



EASN Position Paper regarding the participation of Academia in the European Partnership Clean Aviation

EASN, the Association representing Academia in Aviation and Space, became established as one of the key contributors in the entire process of creating the European Partnership Clean Aviation (EPCA) since its beginning. EASN has been a signatory of the joint declaration committing to the creation of EPCA in Le Bourget in summer 2019 and is pro-actively contributing with enthusiasm, creativity, flexibility, collaborative spirit and reliability in the various Working Groups preparing EPCA. This includes its participation as Member of the Chairing Teams of the Working Groups which have elaborated, written and edited the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) of EPCA, the representation of Academia in the high level Preparation Group (CS3PG) reaching all significant decisions in the context of preparing EPCA, its participation in the group working on the prospective structure and governance of EPCA (WG 3), its participation in the group working on elaborating the working program for the SRIA implementation (WG4), etc.

Unfortunately, the current significant uncertainties on the commitments which are expected to be taken by Associations like EASN for participating as a Founding Member in PPPs in general and in EPCA in particular do not allow EASN to become a Founding Member in EPCA. Said uncertainties include the contribution to the administrative costs of the Partnerships, a definition of the acceptable forms of in-kind contribution, etc.

The BoD of EASN regrets the absence of EASN from the list of signatories of the recent Clean Aviation Memorandum of Commitment signed by the prospective Founding Members of EPCA despite of the significant support offered by the EASN representatives actively participating in the huge number of physical and virtual meetings in the various Working Groups necessary for advancing EPCA to its status of today and the countless working hours spent by the EASN Association for the preparation of these meetings. Said uncertainties, in addition to the lack of a dedicated policy with regard to the participation of Academia in EPCA and the absence so far of any effort to elaborate such a policy, are the reasons for the disappointing low participation of Universities as prospective Founding Members in EPCA.

In this context EASN is welcoming the European Commission's legislative proposal (SBA) on Public Private Partnerships that foresees a seat for Academia in the respective Governing Board. EASN declares its readiness to undertake this responsibility for the entire duration of EPCA as through the intensive involvement of its Members in CS and CS2 and, in the recent years, in all preparation activities of EPCA it has accumulated significant experience and built up a solid competence, a "legacy" which is unique for Academia in the aviation sector. EASN is confident that, based on this legacy, it will be able to cope with the complexity of the Governing task at hand and to respond to the demanding role as Academia representative in the Governing Board of EPCA. This will be achieved by exploiting its membership structure and the related skills, as well as by implementing mechanisms which will ensure an undisturbed expression and efficient representation of the interests of the European academic stakeholders in the Governing Board.

EASN is inviting the Commission, the JU and the representatives of the other Stakeholders to a dialogue for urgently elaborating such policy and clarifying the commitments into which Academia is expected to enter when participating as a Member in EPCA. EASN would like to underline that without a dedicated Academia friendly policy, facing the curiosity that public entities like the European universities are forced to be part of the private party for participating in PPPs, the Academia participation in EPCA will be marginal and the indispensable contribution of Academia for achieving the challenging targets of EPCA will be absent. EASN declares its commitment to work in a collaborative and constructive spirit for clarifying the above and is ready to mobilize its members for ensuring an appropriate participation of Universities in EPCA as Founding or Associate Members as well as on realizing the SRIA and achieving its objectives.