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Key points in the response the Commission document - " From Challenges to Opportunities: Towards a Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation Funding"

The Academia Europaea welcomes the concept of 'Common Strategic Frameworks for EU Research and Innovation Funding' (CSF). We would however encourage the Commission to go even further, by amalgamating part (at least 20%) of the cohesion policy instrument into the CSF. This would, in our view, strengthen and consolidate the Research, Education and Innovation European Space, and create a balanced and integrated portfolio, devoid of the compartmentalisation currently seen, but with the following aspects taken into account:

1. Excellence must always be a priority. Equally important, is a recognition and unequivocal commitment from member states to the principle of excellence. Appropriate benchmarking and applicable and relevant statistical measures (indicators) should be adopted and receive appropriate priority.
2. Excellence can only be guaranteed if advice and assessment comes from recognised authorities not only in their respective fields of interest, but also having well documented experience in the policy area, especially for the highest level advisory bodies to the European Commission.
3. The 'First pillar' of the new CSF should address 'Grand Challenges', defined through and with a larger involvement of science and business community, so as to avoid bias in favour of sectoral and member states interests.
4. "Great Ideas, moving frontiers", should become a flagship second pillar of the future Framework Programme, with quality and originality being the guiding criteria, but extended to team work and to networking.
5. The 'Third pillar' of a future Framework Programme, should be assistance to the member states in stimulating joint undertakings (goal-oriented networking, joint research infrastructure and dedicated mobility actions).
6. Future framework programmes should play much more significant roles in opening the European Research Area to the wider world.
7. Greater flexibility and 'responsivity' of FP are needed to capture changing demands.
8. To stimulate entrepreneurship and creativity through innovation, a European High Risk Innovation Council should be created by the consolidation of most competitive elements of FP programs that target individuals, small groups and high-risk innovative SMEs into one flagship programme. This would create a counterpart to the ERC, but in pre-normative and applied research targeted at products and technologies that could revolutionise future European industry.
9. The prestigious award system at the EU level should be restored and developed.
10. To respond to the unpredictable and unforeseen: a vigorous and broadly based scholarship capacity across Europe must be maintained, with strong EU budget support.
11. Research in the arts and the humanities is as essential for the future cultural and technological development of Europe and its citizens, as that of the sciences and should find a clear and strong place in the CSF.
12. A dedicated subprogram should be created, to preserve unique faculties and subject capacities that safeguard the continuity and unique character of the European knowledge and scholarly tradition.