

The UK's Exit from the European Union – UKRO FAQs on UK Participation in EU Funding for Research, Innovation and Higher Education

The information below is provided by the UK Research Office and reflects our current understanding of the UK situation with regards to Horizon 2020 and other EU funding programmes in research, innovation and higher education.

The UK Government has issued a paper on future science and innovation on 6 September 2017. **“Collaboration on science and innovation – a future partnership paper”** forms part of a series setting out key issues for a future partnership between the UK and the EU. The paper states that “the UK will seek to agree a far-reaching science and innovation agreement with the EU that establishes a framework for future collaboration.” It explores a number of areas, including the Framework Programmes, nuclear research and the EU space programmes as well as defence research.

Please contact UKRO (ukro@bbsrc.ac.uk) with questions relating to the post-referendum situation. We will endeavour, where possible, to provide answers or to signpost to appropriate contacts.

What has changed for UK participation since the triggering of Article 50 or the start of the negotiations?

Key message: No immediate changes to UK participation in Horizon 2020 – [read more](#)

What happens to proposals and projects involving UK participants when the UK leaves the EU?

The UK Government will underwrite funding for EU projects beyond the date the UK leaves the EU – [read more](#)

What is the advice from the European Commission on UK participation in Horizon 2020?

The Commission has confirmed that the status of UK participants in EU funding programmes remains unchanged until the UK leaves the EU – [read more](#)

Not from the UK and have concerns over including UK partners?

The UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy created a special inbox for queries and to report issues – [read more](#)

Coming to Brussels with a group and looking for an update for your researchers/research managers?

UKRO can provide an update on the UK situation at your Brussels event – [read more](#)

Where can I find UK Government resources? – [read more](#)

What has changed for UK participation since the triggering of Article 50 or the start of the negotiations?

No immediate changes to UK participation in Horizon 2020

An important message for researchers, university administrators and research organisations more broadly is that the UK's status in the EU has not yet changed. Article 50 was triggered on 29 March 2017 and the negotiations started on 19 June 2017; in the meantime:

- The UK is still an EU Member State until the date it formally leaves the EU.
- The UK has the same rights and obligations as all other 27 Member States, including the participation in EU funding programmes.
- Details on how the UK can participate after an exit need to be determined during the negotiations between the UK and the EU.

What happens to proposals and projects involving UK participants when the UK leaves the EU?

The UK Government will underwrite funding for EU projects

The UK Government's commitment:

"UK businesses and universities should continue to bid for competitive EU funds while we remain a member of the EU and we will work with the Commission to ensure payment when funds are awarded. The Government will underwrite the payment of such awards, even when specific projects continue beyond the UK's departure from the EU."

HM Treasury issued a **statement** on 13 August 2016 confirming the above and the UK Government set out the parameters of what is covered by the Horizon 2020 underwrite commitment in a **dedicated Q&A**:

- The UK Government guarantees awards where the application is submitted before exit and is subsequently approved. This includes proposals which are informed of their success but, at the point of exit, have not signed a grant agreement, and proposals which have been submitted before exit and that are only informed of their success following exit.
- The UK Government will work with the European Commission to ensure payment when funds are awarded.
- Two stage application processes are also included in the UK Government's underwrite commitment, provided that the proposal for the first stage of the application is submitted before the UK leaves the EU and that the application is subsequently successful.
- UK universities and research organisations should therefore continue to apply for EU funding through mechanisms such as Horizon 2020 while the UK is a member of the EU.
- Universities and research organisations from other EU Member States or countries associated to EU funding programmes are encouraged to and should feel reassured to continue to include UK partners.

- The UK Government's underwrite commitment applies to competitive funding schemes, which, in addition to Horizon 2020, also includes other centrally managed programmes.
- Separate arrangements were made or are being discussed for decentralised funding schemes (EU funding directly administered by the individual member states, not centrally by the European Commission).
- Information on Erasmus+ is available on the website of the National Agency (www.erasmusplus.org.uk/article-50-update-0).

What is the advice from the European Commission on UK participation in Horizon 2020?

The Commission has confirmed that the status of UK participants in EU funding programmes remains unchanged until the UK leaves the EU.

The European Commission issued a statement in July 2016 to confirm that there is no immediate change to the UK's status regarding Horizon 2020.

- The statement said:
"Until the UK leaves the EU, EU law continues to apply to and within the UK, both when it comes to rights and obligations. This includes the eligibility of UK legal entities to participate and receive funding in Horizon 2020 actions."
- The European Commission also explicitly briefs proposal evaluators in their guidance:
"Experts should not evaluate proposals with UK participants any differently than before."
(ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/support/expert/h2020_expert-briefing_en.pdf)
- The status of UK partners in Horizon 2020 proposals has also been clarified on the European Commission's Participant Portal:
*"Should project coordinators of Horizon 2020 proposals dedicate a part of their proposal to addressing the potential risks as a consequence of the UK Referendum?
No. At this stage, any speculation on the consequences for the Horizon 2020 action of a withdrawal of the UK from the EU will not be taken into account in the evaluation."*

Not from the UK and have concerns over including UK partners?

Are you from another EU member state or associated country and your organisation or researchers you work with are concerned over including UK partners, for example in Horizon 2020 proposals? The UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy created a special inbox (research@beis.gov.uk) for queries and to report issues concerning Horizon 2020 partnering and projects. Researchers and research organisations from outside the UK can contact the inbox in the same way UK entities can.

Coming to Brussels with a group and looking for an update for your researchers/research managers?

Are you planning to visit Brussels with a group of researchers, your university management or research administrators? You can contact UKRO if you would like to receive an update on the UK status concerning EU funding in research, innovation and higher education during your visit. If you

are interested in arranging for an UKRO staff member to speak to your group, please contact ukro@bbsrc.ac.uk with details on the event you are planning.

Where can I find UK Government resources on Brexit related to research and innovation?

The Horizon 2020 Underwrite Q&A provides more detailed information on the parameters of what is covered by the guarantee. Jo Johnson, Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, confirmed the Horizon 2020 underwrite guarantee in [his speech on 18 July 2017](#). A dedicated [Horizon 2020 Underwrite Q&A](#) is also available.

UK Government statements and speeches by the Prime Minister relating to the UK exit of the EU are published on the website of the [Department for Exiting the EU \(DexEU\)](#).

In her [speech on 17 January 2017](#), the Prime Minister laid out the UK Government's plan for exiting the EU. This speech included 12 priorities, one of which is on research and innovation. Further detail is available in [the Government's white paper on exiting the EU](#), in particular in chapter 10 covering research and innovation.

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The European Commission also maintains a [website on the Taskforce on Article 50 negotiations with the United Kingdom](#).

Other resources and statements

- Research Councils UK, in a [statement welcoming the UK Government's commitment on Horizon 2020](#), released on 1 August 2017, states that: *"The success of UK research is dependent on our best researchers collaborating with partners and sharing facilities across international boundaries. Clarification of the status of UK applicants to Horizon 2020 funding will allow UK researchers and their partners to continue to bid with confidence. RCUK and our office in Brussels, the UK Research Office (UKRO), continue to work closely with the research community, partners and Government to ensure that the concerns and needs of UK researchers are represented and are considered in the negotiation of a future relationship with the EU."*
- Universities UK provides [FAQs](#) on a wide range of post-referendum issues and information for students coming to the UK.