

**Proposal of the recommendations of CPU and HRK
The position of SSH within Common Strategic Framework”
April 2011**

The recommendations of this document seek to propose the vision of French and German universities for the position of Humanities and Social Sciences within European planning, post-2013. In the case of France, this concerns the programming framework rather than the scientific themes of the alliances.

I – Towards a simplified programme

SSH currently contribute to several programmes of various DGs of the European Commission: the scientific programmes of the 7th FPRD (Cooperation, Ideas, People, Capacities), within the themes of the Cooperation Programme for transverse participation (environment-energy, health...), and to other European Programmes such as Structural Funds. Even though these contributions meet specific demands, it seems possible to instigate a few simplifications:

- **Proposal 1:** simplification is made through a pooling of calls, in particular, by integrating the “Science in Society” programme within SSH collaborative research, or as an item in its own right within this programme.
- **Proposal 2:** reduction of the number of funding schemes in order to simplify access to European programmes.
- **Proposal 3:** French and German universities would like further development before the European SSH operational platform which should, in particular, combine the ensemble of European calls in SSH.

II – A balance of bottom-up and top-down approaches necessary for a vertical and transverse structure

If major challenges are to correspond to European problems, it is equally necessary to put mechanisms in place that would guarantee a balance with bottom-up research:

- **Proposal 4:** the very uniqueness of social challenges requires a specific SSH strand within forthcoming collaborative research. SSH perform the particular role of helping understand, forecast and anticipate the transformations to come about in our society. Equally, this is achieved as result of work carried out between different disciplines of SSH.
- **Proposal 5:** French universities ask for 50% unrestricted calls, German universities, on their part, demand recourse to more “bottom-up” financing instruments in collaborative projects such as, for example, FET-Open, to better meet the needs of different scientific communities and to encourage a diversity of disciplines.
- **Proposal 6 :** SSH play a significant role in overcoming major challenges as well as ensuring the emergence of creative, pioneering and innovative projects. Hence, the necessity to allow them to contribute to the ensemble of major challenges already identified, to flagship initiatives of EU 2020, and to new coordination mechanisms such as IPM. In order to allow SSH to intervene across the length of both a vertical and a transverse axis, and to respond to the concern of ensuring equitable funding, a separate SSH budget must be created (comprising, possibly, a specific package for transverse activities, cf. Proposal 12).

III – For constructing a European-scale network

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It is essential to support networking between researchers. It plays a part in connecting European research laboratories, which in itself is conducive to the emergence of new ideas, and a source of mutual European integration (post-doctoral researchers, research associates, experienced researchers, staff).

- **Proposal 7:** it is thus important to guarantee a share of calls for collaborative research projects with a significant budget for coordination projects (a rise from 15% to 20% of SFA for SSH)
- **Proposal 8:** these networks will be supervised and will pursue precise objectives with short deadlines (2 years). They will be the fruit of a specific methodology, and will give rise to a return to scientific and non-scientific communities.

IV – For a balance of large and small structures

SSH are multiple and diverse. The place of SSH in working programmes of the past few years varies significantly depending on the discipline. Even combined with other domains, for example the Arts and ICT, they are a source of innovation. Humanities and Social Sciences shed essential light in understanding Europe, its relations with other parts of the worlds, and in particular, on questions of cohesion and the management of cultural diversity. Recourse to the ensemble of SSH disciplines in a balanced manner, permits expansion of Knowledge about our society.

- **Proposal 9:** to secure a proportion of collaborative projects of limited size (3 to 5 European partners) within the collaborative research framework, in order to facilitate administrative and financial management, and to ensure a plurality of disciplines, as well as access by new operators on the basis of excellence.
- **Proposal 10:** to create a federal structure for calls within the framework of major challenges, stipulating a three-way allocation: 40% of topics of major challenges would be associated with single-discipline work, 40% would be associated with work between disciplines, and an unforeseen topic given up to 20%. Each topic would have a devolved budget and will function autonomously. The function of the “unforeseen” topic would be to allow the emergence of a new idea arising from the evolution of the project. The allocation of the latter would follow approval by a committee external to the project.

V – The importance of Social Sciences and Humanities in societal and technological innovation

Social Sciences and Humanities play a central role across the length of the process of innovation, a growing role, in particular, in the transfer of knowledge, be it in a system of social and societal innovation, or technical and technological innovation. This is achieved through promoting the emergence of ground-breaking and/or creative projects in line with future needs of Society.

- **Proposal 11:** encouraging calls for proposals drawn-up jointly by researchers in Humanities and other sciences, and striving to bring together Humanities and Social Sciences and “exact” sciences, or other sciences such as ICT, will lead to the emergence of projects that a purely technological approach would not be able to allow. The Universities demand that within calls for collaborative research proposals, be stipulated a sizeable workgroup dedicated to SSH which would guarantee inter-disciplinarily.
- **Proposal 12:** French and German universities wish to guarantee at best, EU funding for the multiple facets of innovation, particularly non-technological innovation, or else, the economics of innovation and social and societal innovation. It is hoped that there be included within the framework of the ESF, a call dedicated to SSH, in order to encourage the drawing up of proposals with specific regard to social and societal innovation, which are not well developed in this part of the world. This call could be

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open to proposals shared with other disciplines, but would, nevertheless, have to contain 2/3 SSH disciplines.

- **Proposal 13:** French and German Universities embark on intensifying the visibility of map of competences of universities of Humanities and Social Sciences in order to make their competences and capacities more transparent, and, in addition, to facilitate its use and deployment in market policy and in the society in general.

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