

EARTO Sets its Vision for next Generation of EU Research and Innovation Programmes

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Today, the European Association of Research and Technology Organisations (EARTO) publishes a paper on the next generation of EU research and innovation programmes as its contribution to the ongoing policy debate. EARTO calls for well-integrated, simplified and strategically focused programmes, with substantial political and financial commitment at European and national levels. This paper, partly designed as a response to the Commission's Innovation Union flagship initiative, comes only a few weeks before the launch of a public consultation on the next generation of EU Research and Innovation programmes.

EARTO welcomes the Commission's Innovation Union proposals, released in October 2010, which would put innovation at the forefront of EU policy, and most particularly the concept of European Innovation Partnerships (EIP). Substantial political and financial commitment, in particular at national level, and effective implementation and governance will be musts if the partnerships, and Innovation Union, are to be successful.

Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs) are particularly well equipped to contribute towards the dual objective of the EIPs of addressing societal challenges while enhancing Europe's competitiveness. EARTO repeats its earlier proposal for Strategic Research Alliances of RTOs to underpin the research programmes required in Joint Programming and to help mobilise coalitions of major stakeholders within European Innovation Partnerships, linking all parts of the innovation chain, from basic and strategic research to the market.

EARTO makes five principal recommendations:

- 1. Member States should commit substantially - politically and financially - to real coordinated action to tackle the Grand Challenges.**
- 2. The Commission should preserve and reinforce the Framework Programme's central place in the European R&D system,** in terms of budget and key instruments, including collaborative research, smaller projects and research for SMEs and SME associations.
- 3. Decision makers need to recognise RTO's distinctive ability to link the parties in innovation value chains and need to leverage their strengths more than in the past. Facilitating strategic alliances between RTOs would significantly advance ERA objectives.**
- 4. EU programmes for research and innovation should be better interlinked.** EARTO favours integration of much of the CIP with the Framework Programme and greater synergies with the Structural Funds, to bolster capacities for

producing, diffusing and absorbing technology and innovation. Regional policy should be aligned with EU2020 goals.

5. **EARTO would welcome the establishment of a high-level European Innovation Council** to provide independent advice and guidance as well as the **extended use of more autonomous, mission-driven agencies** for the management of significant parts of the Union's research and innovation policies.

EARTO also reiterates its call for further simplification in the Framework Programme (FP). Pressing measures such as uniform interpretation and application of FP rules across Commission services and EU institutions and acceptance of usual accounting practices should be implemented as a matter of urgency. EARTO also calls for a rationalisation of existing instruments and initiatives and a removal of unnecessary variations in rules between different initiatives. The FP is an incentive programme, and its rules for participation and reimbursement rate must reflect this. EARTO therefore also opposes proposals of mandatory Open Access in FP projects.

Christopher Hull, EARTO Secretary General said: *"The Commission has tabled a set of proposals that have the potential to re-energise research and innovation policy and practice in Europe. The financial resources to be allocated to future EU budgets will need to reflect these new objectives and priorities.*

Research and innovation with impact to solve Societal Grand Challenges and stimulate competitiveness is an investment that has to be made. EARTO and its members stand ready to play their full part in helping to achieve the European Research Area and the Innovation Union".

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Notes to Editors

RTOs (Research and Technology Organisations)

RTOs have a distinct mission and a key role in the knowledge and innovation economy: they produce, integrate and transfer science and technology to help resolve the grand challenges confronting society and to exploit opportunities for new wealth creation and, hence, improved standards of living. RTOs accomplish their mission through a portfolio of activities and services:

- **monitoring social and economic developments** in order to anticipate and identify future science and technology needs;
- **strategic research** to develop new knowledge and technologies for future application;
- **collaborative and contract research** to develop technologies for specific applications and clients, and
- **knowledge transfer** to ensure the widest possible diffusion and adoption of technologies

EARTO

EARTO is the **European trade association** of the research and technology organisations (**RTOs**), a non-profit organisation founded in 1999. **EARTO groups over 350 RTOs**, with a combined staff of 150,000, an annual turnover of €15 billion, special equipment and facilities to a value of many € billions and more than 100,000 customers from the public and private sectors annually.

<http://www.earto.eu>

Background material:

- EARTO's position paper on the next generation of EU programmes for research and innovation, January 2011:
http://www.earto.eu/fileadmin/content/03_Publications/EARTO_Response_Innovation_Union_Final.pdf
- EC Communication Innovation Union, October 2010:
http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/pdf/innovation-union-communication_en.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none
- *Impacts of European RTOs: a Study of Social and Economic Impacts of Research and Technology Organisations*, Technopolis Group, October 2010:
http://www.earto.eu/fileadmin/content/03_Publications/corr-Technopolis_report.pdf
- RTOs factsheet:
http://www.earto.eu/fileadmin/content/13_Media/Factsheet_RTOs_Final.pdf
- EARTO Media page: <http://www.earto.eu/publications0/>