibility of plant science in Europe, to provide authoritative source of independent information on plant science including science advice to policy, and to promote training of plant scientists to meet the 21st century challenges in breeding, agriculture, horticulture, forestry, plant ecology and sectors related to plant science. <https://epsoweb.org> | EU Transparency Register Number 38511867304-09