

## Letters from the EU Party Leaders 2014

*In the run-up to the 2014 European Elections, CaSE and Euroscience published the responses of the Conservatives, Labour, the Liberal Democrats, UKIP, the Green Party, Plaid Cymru and the SNP, to our questions on their EU science and engineering policies covering research, skills, innovation and evidence-based policymaking.*

### The Labour Party Response

*How should the EU support the development of science and engineering skills?*

It isn't just about ensuring the funding is in place but also about how, during this tough and challenging time, we are making sure the next generation are learning the required skills in science and engineering. With a youth unemployment crisis in the EU we need to support industry in offering the education and apprenticeships people need.

That is why we support ideas like the Youth Guarantee scheme and are keen to see that scheme become bigger and wider reaching to make sure the next generation are given a guarantee of employment, training or an apprenticeship.

*How should the EU support research?*

Through a variety of measures. Firstly, Funding. We have recently seen the introduction of the Horizon 2020 programme which is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever put together with nearly €80 billion of funding available over seven years (2014 to 2020). On top of this, European Research Council (ERC) grants support individual researchers of any nationality and age who wish to pursue research. Since 2007, more than 4,500 projects have been selected to receive ERC funding throughout the EU Member States and the FP7 associated countries.

Secondly, the EU can create platforms for best practice. Do not underestimate the value of cooperation and sharing best practice to successful research. The EU can play a vital role in facilitating this.

Thirdly, through policymaking. From small change to making sure access to research funding is simple and workable, to big changes like reforming the EU budget to prioritise more for research projects at the expense of often wasteful subsidies in agriculture. Good policymaking can support and benefit research hugely.

*How should the EU support industry to invest in science and engineering?*

It is an area where more needs to be done. Depending on the area, incentives can be put in place to stimulate investment for industry. For example, the EU's ambitious policies on tackling climate change through binding emissions targets and the emissions trading scheme, are partly designed to encourage industry to invest more in developing cleaner and more sustainable technology.

How should the EU support the use of science and engineering advice in policymaking?

It is hugely important we rely on stakeholders when making policy decisions, we need full cooperation from the research community to guide policymakers into making the right choices.