

ERA Consultation Contribution (5): A brief statement on the arts and humanities within the European Research Area

The European Research Area is designed to improve quality of life by making Europe a place where scientific research, technological development, and innovation thrive and address the major challenges of our times. However, the major challenges of our times cannot all be solved by science or the pursuit of technological innovations and the input of researchers representing the arts and humanities should be consulted. The humanities consider the problematic questions of a “scientific” approach towards progress and development. The role of the arts must also be taken seriously as a creative force which transforms the world, constructing new visions of Europe and humanity at large.

The most complicated aspect of these domains is an interdisciplinary advancement that can be reached through dialogue and collaboration. Interdisciplinarity is often commented upon but still remains undefined with regards to its nature and implementation. Eurodoc believes that throughout the ERA the arts and humanities can be a dynamic source of reaching a transdisciplinary consensus, among other goals.

The European Union has been doing an excellent job of nurturing the conditions for outstanding new fields of study. Eurodoc feels that an active, socially-responsive humanities-based research pattern, sensitive to the ebbs and flows of modern Europe, will strategically position her for success in this new century. A visionary critique emanating freely from the arts and humanities must be seen as a key incentive to the diversity of the ERA.

Eurodoc believes in the capabilities and importance of the arts and humanities as a field of inquiry and a site of practice and urges all European policy-makers to be more inclusive of these disciplines in their forward planning.

Eurodoc recommends that the following areas of emphasis be given due consideration leading to action:

1. Establishing policies that will encourage the development of new academic approaches within the arts and humanities by early stage researchers.
2. Staging academic congresses that can strategize ways to unite science and technology, social sciences, and the arts and humanities within an interdisciplinary nexus.
3. Support and develop the opinions and activities of junior researchers in a way that will help shape the pursuit of a diverse (research) society in Europe.

Signed,
Eurodoc Arts & Humanities Network
Eurodoc Interdisciplinarity Working Group
November 2011