

## SCIENCE EUROPE PRESS RELEASE

### Joint Statement on Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy

*(Brussels, 10 April 2019)* Academic freedom and institutional autonomy are of fundamental importance and value to society, as highlighted in a joint statement issued today by All European Academies (ALLEA), the European University Association (EUA), and Science Europe.

“All countries in Europe share legal and political commitments to protect academic freedom and safeguard the institutional autonomy of research organisations” said Stephan Kuster, Secretary General of Science Europe. “However, government and public authorities need to better protect and promote those rights.”

Representing a vast section of Europe’s research and higher education systems, the three partners call on governments and public authorities to engage in a trust-based dialogue with research institutions, and not to interfere in their internal affairs. They also urge them to guarantee scholars and students the rights that constitute academic freedom, such as freedom of expression, assembly, opinion, and thought.

“While governments can prioritise research funding, the autonomy of funding decisions and the diversity of the research that is funded should be guaranteed,” Kuster added. “No discipline should be excluded as a whole for political reasons.”

Furthermore, the three organisations call on universities, funding agencies, academies, and other research organisations to foster a culture in which free expression and the open exchange of opinions are valued and the academic freedom of researchers, teachers, and students is safeguarded.

The statement can be downloaded at the following address: <http://scieur.org/freedom-joint>

### **Notes to Editors**

Science Europe is an association of major European research funding and research performing organisations in 27 countries, established in 2011 to promote the collective interest of its members and to foster collaboration between them. For more information see [www.scienceeurope.org](http://www.scienceeurope.org)

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