



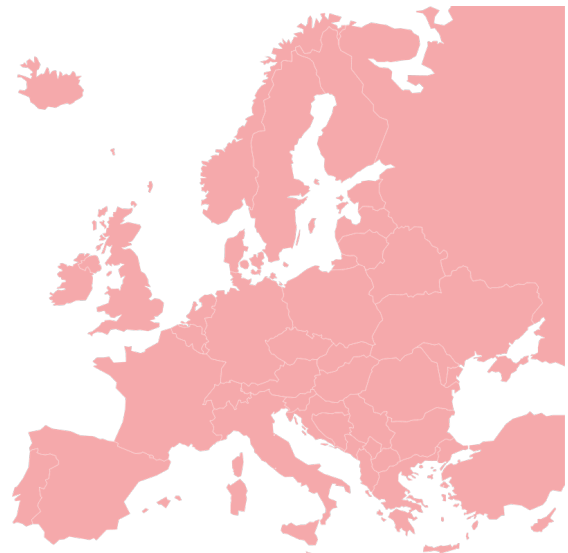
POSITION PAPER

The next Framework Programme for Research & Innovation (FP10)

RISE is Sweden's research institute and innovation partner. Through our international collaboration programmes with industry, academia, and the public sector, we ensure the competitiveness of the Swedish business community on an international level and contribute to a sustainable society.

With this position paper, RISE brings several strategic issues to the attention of the policymakers negotiating the future FP10 under the headlines of:

1. Increasing the FP Budget
2. Tackling the instability of the RDI budget in the MFF
3. Launching support for Technology Infrastructures
4. Streamlining the European RDI support landscape
5. Enhancing the focus on industrial competitiveness
6. Simplifying participation for beneficiaries



1. Increasing the FP budget

Firstly, research and innovation investments play a crucial role for the EU's capability to address global challenges, stimulate economic growth, and boost the EU's global competitiveness. Consequently, research and innovation activities should be further aligned with the EU's industrial and competitiveness policies (e.g., strategic autonomy). In this context, RDI investments should be further prioritized, which is only possible with a sufficient budget for the FP.

Secondly, 71% of high-quality proposals go unfunded according to an analysis of the first two years of Horizon Europe by the Commission. Increasing competition is a sign of European excellence and quality. However, the EU must find ways to increase the number of granted high-quality proposals. There is a risk that significant research and innovation activities find arenas outside of the common European market if the FP is perceived as unattainable.

Increasing the FP10 budget is consequently a necessity for developing the EU's RDI landscape and strengthening the EU's global competitiveness. RISE is, therefore, supporting the call by the Members of the European Parliament Christian Ehler and Maria da Graça Carvalho of increasing the budget for FP10 to €200 billion.

2. Tackling the instability of the RDI Budget in the Multi-Financial Framework

Increasing the FP10 budget might primarily revolve around prioritizing the RDI budget post within the EU's budget and its multiannual financial framework (MFF). Today, this is far from reality, as the EU frequently reallocates funds from its RDI posts to address crisis-related expenditures. The most recent example in February (2024), when €2.1 billion was redeployed from Horizon Europe to bolster crisis support packages, which undoubtedly serve vital purposes. However, stealing from already constrained RDI pockets will in the long run hamper the EU's innovation capacity which is the fundament for our economic growth and Europe's competitiveness. There are additional two more structural dilemmas, other than regular reallocation of the FP budget, to address in upcoming FP negotiations. Annual



“RISE is an active participant in the EU R&I Framework Programmet and is the only non-university on the national top 10 list of participation and granted funding. The future design of FP10 is of great importance for our ability to engage in international projects and partnerships, thereby strengthening the innovation capacity and competitiveness for Swedish industry.”

Malin Frenning, CEO RISE

re-discussion of the MFF budget and yearly changes in allocation within the FP-budget are also contributing to the instability of Horizon Europe.

To overcome this instability, the RDI budget should be ringfenced within the MFF, where the initial budget is protected to ensure stability and predictability for stakeholders participating in the FP. Additionally, it is important that RDI policy and FP10 can encompass unforeseen events and incorporate new policy initiatives responding to unpredictable circumstances. A balance between predictability (ringfenced budget) and flexibility is important and could be reached by a larger RDI budget that also “predicts the unpredicted”. By this, RDI policy would be better aligned with the EU's industrial policy and FP investments would be further included in the EU's toolbox of strategic autonomy without reallocating or renegotiating its budget.

3. Launching support for Technology Infrastructures

Technology Infrastructures (TI) are physical or virtual facilities and equipment such as demonstrators, testbeds, piloting facilities, living labs. They are used to develop, mature, test, demonstrate, and upscale technology to advance through industrial research and experimental development activities from proof of concept to technology validation in relevant environments.

Compared to the established concept of Research Infrastructures, the concept of Technology Infrastructures is at an early stage of recognition in the European research community. However, recent European publications on TIs, notably within the framework of the European Research Area (ERA action 12), suggest that there is a critical momentum for the EU together with Member States to be more ambitious, exploring with relevant national and regional stakeholders a shared vision and jointly developing a European strategy for technology infrastructures to support industry scale-up and technology diffusion across Europe.

RISE stresses the importance of integrating a European strategy for Technology Infrastructures within the FP10. Launching such support is also a



RISE technical infrastructure ProNano for the development of semi-conductors.

strategic policy for linking the EU's industrial policy with its research and innovation policy, where a dedicated funding line for Technology Infrastructures could be placed under pillar two and in connection with each cluster supporting different targeted industrial sectors needs of access to technology infrastructures. In the context of promoting industry participation in FP10 (see 5. Enhancing the focus on industrial competitiveness), funding lines for technology infrastructures in FP10 must be influenced by the needs of the industry. Thereby, the governance and support for technology infrastructures must be separated from the governance of research infrastructures.

4. Streamlining the European RDI support landscape

The creation of various new EU programmes, with RDI components, and their own rules for participation has made the EU's RDI support landscape more complex for beneficiaries. Thus, we call for a reflection on whether an all-encompassing EU RDI program (FP10) would be more efficient (covering all aspects from basic research to close-to-market deployment) than multiple Directorate Generals (DGs) having their own programme with RDI components.

If multiple RDI programmes will continue it is important to streamline the rules of participation, which not only would simplify beneficiaries' management but also facilitate synergies between the different sectorial programmes and FP10. However, combining the many existing R&DI programs under FP10 would create better coordination between different funding streams and increase the overall impact of European RDI policy.

Transferring RDI components from today's sectoral programmes to a comprehensive RDI programme (FP10) would also spur the discussions of transferring components out of today's FP that do not function as sufficient RDI initiatives. In this context, the FP Missions should be discontinued in FP10 as they do not succeed in bringing RDI actors engagement or investments.

Lastly, we encourage the Commission to implement the European needs identified in the so-called Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) as far as possible within “Pillar 2” of FP10, e.g. as cross-cutting calls.

5. Enhancing the focus on industrial competitiveness

One key focus of the Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe involves enhancing the connections between R&I policy and sectoral and industrial policies, aiming for significant impacts on industrial transformation in alignment with the Green Deal objectives while bolstering the EU’s competitiveness and technological independence. Achieving this goal entails a multifaceted and intricate process that demands collaboration among various stakeholders, but foremost a deeper understanding of industrial R&I requirements. Thus, the FP10 should to a larger extent than Horizon Europe promote industry participation and influence across all pillars.

Notably, there is a need for an increased level of pre-competitive collaboration between industry, academia, and research organisations. A good example of this exists today in the European Partnership. The European Partnership model has demonstrated its efficacy yet requires refinement and enhancement within FP10. We advocate for an expanded utilization of this model and increased funding for industry-led initiatives focusing on pre-competitive collaboration. For this, early dialogue among industry, academia, and public entities is essential, alongside efforts to simplify and streamline existing partnership frameworks. FP10 should prioritize industry-led, competition-driven partnerships, fostering cohesion and efficiency while minimizing bureaucratic hurdles and fragmentation.

6. Simplifying participation for beneficiaries

Throughout the evolution of the European Frameworks Programmes, the Commission has taken initiatives for simplification. We welcome this, but the beneficiary perspective must also be included when defining what constitutes “simplification”. The

Funding and Tenders Portal is a good example of a tool that has simplified participation for beneficiaries greatly.

As we call for expanded utilization of the European Partnerships instruments above, we at the same time wish for decreased complexity in the implementation of these programmes. Rather than having their own set of rules and using separate Participant Portals, they should as far as possible be managed in the Funding and Tenders Portal and harmonize their Rules for participation. This would make participation in partnerships more predictable and attractive for all participants.

From the applicant’s perspective, we have noticed an increased demand to put in extra work in order to answer to the topic and call texts of Horizon Europe. There is a tendency to refer generically to other policies and documents, putting the responsibility on the applicant to read up on an entire EU Policy and decipher what is being asked for. It should be possible to write “all-encompassing” call texts with clear instructions, minimizing the number of referrals to such documents and instead translate the needs defined in that policy to specific “Expected Impacts” in the call text.

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