



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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# **RSE Advises on Implications and Opportunities for UK Science after the EU Referendum**

In light of the recent vote to leave the European Union (EU), the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) has submitted an [advice paper](#) on the Implications and Opportunities for UK Science in response to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee's call for evidence.

The RSE has also joined the UK's national academies (the Academy of Medical Sciences, the British Academy, the Royal Academy of Engineering, the Royal Society, the Learned Society of Wales and the Royal Irish Academy) to [publish a statement](#) exploring the impact of leaving the EU on UK science.

In addition, Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell, President of the RSE has participated in an [evidence session](#) with the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee yesterday. At this she expanded on the areas highlighted by the RSE's advice paper.

Through all of the above activities the RSE has made it clear that it strongly believes that the UK Government should now take measures to ensure that the UK's leading position in science and research is maintained. The exceptional scientific community based in the UK is central to Britain's economic, social and cultural standing. The large number of outstanding, international scientists working here are a huge benefit to this community. The RSE asks the Government to give a clear message to reassure international researchers and students that they are welcome to continue to work and study in the UK, and will continue to be so in the future.

Dame Jocelyn said at the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee meeting, "As President of the RSE, I have written to 30 national academies around the world to let them know that we want to work with them and as far as we're concerned, we would like to continue our business as usual."

The RSE's submission to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee highlights a number of factors that the UK's future relationship with the EU will affect; among these are collaboration, free movement of researchers and students, and funding.

On collaboration, the paper notes that the free movement of scientists among EU states has enabled many highly productive research collaborations and that nearly 50% of the UK's scientific publications have non-UK authors. This not only illustrates the value of collaboration to the UK; it also highlights that restrictions on collaboration would have a detrimental effect on the UK's position as a world leader in research. The RSE recommends that mechanisms should be put in place to encourage continued partnership working within the wider science community.

The paper recognises that mobility is of huge importance to collaboration and states that the UK's ability to attract international scientists to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) acts to significantly strengthen them. The RSE also believes that the diversity in UK HEIs serves to improve the holistic experience for those working and studying in them. This benefit, the RSE says, should not be ignored.

On funding, the paper stresses that the UK is a net beneficiary from EU research funding and has been very successful in securing competitive funding from the EU Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation. These programmes have helped provide for a long-term, transparent and consistent research funding landscape. Should the UK gain the status of an 'Associated Country', this would allow us to apply for Framework Funding. It would require the UK to contribute financially to the Framework Budget. If existing precedents apply, the UK would also have to agree to free movement of people but would not be able influence the Programme. UK influence on this aspect has historically been beneficial to both UK science and EU science.

It is essential that the UK's withdrawal from the EU should not lead to a decline in overall public funding on UK science. To ensure continued engagement with the EU on science and research, the RSE believes that the UK will be obliged to continue to comply with relevant EU legislation.

ENDS.

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#### Notes to Editors

The Royal Society of Edinburgh is a leading educational charity which operates on an independent and non-party-political basis to provide public benefit throughout Scotland. Established by Royal Charter in 1783 by several key proponents of the Scottish Enlightenment, the RSE now has over 1600 Fellows from a wide range of disciplines. The work of the RSE includes awarding research funding, leading on major inquiries, informing public policy and delivering events to inspire knowledge and learning. For more information, visit [www.royalsoced.org.uk/](http://www.royalsoced.org.uk/).