



Green Paper on a Common Strategic Framework for future EU Research and Innovation Funding – a written response from Agadem Jan Riise & Co AB, Sweden.

Q 13. How could EU research and innovation activities attract greater interest and involvement of citizens and civil society?

The engagement of European citizens and civil society is crucial if the grands challenges and flagship initiatives of Europe 2020 are going to be successfully achieved. This has to do with acceptance, additional knowledge, expressions of demand, and an understanding of the unseparable worlds – or cultures – of science and society.

Agadem AB is a small SME, based in Sweden, working in the interface between research, society, industry and government, and would like to add three comments to the issues of greater interest and involvement.

- strengthening of the Science in Society programme
- support of cross-disciplinary networks and projects
- acknowledgement of scientists taking part in public activities and outreach activities, including e.g. science in society projects.

Not least the additional dimension of innovation, interpreted as usefulness, as an outcome of research projects and efforts emphasizes the absolute need for public participation – after all, if “need” is the driving force of innovation, it seems reasonable to assume that this is best known and felt by citizens – be they industrial managers, service providers, caregivers or something else.

The “Science in Society” programme within DG Research and Innovation should thus be strengthened and resources allocated to projects strengthening the involvement of citizens , policy makers, researchers and civil society organizations, as well as the development of mechanisms, meeting-places and public involvement in the research agendas. The “Mobilisation and Mutual Learning Action Plans” that have been launched in recent years may be used as a starting point for such discussions.

Further attention should be given to crossdisciplinary – trans- and interdisciplinary – research as platforms discussing and potentially contributing to the solution of many societal issues. It seems that such research approaches sometimes are regarded with some scepticism from the scientific communities – frames of reference, ways of publishing, and languages differ between fields of research. Nevertheless, the societal

challenges, e.g. the ones mentioned are typically cross-disciplinary and not linked to a specific field. This must be acknowledged and supported. The network building between European research institutions in the same fields might now be expanded to promote network building between institutions in *different* fields, including also civil society. This could be on a somewhat less ambitious level than the MMLA plans – it might be sufficient in a first round to create the partnerships.

Finally, the participation and engagement of the scientific community as a whole and individual researchers is absolutely necessary. The process of change must be two-ways and supported at both ends: in society and in research. Acknowledging scientists' participation in public activities, such as festivals and events at museums or science center, or in networking projects, is of vital importance.

Agadem AB has participated in several Science in Society projects, as consortium beneficiary and as third party. The comments made above are based on experiences made during these projects, as well as on participation in other research teams and projects.