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Dear Peter

I am grateful to you for sharing your concerns, and those of the other learned societies, about the BASIS institutes.

Let me start by assuring you and your colleagues that at the Academy we are - and have been for many months - doing everything we can to make the strongest possible case for the schools and institutes and their future funding in what have not been easy or straightforward negotiations with BIS. These discussions, now reaching a critical stage, include close scrutiny of the appropriate balance between continued core funding and new project funding for specific research.

I attach a copy of the letter which I recently sent to Section Chairs, Fellows and others who had expressed their worries, with the caveat that we are now in what is proving to be a fast moving situation likely to be resolved within the next couple of weeks. At that point I will, of course, be in touch again with news which I continue to hope may be able to allay at least some of the fears that you and others have expressed about the future of the schools and institutes.

You also make an entirely fair point about the Learned Societies meeting last December. It was very unfortunate that, at very late notice, due to a last-minute Spending Review meeting of research funders, a number of key players were unable to attend to address the planned Green Paper discussion. We therefore felt it would be better to go ahead with the meeting, focusing on the topic of interdisciplinarity (which had been billed for the afternoon slot from the beginning), chaired by Professor David Soskice FBA, who is leading the Academy's project on interdisciplinarity. We recognise that many attendees were disappointed not to have the opportunity to discuss the Green Paper. I can only repeat our apologies that such factors do unfortunately sometimes combine.

I would like to reassure you that we attach great importance to the sharing and networking function such meetings provide, and that we are seeking to schedule a further meeting for the spring, after we know the outcome of the Spending Review.

If you feel a meeting with me would be useful to discuss these issues in more detail I would be happy to arrange one.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alun Evans', with a horizontal line underneath.

ALUN EVANS

From

Alun Evans

Chief Executive and Secretary

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