



European Innovation Council (EIC): The different possibilities

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European Innovation Council (EIC)

- European Commission (EC) call for ideas on “Designing a European Innovation Council” launched in February 2016
- Call closed on 29 April 2016

EUA’s response to the call for ideas:

- Consultation with university members launched in February 2016
- Consultation with EUA’s Research Policy Working Group (RPWG)

EUA's response to call for ideas on an EIC

Overall message

*An EIC should have as its main **mission the enhancement of Europe's competitiveness** and help to create jobs with high added-value for the benefit of society at large. It should take into account the strong relation between investment in **research-based innovation**, investment in the development of **highly skilled human resources** and the resulting **economic and social innovation**. Education and training should be an integral part of European innovation policies.*

EUA's response to call for ideas on an EIC

Main views and recommendations (I)

- An EIC would be most useful as an **advisory and coordinating body**, integrating all European Commission policies on innovation, and **streamlining existing instruments**. The obstacles to fully realising Europe's innovation potential should be addressed with **comprehensive policies**.
- An EIC should consider **all forms of innovation** and take **a strategic role** in advising on European innovation ecosystems. It should also promote **excellent, research-based innovation** for the benefit of society.
- **An EIC should not be designed as a funding body**. At a time of low public research investment in Europe, it is essential that existing funding allocated to research is preserved.

EUA's response to call for ideas on an EIC

Main views and recommendations (I)

- An EIC should **involve all relevant stakeholders** and have **transparent**, swift consultations and decision making processes. It should **complement other EU bodies**, avoiding overlap.
- An EIC could contribute to **reinforcing links between education and training, investment in basic research and in innovation**. It should also build on **existing good practices** within universities and in their collaborative research with large companies, SMEs and RTOs.

EUA's response to call for ideas on an EIC

Rationale for main views and recommendations (I)

A. Innovation from a university perspective

- Innovation is a broad concept in which **research and innovation** are an **integral part of the innovation value chain** that generates societal well-being, i.e. research generates knowledge, and innovation creates value from this knowledge, which can be of economic, social, educational and cultural nature.
- **Universities** have played and continue to play a **critical role in innovation**, at **regional, national and international levels**. Universities **educate** the future **workforce**, are engines for the development of new ideas through both **basic and applied research** and connect to and **collaborate** with a variety of **external actors** in the innovation ecosystem (e.g. businesses, public and private organisations) to solve societal challenges.

EUA's response to call for ideas on an EIC

Rationale for main views and recommendations (II)

B. Goals and objectives of an EIC

- An **EIC should cover all areas of innovation**, including **all disciplinary fields and sectors**, encompass **education and training** and promote an **entrepreneurial culture** across Europe. An EIC should identify and address bottlenecks for innovation that are related to legal frameworks and economic and social environments.
- **The goal of an EIC should be to complement, and not overlap with or duplicate other existing EU bodies.** An EIC should align existing support instruments for innovation in different EU funds (e.g. Horizon 2020, EFSI, ESIF, EIT, SME Fund, Joint Technology Initiatives).
- In order to accelerate the translation of research results into products and services, **an EIC should foster closer cooperation between academia, industry and RTOs.** It could provide strategic advice to regional and national authorities in developing and sustaining innovation ecosystems. It should encourage collaborative projects across Europe, to help close the gap between different European regions.

EUA's response to call for ideas on an EIC

Rationale for main views and recommendations (III)

C. EIC's role in strengthening links between education, research and innovation

- **Universities'** crucial **role in innovation ecosystems** lies in their performance in **basic and applied research** and in **educating and training students** with high-level skills, who enter the job market and enrich the human resources of public and private organisations of all shapes and sizes.
- In order to fully exploit the potential of the innovative capacities of universities, **an EIC should further foster mutual exchange of personnel between industry and academia** and advocate for minimising existing legal and bureaucratic barriers.
- An EIC could help existing initiatives on university campuses that offer students opportunities to develop their innovative ideas with guidance from professors and entrepreneurs. More generally, it **could encourage universities in augmenting entrepreneurial training in teaching curricula and research projects.**

EUA's response to call for ideas on an EIC

Examples of ideas expressed by universities on a future EIC:

*“From a university perspective, **innovation** is not simply about creating tangible products as in market-creating innovation. Rather it **encompasses the social, ethical and educational [dimensions]** and **encompasses all sectors (public, private, non-governmental, citizens).**”*

*“Discoveries in all scientific disciplines are essential for societal and industrial development. **Basic research activities lay the foundation stone for every disruptive innovation.** Thus, **investment in basic research is essential** in order to keep the pipeline for disruptive as well as incremental innovation. In order to get industry involved and to let science-driven innovation happen, a European Innovation Council could play a crucial role.”*

The EIC in the broader policy context

Framework Programme (FP9)

- Initial discussions on the 'EU Research Framework Programme 9' (FP9, 2021-2027) are under way at the EC and in Member States.
- Preparative steps for FP9 include:
 - European Innovation Council (EIC)
 - Horizon 2020 mid-term review
 - Ex-Post Evaluation of FP7
 - The 2015 Lund Declaration

The EIC in the broader policy context

Horizon 2020

- The EC plans to put forward proposals regarding the EIC as a part of the **mid-term review of Horizon 2020**, scheduled to start during autumn 2016.
- EUA launched a consultation to its university members on Horizon 2020 (15 January 2016 – 31 March 2016)
 - Results are currently being analysed.

In conclusion...

EUA appreciates** the European Commission's **interest** in fostering **innovation** in Europe and welcomes the **discussion on ideas** for a European Innovation Council (EIC). EUA believes that a **comprehensive strategy** for facilitating well-functioning **regional, national and European innovation ecosystems**, and for strategically addressing the barriers to investment in innovative business opportunities **is, indeed, needed.



***Thank you for your
attention !***