



On behalf of Science Europe, I am delighted to sign the Joint Statement on the European Research Area with the European Commission and other stakeholder organisations.

Science Europe is fully committed to playing a central role in the development of the ERA. Although we are a new organisation, this commitment is an on-going one. In 2008, EUROHORCs – the European Heads of Research Councils – and the European Science Foundation launched a joint ‘vision for a globally-competitive ERA and a roadmap for actions’. There has been considerable progress against the objectives set out in the roadmap. However, there is also much more that can and should be done. Science Europe will now be taking forward this roadmap, which is the concrete action plan for our work towards the ERA.

In the statement that I have presented to the Commissioner, we have set out our vision for the ERA. We see it as creative, flexible, trust-based, dynamic and evolving. It is something that can only be a success if all stakeholders work together, and if there is a strong evidence base for the actions that are undertaken.

We have also reinforced our commitment to the ERA. In the coming months we will review and revise the roadmap, assessing the progress that has been made and setting clear and ambitious new goals. I would like to highlight a number of priority areas that will figure in this.

The first is progress towards what is known as the ‘European Grant Union’. This is about effective scientific collaboration across borders, implemented on a voluntary basis, with each organisation engaging with the mechanisms best suited to their needs. Science Europe will analyse and promote collaborative mechanisms, and will provide support, advice and examples of best practice. The second is Open Access, on which Science Europe members will develop and implement a common policy and action plan.

Other priorities include research infrastructures, research careers, ex-post evaluation, research integrity, and connecting Europe to the world. In all cases, members have individual and collective experience that will be built on in taking the roadmap forward.

In the spirit of partnership, and again building on previous successes, we intend to organise an annual high-level workshop on the ERA. This will provide a forum for open dialogue on the achievements and difficulties in implementing the ERA, and we hope that it will continue to make a significant contribution to debate.

In conclusion, Science Europe comprises 50 research funding and research performing organisations from 25 countries, representing around €30 billion per annum; we are working together to strengthen the ERA, and are ready to continue our efforts in collaboration with our partners.

Professor Paul Boyle
President, Science Europe
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