From Research Priorities to Funding

How can research policy priorities be translated into funding that supports scientific excellence and long-term research capacity?

Italian experience … Research Infrastructures and more

- Research infrastructures = facilities, labs, equipment and digital platforms
- Support excellent research and societal challenges
- Open to researchers across institutions and countries
- Example: CERN

1. How are priorities identified?

Research priorities should not emerge from isolated political decisions. They need to be, as much as possible, the result of a structured **planning** process based on scientific evidences, societal needs, economic challenges, and national and European strategic objectives.

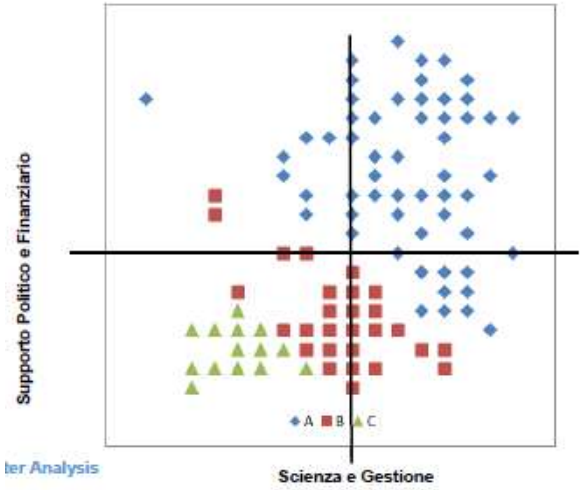
At the same time, priorities should **not be too numerous**. If everything is a priority, then nothing is truly a priority. Governments need to make clear choices and focus resources where they can generate the greatest scientific, social, and economic impact.

National Programme for Research Infrastructures (PNIR) 2016 and 2021

Broad consultation with universities and research organisations

Evidence-based approach: surveys, benchmarking, priority groups

Goal: transparent framework for investment decisions



1. How are priorities identified?

Benchmark criteria

Scientific Excellence
- Researcher Attractiveness
- Capacity Building
- European Competitiveness

Socio-economic Impact
- Technology Transfer
- Industry Partnerships
- Societal Impact

Future Perspectives
- Legal Status
- National / Regional Priority
- National & Regional Financial Sustainability

Access Policies
- Access Procedures
- Data Management Policy
- Researcher Attractiveness

International Relations
- International Partnerships
- European Competitiveness and relevance

Political Commitment & Financial Support
- Participating Countries
- National Commitment

Governance, Management & HR
- Governance Structure
- Formal Governing Bodies
- Legal Autonomy

Financial Sustainability
- EU Funding (HORIZON 2020 or ESIF)
- National or own additional Resources
- Regional Support

2. How priorities can be translated in funding opportunities?

Clear and predictable (*as much as possible*) funding programmes

- ❑ Stable strategic framework and resources despite changing contexts to maintain a strong commitment to scientific excellence
- ❑ Dedicated resources for priority areas

By combining national and EU resources, Italy can increase impact and ensure greater coherence between policy priorities and funding.

Funding model	
Ordinary: Long-term and predictable	Regular activities of RPOs and universities to maintain research excellence
	Key services, retain skilled personnel, and ensure continuous access for the scientific community
	Research activities, long-term planning and participation in international research initiatives
	Operating costs, personnel, scientific programmes,
Extra Ordinary: Targeted and strategic	New equipment
	Data management (open data, fairness, skills)
	Ad hoc Phd's, masters
	National and Transnational Access Programmes

3. How supports scientific excellence and long-term research capacity: IT case

Ordinary: Long-term and predictable	**€1.5 billion/year** for Public Research Organisations under MUR
	~€100 million/year invested in Research Infrastructures over the last 15 years
	Operations and maintenance, Personnel, Scientific programmes, International participation
Extra Ordinary: Targeted and strategic	**2018: PON Research & Innovation : €326 M** Upgrade infrastructures and strengthen scientific excellence (PNIR 2016)
	2022 PNRR 1,5 billions: Create and strengthen national RI networks and strenghetinf of RIs (PNIR 2021)
	2025: PN RIC 2021-2027: €179 M. Consolidate previous investments and boost innovation capacity

Common Features of the Three Calls

- ❑ Up to 100% of eligible costs funded
- ❑ Support for research equipment and facilities
- ❑ Support for human capital (researchers, technical staff, specialised personnel)
- ❑ Alignment with PNIR priorities and European strategies

The Italian Research and Innovation Ecosystem

Building the future through research, innovation and skills

