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Universitetet i Stavanger sitt tematisk innspill til EUs kommende rammeprogram for forskning og innovasjon

The University of Stavanger (UiS) supports the ‘Norwegian preliminary input on the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP10)’ from June 2024. As a member of the European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU), UiS stands behind the [alliance’s position](#) on FP10 from November 2024.

Question 1: *Hvilke tematiske områder er det spesielt viktig at vi samarbeider om på europeisk nivå i det kommende rammeprogrammet? Begrunn forslagene og forklar hvordan de vil bidra til europeisk merverdi.*

Our input is based on the UiS strategic objectives. The following are all global challenges, where cooperation at the EU scale can make a big difference and bring significant added value to the national efforts: green transition, energy, health and welfare, and learning for life. In addition, we emphasize several horizontal topics: AI and digitalisation, citizen engagement in science, social science and humanities.

Green transition and energy

UiS and the region of Rogaland are at the centre of innovation in green transition. The University of Stavanger (UiS) plays an important role in this transition through its comprehensive energy research portfolio. Stronger industry engagement in FP10 has been called for by the Norwegian government as well as by several recent high-level policy reports at the EU level. UiS experience suggests that industry cooperation is especially important in the energy sector. Many technological advances developed by the oil and gas industry have been successfully applied in other spin off industries. FP10 has the potential to act as a leverage and goal-setter and support directing the technology diffusion into low-carbon and sustainable solutions. Our key message is that FP10 should:

- facilitate industry participation and collaboration in energy research, with two particular objectives: **technology diffusion to other sectors and diversification and knowledge transfer from oil and gas to clean energy solutions.**
- highlight the following areas in terms of sustainable energy solutions and new research frontiers: **geothermal, CCS / CCUS, hydrogen, offshore wind, marine renewables (e.g. tidal waves), hydropower, batteries, raw materials.**

Health and welfare

In Norway, we have an aging population and a looming lack of workforce, a challenge faced by many European countries. FP10 can help tackle this by focusing on research in sustainable health solutions and welfare services throughout entire lifecycles.

In particular, FP10 should:

- fund research that will promote public and occupational health, counteract exclusion and facilitate patient safety,
- support research related to the political, democratic, and social frameworks of the welfare state,
- strengthen research related to artificial intelligence and technology development, security, and simulation, as well as ethical competence.

Learning for life

At the UiS, we promote a holistic approach to learning. Education is not only a one-time activity to do when one is nineteen years old, but a culture of cultivating curiosity and knowledge upgrade throughout the entire life.

We therefore believe that FP10 should:

- prioritise research that provides new knowledge about learning and learning environments,
- emphasize interdisciplinary research and education in order to develop transition skills for students and contribute to faster and fairer societal transitions,
- foster the creation of a good connection between education, research, and practice. Such collaboration will enable to develop European talents, and to make sure that they find relevant opportunities here in Europe at any stage of their professional journeys.

AI and digitalisation

A significant push in AI and digitalisation is critical for boosting the competitiveness of EU/EEA. The technological advances need to be accompanied by a robust ethical and data security framework. FP10 should put emphasis on the following areas:

- AI in relation to energy and health,
- AI hubs
- Subsea robotics

Citizen engagement in science

UiS's commitment to sustainable transformation is demonstrated through its interdisciplinary research. By integrating social sciences and humanities into applied research, UiS ensures that technological advancements are socially responsible and aligned with public values. As a university which is both research intensive and tightly connected to the regional community, we emphasize the importance of the following in FP10:

- Research and innovation calls on Smart cities
- Continued requirement for societal readiness level in FP10

Question 2: *De europeiske partnerskapene og samfunnsoppdrag (missions) er virkemidler EU benytter i tillegg til regulære utlysninger. De brukes kun der regulære utlysninger ikke forventes å gi samme utbytte. I partnerskapene bidrar næringsliv og offentlig sektor aktivt, også med finansiering. I samfunnsoppdragene er målet å løse globale utfordringer. Begge de to virkemidlene legger vekt på at kunnskapen skal tas i bruk. På hvilke områder er det særlig viktig for Norge at disse virkemidlene benyttes? Begrunn forslagene.*

UiS strongly underlines the importance of Missions and such strategic cooperation, which should get a prominent role within FP10.

UiS has been working closely with regional actors involved in Missions. We see it as important to bring more focus on how university and knowledge institutions contribute to achieving the results for the Missions.

Stavanger is involved in the Climate Neutral and smart Cities and Rogaland is involved in the Climate adaptation Mission. UiS is working with both these regional actors in relation to the Missions.

We have also been working with the public sector to find suitable governance models. A joint task force for the Missions has provided valuable lessons for FP10. It should:

- Facilitate the establishment of close cooperation between local public authorities and universities, including on strategy and investments prioritization. Knowledge institutions in the region are central to the work on climate change.
- Ensure a broad involvement of various players and organizations.

European Partnerships: **UiS suggest limiting the number of Partnerships in FP10 and only establishing Partnerships when such organization of the R&I effort provides a clear added value.** Opportunities for participation and engagement for different types of actors, including universities, should be communicated in a more accessible manner. Co-funded partnerships should include more calls for projects with lower TRL thresholds.

Question 3: *Er det andre forhold det er viktig å få fram i et nasjonalt tematisk innspill?*

UiS supports the ECIU's call for a budget increase for a stronger Research and Innovation Framework Programme, as well as for utilizing the unique role of universities for regional and European competitiveness and enhancing the societal impact of research through bottom-up calls.

We believe that FP10 should:

- boost research and innovation actions,
- allow innovation actions to include more research, giving research intensive universities better opportunities to contribute.
- boost bottom-up calls and lower Technology Readiness Levels in Pillar 2, to allow for true innovation and societal impact.
- feature a robust MSCA programme, which is pivotal for research careers, and for providing relevant opportunities to researchers in Europe.

Med vennlig hilsen

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