

The Guild welcomes the agreement for the UK to associate to Horizon Europe and urges full association of Switzerland as soon as possible.

After nearly three years of delay, [the Government of the United Kingdom and the European Commission today announced an agreement in principle for the UK's full association to Horizon Europe](#). We are thrilled to see Prime Minister Rishi Sunak setting out the encouraging benefits of this agreement at [The University of Warwick](#), one of three universities based in the UK that are part of The Guild's membership of 21 distinguished universities from across sixteen countries in Europe.

Ever since the Brexit referendum in 2016, the UK and EU research sectors have been united in pressing the urgency of the UK's association to Horizon Europe. Securing the UK's place in EU programmes is crucial for shoring up the future of world-leading research, sustainable growth and high-level skills.

[The Guild has been a highly visible and consistent advocate for UK and Swiss association](#) throughout this period. Our public and political engagement helped to ensure that the importance of maintaining strong research ties across borders was never diminished in the minds of decision-makers at the European and national levels.

We joined with UK and European stakeholders in the research and innovation to strengthen this call, most recently in [our joint response to the Windsor Framework](#) with 17 other key organisations and networks in which we urged swift progress on UK association.

The strength of excellent research in the UK has been demonstrated despite the uncertainty caused by delays to association. For example, the [2023 European Research Council Starting Grant call results](#) announced earlier this week included 32 early career researchers based in the UK. Today's announcement on UK association should encourage researchers and organisations based in the UK to fully engage with the European Research Council and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions. It should also reassure any hesitant collaborators across Europe that they can include UK-based researchers and businesses to build the strong consortia needed to address global challenges and generate transformative innovation.

The UK's association makes the omission of Switzerland from Horizon Europe as an associated country all the more glaring. The agreement made on UK association should incentivise us to push for a similar outcome with Switzerland. Our members remain united in demanding full association of Switzerland to Horizon Europe in light of today's positive momentum.