

THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

SUBMISSION TO DEPARTMENT FOR BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS REVIEW: BALANCE OF COMPETENCES BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE EUROPEAN UNION – RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

1. The Geological Society is the UK's learned and professional body for geoscience, with more than 10,500 Fellows (members) worldwide. The Fellowship encompasses those working in industry, academia and government with a broad range of perspectives on policy-relevant science, and the Society is a leading communicator of this science to government bodies and other non-specialist audiences.
2. We have not attempted to answer most of the questions raised in the Call for Evidence, many of which we are not well placed to address. The Geological Society welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation on Research and Development and took part in the stakeholder meeting event held at BIS on 3 July. There was a detailed and useful discussion around many of the aspects of EU impact on UK research and development and we commented on the areas relevant to the geoscience community. The Geological Society also contributed to a discussion convened by the Science Council, along with several of their other member bodies, which informed their submission to the consultation. We support the evidence they have presented, and offer some supplementary comments below.
3. The UK geoscience research community has a good track record in winning EU funding, which forms a vital part of the geoscience research portfolio. There are many additional positive effects that result from operating in an EU-wide research framework. The wider research community benefits considerably from the improved interoperability of data and infrastructure that comes from cross-border working, and associated technological advancements such as investment in e-infrastructure. Operating within an EU framework also aids the process of collaboration across borders and opens up avenues for research which might not otherwise be considered.
4. Although many research groups and departments benefit from and often depend on EU funding opportunities, awareness of EU funding and research frameworks in the research community is patchy. EU funds allocated on the basis of scientific excellence would be lent greater impact by wider promotion and increased competition, adding to both the value and calibre of EU research.

Increased promotion also has the potential to improve the reach and relevance of EU-funded research in the geoscience community and in society at large.

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