

# **IOP** Institute of Physics

## **Short submission to the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee inquiry into Leaving the EU: implications and opportunities for science and research**

The Institute of Physics is a leading scientific membership society working to advance physics for the benefit of all. We have a worldwide membership of more than 50,000, from enthusiastic amateurs to those at the top of their fields in academia, business, education and government. Our purpose is to gather, inspire, guide, represent and celebrate all who share a passion for physics. And, in our role as a charity, we are here to ensure that physics delivers on its exceptional potential to benefit society. Alongside professional support for our members, we engage with policymakers and the public to increase awareness and understanding of the value that physics holds for all of us. Our subsidiary company, IOP Publishing, is world leader in scientific communications, publishing journals, ebooks, magazines and websites globally. We welcome the opportunity to submit evidence to the committee.

Investment in science is proven to be an essential ingredient for economic growth in the UK. The jobs, technologies and knowledge created by research will be essential for the UK to prosper in the future. Following the result of the referendum we would like to see the Government reaffirm its commitments to the science community, our partners and the important investment that is made to ensure that we maintain our world-leading capabilities.

### **• What action should the government take before the summer?**

The UK physics community has reported two immediate concerns following the referendum vote.

#### **1) People**

Following the referendum vote there is concern that the immigration status of EU nationals studying and working in UK physics<sup>1</sup> (and also that of UK nationals studying and working in other EU countries) may change. This is already causing significant uncertainty. There is also concern that the UK will struggle to recruit staff and students from the EU during the negotiation period.

We ask that the Government works to reassure those EU nationals currently studying and working in UK physics that they are welcome in the UK and that their funding and status is protected.

#### **2) Collaborations**

We have already seen evidence of UK partners being dropped from Horizon2020 collaborations simply as a result of holding the referendum. This dropping of UK partners will likely increase following the result of the vote. There is a related concern

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<sup>1</sup> Within UK physics departments 24% of all research and teaching staff are from other EU countries, with 16% of staff being from other non-EU countries. In 2013 non-UK EU students making up 5.4% of all students in undergraduate physics departments [http://www.iop.org/policy/consultations/2016/file\\_67232.pdf](http://www.iop.org/policy/consultations/2016/file_67232.pdf)

that existing collaborative grants may be cancelled if the UK's status in the EU changes (as happened recently to Switzerland).

The Government should address these issues by underwriting any current collaborations and future collaborative grants that have been agreed by a 'leave' date, and guaranteeing the contribution that the UK makes to hosting or participating in shared EU science facilities.

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