

European Union, September 2, 2024

President von der Leyen  
European Commission  
Brussels

Dear President von der Leyen,

We write to urge you to make research and innovation a prominent and standalone portfolio for the next College of Commissioners.

We appreciate the ambitions you outlined in your Political Guidelines 2024-2029<sup>1</sup> to “put research and innovation, science and technology, at the centre of our economy”. This central role for research and innovation in your European Prosperity Plan should also be reflected politically in the next Commission.

As you wrote, Europe’s future depends on the quality of its research. But the fact is that, currently, Europe is not keeping up with its main competitors in research funding. Any competitive edge in the form of world-class researchers and universities will soon be lost without a clear focus on enhancing European research and securing a leading position for Europe in research and technology. Similar reflections have been put forward by former Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta in the report<sup>2</sup> on the Future of the Single Market and by Professor Draghi in his speech “An industrial strategy for Europe”<sup>3</sup>. In this context, we fully support your commitment to increase the research spending of Europe and to expand the European Research Council as the means to put fundamental research at the heart of our economy.

To deliver on this ambitious agenda for research, we ask you to create a well-funded portfolio ***dedicated to research and innovation***, and to nominate a strong supporter of

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<sup>1</sup> [Political Guidelines 2024-2029 | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Enrico Letta - Much more than a market \(April 2024\) \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Mario Draghi: An Industrial Strategy For Europe - Groupe d'études géopolitiques \(geopolitique.eu\)](#)

research as the next Commissioner for research and innovation, a person who has the leadership quality to implement the ambitious strategy that you outlined at the EU level.

Yours sincerely,

Françoise Barré-Sinoussi	Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2008	Jean-Marie Lehn	Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1987
Emmanuelle Charpentier	Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2020	Morten Meldal	Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2022
François Englert	Nobel Prize in Physics 2013	May-Britt Moser	Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2014
André Geim	Nobel Prize in Physics 2010	Edvard Moser	Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2014
Reinhard Genzel	Nobel Prize in Physics 2020	Erwin Neher	Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1991
Serge Haroche	Nobel Prize in Physics 2012	Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard	Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1995
Jules Hoffmann	Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2011	Giorgio Parisi	Nobel Prize in Physics 2021
Robert Huber	Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1988	Jean-Pierre Sauvage	Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2016
Guido Imbens	The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2021	Klaus von Klitzing	Nobel Prize in Physics 1985
Katalin Karikó	Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2023		