

## EU Framework Programme: Call for Evidence response form

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**The closing date for this call for evidence is 4 January 2011**

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**Question1: What should the UK's high-level objectives be for FP8?**

**Strengthening the Knowledge Triangle: strong universities, research institutions and innovative business; Seamless mobility and attractive careers for researchers; Coherent and efficient research programmes and priorities.**

**Question 2: How can FP8 help deliver economic growth throughout the life of the programme and beyond?**

**Question 3: How should FP8 support the wider European context including Europe 2020 and the European Research Area?**

**Question 4: The study *Impact of the EU RTD Framework Programme on the UK* has indicated a number of broad benefits to the UK of the programme. Are these benefits identified appropriately and there other impacts that should be considered in addition?**

**Question 5: How can FP8 make a positive contribution to the UK economy – and the low-carbon economy in particular?**

**Question 6: How can FP8 support innovation in the UK?**

**Question 7: What are your views on the split of the FP7 budget between these specific programmes? Should this change in FP8?**

**Question 8: Which areas of Framework Programme funding provide the most EU added-value (see paragraph 6)? And which the least?**

In the development of individual researchers whether through the ERC or Marie Curie schemes, the ERA will increasingly develop ground-breaking research, and 'value added' will be seen through the sustainability of EU research via this important group. collaboration of course is implicit in this undertaking, however, Capacities shows little engagement with the higher-level objectives that the ERA has set.

**Question 9: Can efficiencies be found in the Framework Programme because of overlaps between different areas of funding?**

With the development of FP8 it would seem best to integrate many of the instruments of the Capacities programme into other schemes, particularly 'Research for the benefit of SMEs and CSOs' into Collaboration, and Science and Society into perhaps SSH.

**Question 10: What are the arguments for and against FP8 moving towards funding research and development which addresses grand challenges?**

The main issue seems to be that the Humanities are sidelined when it comes to Grand Challenges. The argument from the Commission is that Humanities scholars can 'be involved' within projects but this is unlikely. The Humanities must be included when it comes to funding, it would be a poorer Europe that neglected the contribution to society that Humanities research makes.

**Question 11: Which grand challenges (see above) are best tackled on an EU-wide rather than a national level? Within these areas which particular aspects would benefit from an interdisciplinary focus?**

Opportunity and social cohesion will be enhanced in a world where innovation makes the difference in both products and processes, harnessing the potential of education, research and of the digital economy; The acquisition of new skills, fostering creativity and innovation, the development of entrepreneurship and a smooth transition between jobs will be crucial in a world which will offer more jobs in exchange for greater adaptability; The EU should compete more effectively and increase its productivity by a lower and more efficient consumption of non-renewable energy and resources in a world of high energy and resources prices, and greater competition for energy and resources. All of the above.

**Question 12: How should FP8 engage with countries outside the EU or associated to the Framework Programme in addressing global challenges?<sup>1</sup>**

**Bite the bullet: start to include 1<sup>st</sup> world actors as well as those from other developing countries. Maybe joint initiatives with US or Japanese funding bodies.**

**Question 13: Should FP8 still provide some thematic focus e.g. in areas such as space and transport? Should any of the current themes be revisited over the course of FP8 – and if so, how?**

**Question 14: What should be the role of key enabling technologies e.g. ICT and nanotechnology in FP8?**

**Question 15: Services form a crucial part of the UK economy. Should research into services be addressed specifically in the Framework Programme, and if so, how?**

**Question 16: What are your views on how the Framework Programme allocation for collaborative research should be apportioned between themes; enabling technologies and underpinning areas of research e.g. social sciences and humanities?**

**As stated the role of the Social Sciences and Humanities in maintaining a Europe that is safe, fair, and in which aspects of lifestyles, families, work, consumption, health and quality of life are paramount is extremely important.**

**Question 17: To what extent should ERC funding focus on supporting frontier research? Are there other areas in which ERC could add value?**

**The ERC has been a true success story. It aims to support frontier research and this must be maintained. It could be said that the definition of frontier research could be somewhat broadened to include subject**

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<sup>1</sup> FP7 participants can in principle be based anywhere. There are different categories of country which may have varying eligibility for different specific and work programmes: the EU-27; associated countries– with science and technology cooperation agreements that involve contributing to the framework programme budget; EU accession candidate countries; and third countries whose participation is justified in terms of the enhanced contribution to the objectives of FP7.

staht might not otherwise be included in the 'science-heavy' definition in place within the canon.

**Question 18: Should ERC's current emphasis on funding a single investigator continue into FP8?**

Without a doubt.

**Question 19: Are there any options that could better link ERC activities with private sector interests?**

Re-evaluation of the legal status and definitions surrounding 'sub-contracting'. Perhaps an alternative could be 'partnerships' as seen in RCUK projects where partners can be involved in projects not necessarily as 'researchers' involved in 'outputs'.

**Question 20: What priority should researcher mobility and skills development have in FP8? What is the best way to address this?**

At all times research in Europe should follow those guidelines set out in the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for their recruitment, and in the UK this process incorporates both the 'QAA Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes' and the 'Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers'. It also includes ongoing national evaluation and benchmarking. The Marie Curie programme, and to some extent the ERC help in sustaining an important part of research development in the ERA.

Goldsmiths has led and collaborated in a number of Marie Curie - People awards and would thoroughly endorse the schemes. At all levels the People Programme facilitates excellent inter-European research since the schemes necessarily entail researchers becoming fully immersed in a research environment outside of their own country which inevitably provides a very valuable career development mechanism and cross pollination of research methodologies between European institutions.

On the whole the schemes are carefully funded and if all of the guidelines are followed accurately at application and contract stage the mid-career fellowship schemes provide an adequate level of funding support for the researcher and a modest provision for the host institution's management of the fellowship. Academically the scheme offers tremendous value to host universities since it provides a fully funded mid career research fellow for up to three years who will certainly be very proficient in their field due to the competitiveness of the application process.

However whilst the Marie Curie Initial Training of Researchers scheme provides tremendous opportunities for UK PhD candidates to study in other European countries and for UK institutions to train other EU students the funding mechanism provides significant problems for UK universities. The Marie Curie Programme will not fund UK PhD fees and

requires that the PhD student be paid a salary rather than a bursary. The fixed salary rate provided is at a low rate which would be commensurate with the sort of figure a well paid tax free bursary would offer but the problem occurs because many UK institutions have fairly rigid pay scales and structures and the salary level of the lowest junior research post is higher than the salary that the EU provides. This problem is particularly evident in London based institutions where staff salaries include London weighting and therefore since the EU provides the same salary regardless of where the initial training is to take place London institutions have a further 2.5k per annum to reconcile.

In some cases the short fall in funding does not require the host institution to subsidise the PhD student since the student may decide not to join the USS pension scheme and consequently the institution saves on the contribution payments – but obviously the option of joining the pension scheme must be available for the early career researcher if they wish to join.

It is because of the financial short falls as described above that many UK universities have considerable difficulty in committing to large scale Initial Training Network applications whereby an institution would generally expect to host at least three PhD students over the programme. If adequately funded the scheme would provide an excellent source of studentship funding but as the remuneration currently stands it requires Departments to commit scarce resources to research applications which they may consider would be better spent on studentships for their current cohort of research students.

**Question 21:** The capacities specific programme currently covers several policy initiatives relating to capacity-building. Which of these are of most value? Are there other areas which would merit funding?

**Question 22:** What should the relative priority be for the Joint Research Centre under FP8? On which activities should it focus?

**Question 23:** Please comment on the COST framework and its links with the Framework Programme

**Question 24:** Should FP8 directly support activities aimed at integrating the three sides of the knowledge triangle e.g. KICs?

**Question 25: Which instruments (e.g. JTIs, article 185 initiatives) should be retained for FP8? Are any new instruments required?**

**Question 26: Please comment on the Risk Sharing Finance Facility. Should a scheme of this kind be included within FP8?**

**It should but it needs reviewing/simplifying. Powers should be given to consortia so that if any one partner shows signs of damaging the project then penalties should be in place that are to be taken seriously (currently this is not the case). Prevention is paramount.**

**Question 27: What should the balance be between funding large-scale programmes e.g. the article 185 *programmes* above and smaller *projects* individually administered by the Commission?**

**Smaller projects should be given much more importance.**

**Question 28: What should be the role of public-private partnerships in FP8?**

**Limited unless fully monitored by an external body with review procedures annually.**

**Question 29: What lessons from evaluations of previous framework programmes can help with the development of FP8?**

**Further developing the themes and types of research supported and reducing the level of bureaucracy. At the national level, suggestions focused on exploring possibilities for inputting to FP scheme design and agenda setting; and providing more intensive support to applicants.**

**Question 30: What steps could be taken to ensure that knowledge gained from FP8 is disseminated and exploited – and remains easily accessible over time?**

**Question 31: Would any proactive effort to alter the current balance of funding between universities, research organisations and businesses be appropriate or effective? If so, what might be involved?**

**Question 32: What could be done at EU level to encourage more businesses – especially SMEs - to apply?**

**Question 33: What could the Commission do to reduce bureaucracy of FP8 over and above the current simplification proposals (including changes to the Financial Regulations and Implementing Rules)?**

**Question 34: Is there a role for a two-stage applications process analogous to that used by the Technology Strategy Board<sup>2</sup>?**

**Question 35: Should the programme move away from a cost/input-based funding model to one based more on results/outcomes/performance?**

**Question 36: Should the rules on intellectual property in FP7 be changed for FP8?**

**Question 37: Is the proportion of overheads funded by FP7 appropriate? Should this be adapted in FP8 to create more consistency with other sources of funding?**

**Question 38: Within the current UK public expenditure constraints<sup>3</sup>, could the UK do more on a cost-neutral basis to encourage participation in FP generally?**

**Question 39: How effective are the current UK support services?**

UKRO is an excellent resource and should continued at all costs.

**Question 40: What could be done at UK level to encourage more businesses – especially SMEs - to apply?**

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<sup>2</sup> For details of Technology Strategy Board processes see [www.innovateuk.org](http://www.innovateuk.org)

<sup>3</sup> See [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/spend\\_index.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/spend_index.htm)



Question 41: Are there any lessons from other countries that could help raise UK participation?

**Question 42: Please add additional comments here in relation to UK interests in the Framework Programme.**

**Retention of the medium-sized research projects that had been the mainstay of the FP5 and FP6 programmes, the so-called Specific Targeted Research Projects (STREPs). Over the current trend towards Large scale integrated projects.**

**Do you have any other comments that might aid the consultation process as a whole?**

European funding is an essential part of Goldsmiths Research Strategy to the extent that a dedicated European adviser will be in place to develop not only framework projects but ERA in general. Goldsmiths is increasingly successful at being awarded Framework grants and wishes to maintain its momentum and continue to develop projects either through the individual researcher (ERC MCF) but also through collaborative projects whether those are academic partnerships or industry-academia projects.

Please use this space for any general comments that you may have, comments on the layout of this consultation would also be welcomed.

Thank you for your views on this consultation.

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge receipt of individual responses unless you tick the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply ☒

At BIS we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be okay if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

☒ Yes

☐ No