

EU Research Trends - September 2016

September marks the commencement of the autumn semester in Brussels and is traditionally a month with many meetings and conferences. In this newsletter you will be able to read about the EC High Level Group on maximising the impact of EU Research and Innovation, new calls and consultations as well as insight into the antimicrobial resistance agenda, the plans for a Gigabit society and the initial voices of leading stakeholders on the mid-term evaluation of Horizon 2020. Also we do hope that some of the readers of this newsletter will be inspired to sign up as H2020 expert evaluators as this is a unique way to learn about the EU funding process.

Trends

Juncker's State of the Union Address - "Towards a better Europe – a Europe that protects, empowers and defends"

At the European Parliament's plenary session in September, the President of the European Commission, Jean Claude Juncker, held his yearly state-of-the-union speech. Throughout the speech, he outlined what he – and thus the Commission – sees as the main targets for the year to come.

In order to strengthen the security, handle the refugee situation and achieving a stronger voice in international affairs, Juncker called for a better control of the external borders, stronger security cooperation across Europe as well as a focus on anti-terror measures.

Moreover, he stressed the need for growth and jobs. To achieve higher growth rates and lower unemployment rates, he pointed to the necessity of a wide range of measures. These measures included social fairness; international trade deals (mentioning CETA, avoiding the mentioning of TTIP); the importance of working towards a more digitalised union through investments in infrastructure and demanding lower fees across borders; and better-integrated financial markets such as a Capital Markets Union and investments in the alleviation of youth unemployment.

There was an acknowledgement of the critical existential threats facing parts of the EU. Juncker highlighted the historical achievements of the EU, and appealed to national leaders and MEPs to remember to give credit to the EU, when credit is due. The subject of Brexit was not addressed directly, but did, of course, figure as the main manifestation of the threats facing the union.

To read the full speech please follow this [link](#).

The EU increases budgets

An additional EUR 6.3 billion in financing will be freed up by 2020 by the EU. This was the main news in the presentation of the mid-term review of the multiannual EU budget (budget period 2014-2020). The money will be sourced into job creation, investment, economic growth migration and its root causes as well as high performing programmes such as the extended European Fund for Strategic Investments, the Youth Employment Initiative, the programme for research and innovation (Horizon 2020) the EU programme for Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs (COSME), Erasmus as well as the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) that supports the development of transeuropean networks within transport, energy and digitalization.

Horizon 2020 will be allocated EUR 400 million extra towards 2020. To see the full account please follow this [link](#).

Independent experts to advise Commission on impact of EU research funding

The European Commission will set up a High Level Group of experts who will advise on how to maximise the impact of the EU's investment into research and innovation. The Group will be chaired by Pascal Lamy, President Emeritus of the Jacques Delors Institute. The Group is being established as part of the interim evaluation of Horizon 2020, the EU's current research and innovation funding scheme (2014-20). The experts will formulate a vision for future EU research and innovation and draw up strategic recommendations on maximising the impact of EU's future investment in this area. They will base their work on the available Horizon 2020 interim evaluation results and other factual evidence such as the results of the related public consultation which will be launched in October 2016.

The Group will comprise up to twelve highly qualified, independent members appointed in their personal capacity. They are currently being selected from over 350 candidates that responded to an online call for expression of interest. The selection process is expected to be finalised in November 2016.

The High Level Group will then start its work in December 2016. Its final report will be published in June 2017, followed by a stakeholder conference in Brussels. The Group's recommendations will be taken forward by the European Commission for the future development of EU research and innovation funding, in particular the implementation of the remaining years of Horizon 2020.

To read the news in full please follow this [link](#)

European Research Council (ERC) opens ERC Consolidator Grants again in October 2016

The aim of the ERC Consolidator Grants is to support researchers of any nationality with 7-12 years of experience since completion of PhD who want to initiate their research teams and develop a successful career in Europe. The scheme also strengthens new independent individual research teams. The Consolidator Grants call will open on 20 October 2016 with a budget of 575 million EUR for the year 2017. The application deadline is 8 February 2017.

You can read more about ERC Consolidator Grants [here](#).

European Research Council (ERC) launches research traineeships in order to widen access

In an aim to widen access to EU research funding, the ERC has launched a new research traineeships destined at the countries whose researchers traditionally does not win a lot of EU funding.

You can read more about this news [here](#).

New defence Research and Development pilot programme to be announced

Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker has presented a timetable for an EU move into defence-related research and development. This timetable will be made public before the end of the year. In the Commission announcement it was flagged that a top-up from EUR 315 billion to EUR 500 billion for the EU Fund for Strategic Investments will be mobilised. The programme is likely to run from 2017-2019 and to start with a budget of EUR 25 billion. Read an initial account [here](#).

Fellowship programmes for future European Research Council applicants

Five countries - Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia - as well as the Belgian region of Flanders have set up fellowship programmes to allow future European Research Council (ERC) applicants to visit research teams of existing ERC grantees. This comes in response to the ERC's initiative earlier this year and is in line with the ERC's long-standing ambition to widen participation in its competitions. The ERC has today informed some 2.800 of its grantees about a call for expression of interest regarding the new fellowship programmes, encouraging them to host visitors.

See attachment for more information.

The European Research Council (ERC) has awarded its Starting Grants

ERC has announced today the awarding of its Starting Grants to 325 early-career researchers throughout Europe. The funding worth in total EUR 485 million and up to EUR 1.5 million per grant will enable them to set up their own research teams and pursue ground-breaking ideas.

See attachment for more information.

Expert evaluators needed for EC evaluation of Horizon 2020 projects

The Commission is looking for independent experts to evaluate Horizon 2020 projects with the calls for proposals relevant to:

- Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials (next evaluations planned for spring 2017)
- Energy efficiency (next evaluations planned for spring 2017)
- Innovation in small and medium-sized businesses (ongoing)

Working as evaluator gives a unique insight into evaluation criteria and procedures, and can thus be very helpful in personal or organisational development in relation to EU calls.

See more about how to become an evaluator [here](#).

Further to this call on expert evaluators, the Commission has now also published its list of expert evaluators who have been used for the 2015 proposals. The list of expert evaluators can be accessed through this [link](#)

Consultation on the interim evaluation of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

The European Commission has recently launched a consultation on the EIT. The consultation is organized in the context of the EIT's interim evaluation and will be open until 14. November 2016. The objective of the consultation is to ensure that, in addition to the organisations and individuals directly involved in or benefitting from the activities of the EIT, wider stakeholder groups as well as the general public have a say in its future direction. The consultation is open to individual citizens, public and private bodies, local/regional authorities, ministries and relevant stakeholders in the field of innovation both inside and outside the EU.

The consultation can be accessed through this [link](#).

EC consultation on research and innovation in Cloud Computing

The European Commission's Directorate-General Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT) has started a consultation on research and innovation in the area of Cloud Computing. The results will inform the upcoming Work Programme 2018-2020. The consultation is open to all interested stakeholders from the academic and non-academic sector. Contributions can be submitted online in free format. The consultation runs from 5 September until 10 October 2016. Outcomes will be discussed in a public "Post-Consultation Workshop" on 7 November 2016 in Brussels.

You can access the consultation through this [link](#).

Data available from the call under the Future and Emerging Technologies Open Scheme

The Future and Emerging Technologies (FET) Open Scheme supports the early stages of the science and technology research and innovation around new ideas towards radically new future technologies. Data is now available from the call 2014-2015 under the FET Open Scheme.

The data can be accessed through this [link](#).

Call for Women Innovators

Europe is in urgent need of more innovators to stay competitive in the coming decades and to spur economic growth. In order to recognize and promote also more female participation in this race of the century the EU has launched a call for Women Innovators.

See more through this [link](#).

EU to be Gigabit society by 2025

The Commission proposes the creation of a Gigabit society by 2025 by encouraging investment in high capacity networks with a European Electronic Communications Code and a 5G Action Plan. The Commission factsheet can be accessed [here](#).

In the same spirit the EU continues to promote connectivity across the EU, among others with a proposal for a EUR 120 million investment to promote free access to wireless connectivity in public places.

See more about the proposal [here](#).

Antimicrobial Resistance: Policy attention is there, now actions must follow

On 8th September the European Public Health Alliance hosted a conference on AMR: *RESISTANCE, Antibiotics, Politics and Public Health*. Both the opening and closing remarks made it clear that the threat of AMR is eminent. Today AMR costs 700.000 lives, a figure that will rise to 10 million lives in 2050 if real and tangible measures are not taken now. In the EU it is estimated that the early loss of lives due to AMR is 25.000 people whereas 400.000 people are infected by drug resistant organisms. The main argument was that with these daunting figures AMR is the biggest threat to public health, however, several people raised that when it comes to third world countries' access to medication including antibiotics is still a bigger threat to public health than excess use of antibiotics.

Political momentum is developing and on 21. September during the heads of states' week at the UN assembly the topic of AMR will be discussed and similarly an OECD meeting will be dedicated to AMR in the beginning of 2017. This political attention is much needed as AMR

knows no borders and does not limit itself to one or two sectors. Due to the magnitude of the problem there is a need to scale up prevention, control and research linking all actions up on international and inter-sectorial binding policies and collaboration platforms. The EU is in a leading position when it comes to research prevention and prudent use of antibiotics. This provides an interesting opportunity for the EU to become a blueprint on how to tackle AMR, however to get there the EU needs to step up its coordination and launch binding initiatives.

All continents will at some point have to begin to look at the AMR challenge as the negative effect of AMR is to grow globally to 100 trillion USD in terms of healthcare and lost economic activity etc.

The full account of the conference can be given upon request to Lina Christensen.

Commission proposes new copyright law that will benefit researchers

The law proposed by the Commission will give universities, research institutes and research-performing companies legal backing to scour text and data produced in scientific journals in Europe.

Carlos Moedas, EU Commissioner for Research, said “This proposed copyright exception will give researchers the freedom to pursue their work without fear of legal repercussions, and although some key stakeholders argue that the proposal does not go far enough there is also wide spread agreement that this is a very positive development.

Read more about the news [here](#).

The League of European Research Universities (LERU) publishes paper on H2020

LERU has published a position paper in relation to H2020 flagging the need to forge better links not only between university research laboratories but also with companies, and that there should be more room for bottom-up, collaborative research in the EU’s framework programme, especially H2020’s pillar II and III.

Link to the press release [here](#).

The position paper is attached to the newsletter.

The Initiative for Science in Europe (ISE) and EuroScience call upon the Commission for an inclusive process for the midterm evaluation of H2020.

ISE and EuroScience have published 5 recommendations for the Commission to consider when conducting the mid-term evaluation. Also these recommendations include a call for more collaborative basic research.

To read the text in full please follow this [link](#).

Highlighted events

Attached to the email sending out this newsletter is a comprehensive list of relevant events. In this section a few of these events are highlighted.

Global Trends to 2030 - Society and Governance

16–17 November 2016

[Register here](#)

[ESPAS](#) is an inter-institutional collaboration between the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of the EU, and the European External Action Service that monitors global trends and offers strategic foresight to the EU's decision-makers.

The 2016 Annual Conference is part of a three-year cycle which draws on the insights of the ESPAS report [Global Trends to 2030: Can the EU Meet the Challenges Ahead?](#)

Food2030: Research and Innovation for tomorrow's food and nutrition

12-13 October 2016

Food 2030 is a high level event which will provide a platform for dialogue and which will seek to build on the political momentum for a coherent research and innovation policy framework for Food and Nutrition Security. For more information and registration please use this [link](#).

10 Tech enablers: Europe's rising university-industry clusters

18 October

ScienceBusiness dedicates a conference to digital innovation and looks closer at ten dynamic clusters in Europe where academia, industry and government work together.

More info and registration please follow this [link](#).

eHealth Week 2017:

10-12 May 2017

eHealth Week 2017 is organized by the Maltese Ministry of Health as part of their Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the European Commission and HIMSS Europe. eHealth Week 2017 will gather stakeholders from across the globe to address international topics related to healthcare IT including 'Cross-border exchange of personal health data: from policy to practice' and 'European Reference Networks: how digital health helps'. The Week will be organised on 10-12 May 2017 for more information please consult this [link](#) (please notice that registration only opens in December 2016):

Comments or questions should be directed to [Rikke Edsjö](#) or [Lina Christensen](#)