

CALL FOR A € 160 bn RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

I. For FP9 that supports Europe in globalisation

Global challenges, including climate change, demographic development and tensions over energy and mineral resources, encourage stakeholders to pool their resources and find a solution. Aware of this need for pooling, the European Union has included societal issues in its research framework programme since the 1990s. With Horizon 2020, all societal challenges are gathered into the programme's third pillar. To reinforce the connection between Science and Society, the members of ANRT's ERA group support the idea of a framework programme aligned on the sustainable development goals of Agenda 2030.

The European Union's capacity to determine its future depends mainly on the overall performance of its economy fuelled by innovation. This also ensures a degree of independence for our technological industries. In addition, the framework programme needs to accompany developments in business trends and skills, in particular the digital shift in activities, to prepare for tomorrow's job market.

For the members of the ERA group, the complexity of societal challenges and the ambition of making Europe a strong force in globalisation call for significant strengthening of European research and innovation efforts. They support Commissioner Moedas's proposal of a €160 billion budget.

II. For an even more ambitious FP9

The framework programme has already proved its capacity to deliver expected results.

However, much remains to be done. The Lab-Fab-App report underlined the need for more massive transformation of the framework programme's results into products and services that generate economic activity. Much also remains to be done to reach economic targets, such as creating 180,000 new jobs by 2030, directing 3% of GDP to research and innovation, and extending the influence of the scientific community through twice as many publication citations compared to the global average.

Moreover, the €80 billion budget of the current framework programme has only been sufficient to finance a quarter of proposals judged to be excellent. The European Union is not therefore taking advantage of all of the intelligence available to accelerate its development. To fill this gap, the members of the ERA group consider that all excellent proposals should receive funding, while guaranteeing a minimum success rate of 20% compared to 10% currently. This would involve a higher framework programme budget than for Horizon 2020, of at least € 120 billion.

With the creation of the European Innovation Council (EIC), the scope of the framework programme will grow. For the ERA group members, the EIC's creation should not undermine preparation for tomorrow's breakthroughs fuelled by top-quality research. They strongly recommend maintaining the current budget balance between research and innovation. Moreover, the introduction of missions – whose scope and implementation conditions remain to be defined – will also require a budget that corresponds to the strong political ambition that underlies them.

For the members of the ERA group, only a framework programme with a €160 billion budget will be able to support all of these new ambitions and take advantage of the intelligence available by financing all excellent proposals.

III. For increased effectiveness of the FP9

The way that the Commission manages the FP is viewed by the ERA group members as particularly effective and flexible. The members recognise the quality of the working programmes and the excellence of the reviews. For ERA members, excellence, joint research and private-public partnerships should remain the core principles of Community action.

Members of the ERA group confirm that the framework programme opens the door to skills, infrastructures and results that they would not otherwise have accessed. They confirm that the networks built through cooperation act as a starting block for numerous forms of future collaboration. The cross-disciplinary nature of these projects means that today the framework programme encompasses the whole value chain by encouraging collaborations between researchers, innovators and final users.

In addition, our members emphasise the remarkable quality of the participant portal. They welcome the major efforts made in terms of simplification, legal security and shorter time to grant periods since FP7. Nevertheless, they observe that room remains for simplification, as set out in the 21 concrete measures that they have put forward.