



## Joint Minutes

16<sup>th</sup> European Union–Australia

Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee Meeting

11 April 2024, Brussels

The **16<sup>th</sup> EU-Australia Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee meeting** was hosted by the European Union, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation in Brussels on 11 April 2024. The meeting was co-chaired by Maria Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation in the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (EU), and by Dr Carolyn Patteson, Head of the International Trade & National Security Division in the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (Australian Government). The meeting saw the active participation of key EU and Australian directorate-generals, departments, agencies and services, together with several representatives from the EU Member States joining as observers.

The JSTCC meeting provided an opportunity for both sides to highlight shared values, concerns and interests in research and innovation cooperation.

The EU and Australia have a long history of productive research collaboration underpinned by the 1994 **Agreement on Science and Technology Cooperation**, the first treaty-level science and technology agreement signed by the EU with an industrialised country. 2024 marks **30 years of research and innovation collaboration** under this agreement, and it has fostered an environment of innovation and knowledge exchange, thereby helping advance scientific knowledge and the tackling of global challenges.

The JSTCC meeting resulted in a substantial exchange on current research and innovation cooperation covering a wide range of priority areas including energy transition, agriculture, raw materials value chains, earth observation, health, research infrastructures, researchers' training and mobility and capacity building for the Indo-Pacific region.

Both sides agreed to strengthen collaboration on these areas as well as in research security and measures to protect critical technology and to counter foreign interference in research and innovation. They noted that, in the current geopolitical and technological context, the EU and Australia's interests respectively, are better served by a rule-based international order, based on shared values and principles. Both sides also recognised the value of and confirmed their



engagement in the [Multilateral Dialogue on Principles and Values for Research and Innovation](#).

Australia's Chief Scientist, Dr Cathy Foley, also gave an address on Australia's strengths as an international research collaboration partner, particularly in quantum.

#### *Bilateral thematic cooperation*

Both the EU and Australia noted progress from the 2019 Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee meeting resulting in a very good exchange on current and future research and innovation cooperation.

The two parties discussed the importance of collaborating in **energy transition**, and recognised the key role played by Mission Innovation, in which both the EU and Australia are actively involved. The EU thanked Australia for its commitment to Mission Innovation, in particular as a Co-lead of the Clean Hydrogen Mission, and highlighted the opportunity for more Australian cities to join the Urban Transitions Mission City Cohort. The EU also invited Australia to join the Horizon Europe Clean Energy Transition and Driving Urban Transitions co-funded Partnerships.

Both parties agreed on the importance of further knowledge exchange and closer EU-Australia cooperation to foster innovation in **agriculture**, including through digital and data technologies. The EU recognised Australian research and innovation initiatives to improve soil health across different land uses and provided an update on the state of play, achievements and roadmap for the future of the EU Mission "A Soil Deal for Europe".

The meeting confirmed a mutual understanding of the need for cooperation on research and innovation along the **raw materials value chains**, contributing to minerals knowledge and the minimisation of the environmental and climate footprint.

Both sides, underlined the important role of cooperation on **Earth observation**, under the Copernicus Cooperation Arrangement. The EU welcomed the Australian participation in the space related calls of Horizon Europe open for international participation. Both sides look forward to broadening the discussions on space collaboration in the inaugural EU-AUS space dialogue planned for the first half of 2025.

The EU and Australia acknowledged the excellent cooperation in the area of **health** research. Both sides welcomed the positive collaboration supported by the co-funding mechanism of the National Health and Medical Research Council



(NHMRC) for topics supported through the Horizon Europe Health Cluster. The EU outlined possible future opportunities for collaboration with Australia through upcoming health research Partnerships. Given the excellent results from the NHMRC co-funding mechanism, the EU also suggested Australia's funding agencies explore possibilities to extend this type of co-funding mechanism to other research areas under Horizon Europe.

Respective approaches to supporting quantum research and innovation were presented and discussed. Both the EU and Australia have a range of initiatives underway to capitalise on this emerging technology. Australia mentioned the importance Australian industry and researchers place on working with counterparts in Europe.

When exchanging on **research infrastructures**, the EU welcomed Australia's organisation of the upcoming International Conference on Research Infrastructures (ICRI) in Brisbane, on 3-5 December 2024. The EU also welcomed Australia's commitment to host other international meetings in the sidelines of ICRI in Brisbane, including the meeting of the G7's Group of Senior Officials on research infrastructures ('the GSO').

Both parties noted the EU-Australia collaboration under **Horizon Europe**. In particular, the EU welcomed the positive Australian participation in the **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions** (MSCA) and highlighted ways to further increase this participation, including by further promoting the opportunities of the programme to Australian organisations and researchers.

The EU and Australia reflected on their shared commitment to promote a secure, stable, and prosperous **Indo-Pacific**. Both parties recognise that research and innovation cooperation is key in addressing the complex challenges facing the Global South.

The EU and Australia agreed to explore future opportunities to strengthen their science, technology and innovation collaboration, and agreed that the next Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee meeting will take place in Australia in 2026.



## Annex – List of participants

European Union delegation	Australian delegation
<b>Ms Maria Cristina Russo</b> – Director, International Cooperation, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD)	<b>Dr Carolyn Patteson</b> – Head of Division, International Trade & National Security, Department of Industry, Science and Resources
<b>Ms Paola Pampaloni</b> – Deputy Managing Director, European External Action Service, Asia and Pacific (EEAS)	<b>H.E. Caroline Millar</b> , Australian Ambassador to the European Union, NATO, Belgium and Luxembourg
<b>Dr Martin Penny</b> – Head of Unit, International Cooperation Policy, European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD)	<b>Dr Cathy Foley</b> – Australia’s Chief Scientist
<b>Ms Nienke Buisman</b> – Head of Unit, International Cooperation Policy, European Commission – Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD)	<b>Ms Peta Olesen</b> – Director, Net Zero Innovation, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
<b>Mr Marco Grancagnolo</b> – Policy Coordinator, Global Approach to Research and Innovation, European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD)	<b>Ms Kristi Stinson</b> – Director, Soil Policy Section, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
<b>Dr Mirele Plenishti</b> – Policy Officer, European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD)	<b>Mr Ben Macdonald</b> – Leader, Soil Process and Function Group, CSIRO
<b>Mr Philippe Froissard</b> – Head of Unit, Clean Energy Transition, European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD)	<b>Ms Angela Dinos</b> – A/g General Manager, Critical Minerals Office, Department of Industry, Science and Resources
<b>Mr Francesco Iadecola</b> – Research Programme Officer, European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI)	<b>Ms Nicola Powell</b> – Director, Quantum, Department of Industry, Science and Resources
<b>Mr Luis Sanchez Alvarez</b> – Head of Sector, Research Programme Officer, European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI)	<b>Ms Maree Wilson</b> – Branch Head, Digital Earth, Geoscience Australia
<b>Ms Helena Maria Cavaco Viegas</b> – Policy Assistant, Raw Materials, European Commission, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW)	<b>Mr Chris Jennaway</b> – A/g Executive Director Research Partnerships Branch, National Health and Medical Research Council



<b>Mr Pascal Maillot</b> – Deputy Head of Unit, High Performance Computing and Quantum Technology, European Commission, Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CNECT)	<b>Dr Alex Cooke</b> – Director Strategic Delivery, CSIRO
<b>Dr Astrid-Christina Koch</b> – Senior Expert, International Relations, European Commission, Directorate-General for Defence Industry and Space (DG DEFIS)	<b>Ms Jessica Brosnan</b> – Director, National Research Infrastructure Programs, Department of Education
<b>Ms Rosanna D’Amario</b> – Senior Expert, Strategy for International Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation, European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD)	<b>Ms Stephanie Julienne</b> – Manager, South East Asia, Japan, Oceania, Europe and Latin America Section, Department of Industry, Science and Resources
<b>Ms Patricia Postigo</b> – Policy Officer, Research Infrastructures Policy, European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD)	<b>Ms Laura Aoun</b> – Assistant Manager, South East Asia, Japan, Oceania, Europe and Latin America Section, Department of Industry, Science and Resources
<b>Ms Anouk Lafortune</b> – Policy Officer, MSCA, European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC)	<b>Ms Sarah Brown</b> – Counsellor (Europe) – Industry, Science and Resources
	<b>Ms Hillary Halim</b> – Manager, International and Trade Branch, Department of Industry, Science and Resources