

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
(via email: privateoffice@no10.x.gsi.gov.uk)

11 May 2022

Dear Prime Minister,

I was delighted when you declared your ambition for the UK to become a science superpower, underlining that ambition with significant long-term investment. The Russell Group wants to work with the Government to deliver on this goal.

To do so, the UK must be a global player, able to collaborate on research and innovation with the best minds across the world; we believe association to Horizon Europe is an integral part of that.

Association would do more than underline our status as a science superpower that others want to work with - it would bring clear benefits to the UK. Under its previous iteration the UK won 1,500 prestigious European Research Council (ERC) grants, more than 2,000 individual businesses participated and, overall, the programme facilitated over 31,000 collaborative research links between the UK and countries around the world. Indeed, Russell Group universities alone won over 1,400 ERC grants worth €1.8bn, more than the whole of France.

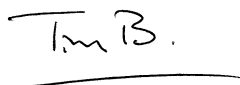
However, the UK's association has not been formalised, preventing us from fully participating in what is considered to be the *Champions League* for research, and collaborating with our most trusted allies, which is particularly important given current concerns over the influence of hostile state actors. Failure to associate would also hinder our ability to recruit and retain some of the best talent, expertise and investment.

In recent months, we have seen first-hand how international partnership and collaboration are critical to succeed in the face of environmental, health and geopolitical challenges. The UK is at its most successful when working alongside our partners on the global stage. More importantly, our allies and partners in Europe – and across the world – have seen how effective the UK's leadership has been, leading the way at COP26, on the response to Covid and in our unwavering support for the people of Ukraine.

The UK is now at a crucial point for association. I would therefore urge you to make a personal intervention to break the deadlock, get the deal over the line on behalf of the research community, and unlock the enormous benefits to the UK that Horizon Europe will bring.

We stand ready to support you in this endeavour in any way we can.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Tim Bradshaw
Chief Executive, Russell Group

The Russell Group of Universities
One Great George Street
London SW1P 3AA
T +44 (0)20 3816 1300
russellgroup.ac.uk

RUSSELL

University of Birmingham
University of Bristol
University of Cambridge
Cardiff University
Durham University
University of Edinburgh
University of Exeter
University of Glasgow
Imperial College London
King's College London
University of Leeds
University of Liverpool
London School of Economics
and Political Science
University of Manchester
Newcastle University
University of Nottingham
University of Oxford
Queen Mary University of London
Queen's University Belfast
University of Sheffield
University of Southampton
University College London
University of Warwick
University of York

GROUP