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How self-governed are the planning processes in the institutes of different scientific societies?

Speaking for the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft the processes of R&D planning and the possibilities of the successive performing of research are quite autonomous and self-governed. There are two major influences on the strategy finding process: the public R&D programmes which Fraunhofer has to follow and the short and medium term demand of industry. Both are drivers for Fraunhofer's orientation. Fraunhofer is as well able to create new R&D topics ("markets for the day after tomorrow") and to finance them with their own institutional funding (technology push), even this amount is limited.

How strong is the influence of the BMBF and its foresight processes?

Fraunhofer cannot wait for these processes and their results because they are often lacking in time and are somehow only reflecting actual debates of the scientific communities. Fraunhofer has to develop more sensitive instruments and internal processes in order to detect very early new signals and new markets. The foresight processes of the BMBF are mainly confirming the strategic topics of the research organizations. The output of the BMBF processes are well aggregated on a very broad level but are not useful to influence the strategy of the institution apart from the fact that the future public project funding will be following these results (see answer above).

How successful is the development of strategies? What is the input on the operational/institutional level?

The definition of medium term R&D topics (if this is meant with "strategy") for an R&D institution is necessary in order to:

- analyze one's own potential in relation to the state of the art and to competitors
- to make a resource planning and a professional road map planning
- to communicate internally on the aim of the institute
- to cooperate with other partners to build critical masses

Fraunhofer has implemented strategies on the institute's and the corporate level, both refer to each other. The institutes use standardized processes to develop their strategy.