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The Rt Hon David Willetts MP
Minister for Universities and Science
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET

Monday 13th January 2014

Dear Mr Willetts,

Thank you for your letter of 27 December 2013.

As we mentioned in our previous letter of 29 November, we welcomed the Chancellor's stated support for science, along with the announcements of substantial commitment to capital spending and the targeted funding. However, no amount of capital will reach its full potential without sufficient research funds to back it up.

To this end, we are seeking the Government's assurance that the research budget will not be diluted by the action of 'tucking in' items that are currently outside of the ring fence, without increasing the overall total to keep research funding itself at £4.6 billion (or preferably more). Such a move would be regarded by the scientific community as a breach of the promised protection of the ring fence, and would cause substantial harm to scientific excellence and output in the UK.

We look forward to your specific reply about the issue of 'tucking in'.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenny Rohn".

Dr Jenny Rohn
Chair, Science is Vital

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Curry".

Prof. Stephen Curry
Vice-chair

cc: Dr Graeme Reid, and published as an open letter on our website