SUPA Proposal - SFC Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme

Letters of Support:

1. Simon Andrews, Director of Fraunhofer UK
2. Paul Winstanley, Director of Scotland's Innovation Centre for Sensing, Imaging and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies (CENSIS)
3. Prof. Derryck Reid, Director of EPSRC CDT in Applied Photonics: Industrially Inspired Photonic Imaging, Sensing and Analysis
4. Prof. Bernhard Hidding, SUPA Theme Leader, Scottish Centre for the Application of Plasma-based Accelerators (SCAPA); a SUPA II Flagship Project
5. Dr Giovanni Losurdo, Spokesperson of the VIRGO Collaboration, Pisa, Italy
6. Prof. Dr Michèle Heurs, Dean of QUEST Leibniz Forschungsschule, Hamburg, Germany
7. Prof. Dr. Huub Röttgering, Director of the Leiden Observatory, The Netherlands
8. Prof. Dr. Hendrik Hildebrandt, Astronomisches Institut, Rhur Universitat Bochum, Germany
9. Prof, Andreas Hoecker, Spokesperson for Atlas Collaboration, CERN, Switzerland
10. Prof. Chris Parkes, Spokesperson for LHCb Collaboration, CERN, Switzerland

Prof Alan Miller
CEO
SUPA

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Glasgow, 22nd June 2021

Re: "Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme" SUPA proposal

Dear Prof Miller,

Thank you for sharing your proposal for SUPA to engage with the Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme. I offer my wholehearted support and I hope that Fraunhofer UK can be of assistance in delivering successful exchanges.

Researcher exchange is always of great value in many ways to all concerned and this is only heightened in the post-Brexit period. There is clearly goodwill towards Scotland amongst the science, engineering and industrial communities across Europe but this residual feeling must be acted upon if we are not to lose our continental collaborative power very quickly. In global competition with the tech giants of USA and the massive state intervention of China, our European agility and willingness to collaborate is our trump card.

There is a wide range of research and innovation across SUPA which is complementary to and much respected by our European peers. There is great scope for purposeful exchange across a range of your themes.

Fraunhofer- Gesellschaft has seen first hand the quality and quantity of the work and people in Scotland from their interactions with Fraunhofer CAP in Glasgow. As an associate member of SUPA and serial collaborator with the Universities of St Andrews, Glasgow, HeriotWatt and our core partner Strathclyde we enjoy a good understanding of the excellence of the offering. Furthermore in support of your proposal we would be very keen to make introductions and suggest productive exchanges with a wide range of European partners. The Chair of my board is Prof Klingner, Research Director for Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, and I know that proposed exchanges would be very warmly welcomed from the highest level in Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, as they would from Institute Directors including Prof Oliver Ambacher and Prof Karsten Buse who are on our board as well as the dozens of others I know personally from the annual Fraunhofer director meetings to which legally-independent international affiliate heads are invited.

I note for transparency that there may be a perceived conflict of interest in our support as we may have an interest in those involved in exchanges. We currently sponsor around 22 PhD and EngD students and that the vast majority are academically supervised by academics in SUPA universities Many of our staff continue close relationships with SUPA universities in formal and informal collaborations and in projects funded by InnovateUK.

We would of course be happy to encourage researcher exchanges with Fraunhofer Institutes and Centres in Germany and beyond (Italy, Austria, Sweden, Portugal). We have had joint technical work with several Fraunhofer Institutes to date including Fraunhofer IAF (our key partner) Fraunhofer ISE, Fraunhofer HHI, Fraunhofer IBMT, Fraunhofer IWES, Fraunhofer IOF, Fraunhofer ILT and more. These institutes cover a wide range of semiconductor, photonics, lifescience, wind energy and manufacturing expertise. We participate in the 'Light and Surfaces' group which covers a range of photonic and materials interests. IN the Fraunhofer Space alliance we meet again with a very broad range of interests from across the 74 German institutes.

We would not limit our suggestions and introductions to Fraunhofer entities. We have enjoyed close collaborations with a number of other European universities and research institutes including:

- France- SYRTE, Observatoire de Paris
- Italy- CNR Pisa
- Poland- University of Warsaw
- Switzerland- University of Neuchatel

In conclusion we are very supportive of this proposal and will be very pleased to offer our time and relationships to assist you in making the very best opportunities available for mutually valuable exchanges.

Yours sincerely,

S Andrews

Simon Andrews CEng, FInstP,
Executive Director,
Fraunhofer UK

CENSIS

To Whom it May Concern

30th June 2021

Dear Sir / Madam

SFC Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme Letter of Support for SUPA Proposal

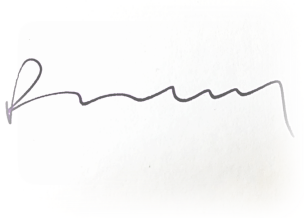
CENSIS is engaging actively to develop new European Collaborations. For example, engagement and support of the Venture Labs North entrepreneurial programme at The University of Groningen and recently taking membership of the European Alliance for Internet of Things innovation (AIOTI). We are keen to continue to develop further this engagement strand. Given this we are strongly supportive of the SUPA proposal to the SFC Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme.

We envisage that CENSIS can support SUPA by making links into, and benefit from, international research collaborations which may have aligned commercial partnership opportunities. The anticipated outcomes are:

- Increasing European awareness of either direct business opportunities with Scotland;
- Developing new commercial opportunities with European partners via productive exchanges;
- Building personal relationships between the creative and innovative early career researchers in SUPA and their European counterparts within academia and commerce.

I hope this is of assistance in assessing the SUPA proposal.

Yours faithfully



Paul Winstanley, CEO CENSIS

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Innovation Centres
Supported by The Scottish Funding Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Scottish Enterprise.

Professor Derryck Reid, Director
EPSRC CDT in Applied Photonics:
Industrially Inspired Photonic Imaging, Sensing and Analysis

Prof. Alan Miller
Scottish Universities Physics Alliance
University of Glasgow

29 June 2021

Dear Alan,

SFC "Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme"

Thank you for the invitation to support your bid to the above scheme.

The EPSRC CDT in Applied Photonics has been running in different forms since 2001. Its current format is cohort-based training of 10–12 doctoral students per year, with a technical emphasis on photonic imaging and sensing, together with associated analytical and computational techniques.

All of the projects are industrially relevant, each is sponsored at a significant level (£20K–£50K) by a company, and each student has dual supervision from an industrial supervisor and an academic at one of our six consortium universities.

Many of the academics in the CDT have active collaborations with universities outside the UK, and several of the companies also maintain connections with universities and research institutes abroad. I can therefore see immediate opportunities for our doctoral students and staff within the CDT in Applied Photonics to benefit from the short-term placements and exchanges.

Our CDT is already very cross-disciplinary, with students engaged in research from quantum optics and optical metrology to computational analysis of medical imaging and machine learning. An exciting aspect of the scheme would be the opportunity to expose students to cross-disciplinary collaborations as part of their development.

We have a number of immediate connections with European labs and organisations that would be suitable partners for the exchange programme. One of our larger sponsors is the Fraunhofer Centre for Applied Photonics, who are strongly integrated with German Fraunhofer centres. Other connections exist with Politecnico di Milano (Italy), EPFL (Switzerland), University of Graz (Austria), Università degli Studi di Pavia (Italy), Munster Technological University (Ireland) and Tyndall National Laboratory (Ireland).

Not only would I see exchanges with European labs being used to consolidate existing relationships, but clearly they could be an accessible way for our students to personally formulate new collaborations that enhanced their own research.

We already have had some examples of students taking overseas secondments through other mechanisms, so I am sure that this scheme would be welcomed by them.

Yours sincerely,

Derryck

Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Bernhard Hidding
Chair of Experimental Physics
Scottish Centre for the Application
of Plasma-based Accelerators SCAPA
Scottish Universities Physics Alliance SUPA
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http://www.cockcroft.ac.uk
http://pwasc.org.uk/

SFC
Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme
To Whom It may Concern

June 28, 2021

Support Letter for SUPA Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme Application

Dear Alan,

As you know, I am the Theme Leader for Nuclear and Plasma Physics for SUPA, the Scottish University Physics Alliance. On behalf of the Nuclear and Plasma Physics theme, I want to express our strongest support for the proposal you submit to the Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme for SUPA.

In previous phases of SUPA, successful foundations were laid for SCAPA, the Scottish Centre for the Application of Plasma-based Accelerators, hosted at the University of Strathclyde. This investment allowed highly visible international engagement of SUPA in various areas of natural, material and life science R&D, in particular with our European neighbours. High-power laser-plasma-interaction is a growth field which many view as fundamentally transformative for the worldwide research landscape, as indicated for example by the Physics Nobel Prize, awarded in 2018 for the scheme that enabled production of high-power laser pulses as exploited at SCAPA.

The availability of high-power laser pulses, and high-quality particle beams from laser-plasma-interaction has put SCAPA not only on the national, but also in the international map. For example, SUPA researchers are involved in several large European consortia, networks and collaborations, funded by H2020, such as Laserlab Europe https://www.laserlab-europe.eu/ , or the Extreme Light Infrastructure https://eli-laser.eu/ , or the Compact European Plasma Accelerator With Superior Beam Quality http://www.eupraxia-project.eu/ – projects that either already constitute multi-100M€ investments or, like EuPRAXIA, aim to do so via the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) roadmap.

In the wake of the success of SCAPA, we were also able to build many research bridges to Europe, for example I myself lead a project called https://nexource.phys.strath.ac.uk/ : Next-generation Plasma-based Electron Beam Sources for High-brightness Photon Science, and we have many further multilateral and bilateral links to European research labs. Among too many

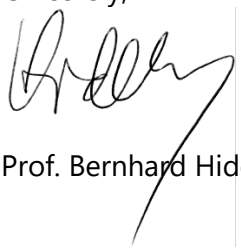
to mention them all here, and in no particular order, there are links to the Centro de Láseres Pulsados (Spain), the Laboratoire d'Optique Appliquée (France), Research-Centre Dresden-Rossendorf, Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron, Gesellschaft für Schwerionenforschung, Helmholtz-Institut Jena, Research Centre Juelich, Ludwig-Maximilian-Universität München, Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf (Germany), Lund University (Sweden), Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare, National Research Council Pisa (Italy), and many more. There are for example joint PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, joint beamtimes and experiments, joint training and education efforts, and the development of large joint research proposals and facilities.

Sadly, these links are now endangered due changes in the research environment due to the known political and public health developments. PhD students and Early Career researchers constitute the backbone of these links. Promotion of exchange of personnel (PhD and postdocs) and join workshops and initiatives such as new research roadmaps and proposals therefore are of paramount importance for the development of these links to our European colleagues. This is reported to me from academics across SUPA universities, and from a more personal perspective as Director of the Strathclyde Centre for Doctoral Training on Plasma-based Particle and Light Sources https://ppals.phys.strath.ac.uk/ as emphatically international PhD centre, I fully agree with the need for continued and if possible, enhanced exchange with our partners in Europe.

Alan, your proposal to the Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme therefore could hardly come more timely. Our Scottish and international partners in the SUPA Nuclear and Plasma Physics theme have strongest interest and commitment in such exchange and collaboration opportunities. In fact, there are several research applications of our European neighbours to their funding agencies ongoing with us at SUPA as partners, and it would be highly advantageous if we could reciprocally respond with funding from a flexible Scottish counterpart funding initiative such as the Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme.

On behalf of the SUPA Nuclear and Plasma Physics theme, I therefore lend you my strongest support for your proposal and confirm highest interest of academic group leaders in Scotland and our European colleagues. Please do not hesitate if you or SFC requires further information or detail.

Sincerely,



Prof. Bernhard Hidding

Theme Leader, Nuclear and Plasma Physics, Scottish Universities Research Alliance

Dr Giovanni Losurdo

Research Director at INFN, Pisa, Italy

Spokesperson of the Virgo Collaboration

Professor Alan Miller

CEO, Scottish Universities Physics Alliance

SFC Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme - Letter of Support for SUPA Proposal

Dear Professor Miller,

As Research Director at INFN in Pisa, and Spokesperson for the VIRGO Collaboration, I am delighted to hear about the new Scottish Funding Council Saltire scheme to fund research exchanges for PGRs and early career researchers in European Laboratories, and I am keen to give my support to the SUPA proposal.

Virgo is an interferometric gravitational-wave antenna consisting of two 3-kilometre-long arms, which house the various machinery required to form a laser interferometer. Virgo operates collaboratively with LIGO in the USA and KAGRA in Japan in many areas with agreements on the exchange of data. The detection and measurement of gravitational waves has opened up a new field within astronomy which is challenging established astrophysical and cosmological scenarios which will continue to advance in the in the coming years to answer fundamental questions in physics.

The extreme scientific challenge of detecting gravitational waves was made possible via some remarkable technological advances in precision measurement techniques. VIRGO is embarked on a path of developing increasingly powerful and sensitive instruments and detectors.

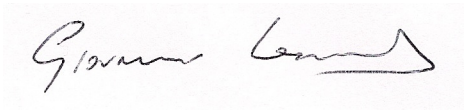
We highly value our research collaborations with Scottish researchers at the University of Glasgow and other SUPA partners who have been highly influential in contributing to advancing the technologies for gravitational wave detection and planning future experiment. We have a long tradition of scientific collaborations and exchanges with Scottish institutions and we are eager to continue it.

PGR and ECR exchanges in both directions are not only welcomed on the short term, but vital for the future of international collaboration in this topic. We recognize that following Brexit and the restrictions caused by the pandemic, we need to work hard at continuing to build relationships and doing this via creating opportunities for our younger colleagues is a very effective means of sustaining collaborations in the future. We are keen to host PGR and ECR from Scotland at VIRGO and hope to be able to send researchers to Scotland on research visits from Italy.

Pisa, July 7th, 2021

Your sincerely,

Giovanni Losurdo



QUEST-Leibniz-Forschungsschule
Forschungslinie QUANOMET

Leibniz Universität Hannover

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover,
QUEST-Leibniz-Forschungsschule, Callinstraße 36, 30167 Hannover

To
Professor Alan Miller
SUPA CEO

QUEST-Leibniz-Forschungsschule

Forschungslinie QUANOMET der Forschungsallianz Braunschweig-Hannover

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SFC Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme

28.06.2021

Dear Prof. Miller

Thank you for sharing information about the new SFC Saltire Emerging Research Scheme. I am delighted to hear that SUPA is planning an application to run an exchange programme between Scotland and Europe open to postgraduate students and early career researchers. This is timely to allow us to continue our productive collaborations between Scotland and Germany on gravitational waves and quantum science following Brexit, made even more important now in a Covid recovery period. We highly value our productive collaborations over many years between the Institute of Gravitational Research in Glasgow, the Institute for Gravitational Physics of Leibniz Universität Hannover together with the Max Planck Institute for Gravitational Physics (Albert Einstein Institute).

Research exchanges of PhD students and other early career researchers is a powerful way to build and extend collaborations between universities and countries while giving our students and postdocs outstanding opportunities to expand their experiences in new areas, techniques, environments and research methods in other countries. Past experience shows these types of exchange to be highly effective. Scotland has a long history of world leading physics research and continues to conduct research at the highest international level exemplified by the work within the Institute of Gravitational Research in Glasgow.

We are keen to encourage and support researcher exchanges in both directions between Scotland and Hannover through the Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme.

I wish you the best of success in your application for funding to launch this scheme.

With best regards,

Michèle Heurs
(Dean of QUEST Leibniz Forschungsschule)

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Zentrale:

Universiteit Leiden

To: the SFC Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme panel,

Date: 30 June 2021

Subject: Letter of Support

To whom it concerns,

The Leiden Observatory at the University of Leiden, Netherlands, has strong research links with Astronomy groups across Scotland, focusing on a wide range of astronomical questions from exoplanets to cosmology to the birth of the very first galaxies. Sharing expertise in observational, theoretical and computational astrophysics we recognise the strong benefit of working with our networks in Scotland. We were therefore very pleased to learn of the Scottish Universities Physics Alliance (SUPA) proposal to the Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme which would allow us to extend our Scottish collaborations, to introduce our Dutch early career researchers to the scientific activities within SUPA, and to welcome Scottish early career researchers to Leiden.

This year we joined with the University of Edinburgh to set up a collaborative PhD programme where PhD students spend two years in each Institute. This scheme was very popular amongst the applicants to the PhD programme and we are looking forward to welcoming four Edinburgh students to Leiden during the course of their PhD. We welcome the additional funding that this SFC scheme provides to support exchange visits with PhD and postdoctoral researchers not only in Edinburgh, but across Scotland. We are committed to matching SUPA-funded exchange visits with return exchanges to strengthen existing collaborations, and also to hopefully start new collaborations.

With the launch of the James Webb Space Telescope, and the first light for both the Euclid and Vera Rubin Observatories in the coming two years, it is an incredibly exciting time for astronomy groups in the Netherlands and Scotland. We look forward to working together to exploit these exciting new astronomical facilities.

Sincerely,

Huub Röttgering

Director Leiden Observatory

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SFC

25. Juni 2021

Letter of support for SUPA SFC application

To the SFC Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme panel,

I am writing in support of the Scottish Universities Physics Alliance (SUPA) proposal to the Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme from the German Centre for Cosmological Lensing (GCCL). The GCCL is a network of astronomy groups across Germany that is based at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, connecting the Rheinische-Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Universität Heidelberg, and the Max Planck Institute for Astrophysics, with an additional external node at the University of Edinburgh. Funded by the Max Planck Society, the Humboldt Foundation, and the Federal Government in Germany, our research focusses on exploiting the two major astronomical imaging surveys of the 2020s: the Vera Rubin Observatory and the Euclid satellite.
Since our centre opened in 2019, we have hosted many exchange visits for early career researchers between Germany and Edinburgh and are looking forward to resuming our in-person visitor programme as Covid-related travel restrictions ease over the coming year. We greatly appreciate the additional funding that this SFC scheme will provide to support exchange visits with PhD and postdoctoral researchers across all of Scotland, not just Edinburgh. The GCCL will provide matched funding for any SUPA-funded exchange visits. We are looking forward to this scheme strengthening our existing collaborations. We are also keen to use this SFC resource to kick-start start new collaborations between our extensive network in Germany and the many different astronomy groups working with Euclid and Rubin data in Scotland.
If you need further information or have any questions do not hesitate to contact me at

+49-234-32-24019 or hendrik@astro.rub.de.

With best regards,

Prof. Dr. Hendrik Hildebrandt

European Organization for Nuclear Research

Organisation européenne pour la recherche nucléaire

GENEVE, SUISSE
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Andreas Hoecker

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To:
Professor Alan Miller
CEO of Scottish Universities Physics Alliance (SUPA)

Geneva, July 8, 2021

Re: Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme of the Scottish Funding Council.

Dear Professor Miller:

Thank you for providing the information about the new SFC Salter Emerging Research Scheme. I am the spokesperson of the ATLAS experiment at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at CERN, ATLAS is a collaboration of 181 universities and laboratories from 41 countries including the University of Edinburgh and the University of Glasgow. ATLAS was one of the two experiments that discovered the Higgs boson in 2012.

As you know, CERN has a long-established relationship with Scottish universities: as well as Glasgow and Edinburgh, CERN has collaborations with scientists from the Universities of Strathclyde and Dundee. Scottish universities have contributed to many experiments at CERN both in nuclear and particle physics, to the development and construction of CERN accelerators, and to theoretical physics research. CERN highly values the contributions and leadership of Scottish researchers and it is essential that this collaboration continues for the success of both CERN and Scottish science. It is a pleasure to host high-quality research students and early-career researchers at CERN.

I was therefore very happy to hear about this initiative by the Scottish Government and the Scottish Funding Council to host future research students, early-career researchers, technicians and engineers here at CERN. This opportunity for scientific exchanges is very timely with the next run of the LHC, scheduled to begin early 2022, and the challenges for collaborative research posed by Brexit and the COVID crisis.

Research exchanges of postgraduate students and early-career researchers are critical for building international scientific relationships and collaboration, providing both valuable cultural experiences, as well as scientific training in an environment of excellence. CERN provides training in many areas including theoretical physics, advanced experimental physics, and cutting-edge technology in electronics, software engineering and data science, with many of the training opportunities specifically aimed at early-career researchers.

We hope to be able to welcome and support researcher exchanges between Scotland and CERN within the new Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme.

Sincerely,

Andreas Hoecker
CERN Senior Research Physicist
Spokesperson, ATLAS Collaboration

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Chris Parkes
LHCb Spokesperson.

Professor of Physics,
University of Manchester.

Guest Professor, CERN.

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8th July 2021 Re: SFC Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme

Dear Professor Alan Miller, CEO of SUPA

Thank you for the information about the new SFC Salter Emerging Research Scheme. I am the spokesperson (elected leader) of the Large Hadron Collider-beauty (LHCb) experiment at the Large Hadron Collider at CERN; LHCb is a collaboration of over 1000 scientists from 86 different universities and laboratories in 18 countries including the University of Glasgow and the University of Edinburgh. Alongside the other three large LHC experiments, it is one of the largest scientific projects ever assembled.

I am pleased to hear about this new initiative by Scottish Government and the Scottish Funding Council which will facilitate research students, early-career researchers, as well as technicians and engineers, to be hosted at CERN to work on LHCb and other projects at CERN. This opportunity for scientific exchanges is very timely with the challenges for collaborative opportunities post-Brexit, and even more important now as we cope with recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The LHCb Collaboration values highly the contributions and leadership of Scottish researchers. Research exchanges of postgraduate students and early-career researchers are excellent in building scientific relationships and collaborations across different countries, providing excellent scientific training as well as valuable cultural experiences that will assist their future careers.

CERN provides many training opportunities for researchers, from fundamental theoretical physics through advanced experimental techniques to cutting-edge technological developments in physics and data science whilst working with other researchers and scientists from across the world.

We hope to be able to welcome and support new researcher exchanges between Scotland and LHCb via this new Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Parkes
Spokesperson LHCb Collaboration
Professor of Physics, University of Manchester
Guest Professor, CERN