

# R&D Sector urges rapid progress on UK association to EU programmes

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Following the agreement in principle reached by the UK and EU regarding the Windsor Framework, representatives of the UK, Irish and wider European research, innovation and business communities have signed a joint statement urging rapid progress on UK association to EU programmes, including Horizon Europe, Copernicus and Euratom.

## **Joint statement: R&D Sector urges rapid progress on UK association to EU programmes**

*As representatives of the UK, Irish and wider European research, innovation and business communities, we were heartened to hear the EU Commission President's emphatic support for UK association to Horizon Europe. Both sides must now put renewed efforts into constructive dialogue to get association swiftly over the line, finally ending the damaging impasse that has lasted over two years.*

*Securing the UK's place in EU programmes is crucial for shoring up the future of world-leading research, sustainable growth and high-level skills. Failure to do so now will be a second-best outcome for both the UK and the EU, undermining our collective efforts to tackle the big challenges of our time.*

*We are unequivocal that full UK membership of EU programmes, including Horizon Europe, Copernicus and Euratom, remains the best outcome for research and innovation. This has been the UK's clearly stated position for a long time, and it is critical that the Government does not lose sight of the prize now that it is in reach. Now this important milestone has been reached, the EU must engage fully in technical discussions to ensure association can happen as soon as possible.*

*Delays to association have been mitigated in the short-term by the UKRI Horizon Europe Guarantee, and UK-based researchers continue to be successful at winning EU funding. The Guarantee and other measures have kept the window for association open while talks continue.*

*As we look to the future, the UK, the EU and communities worldwide face the same big challenges, from climate change, cancer and mental illness. By securing ongoing research collaboration through Horizon Europe, the UK Government and the European Commission will stack the odds in our collective favour for meeting these challenges. We urge that political will and commitment endures and look forward to seeing UK association become a reality.*

## **Signatories**

- Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC)
- British Heart Foundation (BHF)
- British Irish Chamber of Commerce (BICC)
- Campaign for Science and Engineering (CaSE)
- Cancer Research UK (CRUK)
- Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
- The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities
- The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR)
- Institute of Physics (IOP)
- League of European Research Universities (LERU)
- LifeArc
- Royal Society of Biology (RSB)
- Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC)
- Russell Group
- UK Dementia Research Institute (UKDRI)
- University Alliance

- Universities UK International (UUKi)
- Wellcome

Commenting, Dr Tim Bradshaw, Chief Executive of the Russell Group, said: "The deal between the UK and EU on Northern Ireland removes the major barrier to UK participation in EU programmes, including Horizon Europe, Copernicus and Euratom. Now is the time for politicians on both sides to take decisive action to get association over the line, ending two years of damaging uncertainty and unlocking enormous benefits to scientists and researchers on both sides of the channel.

"Even after a delayed start, full participation in EU programmes, which can sit alongside important new schemes for global research partnerships, remains the best outcome for UK research and innovation. As well as making our science superpower ambitions more tangible, being in these programmes is a big win for individuals, businesses and the public more widely who will benefit from research that leads to medical breakthroughs, new technologies and other advances in knowledge. It would be a win-win for the UK and EU at a time when cooperation with our partners in Europe and beyond is more vital than ever to tackle shared global challenges like energy security and net zero."