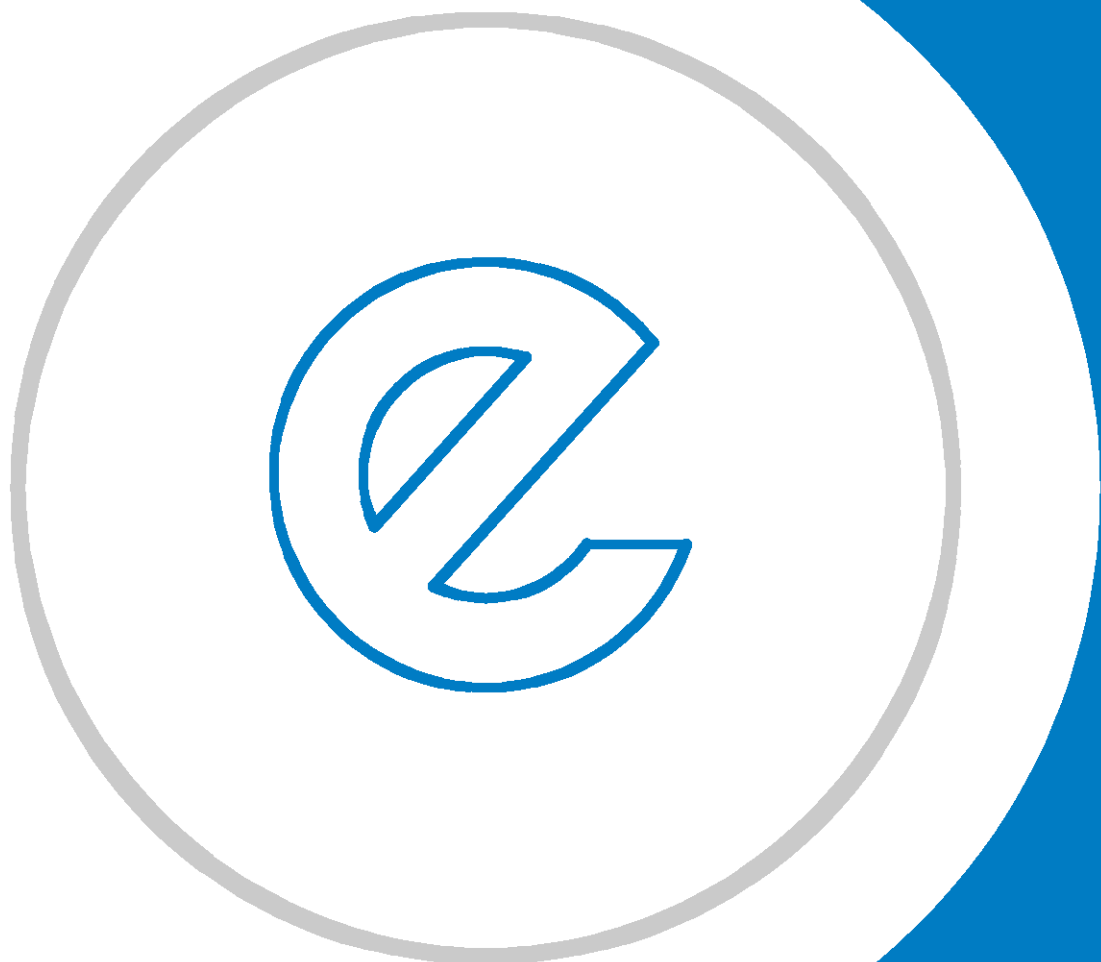


# **Eurodoc Communication on a EU Research and Innovation Funding**

## **Framework for a New Generation of Researchers**



**Researchers in their early career stages** are the backbone of the European Framework Programmes for Research and Development and other EU funded research activity. They participate as Marie Curie fellows or Starting Independent Researcher Grant holders and also as project workers in large collaborative research networks. Today's young researchers are vital to Europe's future. Without them, there will be no Innovation Union.

**Eurodoc, the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers** is their representative body, uniting national young researchers' organisations from 37 European countries. As such, Eurodoc welcomes the Green Paper for a Common Strategic Framework for future EU Research and Innovation Funding (CSFRI) and stands ready to help shaping the future of EU research and innovation funding measures.

In a first approach, Eurodoc proposes **seven recommendations** towards better use of public funds for research and innovation at EU level.

- Funds need to be spent wisely to underpin the policies of the European Research Area. In particular, this applies to a professional approach to human resource policy: transparent and efficient recruitment, favourable framework conditions and an attractive environment allowing researchers to develop their full potential.

Therefore, **the principles of the European Charter for Researchers have to be incorporated in all parts of the CSFRI**. Keeping in mind mid- and long-term effects for the human resource base in Europe, it is not wise to select projects which provide poor conditions rather than those conducted at institutions which implement the principles of the Charter. We need to combine commitment towards research excellence with **strong incentives for applicants to go with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers**.

The Lisbon Treaty now offers a legal base for this undertaking and Eurodoc recommends making use of this opportunity to realise European Research Area (ERA).

- The ERA will only be a success if it's not a construction solely conceived by administrators and policy makers. It needs to be built with full involvement of the researchers' community, meaning with **full involvement of grass roots organisations, European researchers' movements and learned societies.**

**EU's research and innovation funding framework needs to be aligned to support projects of these organisations.** That will be a high return investment for the development of the ERA.

Grass roots organisations should also play a role in the monitoring and evaluation exercise as regards to the CSFRI.

- Eurodoc considers the **'People' Programme (Marie Curie actions) a great success within FP7:** It provides an extraordinary example which shows that in a mobility programme a **professional approach with proper contracts with social security for young researchers** is possible. Various stakeholders have raised concern about the move of responsibilities from DG RTD to DG EAC. In this context we would like to stress that the Marie Curie actions have to continue as programme driven by research in the first place; doctoral candidates are to be seen as young researchers, not students.

The Marie Curie programme needs more funding in particular if additional policy aims have to be accommodated. It should stay open for all disciplines and for the whole innovation chain.

Eurodoc recommends extending the **'Money follows Researcher'** principle to all parts of the CSFRI. It should be possible to become mobile (or mobile once more) during the project lifetime if justified by scientific reasons.

- Eurodoc welcomes the initiative to reconsider all innovation-related funding programmes under the umbrella of a Common Strategic Framework. Also, Eurodoc supports the efforts to reorganise administration of the framework programmes in external public bodies. These bodies need to be given **clearly defined aims, efficient governance structures, no overlapping and follow common rules and standards - such as the European Charter for Researchers.**

The ERC should have administrative flexibility like other successful funding bodies in many countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland,...).

- One of the reasons for the attractiveness of the US is that the best researchers can gain their scientific independence much earlier. This has been recognised by the ERC with the highly successful Starting Independent Investigator Grant which should be continued and extended. Other parts of the framework programme still appear like a game for 'the same people' who already know the machinery, making it difficult for newcomers with innovative ideas to get involved.

To counteract this, **the principle of early scientific independence should be considered throughout the CSFRI. To ensure scientific and management excellence, young researchers have to be represented in steering committees**, much more than they are today.

- The importance of outreach cannot be over-emphasised. Repeated surveys have shown the strong decline of interest in scientific research as career and subject. Although FP funding has elevated the importance of outreach, the non-classical outreach activities such as face-to-face engagement with citizens and future generations of scientists are often assigned to younger researchers. Whilst we encourage active engagement, these outreach activities are often not given due recognition in decisions of funding allocation and career advancement.

Eurodoc recommends that CSFRI funding encourage the participation of researchers at all stages of their scientific careers in public engagement by recognising past outreach activities in current and future applications. **Excellence** should not be defined primarily by scientific publications, but **should also incorporate** outputs such as **outreach activities**.

- We **expect research results from** EU funded projects to be **widely accessible and open** for the benefit of the researchers' community and the public. In the years to come ICT tools and infrastructures will influence the way scientists work and exchange ideas. New tools will make the scientific review system evolve as well. Euro-

doc recommends to provide funding for virtual infrastructures that are necessary so that Europe does not miss new developments such as virtual mobility, Science 2.0 and Open Science.

Eurodoc is committed to further elaborate on these recommendations and to contribute with more detailed proposals, in particular on how to create **incentives for applicants to go with the principles of the Charter** and on how to **support projects of European grassroots organisations**.

For further information, please visit the web site of Eurodoc: <http://www.eurodoc.net>

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