

EUA Contribution to SSH in European Research and Innovation Policy

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Introducing EUA

- **Representative organisation** of universities and national rectors' conferences in 48 European countries
- Ensures that the **independent voice of European universities** is heard wherever decisions are being taken that will impact their activities
- Provides a unique expertise in higher education and research as well as a forum for exchange of ideas and good practice among universities

More information:

<https://eua.eu/>

Headline message

EUA supports the full integration of Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) disciplines in Horizon 2020 and its successor Horizon Europe

- SSH expertise is crucial in addressing societal challenges involving energy, climate change, poverty, ageing societies, migration or extremism
- A better inclusion of these disciplines will expand the understanding of impact and innovation beyond simplistic linear models
- Innovative, multidisciplinary approaches should also increased exchange between different disciplines within Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and within SSH

Source:

EUA (2017). [From Vision to Action: What EUA proposes.](#)

State of play

SSH integration in Horizon 2020 is unbalanced

- The **quantitative** integration of SSH is satisfactory, but has decreased since 2014-15
- The **quality** of SSH integration is highly uneven, depending on the Societal Challenge or Leadership in Enabling and Industrial Technologies part

Source:

European Commission (2018). [Integration of social sciences and humanities in Horizon 2020](#).

SSH project partners often take on an auxiliary role in research projects

“All disciplines in multidisciplinary (Horizon 2020) collaborative projects have the feeling that they are only the “supporting” discipline to each other and not the leading discipline.” – Institution from the Netherlands

“SSH is often reduced to a practical matter of gaining public support or disseminating results. Relevant SSH perspectives should also be allowed to drive and define the fundamental research agenda of the societal challenges.”
– Institution from Denmark

Source:

EUA (2016). [EUA Member Consultation: A contribution to the Horizon 2020 mid-term review](#).

EUA joint positions

EUA and thirteen other university networks advocate to strengthen SSH integration as a cross-cutting priority in Horizon Europe



Universities united for the best Horizon Europe

Source:

EUA et al. (2018). [Universities united for the best Horizon Europe](#) and [joint proposed amendments](#).

EUA policy positions

EUA consistently includes the full integration of SSH in its proposals for and analyses of Horizon Europe

From Vision to Action:
What **EUA** proposes for
the **Next Framework
Programme for Research
and Innovation (FP9)**

Horizon Europe:
EUA analysis of the
European Commission
proposal

Source:

EUA (2017). [From Vision to Action: What EUA proposes](#) and (2018) [Horizon Europe: EUA analysis](#).

Practice what you preach

EUA Energy & Environment Platform

*“Universities are uniquely positioned to make a significant contribution [to sustainable energy] because they can **combine expertise from different research and education disciplines** [...].”*

Source:

EUA (2017). [Energy Transition and the Future of Energy Research, Innovation and Education: An Action Agenda for European Universities.](#)

| 4. (Renewable) Technologies - Chemical | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Topics (for courses) | Understanding, Background Knowledge, Comprehension, General Appreciation of ... | Design and Implementation / Deeper (Master level) Appreciation of ... | Employment Skills |
| Technical | The various bio-refinery systems | Regional context to adapt bio-refinery systems to spatial context | Integrate resource-technology-demand systems on a regional basis |
| | The properties and limitations of bio/renewable resources | The environmental/climate impact on bio-fuel production (e.g. crop production/residues) | Appreciate the principles of the circular economy by being able to connect biological/chemical 'residues' to generation |
| Social | The social impact of bio value-chains, e.g. eliminate impact on food production | Value chain (re)balancing to benefit all actors | Grasp and being able to apply the principles of the circular economy |
| | The role of the various actors in bio value-chains | Different opportunities for improving the circular economy within society | |
| Economical | Bio-resource markets | Possibilities for optimising resource use on a regional basis | Establish innovative business concepts for bio/renewable resource use |
| | The impacts of a purely economically driven bio-resources movement | | |
| Political | Regional governance | Legislation proposals to improve the use of local resources | Interact with regional, national, global actors to optimise local resource use |
| | The interaction of regional, national and global governance regarding bio-resources | | |

EUA recommends

- Provide **clearer outlines** of the general components of multidisciplinary in Horizon Europe projects and describe requirements for multidisciplinary research in a user-friendly way
- Promote and support research based on **bottom-up initiatives and open-themed calls** for smaller, focused, multidisciplinary consortia
- Foster “**disciplinary mobility**” in the programmes
- A **more sophisticated set of indicators** aimed at capturing the innovation possibilities and potential of research should be developed and become part of the impact analysis

Source:

EUA (2017). [From Vision to Action: What EUA proposes.](#)

SSH is not an auxiliary add on

- Render SSH participation mainstream in Horizon Europe to ensure that **SSH experts are involved in all the phases** of the process, including problem formulation, work programme drafting and topic design
- Develop programmes with a focus on challenges and opportunities bringing together multidisciplinary teams within and between **SSH and STEM as equal partners** that contribute to a sustainable future

Source:

EUA (2017). [From Vision to Action: What EUA proposes.](#)

“[Horizon 2020] pays tribute to the findings that, although research in technologies can provide technical solutions to major challenges, **Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) can help making them accepted, understood and appropriated by the general public.**”

Source:

European Commission (2018). [Integration of social sciences and humanities in Horizon 2020](#).

Focus on proposal evaluation

- Review the composition of present **evaluation panels** and include reviewers with multidisciplinary expertise
- Consequently, **new approaches** should be developed to evaluate multidisciplinary projects and to capture their scientific and societal impact

Source:

EUA (2017). [From Vision to Action: What EUA proposes.](#)

Thank you for your attention

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