

Strategy of the FNR

The FNR sees itself as one of the main drivers of high quality research in Luxembourg. In order to fulfil this role, it aims to steer public research through its research programmes and tackle structural issues through its various instruments (AFR grants, Accompanying Measures, ATTRACT, INTER).

Since its creation in 1999, the FNR has been developing its strategy and articulating its vision of Luxembourg research.

Two key questions drive the FNR's philosophy:

- 1. What is, and should be, the aim of scientific research?
- 2. How can these aims be attained?

The aims and objectives of scientific research are manifold. Research should address the challenges and problems a society faces. In general terms, research activities should be in line with the goals of the Lisbon agenda, that is turning Europe into the world's most competitive knowledge economy as well as improving its social and environmental features. The future of Europe lies in making this transition towards a knowledge economy.

Research should find some answers to the pressing challenges that Europe faces. At the same time, the impact of scientific research should be maximised. This calls for selecting priorities in research and striving for high quality in research. Thus, the FNR expects researchers in Luxembourg to increasingly meet international standards, since they are the key to guarantee quality.

The chief role of public sector research is to provide valuable knowledge and guidance in relation to the aspects that are important for Luxembourg's economy, society and its environment. Unfortunately, however, a large number of decision makers and stakeholders only seem to value application and market-driven research and tend to underestimate the societal benefits of research in the social sciences and humanities. Yet, if Luxembourg wants to successfully achieve its transition to a knowledge society and address its future challenges, it is of utmost importance to strengthen research in the so-called soft sciences and not only focus on research with a direct economic impact. In other words, the FNR wants to take a balanced approach to research policy, encouraging research that addresses the challenges of Luxembourg's economy and its society and its environment.

The objective of the FNR is thus threefold: to invest in human resources, in institutions and in knowledge. Hence, the FNR's strategy pursues three main objectives:

1. Supporting Researchers to Build up Scientific Quality and Excellence

Excellent researchers are the cornerstone of a productive research landscape. The FNR wants to foster scientific quality by:

- implementing a research programme (CORE) which covers most of the research domains identified in the Foresight Exercise, with streamlined

procedures based on a stringent peer-review system with scientific quality as the prime criterion;

- attracting outstanding young post-docs to Luxembourg via the ATTRACT programme.

2. Improving the Research Environment

The FNR aims to improve Luxembourg's research environment and institutional framework through:

- developing a strategic orientation for the INTER programme, thus providing researchers with a wide range of opportunities for international collaborations;
- improving existing and developing new Accompanying Measures;
- improving networking among researchers;
- assuring the valorisation of research results;
- improving access to data.

3. Promoting Scientific Culture

The FNR also wants to strengthen the links between science and society and wants the general public to feel concerned with science. Promoting scientific culture is mostly targeted to young people, since they will be tomorrow's citizens and researchers.

A key instrument to do so is the ProScience group, which was set up by the Fund in 2007 and regroups all public research actors as well as the Ministry of Education and the *Service National de la Jeunesse*. This group's objectives are to facilitate the organisation of promotion activities and to increase the research institutions' support of promoting scientific culture. Another key instrument is the Accompanying Measure AM1 for promoting scientific culture. The biannual Science Festival, for instance, is partly funded through this measure.

In addition, the participative and open approach launched through the Foresight Exercise is a way forward to strengthen the links between those who produce scientific research and those who are the users of research.

In parallel to these objectives, the FNR also aspires to strengthen the collaboration and coordination between all the stakeholders in the innovation system:

- the Ministry of Culture, Higher Education and Research;
- the Ministry of Economy;
- Luxinnovation;
- the Public research institutions;
- other organisations from the public and private sector.

While developing, implementing and assessing its policy tools, the FNR aims to be transparent, efficient, professional and accountable.