Swedish Neutron
Science Society

October 22, 2026

Support letter for ISIS

Dear executive chair of STFC Prof. Michele Dougherty,
Dear Chief Executive of UK Research and Innovation Prof. Sir Ian Chapman,

The Swedish neutron user community has strong ties to ISIS through a formal agreement between ISIS and the Swedish Research Council. We are concerned about the budgetary situation at ISIS.

We are convinced that the proposed reductions would not only harm the UK neutron community with long-lasting effects, but would also weaken the position of ISIS as a leading international research centre of materials research. In particular, reduced operation would severely limit opportunities for international collaborations and mobility, which is of critical importance for excellence in neutron science.

We stress that the Swedish contribution to ISIS supports not only the operating budget, allowing scientific use of beamtime, but also includes method development at ISIS instruments funded by the Swedish Research Council. Reducing opportunities for international collaboration at ISIS would thus hamper research progress of UK-based research supported jointly by the UK and international partners, and put established collaboration programmes at risk. Reliable access to beamtime and support by expert staff for technical sample environments and beamlines is needed to realise the full mutual benefit of these shared investments.

ISIS operates a very competitive suite of neutron beamlines, including world-leading instruments with unique characteristics which are already now among the most in-demand instruments worldwide. Reducing beam days for these instruments by operating fewer cycles would thus cut opportunities for highest-impact research. These science cases not only provide unique perspectives for the fundamental understanding of biological, soft and hard condensed matter, but also address grand societal challenges such as health and the sustainable energy transition.

Any closure of beamlines would lead to a further reduction of beam days. Given that beam days at neutron instruments in Europe have already been significantly reduced over the last decade, such cuts would make it extremely hard for the neutron community to maintain high-impact research, method development for future excellence, and high-quality training of the next generation of researchers. For PhD students and postdoctoral researchers working on fixed-term projects, a missed experiment can mean a substantial delay, with limited time to recover.

We are also concerned about retaining the experienced instrument scientists and technical staff who make these experiments possible. The long-term consequences of potential expertise loss need to be considered alongside the immediate reduction in beam days.

We thus cannot avoid the conclusion that the proposed budget reductions for ISIS will have serious and long-lasting effects on the neutron communities in UK, Sweden and across Europe. These effects would not only limit fundamental research, but also slow down the development of novel materials tackling grand societal challenges, with clear consequences for technological progress and economic competitiveness for UK and Europe.

As representatives of the Swedish neutron user community, we thus ask you to reconsider the proposed reductions and review the budget-setting process within STFC in close consultation with the affected institutions and user communities, so that any necessary savings cause as little damage as possible to scientific and technological opportunities. We urge you to protect operating time and instrument support at ISIS, and to include the international perspective in considering the options for ISIS.

Yours sincerely,

the Board of the Swedish Neutron Science Society (SNSS)

Assoc. Prof. Felix Roosen-Runge (co-chair of the Board / Lund University, Sweden)
Assoc. Prof. Yasmine Sassa (co-chair of the Board / KTH, Stockholm, Sweden)
Prof. Karen Edler (Lund University, Sweden)
Assoc. Prof. Germán Salazar Alvarez (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr. Eskil Andreasson (Tetra Pak, Lund, Sweden)
Prof. Anna Ström (Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden)
Wojciech Fijalkowski (SciLifeLab/KTH, Stockholm, Sweden)

List of Co-Signatories:

Prof. Ulrich Häussermann (Stockholm University, Sweden)
Assist. Prof. Xabier Martinez de Irujo Labalde (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Prof. Elizabeth Blackburn (Lund University, Sweden)
Prof. Sheng Guo (Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden)
Prof. Kristina Edström (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr. Marjorie Ladd Parada (KTH, Stockholm, Sweden)
Dr. Johannes Frantti (Reciprocal Engineering - RE Oy, Helsinki, Finnland)
Prof. Mark Rutland (KTH, Stockholm, Sweden)
Dr. Robbie Hunt (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Prof. Ru Peng (Linköping University, Sweden)
Prof. Colin Carlile (Lund University, Sweden)
Johanna Fredriksson (Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden)
Dr. Nikolaos Tsapatsaris (European Spallation Source, Sweden)
Hasan Ghotme (Nantes University, France)
Rakesh Chatterjee (CCBT, Bengaluru, India)
Dr. Ratchawit Janewithayapun (European Spallation Source, Sweden)
Assist. Prof. Daniel Weber (Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden)
Prof. Maths Karlsson (Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden)
Dr. Edward Stuckey (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr. Paulo HB Brant Carvalho (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Assoc. Prof. Magnus Hörnqvist Colliander (Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden)
Dr. Eric Lindgren (Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden)
Prof. Martin Sahlberg (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Prof. Juan Francisco González Martínez (Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena, Spain)
Prof. Trevor Forsyth (LINXS / Lund University, Sweden)
Filip Mehler (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Assoc. Prof. Mikhail Feygenson (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr. Johan Cedervall (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr. Yao Hu (Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden)
Prof. Jens Birch (Linköping University, Sweden)
Tim Günter (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Assist. Prof. Jennifer Graham (Lund University, Sweden)
Oskar Stepancic (Lund University, Sweden)
Prof. Patrik Johansson (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Prof. Jan Swenson (Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden)
Assoc. Prof. Cedric Dicko (Lund University, Sweden)
Dr. Alexei Vorobiev (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr. Mikael Andersson (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr. Maria Pierantoni (Lund University, Sweden)
Dr. Juanita Francis (Lund University, Sweden)
Assoc. Prof. Andrea Scotti (Lund University, Sweden)
Assist. Prof. Margaret N Holme (Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden)
Prof. Anna Stradner (Lund University, Sweden)
Dr. Anna Stephens (Lund University, Sweden)
Prof. Thomas Ederth (Linköping University, Sweden)
Assoc. Prof. Johan Hektor (Malmö University, Sweden)

Prof. Max Wolff (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr. Jennifer Gilbert (Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden)
Dr. Elisabetta Nocerino (Stockholm University, Sweden)
Dr. Monika Rolinska (Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden)
Dr. Ritam Chatterjee (KTH, Stockholm, Sweden)
Assoc. Prof. Valentina Santoro (Lund University, Sweden)
Dr. Pallab Kumar Borah (Lund University, Sweden)
Dr. Adrien Perrichon (European Spallation Source, Sweden)
Assist. Prof. William Andrew Blake Hearn (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Prof. Kenneth Järrendahl (Linköping University, Sweden)
Dr. Oliver Hammond (European Spallation Source, Sweden)
Dr. Ida Nielsen (Paul Scherrer Institute, Switzerland)
Dr. Alexander Holmes (European Spallation Source, Sweden)
Dr. Davide Schirone (Lund University, Sweden)
Dr. Naomi Elstone (European Spallation Source, Sweden)
Dr. Harrison Laurent (University of Leeds, UK)
Dr. Rajan Jagpal (University of Bath, UK)
Dr. Ben Humphreys (European Spallation Source, Sweden)
Dr. Seda Ulusoy (TUM / MLZ Garching, Germany)
Prof. Jan Skov Pedersen (Aarhus University, Denmark)
Dr. Liam Nagle-Cocco (University of Oxford, UK)
Dr. Daniela Farmer (Yara International, Norway)
Dr. Lucien Heurtier (King's College London, UK)

Status for list of co-signatories: November 1st, 2026
For an up-to-date list please visit:
`http://snss.se/wp-content/uploads/2026/10/SNSSletter-ISIS.pdf`

Comments of co-signatories:

> The UK as a partner in ILL and ESS and the owner of ISIS is in a global leadership position. It requires tenacity and determination to reach such a position and to benefit from the scientific output, but one false step and this position is sacrificed. I urge you to reconsider this decision. *(Prof. Colin Carlile, Lund University, Sweden)*

> As a researcher who has directly benefited from neutron spectroscopy at Iris at ISIS and tremendous help from Mona Sarter in my learning and growth, I recognise the indispensable role of ISIS instruments and scientific expertise in advancing soft matter and biopolymer research. Sustained beamtime availability, equitable access, and expert technical support are essential for continued scientific excellence. Budget reductions would undermine international collaborations, delay research progress, limit opportunities for the current and next generation of neutron scientists, and leave a gap which take much more to fill in the longer run. *(Dr. Pallab Kumar Borah, Lund University, Sweden)*

> Ever since the discovery of the neutron by British Nobel laureate Sir James Chadwick, the UK has been one of the leading nations in Europe regarding neutron science. In these times, the importance of maintaining a strong position in this field cannot be overstated. *(Prof. Jens Birch, Linköping University, Sweden)*