



Department for  
Business, Energy  
& Industrial Strategy

# UK PARTICIPATION IN HORIZON 2020

UK government overview with Q&A



March 2018

# UK Participation in Horizon 2020

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*This document provides an overview of the UK's relationship with Horizon 2020. This is followed by a Q&A, which clarifies the UK's eligibility to participate in Horizon 2020.*

The European Council formally agreed on 15 December that sufficient progress had been made to move on to the second stage of the negotiations, and adopted guidelines for that second phase. This followed the publication of a [Joint Report](#) on progress during the first phase by the Government and the European Commission on 8 December, which outlines the agreement in principle made between the EU and the UK. The UK and EU have committed to translating the Joint Report into a legally-binding Withdrawal Agreement as soon as possible, subject to outstanding issues to be agreed as part of phase two of the negotiations. The European Commission published their version of draft legal text on 28 February. The UK continues to stand behind the commitments made in December and will work with the Commission to agree how they should be translated into legal form in the Withdrawal Agreement.

The Joint Report states:

***“following withdrawal from the Union the UK will continue to participate in the Union programmes financed by the MFF 2014-2020 until their closure (excluding participation in financial operations which give rise to a contingent liability for which the UK is not liable as from the date of withdrawal). Entities located in the UK will be entitled to participate in such programmes. Participation in Union programmes will require the UK and UK beneficiaries to respect all relevant Union legal provisions including co-financing. Accordingly, the eligibility to apply to participate in Union programmes and Union funding for UK participants and projects will be unaffected by the UK's withdrawal from the Union for the entire lifetime of such projects.”***

Horizon 2020 is one of the Union programmes covered by this text.

The UK Government encourages the UK research and innovation (R&I) community to **continue applying for Horizon 2020 funding and participating in Horizon 2020 projects** because:

- Until our departure from the EU, we remain a Member State, with all the rights and obligations that entails. This means that **UK entities are eligible to participate in all aspects of the Horizon 2020 programme** while we remain a member of the EU.
- The UK and the EU fully intend **UK entities' eligibility in Horizon 2020 to remain unchanged** for the duration of the programme, as set out in the Joint Report. This includes eligibility to participate in all Horizon 2020 projects and to receive Horizon 2020 funding for the lifetime of projects.
- The Government's underwrite guarantee remains in place in the event that commitments made in the Joint Report are not met.

Science, research and innovation are vital to the UK's prosperity, security and wellbeing, and are at the heart of our industrial strategy. The UK Government is committed to ensuring we secure the best possible outcome for the R&I community as exit negotiations continue. The [Prime Minister stated in her speech on 2 March 2018](#). “The UK is committed to establishing a far-reaching science and innovation pact with the EU, facilitating the exchange of ideas and researchers. This would enable the UK to participate in key programmes alongside our EU partners”, a position further reinforced by the UK Government's [Collaboration on science and innovation: a future partnership paper](#).

The UK values being a part of the Horizon 2020 programme. Through this programme we have built significant scientific partnerships with countries across Europe and beyond. These collaborations have reinforced the UK's position at the forefront of international research and innovation, with UK researchers and businesses helping to tackle societal challenges that affect people all over the world.

Horizon 2020 has delivered great benefits, both from the UK perspective and for our European colleagues. The UK is a top five collaboration partner in Horizon 2020 for each of the other 27 European Union Member States and there have been over 38,000 collaborative links with Member States, including with our top five partners: Germany, Spain, Italy, France and the Netherlands. Across the programme, the UK ranks second only to Germany in terms of the number of project participations, with UK researchers and innovators awarded [15% of all agreed funds to date](#), totalling around €4 billion.

The [UK Government's commitment to underwrite Horizon 2020 funding](#) provides further reassurance to UK businesses and universities. Through this guarantee, any successful bid submitted before the UK leaves the EU will be funded for the lifetime of the project. This ensures businesses and universities can feel confident bidding for Horizon 2020 funds while the UK remains a member of the EU.

## Q&A

### *Joint Report*

#### Will UK beneficiaries in existing projects continue to receive EU funding?

- Yes; the Joint Report envisages that existing projects will continue to receive an uninterrupted flow of EU funding for the lifetime of the project.

#### Will UK participants continue to be able to bid for Horizon 2020 funding after the UK's withdrawal from the EU?

- Yes; the Joint Report envisages that UK participants will be eligible to bid for Horizon 2020 funding for the duration of the programme, including after the UK's withdrawal from the EU. **On this basis, the UK Government encourages UK participants to continue to bid for Horizon 2020 funding.**

#### Will UK participants be eligible to participate in and coordinate Horizon 2020 consortia?

- Yes; the Joint Report envisages full UK participation in Horizon 2020 for the lifetime of the projects, which includes participating in and coordinating consortia.

#### Will UK participants be eligible to bid for individual Horizon 2020 grants?

- Yes; the Joint Report envisages full UK participation in Horizon 2020 for the lifetime of the projects, which includes individual grants.

#### Will UK participants in Framework Programme 7 continue to receive EU funding?

- Yes; the Joint Report envisages that existing projects will continue to receive an uninterrupted flow of EU funding for the lifetime of the project. This includes funding for FP7 participants.

#### Will the UK take part in Framework Programme 9?

- The UK has declared it would like to reach an ambitious science and innovation agreement with the EU, with the Joint Report stating the UK may wish to participate in some union budgetary programmes post-2020, which could include future framework programmes. It is too early to speculate on whether the UK will seek to Associate to Framework Programme 9.
- In a recent speech, Science, Research and Innovation Minister Sam Gyimah said: "I am deeply conscious of the importance of Horizon 2020 and future framework programmes to research in the UK and the huge benefits we have reaped from participation in programmes like the ERC."

We are working hard to secure a good research and innovation agreement with the EU after Brexit.”

## ***EU and UK participation in Horizon 2020***

### **What has the European Commission said about the UK's participation in Horizon 2020?**

- The Joint Report was jointly produced by the UK and the European Commission. It outlines commitments made by both the UK and the EU following the first phase of EU Exit negotiations. Paragraph 71 of the Joint Report states that UK entities are eligible to apply to participate in EU programmes, such as Horizon 2020, and that Union funding for UK participants and projects will be unaffected by the UK's withdrawal from the Union for the entire lifetime of projects.
- The UK continues to stand behind the commitments made in December and will work with the Commission to agree how they should be translated into legal form in the Withdrawal Agreement.
- Furthermore, the European Commission [guidance for evaluators](#) of Horizon 2020 proposals clearly outlines: “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. Experts should not evaluate proposals with UK participants any differently than before.”

### **What has the European Commission said about the eligibility of UK monobeneficiaries and UK participants in consortia within Horizon 2020?**

- The UK and EU Commission Joint Report outlines that UK participants will have full access to Horizon 2020 and as such will be eligible to participate in every aspect of the programme.

### **Could UK participants be asked to leave a Horizon 2020 financed project?**

- As with any participant from a Member State or country associated to Horizon 2020, UK participants could be asked to leave a project by the European Commission for reasons outlined in Article 50.3 of the [Model Grant Agreement](#). The conditions of this article pre-date the UK's decision to leave the EU.
- The underwrite guarantee ensures all UK beneficiaries will receive funding for any successful projects bid for before exit, irrespective of the outcome of Exit negotiations.

### **Should participants from other countries continue to collaborate with the UK within Horizon 2020?**

- Yes absolutely; the UK wants to continue its collaborative research and innovation approach with scientists, innovators and tech investors around the world.
- The UK and EU Commission Joint Report envisages that proposal's from or including UK applicants will be treated in the same way as applications from other Member States or Associated Countries for the duration of Horizon 2020.
- The European Commission has outlined its commitment to international cooperation through its [Open to the World](#) philosophy, which encourages cooperation with non-EU partners.

## ***Underwrite Guarantee***

### **Under what circumstances would it be necessary to administer the underwrite guarantee?**

- The commitments in the Joint Report outline that UK participants' access to Horizon 2020 will remain unchanged for the duration of the programme. However if necessary, the UK Government has also committed to underwrite Horizon 2020 funding.

### **Does the underwrite guarantee cover proposals where the grant agreement is signed after the UK has left the EU?**

- The UK Government has committed to ensuring all successful UK proposals submitted before EU exit are funded. This includes projects that are only informed of their success or sign a grant agreement after the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

### **Does the underwrite guarantee cover all types of projects and application processes?**

- All UK participants awarded funding which has been competitively bid for through the Horizon 2020 programme will be covered by the underwrite guarantee. This includes:
  - Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs)
  - Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs)
  - Contractual public:private partnerships (cPPPs)
  - ERA-nets
  - Flagship Initiatives
  - Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs)

### **Does the underwrite guarantee cover projects with a two-stage application process?**

- Provided that the first stage of a two-stage application is submitted prior to the UK's exit, bids from UK participants will be covered by the underwrite guarantee if subsequently successful.

## ***Mobility***

### **What will happen to EU and international staff and students post EU exit?**

- To retain the UK's position as a world leader in research and innovation, the UK needs to continue to attract global talent from the EU and beyond, with high level skills that can support research and innovation, the industrial strategy and benefit the wider UK economy. We hugely value the contribution of EU and international staff and students.
- We are considering the options for our future migration system very carefully. The Government has commissioned the independent Migration Advisory Committee (MAC, an independent body which advises the Government on migration matters) to provide an assessment of the impacts of exiting the EU on the UK labour market, including universities and research, and in a separate commission, the impact of EU and non-EU students in the UK, by September 2018. These commissions provide an opportunity for the sector to contribute evidence and the MAC's independent advice will help inform future decisions on our migration system.

If you have further questions regarding UK participation in Horizon 2020, please contact the relevant [UK National Contact Point \(NCP\)](#) or email [research@beis.gov.uk](mailto:research@beis.gov.uk).