

31 March 2021

Prof Brian Schmidt

ANU Vice-Chancellor

Prof Russel Gruen

Dean of College of Health (ANU)

Dear Prof Schmidt and Prof Gruen,

We write this letter as concerned international neuroscientists to express our disagreement with the recent proposal to close the Eccles Institute of Neuroscience at the John Curtin School of Medical Research, Australian National University (ANU). This proposal will have serious consequences for the future of neuroscience research, and international relations between the Australian neuroscience community and neuroscience departments across the world.

We collectively have served as international faculty members of the Australasian Course in Advanced Neuroscience (ACAN) over the last one and a half decades. ACAN was conceived at, and has been directed and managed by faculty members of the Eccles Institute or its alumni. This course exemplifies, in its sustained outstanding quality and international reach, the core values and ethos of the Eccles Institute. Its success reflects the tenacity, energy and intellectual gravitas that defines the research of this centre of excellence in neuroscience.

The closure of the Eccles will not only damage the international reputation of the ANU, but will also extinguish a leading and pivotal centre for cellular and systems neuroscience research in the world. On behalf of the international neuroscience community, we stridently oppose this proposal and suggest immediate re-evaluation.

Yours sincerely,

ACAN (Australasian Course in Advanced Neuroscience)

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