Interdisciplinarity from a science policy perspective

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The Policy Landscape: the Policy Makers' Perspective

- **Global convergence and increasing R&D investment**
  - Global spending on R&D has reached a record high of almost US$ 1.7 trillion
  - About 10 countries account for 80% of spending.
- **A common narrative: SDG, large scale challenges, social missions**
  - As part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), countries have pledged to substantially increase public and private R&D spending as well as the number of researchers by 2030.
  - Megatrends: demography; natural resources and energy; climate change and environment; globalisation; the role of government; economy, jobs and productivity; society; and health, inequality and well-being.
- **Research Funding for Development and Economic Growth**
  - Strong spending by the business sector is an underlying factor for success.

Research Funding Requirements:

- Multi-disciplinarity/Interdisciplinarity

- More engagement (esp. w/ private sector)

- Co-design (e.g citizens; civil society)

- Co-production (academia v non-academia)

- Triple/quadruple HELIX

From FP6 to Horizon 2020

- From small to large scale projects

- Saving in grant administration

- Larger more visible?

- Complementary funding: national and European scale

A closer look at the implementation machine

Horizon 2020 struggling with interdisciplinarity: SSH case study

Three EC Reports on Integration show lack of interdisciplinarity:

- From 15% to 29% did not comply with call requirements

- Ch6 is the only place where societal concerns are addressed… fighting silos?

- Disappearing of key areas: legal studies, history and peripheral contributions

Systemic problem: Key issues hampering interdisciplinarity

- Advisory Board composition

- Disjoint call writing

- Disconnection between call design and call evaluation

- Evaluators and evaluation panels

An example: Vocabulary

H2020

- Embedding
- Cross-cutting item
- SSH add on
- Business plans/impact evaluation
- Communication for innovation acceptance

EASSH

- Integration
- Scientific Contribution
- Co-design
- Legal framework, hist studies, social dynamics
- 'Social license to operate'

Encourage interdisciplinarity!

- Several stellar examples of complex projects
- Several scholars working across fields
- Science has several methods and approaches: practice of science has different pathways
- Disciplinary knowledge is at the core of complex science

THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE FUNDING IS KEY FOR ENCOURAGING INTERDISCIPLINARITY

Recommendations for Horizon Europe

- **Equal representation** of SSH and STEM competences: from design to implementation of the work programme

- **SSH driven intervention areas** in every cluster

- A **dedicated cluster** addressing citizens' concerns (e.g democracy) with a multidisciplinary approach

- **Scientific contribution**: a condition *sine qua non*

- A thorough **review of the evaluation proces** and panels

Thanks!