



June 12, 2018

Mr. Carlos Moedas, Commissioner
Research, Science and Innovation
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels, Belgium

Re: Recommendations and Requests Regarding Horizon Europe Funding Priorities

Dear Commissioner Moedas:

ACM is Europe's oldest and, with more than 100,000 global members, the world's largest association of professionals engaged in every aspect of computing. In academia, industry, and virtually every sphere of the public, private and government sectors, ACM's members are the individual educators, theoretical scientists, researchers, engineers, designers and analysts who daily advance the frontiers of innovation and technological progress in computing in Europe and worldwide. ACM is a non-profit and wholly non-political organization.

On behalf of the ACM Europe Council and EUACM, its Policy Committee, we congratulate you, your Commission colleagues and your staff on the clear and essential objectives of the Horizon Europe funding plan just released. Like you and the Commission, we are committed to achieving and maintaining European preeminence in every aspect of computing for the benefit of every citizen of the Union and beyond. We also concur that new thinking and new structures – particularly in the service of facilitating greater collaboration in innovation across disciplines, economic sectors and nations – are essential if we are to succeed as a community of nations and as citizens of the world.

We also write today, however, to caution that the plan's effectively flat funding for two tested and essential engines of progress under Horizon 2020 threatens Horizon Europe's future at its birth. Specifically:

- The European Research Council (ERC) has funded more than 8,000 researchers to date, among them ten Nobel and Fields Prize winners. While we appreciate that Horizon Europe will provide the ERC with significant additional funds over its Horizon 2020 budget, we also note that its proposed share of all Horizon Europe funds will remain at just 17%. We respectfully submit that such de facto flat funding is unwise and counter-productive. As the discussion of such allocations moves to the European Parliament, we urge the Commission to invest more heavily in this proven program that has paid such handsome dividends to date; and

- Similarly, we are concerned that the very modest increase in funding currently allocated to the popular and successful Marie Skłodowska Curie research fellowship program will be insufficient to generate the at minimum half million more researchers that Horizon Europe correctly considers critical to securing Europe's technological future. We strongly endorse Horizon Europe's and the Commission's goal of dramatically raising Union-wide spending on Research and Development from the present 2% to 3% by 2027. Curie fellowships, in our view, constitute a high-yield investment toward achieving that goal.

EUACM and ACM's Europe Council appreciate that all aspects of Horizon Europe now must be externally assessed and thoroughly debated both within and without the European Parliament. We, and our experts in every germane field, look forward to contributing substantively to that process as it unfolds in the coming months. To reach us, please contact ACM's Director of Global Policy, Adam Eisgrau, at eisgrau@acm.org and/or EUACM's Chair through euacm-HE@acm.org.

Thank you again for your work and for consideration of our views.

Sincerely,ⁱ



Christopher L. Hankin, Chair
ACM Europe Council



Dr. Fabrizio Gagliardi, Chair
ACM Europe Policy Committee

ⁱ Dr. Hankin is the Director of the Institute for Security Science and Technology at London's Imperial College. Dr. Gagliardi is Senior Strategy Advisor for the Barcelona Supercomputing Center. They have signed this letter solely in their volunteer capacities with ACM, not on behalf of their respective institutions.