

BMS RIs in support of strong and coherent roadmapping process

Since its inception in 2002, the European Strategic Forum for Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) has enabled the development of a coordinated European research infrastructure eco-system.

In September 2018, ESFRI published the 2018 Roadmap, identifying pan-European Research Infrastructure (RI) projects to complement the existing projects and landmarks. Each was selected for “their strategic potential and impact for strengthening European research,”¹ with a view to providing trans-national access to unique scientific infrastructure and resources that are not uniformly accessible to the community.

ESFRI RIs are grouped in six thematic domains, including Health and Food (H&F), under which the RIs active in biological sciences, biological resources and medical sciences are listed. As of 2018, the H&F group of RIs is comprised of 10 Landmarks² and 6 Projects³, 13 of which are represented in the BMS RI Strategy Board.

ESFRI efforts to coordinate and support investments in several strategic biomedical RIs in Europe have led to the establishment of RIs as solid contributors to a successful European Research Area (ERA). Since 2006, 10 of these research infrastructures have become operational, with large and diverse user communities. They continue to gain visibility as key stakeholders in the research and innovation ecosystem capable of bringing together facilities, services and resources for research, thus providing solutions to societal challenges in the biomedical domain.

A cornerstone of the ESFRI approach is to ensure that the RI ecosystem reduces fragmentation, duplication and accelerates synergies of efforts and resources in Europe. These unique infrastructures serve multiple communities in a transversal manner by providing services to all research disciplines in a given domain. This has several positive consequences:

- RI operate with higher efficiency by serving larger user groups. This reduces unused capacity for more cost-effective operations;
- RI act as hot-spots for knowledge spillovers and cross-fertilisation, by facilitating exchange of know-how and techniques from one discipline to another;
- More efficiently operated infrastructures can remain at the cutting-edge by updating its infrastructure more regularly, thereby putting Europe in a competitive position on the global stage.

¹ Foreword, <http://roadmap2018.esfri.eu/media/1066/esfri-roadmap-2018.pdf>

² BBMRI-ERIC, EATRIS-ERIC, ECRIN-ERIC, ELIXIR, EMBRC-ERIC, ERINHA, EU-OPENSREEN-ERIC, EURO-BIOIMAGING, INFRAFRONTIER, INSTRUCT-ERIC

³ AnaEE, EMPHASIS, EU-IBISBA, ISBE, METROFOOD-RI, MIRRI

Today as the RIs mature, they are actively broadening their user base, and are seeking further interconnectedness of their services and capabilities to better serve the research community. In order to succeed, it is in the interest of all parties, including funders, policy-makers, and particularly patients and citizens, to continue to reduce unnecessary fragmentation. This is especially of relevance when considering new projects to join the ESFRI roadmap.

The BMS RI Strategy Board strongly favors closer dialogue between the BMS RI community and ESFRI, particularly when new infrastructure projects in the H&F domain apply for future ESFRI Roadmaps.

With the current statement, the Board recommends the implementation of a formal mechanism to inform and consult with the BMS RI community. Such consultation would then ensure comprehensive analysis of the existing ESFRI landscape as part of the roadmapping process, and as a result could lead to the integration of new projects within the existing ESFRI RIs when relevant and prevent unwanted fragmentation and duplication of the ESFRI community offering.

On behalf of BBMRI-ERIC, EATRIS-ERIC, ECRIN-ERIC, ELIXIR, EMBRC-ERIC, EMPHASIS, ERINHA, EU-OPENSREEN-ERIC, EURO-BIOIMAGING, INFRAFRONTIER, INSTRUCT-ERIC, ISBE, MIRRI

Anton Ussi

Chair of the BMS RI Strategy Board

EATRIS-ERIC Operations & Finance Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anton Ussi', is positioned to the right of the text. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial 'A'.