



Leopoldina
Nationale Akademie
der Wissenschaften



INSTITUT DE FRANCE
Académie des sciences

THE
**ROYAL
SOCIETY**

Paris, March 2, 2015

Dear President Juncker,

We are writing to express our views about European Union research policy given your recent announcements on scientific advice and the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI).

We understand that you have asked Commissioner Moedas to propose options on how best to embed independent scientific advice across EU policy making processes, based on experience across the Member States. We welcome the opportunity to feed into this debate.

The EU has strongly supported high quality research and has recognised the role that research can play in delivering long term, sustainable economic growth. The European Research Council reflects this commitment, and we consider it to be a real success, based on strong and high quality peer-review and scientific evaluation. We are therefore concerned about plans to divert significant funding from the Horizon 2020 budget to the proposed EFSI. A variety of European Academies and networks, including the European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC) of which we are all members, has written to you advising you not to use Horizon 2020 funding, including European Research Council funding, as part of the EFSI. We once again urge you to reconsider your position on this.

The Research Framework programmes are a valuable opportunity to develop scientific cooperation and networking throughout Europe. However, the quantity of paperwork needed to apply for and to run the programmes once an application is successful discourages many first-class research groups from applying. The establishment of Horizon 2020 has resulted in improvements; however limits concerning the number of partners and a reduction in the amount of paperwork involved could ensure that Europe attracts scientists of the highest quality and variety to its universities and research institutions. To stress, simplicity and effectiveness should be the driving forces for this crucial and flagship European programme. With robust and consistent financial support for EU science, these programmes can make a real difference.

The European Union has been a success for science and we are willing to help in any way we can to ensure that this success continues.

Yours sincerely

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