

Science Europe press release

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Science Europe founded to strengthen collaboration between Europe's national research organisations

European Research Organisations on 21 October announced the founding of *Science Europe* at its festive Launch Event held in Berlin. Around 150 prominent figures from within science and politics came to Berlin to celebrate the creation of the new organisation that brings together 50 research performing and funding organisations from across Europe. European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science, Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, German Federal Minister of Education and Research, Annette Schavan, the Director of the National Science Foundation (USA), Subra Suresh and other speakers congratulated and expressed their hope for future co-operation.

Europe's future prosperity and global competitiveness depends on sustaining and enhancing excellence in research. The creation of *Science Europe* will allow Europe's national research organisations to work in collaboration to maintain this level of research excellence. Based in Brussels, *Science Europe* will promote the collective interests of its member organisations, and streamline the coordination of policies and activities. Its creation will accelerate progress on implementing the actions set out in the Roadmap for the realisation of the European Research Area developed by EUROHORCs and the European Science Foundation in 2009. Its location in Brussels will enable *Science Europe* to work in effective partnership with the European Commission and other European organisations with similar aims.

Dieter Imboden, President of the Swiss National Science Foundation and Chair of the Pilot Board which prepared for the establishment of *Science Europe*, said "I am convinced that *Science Europe* will bring benefits not only to its members, but also to the European Commission, by being a strong partner for dialogue between the actors of the European Research Area".

In addition to coordinating policy work among its members, in 2012, *Science Europe* will establish six Scientific Committees covering all disciplines, including the humanities and social sciences. The Scientific Committees will be made up of leading European researchers to ensure a direct voice for the scientific community in *Science Europe's* strategic outlook, policies and priorities.

At the Berlin meeting, the founding General Assembly of *Science Europe* approved the regulations governing the organisation, its plans for the first year of operation, and elected its first President, Vice Presidents, and Governing Board for two year terms of office.

As *Science Europe's* first President, the Assembly elected Paul Boyle, Research Councils UK (RCUK) International Champion and Chief Executive the UK's Economic and Social Research Council. "*Science Europe* will provide a strong single voice for research funding and performing organisations in Europe; it is essential for us to work together to support research to address the global challenges we face today" said Professor Boyle.

Preparations for the establishment of *Science Europe* have been in development for two years, and a Pilot Board, with a small Pilot Office in Brussels, has been operating since February 2011 to prepare for its establishment and enable a Secretariat to be operational quickly. The Pilot Office has also been working closely with the European Science Foundation to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of activity. Plans approved in Berlin will see the Secretariat grow to between 15 and 20 full-time staff by the end of 2012 to carry out the day-to-day operation of the organisation.

The day before the founding Assembly, on 20 October, the EUROHORCs (European Heads of Research Councils) held their last General Assembly and officially dissolved their association.

For more information and contact details, please visit www.scienceeurope.org.

Notes to editors

1. The following individuals were elected to offices in *Science Europe*:
 - a. **President:** Paul Boyle, Chief Executive of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and Research Council UK (RCUK) International Champion, UK
 - b. **Vice-President:** André Syrota, Director General of the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research (INSERM)
 - c. **Vice-President:** Pär Omling, former General Director of the Swedish Research Council (VR)

Governing Board members:

- a. Franci Demšar, Director of the Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS)
 - b. Matthias Kleiner, President of the German Research Foundation (DFG)
 - c. Christoph Kratky, President of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF)
 - d. Toivo Maimets, Chairman of the Estonian Science Foundation (ETF)
 - e. Karl Ulrich Mayer, President of the Leibniz Association, Germany
 - f. Elisabeth Monard, Director General of the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO)
 - g. József Pálinskás, President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA)
2. *Science Europe* is an international non-profit organisation (AISBL) being incorporated under Belgian law. Its members are publicly funded research funding and research performing organisations with a significant impact on their national research systems within their areas of remit.
 3. The European Research Area concept originated with the Lisbon European Council in 2000. It refers to all research and development activities, programmes and policies in Europe which involve a transnational perspective. EUROHORCs and the European Science Foundation jointly created a Roadmap towards realisation of the ERA in 2009. (www.eurohorcs.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/ESF_Road%20Map_long_0907.pdf) The ERA is currently the focus of a public consultation being conducted by the European Commission.
 4. EUROHORCs was a European association of the heads of research funding organisations and research performing organisations. The acronym originates from European Heads of Research Councils. EUROHORCs was established in 1992 as an informal association of national research councils and public non-university research organisations of the EU Member States and Associated Countries.
 5. Research Councils UK (RCUK) is the strategic partnership of the UK's seven Research Councils. We invest annually around £3 billion in research. Our focus is on excellence with impact. We nurture the highest quality research, as judged by international peer review providing the UK with a competitive advantage. Global research requires we sustain a

diversity of funding approaches, fostering international collaborations, and providing access to the best facilities and infrastructure, and locating skilled researchers in stimulating environments. Our research achieves impact – the demonstrable contribution to society and the economy made by knowledge and skilled people. To deliver impact, researchers and businesses need to engage and collaborate with the public, business, government and charitable organisations. www.rcuk.ac.uk

The seven UK Research Councils are:

- Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC)
- Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)
- Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC)
- Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)
- Medical Research Council (MRC)
- Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)
- Science & Technology Facilities Council (STFC)