

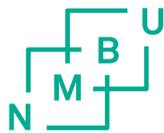
LAB-FAB-APP

Investing in the European future we want

Position paper from the rectors
of Norway's Universities



UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN



Norwegian University
of Life Sciences



NORD
University



Norwegian University of
Science and Technology



UiO • **University of Oslo**



Universitetet
i Stavanger



The rectors of eight Norwegian universities would like to express their appreciation of the work of the independent “High Level Group on maximising the impact of EU Research and Innovation Programmes” (the Lamy group) in issuing the report “Lab-Fab-App: Investing in the European future we want”.

The Norwegian universities highly welcome the ambitious recommendation of a budget increase (from 120 up to 160bn) for the next framework programme (**Recommendation n° 1**) with excellence as the primary guiding principle for how to best invest it.

We also agree wholeheartedly that Innovation Ecosystems are a crucial instrument for European Innovation Council - EIC (**Recommendation n° 2**) because these already represent a significant asset for many European Universities; supporting entrepreneurship, spin-off activities and incubation of new companies. For this reason, we underline the importance of involving the Academic world in the future EIC set up.

As universities, we appreciate greatly, and endorse, the reinforced focus on education in the future (**Recommendation n° 3**) However, we disagree with the assertion that European Universities need to renew and stimulate entrepreneurship. This does not reflect the real situation because many universities are already strongly involved in this. An action aimed at making the universities that are lagging behind able to reach the same level of excellence makes more sense, because most Universities are already a relevant part of Europe’s success story. On the other hand, we support the fact that it is of utmost importance that the future framework programme will also benefit from an increased attention on education. This will

ensure that a strong R&I system, deriving from larger investments and increased focus, will have the necessary skills to absorb new knowledge, and further the progress of European Research and Education. The role of education is also crucial for improving the acceptance of science in the general population, and to increase the involvement of our citizens.

We look with interest on the proposed focus for mission-driven research (**Recommendation n° 5**) and we are eager to see how this will be implemented. We recall the difficult experience in the 6th FP with Integrated projects and view this as a guide in developing more successful approaches to make this recommendation work. However, the ambition to tackle big societal challenges will need new knowledge that is obtained only by exploring novel scientific pathways. For this reason, we claim the inclusion of Low TRL challenge-driven collaborative research activities as a part of the overall scenario.

The Norwegian universities support the goal of achieving more synergies between EU funding programmes and national funding (**Recommendations n° 6 and 9**). However, given that we are stakeholders from an Associated Country to the framework programme and hence not having full access to the ESIF funds, we call on the EC to make sure that the process towards a better integration with the Structural Funds does not limit the full participation of Associated Countries.

The eight Norwegian universities are pleased to see a recommendation on international cooperation (**Recommendation n° 10**). As expressed in [our position paper about the H2020 interim evaluation](#)

and the next framework programme, we call for international research and innovation cooperation to become a cornerstone of the coming framework programme. Only through international collaboration, will excellent European scientists engage with the best in their fields.

Finally, we underline that the attention given in the report on breakthrough innovation should not diminish the investment and attention given to incremental innovation. This is in fact the basis of the current EU industrial production, investments and research to mature technologies to be transferred to industries. All of this stands in the so-called "mid TRL area" which represents the fundamental baseline to ensure a successful transfer of knowledge from excellent research to value creation and innovation. The creation of the EIC and the reinforcement of the ERC is an excellent aim, however it should not be detrimental to incremental innovation.

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