AGENDA for Session 1

• Introduction by moderator of Session I  PROF. Luke Georghiou - University of Manchester and Manchester Business School

• Discussion panel:
  • Arie van der Zwan, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation, Netherlands
  • Per-Eric Yngwe, Dep Director at the Ministry of Science, Sweden
  • Michael Keenan, senior analyst, Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry, OECD
  • Prof. Philippe Laredo, Université Paris-Est and University of Manchester

• General discussion
Context

• ERA priority - More effective national research systems – including increased competition within national borders and sustained or greater investment in research
  – Allocation of funding through competitive open calls for proposals with independent peer review
  – Assessing quality of research-performing organisations and teams and their outputs as a basis for institutional funding decisions
Increased competition is associated with higher performance levels but a complex relationship.
Characterising research systems

• Selectivity
  – Which fields to support and how much focus to give priorities

• Concentration
  – Which institutions or research teams to support and how concentrated should funding be on the best performers

• Sustainability
  – Are the basic resources of people, money, infrastructure and institutions renewing themselves
Benefits and Limitations of Competition

• **Benefits**
  – Incentivises researchers
  – Makes it harder to use hierarchy to get resources
  – Shorter timescales and higher granularity allows flexible application and simple accountability

• **Limitations**
  – High transaction costs
  – Institutional funding provides space for researchers to develop and institutions to be strategic
  – Can lead to hollowing out
Peer review

• Increasingly internationalised
• Can be used to ensure parity of quality
• Potential formative role
• Limitations
  – Conservatism especially in high competition
  – Interdisciplinarity
  – Grade inflation
  – Establishing track record
Institutional assessments

• Assessing the work of whole institutions or of major areas of research within them
  – May be with view to allocating block funding for research in a more concentrated (and hence competitive) manner

• Examples
  – UK Research Excellence Framework
  – German Excellence Initiative
  – Netherlands Standard Evaluation Protocol
Issues for discussion

• What is the optimum balance between competitive and block funding in a research system?

• What measures can be taken to improve national approaches to peer review?

• What is the most effective way to incentivise institutions to improve their research performance?