

NORDIC FIVE TECH



Nordic Five Tech Position Paper for FP10

The Nordic Five Tech alliance calls for a framework programme that supports Europe's sustainable future through basic and applied research and innovation.

The following key messages are based on inputs, ideas and reflections collected from Aalto University, Chalmers University of Technology, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Norwegian University of Science and Technology and the Technical University of Denmark. Our organisations consider the framework programme as the most important platform for international cooperation in research and innovation. There is strong commitment to addressing European objectives and a high level of participation in Horizon Europe as well as previous framework programmes.

With regard to FP10, we urge for:

1. **Adherence to the Principles of Open Competition and Excellence:** FP10 should continue to be based on open competition and excellence across all sub-programmes to promote high-quality science and all types of innovation to ensure sustainable long-term impacts. FP10 should also seek to nurture high-quality and true interdisciplinary research, intersectoral collaboration for deployment of novel solutions, and a culture of innovation that boosts the translation of new technology towards the market or implementation.
2. **Continuation of European Research Council (ERC) and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA):** The ERC and MSCA are effectively managed programmes with a high level of attractiveness among top-performing scientists and global talent. ERC and MSCA contribute significantly to innovation, internationalisation and developing the EU's scientific capacity. The programmes should continue to be bottom-up, open and purely excellence-based with strong budgets to ensure continuity.
3. **Cover the Whole Research and Innovation Chain:** FP10 should support research across all parts of the research and innovation value chain, including in multidisciplinary collaborative projects. Collaborative research should encompass the currently underrepresented basic/experimental research (TRL 2-3) to bridge the gap between basic research and the uptake of research by enhancing the room for studying and documenting the implementation of innovation. We would like to see a stronger interplay between schemes and instruments across the three pillars by strengthening the research component in pillar III as well as bridging Pillar I and Pillar III to increase knowledge valorization and impact.
4. **Stimulating Innovation through Excellent Basic Research:** FP10 should reflect the integrated nature of research and innovation, and call for innovative research that includes social, cultural, economic/financial, and legal innovation along with technological innovation. Specifically, we advocate for enhanced focus on translating research into innovation and on the implementation of innovation, for example through public sector uptake of innovation. We suggest that promising research outcomes – independent of the instrument – should receive smooth and quick access to follow-up funding for exploring commercialisation, scale-up, or implementation.

Such an approach could replace the current cumbersome and slow process of identifying and applying for follow-up opportunities, sometimes in other programmes causing delay in implementation or market deployment of otherwise timely solutions. We support continuation of the EIC Pathfinder scheme. Specific actions on deep tech should be reflected, also taking the need for deep tech talent development in general and in Artificial Intelligence in particular into consideration.

5. **Revision and Reduction of the Number of Partnerships:** Too many co-funded partnerships have led to a fragmented and incoherent implementation of the available funding in Horizon Europe Pillar 2. Despite efforts to rationalise the approach to partnerships, there is still significant room for improvement. Partnerships' objective of coordinating and aligning EU and national funding is still valid, but to make this more effective the number of co-funded partnerships must be reduced. We suggest a continuation of public-private partnerships that structure sectoral or thematic dialogue between stakeholders and the Commission. All partnership calls should be implemented through the regular Horizon Europe Work Programmes, open to all stakeholders and adhere to common rules of participation and implementation measures.
6. **Increasing the Efficiency of the Next Framework Programme by Focusing on Simplicity:** It remains crucial to continue the simplification of processes for all applicants. Bureaucracy should be minimized at both the application and reporting stages. Framework Programme processes and regulations should be clarified, and guidance and support materials that make it easier for researchers and administrators should be provided. The focus should be on making participation in the program straightforward for stakeholders, rather than being defined from the funder's project management perspective.
7. **Effective Approach to Stimulate Interdisciplinary Research:** Recent crises demonstrate the impossibility of predicting the specific research and innovation requirements in a future that cannot be anticipated as a straightforward extension of the recent past. The ability of SSH disciplines to apply a holistic view on societal challenges, and SSH's ability to pinpoint aspects of underlying structures of socio-economic, demographic, and political developmental trends defining challenges that presents itself in society, makes SSH suitable to serve as a driver for European development by pointing to solutions that consider a broader and diverse range of societal aspects.
8. **Ambitious Budget of FP10:** The budget for research and innovation must reflect the needs of Europe in terms of addressing security, strategic autonomy, and competitiveness, as well as maintaining scientific leadership in areas such as green transition, wellbeing, quality of life, life science, and emerging technologies while remaining attractive for global talent. Long-term investments in Europe's broad knowledge-base and capacities are important to quickly address global crises and respond to societal shifts and skills needs. Solutions heavily depend on a strong collaborative research, innovation and education effort across Europe and beyond, and the universities play a vital role in in this.



Nordic Five Tech (N5T) is a strategic alliance of the five leading technical universities in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden: DTU, Aalto University, NTNU, KTH Royal Institute of Technology and Chalmers. The alliance was established in November 2006 with the goal of utilizing the shared and complementary strengths and creating synergies within education, research and innovation. The N5T universities are committed to contributing to Europe's ambitions in research and innovation by carrying out research and providing higher education for future generations.

On behalf of the Nordic Five Tech committee

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