

Stakeholders Workshop on ideas for further simplification of the implementation of the R&I Framework Programmes

Brussels 20 October 2017

Venue: Committee of the Regions, Jacques Delors Building, rue Belliard 99 – 101, Room JDE 52, 1040 Brussels

Programme:

- 09.30 Registration & Welcome coffee
- 10.00 Opening address (A. Panagopoulou, DG RTD)
- 10.10 *“Simplification: a priority for the European Commission”*
(O. Waelbroeck, DG BUDG)
- 10.30 Session 1: *“The Lump Sum Pilot”* (P. Haertwich, DG RTD)
- 11.15 Morning breakout sessions:
- Stream I: *“Easing access to FP9”: Simplifying Proposal submission, Novel ways to evaluation and selection, Towards a more efficient Grant preparation”* (A. Cross, DG RTD)
- Stream II: *“Ex-ante and ex-post control: Accepting usual accounting practices of the beneficiaries?”* (M. Zanchi, DG RTD)
- 12.45 Networking lunch
- 14.00 Afternoon breakout sessions:
- Stream I: *“Reducing administrative burden”: How to develop efficient reporting, dissemination, exploitation”* (I. Vergara & I. Sagias, DG RTD)
- Stream II: *“Can the existing Funding Model be further simplified?”* (R. Schulte, DG RTD)
- 15.30 Coffee break
- 16.00 Plenary session: Reports from parallel sessions by rapporteurs
- 16.30 Conclusions and Closing (K. Vandenberghe, DG RTD)

Outline of Parallel Sessions:

“The Lump Sum Pilot”

The Lump Sum pilot will soon be launched under H2020. The pilot will test two options for lump sum funding in 2018, in view of drawing lessons for FP9.

At the moment in which the work programme 2018-2020 has just been adopted, and the calls to which the two topics belong, are to be launched, an open discussion on the practical functioning of this cost reimbursement scheme seems very appropriate.

“Easing access to FP9”: Simplifying Proposal submission, Novel ways to evaluation and selection, Towards a more efficient Grant preparation”

Preparation and submission of proposals is still perceived as burdensome, in particular by newcomers and small actors. Stakeholders should express their view on the current requirements for proposals and identify possibilities for further reduction of the effort for preparing and submitting proposals.

The quality, speed and feedback to applicants in the evaluation process are subject to some criticism by stakeholders. Participants of the workshop should be asked to express their views on these concerns and to present ideas for further improvements.

“Ex-ante and ex-post control: Accepting usual accounting practices of the beneficiaries?”

There is an intensive debate regarding the most appropriate (and less burdensome) approaches to control. In particular, the concepts of cross-reliance on audits and of acceptance of beneficiaries' usual accounting practice require clarification for practical implementation. Listening to stakeholders' views and expectations in this respect could be an extremely useful input to consider for the preparation of FP9.

“Reducing administrative burden”: How to develop efficient reporting, dissemination, exploitation

The aim of the upcoming Framework Programme is adapting reporting and monitoring requirements, limiting when possible the number of KPIs, building on existing indicators, and focusing on impact indicators. A balance between (necessary) reporting, and no increase of the administrative burden has to be found.

Dissemination and exploitation of research results should be a key activity of all projects to maximise the added value of the R&I programme. Besides the work to be undertaken by individual projects, there is margin for the valorisation of portfolios of results. A dissemination and communication strategy should be part of each project, and followed through each milestone. However, stories to be told should be accessible to non-scientists: Which are the stakeholders' views to incentivise the report on impacts?

“Can the existing Funding Model be further simplified?”

H2020 achieved a major progress simplifying the funding rules taking into account stakeholders' views. However, the question, on if and how the existing Funding Model can be further simplified is extremely appropriate at the moment of discussing how FP9 should be built.

In particular, the AGA (Annotated Grant Agreement) is recognised by different stakeholders a major achievement of H2020. However, there is certainly margin to improve it, as well as the support given to beneficiaries for its correct use via the Participant Portal. The objective of this session is having a discussion on the existing AGA and other documentation and guidance and how to improve it.

Furthermore, besides the General MGA, there is a relatively large number of specific MGAs for actions falling under other frameworks (ERC MGAs, ERA-NET MGAs, SME Instrument MGAs, etc.): Is this a useful approach for beneficiaries? Should we aim at a reduction of the number of grant agreements?