



BRITISH  
PHARMACOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY

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## Fresh concern over immigration restrictions

Professor Ray Hill, President of the British Pharmacological Society has joined other key figures from our sector in signing a letter requesting that the government review its propositions on settlement rights for immigrants. The full text and list of signatories can be found below.

The letter, organized by the Campaign for Science and Engineering, and published in The Times warns that

Government proposals to drastically limit the settlement rights of migrants coming into the UK could seriously damage the country's science and engineering base. The letter was accompanied by an article in which The Times quotes CaSE Director Imran Khan as saying:

"When the immigration cap was imposed we had to fight pretty hard to warn the Government of the damage that it could do to science and engineering. To its credit, it eventually listened and changed its plans, but its settlement proposals could be just as harmful. The Government is effectively saying to the world's top scientists, 'Well, you can come and work here — but we'll be kicking you out after five years'."

"That's not nearly enough for the kind of long-term research that the UK has built its reputation on, and it will mean that we are not even considered as a venue by the world's best talent."

*Sir,*

*A year ago this page carried a letter from eight Nobel prize-winning researchers, explaining how curbs on immigration could damage the UK's science and engineering excellence. The Government listened at the time, but now appears to have forgotten the warning.*

*The Government is proposing to end the right of migrants to settle in the UK, effectively forcing the vast majority to leave the country after five years. This policy would be a profound mistake, jeopardising our position as a hub for the world's finest scientists and engineers.*

*A recent report for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills noted that the UK provides the best 'bang for buck' of any G8 nation when it comes to research, while the economic and social benefits are immense and visible everywhere.*

*This eminence relies on a global outlook. Nearly half of all UK researchers collaborate with overseas colleagues, while migrant scientists such as Andre Geim, Konstantin Novoselov, and Venki Ramakrishnan have all won Nobel Prizes whilst working in British labs.*

*When the best international researchers decide where to work they will consider the prospects for their careers and families. If they cannot be confident of a stay longer than*

*five years – barely long enough to supervise a PhD, let alone a major research programme – then we will be ruled out as a destination.*

*Let us be clear; the UK needs these people more than they need us. Moreover, if we are trying to improve links with nations such as China and India, the worst possible way to start is by turning their best minds away from our doorstep. The Government must decide how much it values our scientific prosperity.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Dr Stephen Bold FREng, Managing Director, Sharp Laboratories of Europe Ltd.  
David Brown, Chief Executive, Institution of Chemical Engineers  
Mark Downs, Chief Executive, Society of Biology  
Nigel Gaymond, Chief Executive, Bioindustry Association  
Professor Ray Hill, President, British Pharmacological Society  
Professor Sophien Kamoun, Head of the Sainsbury Laboratory  
Professor Colin Kleanthous, Chair, the Biochemical Society  
Imran Khan, Director, Campaign for Science and Engineering  
Sir Peter Knight FRS, President, Institute of Physics  
Lord May of Oxford OM AC FRS, Former President of the Royal Society, former  
Government Chief Scientific Adviser  
David Phillips OBE, President, Royal Society of Chemistry  
Professor Baron Piot, Director, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine  
Professor David Price, Vice Provost (Research), UCL  
Lord Rees of Ludlow OM FRS, Former President of the Royal Society  
Professor Mike Spyer, President, the Physiological Society  
Mark Stewart, Human Resources Director, Airbus UK  
Professor Eric Thomas, President, Universities UK  
Sir Mark Walport, Director, Wellcome Trust  
Stephen Whitehead, Chief Executive, Association of British Pharmaceutical Industry  
Lord Willis of Knaresborough, Chair, Association of Medical Research Charities*

[More information can be found on the CaSE website](#)