

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP  
The Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London  
SW1A 2AA

From the President Venki Ramakrishnan

18 July 2018

Dear Prime Minister,

I wanted to write to you in response to the White Paper on the future relationship between the UK and the EU, published last week. We welcome the Government's desire, outlined in the paper, to deliver an 'unparalleled partnership' on cross-cutting issues such as science and innovation.

Such a partnership is clearly in the interests of the UK and the EU. Research is international, as ideas flow freely around the world. Our engagement with the EU has made global science better and that helps us tackle problems that are universal.

Domestically, if we want to drive an innovation based economy, the UK cannot afford to lose the one in six of our highly skilled researchers that are from the EU. It was reassuring to see the white paper highlight our need to continue to attract the brightest and the best to enhance the UK's attractiveness for research, development and innovation. We also welcome the recognition of the importance of the need for researchers to be able to travel easily for short term collaborations or conferences.

We will look forward to the upcoming white paper on immigration in which we hope to see the creation of the lowest possible barriers to practising scientists seeking to move across borders. We hope that, for example, any publicly funded researcher or a researcher offered a long-term post in a UK university or research institute, should automatically be guaranteed entry for themselves and for their families; that they can also bring team members with them; that costs are fair, paperwork minimal and responses are timely. We also want to see the Government have regulations to ensure that UK researchers can easily travel and work overseas in support of their work.

We also cannot afford to lose access to the £1 billion a year in EU funding designed to support international scientific cooperation and the similar figure in funding that the EU grants leverage. Funding can be replaced but the EU Framework Programmes offer an opportunity for collaborative science that is unrivalled in scale and impact.

Alone the UK could not replicate the large pool of expertise to identify the very best science, match the scale of ambition or recreate the international influence that acts as a magnet for talent and innovation. Many areas of research have benefitted from the Programmes including work on graphene in Manchester and quantum computing in Bristol.



President Sir Venki Ramakrishnan  
Executive Director Dr Julie Maxton

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On regulation it is also essential, for example, that we align with the EU to keep the UK involved in the pan-European clinical trials that help provide NHS patients with access to cutting edge treatments.

I know you understand the importance of all of these issues and have been a steadfast supporter of the importance of a good deal for science as we leave the EU. I urge you to carry this through to the final negotiations and ensure that science is not sacrificed under any circumstances.

I continue to offer my support in any way I can help you to deliver this vitally important goal.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "V. Ramakrishnan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot above the letter 'i' in "Ramakrishnan".

Venki Ramakrishnan

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CC The Rt Hon Dominic Raab MP, Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, Secretary of State for the Home Department, The Rt Hon Greg Clarke MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Sam Gyimah MP, Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation and Sir Paul Nurse, Former President of the Royal Society and Member of Royal Society EU Contact Group.