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emptyIP Address:
131.227.249.135Response Started:
Monday, August 5, 2013 9:09:19 AMResponse Modified:
Monday, August 5, 2013 9:34:07 AM

1. Name:

2. Organisation (if applicable):

University of Surrey

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 EU has had a positive impact for the UK on research, technological development, innovation or space in a number of areas, including:

- By providing a funding stream that bridges current gaps in RCUK funding programmes
- By enabling genuine multi and cross disciplinary research which provides a more rounded approach to address global challenges
- By providing programmes such as Marie Curie and ERC enabling the intensive development of UK researchers. It has also proved useful in retaining researchers.

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?

The EU has had a negative impact for the UK on research, technological development, innovation or space in a number of areas, including:

- The UK has not always been that successful in securing bids for large scale infrastructure development. The longer term maintenance requirements often put organisations off applying and facilities tend to go to mainland Europe. <http://www.researchprofessional.com/0/rr/news/uk/politics/whitehall/2013/7/Willetts-hungry-for-international-capital-projects.html>

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?

UK engagement with partner countries and international bodies both within and outside the EU has been hindered by:

- On the occasions that collaborative research is undertaken with a partner outside the EU, unless they have associated country status or equivalent, engagement/funding from the bid can be difficult if not impossible despite a clear rationale for involvement. Examples of this have been China for water research and the US for space activities. UK engagement with partner countries and international bodies both within and outside the EU has been helped by:
- Involvement in EU programmes with partner countries provides the UK with a 'credibility badge' and has enabled us to attract international businesses who are prepared to invest in our research e.g. the 5G Innovation Centre.

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

In terms of the ERA, the concept is still a somewhat nebulous quantity. It is not visible enough to external audiences to provide tangible benefits and demonstrable collaborative strength. However, one positive outcome has been the development of the HR Excellence in Research badge from the European Commission. It provides assurance on the

development of our researchers and demonstrates a benchmark for research consistency across the region. This is a valuable tool for those who engage in collaborative research both inside and outside of the EU.

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 mobility of researchers through Marie Curie actions has enabled incoming and outgoing researchers to benefit from working within new research organisations with mutual benefit from the transnational engagement on research activities. If there is one criticism it would be on the level of funding available to researchers through the actions which appears disproportionately high compared with UK researchers and can (if data on salaries is shared between researchers) cause discontent in the fairness of remuneration. It might be beneficial to look at the mobility living allowances, and then use the host institution's average remuneration level for the researcher, to level that playing field. Of course, all of this is then subject to the variations in exchange rates during the funding period which adds further complexity (and uncertainty) for the researcher.

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 consider providing follow on funding for research projects approaching successful completion, where further work could deliver high impact with a relatively low level of investment. Although support does exist for commercialisation and exploitation on completion of the project, there is no further funding for additional research. •In terms of the space agenda an improved alignment between European Space Policy and the European Space Agency. Although initial work has been undertaken in order to deliver consistent governance at a European level in terms of space, further work is required. Currently there is not a clear mechanism at policy level to ensure ESAs space activities are consistent with EU policies despite the 2004 EU/ESA Framework Agreement. •There is some concern that the amendments suggested by LIBE Committee to the European Commission's Data Protection Regulation (2012/0011 (COD)) may restrict the ability to undertake research using personal data without prior consent. Access to anonymous patient records is a key resource for the academic community to undertake health related research. Current proposals may hinder access and prevent vital research progressing. •The time taken from notification of funding to the actual formal award is still extremely slow. Efficiencies should be made here to speed up the process.

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

The implementation of a flat rate for indirect costs has potential to cause a detrimental financial impact to our EU activity. The University of Surrey has approved simplified methodology status to support the full cost of our research activity (one of only 3 HEIs in the UK). The adoption of a flat rate approach is, in a sense, a retrospective step and has implications for the affordability of involvement in future EU programmes for us and our industrial partners. We would support a mid-term review of the impact of this costing methodology.

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

More specific and dedicated investment in Space is needed at a national level as current funding of this research area falls between Research Councils. As identified by BIS, satellites and the commercial applications of space is defined as one of the eight great technologies which will propel the UK towards future growth. However, there is no long term dedicated funding source to underpin this ambition. In addition, investment in infrastructure at a national level will provide the UK with easier access to the necessary facilities to advance science and ensure the UK maintains a competitive edge in areas such as satellites, communication systems, synthetic biology and advanced materials.

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

Currently there appears to be good complementarity of funding programmes at a national and EU level. Often programmes at an EU level addresses gaps between the seven research councils and allow whole system approaches to solving global challenges.

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

In terms of enlargement, there is some concern that in an attempt to be inclusive research excellence may not always form the crux of peer review. In addition, specific calls may be developed to ensure new partners are included in bids regardless of the logic to make them core partners.

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

In addition to the above we would like to highlight two additional points: - •SME engagement in the EU remains a challenge – the commercialisation of research tends to fall to our EU partners potentially at the expense of the UK. •The UK academic community is still not engaging with the necessary networks at the right level - there are examples of best practice but on the whole we need to raise the importance of engaging as a mechanism for effective lobbying and for getting an inside track on future calls.

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