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(Web Link)Custom Value:
emptyIP Address:
80.195.116.70Response Started:
Friday, August 2, 2013 1:44:02 PMResponse Modified:
Tuesday, August 6, 2013 2:44:23 PM**1. Name:**

High Value Manufacturing Catapult

2. Organisation (if applicable):

High Value Manufacturing Catapult

3. Email address:**4. Address:****5. In responding, it would be helpful if you could indicate whether you are responding as**

a research or educational body

6. Keeping in touch

No Response

1. 1. Where has EU action had a positive impact for the UK on research, technological development, innovation or space? What evidence is there for this? Has EU action encouraged national action in any areas?

The primary funding instruments administered by the European Commission that have helped to create value in research, development and innovation are: i) the EU Framework Programme Seven (FP7); ii) the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF); and iii) the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP). Through FP7 in particular, the scale of the opportunities open to UK researchers and research institutions has significantly increased and has added a dimension to UK research, innovation and technological development which would otherwise not have been available. The UK, as a member of the EU, has been able to influence the direction of the EU's research programmes and the structure of those programmes to its own benefit. For example, the growing emphasis in FP7, and now Horizon 2020, on excellence as a criterion for making awards has been extremely positive for the UK. Likewise, the increasing importance of applied research and innovation in Horizon 2020 should bring further advantages to UK research.

2. 2. Where has EU action had a negative impact for the UK in these fields? What evidence is there for this? Has EU action prevented potentially useful national action in any areas?

There is a multitude of funding schemes administered by the European Commission presenting a very complex landscape that many organisations find difficult to fully understand. The EU practice of funding calls requiring partners from specific geographic areas may have had a negative impact by deterring potentially good projects unable to find a partner from that country or region in turn resulting in weaker project consortia as partners may be invited to join on the basis that they satisfy the geographical requirements. Another specific area that the EU needs to address is the complexity involved in the administration of EU funds and EU projects. ERDF, for example, is a complex finance source and the basic administration cost of ERDF projects to ensure compliance is high – especially revenue intensive projects. This aspect of ERDF has hindered project outcomes and/or even deterred potential applicants. Threat of funding 'claw back' is a key feature in the ERDF debate with existing and new applicants. In ERDF changes in finance rules are retrospectively applied increasing risk.

3. 3. How and where has UK engagement with partner countries or international bodies, both within and outside the EU, been helped or hindered by EU involvement?

EU programmes have positively supported the development of partnerships beyond the EU's borders. Through the allocation of significant resources to collaborative projects with developing world countries, the Framework Programmes have allowed UK research institutions to build profile and reputation in ways that would not otherwise have been possible.

4. 4. What benefits or difficulties has the objective of a European research area (ERA) delivered for the UK?

The overall benefit to the UK from the objectives of creating a European Research Area is significant. It has allowed research bases and industry across Europe to collaborate on projects, exchange staff and develop early-stage researchers. It has encouraged mobility for researchers to develop careers in Europe. However, the UK still suffers from difficulties in developing, attracting and retaining highly qualified researchers. The objectives of a European Research Area have been more beneficial to UK universities than to UK businesses, especially small companies. One of the instruments that are aimed at developing a European Research Area is ERANETs. While in principle the proposed use of ERANETs as a mechanism to extend cooperation at the EU level is attractive, in practice, alignment of national priorities and funding rules is problematic.

5. 5. How has the EU sought to coordinate the policy instruments at its disposal across different policy areas to create an enabling environment for researchers and innovators? How successful has this been?

The EU has many policies and associated programmes including to date FP7, CIP, ERDF, Life+, Eurostars, JTI's, COST and EUREKA. There are likely to be other sources. The EU has also encouraged EU Member States to stimulate the demand side of innovation via public sector sub-contracts. In the UK this has led to the successful Small Business Research Initiatives (SBRI's) calls for proposals. The aims and objectives of each of these instruments are positive but they are co-ordinated by different Directorate-General and Executive Agencies. This approach has led to fragmentation making it difficult for individuals and organisations to understand and hence to participate. The European Commission needs to consider reducing this fragmentation.

1. 6. What could the EU most helpfully do to promote scientific and technological progress and innovation (including in the space sector)? - How could the EU use its existing competence differently to deliver more in your area? - How might a greater or lesser degree of EU competence deliver more in your area? - How could improvements to existing EU activities make them more effective and efficient?

The EU should extend its promotion of greater collaboration between researchers and industry. In particular, it should seek to develop mechanisms through which researchers and end users can come together to identify common interests. While European Technology Platforms and KICs are effective at promoting collaboration involving large corporations, greater activity is required to secure the participation of smaller businesses, especially SMEs.

2. 7. Where might future EU level action be detrimental to your work in this area?

A reduction in funding for research and innovation would have negative consequences not just for research communities but also for the UK and EU economies. A failure to resolve the Eurozone crisis, leading to its break up, would have catastrophic consequences.

3. 8. Where might action at national rather than EU level be more appropriate / effective?

No Response

4. 9. How could EU and national policies and funding streams interact better?

The objectives and policies of EU and national funding for Research and Innovation are reasonably consistent. However, difficulties in maximising the combined value of the available funds are often caused by the differences in timing of funding calls and administrative rules.

5. 10. What impact would any future enlargement of the EU have on this area of competence?

It would: i) provide a wider pool for collaboration and recruitment; ii) tend to increase the power of the EU to act on the world stage and, for example, to promote global research collaboration; iii) further dilute the UK's influence within the EU; iv) increase, or at least maintain, the influence non-research political priorities, such as the capacity of weaker states to participate in the Research and Innovation Programmes, which impact upon research and innovation strategy.

6. 11. Are there any other points you wish to make which are not captured above?

No Response

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