
Foresight and Public Engagement in Research and Innovation

In 2016 the European Commission continued promoting its Open Innovation, Open Science, Open to the World approach as overarching goals of its research and innovation policy. ARC Fund has consistently promoted these goals through its work, and has built a successful track record in supporting citizens' involvement in debates on possible futures. It mobilizes stakeholders on issues marked by uncertainty; and continues to collaborate with a network of research organizations across the EU, as well as globally. Committed to the principles of responsible research and innovation, ARC Fund is a pioneer in advancing **technology foresight solutions and technology assessment in policy-making**. All of the organisation's activities take place in the citizens-science-policy nexus, and aim at mobilizing different actors for mutual learning and finding sustainable approaches to pressing societal challenges.

Demonstrating its commitment to the principles of responsible research and innovation, ARC Fund placed public engagement and citizens' involvement at the core of its work. In 2016, it continued to mobilize stakeholders to look for sustainable approaches to pressing societal challenges. In the last year, the ARC Fund's STIP team worked on six projects supporting the implementation of EU's research and innovation policy.

These are CASI, SI-Drive, Black Sea Horizon, CIMULACT, PROSO and RRI-Practice.

In the CASI project (*"Public participation in Developing a Common Framework for Assessment and Management of Sustainable Innovation"*) ARC Fund leads a consortium of 19 partners from 12 EU countries. The project represents a cross-sectoral partnership on innovation-related challenges and effectively integrates the perspectives of civil society, SMEs, industry, policy stakeholders, and leading academics. The year 2016 has been very eventful for the project; the three highlight events were a mutual learning seminar hosted by ARC Fund in February, a policy actors meeting in April, and a policy conference "Public Engagement for Research, Practice and Policy: Exploring Policy Options for Responsible Research, Sustainability and Innovation", held at the premises of the Committee of the Regions in Brussels on November 16-17, with over 160 participants.

As part of the SI-Drive project, in 2016, ARC Fund conducted an in-depth analysis of social innovation practices in the fields of education, environment and energy.

In March, ARC Fund hosted an international workshop within the framework of the "Black Sea Horizon" project, entitled "Applied research in chemistry: Smart



CASI Policy Conference - Photo by Petteri Repo, University of Helsinki

materials for a smart future.” Based on the results from the meeting, pertinent research topics of mutual interest in the field of smart materials were derived, which were proposed for inclusion in the forthcoming calls for proposals in the Horizon 2020 program, as well as in future international or regional bi-lateral and multilateral research programs. One of the sub-objectives of the Black Sea Horizon project is to prepare a joint call which is to be funded by pooling resources from the Member States of the European Union and countries from the Black Sea region which are associated to Horizon 2020 program.

The project *Citizen and Multi-Actor Consultation on Horizon 2020 (CIMULACT)* aims to add to the relevance and accountability of European and national research and innovation agendas by engaging citizens and stakeholders in co-creation of research calls based on societal visions, needs and demands. In a series of events like workshops and meetings, citizens were given a chance to play a very active role in developing visions for sustainable future and design of research program proposals, based on the elicited social needs. In addition to numerous face-to-face interactions across Europe, the project partners also consulted more than 1000 citizens and experts from 30 European countries via an online survey launched in the summer of 2016. ARC Fund has produced two CIMULACT policy briefs, which summarize the achievements of the project, targeting European and national level policy-makers, researchers and other stakeholders. These can be downloaded at: <http://www.cimulact.eu/publications-2/>.

The *PROSO* (“*PROMoting SOcietal engagement under the terms of RRI*”) project commenced in January 2016. It is a Horizon 2020 supported research action, whose objective is to foster societal engagement under the terms of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) in the research and innovation (R&I) systems in Europe. ARC Fund is a coordinator of a major part of PROSO’s methodology, namely the research focusing on engagement of non-organized citizens in R&I. Public engagement plays an important role in the project. For this



purpose, project partners from five countries organized meetings with citizens to gather their views on different engagement methodologies, discussed in the context of the three research areas (nanotechnology, bio-economy, and food and health).

Since September 2016, ARC Fund engaged in *RRI-PRACTICE: Responsible Research and Innovation in Practice*, which involves partners from five different continents. The goals of the project are to examine the barriers and drivers to the successful implementation of RRI both in European and global contexts; promote reflection on organizational structures and cultures of research conducting and research funding organizations; and identify and support best practices to facilitate the uptake of RRI in organizations and research programs. Apart from conducting a Bulgarian national case study ARC Fund is also in charge of project’s communication and dissemination activities.



CIMULACT pan-European conference in Brussels (December 1-2)