

First Thoughts on the New European Research Area: An Ambitious Plan Calls for Inclusiveness and Collaboration

Science Europe welcomes the European Commission's ambitious Communication for 'A New ERA for Research and Innovation.' To further strengthen Europe's world-leading research, a strong European Research Area is essential and must be based on research excellence, international collaboration, openness, inclusiveness, and academic freedom.

"National investment in the European Research Area will be key to its success," said Marc Schiltz, Science Europe's President. "In particular, more joint programmes and partnerships would rationalise the use of public R&I funds, and these can be shaped based on successful collaborations that already exist."

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, Europe faces extraordinary health, economic, and social challenges. The Communication sets high ambitions for the European Research Area. It seeks to contribute to addressing global challenges and leading the transition to sustainable and resilient societies. For scientific knowledge to contribute to achieving these goals, however, strong political and financial support must be provided to research.

"It is positive that the European Commission aims to contribute to the major research policy discussions," said Lidia Borrell-Damián, Secretary General of Science Europe. "For the new ERA to succeed, it will be crucial to design a governance system and discussion fora in which research stakeholders, that shape and implement ERA on the ground, are meaningfully included."

Several initiatives are foreseen by the ERA Roadmap on research careers, transnational research funding, assessment, and Open Science, that could have a transformative impact on the way research is funded and performed. "EU policy will tackle issues on which Science Europe has been working with its members to co-create better common policies and tools" added Borrell-Damián. "To build a strong and sustainable ERA, coherence and synergies will need to be strengthened across the European research ecosystem. This can only be done through meaningful dialogue and engagement," she concluded.

Science Europe will continue to analyse the Communication and Roadmap and the implications for research across Europe. It looks forward to working with its Member Organisations and with the EU institutions to make the strong and ambitious ERA a reality.

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Notes to Editors

Science Europe is the organisation representing major public organisations that fund or perform excellent, ground-breaking research in Europe. It brings together the expertise of some of the largest and most respected European research organisations to jointly push the frontiers of how scientific research is produced and delivers benefits to society.

Our 37 members play a fundamental role in implementing the European Research Area at the national level. Indeed, they manage a large variety of national and international funding programmes, from bottom-up schemes to mission-oriented research. They collectively invest €18 billion in 27 countries each year. Furthermore, they actively work, within Science Europe, to increase European research collaboration.

For more information, see <https://www.scienceeurope.org/>

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