

# VA RESPONDS TO **HORIZON 2020** CONSULTATION ON **SWAFS WORK** **PROGRAMME 2018–2020**

Before presenting new political initiatives or new legislative proposals the **EU Commission** often holds an open consultation where citizens and organisations are invited to submit their views on a particular matter. The consultation on the Horizon 2020 Science with and for Society Work Programme 2016–2017 aims at obtaining "**views and contributions from a broad constituency on the potential strategy and priorities of the 'Science with and for Society' Work Programme for the period 2018-2020.**" The consultation is structured around six questions. Here is **VA's answer to these questions.**



**Vetenskap & Allmänhet**

**1** What aspects of ‘Science with and for Society’, relating for instance to public engagement, science education, gender, ethics, open access and governance, require action under the Work Programme 2018–2020? Do you think they should be integrated across *societal challenges and leadership in enabling and industrial technologies*?

We need a deeper understanding of how societal actors understand, interact with, react to and sometimes reject scientific results as well as the scientific knowledge production process. Science rejection is becoming increasingly important to investigate against the background of the changing media and communication landscape. In addition, the role of the media in conveying news about research and shaping public perceptions of science needs to be addressed.

Topics addressing public engagement and science communication must not be limited to the development of new and innovative methods for science communication; the deeper role of science communication in enhancing mutual understanding and trust between researchers and actors outside academia should also be covered.

The role of migrants and refugees in society must be addressed by H2o2o, with the SwafS programme focusing on refugee and migrant scientists, and how educational systems can accommodate young migrants.

Although RRI is increasingly mainstreamed within H2o2o, there is a need to research its development and practical application. Its relationship to the emerging 3O’s, and the latter ones’ mutual interdependence, requires special attention.

Efforts should be made to get SwafS aspects *at the heart of projects* throughout H2o2o. This requires careful monitoring at the Work Programme design level to ensure that SwafS aspects are not seen as an add-on.

**2** What activities, types of publications and events, and impacts could be foreseen from the Work Programme 2018–2020? Which innovations (understood in their broadest sense including social innovations) relating to aspects of ‘Science with and for Society’ could reach market or societal deployment within 5–7 years?

The main outputs would be on a methodological level, with integrated approaches and co-creation, i.e. with RRI mainstreamed throughout Horizon 2020. Ongoing and future projects help to initiate a process of (institutional) culture change. The outcomes of future projects are likely to better meet societal expectations, values and needs (cf. various definitions of RRI). In the long-run, a better understanding of the science-society relationships may also lead to a more inclusive and engaged society.

By continuously focussing on ethical concerns and the role of science in society, the SwafS programme could provide a solid basis needed for the creation of a coherent, transparent and effective regulatory system, capable of dealing also with scientific misconduct.

**3** Which existing and emerging challenges (relating for instance to science and technology, innovation, markets and policies) and potential game changers (such as the role of the public sector in accelerating changes) should be taken into account?

The process of Open Science/Open Access is already having a considerable impact on science and public engagement, which must be further investigated and monitored. This includes the underlying – and increasingly commercial – dimensions of Open Access,

originally set to be an idealistic movement to facilitate access to scientific results.

An adjacent aspect is the current reward systems and their incapability to assess broader aspects of scientific production and science-society relationships. There is a clear policy gap related to the role of altmetrics.

The more active participation of citizens in scientific processes mirrors ongoing societal developments, whereby citizens are taking matters into their own hands (eg. crowd-funding, makers' movements, citizen science etc.) Science is no exception in this respect, and SwafS should look into the blurred boundaries of knowledge users and knowledge producers.

Working according to RRI values could become a game changer; various societal actors are active in the process and project results become better aligned with societal expectations, i.e. more easy to implement.

#### **4 Which areas would benefit most from the integration of horizontal aspects such as the social sciences and humanities, responsible research and innovation, gender aspects, and climate and sustainable development?**

All areas. This should be a requirement for all proposals submitted under H2020.

#### **5 Which policies or initiatives should be supported by a) 'Science with and for Society' and b) other parts of Horizon 2020, in order to mainstream Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) within and outside the European Union?**

A future ERA-Net on RRI/Open Science and Innovation could push member states

and associated countries to work together to define processes and methods to implement RRI/Open Science and Innovation on European and national levels. It would also highlight the importance of these questions both on European and national policy level. Synergies with the structural funds should also be investigated.

In order to achieve an optimal mainstreaming of RRI, the RRI values must be fully and explicitly incorporated into the application and evaluation process of Horizon 2020 projects. Key Performance Indicators, KPI, for SwafS and RRI must be developed. One could also consider pilots with on-going evaluation of RRI-related aspects in H2020 projects outside of the SwafS programme.

#### **6 Do you have any further comments?**

We want to highlight the importance of training and awareness raising on RRI for the next generation of researchers. However, awareness of RRI is not as widespread as one may think, so training opportunities should be provided throughout the academic system. Inspiration may come from topics in SwafS work programme 2016–17.

In order to increase the visibility of RRI in Horizon 2020, RRI-relevant topics could be flagged (cf. SSH-relevant topics).



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We carry out studies and surveys, organise meetings and activities, and develop and test new formats for dialogue. In addition, we collect and disseminate knowledge and experience, gained by ourselves and others, about public engagement and communication between researchers and the public.

The organisation is financed through membership fees, project grants and funding from the Swedish Ministry of Education and Research.

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