

Horizon Europe



2 HOT TOPIC: HORIZON EUROPE - New opportunities for international cooperation

As Horizon Europe gears up, EURAXESS WORLDWIDE takes a closer look at the international dimension and what stronger cooperation means for mobile researchers who take the plunge.

Despite its name, Horizon Europe (HE) has a decidedly international flavour that extends way beyond the European continent. Running from 2021 to 2027 and with a budget of €95.5 billion – including €5.4 billion for the Next Generation of the EU ‘Recovery Fund’ – HE is the EU’s main funding programme for research and innovation.

Horizon Europe offers a number of new opportunities for international research cooperation. Take the European Research Council (ERC), for example, which has already issued, on 25 February, the [first call](#) under the Horizon Europe banner. This call sets aside €619 million of its €16 billion total HE budget for ‘starting grants’ to help top researchers get their own research team or programme up and running. That call’s deadline is 8 April!

What matters most here is the calibre of the research and here there is good news for international researchers: “The ERC offers grants to top researchers from anywhere in the world who are ready to come or to stay in Europe to pursue their breakthrough scientific and technological discoveries that can form the basis of new industries, markets, and social innovations of the future.”

On 15 March, the European Commission published its [Horizon Europe Strategic Plan](#) (2021-2024). This plan sets out the key directions that European research and innovation will take over the coming years, including a specific focus on international cooperation. It elaborates on a number of

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A dedicated platform for international researchers

EURAXESS WORLDWIDE is a networking platform and reliable source of information and ideas on research and innovation jobs, funding and hosting opportunities in Europe, helping talented European and international researchers explore and create transnational ties with researchers, employers and scientific communities, and develop careers within the global R&I system.

Contact your nearest branch:
euraxess.ec.europa.eu/worldwide

ERC in a nutshell

The European Research Council offers grants through open competitions to projects headed by early-stage and established researchers. As its sole selection criterion is scientific excellence, it strives to attract top researchers from anywhere in the world to come and stay in Europe. So far, the ERC has funded over 9,500 top researchers at various stages of their careers, and over 70,000 postdoctoral fellows, PhD students and other staff working in their research teams. An independent review in 2020 found that some 80% of projects funded are scientific breakthroughs or major advances, showing the outstanding quality of this EU-funded research.

Lean more: erc.europa.eu



co-designed societal missions and how the EU can achieve other priorities including a climate-neutral and green economy which is “fit for the digital age and works for the people”.

For the uninitiated, Horizon Europe has three main strands: Pillar I prioritises excellent science, scientists and infrastructure; Pillar II addresses global challenges and European industrial competitiveness; and Pillar III concentrates on stimulating innovation. Horizontal actions explore ways to widen participation and strengthen the European Research Area (ERA), and other priorities.

This is also where EURAXESS and its international cooperation role comes into play, linking and promoting ERA as a single research destination (for incoming mobility and collaboration) from the rest of the science world – so-called third-countries not ‘associated’ with the framework programmes, i.e. Horizon Europe and its predecessors.

Worldwide endeavour

The science community’s rapid response to Covid-19 and the EU’s commitments to meet global challenges and build a resilient ‘green and digital’ economy through the Green Deal, Recovery Facility and other initiatives show what a connected community is capable of achieving. It also underlines the importance of **cooperating with the rest of the world**.

“International cooperation is a common priority throughout Horizon Europe,” according to a [fact sheet](#) produced by DG RTD to explain the main thrusts of its new Strategic Plan. “It is essential for tackling many global challenges and therefore underpins all four key strategic orientations.”

International cooperation is also a **key enabler**, providing valuable access to resources, infrastructure, know-how, value chains and markets outside the EU. The fact sheet points out that: “The EU will balance openness with the need to safeguard its interests in strategic areas and act in accordance with its high standards and principles.”

Clearly, global challenges call for international scientific responses. EURAXESS and its worldwide hubs and networks have a vital role to play in delivering the skills and making mobility and knowledge exchange as simple and enjoyable as possible. Take the plunge!