

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Brussels, 31 May 2016) Science Europe Welcomes Defence of EU Research Funding and Call for Action on Open Science by the EU Competitiveness Council

Science Europe strongly supports the stand taken by the Competitiveness Council of the European Union, at its meeting of 26 and 27 May, that “within the framework of Horizon 2020 care should be taken to ensure that loan-based financing is not further expanded to the detriment of grant-based R&I funding”.

This is a very welcome statement. Loan-based funding is complementary to grant funding for close-to-market research, but in no way can loan-based funding substitute for grants supporting exploratory, high risk, radically innovative and low-TRL research.

On this issue, Science Europe unequivocally agrees with the European Parliament, which defended Horizon 2020 funding from being diverted to EFSI, the loan-based European Fund for Strategic Investments (for more information, see Science Europe press release: http://www.scienceeurope.org/uploads/PressReleases/150319_SE_Statement_EFSI.pdf).

Science Europe also welcomes the strong political support provided by the Council for a swift transition to Open Access to scientific publications as the default publication mode. Over a number of years, Science Europe has worked on making the transition to Open Access a reality by identifying pan-European principles for its implementation (see http://www.scienceeurope.org/uploads/PublicDocumentsAndSpeeches/WGs_docs/SE_POA_Pos_Statement_WEB_FINAL_20150617.pdf).

This work will become even more important going forward, and Science Europe agrees with the Council on the need for concrete, concerted and synchronised efforts by all relevant partners.

Furthermore, Science Europe welcomes the Council terminology on research data policy, referred to as ‘optimal reuse of research data’, and the principle ‘as open as possible, as closed as necessary’. Science Europe agrees with the importance of promoting research data stewardship, and of reflecting on the governance and funding of research data, as evidenced by the recent release of a report in collaboration with Knowledge Exchange, entitled ‘Funding Research Data Management and Related Infrastructures’ (available here: http://www.scienceeurope.org/uploads/PublicDocumentsAndSpeeches/SE-KE_Briefing_Paper_Funding_RDM.pdf).

Like the Council, Science Europe believes that the proper implementation of Data Management Plans is crucial for research data management, and is therefore working on concrete proposals in this respect. Science Europe also agrees with the Council that

copyright reform must lead to more and better use of the results of publicly-funded research, and hopes that the Council will support legislative proposals for EU copyright reform that include an exception that would allow text and data mining for research purposes by commercial and non-commercial organisations, as Science Europe has consistently recommended (see:

http://www.scienceeurope.org/uploads/PublicDocumentsAndSpeeches/WGs_docs/SE_Briefing_Paper_textand_Data_web.pdf).

The Open Science Policy Platform (OSPP) proposed by the Commission is an opportunity for Science Europe to share its past, current and future work on Open Science and to collaborate with other stakeholders on appropriate actions.

As a result, Science Europe is delighted by the European Commission's announcement that Professor Matthias Kleiner, President of the Leibniz Association and Science Europe Governing Board Member, will be part of the OSPP as Science Europe representative.

END

About Science Europe

Science Europe is an association of major European research funding and research performing organisations in 27 countries, established in 2011 to promote the collective interest of its members and to foster collaboration between them. For more information, see www.scienceeurope.org

For further information, please email: communications@scienceeurope.org