

## Mission-oriented Research to be Discussed at 2018 High Level Workshop

The 2018 edition of the Science Europe High Level Workshop will take place on 31 May in Madrid. Hosted by the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) at its headquarters, the event will address the topic of 'mission-oriented' research and bring together Heads of Science Europe Member Organisations and high-level representatives of European institutions and national ministries. The Science Europe General Assembly takes place the following day, also in Madrid.

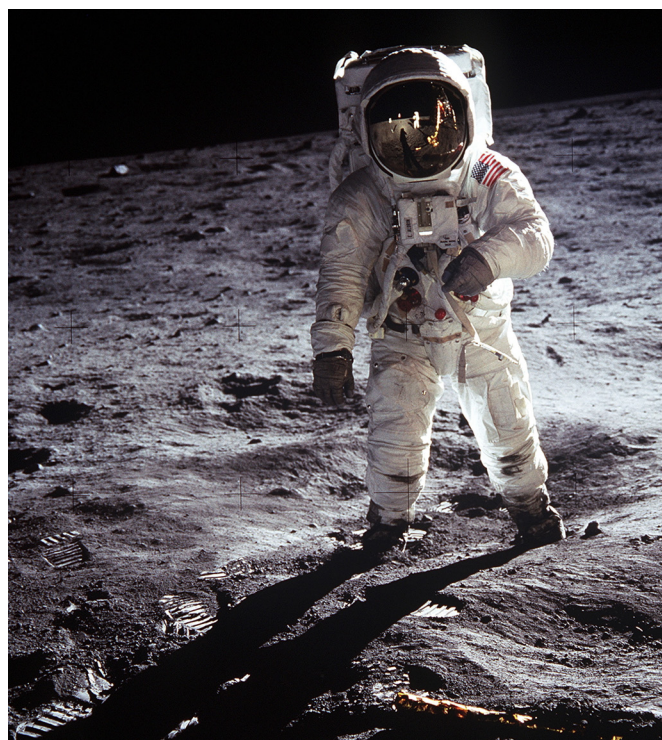
### Mission-oriented research

Mission-oriented research is one of the planned new features of the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP9). Missions are intended to set more specific objectives than the Grand Societal Challenges or Sustainable Development Goals do. A commonly used historic example of such a mission is the objective 'to put a man on the moon and get him back safely before the end of the decade', as stated by US President John F. Kennedy in 1961.

In a February 2018 report, written by professor Mariana Mazzucato of University College London at the request of the European Commission, the concept of missions was discussed, and some examples of possible missions were given, such as reaching 100 carbon-neutral cities in Europe by 2030, or easing the burden of dementia (see February edition of this Newsletter).

This raises a number of issues that Science Europe believes need to be carefully and critically considered. What is the overall purpose of these missions – what are the high level societal, economic or governmental outcomes sought, and what is the expected role of research and innovation in delivering those outcomes? What set of criteria for the selection of missions will most likely deliver those outcomes and ensure that the individual missions fulfil the expectations placed upon them? The absence of such explicit criteria as the basis for a rigorous and robust selection of missions, is likely to be highly problematic.

The High Level workshop will address these issues from the perspective of Science Europe Members and provide a forum for discussion with senior ministerial officials and European Commission representatives.



US astronaut Buzz Aldrin on the Moon: an example of successful mission-oriented research? Photo: NASA

### Feedback from Member Organisations needed

In order to share existing experience ahead of the workshop, Science Europe would very much like to receive examples from its members who already have or are setting up programmes that call for scientific contributions to reach specific goals or solve defined problems – whether they are called 'missions' or not. These

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should preferably be interdisciplinary and foresee alignment with other parties to implement the solutions.

If you have experience with such programmes or instruments, we kindly ask you to send a short description to Mathilde Reumaux at the SE Office ([mathilde.reumaux@scienceeurope.org](mailto:mathilde.reumaux@scienceeurope.org)) **before 13 April** to include in the Workshop preparation.

### Response to European Commission Consultation

The European Commission ran a public consultation on mission-oriented research, which closed on 3 April. The SE Office and

Governing Board submitted a brief response to this consultation, in which Science Europe expresses an interest in the concept, but highlights the need to further develop it together with relevant stakeholders.

### Invitations

Invitations to register for to the High Level Workshop have been sent to all Heads of SE Member Organisations. More details on the programme and the formal invitation to the General Assembly on 1 June will follow soon. We look forward to seeing all of our members there for some fruitful discussions. ■

## Science Europe Task Force on Multilateral Lead Agency Agreement

**There is high demand from scientific communities for more collaboration opportunities outside supra-national programmes such as the EU Framework Programme. The Science Europe High Level Policy Network (HLPN) on cross-border collaboration has explored possible strategies and mechanisms to further support cross-border collaboration in Europe.**

The HLPN has developed a concept for a Multilateral Lead Agency (MLA) framework. It is an international, multilateral collaboration framework for Research Funding Organisations (RFOs) that relies on an adapted implementation of the Lead Agency procedure. This procedure offers researchers a permanent bottom-up scheme for small international project proposals; these go through a single application process, thus avoiding the risk of being accepted by one RFO and rejected by another. For RFOs, this procedure simplifies the evaluation of trans-national proposals and reduces pressure on peer review.

The MLA concept was received positively by heads of Member Organisations at the November 2017 General Assembly. It is a timely opportunity to learn from the Lead Agency implementation in a bilateral context, streamline several steps of the procedure, and simplify it for both the research communities and partnering RFOs. So far, 17 Member Organisations have joined a new SE Task Force dedicated to the development of the MLA agreement.

The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) champions the MLA development within Science Europe. Together with the SE Office, SNSF organised the first meeting of this Task Force on 15 March in Brussels. It reviewed the key aspects that will require detailed operational consensus in order to make the MLA a reality.

Examples of some of these key aspects are:

- eligibility of funding instruments in the MLA framework;
- co-ordination of timelines of proposal submissions;
- choice of the Lead Agency; and,
- uptake by partners of the Lead Agency's funding decision.

The MLA Task Force will be active from 2018 to 2019 with the aim of reaching an agreement for an MLA framework between national RFOs. Agencies that sign the agreement will mutually accept the procedures of various partners for the evaluation and funding of proposals submitted under this framework agreement. ■

## Short Science Europe News

### Consultation on Research Data Management Launching Soon

The Science Europe initiative for voluntary alignment of research data management policies in Europe – championed by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), is entering its next phase with a stakeholder consultation.

After a successful launch event in Brussels on 30 January, where the initiative and its objectives were presented, the experts of the Science Europe Working Group on Research Data are now ready to present the drafts of its core requirements for data management plans and criteria for trusted data repositories. Through an

external consultation among interested stakeholder organisations, additional input will be gathered to further develop them.

The consultation will be launched in early April and will remain open on the Science Europe website until the end of April. See also <http://scieur.org/rdm-initiative> ■

### Welcome to UK Research and Innovation

On 1 April, the seven UK research councils, all members of Science Europe, merged into UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). This consolidation also includes Innovate UK, the agency funding corporate research and development, and Research England – formerly the Higher Education Funding

Council for England (HEFCE) – a new unit that will focus on financing English university research and knowledge exchange. UKRI replaces the previous strategic partnership, Research Councils UK (RCUK).

The new body operates across the UK and supports research in all fields and for researchers at different career stages. With a total yearly budget of almost €7 billion, UKRI will be the largest national public research funder in Europe. Sir Mark Walport has been appointed Chief Executive of UKRI and members of the nine new councils have been announced. For more information on UKRI, please see <https://www.ukri.org/> ■



## Science Europe Calls for Larger Research and Innovation Budget

**“Europe does not lack ideas, scientific excellence, and innovation potential: it lacks funding. The next MFF and FP9 must correct this.”** In a paper sent to the European Commission on 8 March, Science Europe defends a stronger budget for Research and Innovation, highlights the results Europe can achieve through unified action, and makes recommendations for the next Framework Programme (FP9).

In its response to the public consultation on EU funds in the area of investment, research and innovation, SMEs, and the single market, Science Europe calls on the European Commission to give FP9 the budgetary support it needs to deliver results in line with Europe’s ambitions. A stronger European budget for research and innovation, coupled with national and private efforts, will better enable Europe to have a leading role in scientific research and in understanding and tackling global challenges. A larger budget should support the development of new knowledge and scientific breakthroughs, accelerate the conversion of knowledge into solutions, and make the continent a more attractive destination for leading scientists from around the world.

In calling for a larger budget, Science Europe also warns against the danger of falling behind in the international research and innovation scene. According to the 2017 OECD Technology and Industry scoreboard, China, Japan, Korea, and the United States accounted for between 70% to 80% of all patented inventions in ICT technologies. Moreover, the net balance between incoming and outgoing researchers in Europe is negative for Europe. The call for a significantly larger budget is therefore complemented by recommendations on the content and the orientation of FP9.



One of the recommendations calls for excellent, curiosity-driven science and for more mechanisms that translate science into innovation. In line with its previous papers on the next Framework Programme, Science Europe reaffirms that the European Research Council must be maintained and strengthened, and that excellence must drive the selection of all FP9 projects. It also highlights that collaborative research in international consortia helps increase scientific capacity, solve structural imbalances and reduce the innovation and development performance gap between countries.

See the statement at <http://scieur.org/mff-recommendations> ■

## Bulgarian Presidency Flagship Conference on Research Infrastructures

**On 22 and 23 March, the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council organised a conference to provide a platform for discussion and dialogue on the future of Research Infrastructure (RI) policies and their contribution to research excellence, innovation, growth and jobs. The intended outcome of the conference was a European Call for Action on the Long-term Sustainability of RIs.**

Using the European Commission’s staff working document (SWD) on the long-term sustainability of RIs as the basis for discussion at the conference, debates over the two days were divided into three sections: background and main challenges; key elements for the action plan; and a final session during which the European Call for Action was to be presented. In his introductory speech, Jean-David Malo, Director for Open Innovation and Open Science at the European Commission, acknowledged that it is not possible to carry out the 42 recommendations upon which the SWD is based. He said that the overall objective was to establish a more focused set of actions to foster sustainability and impact of European RIs on industry, policy, and society.

While in the end no Call for Action was presented, the event did contribute to the debate on how RIs can foster the inclusiveness of the European Research Area (ERA) by spreading excellence across the regions and opening up to industry and society. It placed emphasis on how ERA policies on RIs can play a role in reducing the growing innovation divide in Europe through new funding approaches and increased efforts at training and mobility.

On the eve of the conference, Science Europe published an open letter to highlight the key role its members have as funders,

operators, and managers of RIs. The letter also drew from previous reports and studies conducted by or in participation with Science Europe to support the efforts of the European Commission and the Bulgarian Presidency in their debates and decisions on concrete actions to help move the sustainability agenda forward. The long-term sustainability of pan-European RIs is an important objective on the agenda of the Competitiveness Council (Research) when they next meet on 28 May 2018. In the likelihood of no Call for Action being published prior to that date, it is expected that ideas from the conference will be used as inspiration for a set of Council Conclusions prepared by the Bulgarian Presidency.

On 1 July 2018, the Austrian Presidency of the Council will begin its six-month mandate. As part of its agenda, it will host the 2018 International Conference on Research Infrastructures (ICRI) conference in Vienna, with an emphasis on international co-operation between RIs.

### More Information

- European Commission Staff Working Document: <http://bit.ly/2laRYyO>
- Science Europe Open letter: <http://scieur.org/openletter-ri>
- ICRI 2018: <http://www.iter-europe.net/events/icri-2018> ■



## EOSC Implementation Roadmap Released

The European Commission has published its Implementation Roadmap for the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) on 14 March. It states that the EOSC is intended to become a “fit for purpose pan-European federation of research data infrastructures, with a view to moving from the current fragmentation to a situation where data is easy to store, find, share and re-use.”

The Roadmap is the result of the Commission’s consultations with scientific and institutional stakeholders over the past two years. It presents governance and financing mechanisms that the Commission considers appropriate for the EOSC.

The necessary financial support for the implementation of the EOSC is to be provided by means of projects under Horizon 2020. This includes a dedicated call (INFRAEOSC) to support the integration of services, the implementation of the FAIR principles, and the development of a FAIR-compliant certification scheme for data infrastructures and the connectivity of research infrastructures such as ESFRI projects. Options for the financial sustainability after 2020 mentioned in the Roadmap include possible funding via ‘deposit fees’ from national research funders, presumably including SE Member Organisations (see page 20 of the Roadmap).

The document will serve as basis for further consultation with all involved parties, such as Member States, the European Parliament, and relevant stakeholders. It should also support stakeholders when planning their future contributions to the project.

### EOSC Governance

The development of a governance structure for the EOSC is planned to happen in two phases. From the very beginning, the governance bodies will actively contribute to the setting up of the EOSC. During the first phase (until the end of Horizon 2020), the governance should steer the initial development of the EOSC, which will be led primarily by the Member States and the

Commission. In the second phase, the governance should oversee initial operations and look into further development of the EOSC. This phase will be more stakeholder-driven, while Member States and the Commission will have an oversight role.

The governance framework of the EOSC should guarantee proper representation of the main stakeholders and ensure effective policy guidance for the project. A possible concept for the EOSC governance structure comprises three main bodies:

- **EOSC Board:** representatives of the Member States and the Commission
- **Executive Board:** representatives of different stakeholders
- **Stakeholder Forum:** an advisory body of representatives of the larger stakeholder community

The Commission aims to have the governance framework established by the end of 2018.

Science Europe will seek an appropriate role in the governance of the EOSC in order to ensure that scientific considerations remain central and to safeguard the interests of the Member Organisations in its set-up.

### More information

- European Commission Staff Working Document ‘Implementation Roadmap for the European Open Science Cloud’: <http://bit.ly/2q9GI5n> ■

## Calendar of Upcoming Meetings

### General Assemblies

01/06/18 General Assembly, in Madrid  
22/11/18 General Assembly, in Brussels

### Governing Board Meetings

20/06/18 Governing Board, in Brussels  
03/10/18 Governing Board, in Brussels

### Working Groups and High Level Policy Networks

17/04/18 WG on Open Access, in Vienna  
24/04/18 WG on Horizon 2020 and FP9, in Brussels

24/05/18 WG on Horizon 2020 and FP9, in Brussels  
18/06/18 WG on Horizon 2020 and FP9, in Brussels

### Scientific Advisory Committee

16–17/04/18 SAC Meeting, in Brussels  
20–21/09/18 SAC Meeting, in Brussels  
21/11/18 SAC Symposium, in Brussels

### Other Meetings and Events

31/05/18 High-level Workshop, hosted by CSIC in Madrid  
19/06/18 Workshop on Impact, in Ghent

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