

**Mr Jean-Eric Paquet**

Director-General

**Ms Irene Norstedt**

Director

Directorate-General for Research and Innovation  
European Commission

Brussels, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Mr. Paquet,  
Dear Ms. Norstedt,

We are writing to you in what we believe are extraordinary circumstances, on behalf of the European Brain Council as well as its member societies:

- The European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA)
- The Global Alliance of Mental Illness Advocacy Networks-Europe (GAMIAN-Europe)
- The European Academy of Neurology (EAN)
- The European Association of Neurosurgical Societies (EANS)
- The European College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ECNP)
- The European Psychiatric Association (EPA)
- The Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS)
- The International Brain Research Organization (IBRO)

Indeed, the current outbreak of the COVID-19 virus is impacting Europe in an unprecedented manner. More particularly, it has been reported to us that members of our constituency were unable to work, collaborate and travel across the EU for several weeks now in the case of certain countries. This is why we kindly request you to **postpone the current deadline of all Horizon 2020 calls by at least 2 months.**

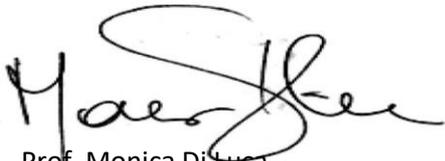
The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus in Europe as well as the containment measures introduced by many EU countries unfortunately severely affect the ability of the brain research community to contribute to the development of high-quality proposals. EBC fully understands the necessity of the various measures as strong action is needed to halt the spread of the virus. However, as an unintended result of these steps, researchers

are currently hindered in their efforts to collaborate with partners in other EU-countries, travel across Europe, organize meetings, gather relevant experts and conduct background research as to the topics of the calls.

Given the extraordinary circumstances and bearing in mind that robust cooperation amongst research communities is a requisite for developing good-quality proposals, we kindly request you to **consider extending the April deadline by at least 2 months**. Such action will enable research communities to better mitigate the unforeseen impact of the containment measures on their work and ultimately ensure the launch of robust projects that will further reinforce the impact of EU research funding on European society.

We would be immensely grateful to you for taking our request into consideration and look forward to hearing from your office as to any potential further steps that the Commission might take in this regard. In the meantime, we would like to thank you in anticipation and remain at your disposal should you require any further information.

With kind regards,



Prof. Monica Di Luca  
EBC President



Frédéric Destrebecq  
EBC Executive Director

