

Workshop on Funding policies and research values: strategies and needs, risks and prospects

Organized by the *Academia Europaea* and the *University of Trieste* as part of the “Cultures in dialogue” project. With the support of the *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond* (Sweden), and in collaboration with the *Barcelona Knowledge Hub*.

Press release

The workshop on *Funding policies and research values: strategies and needs, risks and prospects* was held in the excellent research setting of the public university of the attractive city of Trieste. According to the new global university ranking set up by the European Union, the University of Trieste’s performance ranks first in Italy ([U-Multirank](#): four A, two B, one C in “Research and Research Linkages”).

The workshop opened with a welcome address by the Rector, Maurizio Fermeglia, who also conveyed the high appreciation of the Minister of Education, University and Research, Stefania Giannini, for the new collaboration between the University of Trieste and the international humanistic and scientific network of the *Academia Europaea* (‘AE’).

The Rector turned the floor over the Director of the Barcelona Hub, Genoveva Marti, who presented the institutional history and the cultural policies of the AE and its Hubs in Barcelona and Wroclaw. She was followed by the convenor and organizer, Cinzia Ferrini (member of the AE and the Department of Humanities), who summarized the background, the rationale and the aims of the event, focussing on the four questions the invited speakers of the *Academia Europaea* were to address:

1. Which *strategies* should we adopt for the future of humanities?

Naomi Segal focussed on strategies for supporting literary studies within the framework of European research policy, proposing to redefine them in terms of cultural literacy.

In this way, Naomi Segal highlighted the characteristics of the Humanities regarding their distinctive objects, purposes and methods, warning against the risk that interdisciplinarity can clash with the sense of their specificity.

2. What do Humanistic studies *need*?

Juergen Mittelstrass’s thought-provoking paper highlighted the inner and external difficulties (regarding visibility, organization, funding) currently faced by humanistic studies, their loss of status and the need for new institutional models of European research in the humanities, superseding national identities.

According to Juergen Mittelstrass, what we need is a broader concept of culture as cultural form of the world, where the role of the humanities is to provide orientation and meaning to its work- and life-forms.

3. What *risks* now confront research in the Humanities?

In her informed and inspired presentation, Carolyn Gianturco examined the risks of linear financial cuts in state research funding for the sector of musical studies which paradoxically is neglected in Italy, especially as compared to the rest of Europe.

Carolyn Gianturco emphasized that the current Italian state funding policies marginalize studies of high cultural value, thus failing in the duty to enrich the lives of the citizens.

4. What good *prospects* are now available?

Maurizio Brunori explored prospects for success offered to humanistic studies (history, archaeology) by partnerships and the 'network' academic model centered on the Mediterranean region, fostering the dialogue among different cultural heritages.

Maurizio Brunori also pointed to the seminal value of independent and individual resarches for the advancement of knowledge in apparently unrelated fields.

The discussion, chaired by the Rector's delegates, the Head of the Department of Humanities and the vice-Rector of the University of Trieste, was focussed, rich, lively and productive. We hope that this may be only the begininng of a lasting collaboration.

Cinzia Ferrini and Genoveva Martí