

STRATEGY

PLAN · 2021-2026

SCIENCE
EUROPE

Shaping the future of research

SCIENCE EUROPE

PREAM BLE

The Science Europe Strategy 2021–2026 comes at a crucial time for European Research and Innovation (R&I).

The strategy coincides with the launch of Horizon Europe, the 9th EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, and a renewed focus on the European Research Area (ERA). It has been developed at a time when R&I systems are being influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as by climate change and by an accelerated digital transition: these are topics that affect all areas of society.

Today, science generates knowledge faster than ever before. Enhanced cross-border collaboration and “Open Science” approaches, enabled by digital technologies, facilitate the rapid sharing of data and knowledge. Scientific activity and research methods continuously evolve. The capacity of the R&I system to address complex scientific questions, many of which require a multi-disciplinary and transdisciplinary approach, grows ever larger.

The role of science in addressing societal and global challenges – such as sustainable economic growth, education and healthcare or all, or protecting the environment – is vital, as recognised by the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. At the same time, public mistrust of science and technology grows in parts of society, while in some countries political pressure increasingly limits the freedom of research.

The European R&I system has consistently demonstrated its ability to carry out excellent science and generate new knowledge. It has also improved its capacity to transform fundamental scientific knowledge into concrete solutions, by funding and performing excellent fundamental and targeted research. To remain effective, the system needs to be nurtured with investment and policies that further support science, while respecting the freedom of scientific inquiry and helping to maintain the quality of research.

Since its creation in 2011, Science Europe has been striving for excellent European research and effective ERA policies. Areas of action include academic freedom, research ethics and integrity, access to research infrastructures, gender equality, open access, and research assessment processes.



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**This strategy
will support Science
Europe Member
Organisations in
their mission to
create world-class
scientific knowledge,
delivering more
benefit for our
societies.**



and let thy feet
millenniums hence
be set in midst of knowledge

This strategy will further strengthen Science Europe's profile by engaging in new areas such as research culture and the role and contribution of science in society. Moreover, the strategy will support Science Europe Member Organisations in their missions to create world-class scientific knowledge, delivering more benefit for our societies.

Science Europe brings together and represents major European national research performing organisations (RPOs) and research funding organisations (RFOs). It integrates the multinational insights, views, and experience of its unique and select assembly of Member Organisations to develop strategic thought leadership on European R&I policies and practices and the role of science in and for society. It has the ability to take relevant co-ordinated action to progress the common interests of its members. The diversity of Member Organisations contributes to the richness of Science Europe's activities and leads to outputs that transcend individual members. The association is thus uniquely placed to lead the advancement of the European R&I system and to influence global developments through participation in world-wide initiatives, such as the Global Research Council. Science Europe promotes knowledge sharing, collaboration and, where beneficial, the alignment of policies and practices. It facilitates the advocacy of common interests, as well as conducting outreach for its own activities, the activities of members, and the broader promotion of science.

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**VISION
MISSION
VALUES**

Our Vision

Our **vision** is for a European Research Area with optimal conditions, to support robust education, research and innovation systems. This is a European Research Area where science is a strong and trusted component of sustainable economic, environmental, and societal development.

Our Mission

Our **mission** is to define long-term perspectives for European research and champion best-practice approaches, ensuring high quality science for the benefit of humanity and the planet.

Our Values

- We **consider** scientific knowledge to be for the common good and that research is a public service.
- We **value** and protect the freedom of scientific inquiry and the self-organising nature of the scientific research system.
- We **acknowledge** the responsibility of all actors in ensuring the highest possible standards of quality, ethics, integrity, inclusivity, and openness in the conduct and management of research.
- We **recognise** the strong links between research, education, and innovation.
- We **believe** that collaboration within the R&I system and engagement with and for society are constitutive elements of science. They are vital to its effective and efficient functioning.

Science Europe and its members drive the development of ERA policies, influence national European research systems and build the strongest possible research ecosystem for the benefit of science, researchers, and society. Member organisations have a central role and significant influence in their respective national R&I systems in terms of investment, activity, outputs, and policy development.

Science Europe Member Organisations are active in establishing national strategic R&I priorities. They define and implement relevant national and international collaboration policies. They are a major source of creation of scientific knowledge through the implementation of curiosity-driven and challenge-oriented R&I programmes, which directly and indirectly generate economic, environmental, and societal impact.

Building upon their various roles, Science Europe facilitates collaboration between members to collectively drive European and international R&I policy developments, via mutual learning and thought leadership. Science Europe's work builds on the broad expertise and collective knowledge held by its Member Organisations.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Science Europe Strategy Plan will be implemented through the following set of strategic priorities that address our vision, mission, and values:



Science Europe will meet these priorities through numerous activities. Some activities, such as the promotion and support of Open Science, ERA developments and work related to the EU Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation, will contribute to all three strategic priority areas.





SHAPE EUROPEAN RESEARCH POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

National research organisations are key contributors to the organisation, funding, and performance of research. They play an important role in the development and implementation of research policies (individually and collaboratively), such as those related to Open Science, whilst also ensuring the sustainability of the R&I system as a whole. Science Europe's Member Organisations harbour unique expertise, knowledge, and accumulated experience that should inform and shape policy developments at the European level, including the development of the European Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation. Science Europe has become a privileged interlocutor with the European Institutions and is thus positioned to facilitate this. Science Europe aims to:

- **Promote investment in R&I at national and European levels and inform relevant EU legislative developments.**

Support Member Organisations in safeguarding and strengthening their capacity to fund and perform excellent R&I, both in national contexts and at the international level, and work to close the performance divide between national R&I systems in Europe.

- **Advance research collaboration.**

Identify the complementarities of national R&I systems to help promote bilateral and multilateral collaboration between Member Organisations, in turn raising the standards and quality of the ERA as a whole. Encourage cross-border collaboration at a global level and foster guidelines and standards for international collaboration.

- **Strengthen the global dimension of research and research-based innovation.**

Bring the European view and experience to the development of global research policies and principles, in the framework of the Global Research Council and other international organisations and networks.



CONTRIBUTE TO THE EVOLUTION OF RESEARCH CULTURE

Research culture encompasses the behaviour, values, expectations, attitudes, and norms of a research system. Europe brings together a diversity of approaches that influence scientific methodology, the way that research is evaluated, conducted, and disseminated, and the career paths of researchers. Importantly as a result, the culture that pervades in a research system strongly influences quality. If not balanced, the culture can adversely affect the evolution and sustainability of the system. The core business of Science Europe's Member Organisations is to programme, evaluate, fund, and perform research activities, as well as to implement research strategies on a broader scale. Therefore, they have the capacity and credibility to jointly define and implement the positive culture shift needed to create sustainable research ecosystems that allow researchers to thrive. Science Europe aims to:

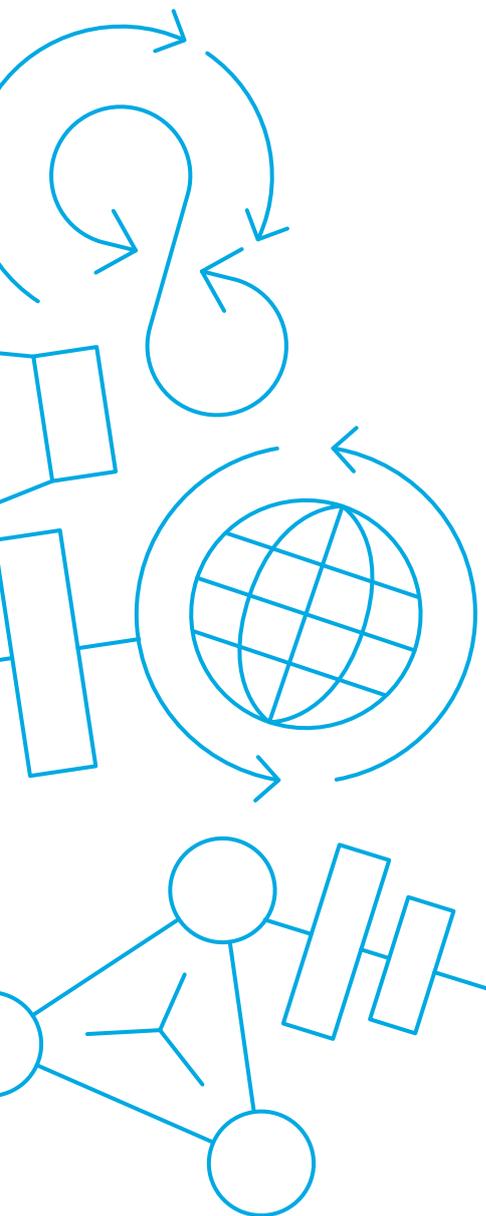
- **Inspire a reappraisal of institutional approaches and values to support the diversity and sustainability of research systems.**
Lead and facilitate reflections on the values, boundaries, and degree of self-organisation of the current and future European R&I system. Societal expectations, global challenges, and the evolution of scientific knowledge and derived technological capacity will profoundly impact the structure and direction of research systems. Approaches and values must be updated accordingly.
- **Develop recognition frameworks that support quality-driven and healthy research cultures.**
Promote policies and practices that recognise, reward, and incentivise actions and behaviour to affirm core values that underpin the sustainable development of research systems. Develop new approaches to better recognise and promote a broad array of research outputs, as well as the variety of career pathways and activities generated by researchers.
- **Promote coherence between policy areas to improve the research ecosystem and conditions for researchers.**
Develop and maintain a coherent overarching view on topics related to research culture such as: Open Science; access to research infrastructures; research integrity; promotion of equality, diversity, and inclusivity; recognition of methodological rigour; transparency; the reproducibility of scientific results; and research assessment processes. Ensure that specific developments in all these areas contribute to improving overall conditions for research.



STRENGTHEN THE ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION OF SCIENCE IN TACKLING SOCIETAL CHALLENGES

Scientific research underpins the innovations, policies and practices required to address societal challenges. R&I is solicited to provide long-term solutions to tackle such challenges, and the societal expectations of science are high. It is evident that both curiosity-driven and challenge-oriented research will be jointly needed to reach these goals. Science Europe, with its broad base of Member Organisations, is uniquely positioned to champion these approaches and to discuss and communicate interdependencies between curiosity-driven and challenge-oriented approaches. Furthermore, most of its members have a specific mission to foster public engagement with the broad movement towards Open Science, which is key in the context of tackling societal challenges. Science Europe aims to:

- **Strengthen the voice of science in and for society.**
Foster effective engagement between researchers, policy makers, and society at large. Encourage a research ecosystem perspective, showcasing the role of all forms of science (including both curiosity-driven and challenge-oriented research) in tackling social, environmental, and economic challenges.
- **Support transdisciplinary research and Open Science as key enablers for sustainable development.**
Lead policy initiatives that facilitate and recognise transdisciplinary research and promote Open Science, with the ultimate goal of further empowering science as a means to resolve social, environmental, and economic challenges.
- **Promote the role of science in shaping sustainable development beyond 2030.**
Using the convening power of Science Europe, foster co-ordinated R&I policies within Member Organisations that address sustainable development through the funding and performing of research. Advocate better integration of science in the definition of priorities to effectively support science-led responses to long-term societal challenges.



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ACTION LINES

Science Europe will develop actions based upon the following action lines:



Provide a forum for all Member Organisations to **share** knowledge and experience, as well as good practices and policies.



Enhance Science Europe's position as a key stakeholder in the European R&I system, facilitating the **alignment** of policies between Member Organisations, where relevant, building further connections within European and national political institutions to spread the vision of quality-driven, efficient, and sustainable R&I systems.



Lead and promote **collaboration** and dialogue between Member Organisations in Science Europe activities.



Enhance policy **advocacy** and reinforce strategic partnerships with selected external organisations. Inform and influence relevant EU R&I policy and legislative developments based on the collective knowledge of Science Europe, along with the needs of Member Organisations and the R&I system in general.



Develop and support **outreach** for both Science Europe and Member Organisation activities. Lead, participate in, and communicate activities promoting the value of scientific research: for its own sake and for societal, cultural, economic, and democratic development.

These action lines will each contribute to all three strategic priority areas and reinforce the ongoing work of Science Europe, providing more added value to Member Organisations and to the broader R&I system. An accompanying [multi-annual action plan](#) presents the actions that will be developed over the years that will inform annual work plans and help measure progress achieved in implementing the strategy.



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Science Europe is the association representing major public organisations that fund or perform excellent, ground-breaking research in Europe. More information is available at: www.scienceeurope.org