

European Scrutiny Committee

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

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From: Sir William Cash MP

12 May 2021

Amanda Solloway MP

Minister for Science, Research and Innovation

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

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Regulation establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (Council document 9865/18) (39882)

We considered your letter of 4 March 2021 on Horizon Europe at our meeting of 12 May 2021.

We were pleased to see that the UK and EU agreed that the UK should be able to associate to the EU's Horizon Europe research programme over the period 2021-27.

There are several outstanding questions about the UK's association concerning which we would welcome your comments.

First, we estimate the likely gross UK contribution over the seven year period to be in the region of £12.7 billion, although this is necessarily speculative given the potential for adjustments both upwards and downwards according to actual spending, UK receipts and the various safeguards built into the UK/EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), and also given the potential for exchange rate variation. It would nevertheless be helpful if you could set out the Government's broad expectations as to the cost.

Second, there was some concern among the research community — expressed in a letter from Universities UK to the Prime Minister on 16 March 2021 — that the UK's association to Horizon Europe would be funded from existing domestic research budgets. We note that, since then, some additional funding has been put in place, but the new funding does not appear to equate to the

likely total cost of association. Could you tell us, please, how the UK's association to Horizon Europe will be funded?

Third, a draft of the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2021-22 suggested that UK entities might be excluded from some projects in the areas of space and quantum technologies. It would be helpful if you could clarify latest developments on the scope of UK participation in Horizon Europe.

Finally, the TCA included reciprocity, meaning that EU entities "may participate in programmes of the United Kingdom equivalent to" the EU's research funds "in accordance with United Kingdom law and rules". How does the Government intend to facilitate such participation?

We look forward to a response within ten working days.

We are copying this letter to Darren Jones MP, Chair of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee and Rebecca Davies, Clerk of the Committee; Rt Hon. Greg Clark MP, Chair of the Science and Technology Committee, and Danielle Nash, Clerk of the Committee; the Earl of Kinnoull, Chair of the European Affairs Committee in the House of Lords and Simon Pook, Clerk of the Committee; your Departmental EU Scrutiny team; and Les Saunders and Donald Harris in the Cabinet Office.

CHAIR