

EU research and innovation funding: Commission consults on radical changes to create more growth and jobs

The European Commission today launches a consultation on major improvements to EU research and innovation funding to make participation easier, increase scientific and economic impact and improve value for money. The proposed "Common Strategic Framework", set out in a Green Paper, would cover the current Framework Programme for Research (FP7), the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). This will create a coherent set of instruments, along the whole "innovation chain" starting from basic research, culminating in bringing innovative products and services to market, and also supporting non-technological innovation, for example in design and marketing. The Commission's Green Paper also provides the basis for far-reaching simplification of procedures and rules. The changes aim to maximise the contribution of EU research and innovation funding to the Innovation Union and the Europe 2020 Strategy. Stakeholders have until 20 May 2011 to respond.

European Commissioner for Research and Innovation Máire Geoghegan-Quinn said: "Our aim is to maximise value from every euro the EU invests in research and innovation. We want EU funding to realise its enormous potential to generate growth and jobs and improve quality of life in Europe in the face of daunting challenges like climate change, energy efficiency and food security. By making our programmes more coherent and simpler, we will make life easier for researchers and innovators – especially SMEs - attract more applicants and get even better results. I look forward to an extensive and innovative debate, making use of the web and social media."

Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn is issuing the Green Paper in cooperation with the six other Commissioners with responsibility for research and innovation, Vice-Presidents Kallas, Kroes and Tajani, and Commissioners Vassiliou, Potočník and Oettinger.

Simpler access to EU research and innovation funding

In its Green Paper, the Commission proposes a "Common Strategic Framework", combining three key aspects.

First, a clear focus on three mutually reinforcing objectives: giving the EU a world-beating science base; boosting competitiveness across the board; and tackling grand challenges such as climate change, resource efficiency, energy and food security, health and an ageing population.

Second, making EU funding more attractive and easier to access for participants, for example through a single entry point with common IT tools or a one-stop shop for providing advice and support to participants throughout the funding process. Furthermore, the Common Strategic Framework will allow a simpler and more

streamlined set of funding instruments covering the full innovation chain, including basic research, applied research, collaboration between academia and industry and firm-level innovation. Flexibility will be promoted to encourage diversity and business involvement. Applicants should be able to apply for several different projects without repeatedly providing the same information.

Third, there will be much simpler and more consistent procedures for accounting for the use of the funds received. This may involve, for example, greater use of lump sum payments.

Greater simplicity will make financial control of EU taxpayers' money easier and more effective.

Other ideas in the Green Paper include: further steps to pool Member States' national research funding; better links with cohesion funding; using EU funding to stimulate public procurement; more use of prizes; further strengthening the role of the European Research Council and of financial instruments such as the Risk-Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF) and the loan guarantee and venture capital investments; and drawing up a set of performance indicators to measure the success of EU research and innovation funding.

The Commission will launch in the coming weeks a competition to find the most inspiring name for the new common framework.

The Commission's proposals take fully into account the interim evaluations of the current 7th Framework programme (see [IP/10/1525](#)) and the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme. The Commission's response to the FP7 evaluation is also published today (available via link below).

Next steps

The consultation is open for comments from today. The deadline for contributions is 20 May. On 10 June, the Commission will organise a major closing conference as a follow-up to the public consultation. The name for the new Strategic Framework will be announced there.

The Commission will then bring forward before the end of 2011 a legislative proposal for research and innovation spending under the future EU budget post-2013.

Background

The current Framework Programme for Research FP7 has a budget of EUR 53 billion (2007-2013). More than 9,000 projects have so far been funded. A study has estimated that projects selected for funding in 2011 alone will create up to 165 000 jobs (see [IP/10/966](#))

The Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme has a budget of EUR 3.6 billion (2007-2013) and has supported more than 100,000 SMEs through loan guarantees alone as well as innovative ICT pilot projects.

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is an autonomous EU body stimulating world-leading innovation, through the pioneering concept of Knowledge and Innovation Communities. The EIT received EUR 309 million from the EU Budget for the period 2007-2013.

Links

[Consultation on the Green Paper](#)

[Innovation Union web page](#)

[European Institute of Innovation and Technology \(EIT\)](#)

[Seventh Framework Programme](#)

[Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme](#)

[European Research Council](#)

[Risk-Sharing Finance Facility
\(RSFF evaluation\)](#)

[Report of the FP7 interim evaluation expert group](#)

[Commission response on the interim evaluation report](#)

[April 2010 European Commission Communication on simplification](#)

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