

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

6 November 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

I write to you as I understand that a decision over Horizon Europe association is imminent. I wish to emphasise the opportunity that you have to send a clear signal of the UK's intention to become a responsible and visionary global science superpower, and to place us on a path to a new future, building back better, stronger and greener, for the benefit of everyone.

Full association to Horizon Europe with the maximum possible engagement and influence, as part of a strong R&D settlement, will send a signal to our partners and investors that, even in these challenging times, the UK is unwavering in its commitment to the global knowledge economy, and realising the benefits of this for our economy and for society.

Without commitment now, we risk eroding the sensitive ecosystem of people, infrastructure, and ideas that spans borders and enables the UK to punch well above its weight. The loss of these productive international scientific collaborations will take many years to rebuild. Confidence is needed now to ensure that the talented individuals and expert collaborations that we need to drive innovation, rebuild the economy, and tackle shared global challenges, continue to thrive when we need them most. Critically, this will help avert major disruption to our science capability in the coming months as we respond to COVID-19.

I recognise that you face considerable challenges in your decisions, and that you must weigh up short-term pressures against long-term benefits. I make the case that I have consistently made, that to meet our current needs and ambitions, and to build resilience for the future, we must safeguard our most important expert collaborations now, and ensure a robust and sustained recovery through a strong research and innovation settlement.

Yours sincerely



Venki Ramakrishnan PRS
President, The Royal Society
president@royalsociety.org



President Sir Venki Ramakrishnan
Executive Director Dr Julie Maxton

Founded in 1660, the Royal Society is the independent scientific academy of the UK, dedicated to promoting excellence in science.

Registered Charity No 207043

Copied to:

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer, HM Treasury

Amanda Solloway MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Science, Research and Innovation)

Dominic Cummings, Special Adviser to the Prime Minister

David Frost, Chief Negotiator, Cabinet Office

Charles Roxburgh, Second Permanent Secretary, HM Treasury

Philip Duffy, Director-General, Growth and Productivity, HM Treasury