Horizon Europe Action Plan 2022-2026

Horizon Europe, the EU's ninth framework programme for research, is the world's largest research and innovation programme, starting on 1 January 2021 and with a budget of NOK 970 billion.

The importance of international research cooperation in solving major and international challenges is increasing. By participating in Horizon Europe, Norwegian researchers will gain access to knowledge, international networks, research infrastructure and the opportunity to collaborate with the best researchers in their field in Europe and beyond. These are ideas and mindsets that correspond well with the University of Agder's vision in the strategy for 2021-2024: "Co-creation for future knowledge".

For Horizon Europe, the Government has an ambitious target of a return share of 2.8 percent, from 2.49 percent in Horizon 2020. According to Minister of Research and Higher Education Ola Borten Moe, the increased level of ambition requires all Norwegian universities to contribute, including the University of Agder.

The purpose of this action plan is to increase participation in EU-funded research projects for researchers at the University of Agder. To serve this purpose, four priority areas have been defined; Research policy influence, increased participation in EU-funded initiatives and offering researchers a competent support system for applications, contracts and project operations, and efficient processes for applications and project implementation. Under each priority area, sub-goals and activities have been defined to ensure attainment of the objective. The action plan will strengthen the faculties' EU strategies. The University of Agder wishes to participate in the European research community, and in the work to solve major societal challenges. EU-funded research is a priority at the University of Agder, and will in the long term contribute to making the University of Agder a key supplier of high-quality research regionally, nationally and internationally.

PRIORITY AREA 1: Research policy influence

Milestones	Activity	Responsible
Active presence and visibility	Increased presence at international meeting places	Faculty
	Increased participation in info days and brokerage events related to HE	FoI, Faculty
		Faculty
	Participate in relevant national and international networks and organizations	
UiA must, to a greater extent, promote its interests and strategies in the EU	Increased presence and influence in Brussels	University leadership, FoI, Faculty
	Closer contact with the Research Council and NCPs	University leadership, FoI, Faculty
	Provide input to work programmes and strategies	FoI, Faculty
	Actively contribute to and promote our interests in national and international networks and organisations	FoI, Faculty
		FoI, Faculty
	Relevant researchers and research advisors register as EU evaluators	

PRIORITY AREA 2: Increased participation in EU-funded initiatives

Milestones	Activity	Responsible
Increase the number of awarded applications by 50% and increase earnings by 20% compared to H2020	UiA and the faculties must specify and highlight goals in annual budget proposals	University leadership, faculty
	Earmark strategic funds for EU participation	University leadership, faculty leadership
	Prioritise resources for relevant academic communities in order to apply to the EU	FoI, Faculty
	Increase thematic coordination of applications to the EU	University leadership
	Offer incentives for successful applications	FoI, Faculty University leadership
	Strengthen cooperation and exchange of experience between researchers across disciplines and sectors	FoI, Faculty
	Emphasise experience with external financing in connection with new hires	Faculty, HR, AU
	Connect an EU advisor at FoI and use an external consultant for quality assurance on all coordinator applications submitted from UiA	FoI, Faculty
Increased focus on and allocation of MSCA PF and ERC	Inform relevant academic communities about the scheme	FoI, Faculty
	Allocate strategic funds to the scheme	University management, faculty
	Conduct MSCA and ERC application programs	FoI

PRIORITY AREA 3: Offer researchers a competent support system for applications, contracts and project management

Milestones	Activity	Responsible	Period
Increased knowledge about EU funding among the university's academic and administrative staff	Study period in Brussels	FoI	
	Courses and information sharing	FoI, Faculty	
Strengthened cooperation between researchers and the EU team and increased visibility and clarification of the latter's roles and services	Inform about the EU team's services and the EU's framework program/information for relevant academic communities	FoI	
	Dedicated webpage on Innaskjærs about the services offered by the EU team	FoI	
	Better coordination of the division of work between faculty and joint administrative support services	FoI	
Clear overview of all application activity at UiA	Prepare a project outline that updates automatically	IT, ØKA, FoI	

PRIORITY AREA 4: Efficient processes for applications and project implementation

Milestones	Activity	Responsible
Increased expertise in the pre- and post-grant phase	Professionalise administrative support for granted EU projects	FoI
	Ensure specialised expertise in the various programme areas of HE by establishing local contact points	FoI