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By Ben Upton in Budapest

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The next EU R&D programme could allocate up to 3 per cent of its total budget to help grantees share their data, a senior European Commission official has said.

The head of the Commission's open science unit, Kostas Glinos, said that spending €3 billion out of a proposed €94.1bn programme budget would be justified in terms of the return on investment.

"What one has to think about is not how much this costs, but how much added value it generates," Glinos told Research Professional News at the World Science Forum in Budapest on 21 November.

Making data fully accessible is "expensive" and can absorb between 1 and 5 per cent of project costs, depending on the nature of the work, he said.

Data sharing will be "one of the biggest challenges" in making Horizon Europe open, while doing the same for past projects is "really challenging" Glinos said. "We need to start at some point though," he said.

In the latter part of the present programme, Horizon 2020, a pilot scheme has encouraged researchers to share the data behind publications from a project, with the option to opt out with good reason.

Setting aside a slice of all grants for data sharing is just one idea the Commission is considering as it fleshes out how Horizon Europe will further open science.

Another idea on the table is "mainstreaming" public involvement in research. All applicants could be asked how they will involve citizens in planning and carrying out research, Glinos said.

"It should become a reflex of the researchers: what opportunities does this area give me for engaging with society?" he said. But he added: "We're not going to force anybody to involve citizens."

The programme could also include more detailed follow-up of projects. The Commission mainly checks up on Horizon 2020 grantees to see if they have published open access. "I could anticipate that we'll be looking at additional dimensions," Glinos said.

Open science is just one aspect of Horizon Europe the Commission must finalise before the programme's first funding calls open in late 2020.

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