Wellcome’s view on Framework Programme 9

May 2018

The EU’s contribution to the European research system supports our mission to improve health through funding the best research. Europe needs a Framework Programme that:

**Improves collaboration between foundations and the Commission**
- Wellcome, along with many foundations, shares the Commission’s goal of excellent research and innovation that improves lives for European citizens. However, it is difficult for foundations to collaborate, or co-fund, with the Commission in the way that industry and public bodies do.
- Framework Programme 9 could improve efficiency in the European Research Area by **formalising strategic alignment with foundation funding** and exploring project-level cooperation.

**Draws on wider expertise by being open to the world**
- Framework Programme 9 should **seek greater participation from across the ERA**, including from countries outside the EU. Accelerating the development of the ERA would benefit EU members, helping to deliver benefits including broader support for the 3% GDP investment target in research and innovation, or wider coordination to tackle major research challenges. Our report, Building a Strong Future for European Science: Brexit & Beyond shows how the EU can capture the value of cooperation with these partners.

**Continues to support high-quality knowledge creation**
- Funding for basic science, awarded based on excellence, is fundamental to the ideas that improve health. Many of Wellcome’s fellows also receive funding through the ERC and Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions. **Maintaining and improving support for basic research** should be integral to FP9.

**Implements complementary missions**
- Beyond our support for great ideas, Wellcome provides intensive support for areas where we can achieve significant progress and meet ambitious goals. **Fewer, bolder missions** in FP9 could help tackle global health issues like anti-microbial resistance and pandemic preparedness. This should maintain the diversity and balance of EU funding, and must not come at the expense of knowledge creation. **Involving foundations in mission development** can increase our ambitions and the speed which we reach them.

**Transforms translation across Europe**
- Alongside other funders, Wellcome launched the commitments to Transforming Translation. The new European Innovation Council should look to these, to **ensure research can have the widest possible benefit to society**. A system that rewards translation, encourages movement between academia and industry, and builds entrepreneurial networks, can accelerate the use of innovative health technologies.
- We are committed to ensuring the healthcare interventions we support are affordable, appropriate, adapted and available. The EU should **prioritise similar access conditions** in FP9 to maximise public benefit.

**Pushes further on responsible research**
- Horizon 2020 has helped drive responsible research through ‘science with and for society’. Foundations like Wellcome have led the way on supporting open access to research outputs. Around 80% of Wellcome-attributed publications are **freely accessible**, and we’re striving to do the same for data, code and biological materials. FP9 should **continue to push forward the Commission’s Open Science agenda**.
• FP9 can also lead by example to create a better culture in research, for example improving reproducibility and becoming more inclusive to engage a wider range of people and ideas. Wellcome’s work in this area includes our priority area on Diversity and Inclusion.

Is simpler for researchers
• Our Future Partnership Project consultation heard that successive Framework Programmes have considerably improved their efficiency. Administrative costs compare favorably with some bilateral agreements. However, many noted the need to streamline further, focusing on reducing the significant administrative burden for applicants.