

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
House of Commons, London
SW1A 0AA

From the President Venki Ramakrishnan

16 July 2019

Dear Mr Johnson,

A no-deal Brexit would be bad for UK science. It would discourage recruitment of international talent, shut us out of valuable scientific collaborations, and restrict access to new medicines and technologies that benefit everyone living in the UK. UK science thrives on the ideas, knowledge and creativity of talented people. One in six academic staff in UK Higher Education Institutions are from other EU countries and they can easily choose to build their careers elsewhere. A no-deal Brexit will make the UK much less attractive.

Science is increasingly an internationally collaborative endeavour and the UK's collaboration rates are increasing fastest with our European neighbours. New research commissioned by the Royal Society shows that more than a third of UK research papers are co-authored with the EU and countries associated to the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, compared for example with 17.6% co-authored with the USA.

Loss of support for UK researchers and SMEs would have an immediate impact on research and innovation already underway in the UK. It will take years to develop alternatives and stop valuable research in its tracks. A no-deal Brexit would also restrict the UK's access to new medicines and technologies and our ability to tackle global problems, as regulatory and governance systems fall apart.

It appears that little consideration is being given to the actual, real world, impacts of a no-deal Brexit on research and innovation. In the interests of a long term vision for a prosperous, outward facing future for the UK, it is time to rule out this eventuality for good. For Britain to thrive, we need science to thrive.

Yours sincerely,



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President

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