

# Paradigm shift: Is the world ready for a new model of collaborative R&I?

A Science|Business Network conference

**16 JUNE 2026**

14:00 - 17:30 CET

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In recent months, speculation and concern have been simmering within the research and innovation community over the Commission's first proposals for the EU's 2028-2034 budget (MFF), including the new European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) and next Framework Programme (FP10). One question in particular has been vexing stakeholders across the board: what will the future hold for the current Pillar II of Horizon Europe, which pumps tens of billions into various forms of collaborative research and technology development?

While this is understandable, given the scale of activity and sums of money involved, it is nonetheless only part of a more complex puzzle that is being shaped by the dynamics of geopolitical turmoil, political focus on technological sovereignty and the quest for greater economic security and competitiveness. In light of the 'great power competition' with the US and China, Europe's positioning within the global R&I ecosystem and critical technology stacks is becoming a subject of intense debate. In parallel, and reflecting Mark Carney's remarks in January at Davos, strategic choices will soon need be made about Europe's alliances in R&I, and the degree to which cooperation with trusted, like-minded partner countries (near and far) will be integrated into the next MFF and funding instruments.

Against this backdrop, on June 11 Science|Business is convening members of its international Network, EU institutions and other key stakeholders for a set of cross-cutting, high-level debates about the future models of collaboration that will underpin the coming years in science and technology, both in European and international contexts.

At one level, the conference naturally assesses latest developments regarding the expected governance and alignment of the ECF and FP10, and whether the EU's current model of public-private partnerships remains fit for purpose in pursuit of its longer-term objectives. Among the related themes being considered: has the time come to embrace other, more disruptive instruments to support pre-competitive R&D? To what extent will collaborative, cross-border innovation be supported by the EU and member-states under the next MFF? Should more attention and investment be paid to the role of regional ecosystems and local partnerships in meeting a wide range of policy goals? And should FP10 enlarge its scope to allow other R&I funders to contribute, such as the philanthropic sector or venture capital funds? At another level, it takes a forward-looking view on the international dimensions of EU R&I programmes, and explores how the existing Horizon Europe association template will need to evolve for the EU to anchor a new ecosystem of global cooperation for security and prosperity, and to avoid finding itself in splendid isolation under the next MFF.

# AGENDA

**13:30**    **Registration and networking coffee**

**14:00**    **Welcome & opening remarks**

- **Maryline Fiaschi**, Chief Executive Officer, Science|Business

**14:05**    **LIVE Q&A: Sovereign interests: A boost or a barrier to R&I strategy?**

Featured speaker:

- **Robbert Dijkgraaf**, President-elect, International Science Council

*Moderated by Maryline Fiaschi, Chief Executive Officer, Science|Business*

**14:30**    **Beyond borders: Towards a true single market for innovation?**

This session addresses the prospects for creating a fully integrated European marketplace for innovation, as well as the critical role of national and regional agencies in connecting their pipelines and portfolios to wider EU agendas and objectives.

A panel discussion featuring:

- **Janet Geddes**, Deputy Director, Global, Innovate UK
- **Brit Helle**, Director General, Eureka Network
- **Freek van Muiswinkel**, Director, Entrepreneurship & Regional Partnerships, Utrecht University

*Moderated by Simon Pickard, Network Director, Science|Business*

**15:10**    **SPOTLIGHT SESSION: Regional ecosystems: A blueprint for the future of collaborative R&I?**

- **Arco Krijgsman**, Head, Public Private Partnerships, ASML
- **Alberto Zilio**, Head, Public Affairs, Ericsson

*Moderated by Maryline Fiaschi, Chief Executive Officer, Science|Business*

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**15:30**    **COFFEE BREAK**

# AGENDA

## 16:00 Pooled resources: Is co-investment in R&I key to Europe's future?

Given budgetary pressures and increasing competition for capital, this session addresses the growing need for synergies between EU and national funding instruments to support R&I across the full value chain, and in parallel the benefits of closer cooperation with private and philanthropic investors to bridge the gaps that public resources alone cannot fill.

A panel discussion featuring:

- **Tatiana López Garrido**, Deputy Head of Unit, Public Investment, DG GROW, European Commission
- **Benedicte Løseth**, Executive Director, Research System and Internationalisation, Research Council of Norway
- **Sara Minucci**, Chair, Research Forum, Philea
- **Annika Thies**, Head, EU Office, DESY

*Moderated by Goda Naujokaitytė, EU Funding Editor, Science|Business*

## 16:40 R&I partnerships: Will a radically new landscape take shape under the next MFF?

This closing session takes stock of latest developments around the potential structure, governance and international dimensions of collaborative R&I in the EU's next multi-year budget, drawing on the Council and Parliament's emerging positions on the Commission's proposals for ECF, FP10 and more.

Opening remarks by:

- **Maria Cristina Russo**, Deputy Director-General for Innovation, Prosperity and International Cooperation, DG RTD, European Commission

Followed by a panel discussion featuring:

- **Àngels Orduña**, Executive Director, A.SPIRE Processes4Planet
- **Maria Cristina Russo**, Deputy Director-General for Innovation, DG RTD, European Commission
- **Hugo Thienpont**, Vice President, Photonics21; Full Professor, Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- **Daan du Toit**, Deputy Director-General, Department of Science, Technology and Innovation, Republic of South Africa

*Moderated by Katarína Halušková, Policy Officer, Science|Business*

## 17:30 NETWORKING RECEPTION



### **ROBBERT DIJKGRAAF**

**President-elect, International Science Council; Former Minister of Education, Culture and Science of the Netherlands**

Robbert Dijkgraaf is president-elect of the International Science Council and distinguished university professor on science and society from an international perspective at the University of Amsterdam. Robbert recently served as minister of education, culture and science of the Netherlands between 2022 and 2024. Prior to that, he was co-chair of the InterAcademy Council (IAC, 2009-2017) and co-president of the InterAcademy Partnership (IAP, 2014-2017). Robbert has a long track record in science policy and advice, as president of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (2008-2012) and chief science advisor to the Dutch government. As director and Leon Levy professor of the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) in Princeton, New Jersey (2012-2022), he stewarded one of the world's foremost centres for theoretical research and intellectual inquiry.



### **JANET GEDDES**

**Deputy Director, Global, Innovate UK**

Janet Geddes leads Innovate UK's international team, partnerships and engagement. Over her 10+ years at Innovate UK, she has shaped strategy, built partnerships and designed programmes supporting UK deep tech and innovative businesses to collaborate globally, scale and address shared challenges. She has worked extensively with partners and countries across both the Global North and Global Majority. Prior to Innovate UK, Janet worked in international development across sectors including water and sanitation, health, agriculture and urban development. She spent 10 years living and working in India and South Asia. Janet is on the board of Edinburgh Science - an educational charity with the mission to inspire, encourage and challenge people of all ages and backgrounds to explore and understand the world around them, as well as on the Investment Committee of Social Investment Scotland (SIS) group - a social enterprise, charity and investment fund offering loan funding and business support through mission-aligned investment.



### **BRIT HELLE**

**Director General, Eureka Network**

Brit Helle has been director general of the Eureka Network secretariat in Brussels since September 2021. Her focus is two-fold: promoting the significant socio-economic impact that Eureka makes through its funding of R&D-performing businesses and research organisations, and ensuring that the Eureka secretariat offers its members in governments and funding agencies around the world the best support and services available. Brit has professional experience from a variety of fields and locations within finance administration and trade policy in both private and public international sectors. Based in Brussels since 2005, she previously held several management positions at the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) related to the European Economic Area Agreement. She holds a bachelor's degree in management science from the University of Warwick and a master's degree in finance, commerce and administration from Toulouse Business School.



### **ARCO KRIJGSMAN**

**Head, Public Private Partnerships, ASML**

Arco Krijgsman currently leads the ASML public private partnership team, and has previously led several teams in key areas of EUV lithography system development since 2010. He is a member of the core team of the EU public roadmap for electronic components and systems, the Electronic Components & Systems Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (ECS-SRIA), as well as a member of the management committee of the AENEAS industry association. Prior to joining ASML in 2010, he was involved in high tech optical system development in various roles. Arco holds a master's degree in applied physics from the University of Twente.



### **TATIANA LÓPEZ GARRIDO**

**Deputy Head of Unit, Public Investment, DG GROW, European Commission**

Tatiana López Garrido is deputy head of the unit for public investment in the European Commission's directorate-general for internal market, industry, entrepreneurship and SMEs Unit. Her unit, which she joined in 2022, is in charge of the interinstitutional negotiations of the European Competitiveness Fund proposal. Tatiana first started her career in the Commission in 2014 in the directorate-general for competition policy. Prior to that, Tatiana worked as an EU-specialist lawyer in the private sector.



### **BENEDICTE LØSETH**

**Executive Director, Research System and Internationalisation, The Research Council of Norway**

Benedicte Løseth is executive director at Research Council of Norway where she is responsible for the division for research system and internationalisation, including research infrastructure, groundbreaking research and key sectoral policy fields such as open research, research security and international research cooperation. Benedicte serves on several international and national boards and has extensive experience from both academia and the public sector. She has held the positions of director of the research and innovation department at the University of Bergen, head of policy unit at Bergen Municipality, and leader for higher education and research at the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD).



### **SARA MINUCCI**

**Chair, Research Forum, Philea**

Sara Minucci currently serves as chair of the Philea Research Forum and is engaged in advancing research, knowledge exchange and strategic dialogue within the European philanthropic sector. She also works with Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo within the Obiettivo Pianeta (Planet Goal), where she oversees international projects in research and innovation.



### **ÀNGELS ORDUÑA**

**Executive Director, A.SPIRE Processes4Planet**

Àngels Orduña is currently in charge of the A.SPIRE Association, representing the private sector in the Processes4Planet Public Private Partnership (and previously SPIRE Partnership) in the framework of Horizon Europe. She is an experienced EU and international collaboration leader with a proven track record championing success in technology and business development through multi-partner, multi-country and multidisciplinary collaboration. With an academic background in international relations, she has managed and led several R&D and innovation projects in the EU and Canada in technology areas related to value chain productions and enabling technologies such as ICT, energy, renewables, environment, advanced materials or manufacturing. Àngels has shown great ability to translate technological concepts to market opportunities and to link partners' commitment through a win-win perspective.



### **MARIA CRISTINA RUSSO**

**Deputy Director-General for Innovation, Prosperity and International Cooperation, DG RTD, European Commission**

Maria Cristina Russo is deputy director-general for innovation, prosperity and international cooperation in the European Commission's directorate-general for research and innovation. In this role, she oversees the relations with third countries on research and innovation, as well as the association agreements to Horizon Europe, and steers the work of the innovation and the prosperity directorates. Prior to that she was director for prosperity, responsible for industrial research innovation and investments agenda, valorisation policies and IPR, industrial transformation and AI in science. She has been working for the European Commission since 1992 where she held several policy and managerial positions related to external relations, the EU decision-making process and various EU policies. Before being appointed director, she was member of the cabinet of the Commissioner in charge of research policy and head of unit in the Commission's secretariat-general holding different positions dealing with inter-institutional relations and policy making, and in the department in charge of consumers' policies and financial services. Maria Cristina holds a degree in political sciences from the Luiss University of Rome and a research master's degree in European studies from the College of Europe in Bruges.



### **HUGO THIENPONT**

**Vice President, Photonics21 and Full Professor, Vrije Universiteit Brussel**

Hugo Thienpont is full professor at the faculty of engineering of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), research director of the VUB Photonics Innovation Center, and vice president of Photonics2. He is also coordinator of PhotonHub – the European Commission's flagship initiative providing photonics technology and business innovation support to companies across Europe.



### **ANNIKA THIES**

**Head, EU Office, DESY**

Trained as a lawyer, Annika Thies is currently head of the EU Office of DESY, one of the world's leading accelerator centres. In this role, she represents DESY on the coordination board of LEAPS and co-chairs the LEAPS ERA working group. Based in Brussels from 2005 to 2022, Annika worked for DLR, the Helmholtz Association and the European Commission, contributing to the establishment of the ERIC legal framework, and from 2014 to 2022 directed the Helmholtz Brussels office. She co-coordinated the DESCA model consortium agreement initiative and the eRImote-project, and currently is part of the coordination team of the COORDINA-INNOV project.

**DAAN DU TOIT****Deputy Director-General, Department of Science, Technology and Innovation, Republic of South Africa**

Daan du Toit began his career as a South African diplomat, serving at the South African Mission to the European Union (1997–2000), where he supported the early implementation of the South Africa–EU Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement. In 2002, he joined South Africa’s Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI) to strengthen its international relations capacity. From 2006 to 2014, he represented the Department in Brussels, helping expand the South Africa–EU strategic partnership in science, technology and innovation. Since 2014, he has served as DSTI Deputy Director-General for International Cooperation and Resources. He leads major science diplomacy initiatives, represents South Africa in multilateral forums including the OECD, BRICS and the UN, chaired the G20 Research and Innovation Working Group senior officials track in 2025, and has played a key role in the Square Kilometre Array Observatory partnership.

**FREEK VAN MUISWINKEL****Director, Entrepreneurship & Regional Partnerships, Utrecht University**

Since 2020, Freek van Muiswinkel has served as the corporate director of entrepreneurship and regional partnerships for Utrecht University. In 2006 he joined the Academic Biomedical Centre Utrecht and then served as innovation advisor to the board of the University Medical Centre (UMC) Utrecht. During these years, he was co-chair of the institutional review board of UMC Utrecht. In 2011, he joined the faculty of veterinary medicine at Utrecht University, becoming deputy director of research. In this role, Freek served as managing director of the regional innovation cluster Utrecht Life Sciences and as manager of life sciences and health for the Utrecht Economic Board. In 2020, he was appointed as corporate director for entrepreneurship and regional partnerships for Utrecht University. Freek graduated as a medical biologist from Utrecht University and received his Ph.D. on neuronal grafting in Parkinson’s disease in 1994.

**ALBERTO ZILIO****Head, Public Affairs, Ericsson**

Alberto Zilio is head of European government affairs at Ericsson and chairs the European Parliament relations committee of the American Chamber of Commerce to the EU. Before joining Ericsson, he served as director of public affairs Europe for AT&T, leading the company’s regional public affairs activities. He was previously an associate director at a Brussels public affairs consultancy, where he led the digital economy team, and prior to that a senior manager at DIGITALEUROPE, the European lobby of the digital industry, responsible for digital economy dossiers and relations with the European Parliament and political groups. He began his career as a European affairs adviser for Telecom Italia in Brussels. He holds a degree in international and diplomatic studies and a master’s in management of innovation from the Sant’Anna School of Advanced Studies in Pisa.



**MARYLINE FIASCHI**

**Chief Executive Officer, Science|Business**

Maryline Fiaschi joined Science|Business in 2011 where she has risen to the position of CEO and leads the company’s operations and growth strategy. Previously, she managed EU education programmes with the European Commission for six years, before entering the media business in 2007. She held business development positions at Shanghai Daily and EU affairs media company EurActiv. She is also an external evaluator for several EU higher education and research and innovation programmes. Maryline holds degrees from Université La Sorbonne, Università di Bologna and Université de Louvain.



**KATARÍNA HALUŠKOVÁ**

**Policy Officer, Science|Business**

Katarína Halušková is a policy and project management professional with six years of experience working at the intersection of research, innovation, higher education, and sustainability. She previously worked at ABIS – The Academy of Business in Society, where she led EU-funded Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe projects focused on open science, circular economy, research careers and assessment. Katarína has rich experience in stakeholder engagement, strategic communication, and organising high-level events and dialogues bridging academic, industry and policy sectors. She holds a master’s degree in international trade with a minor in commercial communication, and has studied in the Czech Republic, Germany and the USA. At Science|Business, she contributes to policy analysis, network coordination and shaping the European R&I landscape.



**GODA NAUJOKAITYTĖ**

**EU Funding Editor**

Goda Naujokaitytė joined Science|Business in April 2020. Previously, she interned at the Council of the European Union and the Guardian News Media, among other organisations in the UK and Lithuania. Goda holds a bachelor’s degree in communication from the University of Nottingham and a master’s degree in data journalism from Cardiff University.



**SIMON PICKARD**

**Network Director, Science|Business**

Simon Pickard leads on network engagement and development for Science|Business in line with the company’s growth strategy. He previously held directorial positions with The Academy of Business in Society (ABIS) network and IDAS Global, a technology solutions provider to the global cash industry. Within these roles, he designed and coordinated a wide range of international projects focused on sustainability-driven innovation, both in research and education. Simon holds master’s degrees in modern languages from the University of Oxford and in business administration from HEC Paris School of Management.

# THE R&D EXPRESS

Science|Business has renamed its fortnightly Widening newsletter to The R&D Express, tracking policies, the people and the institutions driving reforms and investments that shape research and innovation in central and eastern Europe.

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### The latest news

**JUMPING ON THE COMPETITIVENESS BANDWAGON:** Slovakia is revamping its R&D system to focus more on competitiveness. A series of amendments to the national strategy for research and innovation place more emphasis on technology transfer and commercialisation, mirroring plans by the European Commission to extract more value from EU investment in scientific research. Meanwhile, the Slovakian government is far from accomplishing targets set in the past to boost national R&D expenditure to 2% of GDP.

Thomas Brent [has the story](#).

**THE WEIMAR TRIANGLE:** Thanks to the revival of historical diplomatic ties, Poland now plays in Europe's research big league. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is set to fund cross-border networks of German, French and Polish researchers, after the three countries agreed to deepen cooperation earlier this spring.

Goda Naujokaitytė [explains](#) how the Future Network Weimar Triangle scheme will work.

**DISTRIBUTED EXCELLENCE:** European Universities alliances could help strong institutions outside the EU mainstream to join Horizon Europe consortia, says Adam Kola, vice-rector for research at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Poland.

In an exclusive op-ed for Science|Business, Kola argues that European Universities alliances can become strategic infrastructures that help excellent consortia emerge faster, more intelligently and across a wider geography. "Europe becomes stronger when the conditions for excellence are created across many regions, including regions that have high potential but weaker inherited capacity," he says.

Our reporting and analysis highlight how countries across the region are developing their research and innovation systems, and how these efforts contribute to a stronger and more integrated European R&I landscape.

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Welcome to this week's Science|Business Funding Newswire

First up, news on EU plans for start-ups. In a change of tone, the European Commission's research and innovation chief has called for the European Innovation Council to take more risk. Meanwhile, Commission officials predict the first EU Inc company registrations by spring 2028.

And in case you missed it, the EU has finally launched the new €5 billion Scaleup Europe Fund.

In research latest, the EU has adopted a roadmap for phasing out chemical safety testing with animals, but lobby groups say dedicated funding for alternatives is needed to make it stick.

In this week's Funding Radar, we highlight a call from Japan's Sasakawa Peace Foundation for ocean discovery projects. In the Data Corner, David Matthews surveys the ways that research funders are trying to reduce paperwork. See what works and doesn't.

Finally, big news from last week: France and Poland are pushing for the next Horizon Europe to include long-term funding for networks of labs.

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