



Department for
Science, Innovation
& Technology

Rt Hon Michelle Donelan
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Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair, Public Accounts
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6 September 2023

Dear Dame Meg,

I know you have followed closely developments on the UK's association to EU Programmes. I am pleased to write to notify you that today the UK and EU have agreed new terms for UK association to Horizon Europe and Copernicus. This will be announced publicly tomorrow, Thursday 7 September.

From today, UK scientists can bid and participate confidently in the world's largest programme of research cooperation – alongside their EU, Norwegian, New Zealand and Israeli colleagues – and with countries like Korea and Canada looking to join.

UK academics and industry will be able to bid, secure funding for, and, crucially, lead, the vast majority of new calls that will be opening throughout the autumn. UK researchers and businesses can be certain that all successful UK applicants will be covered through the UK's association for the rest of the programme (or through the remainder of the UK's Horizon Europe Guarantee scheme as we transition to these new arrangements). All calls in Work Programme 2024 will be covered by association and the UK guarantee scheme will be extended to cover all calls under Work Programme 2023. UK scientists and researchers can lead project consortia under Work Programme 2024 – a key ask of the sector - allowing them to shape the next generation of international collaboration.

Under the previous programme the UK established over 200,000 collaborative links, and we will now play a leading role in a range of ground-breaking industry collaborations such as the AI, Data and Robotics Partnership worth over £2 billion, or the Cancer Mission aiming to help more than 3 million people by 2030.

Access to Horizon Europe was a top ask of our research community. We have listened to our sector and in this deal delivered collaboration where it is most valuable to UK science. This provides our scientists with a stable base for

international collaboration and makes sure we are on track to deliver on the ambition to make the UK a science and technology superpower by 2030.

The Government has negotiated a bespoke deal in the UK's national interest. It strengthens UK science, boosts economic growth and delivers for the UK taxpayer. This bespoke deal works for the UK by ensuring that we do not pay for the time we were not associated. It also delivers a new mechanism protecting our taxpayers in case the UK ends up putting significantly more into the pot than our scientists get out. This deal also means that the UK has a –greater ability to overperform than other associated countries outside the EU/EEA reflecting our confidence in UK science.

We will also associate to the Copernicus programme, a state-of-the art capacity to monitor the Earth, and to its services. The UK's association to Copernicus comes at a crucial moment, where the Copernicus space infrastructure and its information services will evolve further and our contribution to understanding and acting on environmental and climate change related challenges is more important than ever. Access to this unique Earth observation data will provide early warning of floods and fires, and allow the UK's world leading sector to bid for contracts worth over hundreds of millions. And the UK will have cost-free access to the EU Space Surveillance and Tracking services, providing important information about objects in space.

The UK will not join the Euratom programme. The UK fusion sector has communicated a preference for an alternatives programme that would involve direct investment in the UK sector. We are pleased to announce that we will be doing exactly that. We plan to invest up to £650 million to 2027 in a programme of new, cutting-edge alternative programmes subject to business cases, and will announce further details shortly.

I am copying this letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Foreign Secretary, and the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero.

I have also written to the Chairs of the Science, Innovation and Technology Committee, the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee, the European Scrutiny Committee, the House of Lords European Affairs Committee, the Treasury Committee, and the Energy Security and Net Zero Committee, given their interest in this issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Michelle Donelan". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Rt Hon Michelle Donelan MP
Secretary of State Science, Innovation and Technology