



The Academy of Business in Society

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT & NEW EU FUNDING SCHEMES

As of January 2015

CONTEXT

The European Union and its Member States remain one of the most significant global players in research, development and innovation. Between 2014 and 2020, the EU anticipates that it will invest close to EUR 80 billion through [Horizon 2020](#), the biggest R&I programme in its history.

Horizon 2020 is the financial instrument implementing the [Innovation Union](#), a [Europe 2020](#) flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness through **research, innovation and new knowledge development**.

It seeks (in part) to strengthen the bridges and relationships between industry, academia and society so that Europe may more effectively pursue its strategic ambition of 'smart, sustainable, inclusive growth'. As a result, Horizon 2020 funding is structured around three main pillars:

1. **Excellent Science**
2. **Industrial Leadership**
3. **Societal Challenges**

NOTE: Given its focus on new technology development, the second pillar is generally considered to be outside of ABIS' scope and core competences.

In parallel, the EU is committed to investing close to EUR 15 billion in a wide range of schemes which specifically address **education, training, skills, lifelong learning and youth-related challenges**.

These are grouped together under a new programme called [Erasmus +](#). It is distinct and separate from Horizon 2020, although many confuse the two. Nonetheless, its agenda is directly linked to the sustainable, knowledge-driven economy that Horizon 2020 aims to catalyse. As such, Horizon 2020 and Erasmus + offer a range of exciting funding opportunities for the ABIS network.

(A full version of the 2015 Erasmus + Programme Guide is [available online](#) in multiple languages – but please note that it runs to 315 pages!)

The purpose of this document is therefore to summarize what we see as the most relevant opportunities to ABIS and its members' collective interests. Above all, we prioritise funding schemes which require genuine business-academic partnership and which offer the potential of measurable value creation to both.

For the purposes of simplicity, these are clustered under the broad headings of "Research, Innovation & Knowledge Development" and "Education, Skills & Learning".

RESEARCH, INNOVATION & KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT



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LEADING SCHEMES

1. **Research and Innovation Actions**
2. **Coordination and Support Actions**
3. **Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions**

1/ Research & Innovation Actions (RIAs)

- **RIAs** are collaborative research projects with a typical duration of 24-36 months. In the first round of H2020, these have been budgeted at EUR 2M – 5M.
- Research themes are pre-defined by the European Commission, which drafts a two year agenda of policy-related issues and questions to explore.
- RIAs are published in an integrated document (“Work Programme”) which covers a two year period – e.g., the [2014-2015 Innovative Societies Work Programme](#).
- The two year Work Programme describes the context and key issues behind each RIA. It also presents the EU’s expectations for a successful proposal (content and budget).
- Regardless of which societal challenge an RIA is linked to, proposals need to be built around a consortium of partners from different countries.
- Industry and / or civil society participation – as direct beneficiaries and equal partners – is considered essential to a competitive bid.

2/ Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs)

- **CSAs** support enhanced partnerships and knowledge sharing between key research platforms (networks, projects, programmes, institutions) and wider audiences of research stakeholders. Typical budgets fall between EUR 1M – 3M for 18-36 month initiatives.
- As with RIAs, the EU defines the specific themes and issues which it intends CSAs to address through its two year Work Programmes – e.g., page 76 of the [Innovative Societies WP](#)
- CSAs also require a consortium approach, preferably multi-stakeholder.
- Extra consideration should be given to engaging ‘multipliers’ around a given theme: industry associations, pan-EU networks and platforms, etc.

3/ Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCAs)

The [MARIE CURIE scheme](#), as it is commonly known, features four main initiatives:

- i. [Innovative researcher training networks](#)
- ii. [Individual fellowships for experienced researchers](#)
- iii. [Research & Innovation staff exchanges](#)
- iv. [Co-funding of research training programmes](#)

In this context:

- **MSCAs** focus on the development and mobility of researchers at different stages in their careers (whether in academia, industry, think tanks & consultancies, NGOs, etc).



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- They can fund networks as well as individuals. In the case of the former, they have a typical duration of 24-48 months and an indicative budget of EUR 1.5M – 5M. In the latter, it varies by scheme, seniority, and geography.
- MSCAs offer greater scope for the involvement of **non-European partners**. Some initiatives are in fact explicitly international or global.
- By extension, MSCAs tend to be 'open' thematically. Applicants can propose virtually any issue or topic to explore – but these must include interdisciplinary or cross-functional aspects.

EDUCATION, SKILLS & LEARNING

LEADING SCHEMES

4. **Knowledge Alliances**
5. **Strategic Partnerships**
6. **(Erasmus Mundus) Joint Master Degrees**

4/ Knowledge Alliances (KAs)

- **KAs** are transnational, structured and result-driven projects, notably between small clusters of higher education institutions and business.
- Duration and budget offer two options: 2 years + max. EUR 700K, or 3 years + max. EUR 1M.
- They are open to any discipline, sector and to cross-sectoral cooperation. Similarly, they are open in terms of choice of theme or issue.
- Partners are expected to share common goals and work together towards mutually beneficial results and outcomes. A DNA-style double helix model of industry-academic partnership is sometimes quoted as the ideal model / approach!
- Industry and / or civil society participation – as direct beneficiaries and equal partners – is considered essential to a competitive bid.

5/ Strategic Partnerships (SPs)

- **SPs** support the development of Cooperation Networks which bring together small groups of HEIs, enterprises, research institutes, public authorities, social partners, from at least two different countries.
- Their aim is to ID and implement innovative practices which lead to high quality teaching, training, learning and youth development, institutional modernization and societal innovation.
- Perhaps most importantly, they are sector-specific (and limited to 1 in a proposal)!
- **SPs** are similar in purpose and structure to KAs, but with reduced funding (max. EUR 150K) and duration, from 6 months to 2 years.

6/ Joint Master Degrees (JMDs)



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- **JMDs** involve international consortium of HEIs from different countries and – where relevant – other educational and/or non-educational partners with specific expertise and interest in the study areas/professional domains to be covered.
- A JMD needs to correspond to a high-level integrated international study programme of 60, 90 or 120 ECTS.
- Their specificity lies in their high integration/"jointness" and the excellent academic content and methodology they offer. There is no limitation in terms of discipline.
- JMDs come with a budget of between EUR 2M – 3M for a period of 4 or 5 years. Importantly, there is the possibility of renewed funding beyond the original grant (albeit at a lower level), if real impact and success can be demonstrated to the Commission.
- Funding is divided between management & overheads for the partner institutions, and full scholarships for participating students. The latter can also be recruited from anywhere in the world.

ENDS