

22 March 2021

Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury
UNIT 1
Horse Guards Road
LONDON
SW1A 2HQ

Dear Chancellor

On behalf of 130,000 members of the University and College Union (UCU) I am writing to express my outrage about the savage cuts to Official Development Assistance funding (ODA) for UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) projects.

UKRI have confirmed that the reduction in the ODA budget will lead initially to a £120 million shortfall for research programmes in 2021–22. The scale of these cuts is unprecedented and the enforced cancellation of *existing* international research projects represents a massive breach of trust on the part of the UK government.

This decision undermines the UK's role in combatting the world's most pressing challenges such as infectious diseases, food security and climate change as well as the ability of UK researchers to collaborate with international partners on a longer-term basis. These severe cuts will also lead to job losses in the UK and in low and middle-income countries, with early career staff particularly badly affected.

UCU calls on the UK government to immediately reverse these damaging cuts to ODA funding and to work with the research community to ensure that the UK can continue to play a leading research role in tackling global challenges.

Yours sincerely



Dr Jo Grady
General Secretary