EASN Association Position Paper on the Expected FP9

The European Aeronautics Science Network Association represents a Europe-wide network of about 370 university members performing aeronautics related research. In the following EASN lays down its position towards the preparation of the new EU Research Framework Programme.

The development of innovation and breakthrough technologies represents an indispensable need in order to retain the global leadership and the competitiveness of European Aeronautics and pave the way on achieving the demanding goals of the FlightPath2050. Through Horizon 2020, the establishment of a series of tools and instruments at different Technological Readiness Levels (TRLs) to support the entire research and innovation chain in aeronautics research has been achieved. Yet, a more uniform distribution of these tools throughout the TRL range would enhance the benefits from Europe's excellence in research and would exploit any untapped research potential of European academia. Obviously, the production of new knowledge and innovation reflects also to the quality of education of young European engineers which is a basic element of Europe's competitiveness.

In this context, it is essential for all parties to work together to define the goals, develop the strategy, ensure the necessary infrastructures, and apply policies to facilitate, shape and increase the effectiveness of European Aviation research. EASN notices that at present, European Aviation research is focusing on achieving short and medium-term goals rather than on increasing the long-term competitiveness of the European aviation sector through scientific and technological leadership, which can only be achieved by developing breakthrough concepts and technologies and supporting new ideas. EASN acknowledges the support of Clean Sky to low TRL research activities and the launching of calls for Thematic Topics and encourages Clean Sky to proceed with the launch of further calls while increasing the respective budget.

By exploiting the experience accumulated through its participation to the implementation of three subsequent European Framework Programmes and after a fruitful Association internal

consultation with its members the EASN Association is keen to contribute to the discussion concerning the content and the tools of the expected FP9 with a number of positions:

- EASN underlines the need for an increased budget for aviation research in FP9 as compared to Horizon 2020 and for dedicating balanced funds for upstream bottom-up research and implement proper tools and mechanisms to enable collaborative research.

- EASN favors a unified frame for aeronautical research, covering all TRLs from breakthrough technologies up to demonstration including upstream bottom-up research. However, in such a unified frame, dedicated sufficient funds for upstream research need to be secured. This upstream research stream should be governed by an independent body, capable to meet decisions and release calls.

- Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) offer research opportunities also for universities because of their size and features. Based on past experience, EASN proposes to enable opportunities within FP9 for the development of dedicated open-access platform demonstrators of UAS with adaptable aircraft technologies. These demonstrators should become open test beds for boosting the innovation of all relevant technologies such as novel design concepts, materials, structures, aerodynamics, propulsion, systems, avionics. It should focus on fast implementation of the developed technologies in order to respond to the accelerated innovation cycles. This would also support the development of common, open standards while in parallel would help academia to start very early thinking about the real life of airborne environmental circumstances.

- EASN considers that dissemination of results and achievements is a pylon of research and innovation in Europe. EASN is ready to support the implementation of open dissemination and open science policies based on a code of conduct elaborated with the other aeronautics stakeholders.