

## FET Flagships: lessons learnt

The European Commission and the two flagships, the Graphene Flagship & the Human Brain Project, have a glimpse in the rear-view mirror and draw the lessons collectively learnt.



EC-GrapheneFlagship-HBP

The fourth annual summit of the Human Brain Project took place in Florence from 12 to 15 October 2016, where more than 400 researchers shared their enthusiasm for the latest neuro-scientific advances and for the HBP ICT platforms that are inspiring brain research in Europe. A similar vibrant event was organized by the GRAPHENE Flagship last June.

These events mark the end of the ramp-up phase of the two Flagships and the beginning of their new phase, funded under Horizon 2020.

The major scientific and technology advances of the two Flagships in their first 3 years of work were described last September (see Commission blogpost, and the ramp-up achievements of the GRAPHENE Flagship and the HBP). Today, time has come to share the lessons learnt when implementing the Flagships.

The Flagships create amazing collaboration opportunities across the participating organisations and beyond; they trigger strategic discussions both with large scientific communities and with industry on new technology development and innovation opportunities for Europe; they help recruiting, educating, and developing research talents in Europe by mobilising dozens of enthusiastic young researchers, and they create and spread an innovation mind-set in Europe by implementing ambitious innovation management practices.

*" We promote innovation inside and outside the Flagship consortium by organising industrial workshops, by participating in activities such as the Mobile World Congress which attracts over 100,000 decision makers from European industries and through specific actions such as standardisation and road-mapping. The number of industrial*

*partners who joined us in the Flagship has more than tripled since 2013."* - Jari Kinaret, the Director of the GRAPHENE Flagship

Being major actors in their respective S&T domain, the Flagships unlock the door for international collaboration. Such collaboration is essential to establish young and quickly evolving research.

*"Collaboration on a global scale is key for future activities of HBP. Therefore, the HBP has created an INCO-team, which coordinates and shapes the collaborations of HBP with other global brain initiatives."* - Katrin Amunts, the HBP Scientific Director

Indeed, Flagships need the right governance structure, an inspiring scientific leadership approach and a professional management led by an experienced coordinator. A balanced system of separation of powers between scientific steering, strategic and financial decision-making and the day-to-day management is a must to establish from the outset.

As underlined by Thomas Skordas, acting Director of the Digital Excellence and Science Infrastructure Directorate in DG Connect, a solid collaboration is key:

*"An open and trusted collaboration between the Flagships and the European Commission has allowed us to identify challenges and to find adequate solutions together to ensure a smooth implementation of the Flagships."*

Finally, good progress has been made in building up the Member States' support and contribution to the Flagships, in particular through the FLAG-ERA trans-national funding network. Consolidating and extending this support is one of our priorities for the coming years.

Over the last 3 years, the Flagships have proven their value for European research and innovation.  
**Read our more detailed analysis of lessons learned (pdf).**

**Jari Kinaret**, Director, GRAPHENE Flagship

**Katrin Amunts**, Scientific Director, and **Christoph Ebell**, Executive Director, HBP Flagship

**Thomas Skordas**, Acting Director "Digital Excellence and Scientific Infrastructure", European Commission

## **Background documents**

- The Human Brain Project and the Graphene Flagships are moving ahead to the next stage of their 10-Year Voyage (Sep 2016)
- Reporting on HBP Open day & Summit 2016 & Overview previous HBP summits
- Video reporting on Graphene Week 2016 & Graphene Week overview 2016 & Overview previous Graphene Weeks
- Reporting on Graphene Flagship at the Mobile World Congress 2016
- Graphene Flagship Industrial Workshops

## Downloads

FET Flagships detailed analysis of lessons learned - Oct2016  
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