



ENRF Briefing Note on HORIZON EUROPE: London and Brussels have a deal!



The UK government and the European Commission reached an agreement to allow the UK countries to join again the Horizon Europe and the Copernicus Space Programme.

On 7 September, a joint statement has been published in which the President of the European Commission Ursula Von Der Leyen stated: *"The EU and UK are key strategic partners and allies, and today's agreement proves that point. We will continue to be at the forefront of global science and research."*

In 2016, the UK citizens voted to leave the European Union. This news immediately set alarm bells ringing in the research world. In the light of this, Paul Nurse, Director of the Francis Crick Institute, stated: *"British scientists will have to work hard in the future to counter the isolationism of Brexit if our science is to continue to thrive."*

UK achieved Brexit on 1 January 2021 and the deal that the UK struck with the EU, known as the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), included in it an agreement in which UK researchers would be allowed to participate in Horizon Europe.

In summer 2023, London and Brussels reached a deal: the UK scientists will now be able to receive European Research Council grants and coordinate academic-industrial consortia in the Framework programme. It confirms that from UK will be able to fully participate from **1 January 2024** in the 2024 work programme till the end of Horizon Europe in 2027. This will reinforce the opportunity to be part of a worldwide network of **researchers and innovators** aimed at **tackling global challenges** in climate, energy, mobility, digital, industry and space, health, and more.



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Furthermore, the UK will join also the Copernicus Space Programme, which represents a key initiative for reaching the European Green Deal and net-zero objectives. According to the UK's announcement: *"The UK's association to Copernicus comes at a crucial moment, where the Copernicus space infrastructure and its information services will evolve further and their contribution to understanding and acting on environmental and climate change related challenges is more important than ever!"*

The **UK research community** reacted positive to this news – such as - Sean Rowlands, senior policy officer at The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities said: *“Researchers in the UK and across Europe have not lost touch, they have continued to collaborate and are still in a good position to make up lost ground and engage fruitfully with European programmes.”* and also Matthew Freeman, Head of Dunn School of Pathology, University of Oxford, said: *“This news will make it much easier for those of us who spend time trying to recruit the best scientists from around the world to come to Britain.”*

Nurse researchers from the UK can and should build strong pan-European consortiums that prepare solid project proposals and apply to these Horizon Europe funds. By doing so, they can come up with innovative solutions to make our healthcare systems more resilient, address the frontline needs of the nursing workforce, and improve the quality of care received by patients.

Concluding, we can affirm that this news represents a great possibility to improve research at European level. The United Kingdom represents a key partner in research and its involvement is very positive. Moreover, this deal will allow EU and the UK to open a new chapter in their partnership, based on mutual trust and full cooperation, which will be key in the development of sustainable solutions for improving health and the environment around us.

Horizon Europe - Work Programme 2023-2024 (4. Health) [wp-4-health horizon-2023-2024 en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

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